

Through the gate.



CREATED
BY YOUNG ADULTS,
FOR YOUNG ADULTS.

**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**

Blagrave.
investing in
young people



**YOUNG
JUSTICE
ADVISORS**



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Who? What? Why?

Who are the Young Justice Advisors?

The Young Justice Advisors are a project by Leaders Unlocked, created for 18-27 year olds to allow young adults in the Justice System to have a voice. The group has worked with HMPPS, Ministry of Justice and over 800 young adults! The aim of the group is to provide a safe space, inform reform using real experiences and educate organisations.

What is this guide for?

This guide is for young adults leaving prison, on probation and that want some advice/information. The guide will hopefully make things a bit easier to navigate once in the community and point you in the right direction.

Why did we create this?

This guide was created to bridge the gap of lack of information. We have spoken to a lot of young adults in the system and it was obvious that there was a lack of support. It was written by young adults, for young adults with the hope to empower and show a different path!

“

**Doubt is a killer.
You just have to know
who you are and what
you stand for.**

Jennifer Lopez

Remember
your
experiences
are **your**
superpowers!

Essentials Checklist.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> | CV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> | Employment or Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bank account | <input type="checkbox"/> | Photo identification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobile phone | <input type="checkbox"/> | Healthcare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Disclosure letter | | |

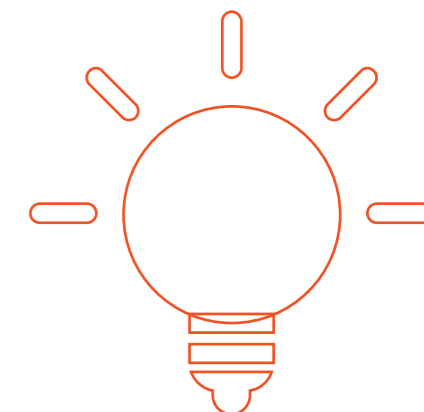
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Each person must live their life as a model for others

Rosa Parks



Hints & tips.



- 1 Try to find a mentor or trusted person
- 2 Try not to stay stagnant doing nothing, always try to keep yourself occupied
- 3 Try to remain mindful and practice mindfulness
- 4 Try to maintain a good relationship with your probation worker, communicate and always share your concerns
- 5 Make religious and cultural needs known to probation to avoid culture clashes and create an understanding
- 6 Don't be afraid to ask for help
- 7 Surround yourself with positive influences
- 8 Think about the skills you have and how you can use them productively
- 9 Find your passion

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The first step is to say that you can

Will Smith

Romaine's story.

When I was in prison, I had thought that my hopes of becoming a youth worker and youth mentor had been ruined.

