



YOUTH UNITY

Empowering Young People

About Us

Youth Unity is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing effective help and support to vulnerable young people and adults who are affected by group violence (gangs), drugs, and other forms of exploitation such as human trafficking, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation).. Youth Unity works in collaboration with statutory organisations, commissioned services to provide a cohesive approach to solutions.

Youth Unity CIC focuses on improving opportunities for all individuals, particularly young people from all backgrounds. Youth Unity believes that by improving the overall health and well-being of an individual, they are better equipped to make informed choices and decisions. We work with various stakeholders to provide support and interventions for individuals affected by group violence, drugs, and exploitation. This may include providing counselling, mentoring, education and employment opportunities, and other practical support to help individuals break free from the cycle of violence and exploitation.

The organisation is committed to being transparent and accountable in its operations and strives to make a positive impact on the lives of young people and our communities.

Our approach aligns with the Government's 4P strategy, which focuses on Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare. Pursue involves tackling offenders, Prevent focuses on early intervention to stop people from becoming involved in crime, Protect aims to safeguard vulnerable individuals, and Prepare involves being prepared to respond to incidents and supporting individuals to exit criminality.







Executive Summary

In 2022, Shirley Jackson, Managing Director of Youth Unity, had the privilege of visiting the British School of Racing during the Racing Media Academy.

The visit left a lasting impression as Shirley was captivated by the exceptional facilities and the array of opportunities available for young people.

Building upon the continued partnership working with BRS, it was through this connection that Youth Unity was presented with an incredible opportunity.

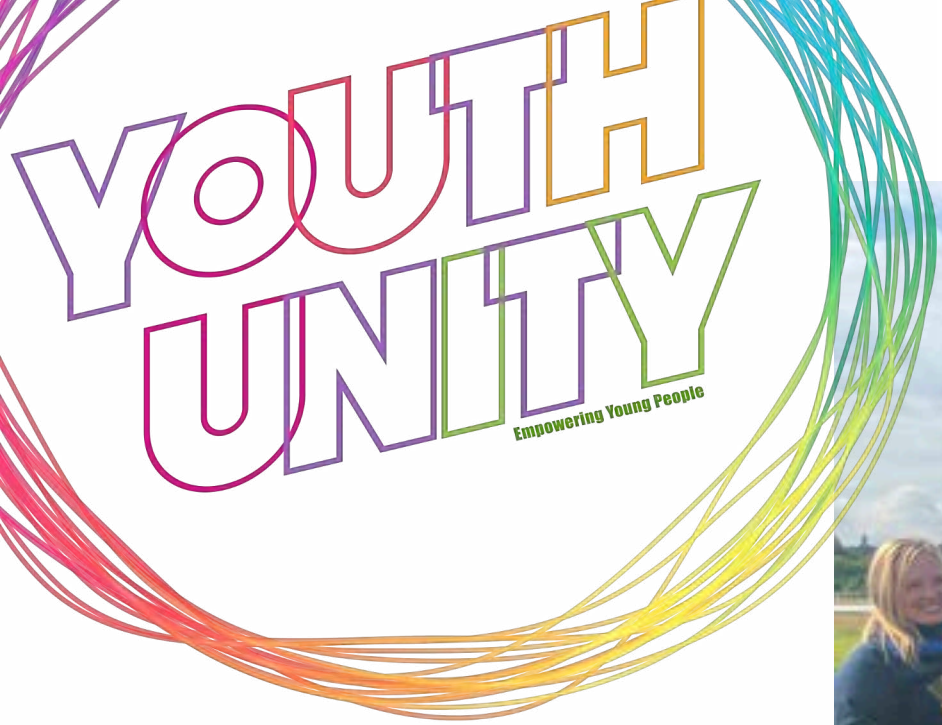
BRS shared with us a proposition to invite young people aged 15 to 18 to participate in a life-changing five-day residential program focused on equine industry.

This transformative experience is made possible through the generous support and partnership of the **Gerald Leigh Charitable Trust**.

We received an overwhelming response from our partnership network, with over 30 applicants applying for a placement.. However, due to limited availability, only 10 participants could be accommodated.

The group comprised of individuals aged 15 to 20 from diverse parts of London and varied social economic backgrounds. Several of the young people faced challenges related to SEN such as Autism, ADHD and anxiety.

We have high hopes that this immersive experience will contribute to their long-term self-confidence and personal growth.



Case Studies



Helping to keep vulnerable children safe

Youth Unity CIC has continued the detailed, intensive and committed work outlined in this report.

