



Tackling **youth** unemployment

The need to employ a new approach?

An evaluation of the Young & Successful project



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TACKLING YOUTH

unemployment

The need to employ a new approach?

Executive summary

- Whilst the issue of long term employment and its negative impact on the economy and society is well documented, it is evident that the precise nature of the interventions required to support young people into employment are still emerging.
- This evaluation report has been designed to illustrate the nature of interventions that work effectively to support young people furthest from the labour market into secure employment.
- The evaluation is based on the 'Young and Successful' (YaS) project which was a five year youth unemployment initiative operating over the period 2014-2018. Funded by the Big Lottery Fund Talent Match programme, the project had the freedom to work against a 'test and learn' ethos to help evolve effective interventions to get young people into employment.

The key evaluation findings can be summarised as follows:

- From the outset of the project, research into the needs of young people indicated the need for a YaS service model underpinned by six core principles which include:



1. Trusted mentor



2. Person-centred provision



3. Specialist employment team



4. Involvement of young people in programme decision making



5. Provision of services through known, locally trusted organisations



6. Availability of a personal budget.

YaS project data has been used to refine Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943, 1954) to help express the journey young people undertake through the project.

- Young people must be meeting their basic life needs for food and shelter before they are ready to fully engage with projects devised to develop their employability.
- Projects like Young and Successful provide a place for young people to 'belong' at a time of life transition between education and employment.
- Young people securing their first ever job experience a 'glimpse at self-actualisation' as they realise employment is an attainable lifestyle.

Project data has also been used to assess the employability (or distance from labour market) of young people on the project.

- This analysis has revealed that the strongest collective indicators that a young person will secure employment are; good levels of confidence, good levels of mental health and if they have ever worked before.
- The strongest single indicator that a young person will secure employment is if they have ever worked before.
- Young people accessing the project do not typically have well developed skills to navigate the jobs market. This concern is compounded when young people lack a wider network of family or friends with a good understanding of what it takes to be employable.
- Young people accessing the project are often trapped in a cycle of declining confidence and mental health associated with unsuccessful job applications. If these issues are left unaddressed, young people may begin to believe that employment is an unattainable lifestyle.
- Over the course of delivering the project, these issues have demonstrated the need for a mentor-based model designed to build the confidence and self-worth of young people whilst addressing their individual barriers to employment.



Project data has also been used to analyse the diversity of demand placed on the YaS service in terms of the number of days young people have spent on the project before they secure a job outcome.

- This analysis revealed a huge inconsistency in the amount of time taken to secure a job outcome, ranging from 3 days to 964 days.
- Through the process of grouping young people into five segments, dependent on their length of time on the project, it is possible to see the diversity of costs running through an employability project designed to support young people into employment.
- The easiest to help group took on average 39 days to secure employment. This group attracts an indicative cost of £2,536 per job outcome. The hardest to help group took on average 538 days to secure employment with an indicative cost of £35,086 per job outcome.
- These findings may help to explain the underlying 'parking and creaming' motivations of providers working within payment by results (PBR) regimes as utilised in large-scale employability initiatives like the Work Programme.
- This evidence would suggest the very real danger that PBR contracts may actually be working as a catalyst to reinforce existing disadvantage and inequality in the provision of welfare to work services.
- Whilst a £35,086 cost per job outcome would seem to be relatively expensive, this evaluation would advocate that further research and policy debate is undertaken to understand the wider system costs of not getting more young people into a lifestyle of employment.

- When the annual costs of keeping a young person in the prison system accrues to £34,480, (Source NEF unit cost database, 2015) it is not difficult to understand some of the wider systemic costs that are waiting to be incurred if effective employability provision is not available for young people requiring more intensive support. The wider implications of lost national insurance contributions, income tax contributions and increased burdens on wider public services including welfare, healthcare and housing serve to emphasise this point.

The evidence presented in this report would indicate that young people furthest from the labour market respond well to a mentor-based approach, underpinned by a holistic person-centred ethos. This represents an ethos which seeks to understand the individual needs and barriers facing each young person and crucially seeks to build the trust and rapport necessary to support progression.

This approach moves away from an advisor based model which has historically mandated young people to undertake specific courses of action based on underlying assumptions about the generic needs of all young people seeking to enter the labour market. Projects like Young and Successful illustrate that there is much more that could be done to support future generations in making the essential life transition into employment.



The need to employ a new approach

SECTION



Introduction – Understanding the growing problem of youth unemployment in the UK

Over the past decade, youth unemployment has been affecting communities across England. Most people will know a family member or friend who has struggled to move from mainstream education into sustainable, full-time employment. The figures show that a large number of young people have been struggling to make this transition in recent years.

In 2010, when the UK was experiencing a severe financial recession, 1.5 million young people were not in employment, education or training (NEET) and 250,000 of these young people

had been out of work for over a year. These trends are alarming as evidence suggests that long-term unemployment has a detrimental effect on the life chances of young people.

This was highlighted in a research report released by the ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment in 2012. Entitled 'Youth unemployment – the crisis we cannot afford' it revealed the damaging effects of youth unemployment for young people and their communities. In particular, the report noted that:

'Unemployment hurts at any age; but for young people, long-term unemployment scars for life. It means lower earnings, more unemployment, more ill health later in life. It means more inequality between rich and poor – because the pain hits the most disadvantaged'

Source: ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment 2012

To help highlight these inequalities, the report identified 152 local authority areas where the proportion of young people claiming unemployment benefit was twice the national average.

The report also analysed the financial effect of youth unemployment. It is estimated that it will cost the Treasury £28bn over the next decade if the current problems are not addressed. While the size of the problem was well documented at the time, the actions needed to help tackle youth unemployment were less clear.

The Young and Successful project

Over the past five years, the Young and Successful project has encouraged a collaborative approach to help those young people who are furthest from the labour market improve their employability. This collaboration has actively gathered the opinions of young people to help shape the way the project works.

By developing a person-centred approach the project has gained deeper insights into the circumstances affecting young

people, and a better appreciation of what's needed to remove the barriers that are stopping young people progressing.

By carrying out this evaluation, we aim to investigate and present the key learning points we have made through providing this service. The evaluation itself has also involved a collaboration between the independent evaluator, Groundwork Greater Nottingham and the Enliven project at the University of Nottingham.





An introduction to the Enliven project

The Enliven project is focussed on building life-long learning for an inclusive and vibrant Europe. Most importantly, the project includes work packages for those young people who are disadvantaged in the labour market. What's more, the focus of the Enliven project is on positively influencing the development of effective policies to support the most at-risk groups.

The collaboration with the Enliven team has been essential in broadening our understanding of the wider

quantitative and qualitative trends linked to young people who are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).

The Young and Successful project evaluation has been carried out to capture the key learnings and critical success factors discovered during the project. In short, we wanted to discover what works for those young people furthest from the labour market.



In summary

To help you understand the rationale behind the project, this evaluation also provides additional background information on the circumstances of the young people involved. This information also fed into our thinking about the most appropriate ways to support them.

What is clear from the project is that the journey faced by young people going into employment is not direct or straightforward. The specific barriers and opportunities facing each young person can vary enormously which puts a big responsibility on organisations to provide dynamic and responsive

support which acknowledges each person's unique life circumstances. This is crucial if we are to employ the right approach to meet the needs of each young person.

This evaluation aims to explore the successful outcomes which can be achieved when providers develop an innovative and collaborative approach to working with those young people who are furthest from the labour market.

Richard Hazledine
Project Evaluator, ConnectMore Solutions

ANDREW'S STORY

Making reasonable adjustments to gain a talented employee

Andrew Francis graduated from Derby University with a 2:1 BSc (Hons) in Mathematics with Education in 2014. He had been trying for some time to gain meaningful employment and joined the Young & Successful project through Derventio Housing Trust in October 2015.



Since leaving university, Andrew had struggled to find suitable long-term employment and had been doing some voluntary work with the Red Cross. His initial baseline survey identified that he was struggling to find work and lead a full life due to low confidence and difficulty with social interaction and communication relating to his Asperger's Syndrome. He identified that his ideal role would be to become a maths teacher as he had a passion for numbers, but he was aware that due to his condition this would be a difficult ask.

Through discussions with his mentor it was agreed that Andrew would start addressing some of his barriers to work by undertaking an NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Retail Skills; Level 2 AAT and various confidence and communications workshops. He continued to gain further experience through volunteering opportunities, largely basic administration, with different organisations, balancing his time accordingly. He felt that by undertaking these activities, he had become more employable, improved his skills, gained work experience, increased self-confidence and made new friends.

With the help of his Mentor and support of the Employment Team, Andrew applied for various roles, but although successful at gaining interviews with his qualifications, he had difficulty with the formal interview process and was ultimately unsuccessful in his applications.

Together, we encouraged Andrew to embrace his differences rather than hiding them and to recognise the

value of his skills and diversity to a workforce. We asked him to declare his difficulties to potential employers as part of his application so that reasonable adjustments could be made to their recruitment/selection process.

In his application to car retailer Pendragon PLC for a Level 4 Apprenticeship as a Data Analyst, Andrew disclosed that he had Asperger's Syndrome and when invited to interview by email, he replied to say that due to his condition: "I sometimes have a tendency to lose my thread and can go off on tangents as ideas occur to me. I also sometimes struggle to recognise the appropriate point at which to bring my answers to an end. Could I ask therefore for the interviewer to feel free to interrupt me if they think that I have drifted off topic, or if I have reached a reasonable conclusion point?"

Pendragon's HR Manager replied to thank Andrew for his email and to assure him that his interviewer would be made aware of his request and would be happy to make adjustments to the interview process as necessary.

Andrew was successful at interview and started his apprenticeship in March 2018. He maintains regular contact with Alison, his Talent Match Mentor, in case of any welfare support he might need to sustain his employment. He reports regularly that he is enjoying his apprenticeship and that his employers are happy with his work. He continues to progress and the future looks very bright for this very bright young man.



SECTION

2

Understanding the needs of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) across the D2N2 area

As part of the process to secure the five-year funding for the Talent Match project, Groundwork Greater Nottingham carried out research in 2012 to identify the typical profile of a young person who is Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). This section of the evaluation summarises the main findings from this research and presents details on the profiles of young people who have accessed the Young & Successful project since it began in 2013. This information has been used as part of the test and learn philosophy of the project to help develop and refine the most effective interventions for those young people who are NEET.

What did our research tell us about the needs of young people?

While each young person's life circumstances can vary enormously, the following themes did recur from the focus groups and surveys carried out. Young people who are NEET:

- Lack the necessary confidence and self-esteem to successfully navigate the recruitment process required to secure employment.
- Are more likely to have low levels of basic skills including literacy and numeracy.
- Lack awareness of the behaviours and skills needed to engage with employers.
- Young people with limited work history are at a disadvantage when they do not fully understand the behaviours and skills that employers value – they are not well placed to market their capabilities.
- Often have a growing mistrust of government agencies and organisations who are seen to be authoritarian in their approach, forcing them to take action to develop their employability which may not be consistent with their needs or aspirations.
- May only want to operate within set geographic boundaries that they feel comfortable within. As a result, they might not want to travel outside these areas to engage with agencies and support services.
- Often have a lack of engagement with support networks of family, friends or trusted professionals who can help them develop employability skills and behaviour.
- Are at a greater risk of developing multiple and complex barriers in terms of mental health, homelessness, substance misuse and involvement in criminal activity.

Across the D2N2 area, there were large concentrations of young people at risk of becoming NEET who live in deprived areas suffering from high unemployment, poor quality housing, criminal activity and comprehensive schools attaining poor OFSTED inspection results.

What have we discovered about the young people who are NEET through the Young and Successful project?

Over the past five years of delivering the Young and Successful project, many of the trends discovered from the initial project research have also been reflected in the national Talent Match project statistics compiled by Sheffield Hallam University. The Common Data Framework (CDF) established by Sheffield Hallam University provides the following analysis of participants accessing the Young and Successful project:

Only
24%

of young people on the Young and Successful project had five or more A-C grade GCSEs including English and Maths. (Source: CDF Headline report, October 2017)

48%

of young people accessing the project were no longer living with parents at the point of the baseline survey (Source: CDF Headline report, October 2017)

60%

of young people had never been employed (Source: CDF Headline report, October 2017)

A large number of young people have negative barriers in terms of living in local authority care, having a criminal record, alcohol addiction, drug addiction, mental health issues or homelessness. (Source: CDF Base data, September 2017)

28%

had experienced one or more of these barriers

15%

had experienced two or more of these barriers

8%

had experienced three or more of these barriers

These barriers, however, only tell part of the story. The Young and Successful project shows that it takes time for young people to build the necessary confidence and trust to reveal sensitive issues to their mentor to help their onward progress.





The problem of hidden barriers

A deeper analysis of these negative barriers, confirmed our concerns that many young people do not disclose these issues when they come into the project. A closer inspection showed that 40% of these young people revealed that they did have additional barriers which only became clear after they started working with their mentor.

It could be argued that this happens because young people either lack the self-awareness to talk about these barriers or don't have enough trust in their mentor when they come onto the project. Only through consistent support and trust is the relationship built to help tackle these barriers and help move the young person closer to employment.

We will return to the topic of negative barriers and their link to job outcomes in section six.

The risk of 'scarring'

Our research also revealed the very real problem of 'scarring' for young people who remain in NEET status on a long-term basis. Scarring can be defined as:

'The possible long-term negative effects of unemployment and has multiple implications in terms of a young person's aspirations, mental health and future employability.'

McQuaid (2017)

Through our research it was clear that a coordinated service would be required in order to assist young people who are NEET to resolve their barriers to employment in order to avoid the debilitating long-term effects of scarring.



In summary

The work done to secure funding for the Young and Successful project revealed a complex situation faced by young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). They have multiple barriers and disadvantages in terms of confidence, employment awareness, mental health, qualifications, or a range of other lifestyle or behavioural factors.

In 2012, research on employability provision for young people revealed a D2N2-wide reliance on Work Programme provision. This is influenced by a philosophy of payment by results which can discourage providers from working with the hardest to reach.

The research at the time, led Groundwork Greater Nottingham to look closely at the underlying principles of service provision when working with young people who are NEET. These principles will be explained in the next section of this evaluation.



