



PEOPLE, PLACES  
& POETRY

## REPORT OVERVIEW

Understanding where young people in South London go when they are not at home and school and how the spaces young people occupy impact on their mental health.

Mayor of London. Supported by Partnership for Young London & Rocket Science.

People, Places & Poetry is a youth-led peer-research project conducted by researchers and creatives Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson, on behalf of SOUNDS LIKE CHAOS and the Albany.

**The Albany** is a Deptford-based arts centre that inspires, develops and supports creativity for the community. **SOUNDS LIKE CHAOS** is a youth arts collective based in South East London. We create bold new performances, develop and support young change makers and create professional opportunities for emerging artists.

# THE PEER RESEARCHERS

Aleksa and Kaylah have come together with SOUNDS LIKE CHAOS and the Albany to incorporate their creative expressions into a research project, with the aim of discovering and amplifying the voices of other young people.

**Aleksa Asme** is 19 years old.

She is an all-round creative, marketer and young researcher.

She is a Trustee for Theatre Centre and newly appointed as a Trustee at the Albany.



**Kaylah Jackson** is 18 years old. She is a theatre-maker and young researcher.



# THE RESEARCH EXPLORED

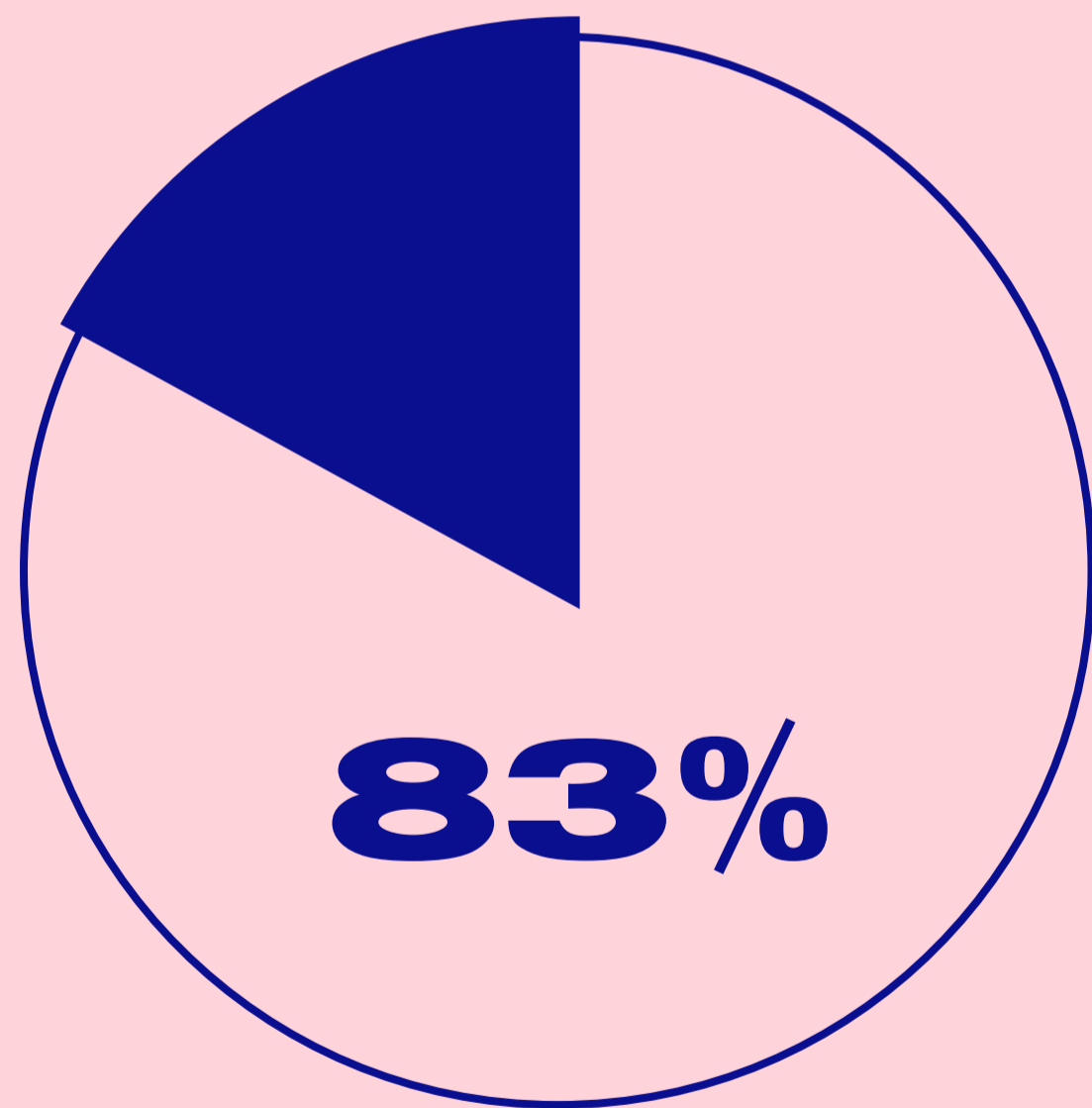
Where do young people aged 14-25, living in South London, go when they are not home or at school and is there a correlation between young people's mental health and the spaces young people occupy?

This research area was chosen in the context of a 60% increase in children and young people experiencing mental health problems in this country since 2017<sup>1</sup> alongside, a real terms, 74% cut in money spend on youth services since 2010<sup>2</sup>.

