

ANDRES

Young Advisor



Andres is 19 and is currently studying for a degree in Criminology and Psychology in Leeds. He is a volunteer at LS14 Trust, a community organisation in Leeds which aims to increase opportunities and cohesion within the local area. His role involves supporting weekly sessions, attending events, leading activities and helping at holiday clubs. He enjoys getting people together and ensuring that sessions are fun. His motivation for volunteering comes from wanting to help others and support their development.

He was first introduced to StreetGames as a young volunteer in a NextGen programme, which supported him in developing the skills needed to be a young leader. It also allowed him to undertake training and qualifications such as a Multi-Skills Activator, First Aid and Budgeting & Planning for Events. He feels that this programme has equipped him with knowledge and skills that have helped in his Young Advisor role: *"Back when I was doing those courses, I didn't know I was going to be doing this (being a Young Advisor), but now I can see it's helped"*.

Andres also attended the StreetGames Summer Camp 2022 in Birmingham as a participant. He remembers being inspired by the Young Advisors that supported the camp, which was one of the key reasons that he applied to be a Young Advisor: *"I really enjoyed it and looked up to the Young Advisors, I remember thinking 'I want to do that'".* The role appealed to him because of the level of responsibility that is given to the Young Advisors: *"We have a big team that supports and guides us, but it's essentially up to us"*.

From his own experiences Andres has developed a belief in the importance of stepping outside of your comfort zone: *"I had to do a lot of stuff that I wasn't comfortable with and at the time it would seem like the worst thing but now it's not"*. For this reason, his favourite part of the residential was seeing young people develop: *"I've been with that group since Monday so when you see them grow and come out of their shell a bit more...it's a bit like 'yeah I'm proud of you guys'"*. He feels that the scenic location of the residential aided the development of the young people, as well as fostering better interactions between everyone: *"I think by being in nature you do feel grounded, I've talked to a lot of people, and they say about feeling calm and relaxed, especially like when you're on a boat on the lake and you see all the views, you just feel as though you become one with nature"*.

At the residential Andres worked alongside members of staff from StreetGames and the Brathay Trust, which gave him the opportunity to observe their approach: *"A member of staff from Brathay without meaning to and by me just observing has been acting sort of like a mentor to me. I think it's quite interesting how he thinks about stuff, gives feedback and interacts"*. He also feels he has been able to develop transferrable skills such as teamwork, presenting and communication. However, most of all Andres reflects on the enjoyment and satisfaction that he got from the residential: *"It's something I'll take with me for the rest of my life"*.

Andres is still open-minded about what he wants to do in the future, but his experience working with LS14 Trust and with StreetGames as a volunteer has made him consider the possibility of developing a career in youth and community development or within the charity sector.



Sophie Jay, an 18-year-old from Swansea, has been volunteering for the past three years with her locally trusted organisation, Evolve. Her passion for making a positive impact on others' lives led her to step up as a Young Advisor for StreetGames. This role enables her to assist staff in planning and running residential events, drawing from her own experiences as a participant.

Sophie first engaged with StreetGames at Summer Camp 2022 in Birmingham. Inspired by the Young Advisors she met there, she decided to pursue the opportunity herself as a stepping stone toward her next goal of joining Camp America. The skills she gained through volunteering have been transformative. She highlights newfound confidence, enhanced communication skills, and a sense of pride as key takeaways from her journey.

Working with young people is the aspect of volunteering that Sophie cherishes the most. She finds it immensely fulfilling to see their confidence grow through her support. Sophie explained, *"I love working directly with young people and making a difference to their lives."* Her time as a Young Advisor has not been without challenges; during the recent residential at Brathay, she contemplated leaving but ultimately decided to stay. This decision, she reflects, was a significant personal achievement.

Sophie also appreciates the practical learning her role has provided. She discovered the importance of adapting communication styles, a skill she believes will help her hugely in her job as a nursery worker. She notes, *"Understanding that everyone communicates differently is invaluable, especially when working with younger children at such a formative age."*

Looking ahead, Sophie dreams of beginning a career where she can continue to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. Her dedication, coupled with her growing skills and confidence, positions her as a role model for others considering volunteering.



