Department for Work & Pensions



Young People and Work

A report about things the Government should do to help young people to work



November
2026

November 2026

About this Easy Read



Easy Read uses easy words and pictures.



This Easy Read tells you the main things in a big report about **young people**, work and training.



Young people means people aged 18 to 24.



This Easy Read is long.
The information in it is important.



You can ask someone to help you read it, if you need to.

What is in this report



Page 1 Young people and work



Page 2 About this report



Page 3 People who helped with this report



Page 4 What people said



Page 9 What the Government can do



Page 11 What Alan wants to happen



Page 13 Changes the Government could make

What is in this report



Page 15 Big change 1: Work



Page 18 Big change 2: Education



Page 23 Big change 3: Health and other support needs



Page 26 Big change 4: Benefits



Page 34 Big change 5: Youth Opportunity Service



Page 36 The future

Young people and work



Almost 1 million young people are not working or learning.



Not doing learning means they are not at school or college.

Or they are not doing any training.



6 in 10 of these young people have never had a job.



This is a problem because it is not good for young people.

And it is not good for the country.



7 in 10 of these young people want to work.

About this report



The Government asked Alan Milburn to write this report.



He has done a lot of work looking at young people and work.



The Government wants to know Alan's ideas to make things better for young people.



They will listen to these ideas.



Then they will decide what they want to change.

People who helped with this report

Lots of people helped Alan with the ideas and plans in this report:



- Young people.



- Employers. This is the person or place you work for.



- Schools and colleges.



- Charities.



- Community groups.



- People who work for the Government.

What people said



People told Alan why so many young people are not working or learning.



Poverty

Some families do not have enough money for things like:



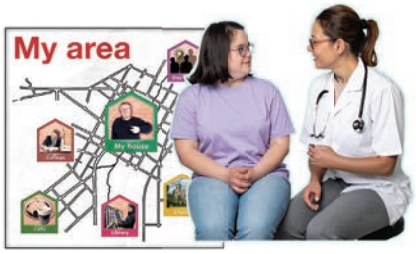
- Food and clothes.



- Travel. Things like getting a train or a bus.



They can’t afford to go to work or do learning.



Inequality

Some young people are treated unfairly because of things like health problems or where they live.



Disability

Having a disability can make it harder to do work or learning.



Being neurodivergent

Neurodivergent is when your brain works differently from other people's.

People with autism and ADHD are neurodivergent.



Being neurodivergent can make it harder to do work or learning.



Support

Young people do not have enough help with learning or finding work.



There is also not enough support for young people in work.



Jobs

There are not enough of the right kind of jobs for young people.

Or jobs close to where young people live.



Skills and learning

Some young people do not have the skills and learning they need to get a job.



Transport

Some young people are not able to travel to work.



Being a carer

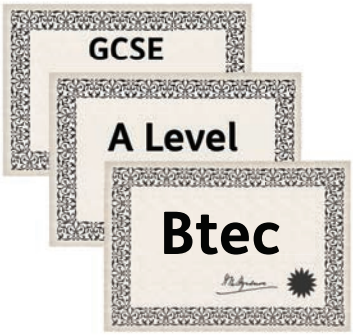
A young person might care for a parent or other family member.

This can make it harder to work as well.



Qualifications

A **qualification** is a piece of paper that shows that you have learned something.



GCSEs, A-Levels and BTECs are all kinds of qualifications.



It is hard to get work if you leave school with no qualifications.

Or if your qualifications are not the ones you need for a job.



Mental health

Mental health is things like your thoughts, feelings and how you cope with everyday life.

Depression and **anxiety** are kinds of mental health conditions.



Depression is when people feel very sad for a long time.



Anxiety is when you feel very worried or scared a lot of the time.



These things can stop people from doing work or learning.

What the Government can do



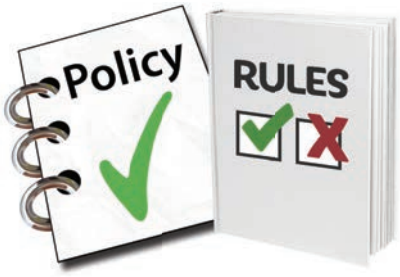
There are things that the Government can do to help:



Spend more money on helping young people to work and learn new skills.



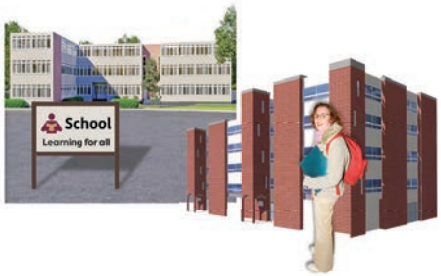
Write new **policies** and laws.



Policies are like rules that the Government and other places must follow.



Make new places that can help people.