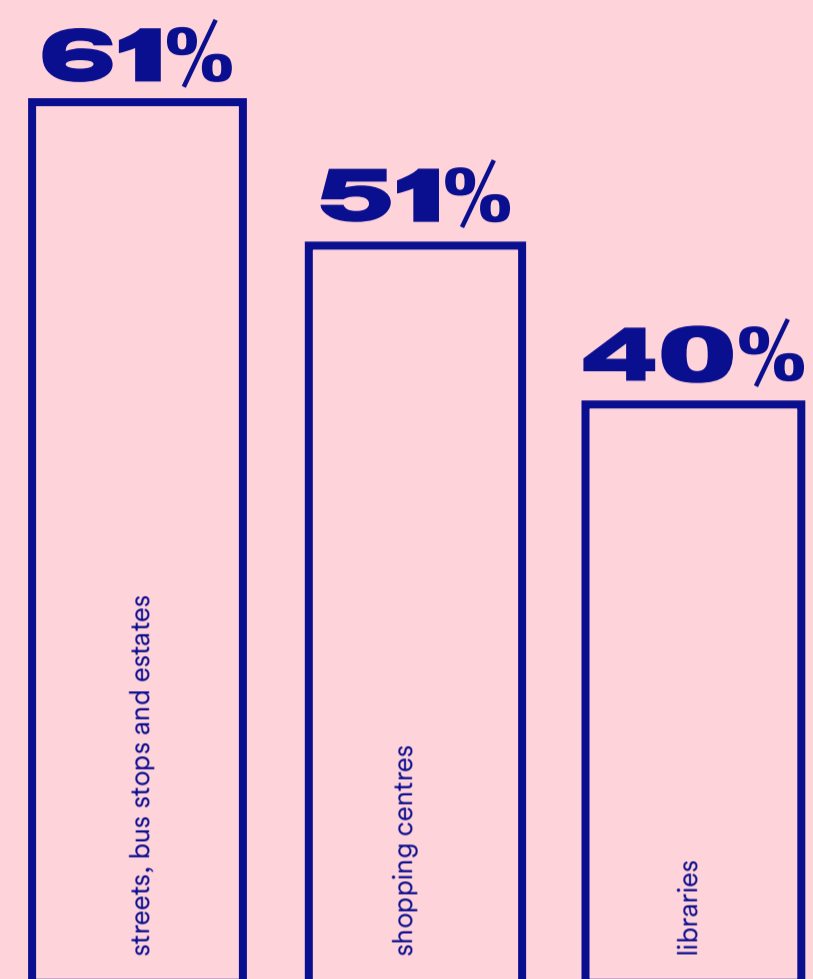
<sup>1</sup> The Health Foundation, 2022

<sup>2</sup> YMCA A decade of cuts to youth services (2022): <https://londonyouth.org/ymca-a-decade-of-cuts-to-youth-services/>

