

YOUTH WORK FUND



YouthLink
Scotland
The national agency for youth work



EVALUATION
ROUND FOUR, YEAR TWO
BY CATCH THE LIGHT, JUNE





INTRO

YEAR 2

EVALUATION

This is the second evaluation report in the fourth round of CashBack for Communities funding - 'Round 4' which runs for three years from 2017 to 2020.

The Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities fund redistributes proceeds of crime, by targeting funded activities towards specific groups of young people:

- those in the most deprived areas (highest 20% of SIMD)
- those not engaged in education, training or employment, and
- those at risk of offending, anti-social behaviour or affected by the criminal justice system.

With one more year to run, YouthLink Scotland has surpassed many of the targets anticipated for 2017-2020. Therefore the evaluation of the Youth Work Fund seeks to track data and collate case studies to understand the extent of

progress and levels of impact made by youth work organisations benefiting from the 'Youth Work Fund'.

As a national umbrella organisation for youth work providers, YouthLink Scotland supports local panels in each of Scotland's 32 Local Authorities. Panels consider an array of bids at the start of each year, ranging from £336 up to £13.5K (£4.1K ave.). The funding made available to the Youth Work Fund in year 2 was £716K, with a target of 6,666 young people to reach (£2.5m and 20,000 young people over three years). There were 171 bids funded with 75% of bids being awarded, which means organisations generally receive less than they bid for.

According to a recent report on universal youth work in Scotland, youth work has a central role in nurturing personal and social development of Scotland's young people in relation to:

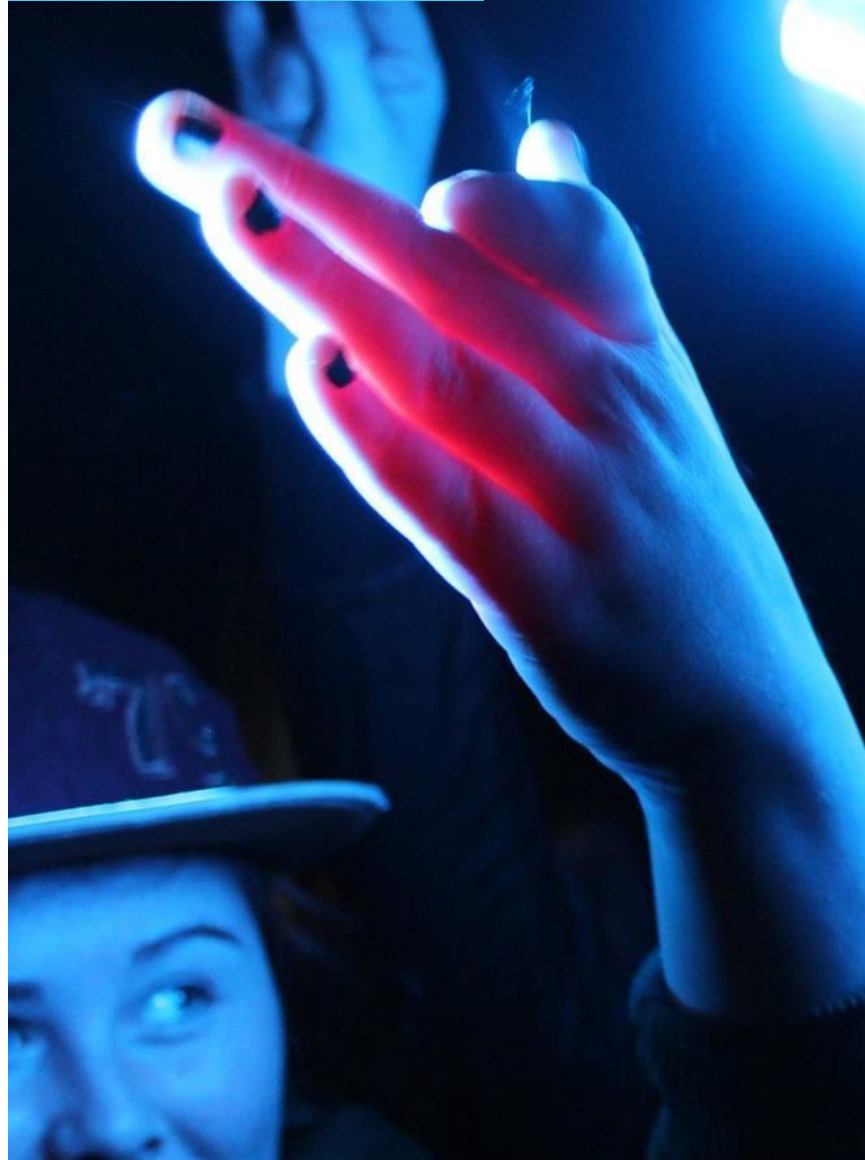
- Confidence
- Skills for life
- Being equal and included
- Friendship
- Feeling safe and well
- Ability to lead and help others
- Getting on with others

The best impacts are reportedly achieved through unique features of youth work practice, that are not readily assimilated in other settings. These are:

- Positive adult long-term relationships
- Providing a space to be safe and be heard
- Giving praise and encouragement
- Working effectively alongside others
- Practitioners as role models
- Negotiated learning
- Inclusive practice

These features are echoed throughout the findings from the evaluation of the Youth Work Fund.