- Ages participating in the Introduction into Horse racing program ranged from 15 to 19 years old, with the majority being aged 15 years or over, with 60% being of white British heritage, and 40% African, Caribbean or Caribbean mixed heritage.
- 20% of the young people were referred by children's social care or early help teams
- 20% of the young children were not in mainstream education or attending school at all.
- 30% were victims or suspected of being victims of child criminal exploitation (CCE). are victims of or suspected of being victims of child sexual exploitation (CSE). 70% of those children participating in the program live in families severely affected by poverty and deprivation
- 40% of those children participating had Special Educational Needs, a term used to describe children or young people who have a learning difficulty or disability which needs special educational provisions to be made for them (Neurodiverse; ADHD, Autism, dyslexia)

A range of positive outcomes have resulted from engagement including improved mental health, improved self esteem, building of relationships, confidence, teamwork and knowledge of the equine industry.





Jessica Okaka aged 19 "I would like to take part to gain a better understanding of the horse racing industry as well as learning how to care for horses. Having the chance to learn how to ride a horse would be incredible and working in a team is also a great opportunity to make new friends. I've had an interest in horses when I was younger but I wasn't able to afford lessons".

Outcome

Jessica's journey began with a sense of nervousness as she had never ridden a horse before. However, as the days unfolded, her true personality started to shine through, and her remarkable smile lit up the surroundings when she was given the chance to ride for the first time. It was truly heart-warming to witness her confidence grow with each moment she spent with the horses.

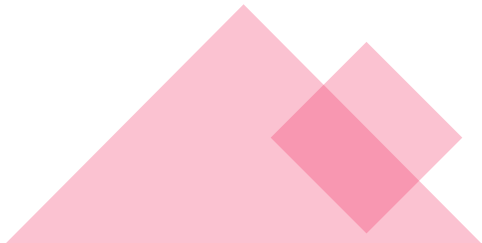


Shafkat aged 16

"It's been my dream since I was 7 years old to ride and care for a horse."

Outcome

Safkat is a reserved yet remarkably passionate young lady who wholeheartedly embraces challenges and faces them head-on. Not only does she adapt well to her surroundings, but she also forms strong bonds with her peers. While Safkat nurtures the dream of studying law, I sincerely hope she considers giving the horse racing industry a chance as well, as her passion and dedication could lead to great success in that field too. Whatever path she chooses, I have no doubt that Safkat will excel and make a positive impact.





Sophie aged 17

"I would like the experience of working on a yard with a completely different atmosphere and hopefully learning something new from it"

Sophie, who began riding horses at the tender age of 4, actively participates in the sport of show jumping. Although she displays a keen interest in pursuing a foundation course related to riding, she has decided to prioritize her academic studies and complete her A 'levels before fully committing to it.



Lois aged 15" *I have been involved with horses for around 5 years. I have been working and learning how to ride with competition horses at a working yard. Throughout this time, I've learnt the basics and am really keen to further my knowledge as I would like to potentially have a career with horses. My dad and I regularly go horse racing and really enjoy being around the parade ring and I would really like to be involved a lot more! My great grandad also used to train horses in Newmarket so this experience would be extra special."*

Despite being one of the younger participants in the group, Lois seamlessly integrated herself and formed strong bonds with her peers. Her deep love and passion for horse riding were evident in the way she wholeheartedly embraced and excelled at all the tasks and responsibilities assigned to her during the program.



Ruby aged 16

Ruby was a young lady introduced to the group by British School of Racing.

Ruby was not one of our girls, however she soon became part of the group, she is full of life and so incredibly passionate about horse racing. She is set to start the Foundation Course later this year and can not wait to hear how she gets on





Chahera Doxon aged 19 "I have SEN needs and this would help with my wellbeing and getting out of my house, I really love animals".

Chahera proved to be an exceptional young lady who wholeheartedly immersed herself in every aspect of the experience. As an organisation we work to be inclusive and engage young people with SEND, Chahera demonstrated how it can be successful through her active participation. Despite facing some challenges along the way, Chahera tackled them with confidence and determination, ultimately enjoying the entire week. Her resilience and positive attitude are truly commendable, and she undoubtedly left a lasting impression on everyone around her. We have signposted her to the organisation Autism in Horse Racing and truly hope she pursues this further.



Roxanne aged 17 "I would love to be a trainer, and i love to be around horses and learn more about them"

Roxanne is a vibrant and promising young lady, but her journey has been accompanied by challenges, particularly with anxiety. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that if given another opportunity and with a better understanding of her unique challenges, she would be able to make the most of the opportunities presented to her. With proper support and guidance, Roxanne has the potential to shine and overcome her obstacles.