JAKOB'S STORY

The quest to find a suitable work environment



When Jakob accessed the Young & Successful project in March 2017, it was clear that he was an intelligent young man with a degree in interactive media. Despite his obvious capabilities, Jakob was struggling to communicate and interact effectively with people, due to his autism and dyslexia.

Jakob was referred from another provider who had been uncertain how to progress him into any kind of work or training due to his high support needs. At this time Jakob was feeling pressured into applying for any job, no matter how unsuitable, and was low in confidence, with little hope for the future. As a result of this lack of progression, Jakob was reliant on ESA and PIP payments.

When Jakob first started working with his Mentor, the first thing that they did together was explore the kind of work that he might be interested in. To help fully understand Jakob's situation his mentor worked hard to understand how his autism affects him on a day to day basis. Based on this conversation it was clear that Jakob can get overstimulated by sounds, smells and temperatures. From the outset it was clear that these issues would need to be carefully considered in Jakob's action plan in order to support him to function in a work environment.

Through dialogue with Jakob, it was clear he would be interested in a career in an ICT related role and so Jakob worked with support from his Mentor to compose a tailored CV. Shortly after completing the CV, an opportunity for a work trial at a local Computer Aided Design (CAD) company became available. He was given the opportunity to meet the employer for an informal chat and was shown the kind of work the company do on a day to day basis - which really helped him as he can get very anxious due to his autism.

The work environment was perfect as it was very quiet and everyone was left to get on with their work at their own pace. Encouragingly, Jakob performed really well on the work trial and was offered a Level 3 CAD Technician Apprenticeship.

To move forward his mentor contacted the apprenticeship team at the local college to inform them of Jakob support requirements, particularly how his autism can affect him. Whilst his mentor communicated that it was really important that someone met with Jakob to support him on enrolment day, unfortunately, no support was put in place by the college and he was placed at a loud and busy engineering site making it unsuitable for his autism. This placed Jakob in an overwhelming situation which he was forced to withdraw from. This undoubtedly knocked his confidence.

After this experience Jakob and his mentor returned to the drawing board and looked into whether there were any other courses available in the nearby area. Fortunately, it turned out that Nottingham College were also offering a Level 3 Engineering Apprenticeship.

Again, Jakob's mentor contacted the College to explain about his additional support needs and, after a couple of meetings, a comprehensive support plan was put in place and he was able to start on the Level 3 Apprenticeship course.

Jakob has since been engaging well with the apprenticeship and absolutely loving it. The feedback from his employer is fantastic and they are looking into taking on another apprentice from the project. At each step in the process, it has been crucial to identify and recognise the specific support needs required by Jakob to get him into a role where he can flourish. Despite the challenges faced by Jakob and his mentor the end goal of getting Jakob into employment has been successfully achieved. Jakob had the following comments to make about the support he's received since accessing the Young & Successful project:



“In every way possible my mentor has helped me! Easy to get hold of. Always responds quickly, easy to get meetings and let me know their availability. I found the perfect employer and perfect job with great training that I never would have found before.”

Jakob Stokes



SECTION

3

How our research into the needs of young people who are NEET has influenced the Young and Successful project

As part of the development of the Young and Successful project, quantitative research was carried out to identify youth unemployment hot-spots across the D2N2 LEP area (Data source: Nomis labour market intelligence).

This research highlighted 27 youth unemployment hot-spots where the number of young people claiming the Job Seekers Allowance was twice the national average. The research was then used to help build youth unemployment profiles across the

D2N2 area. The profiles focused on the inner city and outer estate areas of Derby and Nottingham, and the towns and villages across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire which have been affected by the declining coal mining and textile industries.

The research revealed that:

- Young people furthest from the labour market face multiple barriers around low aspirations, low educational attainment, low confidence and self-esteem
- There is restricted availability of low skilled, entry level jobs suitable for young people beginning their working lives
- Large numbers of young people living in each hot-spot lacked relevant work experience and basic employability skills
- Young people living in unemployment hot-spots tended to have a limited ability or desire to travel out of the area to secure employment
- Employer engagement activities for young people who are NEET don't necessarily meet their needs
- The youth unemployment hot-spots have strong links with most deprived wards (IMD) and the troubled families' agenda
- Youth unemployment interventions are relatively under-developed outside of the major economic areas of Nottingham and Derby
- Young people facing barriers to employment are largely reliant on work programme provision to overcome these barriers
- The quality of secondary school service provision to support young people who are at risk of becoming NEET is variable



When planning the Young and Successful project, research carried out with young people who are NEET revealed that the journey to employment for these young people is not direct or straightforward. This is consistent with the Journey to EmploymentT (JET) framework developed by Inspiring Impact. This framework highlights seven factors that can affect a young person's ability to secure employment:

1. **Personal circumstances** – the specific life circumstances that are unique to any person which can include access to resources e.g. transport, internet, risky behaviours e.g. drugs and alcohol, family life – caring responsibilities or family work history
2. **Emotional strength** – a person's ability to manage their emotions and persevere when setbacks occur. This includes personal assets such as self-esteem, and having grit and determination to succeed
3. **Attitudes** – an individual's outlook and approach to learning and work, including their general feelings about work and their hopes for the future
4. **Employability skills** – the qualities needed to succeed in the workplace and work with others, which include communication, teamwork and leadership skills
5. **Qualifications, education and training** – acquiring knowledge and experience through school, college or training, which also includes qualifications and attainment, as well as conduct and behaviour
6. **Experience and involvement** – these are the activities young people take part in and the experiences they gain outside school or college. These include work experience, involvement in the community, and the networks developed as a result
7. **Career management skills** – the knowledge and abilities needed to find a job, which also covers having career direction, understanding how to search for jobs, and presenting well to employers

Source: Inspiring to Impact Journey to EmploymentT (JET) framework (2013)



The research carried out by Groundwork Greater Nottingham helped shape the development of the Young and Successful project, and this revealed **three principles that the project should embrace**:

1. Employability provision for young people who are NEET should be as inclusive and accessible as possible

Services should recognise the barriers and complexity of working with young people who are NEET and develop projects which are as inclusive and accessible as possible. In addition, caution needs to be used when creating targets and payment systems which inadvertently encourage providers to avoid engaging hard-to-reach groups.

2. Young people who are NEET may not have well-developed support networks to help them develop their employability

Young people who are NEET often do not have access to support networks to help them through the process of gaining employment. This includes poor relationships with parents, and families who might not know about the latest employability practices. Given this lack of support, it might be that young people who are NEET do not know what to do to improve their employability.

3. Young people who are NEET should be involved in decision-making processes

Young people who are NEET are experts in what it is like to be out of work. Therefore, involving young people in the design and delivery of employability projects helps to ensure that they are fit for purpose. For example, young people may have insight into how services have not worked in past or how future services could be devised. Getting this feedback helps to improve projects and at the same time, builds the confidence and employability skills of young people.

The research also defined three principles that the project should avoid:

4. Standardised, one-size-fits-all services

Employability services which are highly standardised and structured are unlikely to meet the needs of young people who have a variety of needs, barriers, competencies and aspirations.

5. Developing services based on the typical circumstances and needs of young people

Services which make assumptions about the circumstances and needs of young people based on limited contact with them only increase the likelihood of poor outcomes and high levels of disengagement.

6. Coercing young people to attend employability-related events and initiatives

Mandating young people to attend events doesn't typically motivate them to develop their employability. This was particularly true when young people could not see the reason for attending a particular event or activity.





In summary

Research into youth unemployment hot-spots across the D2N2 area highlighted 27 areas where the number of young people claiming the Job Seekers Allowance was twice the national average. Closer analysis reveals a situation of multiple disadvantages facing young people living in these communities.

Additional research has shown that the journey for most young people to develop their employability is not direct or straightforward. Tools like the Journey into Employment framework identified the underlying principles which the Young and Successful service should embrace:

- The service should be person-centred and avoid standardised one-size-fits-all services
- A specific package is needed to address young people's lack of access to a developed support network to help them develop their employability
- Young people with experience of unemployment are seldom consulted or involved in the development of

employability programmes designed to help them. As they are the key group using these services this is a missed opportunity

- Access to flexible funding sources could also help to reduce or resolve specific barriers facing young people
- The programme should work in partnership with young people to empower them to develop as individuals, by supporting them through a spirit of trust, empathy and mutual respect

In the next section of the evaluation we look at how these principles were embraced within the design of the Young & Successful service model.



ANTON'S STORY**“Please listen to me”****The need for person-centred planning**

Prior to joining Talent Match, I was a long term job seeker. After leaving the local college in 2010 I had a pre degree in art and design, and I wanted it to be put to use. My goal was to go to university to pursue this further, however when I discovered that my girlfriend was **pregnant, my plans had to change**. Initially signing on to **Jobseekers Allowance** was exciting for me. I thought that the Jobcentre would listen, and show me multiple ways of achieving my ideal career. I soon found out this was not the case.



Each week I spent much time on job search activities. I can remember showing my job search log proud of what I had done. I must have found ten jobs to do with art. My advisor at the time didn't seem to be impressed. They wanted me to look for more realistic jobs which I can understand why, however my heart was not into it. A year later, and I had got nowhere. I applied for retail job after retail job, warehouse work and telecoms. Countless interview rejections drained me, and enforced the idea that I was unemployable.

The Jobcentre then put me onto the Work Programme. At this point my confidence was at an all time low. I walked through the doors, CV in hand for my first interview with my Work Programme Advisor. My belief was that the Work Programme would be more hands on with individuals, something the Job Centre was not able to do. I talked about my goals, and ambitions. I didn't expect the interviewer to chuckle at the mention of me pursuing a career in creative art. I was told again to look for more realistic jobs, and again this was retail, and warehouse work. Time went on, and so did the countless CV workshops, and employability courses. Promises of a “guaranteed interview” that never materialised. Two years on the programme, and I took nothing away from it. I didn't find it helpful. I was often frustrated at repeating myself, repeating workshops, and skills building that I was already adept in.

I was then referred into Young & Successful. After my experience with the Work Programme I had very little faith that this would help me. The first meeting with this project made for a surprising change in my experience of employment programmes. Over the first hour, the conversation was centred on my interests and life style.

The general interest in me as a person was refreshing for me after five years of no one caring or even acknowledging what I wanted to do. I left with a smile that day.

After a few meetings arranged at convenient times I became more open to my mentor who recognised that my confidence, and mental health was a key part of my lack of success. My mentor worked hard to listen to my aspirations and devised creative ways to help me develop new skills, and build up my confidence. For example, my mentor found a training course relevant to my interests which would develop my skills. The experience of the project turned out to be one of the biggest turning points in my life which helped my confidence soar.

As time went on, my mentor helped me find volunteering opportunities where I could grow my leadership and employability skills to help others. This in turn led to an opportunity where I was able to work as a Peer Mentor on the Young & Successful project to help other young people move forward. This was enjoyable work which helped me develop new skills.

Looking back, YaS has helped me by treating me as an individual. I feel that I have been listened to with empathy. All I want is to be seen as who I am and what I can do not what others assume and force me to do. I am pleased that this has happened and as my time on the project came to an end I have been able to set up an art studio near to my home as I continue my journey.

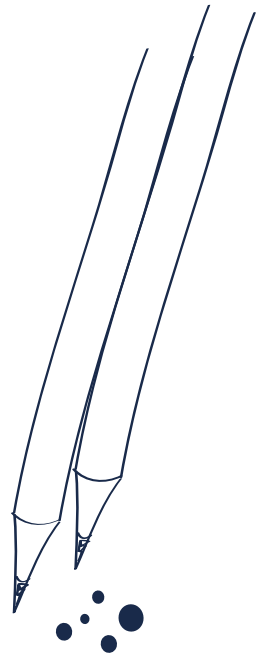
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COACHING



DIRECTION

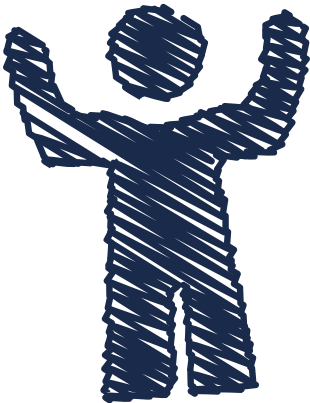


Mentoring



SUPPORT

SUCCESS



ADVICE



GOAL

MOTIVATION



SECTION

An introduction to the Young and Successful project

4

The Young and Successful service model has been specifically devised to help young people who are furthest from the labour market to develop their employability. This section of the evaluation paper introduces the rationale behind the elements of the project, which have been created to help young people tackle the challenges they may be facing.

From the start, local and national research had made it clear that the service should work with young people on a case-by-case basis in a holistic and supportive way. This person-centred approach would

be critical in helping young people to develop their employability with the aim of securing employment.



One - a trusted mentor

Our research revealed that young people furthest from the labour market do not have a clear idea of how they should boost their employability to gain employment. They often face multiple and complex barriers on the journey into adulthood, which can have a destabilising effect when looking for a job.

Our wider research showed that these young people are often no longer living at home with parents, and have little access to well-informed support to help them. In view of these challenges, the trusted mentor role was created to help each young person develop their employability. The mentoring approach helps young people to think independently, and encourages them to make back-up plans to move forward in the event of unexpected circumstances.

Two - a person-centred approach

Our experience with the project shows that young people's journey into employment is not direct and cannot be standardised. Young people have a wide range of circumstances, skills, attitudes and barriers. A one-size-fits-all service developed to meet this diversity of needs runs a high risk of being ineffective with high levels of disengagement.

The Young and Successful project is based around both person-centred thinking and an action plan which each young person devises with their mentor. This action plan forms the start of the road map which drives the relationship between the young person and their mentor.

Through the process of delivering the project, it is clear that the mentoring relationship must be underpinned by trust and mutual respect. For genuine progression towards employment, this relationship must focus on the needs of each young person rather than the outcomes of the project. For these reasons, person-centred mentoring is not readily compatible with the ethos of Payment by Results (PBR) systems.

Three - a specialist employment team

A deeper analysis of youth unemployment reveals a problem with young people who have never experienced the employee/employer relationship – it places them at a distinct disadvantage in the labour market. For many young people, the concept of employment is an unfamiliar one and they have little understanding of how to relate to would-be employers. This problem is often made worse when young people consistently experience rejections from job applications and receive little feedback to help them improve their employability.

