

Building Bridges with Da'aro Youth Project

Strengthening Holistic Support for Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Youth in London



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Section 1

About this project

In November 2025, a roundtable hosted at SOAS University of London (SOAS) brought diverse organisations together to identify innovative approaches to support children and young people within the asylum system. The aim was to strengthen collaboration between these organisations and collectively build capacity to sustain and scale support available to young people. The roundtable involved different stakeholders, including charities, academics, local authorities and statutory service providers. It explored how to better support one another's work and contribute collectively to the existing ecosystem of care for young asylum seekers and refugees (see Appendix 1 for list of organisations participating). The event was focused on the following objectives:

- * Strengthen partnerships and referral pathways between organisations
- * Identify innovative, community-led approaches to care and advocacy
- * Foster long-term collaboration and knowledge exchange, particularly within a context of funding cuts and growing service demands.
- * Develop an online practical handbook of strategies and resources to support practitioners, community organisations, and service providers working with young asylum seekers and refugees.



Funded by the SOAS Impact Accelerator Award, the symposium was co-led by Dr Mikal Woldu, research associate at SOAS and Da'aro Youth Project (DYP), the partner organisation for the project. A discussion paper first outlined the main issues and priorities for young people engaging with DYP. For each of the themes identified, key challenges faced by young people were highlighted along with what DYP is currently able to offer in terms of support and the remaining gaps in support available. The work and approach of DYP was provided as a foundation for discussing how each organisation addressed these support needs. During the symposium, participants discussed each of the themes, adding information and insights from their own experiences and practice. Discussions centred around the following questions:

- * What are we currently doing to address young people's support needs in our organisations?
- * What are the remaining gaps in support for each theme?
- * How else might we address these gaps, including ideas of how we might work together?
- * What other resources/ information that we already have/ have access to can we share?
- * What value is there (if any) in having a further resource and what should it look like?

This handbook is intended for professionals working with young people seeking asylum and aims to provide an overview of some of the key challenges affecting their wellbeing. It is not designed to offer a comprehensive account of all the difficulties these young people face, nor does it provide an exhaustive guide to the support services available to them across London. Instead, the handbook serves as an accessible resource that presents a clear and concise summary of the main challenges experienced by young people seeking asylum, highlights how DYP and the partner organisations involved in the roundtable are addressing these issues, and signposts relevant resources and support available through other partner organisations.

This handbook is an opportunity to share and disseminate learning from the event and to build on these insights for future practice. It is designed as a resource which highlights and shares models of comprehensive support and innovations in practice for young people seeking asylum. Taking DYP as a starting point of innovative and good practice, it also brings to the fore resources and approaches from other organisations supporting young people with experience of the asylum system.

The handbook is organised thematically, recognising that diverse challenges of arriving and living in the UK for young refugees and those seeking asylum are typically experienced simultaneously. Each section leads with an outline of the main challenges experienced by young people, followed by an overview of how DYP is currently responding. We then highlight the complementary work of other organisations and possible additional sources of support, as well as the remaining gaps in provision. We would really like to hear from other organisations working in the field of supporting young refugees and young people seeking asylum about their work and possible links and connections that we could make.

The handbook ends with some suggestions of how the sector could begin to pull together resources more coherently, ideas that will be discussed in a follow-up launch of this report and discussion in September.

About Da'aro Youth Project

DYP is a community-led charity (Registered Charity No. 1189245) supporting young asylum seekers and refugees from the Horn of Africa based in south London. The charity was funded in 2018 by members of the Eritrean communities in south London as a response to a tragedy that saw four Eritrean young people die by suicide within a year. The charity aims to promote young people's wellbeing through a holistic, trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approach that sees young people as active and resilient individuals, able to live fulfilling lives. Through weekly youth clubs, casework, advocacy support, diaspora-matched mentoring, and policy and campaigning work, DYP addresses the practical, legal, and emotional challenges facing young people navigating the asylum system, especially unaccompanied minors.

■ ■ *DYP aims to promote young people's wellbeing through a holistic, trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approach that sees young people as active and resilient individuals, able to live fulfilling lives.*

Five core principles underpinning Da'aro Youth Project



DYP adopts a strength-based youth-centred approach, where young people actively shape the services being provided by indicating their evolving needs. The support provided moves beyond crisis-response, by building confidence and opportunities for professional development as they get more settled in British society.