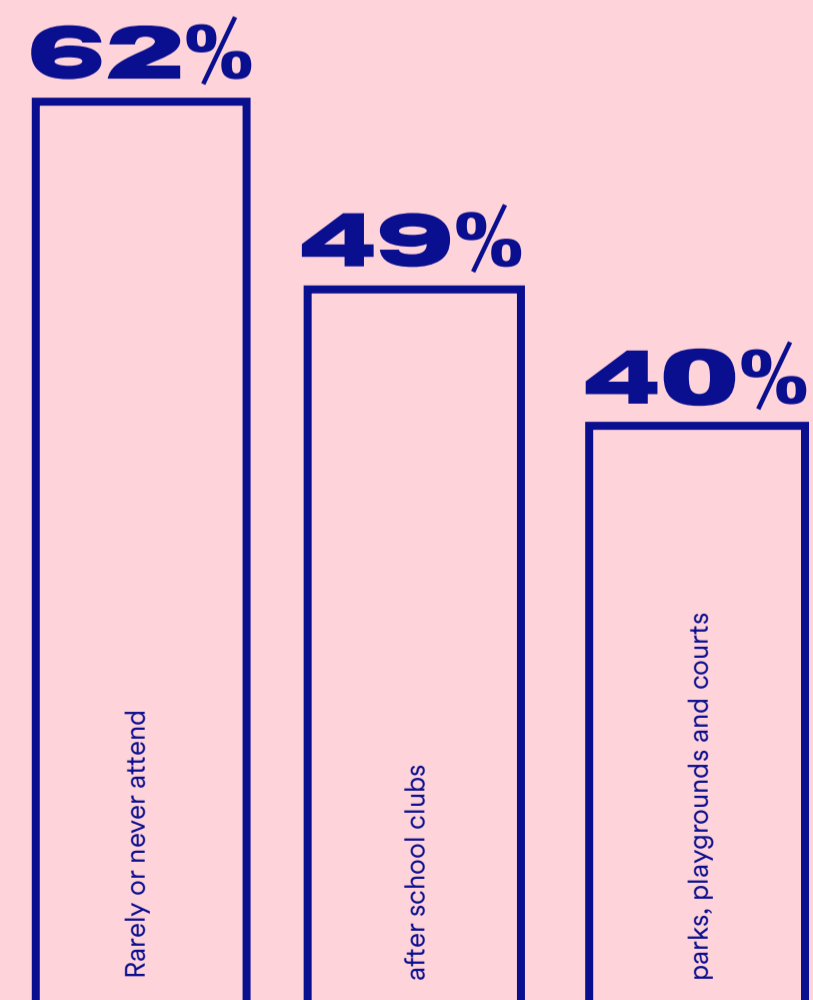
# WHAT WE FOUND OUT



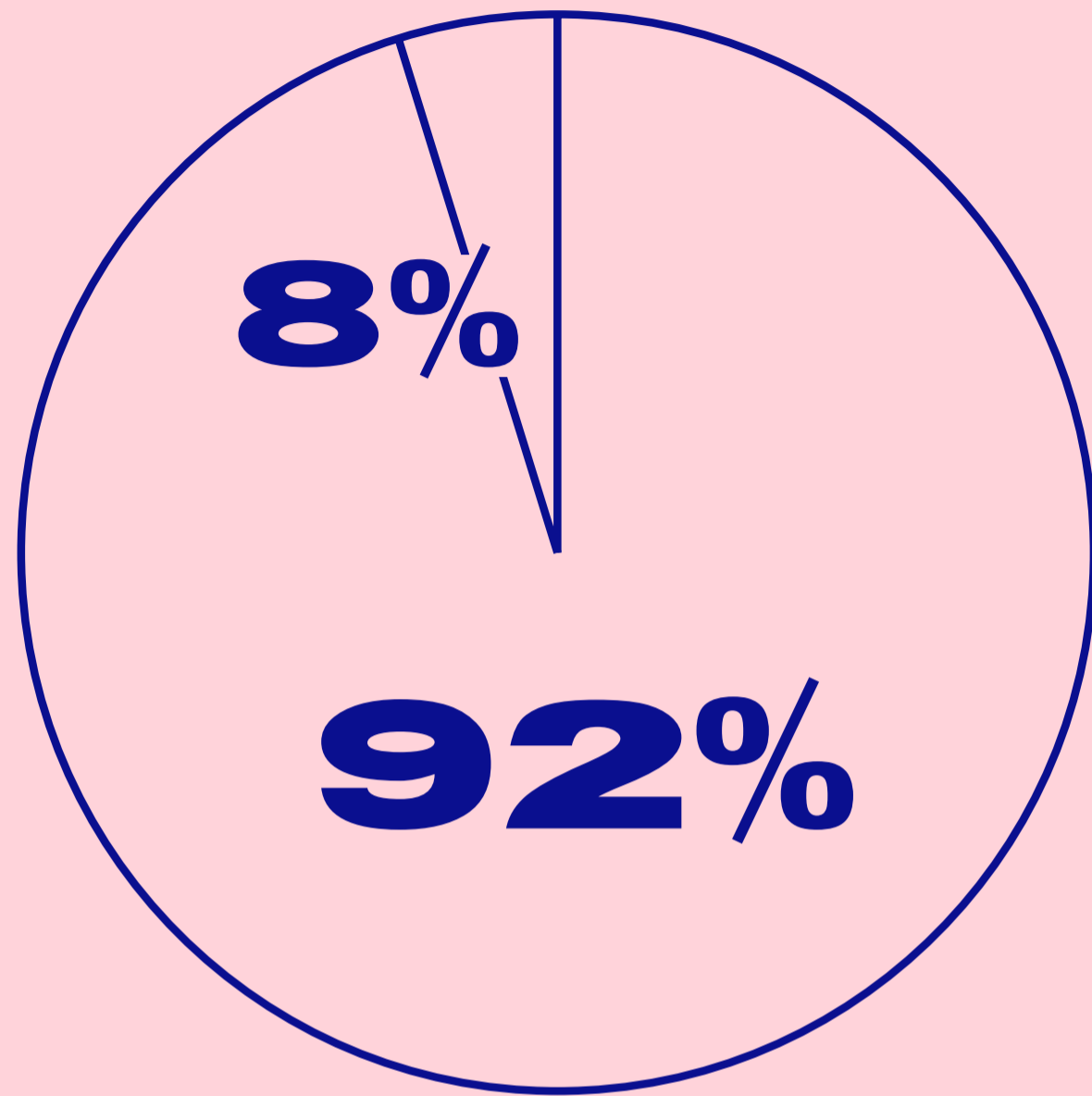
83% of the young people surveyed believe there aren't enough spaces they can access easily and safely.



When young people are not at school or at home they spend their time in streets, bus stops and estates (61%), at shopping centres (51%) or in libraries (40%).



Young people told us they 'rarely or never' attend youth clubs (62%), after school clubs (49%) or parks, playgrounds and courts (40%).



When asked what they needed in a space to support and improve their mental health, 92% of young people said positive relationships, support and care. Only 8% identified the physical attributes of a space as being important.

65% of young people surveyed want someone close to their own age - a peer mentor, youth worker or therapist - who they can confidently share their feelings with, and who will show them love, attention and care.

Young people highlighted pressure and expectation 25%, school 23% and isolation and loneliness 22% as the biggest causes of poor mental health in their demographic.

76% of the young people surveyed told us they want a comfortable space to be themselves without worries or stress. They want to have fun, relax, socialise or spend time alone and have the choice to engage in activities if they want to.

Young people want to feel safer in their neighbourhoods and in their city and they believe that safe spaces will encourage positive mental health for young people.

There are clear barriers for young people accessing spaces, including: cost, fear of fitting in, feeling unsafe and not knowing what spaces and activities are available due to a lack of relevant advertising, and lack of time or travel options.

Young people have few opportunities to gather in groups without drawing negative attention. 36% want to feel part of a community and to experience a sense of belonging.



# RESEARCH METHODS

‘In addition to formal research methods we used poetry and creative writing workshops. as an engaging way of discussing difficult topics. We didn’t want to spend a year speaking to young people to take something away and not give something in return. For this research we held multiple workshops that provided a range of tools, resources, teaching and encouragement for young people to be creative and for us to learn from them’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

This research was Participatory Action Research (PAR), that involves the communities that are affected by the research in the design and delivery of it. The research team undertook training in research methods and data analysis, as well as employing their own skills as creatives and facilitators to gain a greater depth of understanding of the subject and to offer a reciprocal process that would also benefit young people.