THE



30,161 Young People
13,041 in year 1 and
[51% above 20,000 target]

The Youth Work Fund has exceeded most annual targets and has surpassed the three year target to reach 20,000 young people. Essential and non-essential outcomes are agreed with YouthLink Scotland as part of the conditions of grant awarded. However this occurs at the start of the three year term, prior to YouthLink Scotland knowing which projects and activities youth organisations wish to fund in the coming years. With over 150 fresh applications made each year, the variables and error margins are too wide to formulate any robust or reliable

conclusions. To develop a deeper understanding, the evaluation uses a mixed methods approach of self-assessment on wellbeing, which is completed by a large sample of young people.

This is accompanied by five instrumental case studies with youth organisations. The case studies engage with participants, youth workers and stakeholders to learn about the impact youth work has in relation to the CashBack for Communities outcomes and better understand the changes or improvements achieved.



People Reached
and 17,120 in year 2
[target over three years]



KEY FINDINGS

Most of the 171 organisations funded are situated in areas of multiple deprivation and actively target minority or excluded groups. A self-evaluation of wellbeing SHANARRI indicators with a sample of almost 1,500 participants confirmed that young people feel positive about all of the national wellbeing indicators when taking part in youth work activities, as follows:



97%

Feel safe



93%

Feel included



94%

Feel nurtured



94%

Feel respected



93%

Feel healthy



92%

Feel active



91%

Are achieving



91%

Feel responsible

THE THEMES

The 'treemap' diagram below gives a ratio breakdown of the types of themes that the funded organisations are working on as part of their youth work intervention. To achieve this analysis each project was categorised under themes.

Many of the organisations were focussed on aspects of **health and wellbeing**:

Ignite in Moray offered an 8 week programme of outdoor activities, 4 times per year to build motivation, personal organisation and development and leadership that would contribute towards longer term employability skills.

Closing the Attainment Gap:

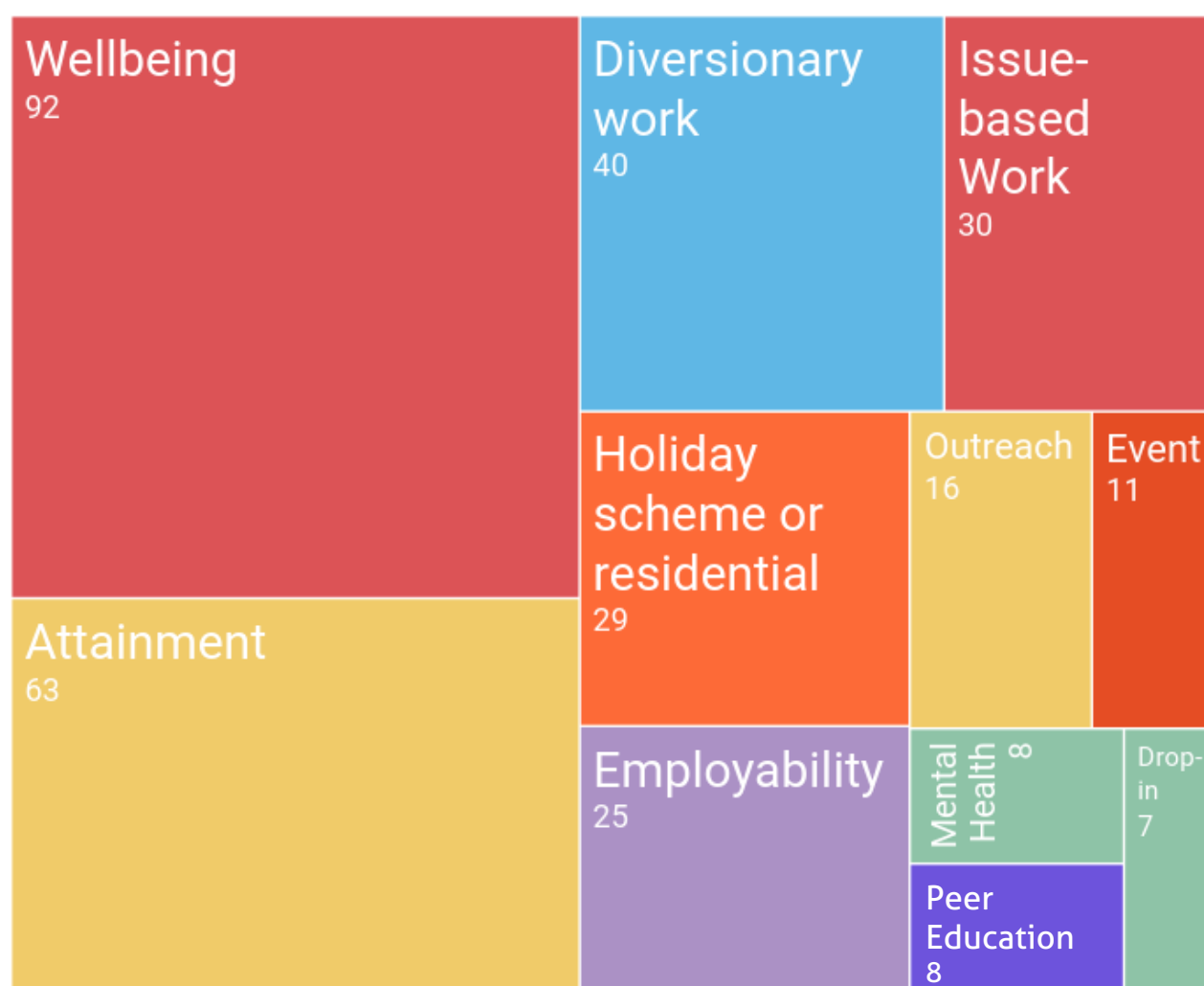
The Granton Youth Project provides

opportunities to gain an award or qualification. They delivered Health, Fitness and Wellbeing activities including swimming, football and boxing to 12-19 year olds deemed by schools to be most at risk. Achievements were recognised with a Dynamic Youth Award or Youth Achievement Award.

Dumfries YMCA provided training for young people to set up and run their own radio station.

In a bid to reduce road accidents, Youth First in Fife provided motor vehicle safety training covering crash management; first aid, basic mechanics and driving skills.

Diversionary work, that prevents young people from getting caught up in antisocial behaviour or the criminal justice system is commonplace:



The diagram illustrates the number of organisations matched to each theme.

One example is the Govan Youth Information Project which is tackling hate crimes linked to sectarianism and racism. They deliver 'Shoaw Racism the Red Card' training along with things like First Aid. Once members are old enough they have the opportunity to train as 'positive role models' giving them leadership responsibilities to help reduce antisocial behaviour and make positive life choices and make their community a positive place for everyone to live.

Meanwhile Community Central Halls in Glasgow actively targets young people aged 8-16 that are known to offend or engage in anti-social behaviour. Their outdoor activity based residential is designed to give young people a break away from the issues and pressures they face at home so that they can reflect on their daily lives, form new relationships with peers and adults and plan for a more positive lifestyle.

Issue-based work is characteristic of the successful bids.

The FAST project in Shetland works to address behavioural issues, money management, housing and family support. It makes sure young people have access to a healthy cooked meal and used the funding to re-open a neighbourhood centre at the weekend so that young people have their own dedicated space. This in turn helped to reduce rises in anti-social behaviour at weekends.

Saheliya, an ethnic minority project based in Edinburgh engaged with Wildfire Theatre group to work with girls to write and perform their own play about issues which affect them. It also engaged with Duke of Edinburgh's Award to increase the take up this award among ethnic minorities.

There were many **holiday schemes** and **residential**s running across the country.

Creating **positive pathways into employment** emerged in a number of projects:

The Good Shepherd Centre in Renfrewshire was working with young offenders to build planters, install them in local schools and

harvest their produce to make healthy meals.

Re:store Crief engaged in upcycling furniture, upholstery and textiles, lunchclubs, scrap stores and furniture recycling to gain valuable creative and enterprise skills.

Flourish in South Lanarkshire is a social enterprise based in floristry training and sales to develop young people's skills and confidence.

Create Paisley, used the funds to support a 'Young Curators Team' that were trained to run festivals and events such as a Youth Mental Health Arts Festival, 'Write Here, Write Now' young writers festival and beyond.

Peer Education initiatives featured among the funded initiatives:

North Berwick Youth Project have developed a 'drugs box' where peer educators cascade their learning to other young people on topics of smoking, drugs, alcohol, internet safety and sexual health. The funded project focussed on extending the group of educators to P7's and S1's to inject good role modelling at a younger age group.

Some **Mental Health** initiatives took place:

LGBT Youth Scotland in Perth & Kinross created an Emotional Wellbeing Collaborative to improve the emotional wellbeing of 11-15 year olds.