The services provided by DYP are interconnected and cater to the different needs that young people express across different stages of their settlement in the UK. These include youth clubs, casework support and mentoring services.



DYP remains strongly committed to remaining embedded within the communities it serves. This is reflected in the racially and ethnically diverse make-up of the volunteers supporting the youth clubs, the well-attended annual community events, and the diverse range of support provided by members of the African diaspora in London.



DYP is actively engaged in campaign and policy work, alongside partnering organisations, to tackle the systemic barriers faced by the young people they serve.



DYP adopts a dialogic approach involving collaboration with other organisations working in the field to share practice and ideas and combine resources for advocacy and change.

The experiences of young people navigating the asylum system

Children and young people who seek asylum in the UK are subjected to an asylum regime that not only neglects their care but structurally generates distress (Sanchez–Cao et al. 2013) and has been characterised as systemically violent (Stalford et al. 2027). Despite widespread awareness of the trauma associated with forced displacement, there remains a critical failure to account for the racialised and institutional harms that young asylum seekers face after arriving in the UK (Chase & Allsopp 2021; Haggar & Kienzler, 2025; Stalford et al. 2027).

Recent developments in UK asylum policy have intensified these harms and they largely ignore the specific needs and circumstances of children and young people. For instance, the Illegal Migration Act (2023) and the Border Asylum and Immigration Act (2025) entrench a system of punishment rather than protection. Fast-tracked age assessments, that ‘reproduce multiple and intersecting racist imaginaries’ (Rosen and Khan, 2024), misclassify minors as adults, denying them crucial safeguarding rights. Additionally, the use of indefinite detention coupled with “No Recourse to Public Funds” and an asylum system plagued by extreme delays, leaves many young people in the system in a prolonged state of limbo.

Black and racialised young people in particular are disproportionately targeted by hostile border practices and overrepresented in coercive mental health interventions (such as detention under the Mental Health Act) (GOV.UK, 2024). They are often depicted in the media as security threats or burdens on the state as exemplified by the racist and Islamophobic riots that swept the UK in the summer of 2024 and the more recent attacks outside Asylum hotels in October 2025. These narratives not only erode their sense of belonging but also reinforce their marginalisation within healthcare systems which present their own structural inequalities (Younis 2021).

Uncertainty regarding future trajectories has been shown to significantly impact the mental, social and economic wellbeing of migrant young people, with research indicating that a sense of wellbeing is closely tied to feelings of control over one’s life, belonging, and the ability to envisage an autonomous future (Chase & Allsop, 2021).

A report by the Mental Health Foundation (2024) asserts that the UK's immigration regime exacerbates distress by fostering fear, uncertainty, destitution, and social isolation.

Yet, mainstream approaches to mental health and wellbeing continue to pathologize young people through narrow clinical and deficit-based approaches, framing distress as an individual issue rooted in past trauma rather than as a rational response to present-day racialised violence, social precarity, and exclusion (Chase et al, 2019). Inadequate housing, surveillance, and dispersal policies isolate them from community support. Cuts to funding for refugee community organisations have further weakened support systems, even as the Home Office's handling of minors has raised serious safeguarding concerns. These systemic failures are not incidental – they reflect a deliberate political strategy of deterrence, one that is deeply racialised in its impacts.

This context demands trauma-informed, culturally responsive support rooted in empathy, stability, and empowerment, to counteract policy-driven harm and ensure young people feel safe, seen, and supported in their settlement journeys.

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Section 2

Housing

Key Challenges

Young asylum seekers and refugees face a range of interconnected housing challenges that can place them at heightened risk of homelessness. Decisions made early in their housing journey often have disproportionate and long-lasting consequences, particularly for those navigating complex housing systems with limited support or understanding of available options.

Participants in the roundtable highlighted concerns about the shortened move-on period that follows an asylum decision, which can leave insufficient time for young people to secure suitable accommodation. At the time of the roundtable in November 2025, that was limited to 28 days, not leaving sufficient time for young people to access adequate housing. In March 2026, the move-on period was extended to 42 days. Despite this change, fast-tracked asylum decisions made within a few months of arrival may not provide enough time for individuals to understand housing systems, build local networks, or prepare for accommodation transitions.



