

Leonard
Cheshire
Disability

Philippines
Foundation

Young Voices

Creating an inclusive and enabling environment for young people.



“As a person with disability, I want to see an end to discrimination and negative attitudes towards us. Disability is not a hindrance for us. Rather, it is our "weapon", our "amulet" in facing life's adversities and challenges.”

- Ronalyn Silvero, Young Voices member

What Are The Issues?

It is estimated that 10% of the world's population experience some kind of disability and people with disabilities are entitled to the same rights as everybody else, however they often experience disadvantage as a result of the barriers of discrimination and accessibility that they face, particularly in accessing education, healthcare and employment. In order to make a positive change to this situation it is vital that disability issues are tackled and that the voices of people who have disabilities are heard.

Young people experience another level of discrimination because of their age, and discussions on disability policy in the Philippines rarely include the participation of youth with disabilities. This means that YWDs are often unaware of their rights and have no say in the legislation and decisions that will shape their futures—but if young people with disabilities are to grow up understanding the importance of social responsibility and empowered to initiate positive change for themselves and their communities they must be given the opportunity to express their ideas, concerns and experiences, and to participate actively in shaping the world in which they live.



Who Are Young Voices?

Young Voices are groups of talented 16 – 25 year old “youths with disabilities” (YWDs) who work to promote equal rights for the disabled community and to raise awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (UNCRPD). Young Voices is a global project of Leonard Cheshire Disability and there are Young Voices groups in 19 countries around the world. In the Philippines, Young Voices is one of the core programmes of the LCD Philippines Foundation, and there are currently active groups in Manila and in Iloilo.

What Do We Do?

We educate our members on their rights as laid out in the UNCRPD, and empower them to campaign and advocate for the UNCRPD to be fully realized in the Philippines. We aim to raise awareness and to change attitudes, behavior and responses to disability, creating an enabling environment where there are equal opportunities for all.

At the same time we support disabled young people to participate fully in sports, social and cultural activities according to their interests, and we have also set up the Inclusive Youth Centre, an organization that brings together disabled and non-disabled youth to campaign together for an end to poverty and social marginalization in the Philippines.

What does the UNCRPD say?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities is intended to “promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity”. Important provisions in the UNCRPD include:

All persons with disabilities have the right to live in an environment that is accessible to them, and in which they can access public services and information and communications services independently. They also have the right to adequate living conditions, include food, clothing and housing.

All persons with disabilities have a right to access education as equals alongside their able-bodied peers, in a learning environment that is inclusive and non-discriminatory.

All persons with disabilities have an equal right to employment, and should receive the same pay and benefits relative to their positions as their non-disabled colleagues.



How To Get Involved

If you are passionate about promoting the rights of people with disabilities, we'd like to hear from you!

We can provide orientations and training on the UNCRPD and what it means for employers, educators and civil society groups. We can conduct accessibility audits of your workplace or community space.

We can organize displays and presentations by our talented YWDs, including dance performances, sports demonstrations and musical recitals.

We also organize regular campaign and advocacy events to which we invite anyone who is interested in furthering the cause of equal rights and opportunities for all.

Finally, if you are 16-25 years old and disabled you may be eligible to become a member of Young Voices.

For more information, or to discuss your ideas, please contact us using the details below.

Leonard Cheshire Disability Philippines Foundation is a non-stock, non-profit, NGO with over 40 years experience working with and for people with disabilities in the Philippines. We are dedicated to promoting the rights of disabled people through Inclusive Education, Economic Empowerment, and our advocacy programme for young people, Young Voices.

Contact Information

Email: yv@lcdphilippinesoundation.org

Telefax: (+63) 413-4446

Address: Unit 501B Pacific Corporate Center
131 West Ave.
Quezon City, 1105

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Leonard Cheshire Disability is a UK based NGO that exists to change attitudes to disability around the world. See www.lcdisability.org for details.

www.lcdphilippinesoundation.org