



Evidence-based policy in disadvantaged places

October 2019

This document is the product of the What Works Network, which includes the following organisations:





Foreword

This project looks in depth at policy and the use of evidence in places in the UK that are most deprived. These are places with a high proportion of people who are vulnerable with complex needs to support. They also have low levels of economic activity. This compounds the challenges they face, as unemployment, poverty, mental illness, and poor health often go hand in hand.

The backdrop for this is the deep cuts to council budgets in recent years. For example, Wakefield, one of our partners on the project, has had its spending cut by 30 per cent since 2009. In these places, improving the cost effectiveness of policies is more important than ever.

This project, undertaken jointly with other members of the What Works Network, focused on how the better use of evidence might help them.

We spent two days each in Grimsby and Wakefield as part of our work. It was invaluable to hear first hand from the councils and third-sector organisations working in their areas, about local initiatives, and the challenges of using evidence to improve policy.

One response to these challenges might be to argue that organisations such as ours do the job for them. Having reviewed the evidence across the What Works Centres, why don't we just provide areas with a recipe that they can follow?

What we have learned from this project suggests that such an approach simply won't work.

The evidence base cannot tell us what the most cost-effective approach will be when needs are complex and there are multiple ways of addressing a given challenge.

Take a specific example of a single parent who is long-term unemployed and suffering from depression. Is the cost-effective intervention to start with a mental health intervention to help address their depression? Or should we focus on better childcare to help them get a job, thereby relieving their worries about income and helping them tackle their depression this way? Or perhaps the problem is with a disruptive child and the most cost-effective intervention tackles the problems the child is facing.

But it is not just a matter of evidence.

The problems of these places have been generations in the making, and are driven by geography, history, and global economic trends. There are no easy solutions. We do, however, believe that it is essential that scarce resources are not squandered on policies that will not make things better. Wherever possible places should be implementing policies where the evidence suggests they will work.

This report provides some easy-to-implement steps to help places make better use of the available evidence to help ensure that time and money are spent in ways that are most likely to produce good results.

It is tempting to see disadvantaged places as testbeds for policy innovation, but we think that there is a strong case that the onus on piloting should be placed elsewhere. Hence the report's emphasis on learning from existing evidence.

While we do not think that we can tell places exactly what policies to implement to tackle the challenges they face, we do feel the principles set out in this document provide guidance on how to develop those policies.

We hope that these suggestions are helpful.

Henry Overman

Director of the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth

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Introduction

How can evidence-based policy help towns and cities suffering from high unemployment and poverty, poor health outcomes and other social problems?

In places often referred to as ‘left behind’ or ‘disadvantaged’, social problems act as a barrier to improving economic outcomes, while poor economic outcomes act as a barrier to tackling social problems. For places with vulnerable populations, the pressure on local government to allocate scarce time and money to an increasing number of issues is mounting. This pressure is exacerbated by the budget cuts local governments have experienced under austerity.

In 2019, the What Works Network came together to use its collective expertise to support evidence-based policymaking in these places to improve outcomes for people in the long term. We set out six principles of evidenced-based policy design for authorities having to do more with less. Most can be put in place immediately, do not require an overhaul of existing programmes and apply across a range of policy areas.

We have also included two examples of advice based on evidence from across the Centres. In both Wakefield and Grimsby, mentoring was discussed as a frequent intervention. Working with vulnerable people with chaotic lives was also raised as a particular challenge - reminders can help. Our ambition is to produce more guidance of this type.

We hope that these modest suggestions will be useful to staff in local authorities, combined authorities and local enterprise partnerships, as well as those in government and the third sector who work with them to address the ‘wicked problems’ that some of their residents are facing. Implementing even one of these approaches would help resources go a bit further towards improving the lives of residents – a modest goal, but an important one.

About the What Works Network

The What Works Centres were established to help ensure that high quality, thorough, and independently-assessed evidence shapes decision making at every level, by:

- Collating existing evidence on the effectiveness of various policy programmes and practices
- Producing high-quality synthesis reports and systematic reviews in areas where they do not currently exist
- Assessing how effective policies and practices are against an agreed set of outcomes
- Sharing findings in an accessible way
- Encouraging practitioners, commissioners and policymakers to use these findings to inform their decisions

For this project, the What Works Network has been assisted by Wakefield and Grimsby — two places in the UK facing these challenges. The Network organised two-day workshops in both places to discuss how its evidence base and knowledge might offer insights to help address local policy priorities. We are grateful to both places for their enthusiastic participation.

