

Video Transcript: Co-production in Birmingham – creating the Preparation for Adulthood Service & the role of the Youth Empowerment Squad

My name is Sarah Kumar and I'm the commissioning officer on the Preparation for Adulthood Team in Birmingham City Council.

My name is Anthony Clay and I'm a business apprentice with the Preparation for Adulthood Team. I became an intern for the PfA Team back in 2021. I started off being part of the YES Group back in October 2020.

SK: Youth Empowerment Squad, they created that name themselves. They were a fabulous group of young people that have real diverse life experiences, who have something to say, that they are willing to share, all their experiences, and they have a real passion to create change.

I brought a group of young people together originally to work in co-production with the Preparation for Adulthood Team, a brand-new service launched in 2020. It's for 14-30 year-olds who have a range of additional support needs whatever they may be and at the heart of PfA was the idea of working in co-production with others.

We wanted to ensure that these feelings and the wishes and aspirations of these young people were at the heart of how we developed the service and we wanted to involve, and we did involve, people right from the very start to work in co-production. We didn't make plans and then run it by them afterwards to see what they thought because, no matter if people may think that that is co-production, it isn't.

It's about involving people right at the start working together in an equal partnership to develop services and to make sure that we do things right for the people that we want to help.

AC: the YES Group looked at the strategy leaflets to make sure that young people can understand the leaflet, what the leaflet is talking about, and making sure the words are appropriate for the younger generation.

The Preparation for Adulthood Team worked in co-production with the YES Group but also with citizens that were in the community, social enterprises, community people, and it's so important that we have people with these life experiences to be part of - good or bad, whatever they may be - but to work with teams in Birmingham City Council and alongside teams in Birmingham City Council because that's the only way really that we've got the best chance of getting it right for people.

AC: After my internship I became a Kickstart Apprentice for the Preparation for Adulthood Team and that has changed me and my life mentally. And me being honest, I can't be any happier than I am right now.

The reason why I say this is because every day, I see my brothers going to work which is what I wanted to do more than anything. The PfA Team has helped with my confidence . grow and grow. I thought, a lot of times that I wasn't capable but as time has gone on I realise that I can do what should be doing. There is no reason in the world that people can't have the same opportunities that I have been given. So I have loved it. Thank you so much for listening.