

The young parent co-design project - supporting young parents into employment through informed employment pathways.



How-to Guide

This guide offers more detailed information and advice for those who may be interested in adopting or adapting the initiative in their local area.

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Title	The young parent co-design project - supporting young parents into employment through informed employment pathways.
Lead Organisation	Aberdeen City Council.
All Organisations	External organisations not specified at this point in time.
Category	Promising – early signs of impact.
Poverty Impact	Prevention. Enabling reduction. Mitigation. Awareness-raising. Improving service delivery. Enhancing understanding.
Introduction to the Project	
The project aimed to support young parents in Aberdeen, particularly mothers and fathers under the age of twenty-five, by identifying barriers to employability and co-designing services which met the populations specific needs. Through this approach, the project aimed to engage at least twenty-five young Aberdeen based parents. This was facilitated through the provision of a service which improved client confidence, employability pathways, and access to targeted support mechanisms through Aberdeen City Council's embedded employability provision initiatives.	

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Initial Idea

Who had the initial idea?	Lori, our local outcome improvement planner at the time.
How did the idea for the project come about?	
Lori suggested that a project aimed at increasing younger parents engagement with our employability activities was a good idea. This was based on information, Lori held related to this group in addition to surveyed young parents data.	
Were plans informed by any published reports / papers / research evidence or practice from elsewhere?	Not specified.
Was anyone else involved in developing the initial idea of the project?	Yes
The lived experiences of young parents helped to develop the initial idea of the project.	
Were those with lived experience of poverty involved in developing the initial idea of the project?	Yes
Lived experience of young parents helped to inform the project design.	

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Was funding required to support the development of the initial idea of the project?		Yes
How was the project funded?	The same funding was used to develop the idea and then implement the project.	
Which organisation provided funding?	Scottish Government.	
How much was required?	Child Poverty Practice Accelerator fund (CPAF).	
What was the specific source of funding?	Not specified.	
Were specific resources – other than funding - needed when developing the initial idea of the project?		Yes
Staff/Volunteer Time	Staff time was required to: Develop the initial idea. Develop and support project guidance related to mitigating child poverty through increasing young parents' engagement in employability activity.	
Facilities / Workspace	Facilities were required for project specific team meetings and discussions.	
Equipment	Basic office equipment and IT systems were required to support the development of the initial idea and documentation management.	
Local Knowledge	Local knowledge was essential in shaping the project. Through the lived experience insights of young parents, we were better able to identify and understand the barriers young parents faced in engaging with employment services and finding paid employment.	
Food and Drink	No	

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Did any barriers have to be overcome when developing the initial idea of the project?	Yes
We faced barriers related to: Engaging young parents in employability activities. Limited existing data on the target group during the projects development stage. A lack of organisational awareness of the support and services available to young parents.	
Did anything in particular enable development of the initial idea of the project?	Yes
There was a strong and informed focus on finding solutions to tackle child poverty amongst young parents in the area, and getting them into paid employment.	
How long did it take between having the initial idea and starting the project?	Not specified.
Who made the decision to introduce the project?	Not specified.

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Early Development

Was there a pilot project or feasibility study or test of change?	No
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Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users

Are potential users referred to your Service.?	Yes
Potential clients were referred to the project through a range of sources including; the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT), members of the team supporting young people, and external training providers. There was also the potential for self-referrals.	
Are there ways, other than referral, that are used to make potential users aware of your Service.?	Yes
Clients were made aware of the project through ABZWorks communications channels, including the ABZWorks website and social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (although X was rarely used due to low engagement). YouTube was also employed to host videos, which were then shared via other social media channels. Local community advertising was also employed: local leaflets and flyers in local libraries/community centres and Event bright.	
What is the most common way through which users typically access your Service.?	
Not specified.	
Do you take steps to keep in touch / reach out to users?	Yes
• Service users were kept in touch with through the 'No One Left Behind' framework. • Participant data was collected and maintained for those involved in the CPAF-funded project. • Attendance was also recorded across sessions, including wellbeing sessions, meetings, and activities delivered with partner organisations. • Ongoing engagement was supported through regular participation tracking, with additional support provided where needed. • Notes also kept on participants provided comments and feedback throughout the programme, capturing both quantitative and qualitative information.	

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Working with People with Lived Experience of Poverty

Are those with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>delivering</u> the project?	Yes
Not specified.	
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in <u>managing</u> the project or in project <u>governance</u> ?	Yes
Yes, some of the project staff members were single parents and had lived experience of poverty.	
Are people with lived experience of poverty involved <u>in any other aspect</u> of the project?	Yes
Not specified.	

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Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working

Who is responsible for managing the project?	
Angela Taylor (Team Leader of Employability and Skills).	
Is this the only responsibility of the person managing the project?	No
Not specified.	
What proportion of the manager's overall workload is given over to this project?	
Not specified.	
Is there a Project Steering or Advisory Group?	Don't know.
Who is involved?	Information not available at this point.
How does it work?	Information not available at this point.
Are any other governance arrangements in place to review strategy and performance?	Not specified.