The Rainbow Muslim Women's Group in Falkirk organised a range of stimulating activities for girls to do, so that levels of isolation are reduced.

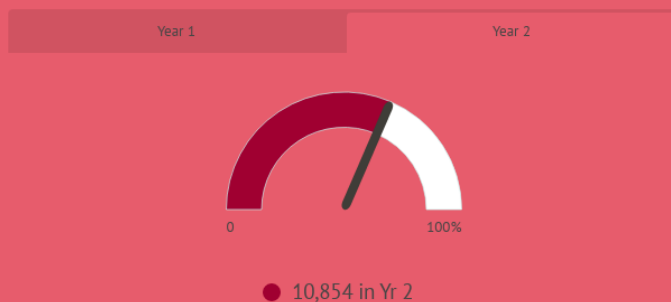
Events were prominent, due to 2018 being Scotland's Year of the Young Person:

One of the most high profile events came from the Oasis Events Team in Dumfries and Galloway. Providing activities such as a hard hitting drama project 'The Toon' has helped reduce anti-social incidents by 62% in the area. More remarkable, their 'Youth Beatz' two-day music extravaganza reached around 40,000 young people from across Scotland.

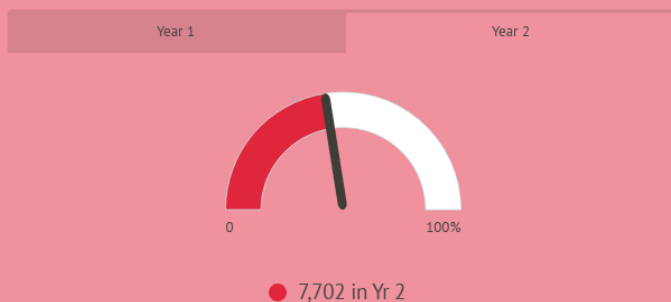
IMPACT ON OUTCOMES

Below is an overview of the extent essential and non-essential outcomes are being met. Zoom in or click an image to access an online interactive of years one and two. The sections below show the accumulated number reached by the end of year 2 and the extent each target was exceeded. The gauge shows the proportion of year 1 and 2 participants impacted. Those marked with an asterisk * are a proportion of organisations selecting this option, as they are non-essential outcomes.

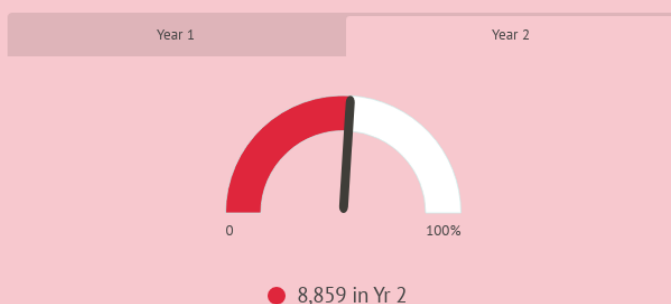
To date 18,029 young people have **increased their capacity and confidence** - Yr 2 was 85% above target of 5,876 per year.



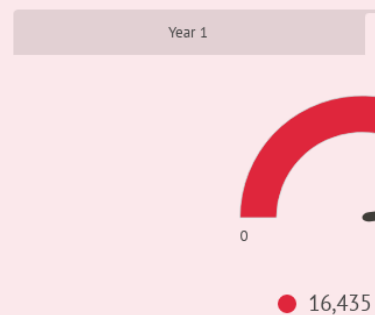
To date 13,863 young people have **increased their personal or physical skills** - Yr 2 was 97% above target of 3,917 per year.



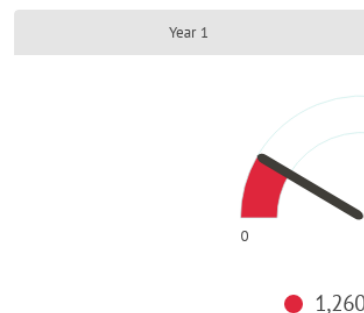
To date 15,848 young people have **increased their aspirations** - Yr 2 was 352% above target of 1,958 per year.



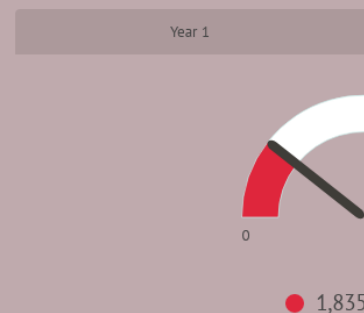
To date 25,208 young people have **improved their mental health** - Yr 2 was 14% above target of 2,200 per year.



To date 2,347 young people have **improved their financial literacy** - Yr 2 was 14% above target of 165 per year.



To date 2,437 young people report **improved their digital literacy** - Yr 2 was 14% above target of 171 per year.



