



Evaluation of Employability4All

FOR BARNARDO'S AND ENABLE

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Research Scotland

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Foreword

Employability4All was led by Barnardo's and delivered in partnership with Enable Works. Over a six-month period the partners made a huge impact on the lives of young people, adults, parents and families in Perth & Kinross in the short time period the project was delivered.

This project was delivered against a back-drop of a significant cost of living crisis. As partners, we worked together to support individuals to overcome these challenges and provided a wide range of holistic support that included the use of Barnardo's own internal cost of living fund which provided £38k in emergency direct payments across Tayside.

In order to meet the Fair Work agenda it is vital to have a clear long-term strategy and fair procurement of the 3rd sector across P&K. Individuals and families who are in poverty require long-term coordinated support to lift themselves out of poverty and into work.

Fair Work starts with Fair contracts and we need to move in this direction rather than having a stop start approach to procurement and delivery.

This approach will ensure No One is Left Behind and deliver a step-change in Employability across P&K; delivering a whole family approach, lifting children and families out of poverty and contributing towards reducing the Disability Employment Gap.

Barnardo's works with hope and is committed to enabling people to reach their full potential, and we know that sustainable funding can make a real difference.

Cliff Graham,
Head of Operations,
Barnardo's ETS Scotland & Northern Ireland

1. Introduction

About this report

This report sets out findings from an evaluation of Employability4All. The evaluation took place in spring 2023. It explored:

- the difference Employability4All made to participants
- learning about what worked and what didn't in supporting participants.

Evaluation method

The evaluation involved:

- discussions with 12 participants and/ or family members
- discussions with 5 partners – who referred into the programme
- discussions with staff delivering the programme
- a desktop review of information on the profile of participants and their outcomes over the life of the project.

The desktop review included a review of workstars completed by 42 participants which gathered evidence on impact of the programme on job skills, workplace skills, job search skills, resilience, aspiration, motivation, self-belief, stability and wellbeing.

2. About Employability4All

Employability4All

Employability4All is a new employability project in Perth and Kinross. It started in September 2022, and is delivered jointly by Barnardo's Works and ENABLE Works.

The project aims to support the introduction of the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind (NOLB) Employability Funding Stream. It aims to deliver a more flexible and user-based model of employability support for people from school leaving age up to 67 years. There is a strong emphasis on making early interventions for vulnerable individuals and families. The service focuses on lifting families out of poverty, reducing child poverty, reducing in work poverty and reducing the disability employment gap.

Employability4All offers a whole family employability service. The approach is needs-led, person centred and trauma informed, focused on delivering the right support at the right time. Support is tailored to meet individual needs and preferences, including support in relation to:

- Health, mental health and wellbeing
- Self-esteem, confidence, social isolation, digital inclusion and routines
- Qualifications and work experience
- Finances.

Support available includes relationship building, action planning, vocational profiling, wellbeing assessments and key worker support to remove barriers and facilitate growth. Individual and group work takes place to develop employability skills, job search and interview skills, achievement of vocational and industry specific qualifications, volunteering and work experience.

Employability4All is delivered by a team of three staff at Barnardo's and two staff at ENABLE. Within the Barnardo's team:

- An Employer Liaison Officer supports participants with CV building, job search and interview techniques as well as finding work placements and engaging with employers.
- Two Project Workers meet with participants, explore their goals and needs, and support skills and personal development. The team also provides in work support for participants up to 12 months after they start working, with a follow up after 4 weeks, 13 weeks, 26 weeks and 52 weeks.

To support participants to address financial barriers, there is a virtual Welfare Rights Officer available one day a week (through ENABLE). The service also works with other support services and professionals to meet the needs of participants, including employers, schools, colleges, Skills Development Scotland, JobCentre Plus, DWP, training companies and others.

Participants who have left school are eligible for a training allowance. Participants can take part in the programme six months before leaving school, but only receive the allowance once they leave.

Participants can be referred through any organisation, or can self-refer. Most referrals have come through schools and Skills Development Scotland.

Participant numbers

From September 2022 to March 2023, the project aimed to work with 68 participants. Half of the participants were to be supported by Barnardo's Works and half by ENABLE Works.

In total, the project worked with 55 participants over the six month period. Barnardo's worked with 33 participants and Enable worked with 22 participants.

The project took a little time to establish, which resulted in working with a slightly smaller number of young people than anticipated. Barnardo's began delivery slightly earlier than ENABLE, which needed to recruit to fill the roles.