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Six steps to better evidence-based policy

The six principles of evidenced-based policy design for authorities having to do more with less. Most can be put in place immediately, do not require an overhaul of existing programmes and apply across a range of policy areas.



Defining success

Setting SMART objectives

Developing an organisation-wide outcomes framework to help inform strategic planning



Doing more with data

Improving cross-departmental data infrastructure

Embedding data initiatives and investing in data infrastructure



Using evidence early and often

Seeking out evidence to inform policies

Diagnosing how embedded the evidence is at different stages of the policy cycle



Tailoring, targeting and timing

Understanding the cost-benefit ratio of policies to inform decision-making

Calculating the 'deadweight loss' to maximise value for money for publicly-funded projects



Measuring success

Monitoring every project, and evaluating the impact of a handful of programmes

Using impact evaluation to assess whether outcomes are the causal result of the policy alone



Sharing what you learn

Publishing and communicating lessons learned — whether successful or not

Being open and transparent about findings to help others replicate them

01**Defining success**

The many goals of local policy are inevitably interconnected. Setting SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based) is an essential and common practice. However, the complexity of outcomes means that one service's activities will impact on others, meaning decisions must be made about how to weight the different outcomes. For example, if schools cancel after-school activities to save money, the police may have to deal with an increase in anti-social behavior from teenagers.

Where different objectives are interconnected, it can help to develop a framework to understand the relationship between outcomes in order to account for spillovers between these outcomes.

Developing an outcomes framework for the whole council using SMART objectives could help inform strategic planning. This would provide a useful structure for local needs assessment; clarity on what outcomes to target, measure and monitor; and would identify the tradeoffs and tensions that might arise.

Where this is too daunting, an alternative approach could be to pick a single issue to work towards across two or three departments. Early Intervention Foundation's (EIF's) outcomes framework for addressing parental conflict shows the links between interparental conflict and outcomes for parents, children and the wider family. This framework has allowed the EIF to measure the success of parental conflict mitigation policies by understanding which aspects of parental relationships have the most significant effects on child outcomes.

A complementary approach might be to use similar outcome measures across different policy areas. 'Wellbeing' is used as the basis for the overall outcomes frameworks for Scotland and Wales and is used as a way to agree goals. In the UK, the Office for National Statistics and OECD use this approach for the Measures of National Well-being Dashboard. What Works Wellbeing provides useful resources on local indicators for local authorities to use to gain insights into their residents' wellbeing; thus assessing 'how we are doing'.

02

Doing more with data

Effective use of the large datasets that local authorities hold can help target and prioritise interventions. Both improving cross-departmental data infrastructure and making as much local authority data as possible available to third-party organisations are proven approaches.

Case study**Cross-departmental initiative for school readiness**

Essex County Council offers a good example of a [cross-departmental initiative](#). They collaborated with Basildon Borough Council and Essex Police to address their school readiness problem. By merging eight of their datasets and hiring data analysts who developed a machine-learning algorithm, they predicted the most at-risk populations based on more than 200 variables, covering information on the child, household, parents and local area. This allowed them to allocate support to households in a more granular way than previously. In addition, it allowed them to measure how many at-risk households might not be known to public services — finding that only a third of children were living in ‘known’ households. The success of this project is only the first from this collaboration — in future, the partners are looking to address other labour market issues with the data.

Case study**Open source public data sets**

The integration of public-sector datasets has formed the bedrock of social economic policy in advanced economies like Denmark. In 2005, Denmark began to integrate address data across local governments and public providers and released this data to the public free of charge. This data helped the emergency services; postal and transport services, and GPS systems. A follow-up study commissioned by the Danish government estimated that the direct financial benefits of this alone for the period 2005-2009 were €62 million, at a cost of only €2 million.

London has also made more data publicly available, through the Open Data Initiative. As of today, the Greater London Authority’s [London DataStore](#), created in 2010, contains over 500 free-to-use datasets in a range of formats, making it a valuable resource for anyone providing services in the city.