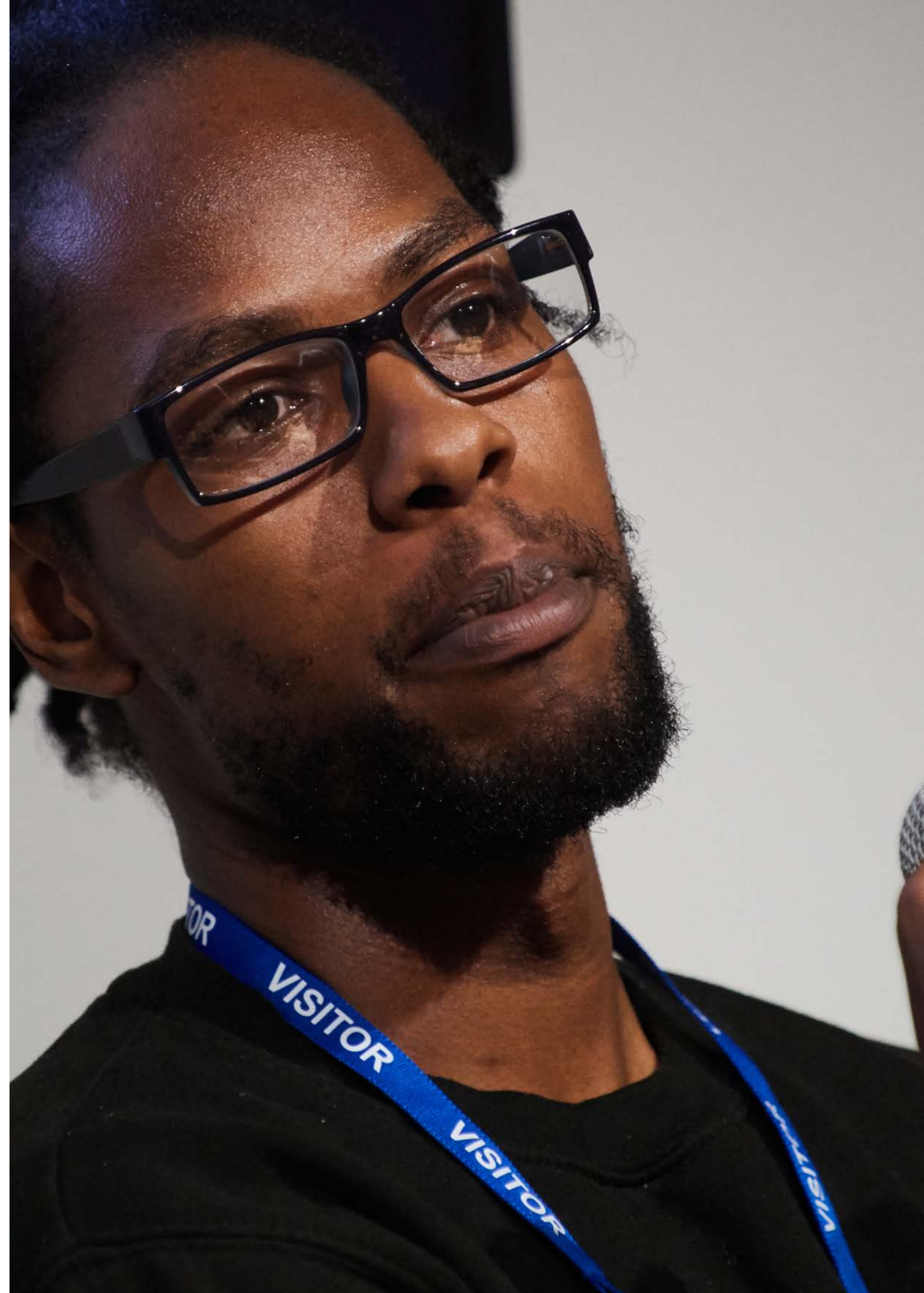
I was able to get bail from detention and, since being released, I have been working a freelance role for Leaders Unlocked, engaging in various projects and even mentoring others. I am also a sports coach within youth work and have been studying to gain my diploma within youth work, as well as other qualifications and further education.

I applied for the youth work role that I am in now and was given an interview; in the interview I made sure that I projected myself as best I could to give a good impression. I also told them about my offence and how I feel about it and then left. I took the chance and didn't really think I would get the job, but I was proud of my effort and my honesty and it paid off.

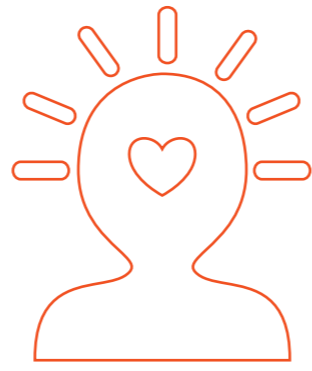
I had a response within days and was told that, despite my conviction, they were willing to give me a chance and that they loved my energy etc. They thought that my experiences, coupled with my energy, personality and my age could be used to bridge a gap with young people within our communities and youth clubs.

I have been a youth worker for over a year and a half and a young leader and mentor for almost two years now. What I can tell you from my experiences is to never give up on your dreams, the door will open eventually, just look for the key instead of trying to force it open!