To date 28,908 young people have **improved their employability skills** - Yr 2 was 8% above target of 3,613 per year.



improved their wellbeing against one or
was 319% above target of 3,917 per year.

sample of 1,475

Year 2



100%

in Yr 2

improved their school attendance - Yr 2
target of 1,106*.

Year 2



100%

in Yr 2

improved attainment - Yr 2 was 42%
et of 1,293*.

Year 2



100%

in Yr 2

e participated in a positive activity -
ve taret of 13,906*.

Year 2



100%

16 in Yr 2

To date 28,908 young people **are new to activity** -
Yr 2 was 221% above target of 3,489*.

Year 1

Year 2



0

100%

8,412 in Yr 1

To date 5,974 young people are **diverted from criminal and antisocial
behaviour** - Yr 2 was 85% above target of 1,348*.

Year 1

Year 2



0

100%

3,845 in Yr 1

To date 2,720 young people were **involved in leadership** -
Yr 2 was 129% above target of 584*.

Year 1

Year 2



0

100%

1,384 in Yr 1

To date 3,392 young people were **involved in volunteering** -
Yr 2 was 45% above target of 1,177*.

Year 1

Year 2



0

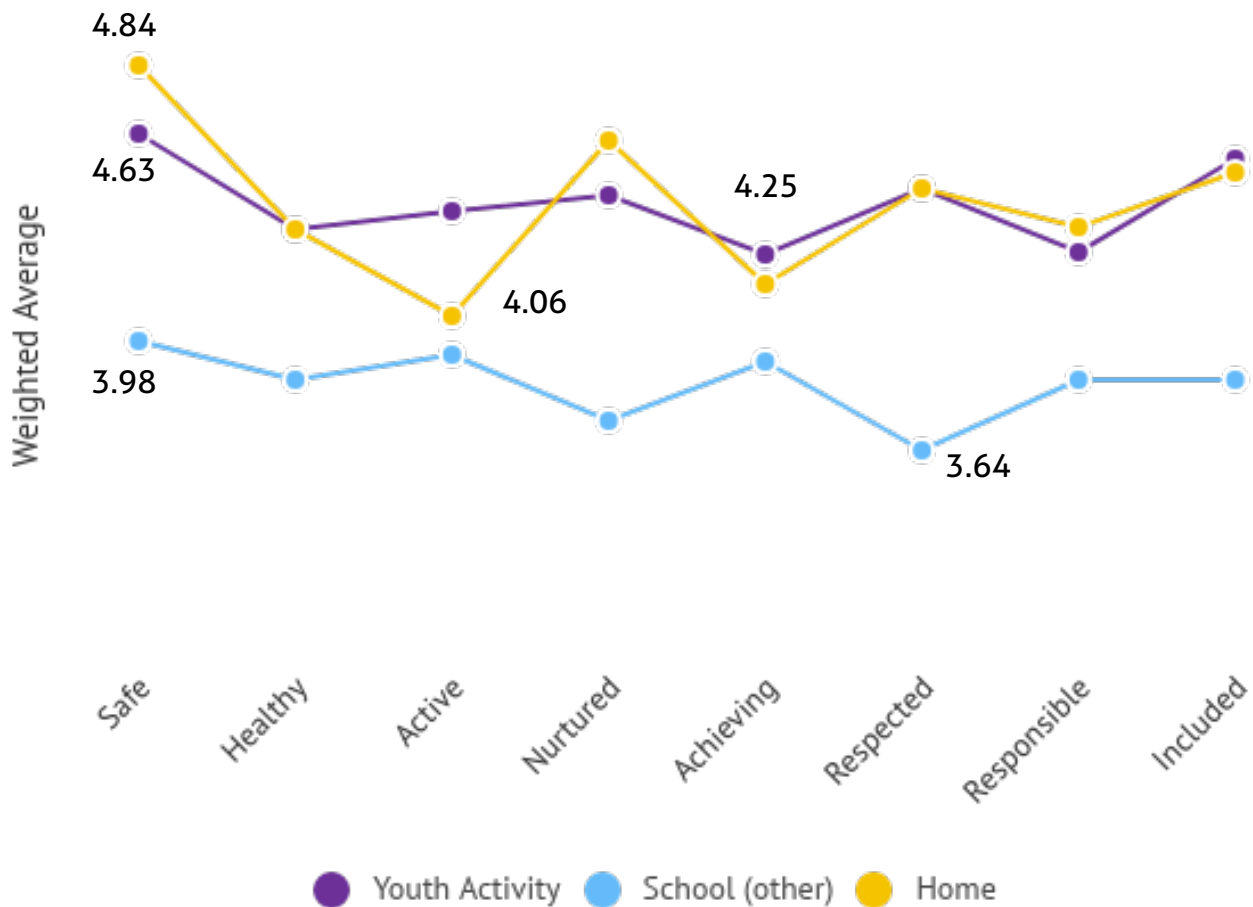
100%

1,682 in Yr 1



Click here to access interactive
results.

