

Who are we?

We are a group of young people from all over London who have come together with a common goal – to improve mental health. We work with three different organisations who have supported the development of this manifesto.

Right Here Newham works to the principle of “nothing about us, without us”. The project works across Newham and aims to make sure BAME young people have a say in the support that is provided to help them look after their mental health. The youth panel at Right Here Newham make key decisions about all areas of the development and delivery of the project.

The Peer Outreach Team are young people who work within the Children and Young People’s Unit at the GLA. They are advocates for Young Londoners and have a direct say in shaping local and London wide youth strategies and projects.

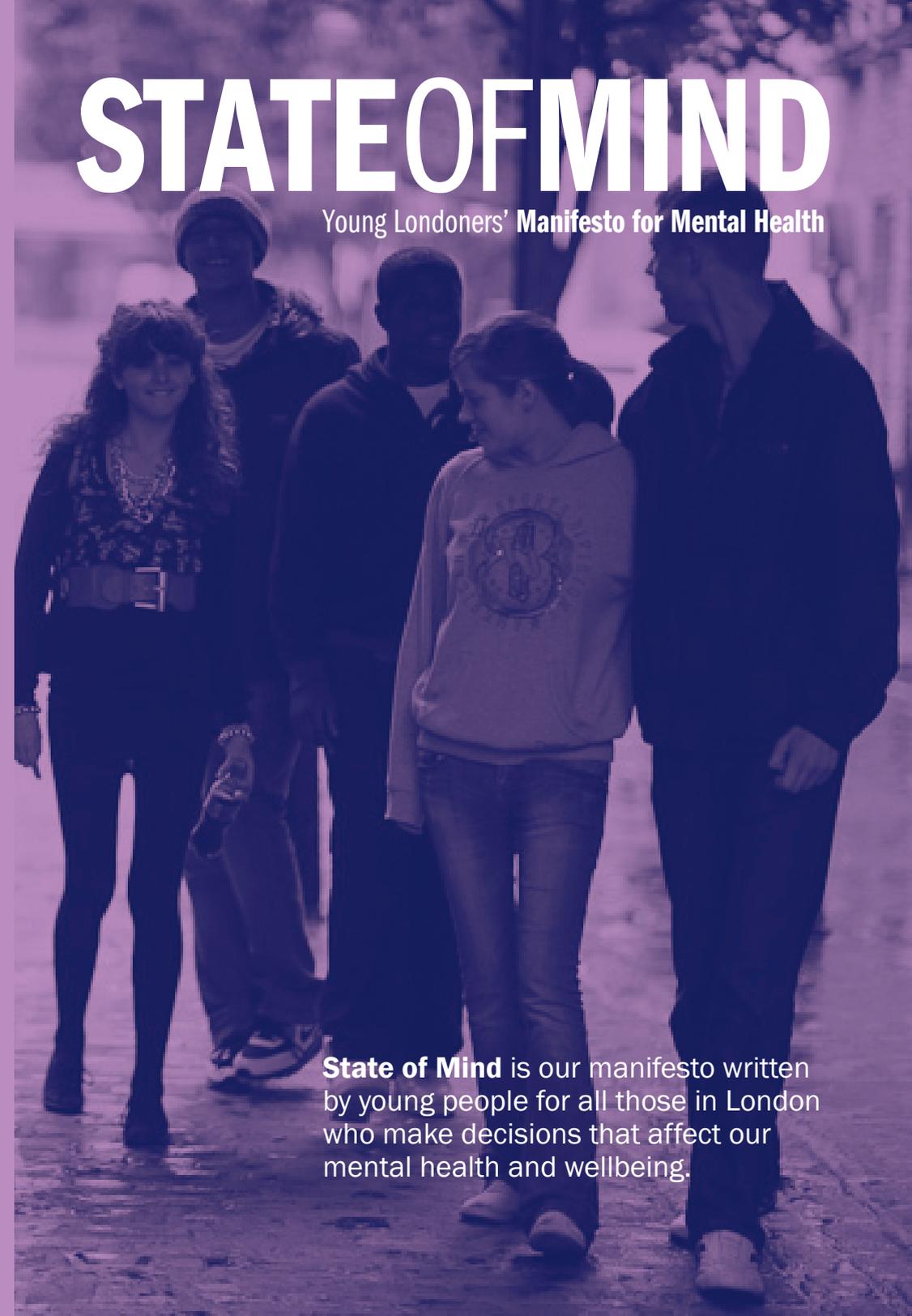
The VIK project at YoungMinds supports young people to campaign to improve mental health services, raises awareness about young people’s mental health and wellbeing and works with mental health services to improve the way they involve young people in all aspects of a service. VIK is led by a national panel of young people.