During our Wakefield and Grimsby visits, it was clear that the third sector is taking on an increasing number of roles that were previously the province of local government. Third-sector organisations have frequent contact with the most at risk populations and therefore often have useful data.

The [Measures Framework](#) being pioneered by the Centre for Ageing Better provides a great example of an approach which brings together all data related to one policy area. This is a compendium of 63 measures and their associated data sources looking at individual-level outcomes related to ageing and later life. It is intended as an accessible tool for anyone who is interested in ageing-related data or evaluating ageing-related activities.

Nesta has identified nine examples of [best practice in data analytics](#) and offers useful guidance for cities and regions that may wish to establish their own.

Much more effort is needed to make open data initiatives part of the bloodstream of local governments across the UK to extend the benefits of these data infrastructure. Investing in such data infrastructure to facilitate data and knowledge sharing can be a worthwhile investment.

03

Using evidence early and often

Most councils understand the importance of evidence-based policymaking. However, the extent to which they seek out evidence to inform their work varies. Sometimes decisions are made based on anecdotes from participants or peers, which can be misleading.

We recommend that ‘evidence diagnostics’ be carried out by local and combined authorities to identify easy wins for improving the use of evidence.

Step one: Are local policy makers familiar with the evidence resources from the What Works Network and others?

- How many schools in a local area know about or use the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) toolkit?
- How many employment training programmes have used the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth (WWCLEG) toolkit on employment training programmes?
- How many mental health policies are informed by NICE guidelines?
- How many police officers know about the College of Policing crime reduction toolkit?
- Are relevant departments using the EIF guidebook?
- Are relevant departments accessing the Wellbeing Data Bank?

Step two: Diagnose how embedded the evidence is at different stages of the policy cycle.

- How robust is the evidence of demand for existing services?
- How robust is the evidence that the outcomes are achievable and measurable given the timeline and budget of the policy?
- Given the objectives of a policy, what evidence is there that this intervention is most cost-effective in addressing that outcome, subject to budget and resource constraints?
- What evidence is there, beyond anecdotal, that current policies work?
- Is there any quantitative evidence that suggests a market failure, or other considerations, that justify implementing the policy in the first place?

Step three: Follow best-practice implementation support guidelines offered by different What Works Centres.

For example, NICE has developed guidelines aiming to provide implementation support to encourage and promote the uptake of NICE guidance.

Councils can get support, training and advice on using evidence from the following places:

- The What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth runs free [Evaluation Workshops](#) that go through the evidence base, offer tips and build intuition for what makes a good evaluation and monitoring plan.
- The What Works Centre for Wellbeing runs Policy Profession [Wellbeing Evidence Workshops](#).
- The College of Policing, the professional body for police officers, runs ‘evidence base camps’ for police officers to get to grips with the research summaries in the [Crime Reduction Toolkit](#).
- The Alliance for Useful Evidence runs [Evidence Masterclasses](#) for the civil servants, leaders of local authorities, and charity chief executives – to help them grow their confidence in using evidence.
- EIF runs the [Early Years Transformation Academy](#) to support local partners to use evidence in the planning of maternity and early years services.

Many cities and communities are designing their own evidence diagnostics. A good example of this is the [Comprehensive Plan and Community Decision-Making Guide](#) published by Erie, Pennsylvania, in 2016. In their guide, they build key metrics and answer the question ‘will our action measurably and meaningfully help achieve the measures described in this comprehensive plan?’ before implementing any policy.

04

Tailoring, targeting and timing

The right intervention at the right time can transform people’s lives. Unfortunately, we rarely know when to intervene, and with what level of intensity, for the best result. Local authorities, especially those with large disadvantaged populations, cannot afford to spend too much at the wrong time.

Tailoring

Whatever the economic or social issue, tailored, intensive interventions often work better. The more contact time and bespoke help provided by a Jobcentre Plus case adviser, mental health counsellor, GP, or case worker, the better the outcomes we would expect to see for people. However, what is gained from tailored programmes in the quality of support is lost in the number of people a service can support. Local authorities need to compare different delivery models against each other to understand the trade-off between depth and breadth of service.

Understanding the cost-benefit ratio of policies can inform these decisions. Various cost-benefit tools exist from back-of-the-envelope estimates to more sophisticated models.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority has developed and continues to refine a [cost-benefit analysis model](#) that identifies the fiscal, economic, and social value of project outcomes, and specifies which public agency sees this benefit. This publicly-available resource can help other local authorities understand trade-offs.