200 young people took part in the research (100 through an online survey and 100 through creative workshops, conversations and focus groups). All of the free text was transcribed and coded so the survey, interviews, focus groups, and the creative workshops data is included in both qualitative and quantitative findings presented in this report.



# WHO WE SPOKE TO



## **GENDER, DISABILITY & ETHNICITY**

Female **55.5%** Male **44.5%**

Black young people **53.17%**

Mixed ethnicity **9.3%**

White young people **17.4%**

**7.5%** of respondents considered themselves to have a disability.

## **AGE**

Participants were aged between **14** and **25**,  
(average age **17.27**).

## **AREA**

Our research was focused in South London.  
(**50%** Lewisham residents)



# CREATIVE WORKSHOPS & FOCUS GROUPS

Many of the groups visited during the research were based in youth projects and youth clubs, schools and youth creative spaces. As such, the research may reflect an over representation of young people who attend youth clubs, creative spaces and after school clubs.

## **Lewisham Young Advisers (15 young people)**

The Young Mayors Team works with the elected Young Mayor, Deputy Young Mayor and Young Advisers to support youth democracy in the borough of Lewisham.

## **Reaching Higher (15 young people)**

Two groups of young people aged 14-18 from a youth club based in Croydon, South London.

## **Spotlight (5 young people)**

A group of young people aged 14-18 from a youth club based in Tower Hamlets, East London.

## **Heart n Soul - Do Your Own Thing (15 young people)**

A group of creative young people aged 14-25 with learning disabilities and autism in Lewisham, South East London.

## **Bonus Pastor Catholic College (10 young people)**

A group of year 9 students in Lewisham, South East London.

## **Pizza and chat session for local young people (10 young people)**

A focus group of young people aged 14-25 organised in collaboration with Lewisham Homes, at the Albany in South East London.

## **Youth Beyond Borders (14 young people)**

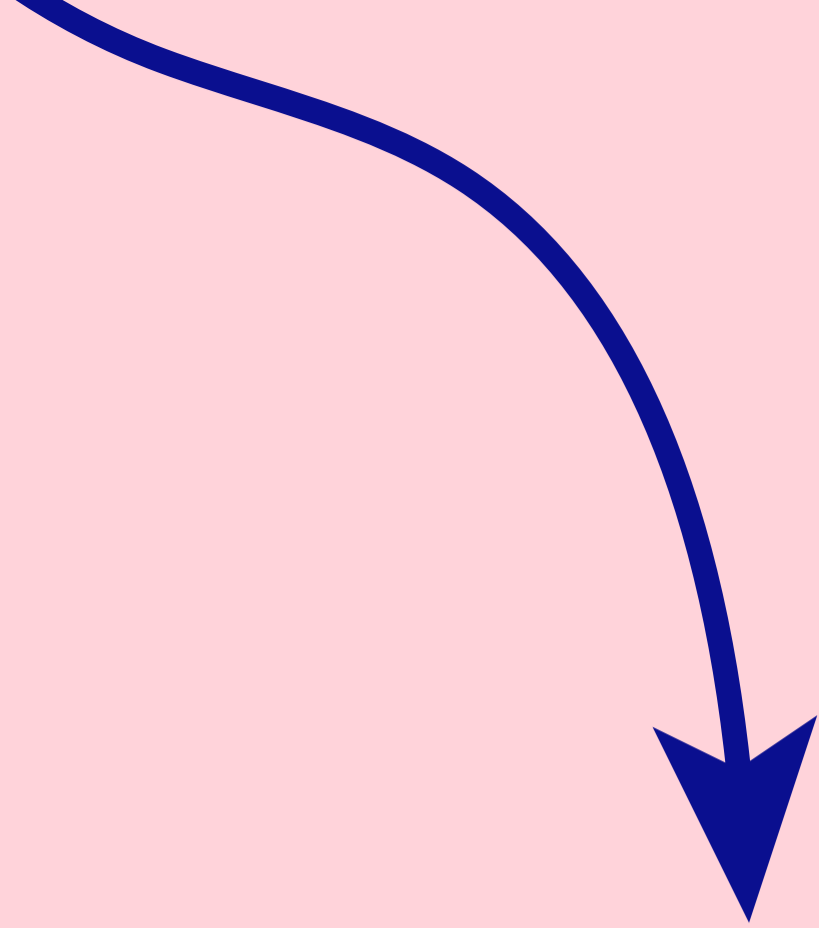
Conversations with young people at the launch event for YBB, a youth-focused cultural collective, led by young people aged 16-22 from communities underrepresented in the arts across the UK.

## **Chickenshed Theatre (3 young youth workers)**

A small group of creative youth workers working on a creative project for young people and in Pupil Referral Units, based in Enfield, North East London.

## **Two poetry workshops (15 young people)**

Two groups of young creative writers aged 14-25 at the Albany in South East London.