For more information please contact Erin Wright at YoungMinds:
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STATE OF MIND

Young Londoners’ Manifesto for Mental Health



State of Mind is our manifesto written by young people for all those in London who make decisions that affect our mental health and wellbeing.



YOUNGMINDS
The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing



State of Mind

Young Londoners' Manifesto for Mental Health

1 DON'T SIDELINE MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health isn't just about mental illness, it's also about having good mental health. Improving mental health must be a key part of all the areas that affect young people including drug and alcohol problems, youth violence, teenage pregnancy, NEET young people etc. **We need people to be concerned about our mental health in all decisions that are made about our lives.**

2 MAKE A REAL COMMITMENT TO REDUCING STIGMA

Stigma about mental health impacts seriously on London's young people. It can reduce access to mental health services, create fear and low self esteem. **We want the Mayor to launch a London wide campaign to promote positive mental health for young people and encourage everyone to challenge the prejudice of mental illness.**

3 HELP US LEARN MORE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

We need to learn more about looking after ourselves, about mental health issues and how to get help when we need it. **We need role models in London's schools who speak openly about mental health so that we can learn more about looking after ourselves and understanding our mental health needs.**

4 TRAIN THE PEOPLE WHO WORK DIRECTLY WITH US

Teachers, youth workers, social workers and youth offending teams in London need to have more knowledge about mental health and recognise the warning signals of mental illness. **We would like more training for all front-line professionals in London who work with children and young people in understanding and recognising Mental Health issues.**

5 TELL US WHERE WE CAN GO WHEN WE NEED HELP

Most young people in London don't know what support is available for emotional issues or mental health problems – whether its general help they need or support in a crisis. **We would like a London-wide anonymous text or phone service where young people can ask questions they may have relating to mental health and mental health services.**

6 MAKE IT EASIER FOR US TO GET SUPPORT AND REMOVE THE BARRIERS

Traditional health services do not fit with the real lives of young people, we don't just have problems during working hours. **We want it to be easier for schools, community centres, religious groups and youth centres to refer young people to services and for young people to refer themselves. We need services to be open at evenings and weekends so we can get support and crisis help if necessary.**

7 DON'T FORGET ABOUT US WHEN WE START GETTING OLDER

There is a huge gap in services for young people from 16–25yrs. This is often a really tough time in our lives. **We need more services targeted at this age group, who work in a way that recognises that young people are still growing and developing and need just as much support as they reach adulthood.**

8 COMBINE SERVICES SO THEY WORK BETTER FOR US

Mental health support shouldn't be isolated from other services. We need support where we feel comfortable whether its in the places we go to to get help or out on the streets. **Mental health services should be combined with other health services, careers advice, housing, youth services etc in multi access centres and through outreach services.**

9 SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES NEED TO UNDERSTAND US BETTER AND CHANGE

Services need to be more culturally aware in order to make support properly accessible. Communities too need to be more understanding, there are some in our city who have little awareness or education about mental health. **We need to train community leaders to be able to dispel myths and take away the shame so often linked to mental health problems. We need services and communities to work better together so we find it easier to speak out about our problems and get help.**

10 LISTEN TO US!

We know what it's really like to be a young person growing up in London and how mental health and mental illness affects us – work with us to come up with effective solutions. **Young people should be trained to inspect services and make recommendations to improve the system.**

We have written State of Mind because we feel that our views and experiences are too often ignored when decisions are made about us.

We feel we have a lot to say about the importance of young people's mental health and wellbeing in London and want to play a part in shaping the services that affect us.

LONDON IS A GREAT CITY BUT IT HAS SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING HERE:

- The Mental Health Foundation's 'Be Mindful' stress survey found that London is the most stressed city in the UK, with 54% of people feeling stressed daily or weekly.
- London has the lowest rate of employment in the UK which is thought to contribute to the high rate of mental health problems.
- The recent riots have shown us that there is a lot of dissatisfaction in living in London which has areas of extreme wealth situated next to areas of extreme poverty, constantly reminding people of what they don't have.
- Over 330,000 children live in overcrowded accommodation placing severe pressure on their mental health and wellbeing.

State of Mind is our plea to London's decision makers to listen to us and involve us in shaping services for young people.