In contrast to this, many employers across the area have voiced their frustration at their endeavours to engage with young people through their usual recruitment processes. To help break this cycle of frustration, the Young and Successful project established a specialist employment team. This works with employers to understand their current skills gaps and workforce needs across the D2N2 area and crucially offer advice on ways to engage with young people to help remove unnecessary barriers. The team also have expertise in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to help young people understand the options available to them to pursue a particular career path.



Four - involving young people in project decision making

In the past, publicly-funded programmes designed to tackle youth unemployment have not involved young people in the decision-making processes to develop services. In one sense it might be seen as counter-intuitive to involve young people in employability programmes when they may have little or no experience of employment. However, while young people may have little work experience, they have all faced the challenges of unemployment. As consumers of employment support programmes, most young people have valuable insight into the type of support they need in order move forward. Involving young people in service developments can provide complementary sources of insight to help understand how an employability programme can be refined to engage with the target group in an ever changing world of social media, welfare rights and job opportunities.

This approach not only helps to ensure that programmes are fit for purpose, it also helps to boost the confidence, knowledge and skills of young people using the service. These are all factors which make a young person more employable.

On the Young and Successful project, young people have been encouraged to take an active role in:

- Governance
- Marketing
- Event management
- Recruitment
- Project audits
- Ambassadorial roles
- Assessment and commissioning of providers



In summary

The philosophy of the Young and Successful project is all about operating in a nurturing, person-centred way to help each young person overcome barriers and move towards employability. It has been specifically devised to recognise and acknowledge the unique situation of each young person accessing the programme. As it is committed to social inclusion for all young people, the programme does not support time-sensitive Payment by Results (PBR) methods. Specifically the project provides:

- A trusted mentor for each young person to help support progression
- A person-centred approach recognising that each

Five - services delivered through known locally trusted organisations

Our research into young people who are **furthest from the labour market** showed that many of them have a limited ability to travel out of their local area. This issue was usually linked to a lack of:

- Money to pay for public transport
- Confidence to travel to unfamiliar locations and situations
- Trust around any engagement with unfamiliar organisations with little or no connection to the local community

For these reasons, the Young and Successful project works with known, locally-trusted organisations at the heart of communities with high levels of youth unemployment. This approach has complemented the flow of referrals into the programme through word-of-mouth promotion across the community.

Six - progression to be underpinned through personalised and flexible funding

From the outset of researching the programme, it's been clear that a lack of money can in itself be a barrier for young people trying to develop their employability. To address this issue, a personal budget fund was created.

The personal budget fund has been available throughout the programme for young people to apply with support from their mentor. This budget has been designed to help young people deal with issues around transport, training and qualifications, use of IT and telecoms which would otherwise hamper their journey towards employment.

young person has different needs, aspirations, skills and barriers to progression

- An employment team to help broker relationships between young people and potential employers
- A Young Person's participation team to help shape the project by drawing on young people's life experiences, to help build their confidence and employability skills
- Services through accessible, known and locally-trusted organisations
- A personal budget facility to flexibly support progression

STEVE'S STORY

Overcoming the barriers to find employment

When Steve accessed 'YaS' in September 2015, he was living at a local hostel and was struggling to develop independent skills and find his way in life.



At an early age Steve was diagnosed with autism and received support from social services following this diagnosis. Throughout his early life Steve had grown up in a stable home and attended the local secondary school. Sadly this was all to change as both his parents died in a tragic accident when Steve was 16 years old. Following the accident Steve and his older brother and sister were sent to live with an Auntie at the seaside. Unfortunately Steve did not settle and neither did his brother, who ran away when he was 18 and Steve has never had any contact with him since.

Steve decided to come back to Derby, but having nowhere to live he ended up in a hostel. From the outset of accessing the Young & Successful service, it was clear that Steve faced a range of multiple and complex needs that would have to be addressed as part of any endeavour to develop his employability. These needs were duly logged as part of a holistic assessment detailed in his personal support plan. To start this journey, Steve was initially supported with budgeting and hygiene skills. When discussing this with Steve he explained to his mentor that he easily forgets things and his mum would put his clothes out in the morning, prompt him to brush his teeth and have a shower. To help him with this his mentor printed off pictures which were put up in his bedroom to remind him of his morning routine.

As the programme of support with Steve unfolded it was clear that there were other issues having an impact on his life. Steve identified as gay, but was very childlike in terms of dealing with relationships. Amongst a range of issues that were unfolding it was becoming evident that Steve was engaging in risky on-line behaviours and his mentor had noticed that he was not effectively managing the money he received each month. These behaviours created further difficulties for Steve which had to be

sensitively resolved with on-going support from his mentor.

During the time the service has supported Steve, he has completed a traineeship at a local college, and attended college to improve his functional skills. He has also been supported to engage with 3 work experience placements alongside volunteering for 3 different charities. Throughout his time on Young & Successful, the project has provided invaluable support for Steve through use of the personal budget facility. This has included mobile phone top ups, stationery, clothes for interviews and work placements and a tablet to search and apply for jobs.

Throughout the process of working with Steve, it has become clear that he just wanted to get a paid job and he was determined to achieve this outcome. After two years of support, Steve secured an 8 hour position at a national retail chain, he has been there nearly a year now. Steve also continues to volunteer in a local charity café.

When his mentor came to the point of talking to Steve about exiting from the programme and explaining why, he had huge concerns for his wellbeing. To help arrange an on-going support plan for Steve, a series of meetings were held with social services. These meeting eventually culminated in an agreement that Steve should have a social worker and regular visits from the local co-ordinator.

Since gaining employment, Steve now has a housing visitor who checks on how he is doing. He has made new friends and he really enjoys his job. He said the best bit is he gets paid for it. In his words this is what he calls 'a real job'.



SECTION

5

Analysing the Young & Successful project data

What the data tells us about supporting young people furthest from the labour market

In this section, we review what the Young and Successful project data tells us about the needs of young people furthest from the labour market. Through our collaboration with the Enliven project, we have developed three approaches to help inform what works when helping young people to secure employment.

These approaches help us to understand the range of necessary progression routes that young people may need to embark upon as part of their journey through an effective employability project.

To help present our analysis, this section has been split into:

- 1. Understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs within the context of young people seeking employment**
- 2. Distance from Labour (DLM) analysis**
- 3. Segmented job outcomes analysis A,B,C,D and E**

Understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs within the context of young people seeking employment

As the Young and Successful (YaS) project has evolved since its launch in 2014, the evidence has suggested that unless the basic life-needs of young people are being met, it is difficult to provide employability support.

This is a key challenge that any employability programme has to overcome if it going to be effective

when working with young people furthest from the labour market. These challenges are consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs which was devised as a motivational theory in psychology to help explain human behaviour.

'Maslow (1943, 1954) stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs and that some needs take precedence over others. Our most basic need is for physical survival, and this will be the first thing that motivates our behaviour. Once that level is fulfilled, the next level up is what motivates us, and so on.'



To explore these issues further, we decided to investigate the availability of quantitative YaS project data which would support our thinking about the relevance of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to young people looking to secure employment.

The Maslow model contains a hierarchy of five needs:

- Physiological needs – food, water, warmth, rest
- Safety needs – security and safety
- Belonging needs – friendship, intimacy and community
- Esteem needs – prestige and feeling of accomplishment
- Self-actualisation – achieving one's full potential

In theory, each of these needs could be matched with the mentoring of young people taking part in the project. For many of these young people, it was clear that their basic physiological and safety needs were not being met. This in turn had an adverse effect on the ability of the project to engage with young people, which was consistent with Maslow's early thinking:

'Maslow (1943) initially stated that individuals must satisfy lower level deficit needs before progressing on to meet higher level growth needs.'



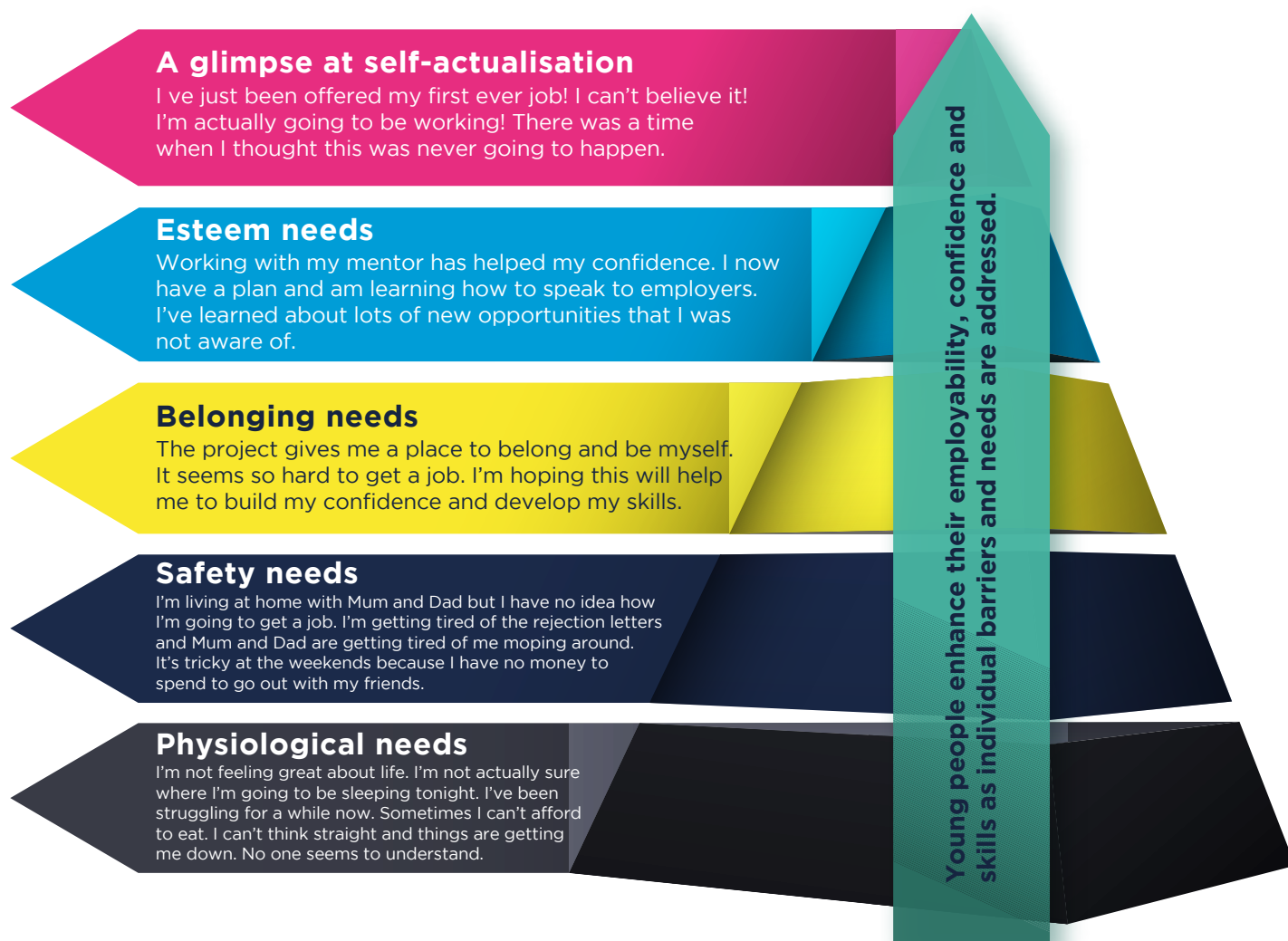
To understand how Maslow's hierarchy of needs could be aligned with the YaS project, we developed a service model which illustrated this.

Through the delivery of the YaS project, it became clear that young people were at different stages **in their** personal development which could be matched with the five key stages of Maslow's model. Here is an overview of the five stages matched with the needs of young

people accessing the project. A full description of the model can be found in the appendices.

At each level of the hierarchy we have included a value statement to help illustrate the potential life-stage perspective of a young person in that situation.

Developing the employability of young people within the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs



One step forward, two steps back

We also know from experience of supporting young people on the project that it is possible for them to make progress and regress at different times while working with their mentor. Outside influences can act as de-stabilising factors for example unstable housing. This again is consistent with Maslow's assertion that individuals must meet lower level needs before progressing on to deal with higher level needs.





