



FINAL REPORT

Ambitious for Young People

- A study of the impact of universal youth provision at OnSide Youth Zones



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the young people, Youth Zone staff, stakeholders and parents from the Youth Zones who made the time to contribute to this comprehensive research project.

Contents

	Page no.
Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Method of approach	8
3. Goal 1: To give young people a safe place to go to have fun and grow	11
4. Goal 2: Help young people lead healthier, happier lives	22
5. Goal 3: Enable young people to better face life's challenges	26
6. Goal 4: Help young people to raise their aspirations and achieve in education and employment	30
7. Goal 5: We strengthen communities by supporting young people to be empowered, active, caring citizens	36
8. Summary: Understanding impact	40

Executive Summary

This report has been prepared to identify the impact of universal provision at OnSide Youth Zones against the five OnSide goals detailed below. The research has been wide-ranging, encompassing quantitative and qualitative research with members, parents and stakeholders across 8 Youth Zones.

The research provides overwhelmingly positive support that the OnSide model works; and their members are happier, healthier and more involved in their local communities.

Young people's surveys comprised; a Baseline Survey across 8 Youth Zones (207 respondents), an Impact Survey across 8 Youth Zones (501 respondents), a Baseline Survey at Inspire (318 respondents) and a Deep Dive Survey at 3 Youth Zones (400 respondents). 353 parents/carers were surveyed, as were 42 stakeholders representing a range of organisations such as Education Services, Headteachers, the Police, Children's Services and Jobcentre Plus.

Goal 1: To give young people a safe place to go to have fun and grow

Giving young people a physical space in their community outside of school is crucial to developing relationships and resilience, which are key to avoiding negative experiences in childhood.

Youth Zone membership builds confidence and increases friendship for most young people so that:

- 77% of members are more self-confident.
- 75% of members have more friends.
- The strength of impact increases with length of membership.
- 29% of members are frequent attenders, attending 4+ times per week.
- 82% of frequent attenders have more friends.
- 73% identified a reduction in isolation as a result of their membership.

Stakeholders provided further validation of these findings:

- 100% of stakeholders agreed (74% of them agreed strongly) that the Youth Zones provided a safe place for young people to have fun and grow.
- 100% said their Youth Zone improved young people's confidence.
- 100% said that it improved young people's social skills.
- 100% considered it enhanced young people's friendships.

Our members said that before their Youth Zone opened they spent more time alone in their bedrooms, isolated from other young people and adult role models.

Goal 2: Help young people lead healthier, happier lives

Children from deprived backgrounds experience much worse health compared with the most affluent.¹ In 2015/2016, 40% of children in England's most deprived areas were overweight or obese, compared to 27% in the most affluent areas.

- Over 70% of members consider that they are healthier.
- Those doing little or no exercise has halved (34% to 18%) and those doing significant physical activity (4 days or more per week) has almost doubled (21% to 37%).
- 73% of members feel happier about their lives.
- 89% of members on free school meals feel happier about their lives

¹ State of Child Health 2017 - full report

Goal 3: Enable young people to better face life's challenges

With emotional disorders on the rise amongst young people², increasing evidence emphasises the importance of out-of-school activities and other resources for young people to draw on to improve their resilience.

Those aged 14+ were asked about mental health:

- 73% of them feel less isolated.
- 66% thought they were better at bouncing back from setbacks and disappointments.
- 66% of young people of all ages agreed that they were 'more likely to stay out of trouble'.
- 65% that they had a better idea of how other people were feeling, enabling them to show greater levels of empathy and understanding.

Parents agreed:

- 78% consider that the Youth Zone has had a positive impact on their child's life, a figure which rises to 95% amongst those whose children have been attending more than 2 years.

Goal 4: Help young people to raise their aspirations and achieve in education and employment

In the light of anecdotal evidence that OnSide's work is also positively impacting on other areas such as behaviour in school, the surveys explored attitudes to school and preparedness for the future.

- 78% of members said that the staff and volunteers at the Youth Zone encouraged them to prepare for the future.
- Further, impact is significantly greater amongst frequent attenders, 79% of those attending for 4 or more days per week agreed that they felt better prepared for the future; significantly higher than the 40% of those attending once per week.

High levels of improvement in aspirations and preparedness for the future amongst White British members were strongly positive findings. As national research shows³, White working class pupils achieve the lowest grades at GCSE of any main ethnic group, and are most likely to be classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Goal 5: Strengthen communities supporting young people to be empowered, active, caring citizens.

Youth Zones are a key part of their community and work in partnership with a network of public and voluntary sector organisations. It is clear that partnership working is a strength allowing all parties to maximise resources for impact and contributing to the public sector's ability to meet its goals.

- 66% of members felt more a part of their community.
- 65% felt that they could make a positive difference to their community. These views were consistent by age, gender and ethnicity.
- 56% of parents believe that their child's membership of the Youth Zone had made a positive difference to the community.

Amongst stakeholders:

- 96% said that their Youth Zone had made an impact on supporting them achieve their objectives.
- 97% of stakeholders said that the Youth Zone worked effectively with them in their role.
- 97% thought that their area was better since their Youth Zone opened.

² <https://files.digital.nhs.uk/A6/EA7D58/MHCYP%202017%20Summary.pdf>

³ Sutton Trust: Class differences, 2016

1. Introduction

This report brings together the outcomes of the research conducted on behalf of OnSide between March 2018 and May 2019. The research was commissioned with the aim of identifying the impact of the Youth Zones pioneered by OnSide. OnSide has one clear mission - to build a network of state-of-the-art, 21st century youth facilities to give young people safe and inspiring places to spend time away from home and school.

Our research has been wide-ranging and has encompassed quantitative and qualitative research with members, parents and stakeholders across a number of Youth Zones in the North West and West Midlands. The Youth Zones were selected as representative of the Youth Zone network at the time; since then other Youth Zones have opened nationwide. The survey work has been supplemented by secondary data analysis to provide a rounded picture of the outcomes and impact resulting from the opening of a Youth Zone.

The findings are overwhelmingly positive and show that the Youth Zones, which are primarily located in areas of high levels of deprivation, succeed in engaging a broad cross-section of young people and have a positive impact on their members and the communities they serve. There are countless comments from young people highlighting the difference that the Youth Zone has made to their lives and these are consistently backed up by hard evidence from our surveys.

The Youth Zones clearly play a vital role in helping young people build trusting relationships, experience positive activities to boost their confidence, widen their friendships and improve their resilience and health, thereby helping them develop the skills they need for life. In the words of one stakeholder:

“It is a vital resource for young people and a real lifeline for children who need wider support than their family circumstances can provide. In a time of statutory services reductions for children's services, the model provides much needed support for our children from all walks of life.” Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Education Provider

Our surveys were specifically designed to test and identify the outcomes associated with each goal in OnSide's evaluation framework and the remainder of the report sets out our findings in relation to OnSide's goals.

Chapter 2: Method of approach: Outlines the nature of the five surveys and secondary research, its purpose and how it was undertaken.

Chapter 3: Goal 1: To give young people a safe place to go to have fun and grow. In this substantive chapter the survey data is explored to identify impacts in relation to confidence, social skills, friendships and social capital. Membership data is analysed to assess how successful Youth Zones are in engaging a cross-section of their community.

Chapter 4: Goal 2: Help young people lead healthier happier lives. With young people's health and wellbeing rising up the political agenda, the survey data is examined to assess the extent to which the Youth Zones improve physical health and mental health and contribute to healthy behaviours.

Chapter 5: Goal 3: Enable young people to better face life's challenges. In this chapter, the focus is on young people's resilience, exploring whether the Youth Zones help to increase awareness of, and the ability of, young people to manage their own emotions and to empathise.