Robyn Cobb aged 15 *"I would like the opportunity to experience a different side of the horse industry in a professional capacity that I've never had the chance to encounter before. I would also welcome the chance to meet and work with other like-minded people who love horses. It would be a great opportunity for me to practice and improve my stable management skills with the hope to also do some riding. It would be a fantastic opportunity to help build my self-esteem and work on building my confidence".*

Robyn's calm and composed demeanour made her an absolute delight to work with, and she effortlessly got along with everyone in the group, earning her popularity among her peers. Her genuine affection for animals was evident in the way she interacted with the horses, displaying a natural understanding and care for these majestic creatures. Even during the early mornings, she never once complained, showcasing her dedication and passion for the experience.

Moreover, Robyn's kindness extended beyond her love for animals, as she proved to be a great source of support for one of the girls in the group who faced challenges with anxiety. Her empathetic nature and willingness to be there for others made a significant difference in creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere for everyone.

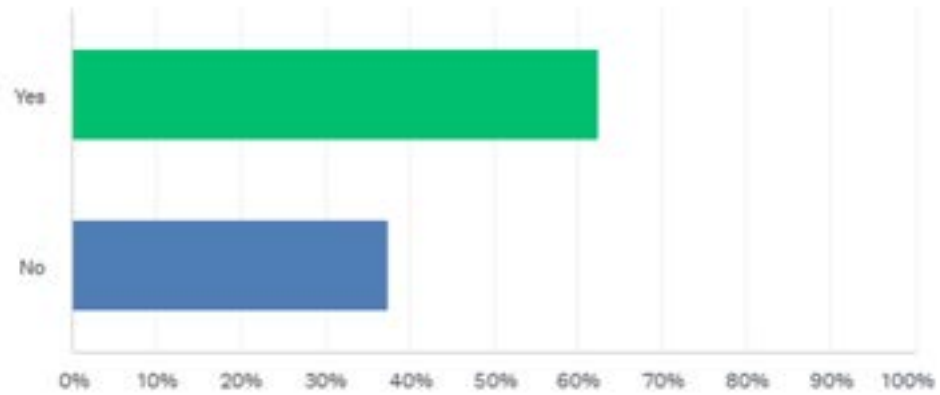


Queen Tanimowo, aged 19 *"I love animals and I struggle with my wellbeing; I have always wanted to learn to horse ride as I believe it would be therapeutic for myself"*

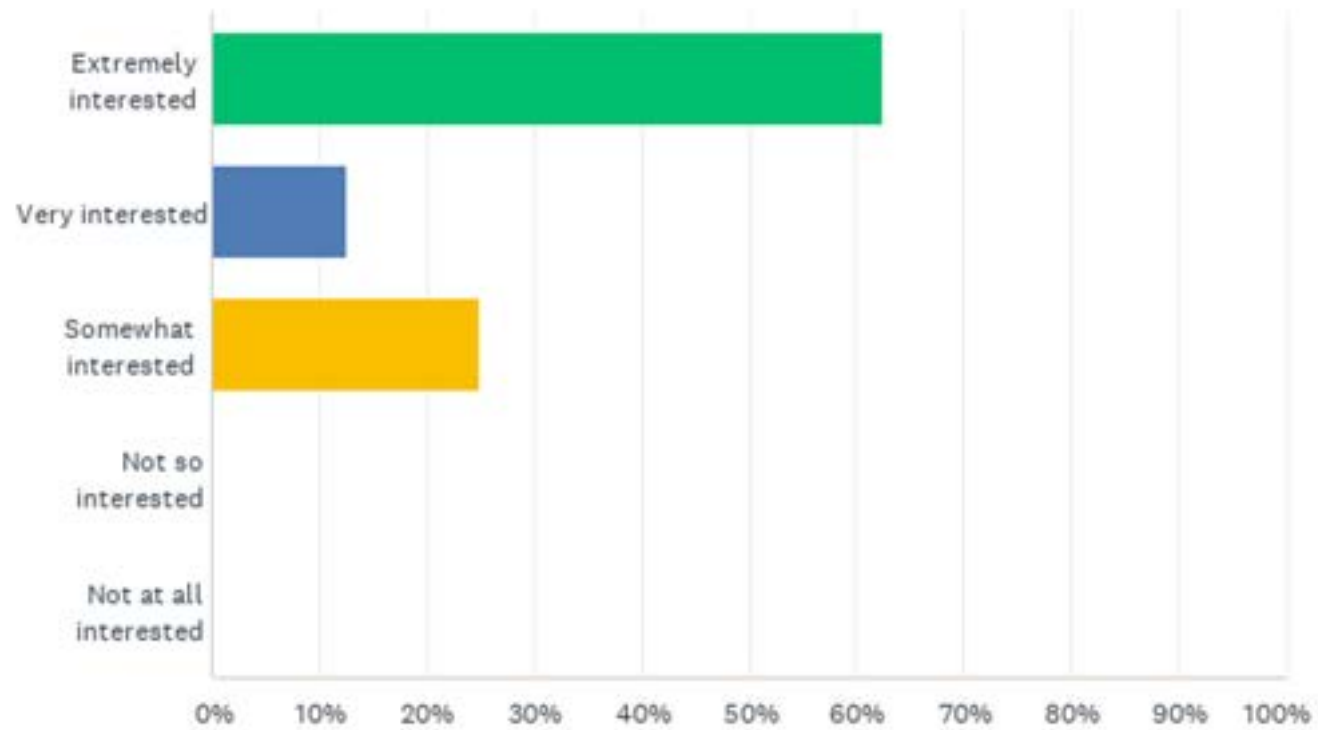
Upon setting foot inside the British Racing School, Queen's excitement was palpable, and her enthusiasm was truly remarkable. Despite never having been on a horse before, it was a long-held dream of hers, and she approached it with a natural ability to confidently connect with the animals. Witnessing her passion and potential, we sincerely hope that Queen decides to continue her journey by pursuing the groundwork course. With her innate talent and dedication, she has the potential to thrive and make significant strides in the equestrian world.