**ACCESSIBILITY  
& AVAILABILITY**

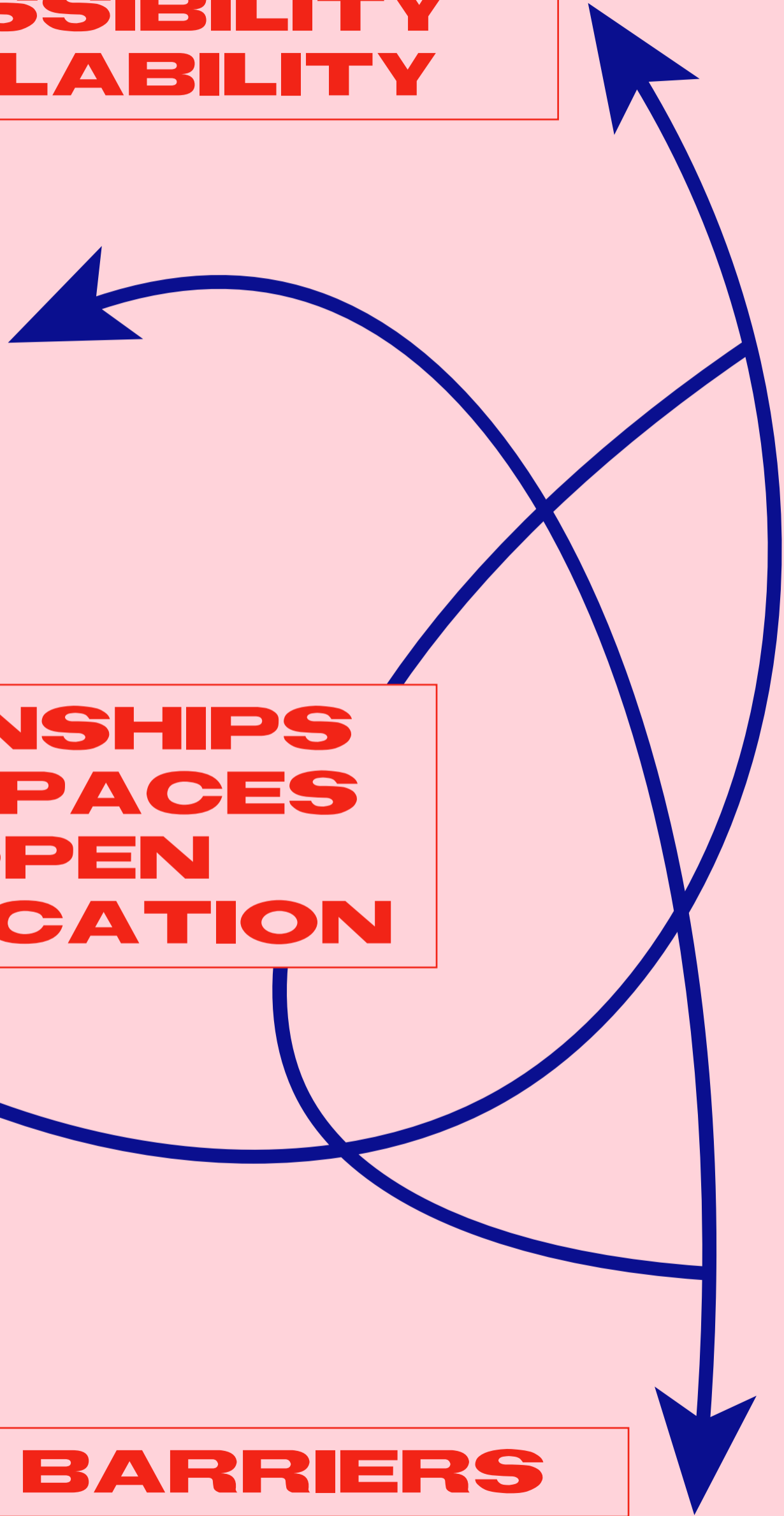
**FREEDOM  
TO CHOOSE**

**PLACES**

**RELATIONSHIPS  
& SAFE SPACES  
FOR OPEN  
COMMUNICATION**

This research identified four themes surrounding space and mental health that provides insight into young people's experiences and needs:

**BARRIERS**



# ACCESSIBILITY & AVAILABILITY

‘Young people both wanted and needed spaces that were free or affordable, physically and mentally safe, warm and comfortable, and easily accessible. They wanted spaces that allowed them to freely express themselves, and be seen and heard when they do. They wanted a space that was their own, with some, yet limited, structures and authority.’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

The research highlighted the limited availability of consistent spaces, reduced funding for youth services, a demand for accessible gathering places and personal challenges in engaging with existing spaces. These insights emphasise the importance of creating inclusive, safe spaces that cater to the diverse needs and interests of young people.

For example, one participant noted limited access to suitable spaces, stating:

**"There's a very limited amount of consistent space."**

Funding cuts and closures have resulted in a scarcity of options. The need for more diverse and well-advertised spaces was also highlighted.

Funding cuts have had a significant impact on spaces and services for young people with disabilities, as highlighted by the quote:

**"For young people on the spectrum with disability, all the funding has gone down, the sports club we went to closed. We went one time and they said don't come back next Tuesday, we don't have funding to carry on. Everything for young people with disabilities is now less."**

A participant described a regular occurrence in their local area:

**"In Lewisham there was over one hundred people outside McDonald's after school."**

The use of commercial spaces highlights the need for inclusive environments that can meet the social needs of young people, enabling them to gather and socialise safely. The impact of limited options is further illustrated by a participant's experience with youth clubs. They state:

**"I never go to youth clubs. I went while I was in primary school. I stopped going because of time. I also feel like I grew out of it as the one I attended was mainly for younger people."**

Older youths also pointed out:

**"A lot of spaces don't have what you need. I need somewhere warm with beanbags, comfy with wifi that is open everyday."**

There is a real need for diverse spaces that accommodate the interests and schedules of young people across different age ranges.

## RELATIONSHIPS & SAFE SPACES FOR OPEN COMMUNICATION

‘Young people listed attributes that would benefit them mentally and emotionally, such as having the ability to be alone, but also be around people, rather than physical attributes like equipment and furnishings.’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

Another recurring theme is a critical need for strong, positive and supportive relationships within youth spaces. Young people listed social, emotional and safety-related factors including freedom, acceptance and kindness above physical characteristics and activities. The research shed further light on the importance of having relatable and understanding individuals available in youth-focused spaces, particularly those who share similar backgrounds and who are close in age:

**“I would like to speak to someone like me, from my similar ethnicity or demographic, who likes similar things to me and someone who knows how to talk and how to listen or to understand.”**

Having someone who can empathise with their unique perspectives can provide a sense of belonging and support for young people.