Chapter 6: Goal 4: Help young people to raise their aspirations and achieve in education and employment. Within this goal, the expected outcomes explored are increased aspirations, increased

determination to succeed, whether young people are more ready for work and are supported into employment, improved attendance at school and improved attainment. The survey data is supplemented with secondary data analysis to assess wider impact.

Chapter 7: Goal 5: We strengthen communities by supporting young people to be empowered, active, caring citizens. This chapter explores whether young people feel empowered and more active in their community. It considers the extent to which young people feel part of, and can contribute to their community. It also reviews the impact of the Youth Zone on the wider community in terms of anti-social behaviour.

Chapter 8: Summary: Understanding impact. This final chapter provides an overview of the findings highlighting areas of greatest success.

2. Method of approach

This written report is based on a significant and comprehensive programme of primary and secondary research running over a 6 month period from June 2018. Its purpose is to succinctly highlight the key findings from the research programme and is themed to align with OnSide's five primary goals. It is supported by a fully detailed Technical Report.

The research programme comprised 8 Youth Zones:

- Blackburn Youth Zone
- Carlisle Youth Zone
- Inspire (Located in Chorley)
- Mahdlo (Located in Oldham)
- Manchester Youth Zone
- The Hive (Located on the Wirral)
- The Way (Located in Wolverhampton)
- Wigan Youth Zone.

Six primary surveys were conducted comprising a total of 1821 interviews.

Young People Survey – Deep Dive

- Youth Zones included are Mahdlo, Wigan Youth Zone and The Hive
- Method is face-to-face interviews
- The sample comprises 400 completed interviews
- The confidence level based on a Standard Error of 95% is +/-4.8
- The purpose of the survey is to establish an in-depth view of impact at these 3 well established Youth Zones.

Young People Survey – Inspire Baseline

- Method is online survey
- The sample comprises 318 completed interviews
- The purpose of the survey is to generate baseline information from members of a newly opened Youth Zone,

Parent Survey

- Youth Zones included are; Blackburn Youth Zone, Carlisle Youth Zone, Inspire, Mahdlo, Manchester Youth Zone, Wigan Youth Zone, The Hive and The Way
- Method is online survey
- The sample comprises 353 completed interviews
- The purpose of the survey is to establish parents' views of impact.

Young People Survey – Baseline

- Youth Zones included are; Blackburn Youth Zone, Carlisle Youth Zone, Inspire, Mahdlo, Manchester Youth Zone, Wigan Youth Zone, The Hive and The Way
- Method is online and self-completion survey
- The sample comprises 207 completed interviews
- The purpose of the survey is to establish the current measure of young people against the range of indicators used for impact.

Young People Survey - Impact

- Youth Zones included are; Blackburn Youth Zone, Carlisle Youth Zone, Inspire, Mahdlo, Manchester Youth Zone, Wigan Youth Zone, The Hive and The Way
- Method is online and self-completion survey
- The sample comprises 501 completed interviews
- The purpose of the survey is to establish impact amongst all 8 Youth Zones.

Stakeholder Survey

- Youth Zones included are; Carlisle Youth Zone, Inspire, Manchester Youth Zone, Mahdlo, Wigan Youth Zone, The Hive and The Way
- Method is online supplemented with telephone interviews
- The sample comprises 42 completed interviews
- Stakeholders cover a wide range including; Local Authority services (e.g. Troubled Family Teams and Children's Services), school leaders, Jobcentre Plus, Police and Health services.
- Resulting from the total population size, the sample is relatively small.
- Analysis and mean ratings have been provided for completeness, however analysis below the total sample (e.g. by stakeholder type or location) has not therefore been undertaken. All quotes contained within this report have been provided by stakeholders who are independent of the Youth Zones. The purpose of the survey is to establish stakeholders' views of impact.

Due to the nature of the surveys and the anonymity of responses, respondents to one survey (for example, Deep Dive) would have the opportunity to respond to another relevant survey (for example, Young People Survey – Impact). Whilst the likelihood of members responding to more than one survey is potentially low, the nature of the analysis, by keeping each survey's analysis distinct and separate, has ensured that there is no duplication of such responses.

The Technical Report supporting this written report provides the full survey data for each of the 6 survey as follows:

- Contents
- Frequency Tables
- Cross-tabulations (except for the Stakeholder Survey)
- Open responses
- Raw survey data.

The range of cross-tabulations detailed within the Technical Report is extensive and includes:

- Location
- Length of time at Youth Zone
- Days attending Youth Zone
- Frequency of attending Youth Zone
- Age
- Gender
- Activity
- Free School Meals
- Ethnicity Disability.

Where relevant, the mean ratings and percentage of respondents "agreeing or strongly agreeing to a statement" have been provided in addition to the percentage responses within the Technical Report.

The data from the Stakeholder Survey was analysed in Excel. The data from all the other 5 surveys was analysed using the industry standard Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Secondary research was conducted using publicly available statistics on the population, deprivation and education and through Freedom of Information requests/bespoke enquiries in relation to local crime figures. Analyses comprised:

- An analysis of OnSide's Management Information Database on current members in the 8 Youth Zones to identify their key characteristics – gender, ethnicity, disability etc. Data is based on current paid members at 1 July in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- This provided the basis for analysis in relation to Census data to assess how representative the membership is of its location.
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 was analysed to provide further contextual information.
- In relation to education, the main 3 primary schools and 3 main secondary schools attended in each Youth Zone catchment were matched with school level data to assess attainment (KS2 and KS4) and absenteeism to explore trends and latest data. Data for each primary school was also analysed for progress data.
- To assess whether antisocial behaviour and youth crime was reduced or displaced in the Youth Zone catchment areas, relevant Police Beat areas for each Youth Zone were identified and data sought from relevant police forces. Further requests were made through Freedom of Information requests.

The data available to inform the key themes is significant. The data referenced within this report is that which most clearly illustrates the findings supported by the various data sets. In any instance where data from different surveys do not support a main theme, this is detailed within the report and potential reasons suggested.

The nature of self-completion surveys means that respondents are not committed to answer every question. This results in varying sample bases for each question. For the purpose of this report, the total sample bases are detailed within this section. Individual sample bases for the total and cross-tabulated responses for each question are detailed within the Technical Report.

All noted differences in this report are based on data which has been tested for significant differences at the Standard Error of 95%.

3. Goal 1: To give young people a safe place to go to have fun and grow

Introduction

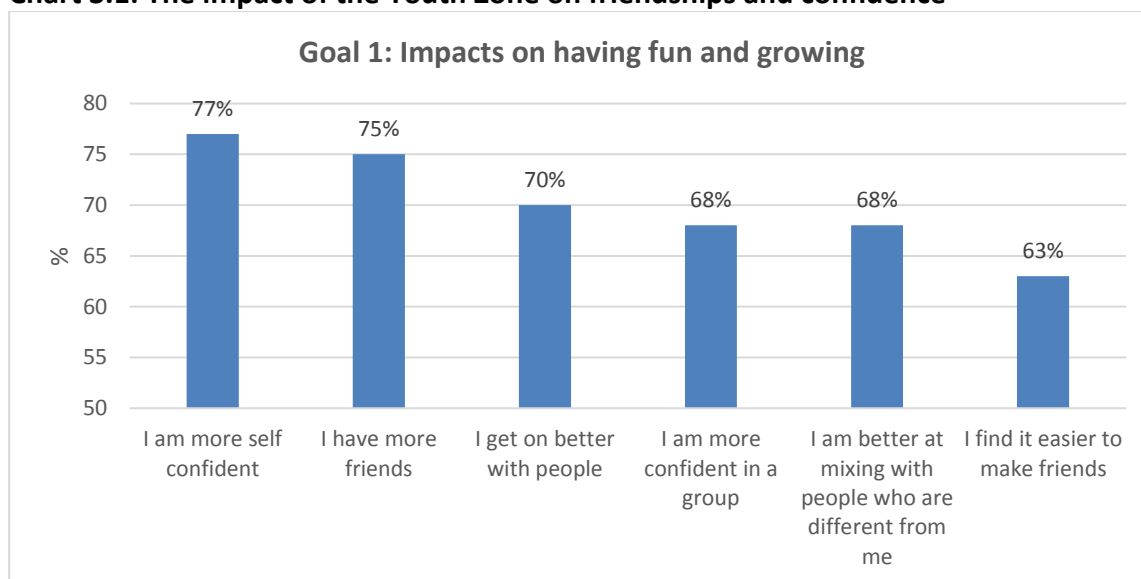
The Youth Zones - like much youth work - are based on an informal education approach; through providing the safe space, support and opportunities for young people to learn through activities, informal relationships, friendship and association. Nearly 85% of young people's time is spent outside of school, and much of their learning takes place outside of the classroom. Children's extra-curricular experience, and the quality of the activities on offer in their communities, are therefore crucial to their development from early years right up to adulthood.