WELLBEING (SHANARRI)



SHANARRI RESULTS

Data from youth work fund recipients that responded in 2017-19 (n=1,457)

Wellbeing (SHANARRI) indicators are core to the Getting it Right for Every Child framework for services that work with young people and families in Scotland. The approach supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and can realise their full potential.

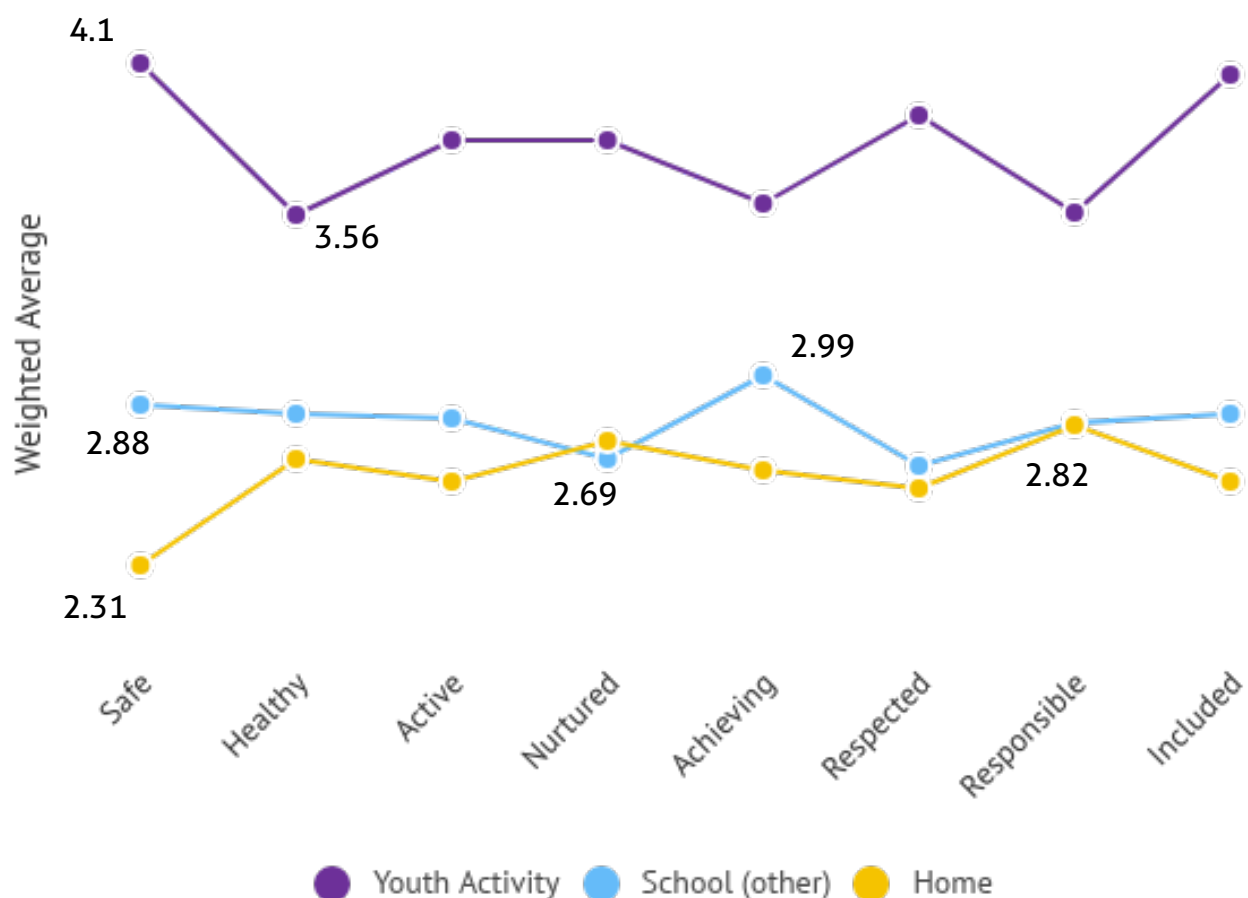
The indicators are used in this evaluation to understand youth work's impact on wellbeing. Over two years, data was gathered from almost 1,500 young people which asked how they felt as part of the youth activity, at school or at home. Guidance notes were developed with youth

workers and some organisations adapted the exercise to make it fit with their context.

Results confirm that most young people view their youth organisations and home life with equally high regard, with all eight indicators scoring an average above four out of a maximum of five.