Young people report looking for connection through shared experiences. They desire a sense of belonging and community, in a space away from home, school and social media.

Young people who responded to the survey also emphasised the need for an environment where one can freely express themselves and discuss sensitive topics that they may not feel comfortable discussing with their parents. Young people value connection with trusted individuals with whom one can have open conversations without fear of judgement or repercussions. Additionally, having a safe space to communicate openly about sensitive topics contributes to emotional wellbeing and fosters a sense of comfort and trust.



# FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

‘Youth spaces should continue to encourage workshops, training and education, especially real world or vocational training and skills. But this should not be their sole objective. We found that sometimes young people wanted a space to just exist or talk to someone, not only a place that constantly pressured them to do or gain something.’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

The research revealed concerns about limited freedom to choose and express one's individuality. The competitive environment in schools was highlighted, with a participant mentioning:

**"The whole environment at school is toxic because your worth is connected to your achievement. There's no diversity of what you can be good at."**

Encouraging spaces that promote individuality and empower young people to use their own voice is essential to counteract these limitations.

Young people want more spaces they can attend easily and safely. They want more opportunities to engage in activities, such as being creative and developing real-world skills including engineering and mechanics. However, young people want to have agency over what they spend their time doing, and don't want to spend all of their time developing themselves and thinking about the future. Resting, relaxing and having fun is of equal importance.

Personal space is also an important issue for young people. As one participant expressed:

**"Having space enables me to think more. Have peace. My thoughts are more coherent. Having space gives me time to rest. When I don't have much space, it makes it hard to think, process your thoughts as there's so much (sic) distractions around you."**

For many young people, having physical and mental space allows for clearer thinking and inner calm, with another participant stating:

**"I like having a change of environment because if you're constantly in the same space your brain can feel chaotic, different spaces create different mindsets, which create different behaviours provoking different thoughts and feelings."**

# BARRIERS

‘Young people told us that many of the youth spaces they do attend currently have low attendance because they are not advertised well. They also said that they don’t know about the opportunities available in their areas and communities and they don’t know where to find out about them.’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

Young people in South London face various barriers when it comes to accessing spaces outside of school and home. Anxiety about unfamiliar spaces prevents young people from trying new things, as one participant in the survey pointed out:

**“Sometimes it’s fear of the unknown, if you’re not used to going to these spaces, it’s hard.”**

Having enough money to pay to access or to travel to certain spaces is also a significant constraint, with 1 in 5 young people reporting not having enough money to attend spaces consistently. Another challenge young people face is a lack of opportunity to gather in larger groups to socialise without drawing negative attention;

**“Say if I wanted to go carnival, I can’t go with ten of my friends, that looks a way. You have to minimise the groups.”**

More than a third of the young people we surveyed highlighted safety as a major concern when deciding which spaces to attend, as many see the city as

threatening with a high level of crime. At the same time school and home were highlighted as spaces that can also feel unsafe.

Long travel times and waiting alone at bus stops contribute to a sense of insecurity, as one participant expressed: **“It takes me an hour to travel to the youth club, to get home I have to wait outside on my own at the bus stop and it doesn’t feel safe.”**

Another common barrier was not knowing what spaces are available that prioritise young people as their primary users:

**“There are some really good places but there either isn’t enough of them or they aren’t advertised well enough”**

and not knowing where to go to find out about what is available:

**“Lot’s of things have closed since lockdown. In the past the council used to advertise what was on really clearly but now it’s like a proper research activity to find out what’s going on.”**

**IN CONCLUSION, THE RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR ACCESSIBLE AND DIVERSE SPACES THAT CATER TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTH LONDON.**

Addressing funding issues, promoting inclusivity, building positive relationships, providing safe spaces for open communication and encouraging individuality and agency are essential in creating environments that support the mental wellbeing of young people. Efforts should be made to reduce barriers and ensure that affordable, safe and suitable spaces are available to promote the overall development and sense of belonging for young people in South London.



# POETRY



We worked with several young poets who we asked to respond to the findings of our research. These poems were presented as part of the People, Places & Poetry live event on 20 April 2023 at the Albany in Deptford.





# CORNER

Me and my friends we used to hang out at the corner shop,  
My other friends they had the bus stop,  
And the other group they used to chill on the road,  
Right at the top.  
But yeah the corner shop was our pitstop  
Where we would get refilled and restoked  
Plantain chips and Buenos and Fredos and all the lot  
Remember 3 wings for a pound?  
It's more like 1 wing for 3 pound now,  
But what do you know about,  
Saving the salt packets for Friday's fish and chips lunch round.  
(Yeah those were dry)  
But I almost miss the sound,  
Of the Olders and the Youngers rushing in the queue loud.  
When an older stepped to you, you knew anything was allowed.  
But we were so proud,  
Getting our house points and performing for our first crowds.  
Our first tries, first ties and our first wows,  
Sometimes we were up so high we thought we would never hit the ground.  
Laughing until we couldn't breathe so many times I can't even count,  
And I can't even doubt,  
That we had so much potential we could reach the clouds.  
But then we had to come down.  
Smiles of ignorance and innocence turned into silent frowns.  
And while I hate to be depressing,  
I wouldn't want to repress the stress that the youth face at present,  
I mean over half my friends have met face to face with depression,  
And that's just my friend not even the whole population,  
It's an invasion.  
We need air raid sirens sounding for a whole generation.  
We are failing the youths of this nation.  
So that inspired this investigation.  
The correlation between then lack of spaces and the youth's tribulations.  
I say this with cadence.  
So, take this with contemplation.