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Mental health & wellbeing.



Key elements of well-being:

Self-acceptance

Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses but also learn to embrace them, you are unique

Personal growth

Try to find new hobbies and skills that make you happy and energised

Purpose in life

Having something meaningful to do. Volunteering, learning something or working

Take control of your environment

Take control by choosing or changing your surroundings using physical or mental actions

Positive relations with others

Form new connections and gain new life experiences; take yourself out of your comfort zone

“

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.

Malala Yousafzai





Shahid's story.

The thing that got me caught up in prison system was myself, my bad habits my immaturity, my way of dealing with things, my drug and alcohol abuse, my negativity and my anger.

I found the time away from society helpful. To be able to start over again. Nothing to occupy your time but your own thoughts and making them positive. Nothing to enjoy but being able to develop as a better individual. Also, the thought of coming out better than when I went in, meant there was no time lost to the system.

What motivated me to stay on a positive path was Faith. I stopped enjoying the life I used to live. I wanted to become a better individual and become happier in my success. Believing that one day it will all work out as long as I stay doing good.

My advice is that you don't have to waste your time in prison. You can gain better tools to go out and do well in life. Don't defeat yourself by believing you cannot achieve great things having come out of prison, as many have come out of prison and gone on to be successful. Surround yourself with positive people who will give you the drive and motivation in life. If you have no one to do that you're better to come up on your own!

What motivated me to stay on a positive path was Faith. I stopped enjoying the life I used to live.

The question is, who do you want to be in the next 5 years; an ex-prisoner, another label or someone you are grateful and proud to be?



Self care menu.

- Take a few deep breaths **5mins**
- Stretch your body **5mins**
- Listen to your favourite song **5mins**
- Meditation **15mins**
- Read a chapter of a book **15mins**
- Write out your thoughts **15mins**
- Take a walk outside **30mins**
- Timeline things you want to achieve **30mins**
- Write down 5 positive things going on **30mins**

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I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed

Michael Jordan

Employment.

If education is not something you are looking at doing, and you would like to take a more of a hands on approach and work - there are companies that do support employing young adults who have been to prison or have a criminal record. There are also a few recruitment companies that specialise in working with people who may be homeless, a care leaver or have a criminal record.

Radical Recruit

Radical Recruit specialise in helping people with complex needs and different backgrounds. You can get help with CVs and start looking for your career. radicalrecruit.co.uk/contact.html

Ex-Seed

Ex-Seed work specifically with prison leavers and people with criminal records to access jobs that will set you up on a successful pathway. They also have a glossary of recommended companies. ex-seed.co.uk/apply.html

Employable

Employable is a recruiter that helps you identify career option, map what qualifications you may need and progress with education and work experiences to help you reach your goal. They work with everyone no matter your background and they also have an app to make things easier to manage. employable.me

Bounceback

Bounce Back is a Training Charity and Painting & Decorating Social Enterprise working inside & outside prison to train people from custody into employment to either become professional decorators for our own business or skilled construction workers for the building industry. bouncebackproject.com/training

The Hardman Directory

The Hardman Trust publishes and distributes a practical guide known as The Hardman Directory to give people in prison and those recently released free access to accurate information on supplementary funding and other forms of financial support that may be available to them. hardmantrust.org.uk/directory



Education.

There are many different options you can explore in order to find out what suits you best. If you are not sure which direction you want to take, there are many organisations that can support you on that journey:

Apprenticeships

If you want a more hands-on approach and would like to train and earn money at the same time, apprenticeships are a great choice for you.

Find an apprenticeship
[gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

Volunteering

Do-it is a database of UK volunteering opportunities. You can search more than a million volunteering opportunities by interest, activity or location and then apply online.

Volunteering search
do-it.org/opportunities/search

Open University

The open university provides the policy of open admissions, distance, and online learning programs that you can do remotely.

