

Impact Report



2024

Oldham Today

Evidence obtained from The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on UK Poverty 2024: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK & The Oldham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Framework



Oldham has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the country at 44%, compared to the national average of 29%.



Oldham's percentage of NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training), 16 to 17-year olds, is higher than regional and national averages at 6.9% compared to 4.7% nationally.



Oldham has the 4th highest rate of young people in treatment services in Greater Manchester for substance misuse with 2.04 per 1,000 almost double the England average of 1.03.



Oldham has a significantly high obesity rate amongst year 6 children at 42.4% compared to national average of 37.8%.



Oldham's teenage conception rate is 20.5%, significantly higher than the national average of 13.1% for England.

“I don't have to hang out walking the streets any more with friends. I go to Mahdlo”

Generation Isolation

Commissioned by OnSide and in partnership with YouGov, Generation Isolation is based on responses from 5,200 young people in England aged 11-18.

“With 85% of a young person’s time spent outside school, the experiences, opportunities and support they are provided during this time plays a vital role — by shaping happy, well-rounded young people who develop into confident, emotionally and physically healthy adults. Yet this time outside of school receives relatively little public or political attention compared with the time spent in school. We wanted to help to change this, by lifting the lid on the social lives of young people and why it matters.”

Key findings:

76%

of young people spend most of their free time on screens.

52%

of young people that spend most of time on their smartphone would like to reduce this.

18%

of young people spend most of their free time alone.

48%

of young people spend most of their free time in their bedroom.

51%

of young people reported high or very high feelings of anxiety.

44%

of young people reported high or very high feelings of loneliness.

85%

of young people do not attend a youth centre.

93%

of young people that attend a youth centre say it has made a positive difference to their lives.

35%

of young people do not have opportunities to meet new people and make friends.

29%

of young people say more affordable leisure activities would make the most difference to improve their life outside of school.

35%

of young people who say youth centres make a positive difference say it is because of making new friends/social interactions.

24%

of young people spend most of their free time on their smartphone, making it the most time consuming activity outside of school.

Read the full report here



Our vision is to empower Oldham's young people to thrive.

THINK OF A PLACE THAT YOU NEEDED AT 13 YEARS OLD.

Mahdlo is a need, not a want.

Imagine a place where you felt safe, supported, and inspired. A place that believed in you even when you doubted yourself. A place just to be young and have fun. For thousands of young people in Oldham, Mahdlo is that place.

For the last 12 years, Mahdlo has been a vital lifeline for young people, providing somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to.

We have responded to their needs, increasing our delivery hours by 107% from 46 hours a week to 96.

Working at the heart of Oldham's communities, we provide life-changing youth work that empowers young people to grow, thrive, and reach their potential.

Many of those who attend Mahdlo face challenges that no child should have to navigate alone.

We are Mahdlo, Oldham's charity for young people.

Through exciting, enriching activities, we give them the chance to build confidence, develop new skills, and create brighter futures.

Open for all young people, they are supported by trained, trusted adults who listen on their terms. We offer more than just activities, we offer hope.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Lees'.

Lucy Lees
Chief Executive
& proud Oldhamer

4,800

delivery hours across all sessions



68% of members reported increased or maintained mental wellbeing.



71% of young people reported increased or maintained social skills.



75% of members reported or maintained feelings of cohesion.



78% of young people reported increased or maintained their self-confidence.



28,835 attendances to sport and physical activity sessions.



19,976 free meals provided.

TEAM

“Coming to Mahdlo, I don’t have to worry about where my next meal will come from.”



4,981

Young people registered as Mahdlo members throughout 2024



20% have a disability or additional needs.



69% of members live in the most deprived communities.



44% of members are BAME.



19% of care experienced young people in Oldham attended Mahdlo.

“I used to get bullied and Mahdlo has helped me make friends.”

“It’s not good enough”

A member of Mahdlo since 2018, Khyla has attended 294 sessions including Family, Girls and Junior Zone. When producing this piece of artwork, she was asked if she would like to put it in the art shop, that had been set up as an enterprise project. She replied “I don’t think it’s good enough.”