Policy prioritisation frameworks can also be helpful, and there are several existing examples to which local authorities can refer. For example:

- Central government's [multi-criteria decision analysis](#) for local authority public health programmes.
- The Global Priorities Project's [philanthropic prioritisation model](#) and flowchart which can help clarify thinking on priorities.
- GiveWell's [cost-effectiveness model](#) backing their recommendations.¹

Targeting and timing

Optimising the targeting and timing of interventions can help places do more with less.

For councils to prioritise policies effectively, they need to understand the extent to which beneficiaries of a given programme would have achieved comparable outcomes without government support. This is a concept called 'deadweight loss'.

For example, in the case of employment training, deadweight loss might occur following the introduction of a policy to enrol job seekers in training courses. Providing support in the first few months of unemployment may not be cost-effective if people are likely to be unemployed for a short time only and will find new work on their own. In this case supporting them is 'deadweight loss'. Instead, training courses might be offered to those who time shows need new skills to find employment. Deadweight loss is key to calculating the value for money of any publicly-funded project. Central government programmes have been estimating and refining this type of deadweight loss as described in an [insightful report](#) from the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.²

Local authorities in disadvantaged places should work to optimise the timing and targeting of support towards interventions where the deadweight losses are smallest and benefits greatest.

1 GiveWell judge charities by two metrics and trade those off against each other by taking the median of their staff's moral judgements, i.e. how many people's income would you have to double for one year for it to be as good as saving an under-5's life? They make [these moral judgments public](#) for transparency and to invite challenge.

2 Department for Business Innovation and Skills, BIS Research Paper 71: Assessing the Deadweight Loss Associated with Public Investment in Further Education and Skills, May 2012, page 22

05

Measuring success

As What Works Centres, we always push for the adoption of the most appropriate evaluation design. But what is appropriate in a particular context is partly conditional on the place. Rigorous evaluation is important but can be expensive and resource intensive.

For disadvantaged places, which already have many demands on their resources, a better approach may be to monitor every project, while evaluating the impact of only a handful of programmes. Quality monitoring, which could be put in place across policies, would be a marginal addition to existing workstreams and would shorten feedback loops to allow quick tweaks and improve policy delivery. The What Works Network provides extensive advice on when and how to undertake more robust evaluation.

Monitoring

Monitoring, the gathering and measurement of data on policy performance, is a vital element of any attempt to improve delivery. It does not always identify causality, i.e. whether a policy has really made a difference for those supported, but it can help answer important questions about quality improvement, such as:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know whether change has occurred and if it is an improvement?

Most places monitor their programmes, but the quality of implementation is patchy and there remains plenty of room for improvement. Crucially, learning develops through the monitoring process. As a result, as NICE observes ‘the hypothesis will change throughout the project and the data will be ‘good enough’ rather than perfect’³. NICE has produced a [guide to quality improvement](https://www.health.org.uk/publications/quality-improvement-made-simple), which can be applied to any project or policy area and offers models of using monitoring to drive improvement.

Evaluation

The term ‘impact evaluation’ is used widely but not always precisely. Impact evaluation assesses whether the outcomes of a policy were the causal result of that policy alone. Evaluation is sometimes confused with monitoring, and impact is confused with simple before and after comparisons. In places facing pressures on delivery, evaluations are sometimes only delivered if there is time at the end of a policy cycle.

If local authorities have the resources to go beyond monitoring, we argue that good evaluation is essential to know whether a policy is having the desired effect for people, compared to what would have happened in its absence.

The most appropriate evaluation depends on what kind of programme is being evaluated and on the objectives of the evaluation. In some circumstances, robust evaluation may require ‘control groups’, to make sure the impact estimated is the result of the intervention alone and not of other factors. For example, evaluating the impact of a training programme by counting the number of participants who found a job on completing the programme fails to capture what would have

3 <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/quality-improvement-made-simple>

happened to the participants had they not enrolled, as some would have found a job anyway. Thinking about what a control group would look like and which characteristics of participants are important can help refine policy goals and may also identify challenges to implementation.

In other circumstances, it may be more appropriate to use evaluations which do not include comparators but are based on theories of change or capture data showing positive change.