Course search
open.ac.uk

Prisoners Education Trust

Prisoners Education Trust help and support people in prison and people who have left prison to access higher education that may not have been available during their sentence.

See their work
prisonerseducation.org.uk





Different Housing Options.

Council housing

You can apply for council housing through your local council. Each council has its own rules. You'll usually have to join a waiting list and you're not guaranteed to get a property straight away. Ask your council how long you're likely to have to wait. You can apply if you're 18 or over (some councils let you apply if you're 16 or over).

Housing associations

Housing associations offer similar types of housing as local councils – often to people on a low income or who need extra support. You can apply directly to a housing association often through your local council, you can also apply to more than one housing association at a time.

Supported accommodation

Supported housing is where people live as a tenant but also get some support whilst living there. Supported housing can be living in a flat by yourself, living in a shared house or living in a network or block of flats where everyone gets support.

Housing benefit

Housing benefit is intended to help meet housing costs for rented accommodation. You are entitled to housing benefit if you are on benefits.

You can get help paying for your housing if you are on or eligible for Universal Credit. You can apply for the housing element to help cover rent costs. They may cover all or part of your rent.

If you are in supported accommodation or a hostel your support worker can help you apply for housing benefit.



Housing Support.

Housing support will be different depending on what you're entitled to and what is available in your area. Below are some National organisations who specialise in housing support.

Nacro

Nacro provide support in housing to enable people to with complex needs to help turn their lives around.
Tel no: 0300 123 1999

YMCA

There are over 200 YMCA's around the UK that are providing housing and advice for the homeless. YMCA is also involved in training for the unemployed and a lot community work. A young person does not have to be resided in a ymca hostel to access any these benefits.
Tel no: 020 7186 9500

Shelter

Shelter have a housing advice line offering independent and confidential information, advice, advocacy and referral for anyone with housing problems
Tel no: 0808 800 4444

Foyer

Foyer provides accommodation with opportunities for young people, and a community in which they can grow and thrive. By integrating training and job search, personal support and motivation with a place to live, they provide a bridge to independence, and a chance for young people to realise their full potential.
Tel no: 020 7430 2212

Benefits.

In July 2019 changes were made to the benefits system replacing 6 other benefits all into one - known as Universal Credit. If this is your first time making a benefit claim, or you were on any of the below, you would now have to claim Universal Credit.

Child tax credits

Housing benefit

Income support

Income based job seekers

Working tax credits

Income related employment and support allowance

As soon as you have made your claim, you will be entitled to apply for an advance payment as it may take 6 to 12 weeks for your claim to be up and running. This can be done via your journal on your Universal Credit account. You can find all information about Universal Credit and your claim here and you will be shown how to use it in your first appointment. You are entitled to different amounts of Universal Credit depending on your age, relationship status and parental status - details of which are on the next page.

Universal Credit Tel no: **0800 328 5644**
if you cannot hear or speak: **0800 328 5644**

The Universal Credit team might phone you after you have sent your application if they need more information or if you cannot verify your identity online.



**How to claim
Universal credit
Applications have to
be made online via the
.gov.uk website which
will mean you will have
to wait upon release to
make you claim**

Universal credit rates.

Rates of Universal Credit standard allowance per month for 2021/22

There are different elements that are considered when applying for Universal Credit including disabilities, children and part time work hours.

Single and under 25

£311.68

Single and over 25

£393.45

What you can get in a couple and you're both under 25

£489.23 (for both)

In a couple and either of you are 25 or over

£617.60 (for both)

Child Element

1st child or qualifying young person (if born before 6 April 2017)

£333.33

2nd & subsequent child or qualifying young person. First child as well if born on or after 6 April 2017

£287.92



Empowerment Organisations.

Here are some organisations that really focus on empowering young adults that have experiences of the Justice System on many different levels. These organisations may vary depending on where you are in the country.