Testing the relevance of the conceptual Maslow model for young people seeking employment

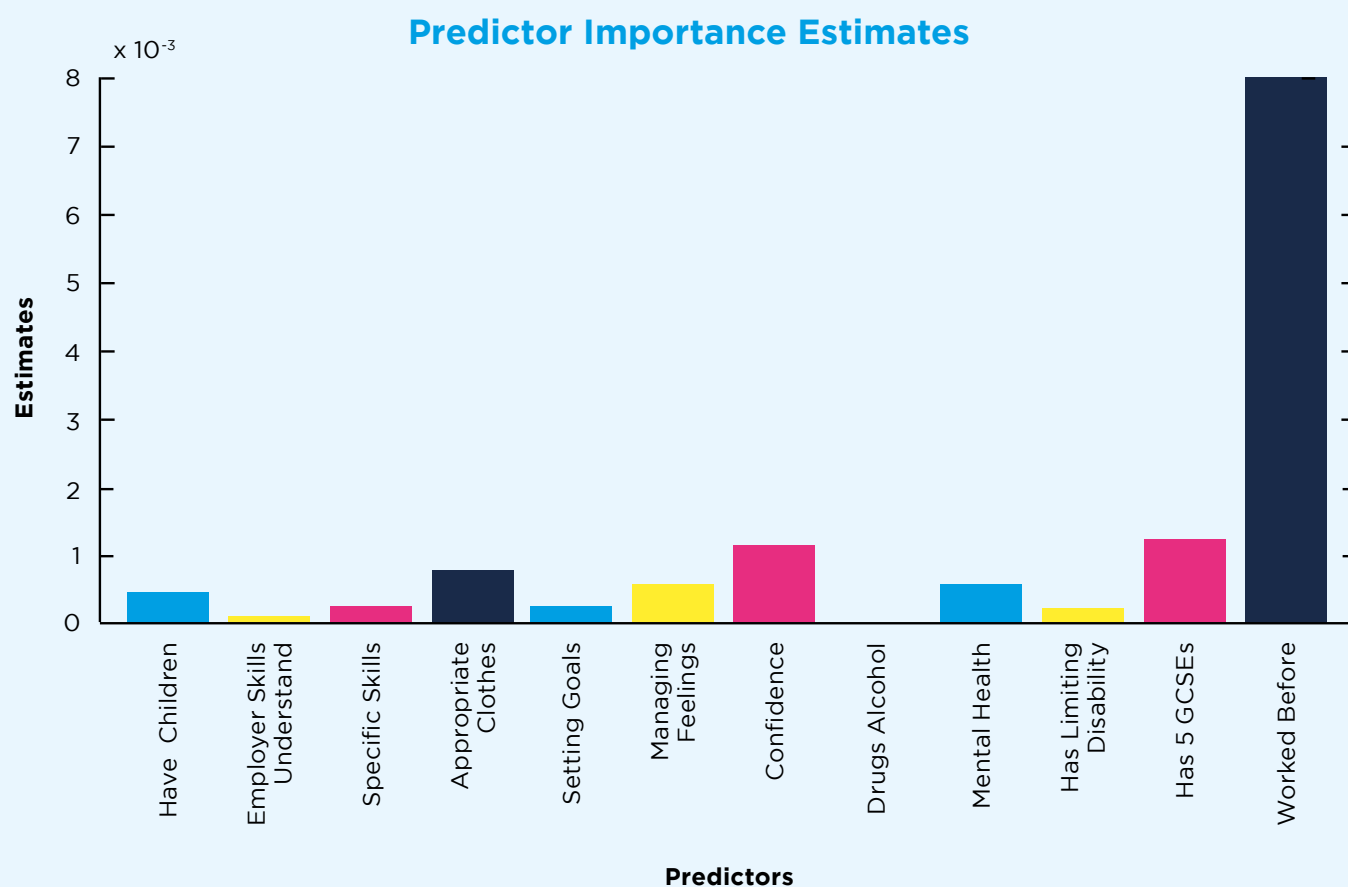
To help complement our conceptual model, we carried out quantitative analysis with the Enliven team at the University of Nottingham. This analysis was designed to assess whether the project data on the progression of young people was consistent with the Maslow model.

The task specifically involved decision tree analysis of common data framework statistics compiled for the D2N2 element of the YaS project. The data was used to identify the strongest predictors of employment outcomes after three months on the project. The

research highlighted three variables with a strong link to employment outcomes:

- Confidence
- Mental health
- Ever having worked before

The strongest single predictor of an employment outcome was 'Ever having worked before' as demonstrated below:



These results are consistent with the experience of delivering the YaS project. Young people who are starting on the project may not be meeting their basic physiological and safety needs and often lack confidence. In addition, issues like housing, debt and basic subsistence needs not only erode confidence but can act as a breeding ground for anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions.

To compound this, frequent rejection from employers leaves young people trapped in a spiral of declining confidence and poor mental health, with a complete lack of awareness of how to break this cycle.

For many young people, the very idea that they could actually secure employment is often seen as unattainable. This is where a mentor is crucial in supporting young people to progress by:

- Helping them gain a broader perspective of their options to develop their employability
- Using an asset-based approach to help them recognise their existing skills and knowledge to build self-esteem
- Equipping young people to build confidence by tackling existing barriers
- Challenging negative thought patterns which might be affecting their progression
- Giving an insight into employer perspectives that young people may never have considered before
- Providing a safe place for young people to look at their circumstances in a person-centred way that promotes trust, empathy and self-respect

The impact of prior work experience

Our experience of delivering the project reveals that many young people who have never worked before often have unrealistic ideas about what it is like to be employed. When these ideas are not fulfilled it can lead to confusion surrounding the day to day reality of employment. To help address this disadvantage it is crucial that mentoring support is continued throughout their initial period of employment.

Another key learning point was the strong link between past work experience and a successful employment outcome through the YaS project. This shows the importance of getting young people into work for the first time and has important implications for commissioners and policymakers working around the employability agenda. For those young people who have never worked before, we believe this demonstrates the need for a mentoring relationship to help young people close a key gap in their knowledge and life experience. Without this mentoring support we would suggest those young people who have never worked before are at a distinct disadvantage in a competitive labour market.

The transformational impact of your first ever job

The importance of having worked before also points to the transformational moment that takes place when a young person realises that employment is an attainable goal after securing their first job. This transformational moment could be linked to the idea of self-actualisation, as young people realise that employment is achievable. Self-actualisation can be defined as:

‘The achievement of one’s full potential through creativity, independence, spontaneity and a grasp of the real world.’

Source: dictionary.com

The implications of this discovery are that the first employment provides each young person with a glimpse of self-actualisation at the start of their working lives.



Self-actualisation and the potential to enhance the resilience of young people

The strength of the link between having worked before and employment outcomes also has important implications for the resilience of young people if they are ever made redundant. Since young people who have worked before now know that employment is attainable, this experience can be applied as a motivational tool to positively influence further job search and applications.

The importance of having worked before also shows how work experience opportunities for young people can help them secure their first ever job.

Further information on the decision tree analysis undertaken to support the development of the Maslow model is provided in the appendices of this evaluation.

Summary findings:

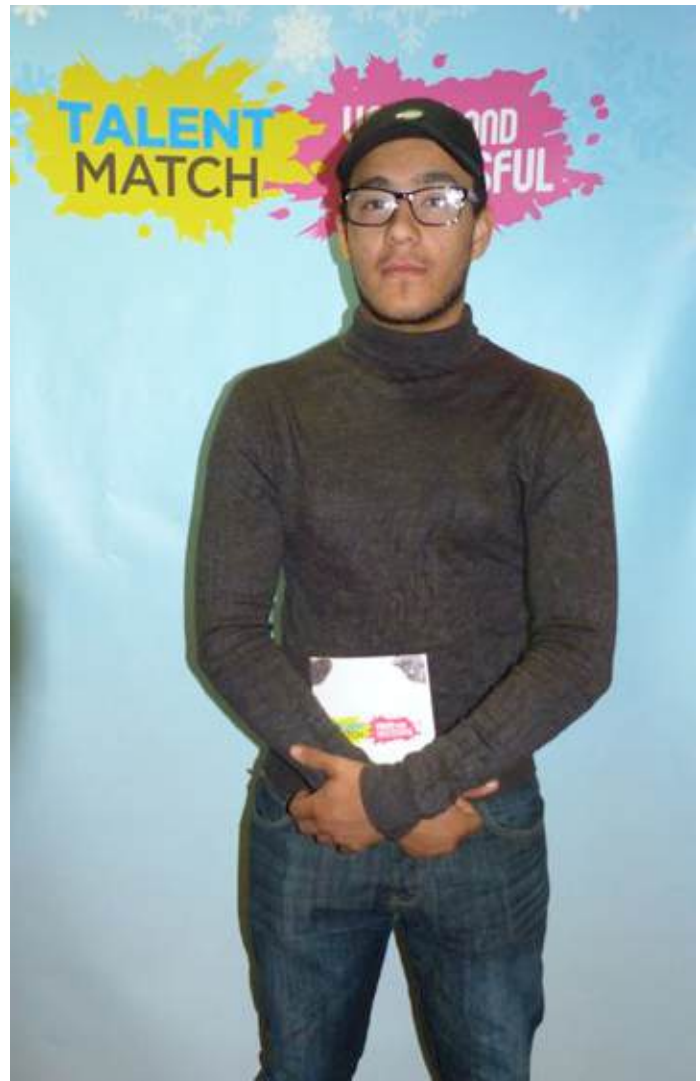
- The YaS project has led to the development of a Maslow hierarchy of needs model to highlight the challenges faced when supporting young people in developing their employability
- Each of the five levels of the Maslow model can be applied to the YaS project
- Young people who have unsatisfied physiological or safety needs will not be able to effectively engage with the project until these needs are met
- Decision tree analysis carried out by the Enliven team shows that 'mental health', 'confidence' and 'ever having worked before' are the strongest predictors of employment outcomes
- 'Ever having worked before' is the single strongest predictor of an employment outcome.
- Young people securing their first ever job experience a transformational change in thinking as they realise that employment is attainable. This transformational change could be matched with the Maslow concept of self-actualisation.

Distance from Labour Market (DLM) analysis

To help further explore the progression of young people through the YaS project, we also looked at the idea of Distance from Labour Market (DLM).

From running the project, it's clear that each young person's journey to employment is not direct or straightforward and that the barriers and opportunities vary significantly. This is why each young person works with a mentor to develop a person-centred employment plan to help them progress towards employment.

To help look at the idea of Distance from Labour market (DLM), the National Evaluators, Sheffield Hallam University, have devised a DLM tool. This measures proximity to the labour market and estimates how



likely a young person is to be in work. Twelve indicators combine to create the measure:

- Have a limiting disability, negative factor
- Have children, negative factor
- Attained five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C (including English and Maths)
- Understand the skills that employers want
- Have good specific skills for desired job
- Setting and achieving goals
- Managing feelings
- Have confidence and good self-esteem
- Have appropriate clothes for an interview
- Involved with drugs/alcohol support, negative factor
- Involved with mental health services, negative factor
- Have ever worked before

Each of the 12 factors are scored on a binary scale of 0 or 1 to provide an overall DLM score from zero to twelve. By calculating a DLM score, young people can be graded into one of the following five groups:

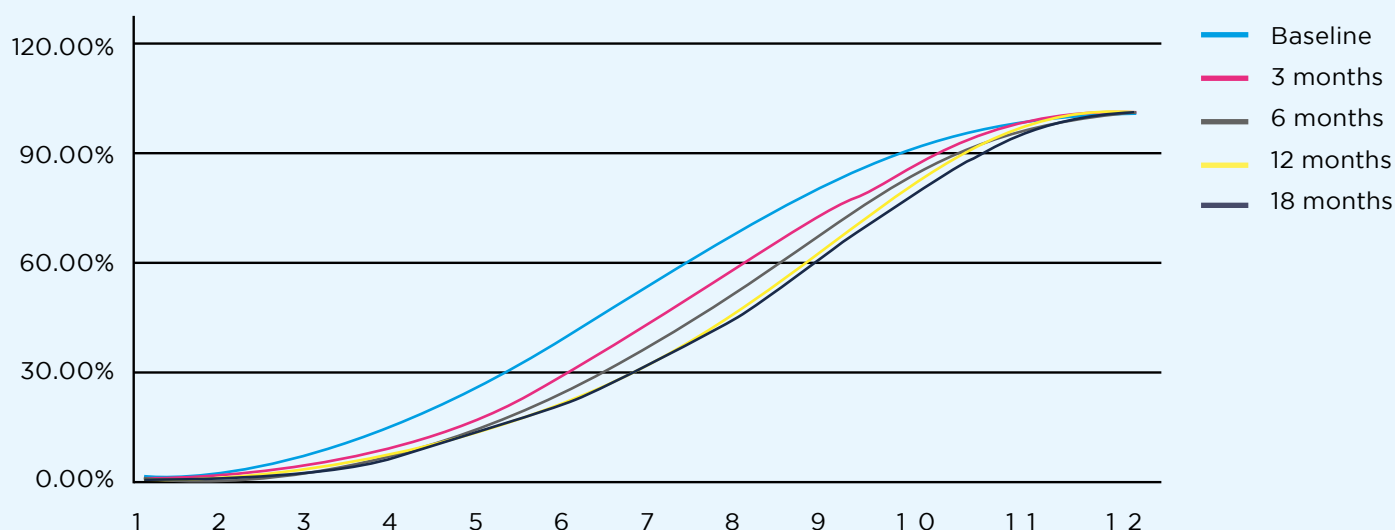
- Group one: furthest from the labour market: scores of 0 to 5
- Group two: scores of 6 and 7
- Group three: scores of 8
- Group four: scores of 9 and 10
- Group five: nearest to the labour market: scores of 11 or 12

Assessing the distance from labour market profile for young people accessing the YaS project

Working with the Enliven team at the University of Nottingham, we utilised Sheffield Hallam University DLM tool to calculate the DLM profile of young people engaged on the YaS project at baseline, 3, 6, 12 and 18 months.

Through the ongoing mentoring relationship, it can be seen that young people gradually move closer to the labour market as they take part in the project. This can be seen in the rightward shift in the line graphs as young people achieve progressively higher DLM ratings.

DLM - Cumulative % profile of young people on project



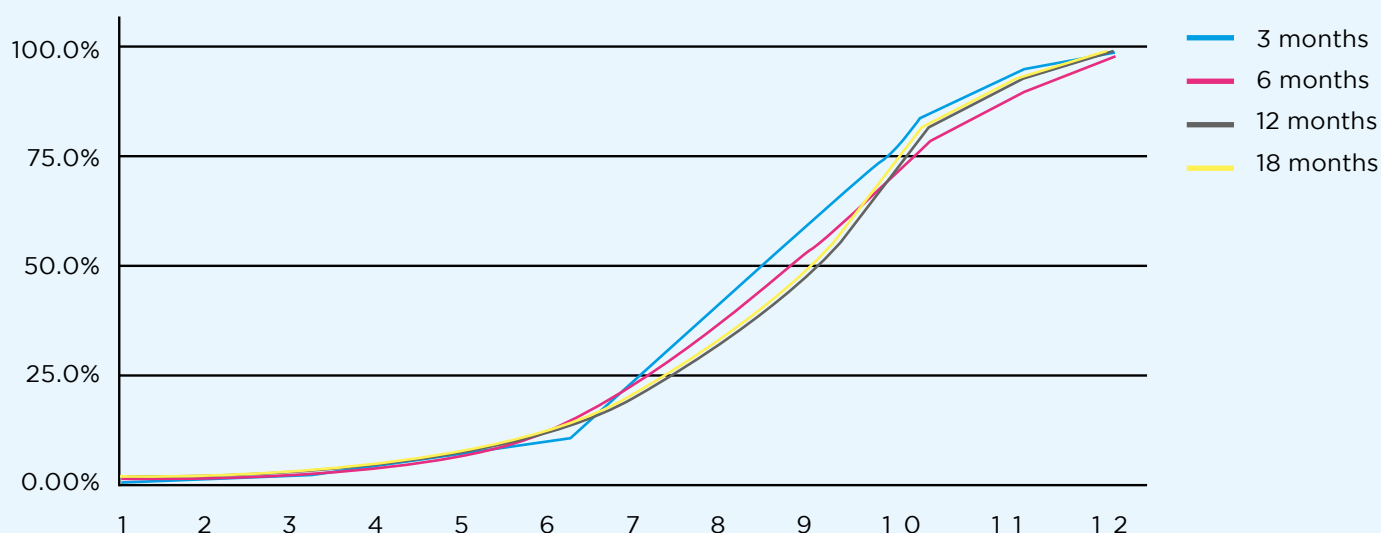


Distance from Labour Market analysis of young people securing job outcomes

To complement this analysis, we reviewed the DLM profile of young people securing job outcomes after 3, 6, 12 and 18 months on the project.