In this chapter we explore the extent to which young people, their parents and stakeholders consider that their Youth Zone contributes to OnSide's overarching goal to provide a safe place to have fun and grow. The survey data is supplemented with an analysis of membership data to assess the extent to which the Youth Zones successfully engage with young people in the communities in which they are located.

Growth in confidence and friendships

Impacts against Goal 1 were identified by a majority of members with at least 3 out of 4 recording an increase in **self-confidence** (77%) and **friendships** (75%). This pattern of findings was apparent in both the Impact Survey and the 'Deep Dive' Survey.

Chart 3.1: The impact of the Youth Zone on friendships and confidence



Source: Impact Survey, % of respondents rating "agree" or "strongly agree" for each statement

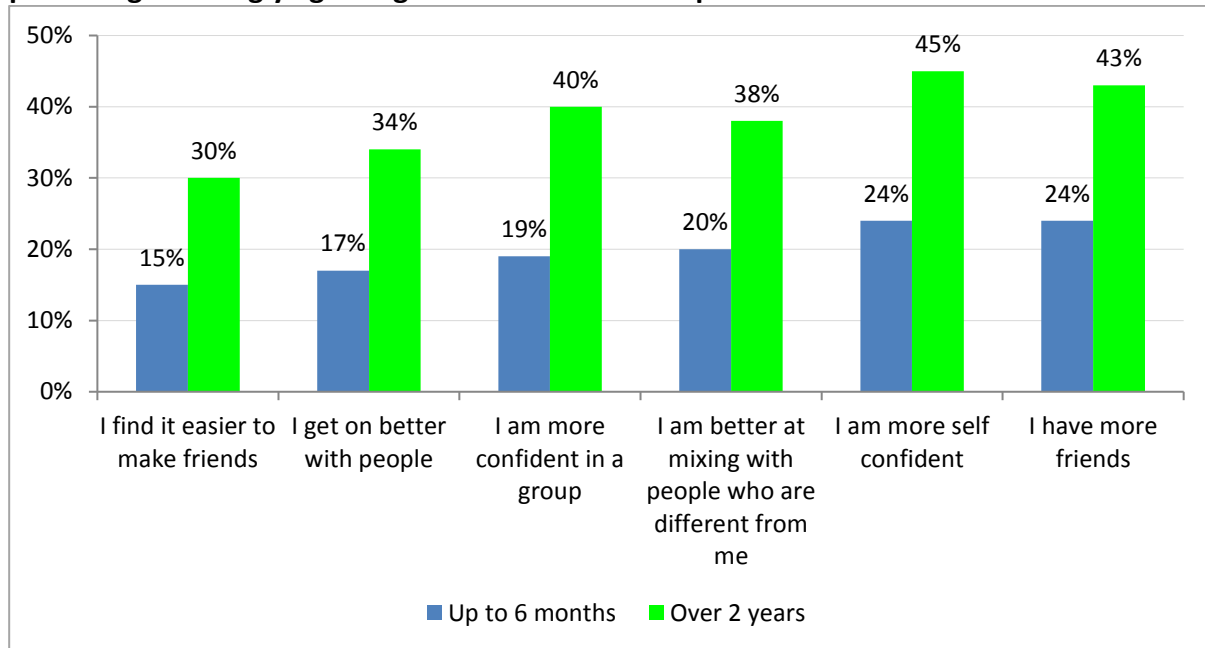
Although the overall proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing there has been an impact from their membership does not change significantly with length of membership for most indicators, two exceptions are:

- An increase in friendships (from 66% for those who have been members for up to 6 months having more friends rising to 82% amongst those who have been members for 2 years or more); and

- Confidence in a group situation (up from 55% in the first 6 months to 73% for 2 years plus).

Interestingly, what does change is the *strength* of impact through time across all 6 indicators. The proportion of young people strongly agreeing with each statement is significantly higher after 2 years than up to 6 months, with a clear upward and statistically significant trend in those strongly agreeing that the Youth Zone has made a difference:

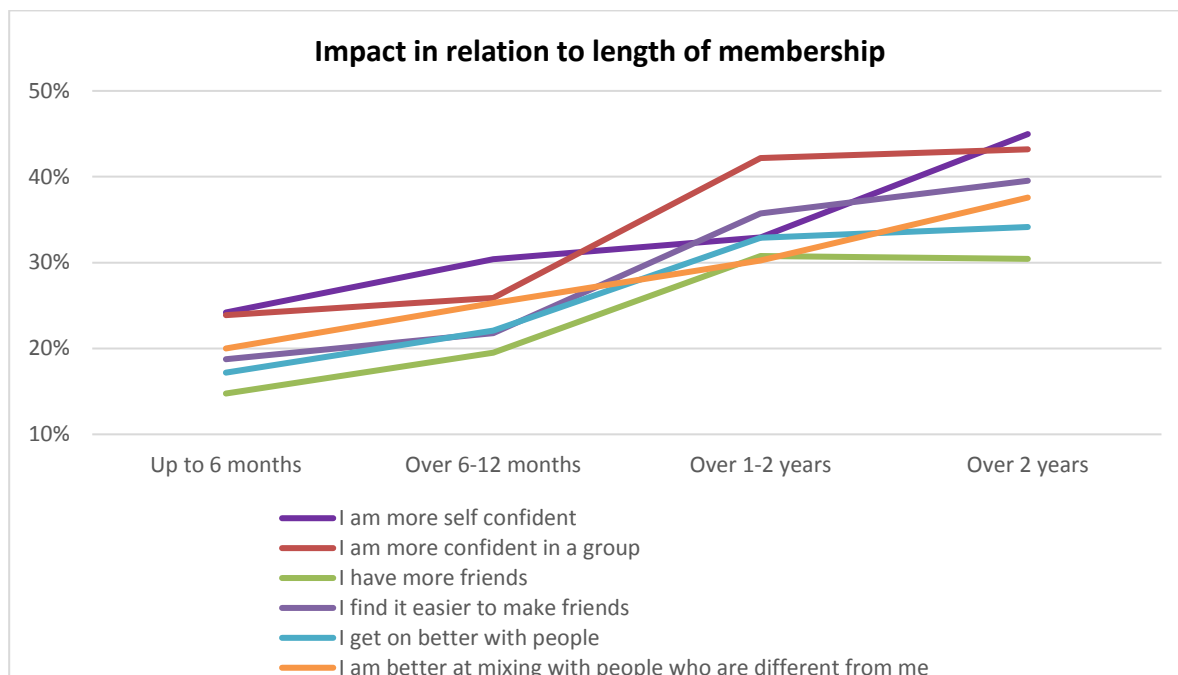
Chart 3.2 The impact on a range of indicators by length of attendance at the Youth Zone; percentages strongly agreeing there has been an impact



Source: Impact Survey

Analysis of the impact by length of membership is further illustrated in the progression from the initial point in the chart below:

Chart 3.3: Proportion of members agreeing or strongly agreeing that there has been impact across a range of different indicators shown by length of membership



Source: Impact Survey

Analysis in relation to frequency of attendance also shows that there is a clear difference in outcomes for attendees who attend more than 4 days per week (of whom there are 29%) and those who attend less often than once a week, and this is statistically significant for the differences in relation to friendships:

Table 3.1: Proportion of members agreeing or agreeing strongly by frequency of attendance

	Attend more than 4 days per week	Less often than once a week	Percentage Point Difference
I have more friends	82%	60%	22%
I find it easier to make friends	69%	43%	25%

Source: Impact Survey

Analysis by gender, disability, ethnicity and age show no significant differences suggesting that the benefits of attendance apply to all members. There is one exception to this, with younger members being more likely to have improved their ability to mix with people who are different from them than members aged 13 and over.