Young people are often not treated as a housing priority despite their heightened vulnerability and limited support networks. The use of hotel accommodation was raised as a concern, with participants describing some placements as inadequate for supporting young people's longer-term wellbeing, independence, and integration. Many arrive with expectations about housing that do not align with the realities of the current housing crisis, where choice and availability are severely constrained. Although information and guidance are often provided, it is not always relevant to the practical circumstances and decision-making points that young people encounter.

Transitions at age 18 from care to adult services can be particularly problematic. Administrative complexities associated with the National Transfer Scheme¹, alongside requirements to relocate to designated local authorities, can disrupt housing arrangements, continuity of support, and social networks. These disruptions may increase the risk of housing instability and homelessness among care-leavers by creating gaps in support during a critical developmental transition.

¹ The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) is a UK Government initiative designed to facilitate the safe transfer of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) from one local authority to another. The scheme aims to ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of UASC across local authorities, supporting entry authorities in meeting their statutory duties under relevant children's legislation. Read more here [Unaccompanied asylum seeking children: national transfer scheme](#)

Financial barriers further restrict access to accommodation: weekly support payments of £70 are often insufficient to cover high service charges (up to £30), leaving little money for basic living expenses and leading some young people to avoid housing offers altogether. Administrative delays in accessing financial support can prolong periods of instability by up to three months, while inconsistent service charges and limited oversight of providers raise concerns about accountability and fairness. More broadly, weaknesses in housing regulation, combined with reliance on private accommodation providers, can leave local authorities with limited ability to ensure safe and affordable housing.

At the same time, organisations supporting young people often lack mechanisms to assess which resources, interventions and information are most effective, leading to duplication of effort and uncertainty about what forms of support genuinely improve housing outcomes for refugee and asylum-seeking young people. Importantly, these challenges are not unique to refugees and asylum seekers but reflect wider pressures within a housing system that is struggling to meet demand.

What Da'aro Youth Project offers



Direct work



Advocacy



Partnerships



Systems-level
change

DYP responds to housing challenges through a combination of direct support, advocacy, partnership working, and systems-level change. A key element of its approach is providing individual casework support to help young people navigate complex housing systems, understand their rights and options, and access available accommodation and support services.

Alongside direct support, DYP engages in advocacy and campaigning activities aimed at influencing policy and improving housing outcomes for young asylum seekers and refugees. The organisation also contributes to and supports relevant research projects that seek to strengthen the evidence base around housing needs, barriers, and effective interventions.

Recognising the shortage of suitable accommodation, DYP works closely with a range of organisations that provide temporary or emergency housing, including hostels and interim accommodation services. Partnerships with organisations such as Praxis and Crisis help ensure that young people experiencing housing instability can access immediate support while longer-term solutions are explored.

Existing Local Support

Several promising approaches are already being used to support young asylum seekers and refugees in navigating housing transitions. One key area of work focuses on helping young people understand their options and prepare for important decisions before they reach crisis points. This includes supporting individuals to make informed choices by providing relevant information, exploring different possible outcomes, and helping them understand the implications of decisions related to housing and support.

A strong example of this preventative approach is the work undertaken by CARAS to support young people approaching adulthood. At around 17½ years of age, young people are proactively contacted and informed that their circumstances and entitlements may change when they turn 18. Those who wish to receive further support are connected with a caseworker who can provide information, guidance, and practical assistance. The aim is to ensure that young people are aware of upcoming changes and can prepare in advance, reducing the risk of homelessness or housing instability during this critical transition period.

Housing support across London



[Housing Justice](#) brings together communities and finds solutions to homelessness by building personal connections, a sense of belonging, and creating justice in the housing system. They provide personalised assistance to help individuals access relevant local services and address their other needs.



[Praxis](#) provides advocacy and legal support in finding housing, accessing health care and navigating the asylum system.



[Crisis](#) is the national charity for people experiencing homelessness. They help people out of homelessness and campaign for the changes needed to solve it altogether.



[Shelter England](#) provides housing advice.



[Glass Door Homeless Charity](#) provides housing advice, shelter and support with community partners.