This showed that no young people with a DLM score of 0 and 2 secured a job. The evidence also revealed that few jobs are secured before young people achieve a DLM score of 5 and above. In comparison, there are a large number of job outcomes achieved between DLM scores of 7 to 10 as illustrated in the chart below:

DLM - Cumulative % of job outcomes



The chart also shows that less than 10% to 15% of job outcomes are attained by young people achieving a DLM score of 1 to 6. In comparison, between 65% and 70% of job outcomes are attained between DLM levels 7 and 10. Around 13% to 20% of job outcomes are attained by young people with DLM scores of 11 and 12. The figures suggest that from DLM scores of 7 upwards young people can increasingly be supported to secure a job outcome.

For those young people who are securing their first job this is great news, since we know that having worked before is the strongest predictor of an employment outcome when young people come into the project.

The fact that young people from DLM level 7 upwards can be helped to secure a job has implications for in-work support packages. Given that young people can secure work at this DLM level, it suggests that young people securing work will need to continue their journey to develop their employability skills after getting a job.

In addition, very few young people secure jobs with DLM scores of 11 and 12 – that’s because they have already secured employment at an earlier DLM score.

Whilst these are important issues, it is also important to note that for some young people a maximised DLM score may not be achievable if they already have children or a life-limiting disability. These are both classified as negative factors which tend to push young people further away from the labour market.

For young people securing a job outcome at DLM scores of 6 and below, it’s likely that these young people will need much more intensive tailored in-work support to help them transition into sustainable employment.



Findings from the Distance from Labour Market research

- Sheffield Hallam University have created a Distance from Labour Market (DLM) tool to help projects assess a young person's proximity to the labour market based on twelve key factors
- Young people taking part in the YaS project have been able to secure jobs before progressing to the higher level DLM scores of 10, 11 and 12
- The typical mean DLM score needed to get a job is around 8.5. This is important for in-work support packages as it implies that young people do not have basic employability skills when entering the jobs market
- The DLM research provides additional evidence to support our work around Maslow's hierarchy of needs for a youth employability project, i.e. it is very difficult for young people to gain employment when their basic needs are not being met

Segmented Job Outcome Analysis A,B,C,D and E

Our work to illustrate the concept of Distance to Labour Market is also supported by complementary analysis to understand the amount of time it took young people to secure a job outcome, i.e. the number of days on the programme.

This revealed a wide variation in the amount of time taken, from 3 days to 964 days. To develop the analysis further, we ranked all 411 young people getting jobs by March 2018, based on the number of days this took. This enabled us to create a league table segmented into five categories as follows.

Each of the five categories contains 20% of the young people achieving a job. Young people in category 'A' were on the programme for the longest amount of time before getting a job, through to young people in category 'E' who were on programme for the shortest amount of time before finding work.

The table below displays the specific details:

A= Most intensive support to secure job, E= Least intensive support to secure a job outcome.

Category	Number Young People in segment	Times Placed in FT/PT Jobs	Number CRESR sustained Job Outcomes	Number of Days on Programme	No. of One to One Meetings	Total No. of Interactions	One to One meetings as a % of total interactions	No. of Times young people disengaged & reengaged	Average number of days on programme	Average number job outcomes per person
A	82	161	26	44,092	1,741	4,872	35.7%	17	538	1.96
B	82	122	28	23,952	1,076	3,993	26.9%	10	292	1.49
C	82	103	32	14,822	857	2,541	33.7%	3	181	1.26
D	82	97	32	8,158	740	2,710	27.3%	3	99	1.18
E	83	90	36	3,226	490	1,978	24.8%	4	39	1.08
Totals	411	573	154	94,250	4,904	16,094				



This analysis revealed a number of interesting trends:

- Young people in category 'A' requiring the most intensive support in terms of number of days on programme were also more likely to need a greater proportion of one-to-one mentoring support.
- The number of interactions required to secure a job outcome typically reduced in sequence moving across A-E categories (interactions include one-to-one meeting, group meeting, phone call, text message and email logged case notes).
- Young people from categories 'A' and 'B' were much more likely to have disengaged from the service at some point before re-engaging and getting a job.
- Young people from category 'A' were also more likely to disengage or lose employment than the other categories. This is in contrast to category 'E' who were more likely to stay in employment after securing a job outcome on the programme.
- The emerging correlation between sustained employment and length of time on the programme has important implications for the provision and targeting of in-work support resources.

Interpretation of segmented job outcome analysis

This research highlights the variety of demands placed on the YaS project. Young people in category 'E' were clearly much closer to the labour market when using the project and needed much less mentoring than any other category. This group was also more likely to sustain their employment.

However, young people in categories D up to A need increasing levels of support. Young people in category 'A' would require extra support around the safety, security and physiological level needs as identified in the Maslow analysis. Similarly the evidence confirms that young people on the project for longer are more likely to struggle to stay in a job – probably because their employability skills and attitudes are still being developed. As we saw in the earlier analysis, young people have been able to get a job at DLM levels 3 to 6 although most jobs are secured at levels 7 to 10.

Both these trends point out the need for careful planning of in-work support to help young people stay in employment. While in-work support cannot guarantee that young people stay in work, it can be a useful resource to help both young people and employers carry out reflective learning practice if a young person is made redundant. This evaluation would suggest that more research is needed to inform best practice in the development of in-work support programmes that work with employers.





In summary

This section of the evaluation reveals that the journeys for young people into employment are highly individualised. The work to develop the Maslow model, the Distance from Labour Market analysis and segmented job outcomes highlight these key learnings:

- Employability projects must examine whether young people have outstanding physiological, safety or security needs to address before trying to improve their employability
- Young people who have good levels of confidence, mental health and have worked before are more likely to secure employment
- Young people who have worked before possess the single strongest predictor that they will find another job
- For those young people that have not worked before, mentoring is crucial to help them develop the skills, confidence and ability to reduce their distance from labour market and get a job
- Our DLM analysis shows that very few young people gained employment at DLM scores of 1 to 6
- Most young people who have secured a job have done so at DLM levels 7 to 10
- The DLM analysis shows that young people have already secured a job before reaching higher levels 11 and 12
- The segmented job outcomes research reveals a massive variation in the length of time taken to get a job
- Those young people from category 'E' who find employment in the shortest possible time need less mentoring and are more likely to stay in work
- In comparison, young people from category 'A' who take the longest amount of time to get a job need more intensive mentoring and are less likely to stay in work
- The DLM research and segmented job outcomes analysis suggest that more effort is required to target in-work support projects, to help ensure that young people and their employers can work effectively to sustain employment
- All three approaches outlined in this section confirm the variety of demands placed on the YaS project. This supports the rationale of developing flexible, person-centred services which are delivered through consistent mentoring to help young people tackle barriers and move towards employment







SECTION

6

Analysing Value for Money in the context of the UK welfare to work agenda

In this section of the evaluation, we consider the concept of Value for Money (VfM) within the context of the wider welfare to work agenda in the UK. We look at the challenges and outcomes experienced during the delivery of the YaS project and examine how these reflect similar challenges associated with the Work Programme.

To provide a deeper analysis of the concept of VfM, we look at how the diversity of demand placed on an employability service drives costs and causes tensions for providers wishing to maximise their return on investment. Finally, we consider the implications of wider economic and financial costs in the absence of funded provision designed to support young people looking for work.

To provide a context for the size and scale of the Young and Successful project the following table provides details of the key outcomes achieved over the past five years.

Young People Engaged	1,325
6 Month Employment Sustained	223
Basic Skills Completed	1053
Formal training or Education Completed	325
Placed in Full Time Job	436
Volunteering	293
Work Experience	347

The challenge of assessing Value for Money

Throughout the course of the YaS project, it became apparent that young people face major barriers which could thwart initiatives designed to boost their employability. Mental health, housing, substance misuse, gangs and lack of basic skills are some of the issues that young people furthest from the labour market may be facing. These are unlikely to be addressed by an introductory CV writing workshop or employability skills training in the classroom.

Our experience would reveal that there are more pressing issues that these young people need to deal with in their journey to employability. These issues all have an impact when looking at Value for Money (VfM) in helping these young people find work.

Reviewing the literature on working with hard-to-help groups reveals that the challenging issues experienced during the YaS project are also apparent in other

programmes across the UK. In particular, it's becoming clear that the government's flagship employability initiative over recent years, the Work Programme, has also experienced challenges when working with the most disadvantaged in the labour market:

'The Work Programme, while it may deliver 'acceptable' results for mainstream jobseekers, is letting down those furthest from the labour market. While one in five mainstream jobseekers will find work through the programme, as few as one in 20 of those with more complex needs will access employment. Despite the fact that contracts are designed to reward providers for helping the latter payment groups, the results for these groups are poor, and there is little evidence of innovation in the programme. Even the providers most effective at delivering support for mainstream jobseekers appear out of their depth when addressing those with more complex conditions.'

Source: Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) North. Work Programme – Alright for some? Fixing the Work Programme locally 2014

A closer inspection of the performance of employability projects reveals a significant issue with 'parking' and 'creaming' of participants. (See National Audit Office – Work Programme report 2014 for further details of 'Parking issues'). These terms are used to describe providers that help those that are closest to the labour market to secure jobs, to gain themselves the biggest financial returns. While those young people that are seen as too difficult to work with are left behind or 'parked'.

On the Work Programme, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has tried to stop this happening through a Payment by Results (PBR) regime, although this has also had difficulties. This is because the journey into employment is not a standardised journey and in reality young people typically need varying levels and types of support in order to succeed. However, as providers are looking to maximise profit there is an underlying incentive for them to support easier-to-help participants. These tensions have also been identified within senior levels of the DWP.



‘DWP’s Director of Labour Market and International Affairs explained that no matter how the Department chose to distinguish between claimants, no group of claimants would be homogeneous; a flat fee was therefore likely to elicit creaming and parking, as a rational response from providers seeking to earn maximum return from their investment.’

Source: Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) North. Work Programme – Alright for some? Fixing the Work Programme locally 2014

‘The Work Programme’s innovative differential payments model has not had its intended impact on the behaviour of providers. Payment groups based largely on benefit type have not provided an accurate proxy for the level of support required by individual participants.’

There are too many payment groups in the current model, with financial differentials which do not adequately reflect the relative likelihood of providers achieving an outcome for individual participants: this is both unnecessarily complicated and ineffective.’

Source: House of Commons, Work and Pension Committee, Welfare to Work, Second Report of the Session (2015)

While PBR was established to provide increased financial rewards to encourage providers to work with the hardest to help, it’s not clear if the higher reward actually covers the provider’s real costs.

Our experience with the YaS project would suggest there is a substantial diversity of demand when working with young people furthest from the labour market. This makes it difficult to calculate an average level of resource per head, without risking the ‘parking’ of individuals judged to need above average levels of support. Based on our research of the Work Programme, it is clear that difficulties have been experienced when assumptions have been made regarding the levels of support needed by different payment groups:

What is perhaps lacking in these approaches is a deeper analysis of the diversity of demand placed on employability projects for young people. A different approach could help to highlight not only the diversity of demand, but also the relative cost implications for providers working with people both near to and far from the labour market.

To help illustrate these principles and provide a deeper insight into the variety of resources used by young people on the programme, we have refined the segmented job outcomes analysis outlined in section five.

To do this we have highlighted the details of the 411 young people who have used the programme against each of the five A,B,C,D,E categories. Dividing the total project funding of £6,150,000 by 411 job outcomes reveals an average cost per job outcome of £14,963. Whilst this cost seems very high compared with the estimated £3,871 DWP cost per job outcome (Source IPPR North, Fixing the Work Programme 2014) the approach of dividing total project costs by job outcomes conceals the true range of costs running through the service.

If we take a different approach and look at the total number of days on the programme for all young people achieving a job outcome, e.g. 94,250 days and use this figure to divide the total cost of the project £6,150,000, we end up with a unit cost per day of £65.25. If this day rate figure is then used to apportion costs to each ABCDE segment, we can see the disparity of costs driven through the service, and the extent of the resources needed to support those that are hardest to help:



Category	Total number of days on project	Average number of days on project	Total cost	% costs	Adjusted cost per Job Outcomes
A - Furthest	44,092	538	£ 2,877,090	47%	£35,086
B	23,952	292	£ 1,562,915	25%	£19,059
C	14,822	181	£967,164	16%	£11,794
D	8,158	99	£532,325	9%	£6,491
E - Nearest	3,226	39	£210,502	3%	£2,536



We can see that young people from category E, nearest to the labour market, consume £2,536 per job outcome compared with £35,086 for young people from category A, furthest from the labour market. In other words, the programme could help 13 young people from category E into employment for the same cost as one young person in category A. This highlights the tensions facing providers who are driven by the need to maximise profitability.

These discrepancies also highlight the difficulties when trying to establish effective PBR arrangements. We appreciate that the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, Welfare to Work, Second Report of the Session (2015) recommends that, 'a service fee, set at 30% of the job outcome fee, be introduced for participants in the intensive support group'. Whilst the introduction of a 30% service fee is a movement in the right direction, it is questionable how much this would incentivise providers bearing in mind the growing costs as we move up the segmented job categories from D to A.

In order to influence the future design and resourcing of effective employability programmes, it is crucial that commissioners and policymakers gain a deeper

understanding of these trends which so evidently affect service delivery.