Demand for the service was high. Initially, the project received more referrals than it was able to support – while staff were recruited - and had to put a waiting list system into operation.

There is a strong focus on providing in-depth, quality support to each participant, which takes time.

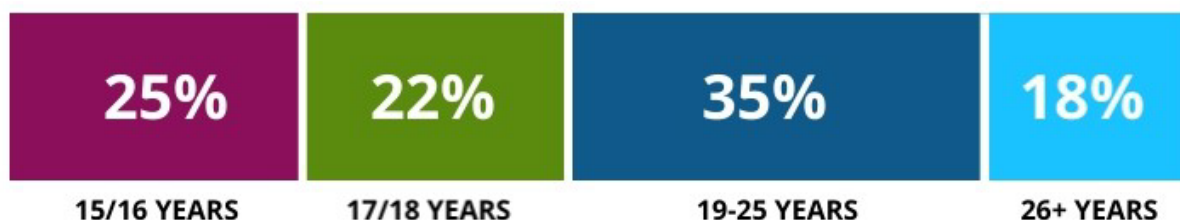
Participant profile

The target groups for the project are:

- 16-19 year olds/ school leavers without a positive destination (and 15 ½ year olds needing support to transition from school to post-school activity)
- Jobless Care Experienced Young People (16-26)
- Young people with other protected characteristics (16-29)
- Unemployed people with a physical/ learning disability or health condition (16-67)
- Long term unemployed people (16-29)
- Unemployed residents in rural areas or the most deprived 5% SIMD datazones (16-29)
- Disabled parents with dependent children, and parents with disabled children who are unemployed or low income employed.

Participant characteristics

Most participants in the programme were aged 25 or under.



Barnardo's focuses on delivery for young people aged 15 to 29, while ENABLE delivers across a wider range of ages (up to the age of 67). In practice, Barnardo's worked largely with people aged 15 – 18, with almost three quarters of their participants in this range. The remaining quarter were aged 19 to 25.

Enable worked largely with people aged 19 to 35 – with two thirds of participants in this age range, and a small proportion aged 17/18 or 36 plus. Enable participants ranged in age right up to 66 years old.

The profile of participants was varied.



None of the participants had criminal convictions or substance related conditions.

Participant employment profile

All of the participants were not in employment when they joined the programme.

32
WERE
UNEMPLOYED

19
WERE
ECONOMICALLY
INACTIVE

4
WERE SCHOOL
PUPILS (AGED 15
OR 16)

Some of the participants had previously been in work, while others had never worked.

- 22 had never worked
- 17 had been out of work less than 6 months
- 13 had been out of work more than 6-12 months
- 1 had been out of work 1-2 years
- 2 had been out of work more than 5 years
- 29 had limited or no work experience

Some participants were almost work ready, and just needed a little help. Others needed long term support and experienced more barriers to employment.

3. Impact

Introduction

This chapter explores the impact of Employability4All over the first six months of its operation. It is important to note that at the time of this evaluation, most of the participants were still being supported through the programme, and had not completed their journey.

The employability journey

As at March 2023, when the evaluation took place:

- 34 participants remained on the programme, being supported to achieve their goals
- 15 participants had left the programme with a positive outcome – receiving follow up check-ins and support
- 6 participants had disengaged from the programme without a positive outcome.

Those who disengaged included people of a range of ages, both males and females, and people both with and without disabilities.

Those still on the programme had achieved qualifications, gained work experience, been signposted to support and undertaken wider confidence building and team work activities. Participants were receiving support with job search activity, while gaining qualifications and work experience.

Participants were also linked up with wider organisations to support with the journey to employment – for example Skills Development Scotland, YMCA, Remploy, Perth and Kinross Employment Support Team and Creative Catalyst.

As part of the programme 15 participants received the YPTA young person's training allowance. This was available to young people who had left school.

Achieving a positive destination

By the end of March 2023, 15 participants had achieved a positive employment or further education outcome:

- 8 had moved into a job
- 3 had moved into a Modern Apprenticeship
- 3 had moved on to further education
- 1 had got a job and also a place at further education.

The profile of those moving into employment broadly matched that of the wider participant group.

- 60% were male and 40% female
- 73% identified as having a disability
- 53% had never worked before
- 40% had been out of work for less than six months.

Employment types

Details are available for nine of the participants who moved into employment, including a Modern Apprenticeship.