School achieves a positive rating above the mid point of three, albeit at a lower level than home or the youth activity. Feedback suggests that lower ratings are due to youth work being a

SHANARRI) RESULTS



SHANARRI RESULTS (FILTERED)

Filtered by those feeling less safe at home (n=144, 10% of total 1,457 responses)

choice rather than a necessity. More importantly, youth work approaches and relationships are making young people feel safe and included, like part of an extended family - as many have testified.

Conversely, one in twelve respondents gave a negative rating (0-3) for feeling safe at home. Filtered responses for this group found that despite having negative views of home and school, youth work remained positive (above three) for all eight indicators. At home negative scores were often linked to a breakdown in

relationships with parents, carers or siblings. At school negative views were attributed to a breakdown in relationships with teachers. Therefore case studies were used to explore potential reasons for the strength of positive relationships with youth workers.

[Link to open interactive Wellbeing SHANARRI results for all respondents.](#)

[Link to open interactive Wellbeing SHANARRI results for those that feel less safe at home.](#)

IMPACT



Science has shown that the more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) experienced in childhood, the higher the risk of detrimental effects on long term health and wellbeing. The 'Centre for Youth Wellness' in the US devised statements that allow teenagers to self-report on ACEs. Within the case study organisations, young people were invited to identify how many causes of adversity apply to them, without identifying any specifics.

All ethical guidelines were followed. Participation was voluntary with the ability to opt-out being reiterated at several points during the exercise. Two sets of ACEs statements were used. The original ten statements hail from the landmark 1998

study. Since then other statements evolved which recognise additional adversities that can have a similar 'toxic' effect but were omitted from the original ten. Therefore both sets of ten questions were used. To balance negatives with more positive attributes, additional questions on resilience factors were also included.

Three of the five organisations agreed to participate in the ACEs and resilience activities, with 21 responses gathered in total. Although the sample is too small to draw conclusions, the results reveal an interesting context to youth work's role in supporting young people affected by ACEs and ways it builds resilience.

Case study participants were asked how many of the original ten ACEs statements they had experienced since birth. The small sample shows that three quarters (76%, 16) of respondents had experienced one or more of the original ten categories of adverse childhood experiences. Of these, 44% had experienced four or more ACEs. This is significant as research concludes that those with four or more ACEs are more likely to experience long-term health and wellbeing issues.

A second set of categories includes experiences such as parental separation, or a family history of mental illness, living in a household with someone who had a problem with drinking or drugs. Three quarters (76%) of respondents had experienced one or more of the ten statements. Half (50%) of those had experienced four or more.

One of the reasons this limited sample provides a useful start point, is that research strongly advocates that good adult relationships can effectively mitigate the effects of adversity.

Emergent research on teenage brain development also highlights that adolescence is a crucial time of brain growth where there is a second window of opportunity to repair damage and put young people back on track.

Therefore case study participants were asked a series of questions designed to identify what resilience factors were in place. Results show that 75% recognised that getting an education was important. However only 26% felt they belonged in school while 53%

said they didn't feel they belonged. Over half (55%) said 'yes' they knew where to get help when they needed it and 40% said they sometimes knew.

When asked if their parents / carers know a lot about them such as who their friends are and what they like to do 68% said 'yes' they did and a quarter (26%) answered 'sometimes'.

When asked more specifically about the role that youth workers play in their lives, the majority (90%) agreed that they have a youth worker that looks out for them. Most (85%) agreed that they have access to youth services that support them when they need them. Three quarters (75%) believe that when they need help, they can speak to a youth worker that knows them. Finally, two-thirds agreed that when things don't go their way, youth workers help them to work it out.

Featuring strongly in the discussions is a perception of youth workers as 'good adults' that young people confide in, as this response laid bare:

"I fell into a deep state of depression after a friend committed suicide. My youth worker and friends helped me come to terms with it."

Positive relationships appear to hold true despite weaker connections in school and at home. Therefore the extent that youth work builds resilience during adolescence is worthy of further exploration in year three of Round 4.



CASE STUDIES



Click on the booklets to have a look inside



the five case studies from across Scotland.

HIGHLIGHTS

Part of the evaluation work involves developing a platform with examples of practice from across all of the projects in receipt of grants from the Youth Work Fund.

There is a digital wall, where each yellow brick reveals stories of ways the money was invested [\[Link Here\]](#).

A key feature of the wall is an ability to quickly filter out projects working towards common outcomes. Users simply click on one of the outcome tags to read more about the projects.

Remarkably, the Youth Work Fund is utilised in many different ways.

FARE in Glasgow's Easterhouse is offering modern apprenticeships to divert young people from criminal or antisocial behaviour. SOAR in South Lanarkshire seeks to reengage young people in school.