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Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements

To the best of your knowledge, is the project aligned with national and/or local anti-poverty strategies and priorities (e.g., local authority or health board priorities)?	Yes
The project aligned with national and local anti-poverty strategies. This included the Scottish Government's Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and local authority priorities focused on reducing child poverty and improving outcomes for families. The project further aligned with employability and fair work priorities through, 'No One Left Behind' and CPAF-funded activity.	
In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?	Yes
Not specified.	
Is the project part of any other strategy?	Yes
Aberdeen's 'No one left behind' strategy.	
In your opinion, has the project benefitted from being part of this anti-poverty strategy?	Yes
The project aligned well with local and national government efforts to improve child poverty outcomes, strengthen national and local employability initiatives, and contribute to inclusive economic growth.	
Is the project delivering a service that is a statutory commitment?	Not specified.
In your opinion, what has been the impact on the project of having this statutory commitment?	Not specified.

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Funding

Is funding used to support the work?		Yes
If no funding was used, would work benefit from funding?		
Has external funding been secured to support the work?		Yes
Which organisation provided funding?	Scottish Government / Aberdeen City Council (core employability and child poverty related funding streams).	
What was the specific funding stream/source/scheme?	CPAF funding, No One Left Behind funding, Child Poverty Coordinator funding (Scottish Government funding streams).	
How much funding was secured?	Not specified (referred to as 'small pot' and 'around £80,000 total pot' but not clearly allocated per strand).	
For how long has funding been secured?	Not specified.	
Is future funding from the same external source a possibility?		No
Which organisations might provide funding?		
Is future funding dependent on achieving pre-agreed outcomes or outputs?		
What are these conditions?		
Has a specific sum been secured from your organisation to support this work?		Not specified.
How much funding was secured?		
For how long has funding been secured?		
Is future funding from your organisation a possibility?		N/A. Project has now ended.

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Is future funding dependent on achieving pre-agreed outcomes or outputs?		N/A
What are these conditions?	N/A	
What are the future - longer-term - prospects for this work if existing funding sources were no longer available?		
N/A. Project has now ended.		

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Staffing and Resources

Do existing staff from your organisation contribute toward the work of this project?	N/A. Project has now ended.
Are any of the resources needed to deliver the project provided in-kind, rather than budgeted from project funds?	N/A. Project has now ended.
Were new IT systems, additional software, or upgrades existing software (databases, Apps) required to deliver this project?	No
Was additional training – for staff or volunteers - required to deliver this project?	Not specified.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

Do you – or other organisations - collect data on the project for monitoring or evaluation purposes?	Yes
Is there baseline data to describe what things were like before the start of the project?	No
Is the difference that the project is making measured or monitored by the host organisation?	N/A Project has ended
Has the data that has been collected by the host organisation been used to adapt the way the project works?	N/A. Project has now ended.
Has an external organisation been employed to formally evaluate the project?	No
Is there an intention to employ an external organisation to evaluate the impact of the project in the future?	No
Is there an intention to undertake your own formal evaluation in the future to estimate the impact of the project?	No

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Impact

To what extent have the aims of the project been achieved?	Not specified.
What difference has the project made?	
Not specified.	
Have conditions or demand changed since the project was introduced?	Yes
• Scottish government lifted the child benefit cap. • Worsening economy. • Increasing redundancies.	
Has the project had the capacity to meet these changing conditions and demand?	Yes
Not specified.	
Has the project changed through time?	N/A. Project has now ended.
Has the project had any unexpected or unintended outcomes?	Yes
The project allowed the organisational to better understand, identify, and communicate service accessibility issues for young parents. Feedback from young parents highlighted that existing communications, including internal processes, leaflets, and website information, were not always accessible to the target group. This led to an internal review and an improvement of communication materials and the service approach required to meet the needs of young parents.	
In your opinion, is the project having an impact on tackling poverty?	Yes
Not specified.	

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Learning from Experience

What is working well?	
Not specified.	
What, if anything, is working less well?	
Not specified.	
What are the key learning points that you'd like to share with other practitioners?	
• Face-to-face commissioned courses can be difficult for young parents to access. • Some participants were unable to attend in-person learning. • Online learning was identified and explored as an alternative option. • Some participants did not want online learning, so it cannot be the only option. • A range of online training options is being considered based on the project group's general employment interests. • Learning provision can be used to support continued development until participants feel ready to progress.	
Are there plans to develop or expand the project in the future?	N/A Project has now ended.
How easily do you think this project could be replicated in another setting?	
The project could potentially be replicated quite easily. Without payments to participants included in costs, the economic cost of running the project would be minimal. Paying participants was not an adopted standard practice and was a new element introduced in this project. However, it is unclear whether the same levels of engagement would be achieved without a paid participation element.	

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