- Six achieved a permanent position, three achieved a temporary position.
- Most worked 30 to 40 hours per week, with one working 16 and one working 48.5.
- Jobs were in a range of sectors including sales, customer service, teaching and education, plant and machine operation and trades.
- One participant's employment was supported through an employer recruitment incentive.

Rates of pay ranged from £4.81 to £11.31 per hour. Hours and pay rates remained broadly the same from start of employment through 4 week and 13 week follow ups.

Sustaining employment

Eight of the participants had reached the stage of having a 4 week follow up after achieving a job. Almost all (7) remained in employment or in their Modern Apprenticeship. One was no longer in their temporary role and was continuing to receive support through the programme to return to employment.

Five had reached the stage of a 13 week follow up after achieving a job. All who were still employed at 4 weeks, continued on to employment at 13 weeks.

Sam

Sam* started with Employability4All after leaving school because she didn't feel safe there. She withdrew from school and was home educated for about 18 months.

Sam found out about the programme through Skills Development Scotland. She thought it would be a good chance to boost her confidence and see where things go in terms of finding a job.

"I was very nervous about jobs, interviews, etc but knew it would have to happen one day."

Sam met with staff every week, and got lots of support looking for jobs, developing a CV and preparing for interviews. At the sessions she felt supported and confident. She felt able to choose what support and activities she wanted.

"I was able to choose what was best for me at the time and how comfortable I felt."

"I always felt comfortable enough to get my points across as well as learn."

Sam's confidence grew, and she developed new skills. She felt her mental health and wellbeing improving.

"It has made a big difference in my confidence, being able to speak and go to appointments myself."

Over time, Sam gained enough confidence to apply for a modern apprenticeship and attend the interview.

"It has allowed me to learn more about my future and helped me through trying to find a work placement."

Sam's mum feels the programme has made a significant difference to her. It was a big step to leave her bedroom and go out to attend Employability4All sessions. Sam's mum felt she connected with staff immediately, despite often finding it hard to be around other people.

Sam is now working full time - a goal that her mother was unsure would be achievable for her. She has a plan for her career, seeking further practical work experience and then aiming to attend university after completing her modern apprenticeship.

"It's been pretty life changing actually." Mum

Without Employability4All, Sam feels she would still be staying at home most of the time, and not living her life as she wants to.

*Name changed to protect identity

Gaining work experience

By March 2023, 16 participants had undertaken work experience. This varied from a few days of work experience, through to a few months. Work experience was arranged to suit participant interests, including creative venues, cafes, charity shops and others.

Three participants also undertook volunteering, for example a work placement in a café or charity shop.

Participants taking part in this evaluation felt that the work experience helped them to build their confidence, gain experience and learn how to act and behave in the workplace.

“Well it’s definitely brought my confidence up quite a bit, obviously dealing with the customers in the shop has brought me out of my shell a little bit and made me a bit more talkative and confident.” **Participant**

Jenna

Jenna* had stopped going to school because she was being bullied. It was affecting her mental health. At Employability4All she explored her interests, and got involved in a creative work placement. She is really enjoying her work placement and feels like she knows more now about what to expect when she starts working.

Through Employability4All, Jenna has got out of the house and is speaking to more people. Her self esteem has improved because she’s doing something, and feels she has more purpose. Her routines have improved a lot, and Jenna is now doing something every day, while before she was rarely leaving the house. Jenna feels her mental health has improved a lot since getting involved in Employability4All.

“(Without Employability4All) my mental health would probably be worse, and I’d still probably be at home, just quite anxious to just leave my house. I still can be like that but do leave, and I do feel better about leaving the house...I just feel better.”