This piece was entered into the auction at the Mahdlo Ball, where it was the star piece selling for an impressive £760. The winning bidder certainly thought it was good enough!

“At Mahdlo, fostering a culture of creativity empowers young people to discover their passions and equips them with the tools to navigate life’s challenges with resilience and confidence.” - Lucy Lees, CEO



“Mahdlo gives me a break from my family to have some time to myself to do different things.”



“Volunteering at Mahdlo has given me an opportunity to use my skills to help my community and make it better for the people living here.”

Our People

5,560

Hours given by our incredible volunteers



178 volunteers.



39 young leaders (age 16 - 21).



70 local residents employed.



2,909 training hours undertaken by the team.

“The team always make me feel really safe, and I know there is someone to talk to.”



Member to Manager

Shaunnine started her journey at Mahdlo as a Senior Zone member and became a young leader supporting the Junior Zone sessions. She quickly progressed from volunteer to a paid member of the team, working on reception and as an activity worker.

Her role as an activity worker gave her the confidence to undertake a Youth and Community Work degree at Huddersfield University. Upon completing her degree, Shaunnine became a Youth Worker, progressing to Junior Zone Coordinator in 2021.

In May 2024 she successfully applied for the position of Youth Work Manager and is responsible for ensuring all Mahdlo's sessions address the needs of young people. Shaunnine is an excellent example of how a young person can become inspired to volunteer and then transition to paid youth work. Through investing in our people, we can ensure our team is representative of the community we work with.

“Being able to inspire young people and see them grow is so rewarding.”



“She believed in me”

When I first met my mentor, Jo, I had no idea how much of an impact she would have on my life.

From the start we clicked, spending time together cooking, playing games, and chatting about everything. Jo believed in me, even when I didn't. She helped me see that I could take a different path in life supporting me through ups and downs and always making sure we had a laugh along the way.

We tackled things together that I found overwhelming, such as writing my CV, setting up a bank account, applying for a passport and helping me find work experience. One of the biggest things Jo helped me with was signing up for a dentist - I'd avoided it for years, but she stuck with me until I got it sorted!

I'll never forget my 18th birthday picnic at the reservoir, complete with cake and balloons. Through Jo's encouragement, I gained the confidence to go to a job fair, got an interview there and then secured my first job in a hospital blood lab as a Biomedical Scientist. I've recently been promoted. I'm at college too studying for my Level 3 qualifications, saving for a flat and I've even taken my first holiday abroad.

Looking back, I don't think I'd be where I am now without Jo. Because of her, I've achieved things I never thought possible. I'll always be grateful for everything Jo and the mentoring project at Mahdlo did for me and the confidence it helped me find.

“I was simply thinking of ‘giving’ not ‘receiving’ but have been blown away by being a mentor.”

£1,669,337

raised and invested in young people's futures



32 Corporate and individual Patrons.



Continued funding from the local authority.



358 people taking part in events, challenges and making donations.



32 project funders.



Shape the future of Oldham's young people:



“It's more than a donation, it's being able to see the difference you make to their lives.”

Thank you to our Patrons, Funders and Donors for their belief in Oldham's young people.

Founding Patron

The Stoller Charitable Trust

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OMC
The Nursery Store

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Project Funders

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Medicash
NCS Trust
One Oldham Fund
OnSide Youth Zones
Onward Homes
Percy Bilton
Saddleworth Hydro

Sedulo Foundation
Sport England
The Henry Smith Charity
The Prudence Trust
The Roger Tanner Trust
The Treeside Trust
The Together Energy Fund
The Souter Trust
WEA GMCA Community
Fund

Donors, Fundraisers, Event and Campaign Supporters

Ambercare
Artko
Callum Wood
Danny Mills
David Bellis MBE
Kenny Hope
Oldham Business Awards
Prestige Nursing & Care
Terry & Sue Flanagan
14 Teams who took part in the GMP 13 hour fundraiser
18 Teams that played in the Mahdlo Golf Day
60+ Businesses, Individuals and Organisations who have given generously throughout the year
119 people who signed up for the 3 Peaks of Saddleworth
160 people who attended the Mahdlo Ball