P3

P3 is a National charity and social enterprise, made up of passionate people, who care about people. They run a variety of services all across the UK, that aim to give everyone the chance to be part of the community they live in and feel connected to society. They support individuals to unlock inner potential, opening up a world of possibilities.

Find out more here: p3charity.org/about-us/about-us

St Giles Trust

St Giles Trust is a National organisation that engages people using real-life experiences, they help with jobs, volunteering opportunities and can even help with qualifications. They work in different areas all over the country. They aim to empower you to use your experiences in a positive way.

Have a look at what they do here: stgilestrust.org.uk/what-we-do

Youth-Ink

Youth-Ink is a London based charity that is led by young people with lived experiences. They take the lead on a variety of important conversations with decision makers in the health and justice sectors. All the staff on the team have lived experience. Regardless of your background, your experience, you can support young people's lives through your passion and time. with them.

See more details for volunteering here:
youth-ink.org.uk/find-help/for-volunteers

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It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves

William Shakespeare

Community Led Initiatives CIC

CLI is a national organisation with a passion to help people who want to make changes to feel part of their community and achieve their potential. Through mentoring, group activities, community building and co-production, they remove barriers to community inclusion for people who are socially excluded, facing complex issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, criminal records and mental ill-health.

They have mentoring opportunities here: communityled.org.uk

Switchback

Switchback is a London based charity that focuses on rehabilitation for young adults coming out of prison. The organisations purpose is to enable young men to find a way out of the justice system and build a stable, rewarding life they can be proud of.

Have a look at their programmes here:
switchback.org.uk/what-we-do/#programme

Peer Power

Peer Power are a London based charity that we partner with children, teenagers and young adults who have experienced injustice, abuse, loss and exclusion.

Together, we work to heal trauma and adversity through caring relationships, and transform youth service systems, by supporting the young people we partner with to influence and inspire action.

Volunteering opportunities are available:
peerpower.org.uk/about-us/get-involved

Careers & Aspirations.

Do you have goals?

Would you like to further your education or maybe working is more of an interest to you? Here are some things to think about:

- Have you thought about your career path?
- What would you like to do or where you would like to work?
- What is your dream job?
- Do you know what you will need or what to do to be successful
- Do you have a cv and cover letter?
- Have you had interview practice and preparation?

Steps to help achieve your goal

- Write your goals down
- Create a plan
- Explore what you will need to achieve your goal
- Self care
- Be open-minded

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It is always the start that requires the greatest effort

James Penney



Fatmata's story.

I think the care system was my pipeline into the criminal justice system but a lack of support no guidance and bad friends ensured I would continue to follow that path.

I think creating and setting my self goals and trying to surround myself with positive like minded people is what has helped me and the support of friend's colleagues and family along with the willingness to live up to my best potential.

Mostly my kids are my main motivation but honestly it was just because I was tired of the life and where it was leading and I knew I needed to make massive changes.

No matter how hard its going to get its only temporary even a year or more is temporary nothing is forever u don't need a time limit on self progression what one or two years of your lifetime to get yourself back on track

No matter how hard its going to get always learning from other people and situations

We want to hear from you.

Leaders Unlocked enables young people and under-represented groups to have a stronger voice on the issues that affect their lives. In education, policing, health, justice and elsewhere, we help organisations to involve the people who matter and shape decision-making for the better.

You can see our projects here:
leaders-unlocked.org

The Young Justice Advisors are always looking to speak to and work with young adults who want to have their say and work alongside decision makers. We have a team of 'experts by experience' that are able to voice their thoughts on a wide range of areas within justice. We will build up your skills, confidence and C.V and want to hear from as many young adults who have experienced the Justice System.

You can see our projects here:
youngjusticeadvisors.co.uk

Twitter: @YJAdvisors
Instagram: yjadvisors

We'd also love to know your thoughts on this guide and if you would like to get involved with us.

Please contact - nadine@leaders-unlocked.org

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**The best way to get started is
to quit talking and begin doing**

Walt Disney