Based on this basic analysis, we would advocate that further research is carried out to understand the true operating costs when working with those furthest from the labour market.





The cost implications of supporting young people furthest from the labour market

As the preceding analysis demonstrates, it becomes progressively more resource-intensive working with young people furthest from the labour market. Whilst young people in category E need a relatively light support package lasting on average 39 days, this is quite different from the category A group who stay on the programme for 538 days on average.

These figures raise important issues around the idea of Value for Money (VfM) within the context of an employability project. For example, does a job outcome achieved by a young person in category A represent value for money at an estimated cost of resources of £35,086 compared with the cost achieved by a young person in category E at just £2,536?

This leaves us with a number of challenging questions to resolve:

- Do resource-intensive category A jobs at £35,086 each represent Value for Money?
- Do the costs of a category A job outcome reveal new evidence on the true costs of intensive employability projects working with those furthest from the labour market?
- Since young people tend to disengage from employability projects they see as not working, does the fact that young people are willing to be involved for 538 days before getting a job show the strength of this model?
- If a group of young people looking for work are willing to commit to a programme for 538 days before getting a job should they be supported to do so?
- Whilst 538 days is a long period of time, is it reasonable to assume that young people are

developing valuable employability skills of resilience, commitment and dedication during this period that will be of benefit for the rest of their working lives?

- Are there wider system costs to society and the government which can be used to help interpret whether or not the costs of category A job outcomes represent Value for Money?
- What are the implications of doing nothing to support those furthest from the labour market?
- Is it possible to develop future models which encourage providers to cross-subsidise funding streams for those young people 'nearest to' and 'furthest from' the labour market?

To help answer some of these questions, it is important to consider the implications for society if effective employability programmes do not exist – particularly for those young people furthest from the labour market.

The financial and economic implications of helping young people gain qualifications or employment

In section one of this evaluation, we referred to the 2012 ACEVO research report entitled, 'Youth unemployment – the crisis we cannot afford'. The report highlighted the damaging effects of youth unemployment for young people and their communities, and estimated a £28bn cost to the Treasury over the next decade if the current problems were not addressed.

Consultation of the New Economy Foundation (NEF) unit cost database (2015) provides further insights into how the £28bn cost could accumulate if effective employability provision is not funded. This database reveals both the 'fiscal value' and 'economic value' of a range of different services/outcomes which young people could face if unemployed long-term. These terms have been defined by the creators of the database as follows:

Fiscal value: costs or savings to the public sector that are due to a specific project (e.g. delivery of additional services or reduced health service, police or education costs).

Economic value: net increase in earnings or growth in the local economy.

Working with young people who are furthest from the labour market on the Young and Successful project, we understand the massive potential contribution that young people can make to the local economy. This potential impact is confirmed within the education and employment section of the unit cost database with the calculations attached to a variety of measures:

NVQ Level 2 Qualification - annual fiscal and economic benefits per person per year	£483 economic value
NVQ Level 3 Qualification - annual fiscal and economic benefits per person per year	£1003 economic value
Apprenticeship Level 3 Qualification - annual fiscal and economic benefits per person per year	£2097 economic value
Job Seeker's Allowance - Fiscal benefit from a workless claimant entering work per person per year	£10,321 fiscal value



The financial and economic implications of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in terms of welfare and healthcare needs

We know from wider research that the longer young people remain in a NEET status, the higher the risk that they will develop mental health or addiction problems (Source: Impetus Making NEET history 2014). This has major cost implications not only for the ongoing cost of welfare payments, but also the provision of healthcare services.

Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET) Average cost per 18-24 year old NEET per person per year (includes welfare payments and forgone national insurance and tax contributions)	£4,637 fiscal value
Drugs misuse - average annual savings resulting from reductions in drug-related offending and health and social care costs as a result of delivery of a structured, effective treatment programme	£3727 fiscal value
Average cost of service provision for adults suffering from depression and/or anxiety disorders, per person per year - fiscal and economic costs	£977 fiscal value £4522 economic value (lost output)

The financial implications of the potential involvement of young people in criminal activity

We also appreciate that many young people who remain unemployed are at risk of falling into criminality. A review of the YaS project shows that over 11% of the young people on the project felt that their criminal record or time in custody had adversely affected their ability to secure employment. Young people involved in criminal activity drive significant costs through the criminal justice system:

Anti-social behaviour, further action necessary (cost of dealing with incident)	£673 fiscal value
Offender, Prison Average cost across all prisons, including central costs. Costs per prisoner per annum.	£34,480 fiscal value
Youth offender, average cost of a first time entrant (under 18) to the Criminal Justice System in the first year following the offence	£3,620 fiscal value



As the economic and financial costs of a young person remaining unemployed begin to compound over a number of years, this provides a useful context in which to judge whether the category A cost of £35,086 to help a young person into employment represents Value for Money? When it costs £34,480 to keep an offender in prison per annum, it is not difficult to see the wider costs to society if we don't invest in projects to help young people get into work.

We would advocate for further research to help understand the true costs and Value for Money principles of getting young people furthest from the labour market into employment. Clearly, further developmental work is required to help inform the creation of future employability policies and programmes to benefit young people, the UK economy and wider society.





In summary

- Young people furthest from the labour market cannot be standardised into a one-size-fits-all group
- The YaS project demonstrates that there is a massive diversity of demand that has cost implications when working with groups of young people relatively 'near to' or 'far from' the labour market
- The challenges of working with young people furthest from the labour market is consistently featured within the wider welfare to work agenda and has been a particular challenge faced by the Work Programme
- Assessing Value for Money calculations for employability projects is fraught with difficulties since the nature of demand and the costs depend on the needs of each participant
- Attempts to alleviate these challenges by Payment by Results schemes are also problematic as this often leads to 'parking' and 'creaming' behaviour by providers
- On the YaS project, segmented job outcomes analysis shows the wide range of demand and the implications for how this drives costs
- This analysis reveals that the YaS project could support 13 young people from category A (cost £2,536) into employment for the same cost as one young person from category A (cost £35,086)
- To help assess if the resource-intensive category A packages of support represent value for money, it is important to consider the wider costs to society if young people become long-term unemployed
- The ACEVO 2012 report, 'Youth unemployment – the crisis we cannot afford' estimates this cost to be £28billion over the next decade
- The New Economy Foundation (2015) unit cost database highlights how the financial costs could build up for a young person becoming a long-term unemployed adult
- We would advocate that further research and debate is carried out to assess the true costs of helping young people furthest from the labour market into employment





SECTION

7

The YaS project key learning points

This section of the evaluation captures the key learnings from the YaS project over the past five years. All the points have been created to help to inform the future legacy of projects targeted at young people furthest from the labour market.

Throughout the course of the programme, it has become clear that the situations facing young people are incredibly diverse and as a result it is inappropriate to make assumptions about the courses of action needed before getting to know a young person.

In this final section of the evaluation, we explain some of the key principles and trends which we have found have been helpful to consider as part of a project working with young people disadvantaged in the labour market.

The impact of multiple and complex barriers and the link with Maslow's hierarchy of needs

1. Young people furthest from the labour market are likely to have multiple and complex barriers to employment. These barriers must be individually resolved as part of any meaningful attempt to develop a young person's employability
2. Unless young people are currently meeting their basic physiological and safety needs, it is very difficult for them to develop their employability
3. Projects like YaS provide a place for young people to 'belong' as they develop the necessary skills to move into the workplace
4. Young people get a glimpse at self-actualisation when they secure their first ever job. They realise that a lifestyle of employment is attainable
5. Decision tree analysis of YaS data reveals that good levels of confidence, mental health and having worked before are the most accurate predictors that young people can secure employment

The impact of mentors

6. Mentoring is a crucial part of any service designed to support young people trying to gain employment
7. One-to-one mentoring provides a safe space for young people to address their barriers to employment without fear of being judged or rejected
8. Young people may not have active involvement from parents who would have traditionally provided advice on finding work. The role of a mentor helps to close this gap
9. Mentoring relationships take time to build the trust and rapport necessary to help young people tackle barriers and make progress
10. Employability programmes which rely too heavily on infrequent meetings with a range of employability professionals erode the trust required by young people to make progress

'YaS offers more hands-on support - you get much more encouragement to build up your confidence. The service works with you and shows you how to do things rather than telling you what to do'.

Young Person on the YaS project



'The mentoring relationship helps to broaden horizons to know about opportunities and training providers. It's been helpful and makes things easier to find work'.

Young Person on the YaS project

'Having a mentor is like having someone who can help with any situation, whatever it is.'

Young Person on the YaS project

11. Mentors ideally should have a wide range of skills to attract, engage and empower young people to build their employability. This includes youth work and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) approaches

'As Talent Match participants get closer to employment, the skills that key workers need change: moving from a youth work approach that focuses on emotional, personal and social development, to a greater emphasis on employability and careers guidance.'

Source: Talent Match 2018 Knowledge and learning programme briefing

The impact of person-centred services for young people

12. The sheer diversity of young people needing employability support points toward the need for employability professionals to work in a person-centred way. One-size-fits-all approaches do not work effectively
13. Young people seeking work benefit from a person-centred action plan to help enhance their employability by providing a focus for their efforts
14. Young people often have a limited awareness of what they should be doing on a day-to-day basis to develop their employability
15. Young people naturally develop their own independent thinking skills through developing a personal action plan with their mentor

'YaS provides you with more freedom to do what you want. It builds confidence and is more friendly and less regimented when compared with The Work Programme or Job Centre Plus. This helps to boost the motivation of young people.'

Young Person on the YaS project

16. The specific situation facing each young person becomes fully apparent within the first three months of using the programme. Over this time, additional barriers usually become apparent
17. As many as 40% of the young people on the programme have additional barriers which are often not disclosed due to a lack of self-awareness, trust issues or a perceived stigma on the part of the young person

'Almost a quarter of participants acknowledge having experienced mental ill health (24%), although this could be as high as 50% because many do not disclose mental health issues before they have built up a trusting relationship with their mentor.'

Talent Match 2018 Knowledge and learning programme briefing

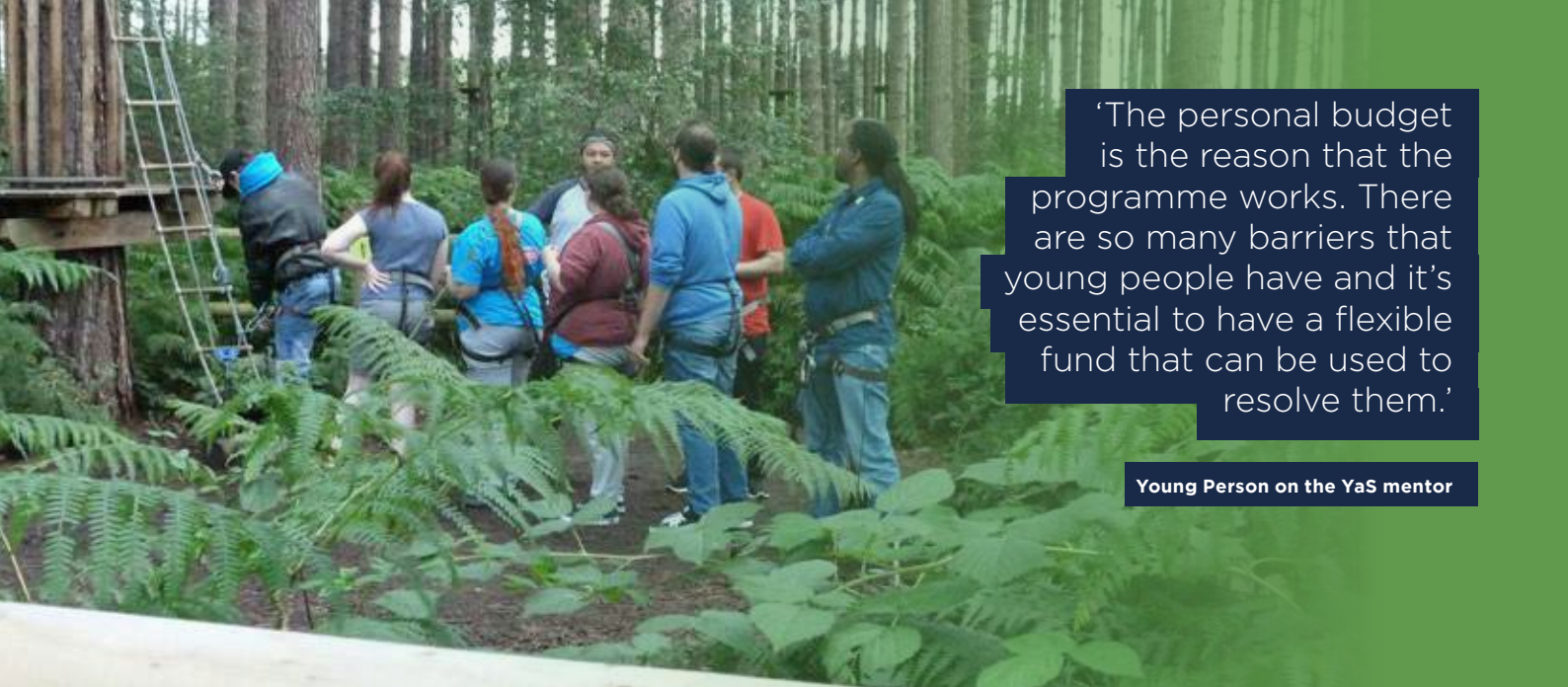
The link between mental health and employability issues

18. Employability services for young people looking for a job must have the capacity to support individuals with undiagnosed or diagnosed mental health conditions
19. The loss of an educational routine and the absence of employment provide the ideal breeding ground for anxiety, depression and a range of mental health conditions to adversely affect young people
20. Many young people may not even realise they are beginning to suffer from poor mental health caused by growing frustration at a series of failed attempts to secure employment
21. To help respond to these challenges, it's vital that all frontline staff have basic mental health awareness training to effectively support young people



The impact of a personal budget

22. The option to provide young people with access to a personal budget is an invaluable resource to help tackle barriers
23. Personal budgets increase the accessibility of vocational opportunities that young people might not otherwise be able to access
24. Personal budgets also provide a crucial subsistence element to help young people cover the necessary costs to take part in a project, e.g. to cover the costs of public transport and phone credit. This is key to helping young people stay connected with their mentor
25. Mentors consistently report back that the personal budget helps to build trust and remove barriers. They believe that not having a personal budget would have a detrimental effect on the mentoring relationship



'The personal budget is the reason that the programme works. There are so many barriers that young people have and it's essential to have a flexible fund that can be used to resolve them.'