These changes will only happen if different groups work together:

- **Education:** Schools and colleges.



- **Health:** Doctors and hospitals.



- **Employers:** The person or place you work for.



- **Welfare:** The parts of the Government that look after **benefits** and other support.

  Benefits means money from the Government for people who need help to pay for things.





Universal Credit or PIP are benefits.

What Alan wants to happen



All young people are working or learning by 2036.



There are lots more chances for every young person to get the right support.



Things like:

500 thousand new jobs and chances for education.



270 thousand new **apprenticeships** every year.

An **apprenticeship** is special training. You do some learning in a classroom.

Then you do some learning while you are working in a job.



25 thousand **pre-apprenticeships**.

A **pre-apprenticeship** is a way to get ready for an apprenticeship.



More places for people to keep learning after they leave school.
Places like a university.

Changes the Government could make

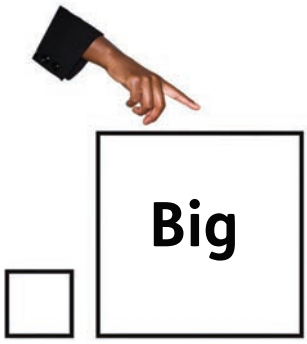


Alan wants all young people to be working or learning.



But a small number of young people cannot work even if they got lots of support.

The Government needs to do something else for them.

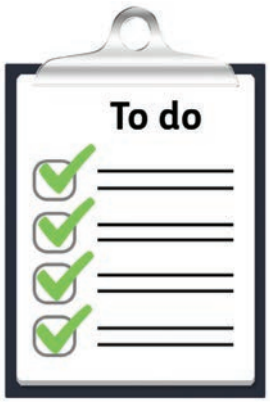


The changes Alan wants to make have to be big.

Small changes will not make much difference.



The Government should start making changes now.
They will take about 10 years to do.



The rest of this report is about some of the things the Government would need to do.

These things are needed to make the changes happen.



To make this plan work 5 big things need to change.

Big change 1: Work



We need more jobs, apprenticeships and **work experience**.

Work experience is when a person works for a company for a short amount of time.



They learn about the company and get new skills.



Alan wants the Government to help employers with the cost of giving young people jobs.



One of these costs is **National Insurance**.

National Insurance is money that employers have to pay to the Government.



Employers should give less National Insurance money to the Government when they give a young person a job.



This could happen when the Government can afford it.



Employers should get some money from the Government when they give a young person a job.



Employers should also get money to give young people apprenticeships.



The Government and other **public organisations** should give jobs more young people.

Public organisations are things like hospitals, council and the police.



The Government spends money on lots of big pieces of work.



Places who do the work should help make jobs for young people.



Lots of employers want to give young people more chances to work.

They want to make it easier to get a first job.

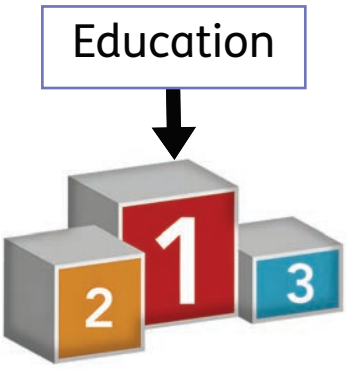


They call it First Chance.
The Government should support First Chance.

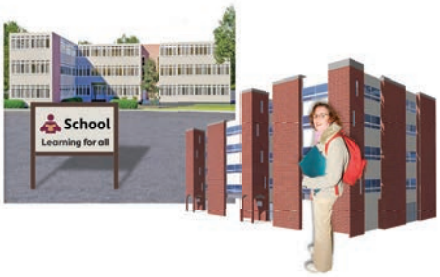
Big change 2: Education



Many young people leave school or college without the skills they need to find work.



Education is the most important way to help young people to be ready for work.



All schools and colleges need to help young people to be ready for work.



Best Start Family Hubs are places families can go to for help and support.

The Government should support them more.



Some children have **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.** This is called S**END** for short.

Children with SEND should get the right support at the right time.



Alan wants to make sure that children and young people go to school every day.



And that all children do better in school, right from the start.



Schools and colleges should teach skills for everyday life as well as things like maths and English.

Things like cooking, traveling or looking after money.



The Government are making new **vocational** GCSE qualifications.

Vocational means learning the things you need to do 1 kind of job.



Things like:

- Building.



- Looking after children.



- Working on a computer.



Schools and colleges should have checks to make sure they are helping young people to be ready for work.



There should be more **Further Education** for 18 to 24 year olds.

Further Education means things like university and colleges.



Colleges should get more money to help young people who will find it hard to get a job when they are 18.



There should be more help for young people to go to university when they leave college.

Living in care



Alan thinks we should give £50 per week to some young people who have lived **in care**.

