

Annual Update 2024/2025



Year Overview

As we reflect on 2024-2025, SSYI has experienced another year of meaningful progress and positive impact. Our commitment to serving the young people in our community has led to the continued expansion of our work, with 11 youth groups running each week across Shelford, Stapleford, Sawston, and Duxford. Through our open access sessions, targeted groups, one to one sessions and community activities, we've been able to support over 300 young people, providing opportunities for growth, connection, and development. This work has been powered by our dedicated youth workers—Tilly Akoto, Tina Woodstock, Kay Salter, and lead youth worker Zac Britton—under the oversight of Jon Sanders, head of the Romsey Mill Youth Development Team. New youth worker Jack Newman has just joined the team in April 2025.

This year, we've been able to take full advantage of our new minibus and trailer, bringing the football cage to local events like the Shelford Feast and the Christmas Light Switch-On. Additionally, the minibus allowed us to offer outreach sessions in the summer across Sawston, Duxford, and Harston, creating more opportunities for young people to get involved, as well as allowing us to offer more trips in the holidays. We're also excited to have revived our 'Shred it Up' skateboarding and BMX sessions, which have been a hit thanks to these new resources.

Mentoring and 1:1 support remains a core part of our work. As of March 2025, we are meeting with 19 young people each week, with most of these sessions happening at Sawston Village College. We also provide support in the community, often meeting young people for casual conversations over food or during walks in local public spaces. This personal approach allows us to build stronger relationships, understand individual needs, and offer guidance as they navigate the challenges and difficulties they are facing. Through this work we have supported young people around their mental health, emergency housing provision and helping them to better engage with their education.

Throughout the year, we have continued to support a growing number of young people dealing with issues related to substance misuse, including alcohol and drugs, alongside an increase in mental health challenges among those we work with. Thanks to Serious Violence Diversionary Funding, we have been able to expand our work and reach even more young people who are facing these challenges. We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support of our partners and donors—your contribution makes everything we do possible.

Thank you for helping us make a lasting impact!

Stories of hope

James*, 15, is one of the young people from Sawston who we support. This year has been a challenging one for him, as he worked hard to find an educational path that suited his needs while navigating difficulties with anger. However, over the past year, James has made remarkable progress in managing these emotions. He is still attending school and has benefited from 1:1 sessions with Kay, including pursuing a home cooking qualification every Tuesday in our Youth Centre. James has also engaged in Sawston youth group run by Kay and participated in many trips, which have helped him shift his outlook on life from one of hopelessness to positivity. Not only has he made significant strides in his personal growth, but he has also repaired relationships with friends he had previously fallen out with, showing the power of resilience and growth. When asked what he enjoyed about SSYI, he said: "...the trips, the people... good people to be around... have fun, cook, I try it... get a qualification out of it in the end, and then, yeah, goes on my CV"

*The name of this young person has been changed

Ethan*, 16, is a young person who initially attended our Friday youth clubs, and now regularly attends our Deeper sessions run by Tilly. Over the past couple of years, he has experienced tremendous personal growth. Initially shy and unsure, Ethan has grown in confidence and has become much more comfortable communicating with others. He has built some strong friendships through these sessions and has joined us on several trips too. The supportive environment and community have helped him build a stronger sense of self and deepen his connection with his faith. His newfound confidence has not only improved his interactions within the group but also in other areas of his life, allowing him to face challenges with a positive mindset and a clearer sense of purpose. "SSYI has helped me socialise with other people and helped me gain confidence with talking to people."

*The name of this young person has been changed

Ryan*, 16, is a young person who has been attending our Duxford Youth Group run by Tina over the past year. Through his involvement, he has made remarkable progress in both communication and anger management. At the beginning, Ryan faced challenges with expressing himself and managing his emotions, particularly when playing football, but with the support of the staff, group and the positive environment, he has learned better ways to communicate and handle his anger, both in our sessions and at school. His growth has been inspiring, as he now approaches difficult situations with more patience and understanding.

*The name of this young person has been changed



Statistics | Engagement and Activities

Total number of young people regularly involved in SSYI activities	314
Gender of the young people	Female: 141, Male: 171 Transgender/Non-binary/Intersex: 2
Ethnicity of the young people	Asian/Asian British: 14; Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 3 Mixed/Multiple Ethnic groups: 46; White British: 237; White Other: 14
Number of young people we engaged with through detached work	149 Community: Sawston, Shelford School: Sawston Village College
Number of young people we supported through open access activities	243 Sawston Football Duxford; Sawston 7-9 Girls Group; Deeper; Shelford 6+7; Shelford 8+9
Number of young people we supported through targeted group work	48 Shred It Up; Serious Violence Diversionary Funding Group BLU
Number of young people we gave 1:1 support	10 (Community); 25 (School)
Number of young people involved in community projects	34 Young leaders (9); Shelford Feast Village Events; Christmas Tree Festival
Number of young people involved in youth voice projects	56 Youth Assembly Project; Skatepark Design Project
Number of trips / residentials	16 trips Trampoline Park *2; Escape rooms; Gauntlet; Adrenaline Alley; Aqua Park; Brighton Beach; F51; Ice Skating; Nando's; Golf; Mini Golf; Shuffleboard; Bowling; Archery; 1 Night Residential in Essex; 2 Night Residential in Norfolk
Number of young people we supported in more than one context	167
Number of young people supported in time of crisis	47
Number of hours of face-to-face delivery	1576 hours

Statistics | Mechanisms of Change

"The youth workers make me feel welcome"	100%
"The youth workers care about me"	97.1%
"The youth workers give me the support I need"	91.4%
"The youth workers listen to me"	95.7%
"The youth workers trust me"	91.4%
"The youth workers respect me and my background"	97.2%
"I enjoy my time with SSYI"	100%
"I feel I can talk to one of the Youth workers if I have a problem"	100%
"I feel part of a community at SSYI"	88.6%
"I have a say in what activities take place at SSYI"	65.8%

Excerpts from Focus Groups

So how do you feel when you're at SSYI and chatting to an SSYI Youth worker?

