

AFK

working with disability
creating opportunities



AFK's Strategy 2025 - 2028



Hello, we're AFK



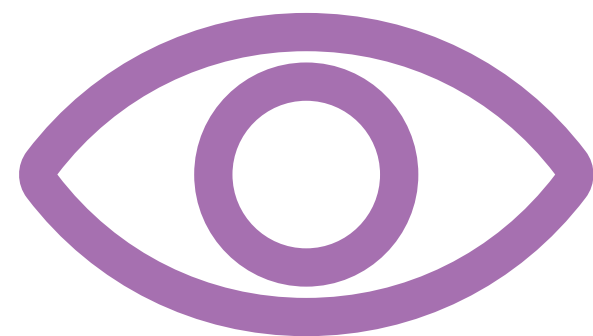


For over 30 years, we've worked to develop pathways to employment and fund mobility equipment for disabled or neurodiverse children and young people. We're an agile, listening organisation that evolves with our young people's needs.

We create practical solutions. Over the next three years, we've got ambitions to reach more young people than ever before.

This strategy – developed in collaboration with our beneficiaries, staff, and partners – explains how we'll get there.





Our Vision:

A world where there are no barriers to independence for children and young people who are disabled or neurodiverse.



Our Mission:

To create opportunities for children and young people who are disabled, neurodiverse or both, to increase their independence, reach their individual potential and remove the barriers they face.



Our Principles

Co-production

Our young people are at the centre of everything we do; they are actively involved in designing projects, developing ideas and making decisions at all levels. They will increasingly help deliver our work in future years.



Our Principles

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:

We recognise significant barriers still exist that deny equal access to support. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive culture where everyone can progress and thrive with a sense of belonging.



Our Principles

Sustainability

We want to be around for the long term. We're committed to efficient systems, financial resilience, and reducing our environmental impact. We're diversifying our income through social enterprise models and government funding.

Our change themes

We want to continue to create opportunities for disabled children and young people to increase their independence, reach their potential and overcome barriers they face across three themes:



1

Improve

Better lives through innovative employment support

2

Increase

More people getting the specialist mobility equipment they need

3

Influence

More young people participating in society as equal citizens

How will we do this?

- Further developing specialised career support and self-employment initiatives to create pathways to new opportunities.
- Implementing innovative programmes driven by real-life experiences that align with AFK's mission.
- Providing essential mobility equipment not covered by the NHS, and uniquely, being the only charity in the UK that covers maintenance costs for powerchairs we help fund.
- Training our young people to adeptly navigate their journeys to school, college, or employment.
- Collaboration by sharing best practices and delivering high-quality training to partners and the community.

Why it matters

Understanding what we are up against



Wider context

Each year in the UK, thousands of disabled and neurodiverse young people face significant barriers to independence and employment.