Kamil is a 19-year-old from Wrexham. He is an experienced volunteer having undertaken youth leadership roles within the Scouts and at his college. His role in the Scouts includes volunteering on a weekly basis delivering team building activities, taking groups exploring and helping out at camping trips. He enjoys the sense of satisfaction that comes with volunteering and helping people: *"You get satisfaction of seeing people be happy, grow and get out of their comfort zone. I remember when I was getting out of my comfort zone and people complemented me on it, and how good that feels"*. Away from volunteering Kamil is currently completing a part-time hospitality course at college and works part-time in a cocktail bar.

He originally heard about the opportunity to be a Young Advisor through his college. He was attracted to the role as he felt it was an opportunity to upskill himself, which would help him in the future. At the Brathay residential Kamil's role involved leading icebreakers, activities and being a point of contact for the young people: *"StreetGames staff do a lot of work in the background, but we're delivering it...engaging with young people is the biggest job this week"*. The element of the residential that Kamil enjoyed most was meeting new people from different parts of the country: *"It's been wonderful to connect with everybody from so many different backgrounds, it's an amazing thing"*. His favourite activity was kayaking on the lake.

There were also some aspects of the residential that Kamil found challenging, such as managing the behaviour of the young people: *"The young people can be a bit in your face at times, they sometimes see you as one of them, so it's important to set boundaries"*. He found he was able to learn new approaches to dealing with these situations by observing experienced members of staff: *"I've learnt a lot from one of the Brathay members of staff, he has a very gentle approach but still has control"*.

Some of the key skills Kamil feels he has developed from the residential include improved teamwork, communication and the ability to be open-minded: *"I think everything I've done will transfer to everywhere"*. In the future Kamil has ambitions to have a career as a cabin crew member as it would allow him to travel the world and see new places. He feels the experiences and skills he has developed through volunteering have prepared him well for this type of role.



Viyenze is a 19-year-old from London and is currently studying Computer Science at university. Viyenze volunteers at Gmax, which is a registered charity, non-profit youth sports programme serving young people in the Lewisham area. The focus of the programme is to promote youth sport participation in particularly in Athletics, promote healthy development in young people and increase youth access to education and job opportunities in sports. She enjoys volunteering as it provides the opportunity for her to meet people from a variety of backgrounds and finds it fulfilling to help others and witness their development.

Viyenze's coach at Gmax shared the opportunity to become a Young Advisor at the residential. One of the key factors that attracted her to the role was the level of ownership and responsibility that is given to the Young Advisors: *"You guys do help out (StreetGames staff), but we get a say, and we decide the type of activities that we want to do which is another reason why I wanted to do it"*. She also felt it was a great opportunity to meet likeminded young people from different parts of the country. Viyenze commented on how the opportunity being free played a significant part in making the Young Advisor role appealing: *"Knowing the residential was basically free, it was like going on a vacation before I had to come back and do my exams"*.

At the residential Viyenze's favourite moment came when leading a team of young people in a game which involves a race to see which team can unfold/defrost a frozen t-shirt and wear it the quickest: *"My team really came through that day; I was even shocked. Everyone really wanted to give it their all, which was a really good sight to see because the whole time my team were like they were sleeping a little bit, and just really laid back. But that day when we had to do the freezing t-shirt activity everyone just got involved"*.

There were also elements of the residential that she found challenging, particularly managing the behaviour of the young people and found at times they were reluctant to listen to her. However, she felt that this was a valuable learning experience and provided her with opportunities to consider ways of managing these situations: *"It was hard to deal with the young people when you're already tired and they decide to start arguing... It wasn't a negative experience, it was a good learning experience...I wasn't as patient as I'd have liked to have been, if I was to go back, I'd try to relax a little bit"*.

As well as gaining more experience of leading groups of young people, the residential provided Viyenze with the opportunity to make friends with the other young advisors and visit a part of the country she had previously not been to: *"I took so many pictures...I still look back and it was a really good experience"*.