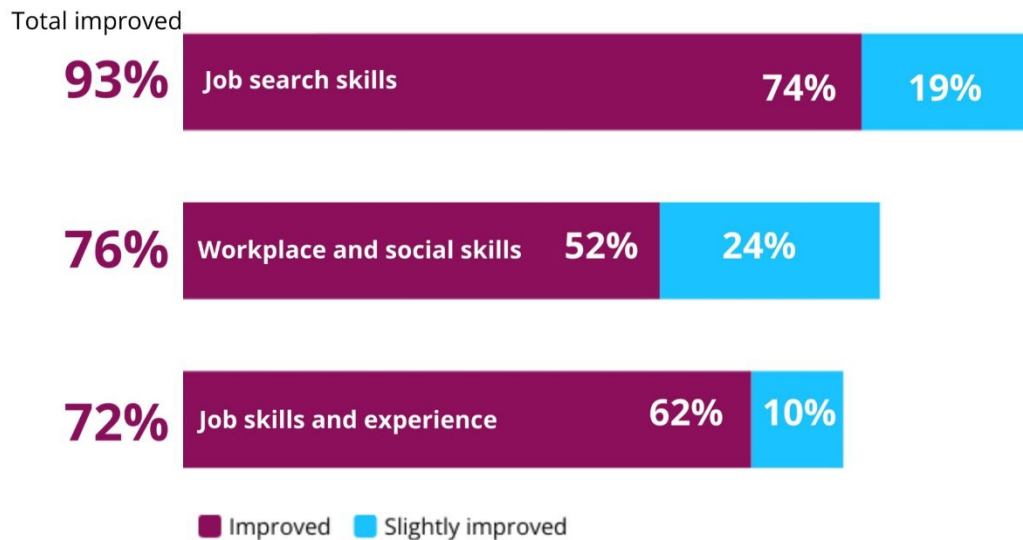
Jenna feels like she has managed to move from feeling overwhelmed by planning for the future, to thinking about the idea of a job and beginning to make some early plans. She is still not sure what she wants to do but is open to ideas, particularly creative employment opportunities which she hopes to learn more about.

“I like that they’ve managed to take me from, like I really had nothing, to now I feel better mentally, cause I feel like I’m doing something good. That’s been really good, it’s made me feel better.”

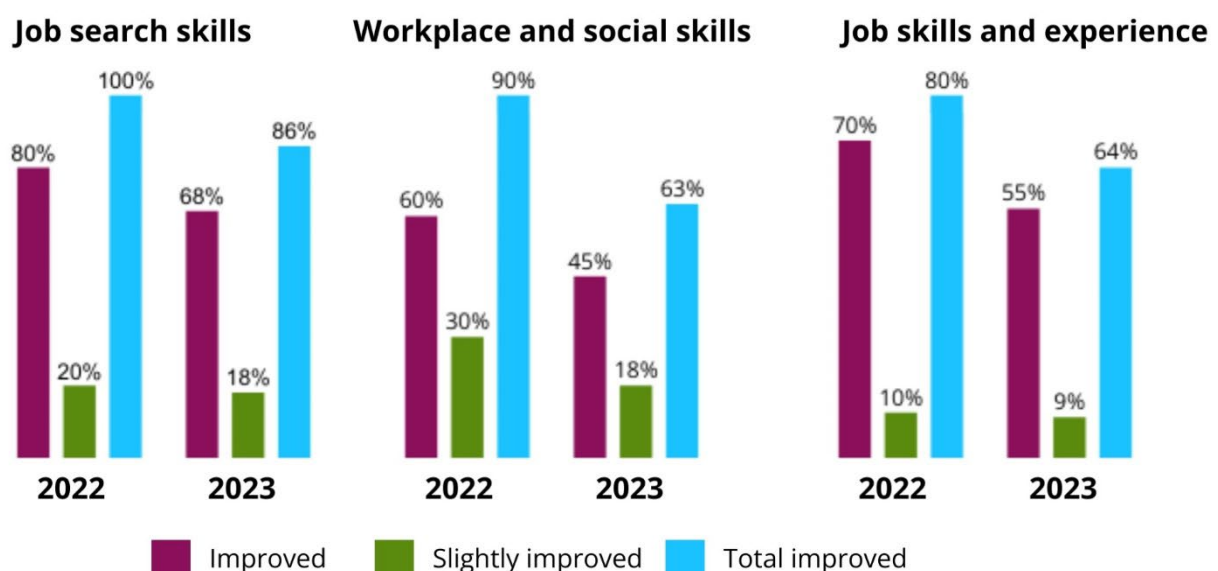
*Name changed to protect identity

Skills and qualifications

Evidence from workstars from 42 participants highlights that they improved their job search, workplace, social and job experience skills:



The outcomes increased in positivity over time. Those that joined the programme in late 2022 showed more positive outcomes than those that had joined in the first three months of 2023. All of the 2022 joiners showed improved job search skills, with almost all showing improved workplace, social and job skills.



By March 2023, 18 participants had gained qualifications.

