



Youth workers work one-to-one and in groups with young people to support them with literacies, employability, self-esteem, health and wellbeing, life skills and personal development. Young people are referred through Skills Development Scotland, schools and the extended outreach team – sometimes they also join the programme having referred themselves. A pre-activity agreement, where schools timetabled sessions where young people can sample the activities and meet staff is also in place to enable engagement. Partners refer young people because they are disengaging from school, and often also coping with other barriers to learning, including poor mental health and chaotic home environments. The youth work team aims to offer alternative, positive learning experiences over the school year.

Direct Impact

- All 11 young people involved in the programme in 2019-20 improved their literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing and skills.
- Every young person became more positively engaged in learning and secured a positive destination.

Unintended Outcomes for Young People

The Irvine Activity Agreement participants had a keen interest in cooking and business management. After volunteering at the Youth Forums breakfast club, they developed an action plan to create a community cafe. The group initially ran a ‘pop up’ cafe event for 40 community members, creating their own advertising, ordering produce and planning a timetable for service. After the success of the pilot, the group took on a larger event, after which they successfully applied to the Prince’s Trust for funding for a social enterprise cafe. Currently the group are working on tying in with local schools to organise community volunteering and work experience opportunities, and they also have a plan to extend this to the wider community.

Young person

“From completing this programme, I have taken these skills home which has led to a better home environment as I can help out my Dad around the house more – we have cooking competitions and have a better relationship now. I am still really interested in cooking and hoped to go to college to get my cooking and catering qualifications”

Family member

“Since he has started the Activity Agreement, he has become more confident, and enjoys spending time with family and friends more. Before, he was quite isolated in his room. He was quite shy due to his anxiety and was nervous about his literacy skills and talking to people – now, after this, he has something he is excited about – he talks a lot and is really passionate about it.”