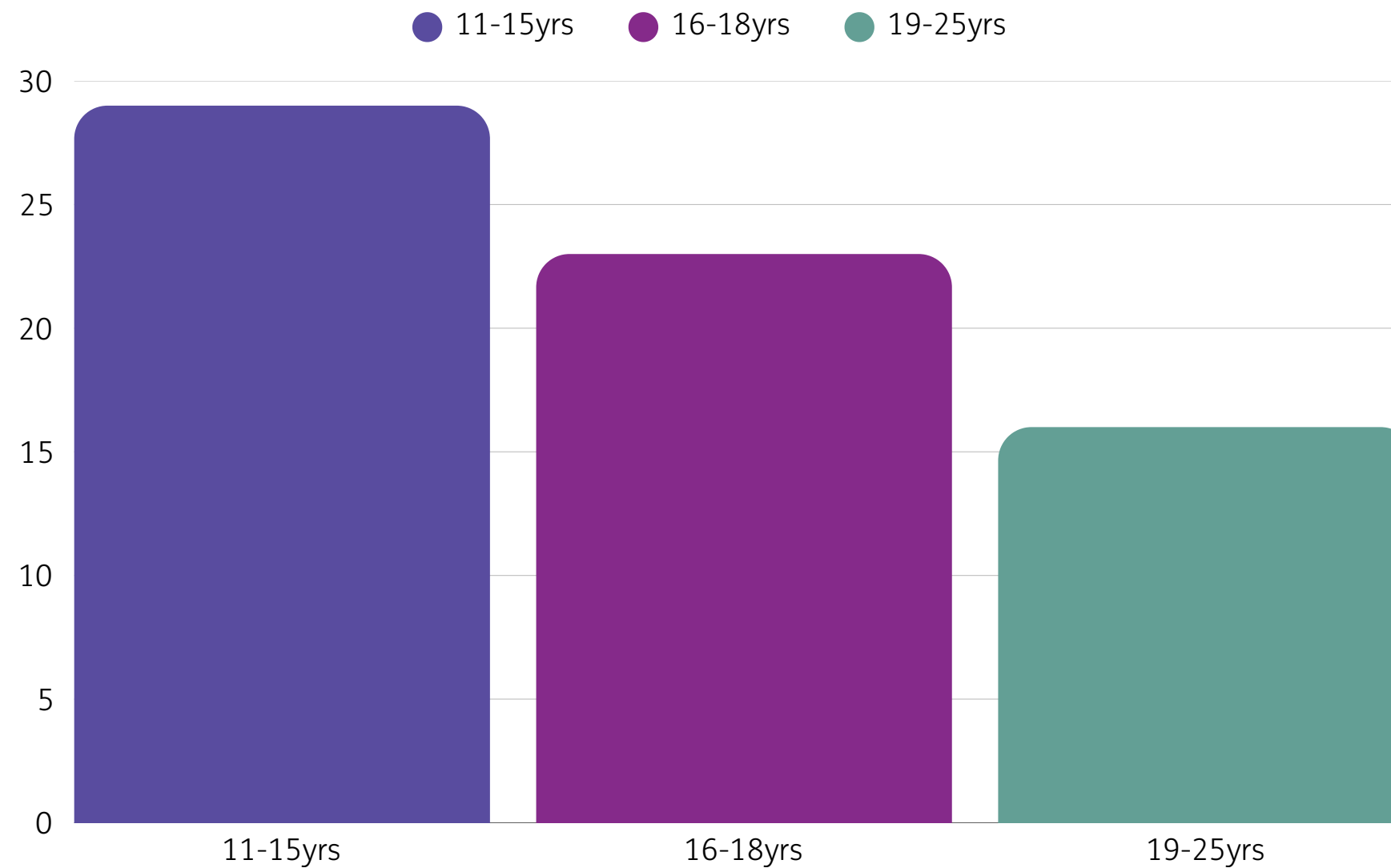
- ★ 23% of the working-age population has a disability (Office for National Statistics June 2023)
- ★ 12.3% of all 16-24 year olds were not in employment, education or training (NEET) from July to September 2024 (GOV.UK)
- ★ 70% of young people accessing our provision come to AFK with little or no work experience
- ★ An estimated 75,000 young people in the UK need a wheelchair to be mobile (Whizz Kidz, 2025)

Only 1 in 5 disabled young people feel they get adequate support to achieve their goals or have their opinions heard by health or social care staff.

Additionally, only 1 in 10 believe their parents receive enough social care support.

I have the right amount of formal support to achieve the things I want to.

Figure 1: Proportion of Disabled young people stating that they have the right amount of support to achieve the things they want to in life by age group. DCP 'This Is My Life' Report 2024.



Devalle's Story

Devalle, 24, is neurodivergent with a mild learning disability that makes communication challenging.

His passion for basketball gave him community and belonging, but after completing his Sports BTEC, he struggled to find employment while his peers went to university.

Through AFK's Employment and Skills Programme, Devalle connected with an employment coach who helped build his leadership skills and confidence. When traditional employment options proved limited, he joined AFK's Self-Employment Pilot, receiving guidance on business development.