- Building Own Employability Skills/ Dealing with Work Situations – Level 4 – 6 participants
- Emergency First Aid at Work – Level 3 – 11 participants
- Social Care in the Community – Level 0 – 1 participant

These are the first qualifications achieved for these 18 participants. Some of these participants went on to gain further qualifications. Participants talked about the tailored training they had received, for example practical qualifications for work such as manual handling or tractor driving certificates.

A few participants involved in the evaluation talked about how through Employability4All they accessed additional support for learning, which enabled them to gain qualifications. These participants indicated that their needs hadn't been identified or met at school.

Participants felt that the skills they were developing were useful for day to day life, for example in relation to their finances. Participants also felt that these skills would be useful for work – for example first aid, health and safety or manual handling skills. Participants valued getting certificates for their qualifications, and felt it strengthened their CV. Participants also felt that the skills they developed helped them to update their CV and use the internet to search for work.

Young people said that they felt much more confident about interviews, for work and college. Young people felt that they better understood how to prepare for an interview, and how to behave and present yourself. Some said that they valued that staff attend interviews with them, to help build confidence.

Through taking part in the programme, and developing skills, a few participants became more interested in further learning. For example, one person went back to school full time after the programme, having previously only attended once a week.

In addition, four participants were being supported to make a college application for summer 2023, and had interviews for college placements coming up.

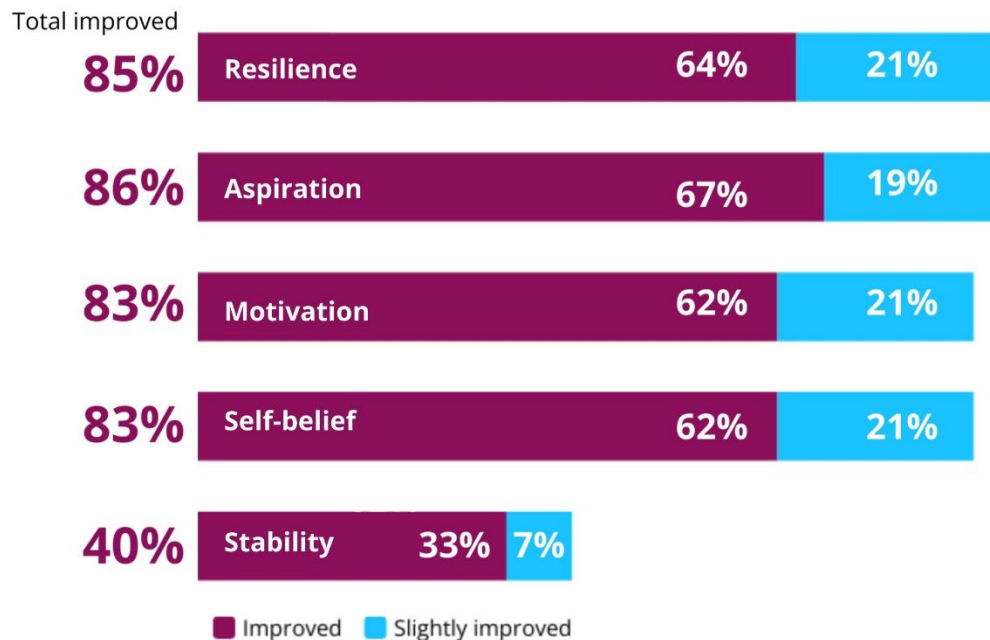
Jack

Through Employability4All, Jack* achieved his tractor licence and began a work placement on a farm doing general farm hand and labouring duties. This was based on discussions with staff, exploring the things he was interested in. The placement has helped him realise that he would prefer to work with heavy machinery, and having a tractor licence helped him to feel he has a good chance of achieving this.

*Name changed to protect identity

Developing aspirations and setting goals

Evidence from workstars from 42 participants highlights that they improved their resilience, aspiration, motivation and self-belief, and some improved their feelings of stability.



The outcomes increased in positivity over time. Those that joined the programme in late 2022 showed more positive outcomes across most outcomes than those that had joined in the first three months of 2023. Almost all participants that joined in 2022 saw an improvement in resilience, aspiration, motivation and self-belief. However, participants who had been on the programme for a shorter time reported more positive impact in relation to stability.



Participants involved in the evaluation said that they felt more confident, happier, more positive and more motivated, with a much clearer idea of what they want to do in the future.