Again, the What Works Network can help places figure out what kind of evaluation is appropriate and how it might best be implemented.

Tweaking

You can achieve more with a limited budget by integrating quick feedback loops to trial different service delivery options and choose the best provision when the trial is finished.

For example, WWCLEG is currently working with a local authority to trial a comparison of digital employment support with face-to-face support. Given that a digital solution costs less than face-to-face support, if the difference in impact between the two is small then this finding would be fed back into the overall policy design and digital support would be offered to more people.

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Sharing what you learn

Publishing and communicating lessons learned from existing policies, whether they are successful or not, can help other local authorities and local enterprise partnerships design and focus on the policies that work best.

Our final recommendation is therefore to be open and transparent about findings. The EIF provides [helpful guidelines](#). They highlight the benefits of publishing evaluation findings as well as being open about the limits of the data and analysis. If the methods used do not enable causal claims to be made, they do not recommend making them. They recommend that best practice would be for local authorities to provide enough detail to allow someone elsewhere to replicate the findings. This would help shape future design and delivery of the policies, and would help inform decisions regarding what to continue, what to cease doing and what to change.



Evidence-based advice

We include two examples of advice based on evidence from across the Centres. These examples put the six principles above into practice. In both Wakefield and Grimsby, mentoring was discussed as a frequent intervention. Working with vulnerable people with chaotic lives was also raised as a particular challenge — reminders can help. Our ambition is to produce more guidance of this type.

Reminders

Key points

- Text message reminders are very low cost and the evidence suggests they can be effective in improving attendance at employment training courses, school, medical appointments, and even improving rates of college enrolment.
- Reminders should be as simple as possible and should highlight the benefits to the recipient of participation.
- The evidence suggests that reminders are often more effective for those least likely to attend.

When the What Works Network met with Wakefield and Grimsby to look in depth at how the better use of evidence might help them, one of the challenges we heard about in a variety of contexts was the difficulty in engaging vulnerable people to take up and follow through with support and development. Sending reminders represents one way of improving these outcomes. To help improve their use, we have pulled together evidence from across the What Works Network — and from the Behavioural Insights Team — on what we know about using reminders. We have provided more detail on the evidence in different policy areas from each What Works Network member at the end of this document.

We define reminders as providing people with information about potential or upcoming activities by text, email, or phone call. For example, in the case of training programmes, reminders provide people with information about available training or forthcoming courses for which they are enrolled, or about their timetable for the coming week. Their objective is to encourage people to remember and continue with their programmes and make them aware of further opportunities.

The quantity and strength of the evidence base varies across policies; however, we do have a good quantity of evidence for a variety of settings. The evidence base covers reminder programme applied to different activities such as: training programmes, school attendance, college enrolment, medical appointments, as well as other contexts. The most extensive evidence comes from WWCLG, NICE, the Behavioural Insights Team, and EEF.

The available evidence is of a high quality and points to positive effects at generally very low costs. For example:

- Employment training programmes: Text message reminders had positive effects on course attendance and final exam performance. Reminders that improve training attendance sometimes also had positive effects on performance, as measured by final grades. Reminders appeared to be most effective for those least likely to attend employment training.
- School attendance: Texts to parents about children's activities and attendance records reduced student absenteeism, and there were also some positive effects on pupil performance.
- Healthcare appointment/medical treatments: Both text messaging reminders and telephone reminders increased attendance rates at healthcare appointments. However, postal reminders were not effective. Reminders were also effective in getting people to take medication.
- Other contexts: The effectiveness of reminders is supported by the evidence available from other contexts — and other countries — such as claiming benefits, college enrolment, gym attendance, voting in non-compulsory elections, and saving money.

Key things to consider for reminders

Which is the best type of reminder?

- SMS and telephone reminders are often equally effective; however, SMS reminders are cheaper and they can be scheduled to be sent at the most relevant times.
- Emails are cheaper still and can provide more content and information than a text message. However, emails may not reach everyone, especially those on lower incomes who may not have easy, or indeed any, internet access.

What should be included in the reminder?

- The notice should be as simple as possible and should highlight the benefits.
- Trialling different wording may be a simple way to increase response rates.
- In some settings, effectiveness was improved by emphasising the size of potential benefits or reminding the individual of their personal motivation for the activity.