In the future Viyenze has aspirations of pursuing a career as a Data Analyst, however, also has a number of other passions including sport and attending the residential has allowed her to consider other career options including working for StreetGames or similar organisations. Going forward she is keen to seek out similar opportunities to volunteer and would like to be involved in future StreetGames residentials: *"If you do anything like this in the future, invite me!"*.



Zain, a 23-year-old from Wigan, is balancing multiple roles—training to be an electrician, volunteering part-time as a youth worker, and serving as a trustee for a care centre. His commitment to supporting young people extends beyond work; through volunteering, he strives to give them a voice and create meaningful opportunities for their development.

At his local youth project, Zain plays a hands-on role in running sports sessions for young people aged 9-19, with a particular passion for football. His journey from Young Volunteer to Young Advisor has been a significant step forward, pushing him out of his comfort zone while teaching him how to take responsibility for others. *"The biggest thing has been making sure the young people I work with feel heard. That responsibility has helped me progress so much."*

For Zain, the best part of volunteering is the sense of achievement and the doors it opens. He describes it as empowering, rewarding, and impactful, highlighting how he's gained valuable experiences and learned from the people he has met. *"I feel happy and almost at peace because I know I've done something beneficial—not just for me, but for the young people I support."*

His role as a Young Advisor has provided further opportunities to develop his leadership skills, particularly in offering support and guidance. At the recent residential, he found the most rewarding part was simply being there for his team when they needed him. *"I like being someone they can rely on, knowing they can come to me with concerns and challenges, and I can help them through it."*

Zain has also picked up practical skills along the way, learning new icebreakers and games to bring back to Wigan Youth Zone. Spending time with people from different parts of the country has broadened his perspective, reinforcing the value of connection and shared experiences.

Looking ahead, Zain's dream is simple but meaningful: securing a full-time job and building a family of his own. His experiences with StreetGames have deepened his involvement in the organisation, giving him a clearer understanding of its goals and the opportunities available. As he continues to grow in his role, his dedication to supporting young people remains at the heart of everything he does. *"Volunteering has been a journey of learning, leadership, and impact—and it's only the beginning."*

HANNAH

Young Advisor



Hannah, an 18-year-old from South London, is balancing a busy schedule—studying Health and Social Care at college, working part-time in sports coaching, and volunteering at a primary school, where she supports SEN children in their learning. Despite her packed routine, she has found time to step into a leadership role as a Young Advisor with StreetGames, an experience that has strengthened her confidence, teamwork, and communication skills.

Her journey with StreetGames began at the Design Jam, where she discovered the power of collaboration and problem-solving. *"It gave me a chance to connect with others, share ideas, and improve how I work in a team,"* she explains. Taking on the Young Advisor role has taken this even further, allowing her to develop leadership skills and confidence in expressing her ideas. *"I've learned how to lead while making sure I don't overpower others—being inclusive and encouraging a team rather than just directing them."*

The aspect Hannah enjoys most about being a Young Advisor is the freedom to contribute ideas and see them come to life. She thrives on the responsibility that comes with leadership, recognising how valuable these experiences will be as she prepares for university and beyond. During the recent residential, she took on the role of motivating and guiding her group, helping them build new skills along the way. *"I feel proud—I've pushed myself to take on this role over a whole week, not just for a few hours. It's also been rewarding to see people recognising me, knowing my name, and coming to talk to me, I feel very appreciated."*

Hannah describes the experience as fun, diverse, and positive, highlighting the deep connections she has built with her group. What started as a daunting task—leading a team of strangers—quickly turned into a close-knit bond. *"On day one, I wasn't sure how well we'd get along. Now, after four days, we talk like we've been friends for years."* She also credits the experience with helping her refine essential skills, such as active listening and ensuring everyone has a voice, including those who may be quieter or less confident.

Looking to the future, Hannah aspires to study sports science or management at university and use the leadership skills she's honed on a larger scale in a career in sport. The lessons she's learned as a Young Advisor—confidence, inclusivity, and motivation—will undoubtedly shape her path ahead. *"This experience has set me apart, and I know it will help me take on leadership roles in the future."*