# SHOP

But yeah, the corner shop was our area 51.  
There's 51 percent of us who's spaces consisted of shopping centres.  
And 61 at bus stops, estates, streets, chilling on fences,  
Defenceless.  
21.4 percent less and we're at 39.6,  
For those of us in libraries or getting creative kicks.  
Developing minds and taking, faking, making hits,  
Now I hate to say it,  
But where were youth clubs in the mix?  
Two thirds of us, 62 percent, found youth clubs to be the least attended.  
And don't get me wrong, this isn't a diss,  
But obviously something must have been missed,  
There's something that needs to shift,  
Sometimes we just need a place to exist.  
  
(So that's why me and my friends liked the corner shop,  
No one to judge us and tell us what's what.  
We could complain about the year 8s in peace because they were getting way too  
big for their boots,  
Had to tell my man shut up.

I'm joking I was too quiet for that.  
But listen I don't think they were listening,  
Even though my ye was different to their ye.  
So the year 8s should've sat down and been humble,  
So my friends told Samantha and Lesley to cut out the psycho because this isn't  
GCSE Drama.  
Did you see what I done?  
Yeah man those times were fun.)

(Because) in a way, this is all just an illusion,  
You can't talk about the weather and ignore the pollution,  
Which we all have a contribution towards.  
There has to be a solution to this confusion,  
Because all I'm feeling is disillusion,  
And all I'm seeing is denial.  
How old were you when you had to talk someone out of suicide because I was just a  
child.  
Better yet, how old were you when your feelings or lack of became so intense you  
got caught up in a spiral.  
I wish I could be mild.  
But when it comes to the youth the issues are unnecessarily piled.

I don't think you get it.  
We got school councillors giving out counselling while needing a counsellor.  
Because these days we care more about students' grades than their brains,  
And they've been storming.  
And when they're needing help we're ignoring,  
It's appalling.  
The lives of our young people are being held by other young people,  
That's a responsibility that shouldn't be left for young people.  
And when I said hold lives,  
I wasn't even talking about those that hold knives,  
Life left on a gamble flip of a coin, I  
Can't even lie,  
I'm tired of seeing flowers on the floor,  
Of the tears shed in bedroom doors,  
Knowing a life barely started isn't here anymore.  
And what's the cause?  
I guess some of our youth don't see themselves living past 25 so may as well go

out with a spark.  
I hate to be dark.  
You know I loved that corner shop.  
But Bossman can only boss man,  
He doesn't actually give a toss man,  
He's just another man.  
Standing outside the corner shop there's no real structure,  
Not a real safe haven.  
And while I was fortunate to come from a good home,  
I'm not here to speak for myself alone.  
Maybe if our young people had a place to destress,  
To unwind to express,  
To lift the weights of life from their chests,  
There would be a bit less pressure to impress,  
A bit less strain a bit more success.  
83 percent of young people believe there aren't enough spaces they can access  
safely.  
That's over 3 quarters.  
So next time you think of mental health,  
Think of your sons, your nephews, grandchildren, daughters.  
There are so many things they struggle with, and I understand this is new waters,  
But dip your hands in.  
It might be uncomfortable at first,  
But eventually you will realise the water is what parches your thirst.  
And it's not as unfamiliar as you once thought.  
As society once taught.  
You see, the importance of having a space and a community isn't something that  
requires a court,  
But after today, the ball is in yours.

**BY SHIREESHA (ALANA SUN)**

Where is your mind?  
My mind is a garden,  
At times untamed and wild,  
At others a playground for a child,  
It needs looking after.  
Worried weeds that need chopping down,  
Flowers and trees that need watering now,  
I 'm learning to love my garden,  
To give it the nutrients of self-love it needs,  
To acknowledge life's changes and rake up the leaves,  
To remember to take the fruits of ideas off the trees,  
Before they rot, I have to believe,  
Because it's my garden and my garden is me.

Maybe your mind is a beach,  
Worries flow in and out like a tide.  
Sometimes it floods and sometimes it's dry,  
Sometimes you love it and sometimes you hide.  
Maybe your mind in an Albion Oak,  
Your branches stretch out to the sun.  
Constantly reaching for light your thoughts scatter and stun.

Or maybe your mind has been stunned,  
By Depressions gun,  
Shooting shots of negativity with a dunk of numb,  
Fatigue and emptiness that's a hole in one,  
Survival and a real smile become the only goal,  
When depression holds you hostage and takes control.

Well maybe your mind is your escape,  
A fantasy castle.  
A fortress against the worlds disaster,  
A plaster.  
Covers up the crack and wounds,  
The hurt and the gloom,  
The elephant in the room



That we're all hurting or have been hurt in some way.  
That you can never feel true joy until you've felt pain.  
That an apple a day doesn't actually keep anything away  
As we have no real control over what goes and what stays.  
And that's okay.

The hardest and best part of healing is change.  
It's letting go and letting God,  
It's accepting that sometimes love isn't enough.  
Or perhaps your mind is simply an empty room.

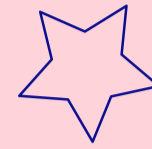


A blank slate.  
Is it emptiness or contentedness that depicts your mental state.  
Are you free from any constraints or restraints,  
Or lacking any feeling to create.  
Is it full of compartment where you compartmentalise parts of your life.  
An empty apartment where you can put things together and pull them apart.  
Is your mind simply a space for you to intellectualise your emotions and  
rationalise your actions.  
Where you strategize and readjust your mirror so you can drive to your  
destination.