In the Deep Dive survey, members were asked to explain the difference which attendance at a Youth Zone had made to their confidence and friendships. The responses were varied, and included members explaining how they used to suffer from shyness, anxiety or poor behaviour and how the support from team leaders and activities have helped with their self-confidence which in turn had led to more friendships:

"I just have more of a social life, met lots of people, do lots of different activities, I have fun with my friends & learn new things" As a result, "I feel it has helped me grow which made me think more sensibly & behave better in general." Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 11

"There are people here with Asperger's like me, so I'm more accepted by people." The Hive, Female, Aged 21

"Some people make me get into trouble, but I am a lot better now: I have more friends and fun." Mahdlo, Female, Aged 8

"I'm not in as much trouble, it keeps me busy, and I have more confidence." Wigan Youth Zone, Male, Aged 16

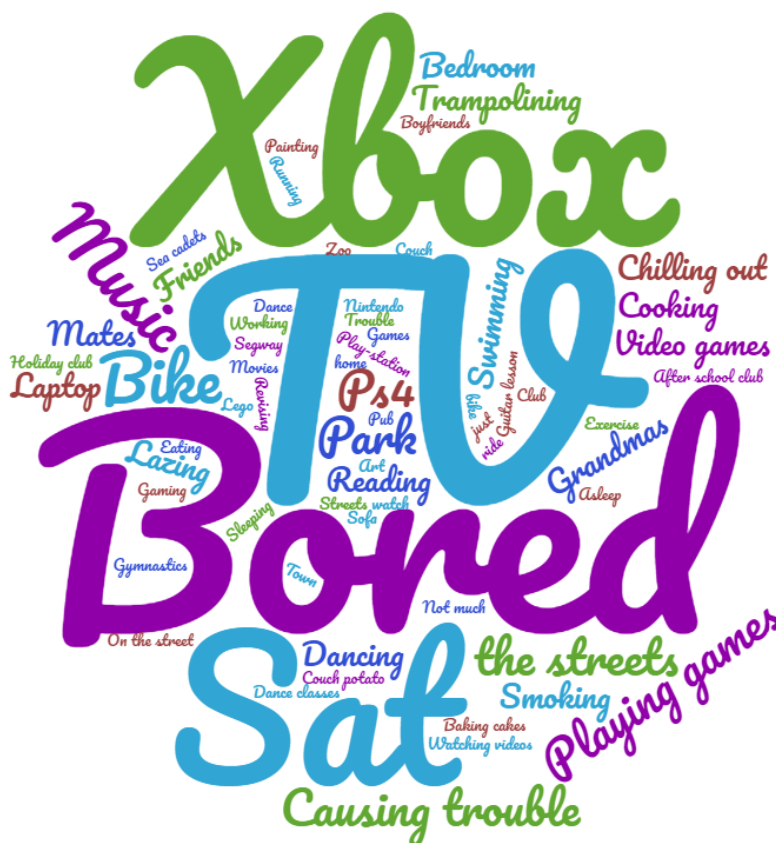
"My confidence has grown" – the impact is that "I'm doing better at college." Mahdlo, Female, Aged 16

"I'm mixing with people more instead of being on the Xbox." The Hive, Male, Aged 12

"Every week you can speak to a person who you have trust in. A sense of relief." Mahdlo, Male, Aged 16

Whilst young people themselves had some difficulty in pinpointing the exact factors responsible for making the difference, it is clear that the wide range of activities, their inclusivity and the staff which all contribute to the impact identified.

Without the presence of the Youth Zone, young people would most commonly be at home, usually in their bedroom on their Xbox, phone, iPad, PlayStation or watching TV. The word cloud below illustrates the words most frequently used in the responses:



In more detail, typical comments in response to being asked what they would otherwise be doing were:

“Lying in bed doing nothing.” Mahdlo, Female, Aged 16

“I would be sat doing nothing all day.” Blackburn, Male, Aged 10

“Hang with my mates on the streets” The Way, Male, Senior (age not provided)

“I’d be at home in my bedroom” The Hive, Female, Aged 17

“Nothing, bored” Mahdlo, Male, Aged 11

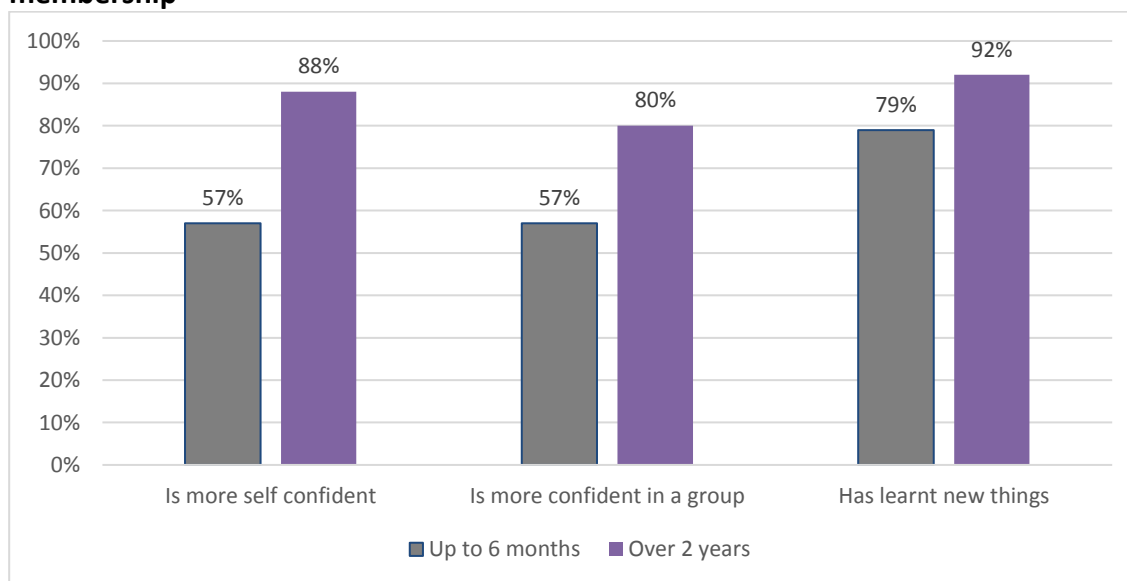
“I’d be sat in my room playing on the Xbox with no interaction with anyone else” Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 15

“Out in town with mates or at home watching TV, playing video games.” The Hive, Female, Aged 15

The parents’ perspectives add weight to the above analysis. More than 2 out of 3 parents (68%) felt that their child was more self-confident as a result of attending the Youth Zone. 80% said their child liked to try new activities, 83% agreed that their child had learnt new things and 64% thought their child was more confident in a group.

