

We are a community of people who share an ambition to improve the mental health of young people. We have read lots of reports saying youth mental health in the UK is getting worse, and that support available doesn't always work. We think now is the time for research and practice approaches that offer a radically different way of doing things.

Informed by our understanding of resilience, defined as 'beating the odds whilst also changing the odds', we believe that activism has the potential to offer this radically different way of preventing, addressing and reducing mental health problems through building resilience. We call this 'Activism for Resilience' (A4R). We have undertaken a piece of research to explore this idea funded by the MRC/AHRC/ESRC Research Councils titled "[Nothing about us without us: civic activism as a mental health intervention](#)".

## The Blackpool Activist Alliance



For young people who face major challenges, taking part in

community projects and social action may be even more successful than than traditional services in improving our mental health. The Boingboing Foundation is therefore working to bring together young people and our allies in Blackpool to form an Activist Alliance; a collective looking to learn, teach, organise, campaign, fund and disrupt to make change big and small on the issues affecting us and our communities.

So, [what is activism](#)? What you see and hear in the media might not always be the full picture. The Activist Alliance is currently working together in the following ways, it could be more your thing than you know:

- [Apply to be an Environmental Activist in Residence](#) by 29th March 2024
- **Follow us on social media**
  
- [Follow](#)

## Skills and knowledge exchange



Blackpool Activist Alliance hosts free workshops for young activists and community organisers wanting to learn and teach how to 'do' activism. The Skills and Knowledge Exchange events are a space to meet with like-minded local people, share knowledge, skills and take steps together towards making change on the issues we care about. Whether you're a complete newbie or seasoned activist, you're welcome.

## Community co-research



We facilitate opportunities for people facing systemic disadvantage to take seats at the table in research projects that aim to tackle structural inequalities and social injustice. This disrupts power imbalances in research spaces, away from traditional sources of knowledge and towards those of us who are experts by experience. Co-research also gives the communities being studied ownership of the gathered evidence and insights. Disseminating this learning across the Activist Alliance, we aim to provide a direct route from community research to community action.

## Activist in Residence Project





The Activist in Residence project is a paid opportunity for young people in Blackpool aged 16-24 develop and deliver an activist campaign based on their own 'hope for change'. To make this happen, young people are matched with a host organisation seeking to promote youth voice and leadership either internally or in the wider community. The host organisation in return offers the resources, support and/or scaffolding for the campaign.

Read more about our activism:



## [Could you be our next Activist in Residence?](#)

Seeking two Environmental Activists in Residence for the Lancashire Youth Climate Conference. Anyone can be an activist! Apply by 29th March.



## [Watch our workshops: how to do community co-research on health equity](#)

Created as part of the ongoing Community Solutions for Health Equity project that Boingboing Foundation are proudly part of, we are pleased to share recordings of a series of workshops held recently in Blackpool. These workshops are free resources to be taken advantage of by any community members or organisations looking for a beginner's guide to developing the research skills and knowledge needed to explore health inequalities in coastal areas.





## [A guide to becoming more eco-friendly in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast](#)

Hi, I'm Maya, and I wanted to say a big thank you to you for reading. These guides were created to help people in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast become more environmentally friendly, without feeling too overwhelmed by climate issues. They were produced as part of the Boingboing Activist in Residence project, which gave me the opportunity to work as an Eco-activist in Residence at Blackpool Victoria Hospital. I decided that I wanted to use this role to make two guides: one for local residents, and another for Blackpool Teaching Hospitals' Green Champions.



## [Loops – a review](#)

On 22nd February Grace and Lauren, members of the Activist Alliance, attended the show Loops at the Blackpool Grand Theatre. It was a play made in collaboration with Liverpool Everyman + Playhouse, 20 Stories High theatre company and, "a brilliant group of activists and artists who all

shared important stories of what their experiences were, with courage, honesty and jokes”.



## [Prevention in Health and Social Care Inquiry Submissions](#)

Co-leaders of the Resilience Revolution made not one, but two submissions to the UK Parliament ‘Prevention in Health and Social Care’ inquiry last month. The inquiry is about preventing ill health, now and in the future.



## [24th November – Transformative Conversations Workshop with Blackpool Activist Alliance](#)

Join the Activist Alliance and the Ella Baker School of Organising as we reflect on how we can successfully engage with ‘difficult’ conversations with people who do not share either our values or our moral frames in this Transformative Conversations Workshop.



## Activism is for everyone – and it’s essential for building resilience

I stood there on a warm August day with a sense of hope. People of all ages had come together for Make A Change, the inaugural launch event of the Activist Alliance in Blackpool. And it seemed to have come at just the right time. Things seem to be going from bad to...



## Community Report – Climate Change and Mental Health

A full summary of findings from the research project 'Climate change and mental health; A co-produced study with young people in Blackpool'.





## **Our work with Amnesty International**

Boingboing and the CRSJ partnered up with Amnesty International to deliver some training to Amnesty's young campaigners as part of their 'Rise Up' training programme.



## **Submission of Evidence – Health Assessments for Benefits**

In response to the Work and Pensions Committee inquiry, we make recommendations on ways the health assessment processes to claim disability benefits should be improved.



## [The Very Personification of Resilience, Mr Daniels](#)

Let's cut to the chase! Absolute respect to the bravery and resilience of our very own Blackpool FC's Jake Daniels. The 17-year-old has become the first openly gay male professional footballer in the UK, receiving widespread support in his decision to be open about...



## [Blackpool Climate Co-research report](#)

This report has been co-produced by the Blackpool Youth Climate Group and research partners from Boingboing and the CRSJ to share their findings about what young people and adults in Blackpool think and feel about climate change.



## [Activist in Residence project](#)

Beingboing and the Resilience Revolution are launching round 2 of an exciting project that is about creating more ways for young people to take part in activity to change the odds – by becoming an Activist in Residence. Find out more here.



## [Resilience Revolution – Activist in Residence project](#)

Beingboing and the Resilience Revolution are launching an exciting new project for young people that is about creating more ways for young people to take part in activity to change the odds – by becoming an Activist in Residence. Find out more here.





## Resilience Revolution – Blackpool HeadStart

The Resilience Revolution has delivered an extensive programme of lasting change with disadvantaged young people in the town of Blackpool, through a successful £10.4 million Big Lottery HeadStart funding bid. Their work is based on research into resilience by Boingboing and the Centre of Resilience for Social Justice.



## Nothing about us without us: civic activism as a mental health intervention

Through this research a team of co-researchers from different generations, professions and backgrounds will co-create knowledge regarding the role of innovative ‘glocal’ civic activism as a mechanism to strengthen young people’s mental health.



## Activism 4 Resilience: one – Bid Fever: nil. Co-producing a complex research bid in the midst of a pandemic – what’s not to love?

This blog was written by young people who co-wrote a bid for funding from an academic research council. We reflect on our experience of being involved. Even though the bid wasn’t successful it gave us valuable learning experiences.



## Including people with learning disabilities in research – A co-produced short film

A short, animated film co-produced with people with learning disabilities that explains why it is important to include people with learning disabilities and autism in research. This film has been made by Boingboing together with ambassadors, co-researchers, staff, students and volunteers from Arts

Connect, The Resilience Revolution and the University of Brighton.

[Older Entries](#)