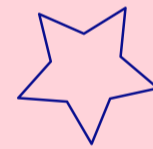
In a way, all of our minds should be a Temple  
Our place of peace  
The piece of us that keeps us going.  
Not tears us down.  
We should be able to drink that Holy water that allows us to flow,  
That allows us to grow and re-energises our soul.  
And if you ever invite anyone to your temple,  
Don't let them run your rivers dry.  
Don't pour out without pouring in,  
Because your Temple is yours and where only you lie in.

Close your eyes.  
I want you to picture your mind.  
What does it look like?  
What have you got in it and what passes you by?  
Is it comfortable?  
Safe?  
Loved?  
Does it need some nurturing, or pruning?  
In your mind are you winning, or losing?

**BY SHIRESHA (ALANA SUN)**



Confined between the blue waters and the blue skies  
The sky is the limit they say  
But I've proven its lies cos  
Life comes down to perception  
And who we share our lens with  
As a result I've been telescoping who I choose to be friends with cos  
I need the love of a million stars  
Love me to the moon and back  
But I need 250 million miles to Mars  
I need more than what my eyes can see  
I need the space only my mind can see  
And I know some people can't give that to me



So, sometimes it gets lonely  
Especially when everything is...moving...so...slowly  
I try to catch a ride with this floating debris  
But no matter where I go it's just  
Alienation and me

I need the strength of the star that dies but is reborn even brighter  
The star that doesn't say anything but knows within - it's a fighter  
I need the Space to shine so the Dark won't Matter  
Sometimes it'll be difficult to see  
Cos that's Dark Matter  
But I beam brighter  
That's mind over matter  
But just like the sun shines to reveal all his family  
I keep my light switched on to see all the love that's surrounding me

All this space with even more room to breathe  
One small step for man  
With the whole world at his feet  
One giant leap for mankind  
But my leaps feel incomplete  
Cos I'm trying to fly  
In the space of self-discovery  
With zero boundaries of exploration  
I need the attachment of an orbit  
But the freedom to find a new location  
I need Space  
To grow and to learn  
Discovering something new on this axis of every turn  
Growth is growth  
It's not about competing for this Earth show cos  
Nothing is ever too small to be irrelevant - Pluto  
I need Space  
To love and be loved  
Love is gravitational, it's limitless, there's more than enough  
In this Space  
Of weightlessness and depth  
Where any star is a supernova upon death  
I need to search for answers internally  
And the truth is I could be searching for pieces of myself for eternity  
But firstly, is that one small step  
Into Space.  
Into the belief of being worthy of peace and identity regardless of my mistakes.  
A giant leap into the illusion of the unknown  
Until I'm gliding between the fusion of stars that I'll eventually call home.



**BY HUMUS**

# RECOMMENDATIONS

‘Though this research includes data that can be beneficial for so much change, we have a few key calls to action we are strongly urging people to implement. Our research question was one that the majority of people could easily predict the answers to. We knew young people would benefit from having access to more spaces, we just needed data to support the ongoing urgency of that, as well as discovering what those spaces needed to be like.’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson

## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL SAFETY SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF SPACES CREATED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Support young people through conversations that focus on their needs, thoughts and feelings. Ask questions, listen and allow space for them to talk freely

Physical and mental safety should be at the heart of spaces created for young people

Invest in staff training in safeguarding, mental health, counselling and helping conversations and take care of them so they will have the energy to look after young people and the space

Offer more paid leadership roles to young people

Develop collaborative safeguarding policies and practices that involve young people

Provide relatable emotional support for young people

**ADVERTISE SPACES THROUGH SOURCES YOUNG PEOPLE TRUST SUCH AS LIBRARIES, COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARDS AND GROUPS, THROUGH SCHOOL AND RELEVANT SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS**

Align opening and closing times with the typical availability and needs of young people across the various age groups

Provide consistent, affordable access to local spaces and activities at regular times throughout the year

Provide a central place with up to date borough wide information for space and activities that young people can access

**INVEST IN, IMPROVE AND AMPLIFY EXISTING YOUTH SPACES THAT CENTRE YOUTH LEADERSHIP**

Make all facilities relevant to young people, in good working order and available for use

Collaborate with young people to ensure these spaces are comfortable and relaxing

Prioritise young people as the primary user and employ young people in significant leadership roles

Identify people with the right skills to facilitate inclusive conversations and co-create solutions together with young people, working flexibly and iteratively with them over time to improve existing spaces

Adopt less hierarchical leadership and encourage youth ownership

# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

‘One of the most straightforward actions to implement from this research is to support young people by simply having conversations with them. Our main approach was conversations. As extensive as our data was - and we were so grateful to have such rich and in-depth discussions with our attendees - it was equally very disheartening to see how few opportunities they have been given to freely express themselves.

Systems like schools and workplaces, as well as sometimes challenging home situations, have meant that so many young people are suppressing their emotions, experiences, and traumas. Professional therapy is expensive and clearly not accessible, meaning young people are going without safe and comfortable places to voice their mind and heart.

There is also a divide in conversations between young people and adults. We have continuously found, both in our research and our individual experiences, that both parties do not feel like they can talk to each other. These mindsets are rooted in stereotypes and generalisations. This is a fairly simple but vital solution that could inspire a new wave of learning and regeneration, if more discussions could be had between both parties. Young people can and should be included in bigger, important discussions, especially regarding their own needs and mental health. Adults can gain a lot from their fresh perspectives, but also use their expertise and experience to support and pass on their knowledge, to include young people in decision making’

Aleksa Asme and Kaylah Jackson



People, Places & Poetry is part of SOUNDS LIKE CHAOS and the Albany's ongoing partnership, supporting young artists and cultural leaders and resourcing local young people as change makers in our communities.

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