In care means a young person lives:



With **foster carers**.

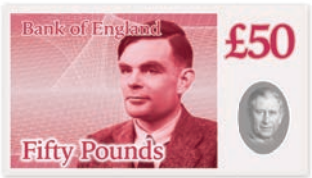
A **foster carer** is a person who looks after children when they cannot live with their own family.



In a children's home.



In some cases, they might live another family member or family friend.



This money would be called **Care-Leaver Transition Allowance**.

Big change 3: Health and other support needs



Many young people are not working or learning because of their health or support needs.



Sometimes young people have to wait a very long time to find out what their health problem is.
Or for help with being neurodivergent.



Then they wait a long time to get the help they need.



We should help young people as soon as possible, when problems first start.



The NHS needs to help make this happen.



Young people should be able to get help, even if they do not have a **diagnosis**.



A **diagnosis** is when a doctor says what disability or condition you have.



Alan wants to make a service called the **Youth Opportunity Service**.

It would be able to sort out the right help for young people.



The Government should make this promise:

Every young person who needs health support from the service should get it in 3 months.



Sometimes a young person might be off sick for a long time.



The Youth Opportunity Service should offer the young person help and support.



Young people should be able to get support with their mental health online.



The NHS should help to pay for the Youth Opportunity Service.



The NHS should also have to give more young people jobs.

Big change 4: Benefits



Many young people get benefits like Universal Credit and PIP.



More and more young people are getting disability benefits.



At the same time, less young people are working.



Benefits should help people into work, not stop them from working.



2 Government promises

Alan has 2 ideas for young people get more help to find work:



Idea 1: New Opportunity Guarantee

A Government promise.

Every young person would be able to get work, education or training.



Idea 2: Support Guarantee

A Government promise.

Every young person would get the support they need to do work, education or training.



A Youth Opportunity Service in every area would make these promises happen.

A plan to get into work



Every young person who is helped by the Youth Opportunity Service will get an **advisor**.

An **advisor** is someone who would help them.



They would work with their advisor to make a plan called a **Participation Plan**.



Their plan will be about how they will work towards getting a job.

It will say what they will do and what help they will get.



The young person would need to do the things in their plan.



If they don't, their advisor could help them change their plan.

Or they could give them different support.



If they still do not do the things in their plan, they might lose their benefits.

New benefits

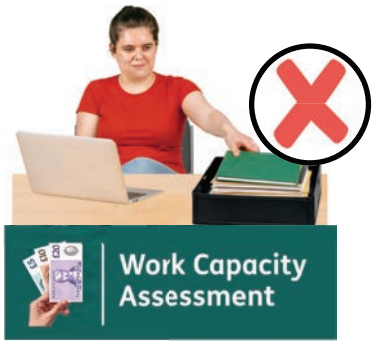


Young people would stop getting Universal Credit and Universal Credit Health.



Instead there would be a new benefit called **Youth Allowance**.

It would be the same amount of money as Universal Credit.



Work Capability Assessments would stop for young people.



A **Work Capability Assessment** is a check to see if you are able to work or not.



Young people would not get PIP benefit.



Instead there would be some other new benefits.



There would be a new **Health and Disability fund**.



This fund is money to pay for the support people need so they can do the things in their participation plan.



Some young people would get a new benefit called **Additional Cost Allowance**.



It would help people to pay for the extra costs of being disabled.

Things like having a special diet.

Or paying to have the heating on more in their homes.



There should be another new benefit called **Severe and Complex Needs Insurance.**



It should be for young people who will never be able to work.



Children who get **Disability Living Allowance** would be able to get this benefit until they are 18.



All these changes will cost a lot of money.



But they will also save money in the future, and help a lot of young people to work.

This is what would happen if the Government makes all these benefit changes:



More young people would have a job.



Some young people would get less money in benefits.



Many young people would have more money because they are working.



The Government would spend much more money on supporting young people into work.



And spend much less on benefits by 2036.

Big change 5: Youth Opportunity Service



Every local area would have a new Youth Opportunity Service.



It would support young people to work and to learn.



The Youth Opportunity Service would:

- Help any young person who is not working or learning.



- Be welcoming and treat everyone fairly.



- Be easy to find.



The Youth Opportunity Service will not run every service that helps young people in a local area.



It will join up support from those different services.



Many places will help to run local Youth Opportunity Services.



The Youth Opportunity Service will count how many young people they have helped to get into work.

The future



Young people not working or learning has been a problem for 25 years.



It is not ok for almost 1 million young people to be out of work and learning.



Work helps young people feel good about themselves.



It gives them something important to do and gives them money to live.



The big changes in this report will help young people, and help the whole country.

This easy read was made by Easy Read UK.
The pictures in it are from Photosymbols, Ing Image, Unsplash and Base Six.