“I feel confident and motivated.” **Participant**

Many of the participants involved in the evaluation had stopped attending school and felt isolated. Many were not leaving home and said that they had no goals before the programme, and were not sure what they wanted to do.

“I had no idea what I wanted to do or how I was going to accomplish what to do.” **Participant**

Participants also reported feeling more hopeful about being able to get an interesting job which is appropriate for their skills and interests. Previously many said that they found the idea of working daunting and scary, and as a result of the programme they feel more prepared. The programme has helped many participants to open up their

mind to new situations, learn how to be in a work environment, and understand their options.

“I didn’t really know what I wanted to do when I was at school and I came here and then they helped me with my interests and what would suit my interests and that.” **Participant**

“It does give me a lot more hope towards going into work.” **Participant**

Many said that without Employability4All they would be stuck and wouldn’t know what to do.

“I feel like I’m actually going to be able to do something now whereas I was kind of stuck before.” **Participant**

Blair

Blair got involved with Employability4All when he had been unemployed and was struggling to find a job. He worked on interview skills, developing his CV and job searches and has become more motivated to apply for jobs more often. He also has a bus pass which helps him with his job search and is receiving support to apply for Universal Credit.

So far, he has built his confidence and self esteem. He feels he’s got into a routine because he attends the programme once a week. He feels more motivated to keep looking for work because of the programme, and his mental health and wellbeing has improved.

“I feel more motivated.”

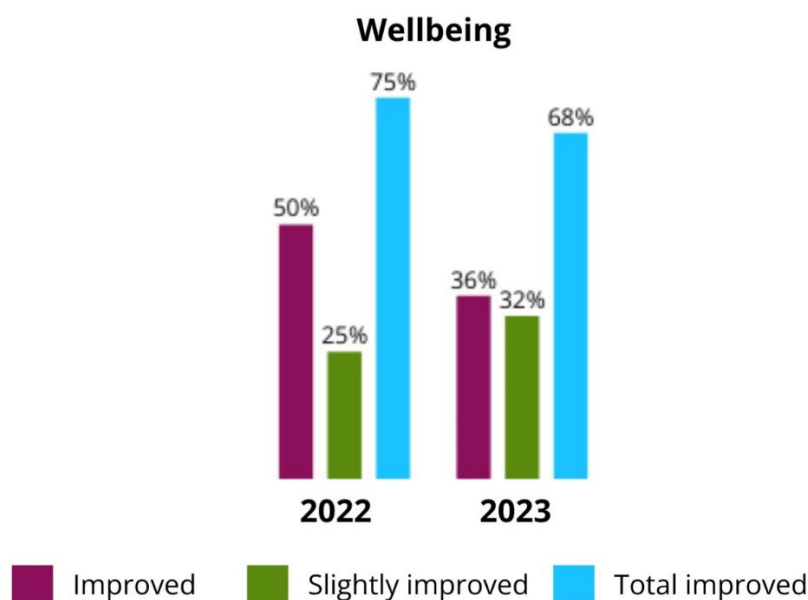
Blair feels that his interview skills have improved, and he has built on the qualifications that he already has. He feels more focused on the types of work he would like to do, and regularly revises his CV now to make sure it better matches the roles he is applying for.

Health and wellbeing

Evidence from workstars from 42 participants highlights that there were some improvements in wellbeing.



The outcomes increased in positivity over time. Those that joined the programme in late 2022 showed more positive outcomes across most outcomes than those that had joined in the first three months of 2023.



Participants felt that the programme had helped them to establish a healthier daily routine. Many said that if they were not at Employability4All they would be at home.

A few said that through this routine, they had developed healthier habits – including stopping smoking cigarettes and cannabis.

“I would probably be sleeping all the time.” **Participant**

Partners who referred participants to the programme agreed that they saw an impact in terms of developing a healthy routine.

“I think it’s the routine and consistency in their week that makes the difference. So many of them are just doing nothing. They’re up all night gaming and sleeping all day so just going out and getting into the routine helps with their mental health.” **Partner**

A few participants said that through work they got up and moving about, and improved their physical strength. And many reported feeling happier, more hopeful, more connected to others and more confident.

Staff at Employability4All also saw a difference in participants in terms of having a scaffolding of support including a range of adults and peers they can approach for help. Staff also noted a difference in participants in relation to personal care and hygiene – linked to accessing financial support if needed.