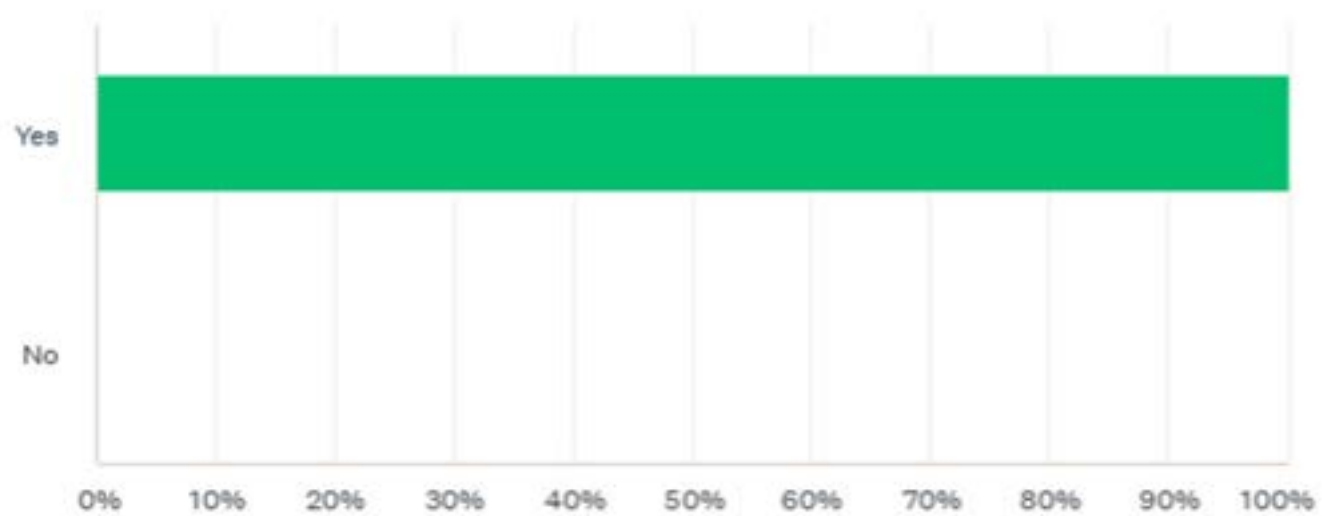
Did you have any experience in the equine industry prior to the course ?