Section 3

Immigration and social care

Key Challenges

Young asylum seekers and refugees face significant challenges in navigating the UK's immigration system, many of which stem from limited access to legal support, complex administrative processes, and inconsistencies in decision-making. These barriers can have profound consequences for young people's legal status, access to services, and future opportunities and health and wellbeing.

A major concern for supporting organisations is the declining availability of legal aid and specialist immigration representation. Participants reported that reductions in legal aid provision, combined with restrictions on funding for certain immigration cases, have made it increasingly difficult for young people to access qualified legal support. This challenge is compounded by the emergence of "legal aid deserts", particularly outside London, where access to experienced immigration solicitors is extremely limited. Even where representation is available, concerns were raised about the quality of legal advice, with some young people struggling to find competent solicitors. When appeals on asylum decisions are refused, young people may be left without legal representation altogether, while personal advisers and support workers are often not equipped to help them navigate complex legal processes independently. As a result, many young people face uncertainty about their options and next steps following a negative decision.



Some charities have sought to address these gaps by getting training and accreditation by the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA), enabling them to provide base-line immigration legal advice. IAA accredited in-house advisers can offer guidance, submit applications, and facilitate referrals to solicitors, creating a more integrated support pathway for young people. However, charities face significant barriers, including the financial liabilities associated with providing legal advice and an ongoing shortage of immigration solicitors willing or able to take on cases.

Participants also highlighted a number of structural challenges within local authority practice. Social workers and other professionals supporting young asylum seekers often receive little or no training on asylum and immigration matters, resulting in knowledge gaps that can affect referrals and support planning. Misunderstandings about whether professionals are permitted to recommend specific solicitors can further delay access to legal representation. There was a strong view that social workers, local authorities, legal representatives, and voluntary sector organisations need to work more closely together, particularly around age assessments, referrals, and case strategy. Participants identified a need for accessible resources, including quick-reference guides, frequently asked questions, myth-busting materials, and clear step-by-step pathways to support both practitioners and young people.

Age disputes emerged as a particularly significant concern. Participants described situations in which young people are incorrectly assessed as adults, resulting in the loss of access to children's services, specialist support, and care entitlements. At the same time, unresolved age disputes can delay asylum decision-making, with limited communication between the Home Office and local authorities sometimes contributing to confusion and delays. Even when refugee status is granted, errors in recorded age can create additional legal and administrative challenges that require further intervention. Participants emphasised the importance of ensuring that young people understand their right to challenge age assessments and of establishing more effective systems for identifying and managing age-dispute cases at an early stage.

The collection of evidence to support immigration and asylum claims presents another significant challenge. Many young people arrive in the UK without key documents, such as birth certificates or school records, due to conflict, displacement, family separation, or unsafe journeys. Obtaining alternative forms of evidence, including medical or psychological assessments, can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, often requiring specialist reports, interpreters, and coordination across multiple services. Participants noted that evidential thresholds appear to be increasing, placing additional pressure on young people to provide documentation that may be difficult or impossible to obtain.

Finally, concerns were raised about the interaction between asylum and trafficking support systems, particularly the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Participants reported that a lack of coordination between the NRM and asylum processes can result in delays and uncertainty, with NRM decisions sometimes affecting the progression of asylum claims (Stalford et al., 2027). As a result, some young people may be reluctant to engage with trafficking identification and support mechanisms, despite potentially benefiting from them, due to concerns about the impact on their immigration case.

Overall, participants described an immigration system that is difficult to navigate without specialist support and characterised by challenges in accessing legal representation, resolving age disputes, gathering evidence, and coordinating services. These barriers can leave young asylum seekers and refugees vulnerable to prolonged uncertainty and can have lasting implications for their wellbeing, rights, and access to support.

What Da'aro Youth Project offers

DYP strengthens access to immigration support by working closely with legal partners and developing internal expertise. Through partnerships with legal firms, the organisation helps young people access specialist advice and representation when needed. DYP caseworkers are trained to support immigration case preparation alongside a trainee barrister, helping young people gather and organise the necessary documentation. DYP also holds Immigration Advice Authority (IAA) accreditation for Level One Immigration Advice and Asylum Protection. The accreditation enables staff to provide first-tier immigration advice and guidance, ensuring young people receive timely and informed support throughout the process.