Young Person on the YaS mentor

Structuring employability projects to boost engagement with young people

26. Youth employability programme referrals and engagement rates can be boosted through the provision of services through local organisations
27. Locally known and trusted organisations within the community can help to alleviate fear and suspicions that young people have of unknown outside organisations
28. Locally-based approaches avoid potential problems with young people having to pay to travel out of the area to unfamiliar situations which may be seen as hostile or threatening
29. Postcode-based services targeted at youth unemployment hot-spots create an accessibility lottery and cause confusion for young people and referral partners. They should be avoided
30. Project referrals have been boosted by the fact that YaS is a non-mandated employability programme
31. Young people looking for work are often anxious about the potential to be sanctioned when they visit Job Centre Plus. To avoid sanctioning, many young people feel that they were mandated to attend training courses which did not help develop their employability

'Job Centre Plus didn't really help me find a job. I went on lots of courses but did not find them helpful. Actually, sitting down with my mentor regularly to discuss things helped me find work.'

Young Person on the YaS mentor

The problem of payment by results when working with young people seeking employment

32. Incentivising mentors and service providers through payment by results (PBR) arrangements risks destabilising the mentoring relationship
33. The natural result of PBR arrangements is the parking of young people deemed to be too hard to reach and the creaming of young people seen as easiest to get into work
34. The wide variety of resources consumed to get individual young people into work reveals the commercial tensions that providers face when working with young people looking for a job
35. On the YaS project, 13 young people from the easiest to help category (E) could be helped into employment for the same cost as one young person from the hardest to help category (A)

'At the Job Centre it felt like they were only bothered about saving money and benefits. They were not bothered about me. YaS felt different, like they were actually there to help'.

Young Person on the YaS project

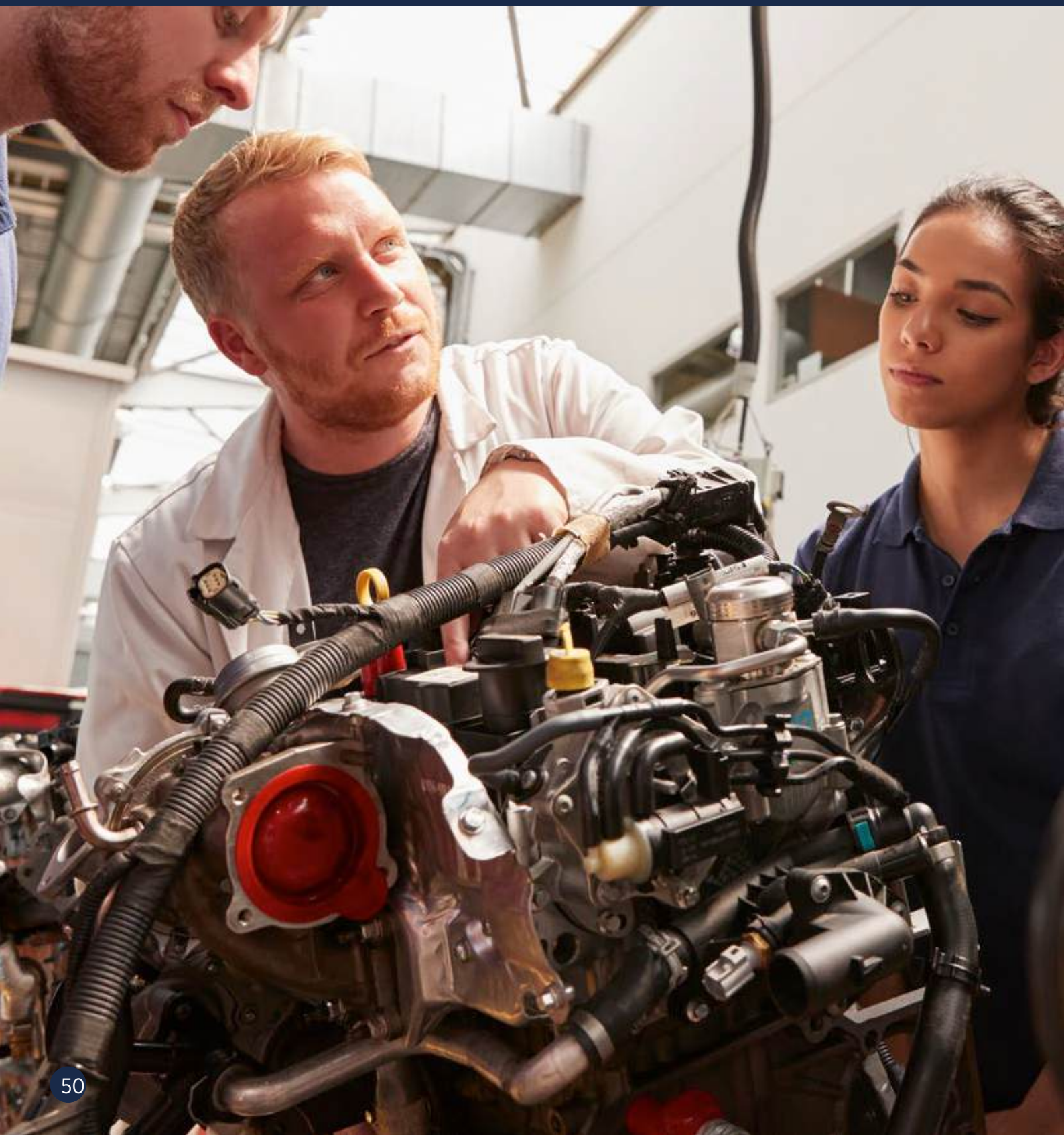
‘There is no failure, only learning on YaS. Other providers give up on you if you make a mistake or are deemed as too difficult to work with’.

On YaS I have been encouraged to keep trying.’

Young Person on the YaS project

‘The Work Programme’s innovative differential payments model has not had its intended impact on the behaviour of providers. Payment groups based largely on benefit type have not provided an accurate proxy for the level of support required by individual participants.’

Source: House of Commons, Work and Pensions select committee, Welfare to Work report 2015-2016



The positive impact of a prior work history

36. Detailed analysis of YaS project statistics reveals that having worked before is the strongest predictor that young people will secure employment

'An important barrier to securing employment for young people is the expectation of candidates to have previous work experience and/or a minimum level of qualifications: 63% of employers countrywide require previous experience for entry level roles.'

'This results in a vicious cycle - if an entry level job requires past experience how can young people get that initial experience?'

Source: Talent Match 2018 Knowledge and learning programme briefing.

37. The employability issues facing young people with multiple and complex barriers are compounded when they have no previous work history
38. In these circumstances, it is crucial that young people engage with specialist mentors to help them develop their employability

'Those furthest from the labour market require a whole range of specialist support and resources to be able to progress to a place of stability, self-confidence and engagement. Our partnerships have found that basic needs such as housing and mental ill health are not always addressed. Many need help in developing the appropriate attitudes, resilience and behaviours to cope with typical work patterns.'

Source: Talent Match 2018 Knowledge and learning programme briefing.

39. Young people with complex barriers who have never worked before are unlikely to secure employment without mentoring support

The power of engaging young people's experiences of unemployment

40. Encouraging young people to participate in an employability project creates additional opportunities to enhance the quality of the service
41. Getting young people involved in decision-making empowers them to share their experiences and help to ensure that projects are fit for purpose
42. Participation also helps young people to develop their employability skills in terms of better communication and problem-solving skills, team working, time management capabilities and so on



'At Project Board meetings there is no condescension from managers towards the young people. They treat us as adults... everything the young people say is listened to and we get recognition for the things we achieve.'

Young person on the YaS project



43. Youth participation plans (YPP) should be backed by an effective training and induction plan
44. For YPP to work, training and induction plans should be created for both young people and project staff
45. As young people interact with their peers, they realise the common challenges that they face to develop their employability. This helps to boost self-esteem and self-awareness
46. Participation helps to reduce the sense of social isolation that many young people face while at the same time boosting well-being and self-esteem

‘Being able to speak to young people in the same situation as me is really helpful. Before coming on YaS I would never really go out of the house and YPP has helped me to ‘come out of my shell’. The team ask you to do things that really get you out of your ‘comfort zone’ this has really helped me.’

Young person on the YaS project

The need for youth employment projects to have dynamic employer engagement

47. Young people who are seeking work usually have little or no experience of engaging with employers
48. In turn, employers often have little or no experience of engaging with these young people
49. Dynamic employer engagement helps to bridge this gap
50. The Youth Friendly Award devised by Youth Employment UK is a good example of effective employer engagement with a range of measures that employers can use to attract and retain young talent. For further details of this mark see www.youthemployment.org.uk/youth-friendly-employer-award/

‘The YaS Employment team opens up pathways as to what options you have. Even though a young person may have one goal, the team provides you with different options to get there.’

Young person on the YaS project



51. An effective youth employability project must include dynamic employer engagement to help young people secure a job

The need to devise in-work support packages to keep young people in work

52. Employability projects should not assume that young people securing a job have the skills and experience to stay in work. These young people are highly likely to need in-work support to help them in the short-term



‘Talent Match experience suggests that in-work support can help support sustainable employment: 81% of TM participants who have received in-work support have held onto their job for 6 months while only 75% of those who have not received such support have stayed in their role. Young people who require the most intensive support to secure a job outcome are also more likely to struggle to retain employment in the short-term.’

Source: Talent Match 2018 Knowledge and learning programme briefing



- We would suggest that there is a need for government policymakers, commissioners and employability professionals to learn from the experience of programmes like Talent Match YaS
- The future of the UK economy and increasing pressure on public services will not be helped by a growing and disenfranchised community of young people
- We owe it to ourselves, our communities and our young people to engage in further policy debate and research to discover, ‘what works when working with young people furthest from the labour market’

As a starting point we would suggest that this research and policy debate should seek to:

- Explore the diversity of unit costs to help those furthest from the labour market to secure and sustain employment
- Develop effective models to help segment the distance from labour market classifications of young people accessing the labour market. This data is crucial for devising new projects based on the needs of emerging target groups
- Develop new initiatives to bring together employers and young people seeking work
- Draw on young people’s experience to shape future employability programmes
- Create the most appropriate funding models to stimulate and not stifle innovation in employability projects designed to help young people find employment

The experience of delivering the YaS project shows that it is possible to support innovation in the development of progressive programmes designed to support young people furthest from the labour market.

The need for ongoing innovation to help more young people gain employment

- Through running the YaS project, it is clear that much more can be done to create pathways for young people to access the labour market
- This evaluation proposes that there is much more to be learned from Talent Match projects like YaS which have been running across England over the past five years
- Research nationally reveals that large scale employability programmes like the Work Programme are not reaching the hardest to help

‘The Work Programme, while it may deliver ‘acceptable’ results for mainstream jobseekers, is letting down those furthest from the labour market. While one in five mainstream jobseekers will find work through the programme, as few as one in 20 of those with more complex needs will access employment.’

Source: Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) North. Work Programme – Alright for some? Fixing the Work Programme locally 2014



The test and learn philosophy of the Talent Match project has allowed organisations to develop innovative approaches to help respond to long-standing issues associated with youth unemployment. In our view, this has been a key factor behind the success of the project in giving organisations the freedom to embrace new ideas to help young people move forward.

Reviewing existing government and research papers on youth employability programmes demonstrates the need for further innovation in the scope, structure and ethos of future employability programmes.

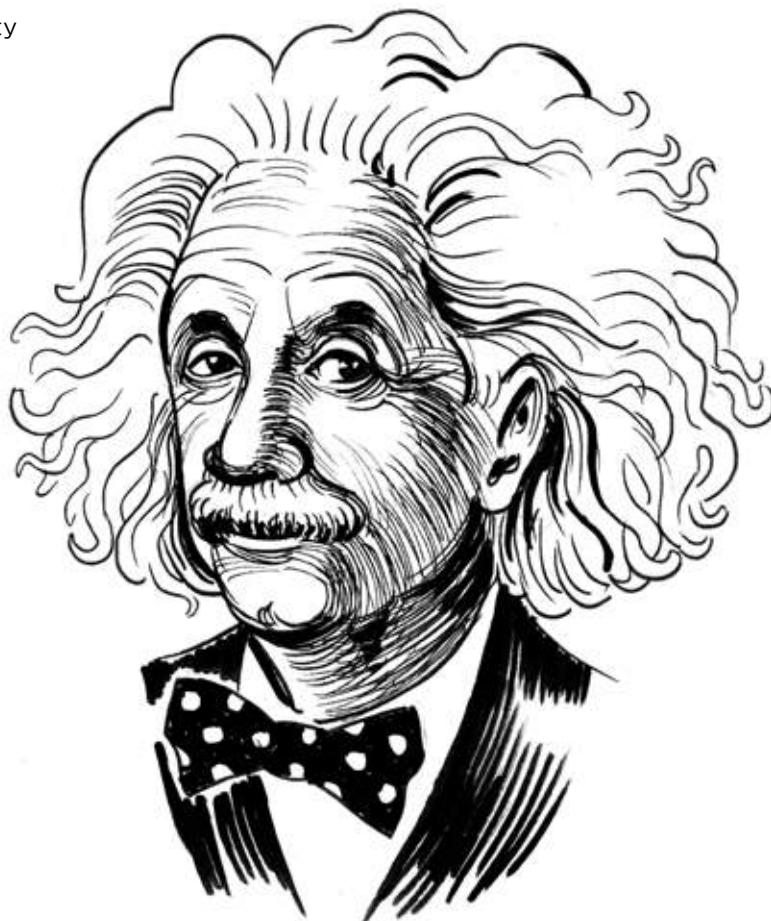
We would therefore encourage all readers of this evaluation to seriously consider the key principles that should underpin an effective youth employability project.