Sources

Evidence on employment training attendance and completion:

- [Toolkit: Employment Training Reminders](#), What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth

Evidence on school attendance and attainment:

- [Evaluation: Texting Parents](#), Education Endowment Foundation
- [Text Reminders to Increase Attendance and Attainment](#), Behavioural Insights Team

Evidence on attendance at healthcare appointments:

- [Stating Appointment Costs in SMS Reminders](#), Behavioural Insights Team
- [Mobile phone messaging reminders for attendance at healthcare appointments](#), Cochrane Systematic Review

Evidence on a variety of healthcare outcomes:

- [Using Text Messaging in Healthcare](#), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Mentors

Key points

- Across a range of policy areas, mentoring programmes have had some positive impacts.
- It is important to think about who is being mentored; how mentors will be selected and matched to mentees carefully, and to consider what kind of support will be offered to mentors.
- The length of the mentoring programme and the frequency and length of meetings can all make a difference to how well the programme works.
- Poorly-terminated relationships — especially due to mentor drop-outs — may lead to negative outcomes. It is therefore important to think about how programmes are going to end.
- There is evidence that these programmes can be good for mentors as well as the mentees.

During meetings with local areas as part of the project supporting evidence-based policymaking in disadvantaged places, one intervention that recurred as a proposed solution for different policy areas was mentoring. To help improve the cost-effectiveness of mentoring programmes, we have pulled together the key insights from the collective evidence base of the What Works Network (WWN) on what works for designing, developing and implementing good mentoring programmes. Detailed evidence for the different policy areas provided by each WWN member can be found below.

We define mentoring as any programme that facilitates one-to-one engagement between two people, with the explicit aim of improving outcomes for one of them. Usually, the mentor has more knowledge, experience, or is in a position of power or seniority. The desired outcomes vary by policy area and programme. For instance, the programmes studied by EEF focused mainly on improving non-academic outcomes such as confidence, self-esteem, resilience and aspirations, while the College of Policing looked at programmes centred on reducing juvenile delinquency and reoffending.

The quantity and strength of evidence varies across policy areas, but the evidence base across all the centres indicated that mentoring can be beneficial to both the mentee and the mentor. The evidence also suggested that the impact can be influenced by the programme design details. For example:

- Apprenticeships: Mentors improved rates of completion and the level of skills. There was no impact on broader outcomes.
- Academic achievement: Mentors had little impact on academic achievement of school children but did have a positive impact for non-academic outcomes such as attitudes to school, attendance and behaviour.
- Reoffending: Reoffending rates fell for those enrolled on mentoring programmes.
- Wellbeing: There is evidence that mentoring is good for the wellbeing of the mentor as well as the mentee.

See the individual centre evidence pieces for much more detail on each of these, including the extent and quality of the evidence base.

Key things to consider for mentoring programmes

Who is being mentored?

The effectiveness of mentoring can vary across different types of people. For example, EIF has evidence suggesting that mentoring works well for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and young people who have been in contact with the police but do not have a long criminal history.

What is the objective?

Mentoring will likely be more effective in improving some outcomes than others. WWCLEG finds evidence that within apprenticeships, mentors were effective in improving completion of the programme, but had no impact on other personal outcomes. EEF found that mentoring improved attendance, but not academic performance.

How will mentors and mentees be matched?

It is important to select mentors and match them to mentees carefully. Evidence from EIF finds that while peer mentoring is broadly beneficial to both mentors and mentees, in high-risk youth it may actually contribute to increases in problematic behaviour due to 'peer contagion'.

What support and training will be provided?

Things can be done to make sure that the mentors themselves are prepared for the role in giving guidance, handling problematic behaviour, etc. Evidence from EEF suggests providing support and training to mentors improves outcomes, especially in peer mentoring.

How long will the programme be?

The length of the programme matters. The College of Policing have evidence that longer programmes are better, giving mentors and mentees the time needed to build constructive relationships.

What will be the frequency and length of meetings?

This will vary by the context of programme and the nature of the relationships. The College of Policing's evidence suggests that meeting more often and for longer periods had the most impact on reducing reoffending rates.

How will the programme end?

It is important to think about this at the outset. Evidence from both EEF and EIF suggests that poorly-terminated relationships, especially due to mentor drop-outs, lead to negative outcomes.