4. Learning

What works

Participants, partners and staff were very positive about the model of support provided through Employability4All. Key strengths were:

- **The individualised support** – Participants said that the individualised, one to one support was the best thing about the programme. They felt that they developed strong relationships with staff through one to one support. Partners also valued the one to one, person centred support, particularly for vulnerable participants.

Staff emphasised that the programme was tailored to the needs of the person. The team has time to sit and work with each individual, working on goals, skills, motivation and confidence – based on what the individual needs. Staff felt empowered to put client needs first. Rather than a group working through the same qualifications, each person can access training that they need as an individual, and there is a budget for this. This means that the types of training people have accessed is very diverse. For example, learning to drive a tractor, going to an art class, working with animals or driving lessons. Group work is still available if it suits individuals, but it is tailored to what the individuals need and want.

“I think it's quite a flexible programme. It's client-centred and designed to do what's right by the client. It's not just about getting them into a job right away just to satisfy targets.” **Staff**

- **Practical experience** – Participants highlighted that the work placement was a real draw and a reason for getting involved. Participants were pleased that their work placement was organised quickly.

“They said it was going to be fairly quick when you get a work placement it won't be like long, just constantly coming in and talking, they'll get straight to it, into a work placement, and they did.” **Participant**

Partners also felt that what makes the programme different is the work placement and volunteering aspect. Partners felt that this made it stand out from other programmes.

“I think the massive thing is getting the real life experience in a workplace or volunteering placement... being able to gain those real life experiences is really important.” **Partner**

“It’s about skills like having a routine, being organised, time keeping. Skills that for people who are out and about are kind of routine but for these young people, they’re huge.” **Partner**

“The experiences are what will make the difference for these young people.” **Partner**

- **The staff team** – Participants felt that staff were approachable, supportive and helpful. Participants were comfortable talking to staff about a range of issues, and felt staff were non-judgemental and helpful. Participants liked being supported to do things for themselves.

“Probably how helpful they are and how they actually show you how to do it by yourself... They try and encourage you cos like they’re not always going to be there, so they make sure you can do it on your own.” **Participant**

“I’ve really enjoyed it, they’ve been really good, and they understand me and that, and they understand my autism and things like that, which is really helpful for me.” **Participant**

Partners felt confident referring participants to the Employability4All programme. Partners felt that the programme was delivered by respected and established providers, and it was easy to refer participants to the programme. Partners said that they had a good relationship with Employability4All staff, and could call them to talk about anything – for example to catch up on referrals and make sure they don’t lose track of individuals. Partners felt that there was good communication and the team was caring and professional.

“I work with really vulnerable young people who are at really difficult stages and Barnardo’s is a really well respected provider... Barnardo’s is a trusted partner and they are all really committed to the young people.” **Partner**

- **The environment** - Participants also felt that it was a comfortable environment. Partners also emphasised that they knew participants would be nurtured and well looked after within the programme.

“I feel pretty comfortable coming here..” **Participant**

A few participants who were entitled to the allowance also mentioned that this was appealing and encouraged them to participate.

Areas for development

- **Enhanced communication** – While partners felt that communication within Employability4All was good, some felt it would be good to have more regular reviews so they could keep track of where participants are on their journey.

“It would just be good to make sure young people don’t fall through the net.” **Partner**

- **Enhanced information** - Partners highly valued the bespoke aspect of the programme. However, they felt it would be useful to have more information about the structure of the programme – for example the programme goals, a rough timetable and how individual’s might experience the programme. Partners recognised that each individual is treated as an individual, but felt that made it a bit difficult to explain the programme to potential participants. One partner suggested a visual explaining the programme, so it could be clearly explained to participants.

A few partners said that it would be useful to have a better understanding of the role of Enable within the programme, and the difference between the work of Barnardo’s and Enable on the programme.

- **Building links with employers** – Staff highlighted that it had taken time to build awareness of the programme among employers. Relationships had to be built to encourage employers to consider the work placement opportunity. Staff also highlighted that some employers had rules that they couldn’t take young people until they were 16 or 18, and some did not hold employer liability insurance needed for the work placements to take place.
- **Managing demand** – Staff highlighted that because support is bespoke they don’t always know when a spot will become available on the programme, as there isn’t a set time when a participant will finish. Initially, referrals to the programme outstripped supply as the programme was just getting set up so a waiting list was put in place. Staff indicated that demand for the programme remained high.

Barnardo's Works
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Employability4All



**PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL**



Scottish Government
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gov.scot

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