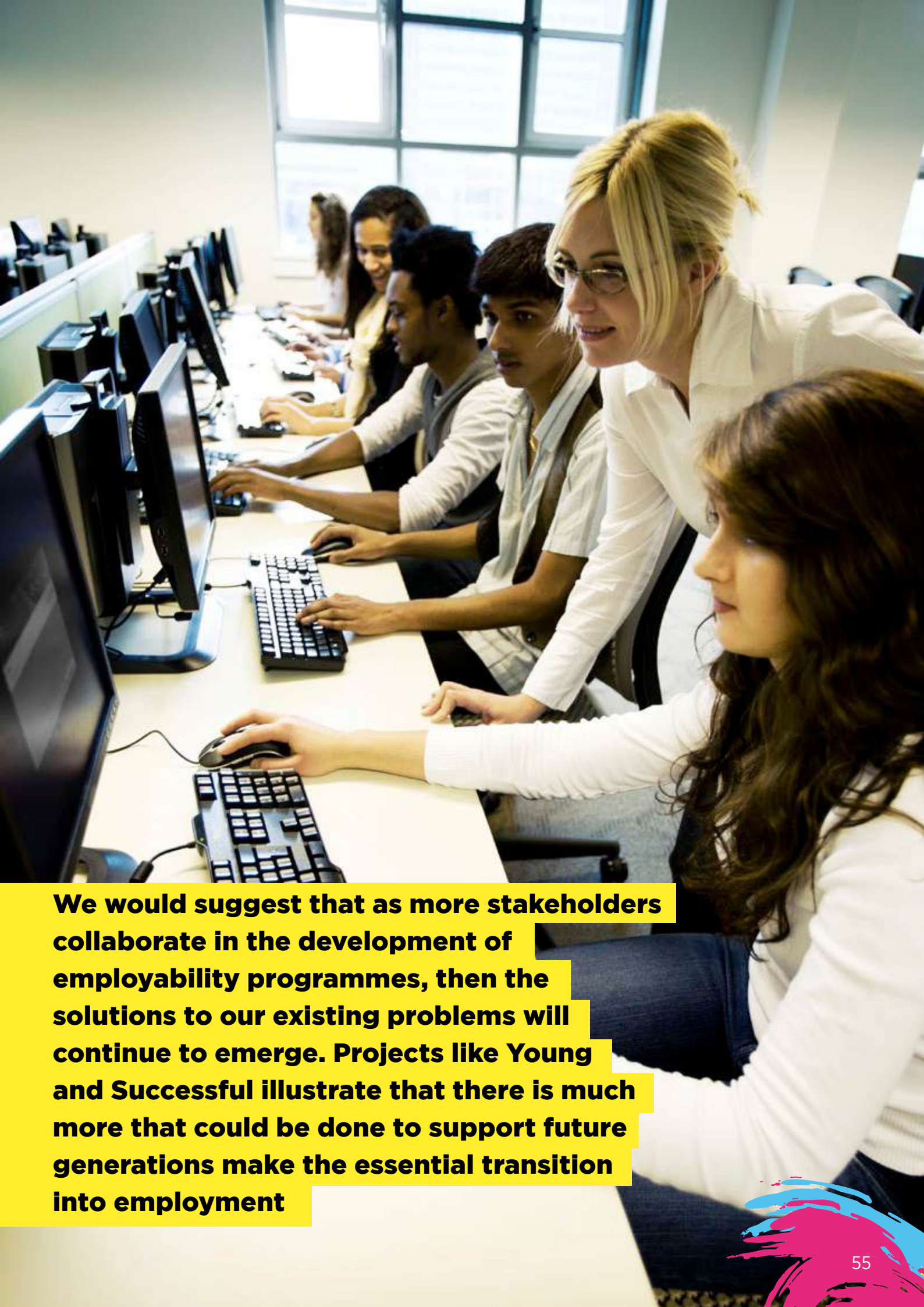
Our experience tells us that understanding the diverse needs of young people who require employability support enables the development of effective programmes. These are programmes which are underpinned by principles designed to directly address the challenging range of circumstances faced by young people today.

Indeed if we are to effectively tackle youth unemployment, the need to develop and employ new approaches must continue.

“We cannot
solve our
problems
with the same
thinking we
used to create
them”

Albert Einstein





We would suggest that as more stakeholders collaborate in the development of employability programmes, then the solutions to our existing problems will continue to emerge. Projects like Young and Successful illustrate that there is much more that could be done to support future generations make the essential transition into employment

SECTION

8

Appendices - Young & Successful legacy evaluation

Decision tree analysis associated with Maslow's hierarchy of needs for young people furthest from the labour market.

To help explain the application of decision trees associated with Maslow's hierarchy of needs analysis, the following supporting narrative has been supplied by the Enliven team based at the University of Nottingham.

A decision tree is a machine learning classification model represented as a tree, where each node represents an attribute,

each branch represents a decision and each leaf represents a classification. A branch is a link connecting a pair of nodes and a decision is a set of values taken by the attribute. Classification techniques create decision trees by learning the mapping between a set of predictor attributes and a (classification) outcome value.



In this case, the predictors are the proximity to labour market factors identified by Sheffield Hallam (e.g. possession of a limiting disability, children, five or more GCSEs and so on) and the (classification) outcome value is whether or not employment has been gained. The decision tree is created by repeatedly changing the sequence of the attributes and their values, sorting down the tree from the root (topmost) node to a leaf node. At each node, a test is applied to the attribute to sort the data into two subsets.

The data has been sorted by applying a true/false test, e.g. have or do not have five or more GCSEs. As we have a data set of 488 values (with Common Data Framework Young and Successful three-month data set - missing values removed) and are considering 12 attributes, this results in 48812 combinations, meaning 1.82×1032 tests are performed to create the decision tree. The number 1.82×1032 is greater than the number of atoms in the human body.

The predictor importance calculates how much in total each predictor attribute contributes to the decision tree. A decision tree shows the predictors required to infer the outcome in order of importance. The predictors calculated by the predictor importance algorithm may be different to the top predictors shown by the decision tree, as a predictor may re-occur at lower branches of the tree. Predictor importance is derived from summing the number of times a predictor occurs within the decision tree, and dividing this by the lowest depth at which it occurs within the tree.

Distance from Labour Market (DLM) scoring system – an explanation of the research carried out by Sheffield Hallam University.

This is a measure of proximity, or nearness, to the labour market which has been created to estimate how likely a young person is to be in work. The measure combines information about a young person's characteristics, experiences and competencies to provide a single indicator of how close a given young person is to the labour market.

Twelve indicators combine to create the measure. These were identified in a statistical modelling exercise on Common Data Framework responses at 6 and 12 months, depending on which was the latest, to identify factors statistically associated with being in work.

Logistic regression was used by Sheffield Hallam University to identify factors associated with a young person being in work or not. Over 28 variables were considered for inclusion covering factors like tenure, having children, having a limiting disability, educational attainment, self-reported competencies, (including communication, teamwork, basic skills, ability to compose a CV and appropriate clothing for an interview) and services the young person is involved with.

Backwards variable selection using a likelihood-ratio test (LR) was used to identify variables for inclusion within the final proximity to the labour market measure. This identified 12 factors:

- Having a limiting disability, negative factor
- Having children, negative factor
- Attained five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C (including English and Maths)
- Understanding the skills that employers want
- Having good specific skills for the desired job
- Setting and achieving goals
- Managing feelings
- Having confidence and self-esteem
- Having appropriate clothes for an interview
- Being involved with drugs/alcohol support, negative factor
- Being involved with mental health services, negative factor
- Ever having worked before

To simplify interpretation of the measure, and to ensure that it was consistent over time, the factors were each given an equal weight. This is opposed to using the coefficients from the statistical model to weight factors according to their relative importance in predicting the likelihood that a given young person was in work. Both these approaches were tested against each other by applying baseline Common Data Framework responses. However, relatively few differences were noted in the positions of young people on either scale.

The final measure is on a scale running from zero to 12, with a higher score indicating a greater proximity to the labour market. For the purposes of our analysis, scores were grouped into five bands indicating level of distance to the labour market. These were:

- Group one: furthest from the labour market: scores of zero to five
- Group two: scores of six and seven
- Group three: scores of eight
- Group four: scores of nine and 10
- Group five: nearest to the labour market: scores of 11 or 12

Each of the 12 factors were scored on a binary scale to provide an overall distance from labour market score on a scale running from zero to twelve. A full copy of the DLM scoring chart can be found below:

	Binary score	
	1	0
Having a limiting disability, negative factor	No	Yes
Having children, negative factor	No/Prefer not to say/Not asked	Yes
Attained five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C (including English and Maths)	Yes	No
Understanding the skills that employers want	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree
Having good specific skills for desired job	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree
Setting and achieve goals	Score 5 or 6	Score 1, 2, 3 or 4
Managing feelings	Score 5 or 6	Score 1, 2, 3 or 4
Having confidence and self-esteem	Score 5 or 6	Score 1, 2, 3 or 4
Having appropriate clothes for an interview	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neither agree nor disagree/Disagree/Strongly disagree
Being involved with drugs/alcohol support, negative factor	Not selected	Yes
Being involved with mental health services, negative factor	Not selected	Yes
Ever having worked before	Yes	Not selected





Distance from Labour Market (DLM) analysis for young people on the Young & Successful project across the D2N2 area.

The Young and Successful project data was applied by the Enliven team at Nottingham University to recreate the Distance from Labour (DLM) tool created by Sheffield Hallam University. The data presented below

illustrates the DLM profile of the young people on the project at the respective baseline and follow-on survey time intervals.

YaS DLM profile of young people currently engaged in the project					
DLM Classification	Bassline	3 months	6 Months	12 months	18 months
1 - Furthest	2	0	0	0	0
2	8	5	4	1	0
3	53	20	6	10	3
4	95	40	33	21	7
5	115	59	52	27	18
6	128	63	49	30	14
7	145	100	72	34	15
8	159	105	73	58	27
9	106	76	77	56	35
10	70	72	71	70	33
11	29	35	36	29	17
12 - Nearest	16	12	16	10	6
Unclassified	58	375	429	461	425
Totals	984	962	918	807	600

Source: March 2018 Common Data Framework extract

N.B. Any young people with incomplete Common Data Framework data for each of the 12 DLM factors are entered into a status of 'unclassified'.



Distance from Labour Market (DLM) analysis for young people on the Young & Successful project securing a job outcome.

Further analysis was also carried out by the Enliven team to provide data on the DLM profile of Young and Successful participants securing job outcomes after 3,

6, 12 and 18 months involvement with the project. This is shown in the table below.

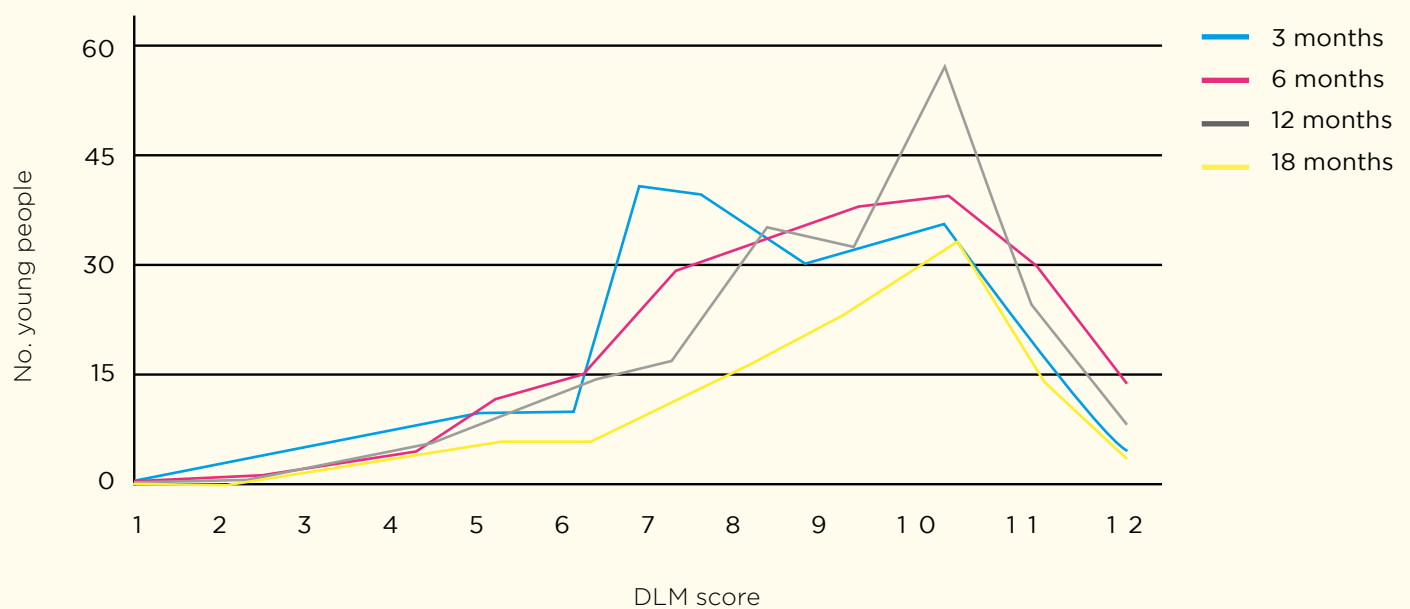
YaS DLM profile young people gaining employment outcomes					
DLM Classification	Bassline	3 months	6 Months	12 months	18 months
1	n/a	0	0	0	0
2	n/a	0	0	0	0
3	n/a	1	1	2	1
4	n/a	3	4	4	3
5	n/a	6	12	9	6
6	n/a	8	15	14	6
7	n/a	38	29	17	11
8	n/a	36	33	35	18
9	n/a	31	38	32	24
10	n/a	34	40	56	32
11	n/a	19	30	24	14
12 - Nearest	n/a	6	14	8	4
Unclassified	n/a	4	7	7	6
Totals		186	223	208	125

The data contained in the DLM profile of young people securing job outcomes is illustrated in the line graph below. This reveals that most job outcomes are achieved after a young person has achieved a DLM rating of 6 or more.





DLM analysis of Job Outcomes



Further details on the collaborative analysis undertaken between Groundwork Greater Nottingham and the Enliven project can be obtained by contacting Groundwork Greater Nottingham:

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