The extent of impact was greater the longer a child had been a member (under 6 months compared with 2 years +) in relation to self-confidence, confidence in a group situation and learning new things:

Chart 3.4: Parents’ views of impact on confidence and friendships by length of child’s membership



Source: Parent Survey

Parents made many positive comments about the Youth Zones, for example:

“My son was being bullied at school by a girl, this was a really difficult time for him. He didn’t tell anyone at the time and The Hive just gave him that break from the daily torment he felt. He gained confidence and a different approach to how he let the situation affect him. I couldn’t recommend it highly enough.” The Hive, Parent of Male 11 Years Old

“My daughter has gained a vast amount of confidence, thoroughly enjoys her time there especially the climbing walls, has built good relationships with the members of staff that have supported her since attending.” Wigan Youth Zone, Parent of Female 13 Years Old

Stakeholders were also positive about the impact of the Youth Zones. Those surveyed represented a whole range of services from education, schools, jobcentre plus, troubled family services, housing and community health. **All stakeholders** agreed (74% of them agreed strongly) that the Youth Zones provided a safe place for young people to have fun and grow. Further:

- 100% said their Youth Zone improved young peoples' confidence
- 100% said that it improved young peoples' social skills
- 100% considered it enhanced young peoples' friendships

Success is down to:

"Great building design which makes it easier for young people to try different activities. Constant fun and laughter whilst also providing support." Local Government Stakeholder, The Hive

"It provides a really wide range of activities to engage young people in, offers young people an understanding of opportunities and what is achievable that they might not see in other parts of their lives, therefore building aspirations, also the chance to develop skills and the impact that has builds resilience." Children's services Manchester

"Really good facility for the young people with an extensive range of activities to do. Well staffed which helps young people feel safe in such a large building, opens new opportunities for them too." Sports Stakeholder, The Hive

"It involves people mixing with other children in a social setting and children from different areas across the City. It gives them a safe outlet to socialise rather than just staying at home on electronic equipment." Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Education Provider

Feeling safe

A key feature of the Youth Zones is that they offer a safe place for young people free from fears of bullying or other worries. The Deep Dive Survey found that **95%** of young people said they felt safe at their Youth Zone, 4% said 'sometimes' and 1% did not feel safe. The feeling of safety was universal across different genders, ages, ethnicities and eligibility for free school meals.

Analysis of the Baseline and Impact Surveys showed that 54 of the 88 young people (61%) who did not have a trusted adult outside of the Youth Zone to talk to, have someone inside the Youth Zone they can talk to, suggesting that the Youth Zones play a valuable role in keeping young people safe.

Do Youth Zones engage a cross-section of the community?

"They have a "family" atmosphere that is not only welcoming but supporting right the way through from young people to CEO. They have an organised, assimilated approach to key social issues with projects targeting those that may have fallen through the net and I am always pleased to promote their services, provisions and staff! The creativity and management of key relevant issues amongst young people of all ages makes a useful tool for transition between primary and secondary, secondary to 16+ and preparation of key skills and the world of work." Local Authority Stakeholder, The Hive

It is clear from the above data that outcomes are universal across the cohort. 97% of stakeholders consider that the Youth Zones effectively support all young people to achieve their potential. 97% also consider that young people with multiple disadvantages are effectively supported.

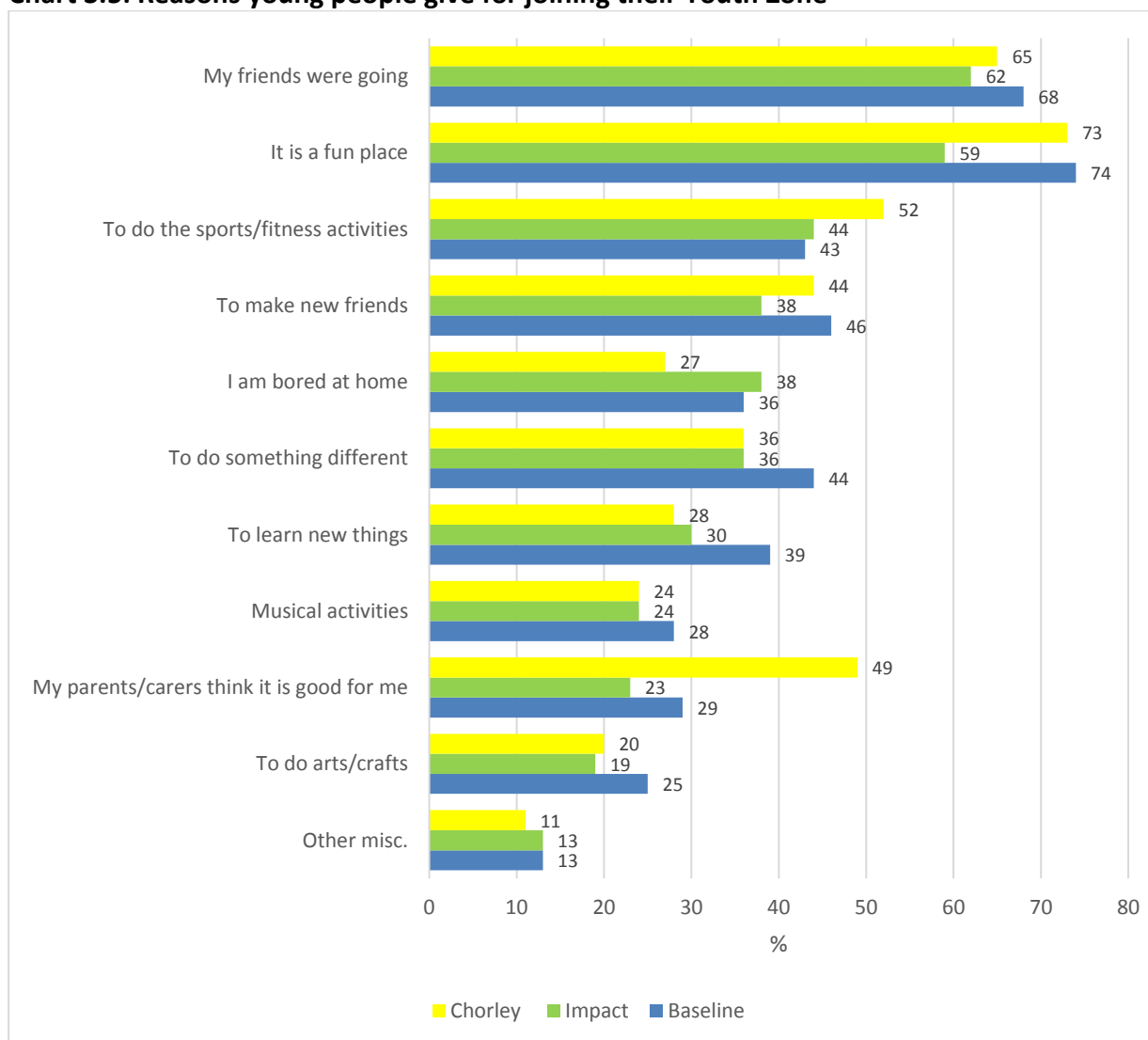
"Great facility with high quality equipment and a good level of interaction and supervision from staff. The split in age groups allows for the younger children to buy into the youth zone and remain members into older years" Stakeholder, Chorley Youth Zone, Local Authority

“The ability to offer activities and support services to children of all backgrounds. 21.5% of Carlisle's children are classified as living in poverty.” Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Education Provider

What attracts young people to the Youth Zones?

The main reasons people are attracted to the Youth Zones is that they look like fun and their friends were going, suggesting that marketing in line with OnSide’s vision is having a positive impact. These reasons are fairly consistent across the three surveys with the main differences being far greater parental involvement at Inspire which, as noted in the following section, is situated in the least deprived Local Authority area of all the Youth Zones analysed. The other main difference is variation in views on the Youth Zone being “a fun place” in the Impact Survey with levels as high as 84% at The Hive and 72% at Inspire.