Sources

Evidence on skills mentoring and apprenticeships:

- [Apprenticeships Toolkit: Mentoring](#), What Works Network for Local Economic Growth
- [Evidence Review: Adult Learning and Wellbeing](#), What Works Centre for Wellbeing

For evidence on using mentoring to reduce crime:

- [Intervention: Mentoring](#), College of Policing
- [Systematic Review: Mentoring](#), College of Policing

For evidence on working with high risk young people:

- [Advice for Commissioning Mentoring Programmes](#), Early Intervention Foundation
- [Mentoring to Prevent Gang and Youth Violence](#), Early Intervention Foundation
- [Building Trusted Relationships for Vulnerable Children and Young People with Public Services](#), Early Intervention Foundation

For evidence on working with children in school:

- [Teaching and Learning Toolkit: Mentoring](#), Education Endowment Foundation

For evidence on how mentoring affects mentors:

- [Older People: Independence and Mental Wellbeing](#), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence



Resources

This evidence list is a summary of resources from the WWN related to some of the priorities identified in Grimsby and Wakefield. It only scratches the surface of the resources that the centres hold and the topics they cover.

Employment and apprenticeships

- WWCLEG Toolkits about employment training and apprenticeships:
<https://whatworksgrowth.org/toolkits/people/>
- Ageing Better case for supporting longer working lives:
<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/silver-lining-uk-economy>
- Ageing Better guidance on how employers can be more age friendly:
<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/becoming-age-friendly-employer>
- NICE guidance on workplace health:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/workplaces>
- EEF evidence on careers education:
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/evidence-reviews/careers-education/>
- What Works for Wellbeing evidence on job quality, wellbeing and performance:
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/product/job-quality-and-wellbeing>
- Review of the evidence on employment support for over 50s:
<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/employment-support-over-50s-evidence-review>
- Addressing worklessness and job insecurity amongst people aged 50 and over in Greater Manchester
<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/addressing-worklessness-and-job-insecurity-amongst-people-aged-50-and-over-greater>
- Health warning for employers: Supporting older workers with health conditions
<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/health-warning-employers>

Working with vulnerable people

- The EIF Guidebook provides information about early intervention programmes that have been evaluated and shown to improve outcomes for children and young people:
<https://guidebook.eif.org.uk/>
- EIF offer further evidence on building trusted relationships:
<https://www.eif.org.uk/report/building-trusted-relationships-for-vulnerable-children-and-young-people-with-public-services>
- NICE guidance on multi-agency work, particularly around issues of violence and abuse:
<https://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/domestic-violence-and-abuse>
- NICE guidance on mental health and the justice system:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng66>
- College of Policing pilots are currently being evaluated to test initiatives tackling vulnerability and violent crime:
<https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Pages/Vulnerability.aspx>

Community approaches

- NICE guidance on community engagement:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/community-engagement/products?ProductType=Guidance&Status=Published>
- What Works for Wellbeing conceptual review of community wellbeing:
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/product/what-is-community-wellbeing-conceptual-review/>
- What Works for Wellbeing community wellbeing indicators:
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/product/community-wellbeing-indicators-table-only/>
- What Works for Wellbeing systematic review on community involvement in decision making:
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/?s=joint+decision+making>

How to evaluate

- WWCLEG evaluation resources for local economic policy, including guidance, case studies and workshops:
<https://whatworksgrowth.org/how-to-evaluate/>
- College of Policing evaluation toolkit:
<https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Support/Pages/Evaluation-Toolkit.aspx>
- EEF resources and information for evaluators and grantees curated from their experience setting up random control trials in schools:
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/evaluating-projects/>
- EIF guide about how to evaluate the complex systems that make up local early help offers, which may involve many partners and multiple programmes and services:
<https://www.eif.org.uk/resource/evaluating-early-help-a-guide-to-evaluation-of-complex-local-early-help-systems>
- What Works for Wellbeing Measuring Wellbeing series:
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/our-work/measuring-evaluating/>

This work is published by the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, which is funded by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Department for Transport and the Department for Work and Pensions. The support of the Funders is acknowledged. The views expressed are those of the Centre and do not represent the views of the Funders.

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October 2019

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Economic Growth 2019



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