Opportunities exist to develop skills for life through garden development with Re: Make in Perth & Kinross; fire skills in Inverness; stop motion film making in North Lanarkshire; bike maintenance in Glasgow West and many more innovative offerings.

Issues are explored where and when they matter, for instance YCSA participants learn to speak out against racism, while Steps to Resilience in Falkirk supports young people to overcome trauma and build their resilience.

In this digital age where fears abound of young people glued to screens, those engaged in youth work are highly active and engaged in a breath taking range of indoor and outdoor pursuits which would be difficult for families to afford without youth organisations drawing in funds.



Video by Re:make Scotland of their learning garden



Priorities met by Youth Work Fund Projects



97%

Working in areas of deprivation



76%

Involved or at risk of involvement in antisocial behaviour or offending



64%

Excluded or at risk of exclusion from school



44%

Unemployed or not in education or training



The breakdown (above) reinforces the extent that organisations granted funding are in clear pursuit of the CashBack for Communities priorities. For most, projects fit because the priorities are part and parcel of what the organisations are set up to achieve. Routines are not altered to fit the funding mold. However the additional sessions, activities and workers hours are only possible as a results of core funding. Organisations report being under increasing pressure from cutbacks and the churn that occurs when funders look to innovate rather than sustain what is already established.

Paradoxically, successful early interventions can mask the extent of the impact. For instance, when young people at risk of being

excluded from school are steered towards a positive pathway, they are diverted from risks of worklessness and crime. The causal relationship become tricky for organisations and evaluators to evidence. Meanwhile, some post industrial poverty issues are like permanent stains that are too stubborn to shift, no matter what interventions are tried. Funders are consequently forced to weigh up whether to retain ongoing effective early interventions or weigh in when the problems may be too acute to counter. Recent rises in knife crime in England serve as reminders that letting core youth services collapse has serious consequences. Therefore the examples confirm that ongoing investment in combinations of early and later youth work interventions are necessary.

CONCLUSION

The Youth Work Fund evaluation has uncovered persuasive evidence of ways youth work impacts on the CashBack for Communities outcomes and brings positive changes to the lives of many young people.

Outcome results highlight that youth work contributes strongly to the purpose of CashBack funding and priorities.

The wellbeing SHANARRI indicators reinforce that young people perceive their local youth organisations as part of an extended family, especially where families and education relationships are weakened. Starting where they are, young people welcome not being judged or criticised for mistakes, but valued, respected and supported to grow into the adults they wish to become in a safe and inclusive environment.

Diverse ranges of intervention pay credence to the sector's claim that 'It's not what you do, it's the way that you do it.'

Case studies back this claim. In Edinburgh About Youth responded directly to police records of rising anti-social behaviour as it occurred. Their outreach in the targeted hot-spot have diverted young people away from the downward spiral of the criminal justice system. Courage was needed to ignore the initial rejection and find a way of winning young people trust to direct negative energy into positive activities.

West Dunbartonshire stands out for taking a partnership approach to delivering a summer programme that successfully engages young people from all areas of deprivation identified across the local authority. It is a model that others ought to consider to gain such wide coverage.

The Dundee & Angus ADHD Support Group arose in response to one parent's recognition of a gap in the system. It has grown to offer holistic support for families that often feel misunderstood.



PEEK in Glasgow's East End used the funds to support a girls group to build their resilience, whilst actively working to tackle acute food poverty. Surrounding the girls group is a package of progressive recreational, personal development and employability pathways.

In rural Perthshire, the Breathe Project has built a reliable youth hub in a remote area, that is highly attentive to its diverse population from tackling rural isolation to delivering alternatives to school for those that are disengaged.

Despite such diversity the projects funded have commonalities. They see young people as assets to their communities. They believe in young people's potential to be catalysts for change in their communities and seek to widen future horizons.



A hallmark of success is taking cognisance of the causes of adversity as well as easing the symptoms. Making and providing food has therefore become a growing necessity. Intensive and targeted work is most apparent where the core services are secure enough for staff to stay in jobs and pursue the types of positive relationships that young people are often denied in other settings.

Rather than limiting young people to a narrow or singular activity type, the youth work fund's ever changing programme - and vibrant photographs and videos on the dedicated evaluation website - reflects an openness to young people leading the activities as much as their desires,

imaginations and resources allow. Giving away power is one of the unique ways that youth work strengthens relationships whilst enabling young people to test and hone their skills and strengths.

Consequently, CashBack for Communities priorities and outcomes are met with reasonable ease by the Youth Work Fund.

Thanks to the wider investments secured by youth organisations, funds received are stretched a long way, with low spending for each individual. This belies the powerful stories shared of the profound impact youth work has when supported to implement the early or later interventions it so effectively