This support empowered Devalle to create "Adaptive Ballers" - a business bridging wheelchair basketball with mainstream basketball.

He now works with top wheelchair basketball teams and delivers coaching through Disability Sports Coaching.

Devalle reflects: "The programme impacted my confidence and provided me with a network of support. I felt empowered and learned my potential."

Boronica's Story

Meet Boronica, a joyful young girl with Spastic Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy, navigating her own journey of physical challenges.

After her Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy surgery, her medical team identified a Theraplay Trike as essential for her rehab journey.

When her family reached out to AFK, we understood the importance of this pink trike and worked to make this goal a reality.





This intervention has proven instrumental in Boronica's rehabilitation journey, providing targeted support for strength development, coordination improvement, and increased independence.

The impact of this equipment on Boronica's life has been nothing short of transformational. Her mother expressed their profound gratitude, saying, "We thank you again very much for providing this item to our family."

This trike has not only been integral in Boronica's physical recovery but has also brought newfound joy and independence into her daily life.

Our Programmes



Mobility Services



Pathways to Employment

Mobility






We provide funding for specialised mobility equipment that's beyond NHS provision, from wheelchairs and powerchairs to car seats and trikes. We advocate on behalf of individuals to secure additional funding where needed.

Impact target: By 2028, we'll provide 150 pieces of equipment annually and raise advocacy funding to £80,000.





Pathways to Employment



We support disabled or neurodiverse young people aged 16-25 in London to find paid employment through employer visits, work placements, workshops and with one-to-one interview support.

Impact target: By 2028 we'll increase the numbers of young people we support on these programmes from 90 to 105 with staggered annual increments.





Aspire To Work

We connect young people with real employers from different sectors to learn about careers and develop essential employability skills before they leave school.

Impact target: By 2028 we'll support 100 young people every year.

Employment and Skills

Supporting 90+ disabled or neurodiverse young people (16-25) in North London with critical life and work skills through employer visits, work placements, workshops, and travel training.



By 2028, we'll support 105 young people annually, with 50 external work placements and 30 starting paid employment each year.



Self-Employment Programme

Helping young entrepreneurs develop their business ideas through workshops, mentoring, and our Summer Business School.

Impact target: Engaging 125 young people annually and creating 12 new businesses by 2028.

Independent Travel Training

Supporting young people to develop the skills to travel independently to education or employment, focusing on road safety, personal safety, and practical journey planning.

Impact target: By 2028, 15 young people signed off to travel independently each year.



Innovation: Our Future Direction

Pre-Internship and Supported Internship Programmes

A tailored programme for young people 16-18 who require additional time and support to transition to other work programmes, delivered in partnership with North London schools, colleges and local businesses.



Innovation: Our Future Direction

Disability and Neurodiversity Training and Consultancy

Launching specialist training for organisations on disability awareness and neurodiversity, with co-facilitation from our ambassadors and alumni. This social enterprise will generate income while promoting inclusivity.



Innovation: Our Future Direction

Train the Travel Trainer

Offering accredited training for local authorities and education providers who wish to deliver their own Independent Travel Training Programmes in-house.



Innovation: Our Future Direction

Reshaping Youth Leadership

Evolving our leadership model to better reflect the changing landscape of how young people engage with our work.



Our Partnerships

AFK will develop strategic partnerships with:

- Youth and community organisations whose service users would benefit from Travel Training
- Disability-focused membership organisations to promote our EDI consultancy
- Organisations for joint project delivery or resource sharing
- Businesses who can provide employment opportunities for disabled or neurodiverse young people



Join Our Journey

Together, we can create a world with no barriers to independence. We're looking for partners who share our vision and want to make a difference in the lives of disabled and neurodiverse children and young people.

www.afkcharity.org
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AFK is committed to supporting disabled and neurodiverse young people across the UK