A significant source of difficulty has arisen recently as a result of the Home Office's transition from physical BRP (Biometric residence permits) cards to the new online Sharecode system. Those granted status find this new system complex and as they frequently lack reliable online access, it becomes very difficult for them to access services and to prove their credentials when applying for employment or welfare benefits. DYP intervenes here by sourcing donated SIM cards, phones and mobile data, and by training young people in digital awareness.

Existing Local Support



[Coram Children's Legal Centre \(CCLC\)](#)

provides free legal advice and representation for migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking children.



[Migrant & Refugee Children's Legal Unit \(MiCLU\)](#)

Islington Law Centre provides direct legal representation in asylum and immigration cases.



[Asylum Aid](#) provides specialist legal representation in asylum and human rights cases. Has expertise in complex asylum cases involving children, trafficking survivors, and particularly vulnerable young people.



[Refugee Legal Support](#) provides free legal advice and casework for asylum seekers and refugees. Has expertise in supporting family reunion applications and access to legal rights and entitlements.



[Southwark Law Centre](#) provides direct legal representation in asylum and immigration cases. Experienced in supporting children, young people, vulnerable migrants, and asylum seekers.

Section 4

Education and employability

Key Challenges

Discussions on the theme of education for refugee and asylum-seeking young people highlighted several common challenges identified by different agencies. These related to issues of access, quality, continuity and coherence in learning opportunities. In many cases learning and education were significantly disrupted as young people are moved across different local authorities, impacting their access to learning opportunities. In addition, inadequate support for language learning meant that many young people were unable to access broader curricula and learning opportunities, and progress through learning.

A significant amount of time is lost within mainstream educational settings as young people struggle to get a place in school or college. According to a recent report by Together with Migrant Children and Public Law Project (2025)² of the 49 participating organisations working with children seeking asylum, about 70% reported to have supported children who had to wait for eight weeks or more to access formal education. This is also tied to the lack of flexibility for accessing education throughout the school year and the limited availability of appropriate or relevant learning opportunities. Participants in the roundtable highlighted poor communication between local councils and colleges about the availability of educational spaces and opportunities throughout the academic year to enrol students into courses. In addition to the structural and institutional barriers to education, young people's access to learning was also affected by mental health and wellbeing challenges affecting attendance, engagement, learning and overall progression – for which they require adequate psychological and social support.

² [Experiences of accessing education in asylum accommodation](#)

What Da'aro Youth Project offers

DYP offers a mentoring programme that supports young people to overcome barriers, develop practical skills, build confidence, and progress into education, training, volunteering, and employment. The programme combines accredited training, hands-on work experience, personalised mentoring, and regular feedback from young people themselves.

DYP's casework and mentoring teams work closely together, sharing a detailed understanding of each young person's circumstances, strengths, ambitions, and support needs. Casework advocacy focuses on resolving immediate challenges and crises, including issues relating to housing, immigration, wellbeing, and other practical barriers to education and learning. Once these needs have been addressed, young people are referred into mentoring, where they receive ongoing guidance and encouragement to pursue opportunities in education, training, volunteering, and employment.

Every six months, DYP conducts consultation surveys with the young people it supports. Rather than relying on impersonal online questionnaires, these are delivered through structured one-to-one conversations with staff, enabling young people to speak openly about their experiences and aspirations. These discussions provide valuable insight into the effectiveness of DYP's support, training, and work experience opportunities, while identifying any additional needs or areas for improvement. Feedback directly informs the design and delivery of mentoring activities and ensures that services remain responsive to young people's priorities.

Through DYP's mentoring programme, young people gain the confidence, skills, and motivation to achieve their goals and realise their potential. Participants are supported to navigate barriers, pursue educational and employment opportunities, and become active contributors to their communities. The programme is strengthened by the leadership and involvement of young people themselves, creating a cycle in which participants not only benefit from support but also go on to inspire, mentor, and guide others.

Innovative approaches to mentoring are delivered through two interconnected strands:

Training and Qualifications: Selected young people are supported to complete the Level 1 Youth Service qualification, providing a recognised pathway into youth work, care, and related sectors. Classroom-based learning is delivered by external training providers, while practical experience is gained through supervised involvement in DYP club sessions. Once qualified, many participants become DYP volunteers, using their knowledge and lived experience to support peers and contribute to the development of DYP's activities and services.