Chart 3.5: Reasons young people give for joining their Youth Zone



Source: Inspire Baseline, Impact Survey and Baseline Survey

More in depth analysis of the Youth Zone Impact Survey shows little difference in motivations to join by age. The main differences noted are:

- Boys are more attracted by the sporting activities (57% for boys compared to 38% for girls). This was consistent across all surveys.

- The main appeal for BAME groups⁴ was that it looks like a fun place whereas amongst White British members both the draw of their friends attending and it being a fun place are equally the most significant factors. Again, the other surveys identified the same finding.
- Those with a disability are more likely to be attracted by the chance to make new friends (51% compared with 36% without disabilities). This factor held true across all three surveys.

How effective are the Youth Zones in engaging a cross-section of their community?

The following section draws on membership data and secondary research to assess how representative engagement is within the 8 Youth Zones.

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD), the majority of the 8 Zones which form the basis of this analysis are located in some of the most deprived parts of the country. Deprivation is measured against a range of indicators e.g. poverty, crime, living conditions. These are aggregated for local authorities and show for instance, that Harpurhey in Manchester is in the most deprived local authority nationally i.e. Manchester has the greatest extent of deprivation in the country and Blackburn Youth Zone and The Way are within the most deprived 10% of the country.

Using Super Output Areas is another way of looking at deprivation. The Index divides each authority into smaller sub-areas called Super Output Areas which show that even relatively prosperous areas can have pockets of deprivation. A count of how many small sub-areas within each local authority are in the most deprived 10% in England, shows that 7 of the 9 Youth Zones have high numbers of sub areas which are ranked amongst the most deprived 50 (shaded in red) or most deprived 100 (shaded in orange) in the country.

Table 3.2 Ranking of local authorities by number of Super Output Areas within the 10% most deprived (i.e. intensity of deprivation)

Youth Zone Local Authority	Rank of authorities with the most sub-areas in the most deprived 10%
Blackburn with Darwen	12
Carlisle	112
Chorley	125
Manchester	5
Oldham	27
Wigan	66
Wirral	36
Wolverhampton	21

Source: IMD 2015 (Rankings range from 1(worst) to 324 (least))

IMD data is generally not available at ward level, but some local authorities choose to produce a bespoke analysis which allows us to assess the extent to which members are drawn from the most deprived wards. The data shows that the Youth Zones are serving young people drawn from severely deprived areas and, in the cases of Blackburn with Darwen and Oldham, a majority of members are from these areas:

⁴ NOTE: BAME category throughout this report also includes any White Non British

Table 3.3: Percentage of members living in the most deprived wards

	Members living in the most deprived 10% of wards nationally	Members living in the most deprived 11-20% of wards nationally	Total: % of members drawn from most deprived wards
Blackburn with Darwen	38%	27%	65%
Chorley	-	13%	13%
Oldham	17%	42%	59%

Source: Current membership data

Gender

Analysis of current members shows that the highest proportions of girls are in Inspire (48%) and The Hive (47%) and the lowest in Manchester Youth Zone (39%). This may well reflect the well-documented much lower rates of participation in sports amongst 8-15 year old girls than boys⁵:

Table 3.4: Proportion of members by gender

Youth Zone	Girls	Boys
Blackburn	43%	56%
Carlisle	45%	55%
Inspire	48%	52%
Manchester	39%	61%
Mahdlo	44%	56%
Wigan	44%	56%
The Hive	47%	53%
The Way	44%	56%

Source: Current membership data

Disability

In most Youth Zones there are higher proportions of members with a disability than exist among the young population, suggesting that the Zones are inclusive. In those where the proportion is less than might have been expected, the difference is marginal.

5

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/childrensengagementwiththeoutdoorsandsportsactivitiesuk/2014to2015>

Table 3.5: Percentage of current members with a disability

Youth Zone	Members with a disability	Census data for 16-24 year olds: % with long term health problem or disability
Blackburn	8.2% (255)	6.0%
Carlisle	4.5% (81)	5.1%
Inspire	4.3% (192)	5.3%
Manchester	5.4% (76)	5.0%
Mahdlo	11.0% (389)	5.9%
Wigan	4.2% (180)	5.5%
The Hive	10.6% (340)	7.3%
The Way	8.5% (231)	5.8%

Source: Current membership data and Census 2011

Findings from the stakeholder survey back up these statistical findings.

In each of the Youth Zones the ethnic mix of the membership is broadly in line with the population but with a higher representation of BAME groups than the Census data shows. Since Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black ethnic groups are most likely to live in deprived areas, this finding is not unexpected given the location of most of the Youth Zones. More detailed analysis shows that:

- Manchester Youth Zone and The Way have the most ethnically diverse membership.
- Carlisle Youth Zone and Inspire have the least diverse membership since they are located in predominantly White local authority areas.
- The Youth Zones are notably successful in attracting high percentages of young people of Black ethnic origin.
- Conversely in some areas there are far fewer members of Asian origin than might be expected, for example in Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen. This may be because some of the wards in the immediate vicinity of the Youth Zones have lower proportions of Asians than the authority as a whole (i.e. in Manchester city as opposed to Harpurhey); this is the case in Harpurhey for instance, but given the prevalence of this pattern more widely OnSide may wish to explore this in more detail. Limitations on the availability of data at ward level, however, means that such analysis is not available for this report.

Table 3.6: Ethnicity of members compared with the 2011 Census

Youth Zone Local Authority		Asian	Black	Mixed	White	Other /not stated/ DK
Blackburn with Darwen	Membership	29%	2%	3%	56%	10%
	Census	38%	1%	2%	58%	
Chorley	Membership	2%	0.3%	3%	93%	1%
	Census	2%	0.3%	2%	95%	
Carlisle	Membership	<1%	<1%	2%	96%	1%
	Census	1%	<1%	1%	98%	
Manchester	Membership	6%	30%	12%	47%	5%
	Census	21%	12%	9%	54%	4%
Oldham	Membership	20%	7%	7%	57%	
	Census	28%	1%	3%	67%	
Wigan	Membership	1%	2%	1%	89%	7%
	Census	1%	1%	2%	96%	
Wirral	Membership	1%	1%	3%	91%	4%
	Census	2%	0%	2%	96%	0%
Wolverhampton	Membership	12%	18%	17%	47%	6%
	Census	20%	7%	10%	61%	2%

Source: Census 2011 for 8 – 18 year olds. Note Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding

Overall the analysis shows that:

- ✓ **Most of the Youth Zones in the analysis are situated in some of the most deprived parts of the country and succeed in drawing a membership which reflects these communities.**
- ✓ **In all Zones fewer girls than boys are members, possibly reflecting girls' lower interest in participating in sporting activities.**
- ✓ **The Youth Zones attract a disproportionately high number of BAME members, though with fewer Asian members than might have been expected, but more members of Black ethnic origin.**
- ✓ **The Youth Zones are inclusive with most having higher proportions of members with a disability than exist among the young population**

4. Goal 2: Help young people lead healthier, happier lives

Introduction

In 2010, the seminal report Fair Society, Healthy Lives (the Marmot Review) set out a hard-hitting review of the health inequalities evident within the most deprived communities in the UK. One of its key themes was that, broadly, health outcomes are 70% influenced by social determinants and only 30% by clinical factors. In the UK, nearly 1 in 5 children are living in poverty, with those from the most deprived backgrounds experiencing much worse health compared with the most affluent.⁶ In 2015/2016, 40% of children in England's most deprived areas were overweight or obese, compared to 27% in the most affluent areas.