AB – *I feel safe and calm when talking to youth workers, they don't make me feel silly or judged, easy to chat with. It feels like youth workers are our friends rather than people in charge*

LJ – *there's no pressure from the youth workers to be anything, they let me be myself and respect me, they talk to me like I am an adult and don't baby me*

MC – *youth workers make me feel safe and I know that they I can talk to them about anything, I know that they will only tell someone what I have spoken about if I am in danger*

CM – *the youth workers are laid back, calm and funny and really nice. The volunteers are also nice,*

PZ – *I like that I can have a laugh with you all, I like that we can always ask for help, and I like that if I am struggling with transport or payment for trips, they support us*

AB – *they keep me safe, treat me like an adult, listen to me and make me laugh*

Community Connections, Partners and Enablers

Partner Organisations	<p>Romsey Mill;</p> <p>The Parish Councils of Great Shelford, Little Shelford, Stapleford, Sawston, Duxford, Harston & Whittlesford</p> <p>South Cambridgeshire District Council; Cambridgeshire County Council; Police & Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Cambridge City FC; Duxford FC</p> <p>Sawston Village College; Tesco; Waitrose; Co-op;</p> <p>John Huntingdon Charity; COLE charitable Trust; Evelyn Trust;</p> <p>Garfield Weston; Gosling Foundation;</p> <p>St Andrews Stapleford St Mary's Great Shelford;</p> <p>Great Shelford Free Church; All Saints Little Shelford; Sawston Free Church; Hinkledux Parish Churches Our Lady of Lourdes</p> <p>Sawston; Kingsgate Church; Cambridge Shelford Playscape</p>
Number of Volunteers	17

Third Party Quotes

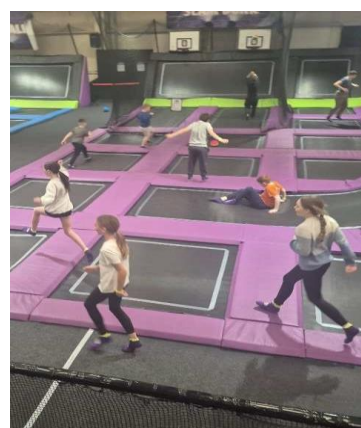
'SSYI provide our pupils with incredibly valued support, both in school and off-site in the community. The youth workers are highly-skilled and are able to engage with pupils in a meaningful way to provide much needed help for those who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. We are richer as a school for the care and dedication shown towards our pupils by the SSYI team.'

Clare Greaney: Assistant Principal – Sawston Village College

Quotes from parents

"My son loves attending youth group on a Friday, it's helped him greatly with his independence and his social interactions from others"

"My son looks forward to coming to SSYI every Friday. It's a safe and fun place to build independence and socialise with others"



Statistics | Outcomes

Young people expressing an improvement in confidence	80%
Young people expressing an improvement in their ability to overcome challenges	70%
Young people expressing an improvement in their ability to get on with others	90%
Young people expressing an improvement in their wellbeing	85.7%
Young people expressing an improvement in their skills	80%
Young people expressing an improvement in making positive choices and decisions	82.8%
Young people expressing an improvement in feeling safe in their community	94.3%
Young people expressing an improvement in their ability to have a positive impact on others in their community	88.6%
Young people expressing an improvement in hope for the future	82.8%
Young people expressing an improvement in their ability to manage their emotions	84.3%
Rating of SSYI sessions out of 10	9.2

Quotes From Young People

- *"SSYI helps keep me off the streets and gives me somewhere to go and something to do, the staff recognise when I am upset and need to talk, and they always encourage me to be my best and work hard."*
- *"SSYI gets me out the house and offers me support when I am struggling."*
- *"I talk more with different people then I used to, and I feel happier talking to others."*
- *"I like being part of a community and it helps me to have a guaranteed time to see my friends out of school."*
- *"SSYI helps me manage my anger and staff teach me how to be calmer."*
- *"I like SSYI because it's a safe place and gives me freedom to be who I want to be, in the future I'd like to be a young leader/volunteer."*
- *"I love youth group as it is, I think it's perfect as it is, it's not posh or scruffy it's just right and makes us feel welcome and safe."*
- *"They understand children and listen very well they help you see things clear for later on in life and also help with life skills."*
- *I go to sawston youth group with Kay, Tilly and Chris and it gets me out the house meeting new people and supporting me it's fun and Kay makes sure there's lots of activities for us to do."*
- *"SSYI are really supportive of me and help me build my confidence and encourage me to try new things"*

Young Leader Story

I started coming to youth group hoping that it would help me with my mental health and that. It also gets me out of the house. When I first came, I was badly behaved because I couldn't control my anger and emotions. SSYI staff have helped me and told me about the young leader programme, and I thought I'd give it a go and now I am a young leader, and I have to set a good example to the younger ones, this has helped me learn how to manage my own emotions and develop some better coping strategies. Staff have been patient with me and helped me to learn to control my anger and talk about my feelings, I have been given the opportunity to complete other courses such as my first aid course and staff have given me a reference for future jobs. I am aiming to become a youth worker and help others.

Peter – 16