Work experience: DYP provides practical work experience opportunities for young people interested in haircare. Haircutting equipment is available during club sessions, allowing participants to develop their skills by providing haircuts to peers under supervision. This experience helps young people build confidence, gain workplace-relevant skills, and prepare for future employment opportunities. DYP also supports participants to progress into haircare careers once their immigration status enables them to enter employment. In addition, free haircuts improve the confidence, self-esteem, and wellbeing of other young people who may otherwise feel reluctant to participate in social or public activities.

Existing Local Support



[Refugee Action](#) supports skills and credential translation and offers group employability programmes.



[ReConnect](#) is a London-based charity that supports unemployed and underemployed refugees to gain skills and qualifications.



[Hope for the Young](#) provides mentoring, advocacy and financial support to assist young asylum seekers and refugees access education and improve their wellbeing.



Student
Action for
Refugees

[Student Action for Refugees \(STAR\)](#) is a national network of students that offers training and mentoring to support university applications through UCAS and maintains a database of scholarships and access routes.



Good Things
Foundation

[Good Things Foundation](#) focuses on digital inclusion by providing free phones, tablets, laptops and free SIM cards with preloaded data and digital skill learning resources.



CARAS
supporting diversity
challenging adversity

[CARAS](#) runs a Get Ready for School Programme, providing 10 hours of English classes each week to newly arrived asylum-seeking young people.



Refugee Education UK

[Refugee Education UK \(REUK\)](#) helps individuals with insecure immigration status overcome barriers to learning.

Section 5

Advocacy and campaigning

Key Challenges

An important part of the work of charities is to demonstrate how the challenges faced by young people within the asylum system are not individual or isolated, but part and parcel of policy and practice decisions which at best fail to fully account for young people's needs and rights and in many cases are purposefully violent (Stalford et al 2027). Advocacy and campaigning work therefore are vitally important to build an evidence base of what is going on and to demonstrate the harms of existing policies and practice. Advocacy work takes place daily at the individual level, for example through a case worker advocating for a young person's access to adequate care and support or to appropriate accommodation. Yet advocacy and campaigning work at the collective level is also vitally important to bring about important policy and practice changes that can benefit all refugee and asylum-seeking young people. In some cases highly effective, civil society-led research has supported campaigns for more comprehensive and transparent government data (Dorling 2026; Taylor 2026; Hunter 2026).



What Da'aro Youth Project offers

DYP has developed a strong track record of advocacy and campaigning work. This includes individual advocacy to contest age assessments; overturn unfair asylum application decisions; support family reunifications; support young people who become embroiled in the criminal justice system as a result of intersecting vulnerabilities; and enable young people to access the services and support they are entitled to. In addition, DYP takes on broader campaigning work to support changes in policy and practice and has gained significant impact and recognition for this work.

Below are a couple of key examples, with further detail available through the DYP website.

Based on the experience of witnessing young people dying by suicide and seeing the lack of appropriate statutory inquiry into these deaths, for some time now DYP has been spearheading research to highlight the number of deaths among former unaccompanied children seeking asylum while in the care of local authorities in the UK (Hunter 2026). In the absence of any routine data collection by statutory services, data was gathered painstakingly through Freedom of Information requests (FOIs) from local authorities. The analysis suggests that between 2015 and 2024 at least 52 young people in the asylum system and while in the care of local authorities died. More than half of these young people (31) died by suicide. Most deaths occurred in the most recent five years covering the

analysis, and more young people died in 2024 than in any previous year. In only four of these cases was there an in-depth case review. Through this research, DYP has had significant impact in bringing this evidence to leading policy makers and in initiating policy change. The research has led to new statutory duties on local authorities to collect relevant information and to follow up similar incidences with appropriate and timely detailed enquiries. The report of findings led to a meeting with the Department for Education who accepted all the recommendations from the report and is taking measures to ensure that the Home Office complies with the requirement to report any deaths of young people while in their care.

Collaborative work with partnering organisations is another key strand of DYP's advocacy and campaigning work. Working in partnership with organisations such as IMIX Communications, DYP contributes to campaigns that challenge far-right violence, discrimination, and misinformation. DYP is also a member of the Institute of Risk Management's (IRM) Charities Special Interest Group, which meets quarterly to share insights and experiences from across the voluntary sector and to develop collective recommendations for government policy change. In addition, DYP collaborates with Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ) and other sector partners to provide evidence and frontline perspectives that support national lobbying efforts aimed at strengthening the rights, protection, and wellbeing of refugees and migrants.