The emotional well-being of children is just as important as physical health and barely a month goes by in which issues of depression, anxiety and other disorders are affecting children and young people. Good mental health helps young people develop the resilience needed to cope with life's challenges and OnSide's goal to help young people lead healthier, happier lives has never been more important. It was evident from the above chapter that young people who join the Youth Zone do more activities - especially physical activity - and spend less time in their bedrooms on their game consoles/TV/phones. The surveys further sought to identify what impact their membership has had on young people's physical and mental health.

Feeling healthier, feeling better

75% of young people surveyed for the Baseline Survey considered they live a healthy life; this was supported by the Inspire Baseline.

The Impact Survey demonstrated that the activities at the Youth Zones were having a positive impact on health, with majorities of all types of members believing that as a result of their membership they lived a healthier life. In more detail:

- 78% of under 13s thought they were healthier and 66% of over 13s; the latter figure perhaps reflecting people's greater awareness of healthy lifestyles as they grow older and decreasing levels of physical activity.
- 77% of boys and 66% of girls thought they lived healthier lives. This difference may well reflect the findings from Sport England that girls have a lower rate of participation in sport after the age of 14.
- 65% of those with a disability considered they were healthier.

Further, results from the Deep Dive survey show that:

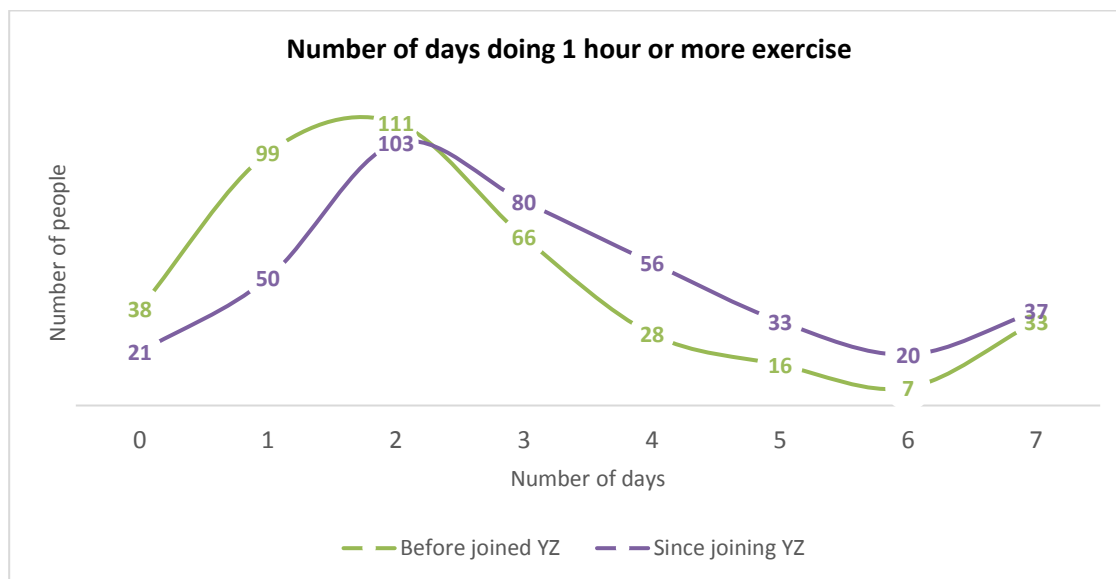
- 70% of members believe that they are more healthy physically
- 75% feel better in themselves
- 69% choose to do things that are better for their health.

These findings were consistent by gender, age and disability.

⁶ State of Child Health 2017 - full report

In practical terms, the Deep Dive data shows that there has been a general shift to more exercise; i.e. more young people are doing more activity for more days per week. Thus, on average, members were doing an hour or more of exercise on 1.9 days per week, but since joining the Youth Zone they do an hour or more of exercise on 2.5 days per week. This is virtually a one third increase in average time spent doing this length of exercise.

Chart 4.1: Number of members doing 1 or more hours of physical exercise before and after joining a Youth Zone



Source: Deep Dive Survey

It was also clear that the frequency of attendance was positively correlated with additional physical activity. For instance, the Deep Dive Survey showed that 94% of frequent attenders (those attending for 4 or more days per week) do one hour’s exercise at least once per week *now*, which is significantly higher than the 83% who did one hour at least per week when joining.

Additionally, stakeholders were very positive about the health impacts of the Youth Zones:

- 97% considered that the Youth Zones improved young people’s physical health
- 100% that it improved young people’s mental health
- 100% said that it moved people from inactive to active lifestyles
- 95% considered that it helps people lead healthier, happier lives
- 97% said that it supports young people to make healthier choices.

In the words of two stakeholders:

“There are activities available to suit everybody’s abilities and needs, not just focussing on already active young people.” Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Local Authority

“Fantastic place and we are lucky to have this in our area, to change young people’s lives for the better.” Stakeholder, The Hive, Children’s Services

What has made the difference?

The sheer range of activities that are available, new friends to join in with, and encouragement to take part, together with increased self-confidence all play their part in getting young people active as is illustrated by the following:

“By using the climbing wall I've got stronger. As time has gone on I've been able to get higher faster.” As a result, “I'm stronger, more physically fit, so now I'm able to help other kids when they are struggling.” The Hive, Male, Aged 13

“Doing more sport which makes me want to do more. My diet has changed. I'm eating healthier foods so can do more sport. I'm happier, fitter, healthier.” The Hive, Male, Aged 15

“I feel more energetic. It makes me run more, I'm more tired when I get home so my sleep is better.” Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 10

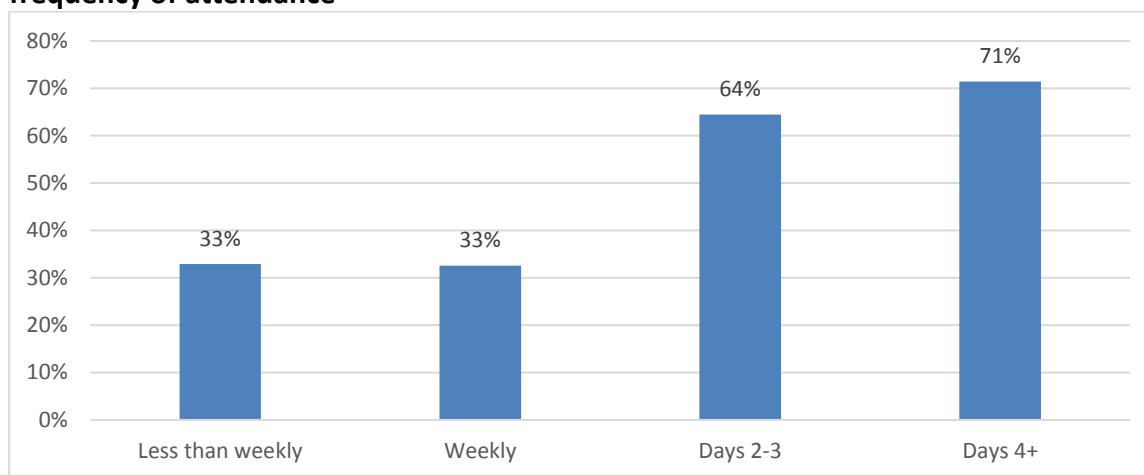
“I am doing more sport and I feel happier and healthier.” Mahdlo, Female, Aged 15

“I practice and joined a team with my friends.” Wigan Youth Zone, Male, Aged 9

“I'm more energetic instead of being tired.” Mahdlo, Male, Aged 12

Amongst parents, 63% considered that their child did more physical activity. The Parent Survey also showed clear evidence of correlation between frequency of attendance and improved physical health:

Chart 4.2: Proportion of parents agreeing that their child had better physical health by frequency of attendance



Source: Parent Survey

Earlier findings showed that young people were doing more exercise as a result of their membership. Research has shown that participation in regular physical activity has a positive impact on wellbeing and can increase self-esteem and reduce stress and anxiety⁷. It is therefore unsurprising to find that 47% of parents believed that their child had better mental health as a result of their membership of the Youth Zone (41% neither agreed nor disagreed). 64% of parents whose children attended more than 4 times per week thought their children had better mental health, twice as high as parents of children who attended less than once per week (32%). Length of membership also made a difference, thus 58% of parents of children who had been members for over 2 years identified an impact compared with 38% of parents of children who had been members for up to 6 months. The impact was particularly noticeable amongst those with children aged 13 and over where 63% of parents considered their children had better mental health compared with 42% of those under 13, presumably reflecting the greater pressures children are under as they get older.