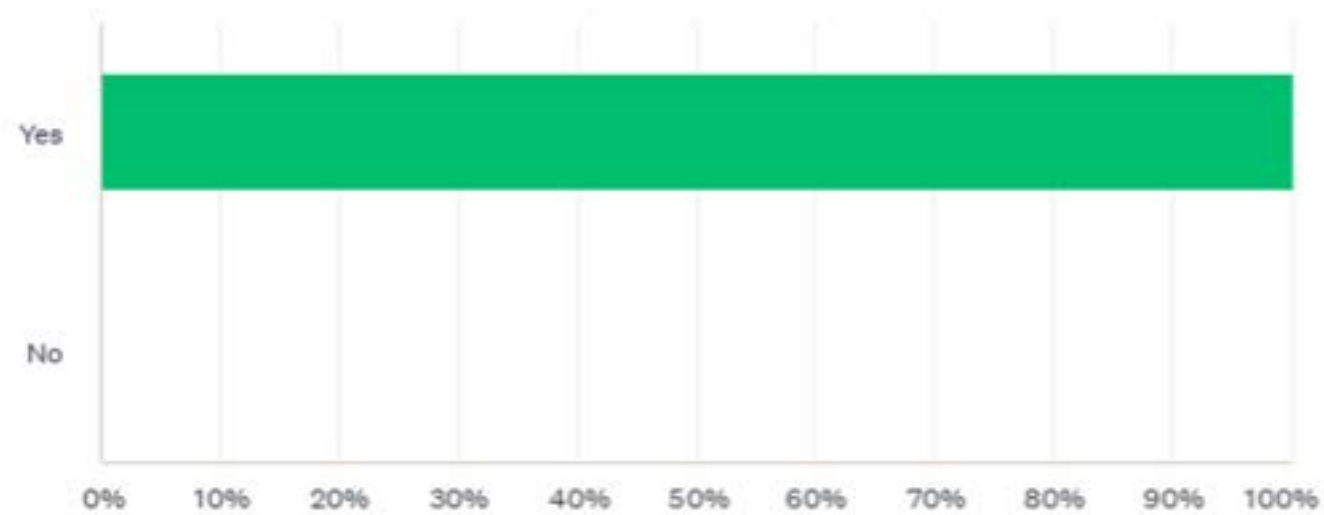
Are you interested in attending other courses run by British School of Horse Racing ?



Has your knowledge and understanding of the equine industry improved ?



Following completion of the course feel their confidence and self esteem has improved ?



What did you enjoy most on the course ?

#	RESPONSES
1	The structure of the day, always made sure there was something new to be done
2	Riding the horses and learning more about the horses and the industry
3	Getting to understand the characteristics of hores and what means what
4	Understanding different sides of the horse riding community
5	Riding a horse for the first time
6	Meeting new people
7	Riding and learning what effort goes into racehorses
8	Learning more about racing and seeing how other place work



What did you most dislike during the program ?

#	RESPONSES
1	Some of the food options
2	Probably all the tiny flies when mucking out
3	Early morning but it was understandable
4	Mucking up every morning and getting into the routine of waking at 6am



Constructive or Positive Comments

#	RESPONSES
1	More Shirley 😊
2	I think made a specific kit list. As I overpacked and I didn't know you need to bring your own hand washing soap for the bathroom.
3	Thank you so much for this brilliant opportunity. It has been Ana amazing week that I will miss xxx



Testimonials



Rate your interaction with your support worker ?



Thank you
Chakera
Doxon

Thank you for taking
such great care and
supporting me throughout
this new and exciting
opportunity. special thanks
to the best instructor
I'll never forget your
kindness have a
love from,
Queen xoxoxo.

Thank you so much
for the support and

come true, I love
horses love Shafkat

Thank you for providing
this amazing opportunity.
I was able to ride a
horse for the first time.
I also loved learning more
about horses and this week
has piqued my interest in
the racehorse industry.
love from Jessica Okaka

Ruby
Thanks you
for the opportunity

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So
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Tha
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hors
I also



P.S.
 We will miss our fun car
 journey mps to visit Shirley
 Wurlley ☺

love you lots thank you
 so much for the effort
 you put in to make this
 happen ☺
 Sophie x

lots of love from
 Alison Tommaso ☺☺☺
 Yvonne Clark ☺☺☺
 Lisa

Dear
 This
 give
 cap
 riding
 would
 when
 a
 reach
 know
 and
 had.
 We
 need
 is

Shirley

Dear Shirley,

Thank you for supporting us through
 this amazing opportunity and
 giving us the chance to
 experience riding which
 would have some of us
 never had the
 chance to. It has led
 a few of us to
 realise and learn about a
 passion in ^{...maybe not} horse racing we never
 knew we had.



STRAIGHT AWAY
 but
SOON!

We appreciate you meeting everyone's
 needs and making sure everyone
 is accommodated and happy.

Thank you so much IUV U ☺
 xoxo Shafkat







Special Thanks to the British School of Racing and Gerald Leigh Charitable Trust

In conclusion, the Youth Unity CIC team would like to make particular comment about the high standard of professionalism of all staff; likewise, the young people involved exhibited a great passion, enthusiasm and commitment towards the program.