Existing Local Support

DYP has been able to work in partnership with a wide range of other organisations to support campaigns work and to strengthen the impact of what they do. There are a range of key coalitions and networks to campaign for the rights of children and young people within the asylum system. These include:



[The Refugee and Migrant Children's Consortium \(RMCC\)](#)



[Coram Children's Legal Centre \(Migrant Children's Project\)](#)



[Refugee Council](#)



[Safe Passage International](#)



[Young Roots](#)



[The Baobab Centre](#)



[Migrant Children's Legal Unit](#)



[ECPAT UK](#)



[South London Refugee Association \(SLRA\)](#)

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Section 6

Conclusion

The roundtable highlighted both the complexity of the challenges facing young people seeking asylum and the considerable expertise, commitment, and goodwill that exists across statutory, voluntary, community, and refugee-led organisations. While participants identified persistent barriers related to housing, transitions to adulthood, access to information, and service coordination, there was a strong sense that many of these challenges could be addressed more effectively through greater collaboration, improved communication, and the strategic sharing of knowledge and resources.

A key theme emerging from the discussion was the need for consistent and coordinated messaging, particularly around housing. Participants emphasised that young people require accessible information that is delivered repeatedly, at appropriate stages of their journey, and tailored to their individual circumstances. Better mapping of existing resources and services could help reduce duplication, strengthen referral pathways, and ensure that young people receive clear and aligned information regardless of which organisation they engage with.

Conclusion

There was broad agreement on the value of developing a shared resource that brings together evidence, practical guidance, examples of effective practice, and information on persistent gaps in support. Such a resource should be organised thematically, informed by practitioners and lived experience, and designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of audiences, including young people, social workers, educators, legal professionals, health practitioners, and community organisations. Importantly, participants stressed that future resource development should build upon existing work rather than replicate it, while ensuring that responsibility for maintaining and updating information is clearly defined.

The discussion further highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for ongoing networking and knowledge exchange. Annual or bi-annual forums, practitioner networks, and mechanisms for sharing examples of both successful and challenging practice were identified as valuable ways of strengthening collective learning and improving support across sectors. Participants also emphasised the importance of ensuring that future research and resource development are shaped by frontline practice and informed by the voices and experiences of young people with lived experience of seeking asylum.

Looking ahead, the project has an opportunity to act as a catalyst for stronger collaboration across organisations. The offers of support made by participants, including the sharing of resources, practice guidance, employability materials, and local intelligence, demonstrate a collective willingness to contribute to a more coordinated support landscape. By bringing together existing knowledge, identifying gaps, and fostering ongoing dialogue, the project can support a more joined-up response to the needs of young people seeking asylum and help promote pathways towards stability, wellbeing, and inclusion.

Additional resources

1. Directory of relevant resources collated by Kazzum Arts | [Support for Refugees, Migrants and Asylum Seekers](#)
2. Directory of relevant resources collated by Fences & Frontiers | [Support and Tools for Refugees](#)
3. Refsource is a crowdsourced directory of organisations in UK that help and support refugees and asylum seekers collected over a number of years | [refsource – Contacts for asylum seekers and refugees in UK](#)
4. The MHPSS Directory is a broad and detailed list of organisations providing mental health and social support services to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in London and Greater London.
[Mental Health and Psychosocial Support \(MHPSS\) Directory for Refugees and Migrants in London](#)

Appendix

Appendix: List of Roundtable Discussion Participants

1. CARAS <https://caras.org.uk>
2. Refugee Council <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk>
3. New Horizon Youth Centre <https://nhyouthcentre.org.uk>
4. Croydon College <https://croydon.ac.uk>
5. Immigration Social Work Services <https://isws-ltd.co.uk>
6. Refugee Action <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk>
7. Freedom from Torture <https://www.freedomfromtorture.org>
8. SLRA <https://www.slr-a.org.uk>
9. Hope for the Young <https://hopefortheyoung.org.uk>
10. Islington Council <https://www.islington.gov.uk>
11. Glass Door Homeless Charity <https://www.glassdoor.org.uk>



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