As well as increasing their levels of physical activity the Youth Zones work to promote healthy lifestyles and 74% of children aged 14 and over across the 8 Youth Zones said they understand more about the

⁷ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/lets-get-physical-report.pdf>

dangers of smoking, drugs and alcohol. Of the remainder, 8% disagreed and 18% said it had not made a difference.

Youth Zone membership makes young people happier

With improved fitness and mental health, it is unsurprising to find that almost 3 out of 4 members (73%) feel happier about their lives as a result of their membership of the Youth Zone. In particular, those eligible for Free School Meals (89%) experienced significantly greater impact in this regard than those not eligible for Free School Meals (69%).

61% of parents agreed with the overall findings and reported that their children were happier than before they joined the Youth Zone.

This is supported by findings from the Deep Dive, with three quarters of members (75%) agreeing that since coming to the Youth Zone they feel better in themselves (they feel happier). Their improved happiness levels cannot be attributed to any one factor but appear to reflect people's increased confidence and self-esteem and belonging to a place where they have more friendships and sense of purpose.

"My friends have helped me, so I'm happier around them". The Hive, Female, Aged 18

"I am happier, I don't feel sad and have lots of friends" Mahdlo, Male, Aged 10

"Happier better than sitting at home all day" Mahdlo, Male, Aged 11

"I'm happier - more excited. Able to show people what I can do" Wigan Youth Zone, Male, Aged 11

5. Goal 3: Enable young people to better face life's challenges

Introduction

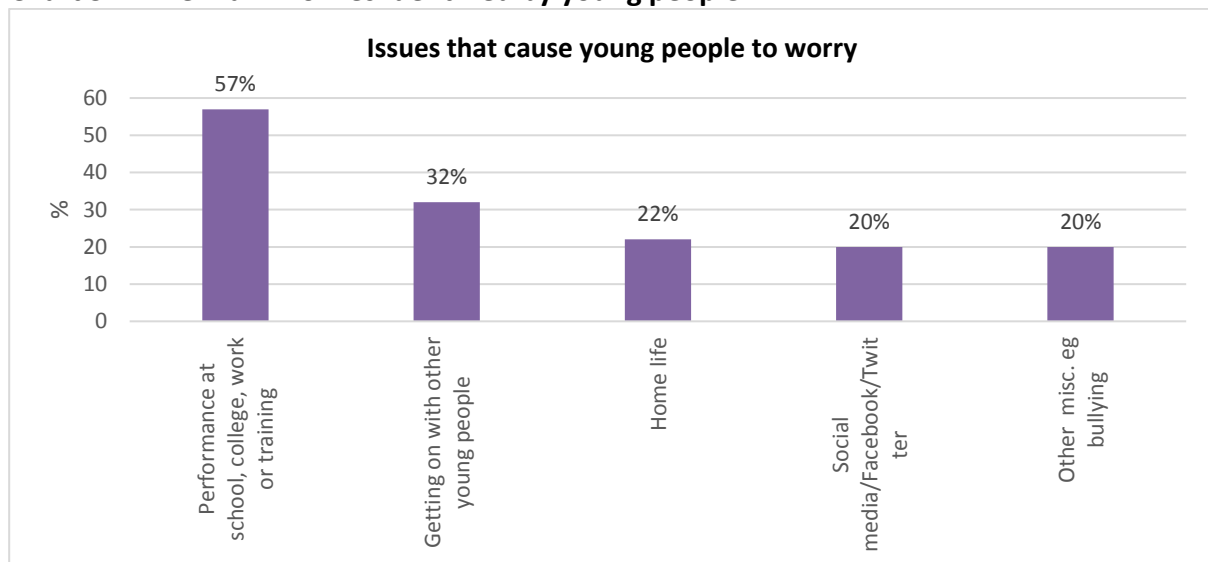
All children encounter stress of varying degrees as they grow; they become ill, encounter bullies, are under pressure with school work and have to cope with parental separation to name a few challenges. As with mental health, NHS England reports that emotional disorders are on the rise amongst young people.⁸ Increasing evidence emphasises the importance of out-of-school activities and other resources for young people to draw on⁹ to improve their resilience. This includes both after-school provision but also activities provided completely separately from education, including the sort of opportunities offered by the Youth Zones such as taking part in creative activities, music and sports and volunteering.

This chapter sets out the worries young people have and the skills they have developed to bounce back from setbacks and face life's challenges.

More than half of all young people have worries about their lives

At least 53% of members had worries about their life, primarily in relation to their performance at school/college or work:

Chart 5.1: The main worries identified by young people



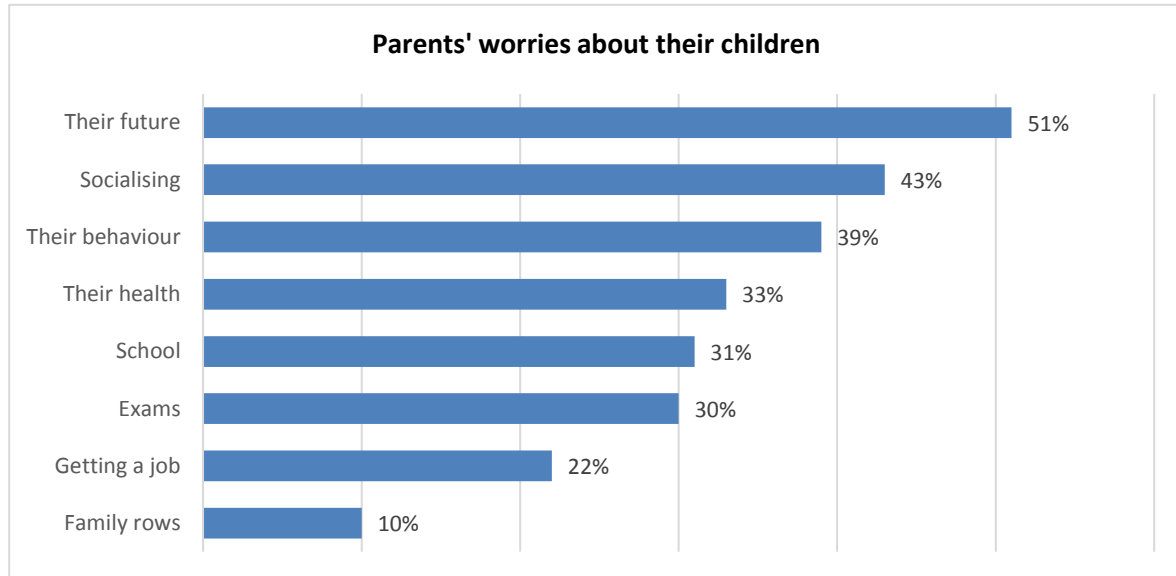
Source: Baseline Survey, Percentages of young people who identified at least one worry

Parents were more worried than their children. 72% said they were worried about their children, with their children's future topping the list of concerns:

⁸ <https://files.digital.nhs.uk/A6/EA7D58/MHCYP%202017%20Summary.pdf>

⁹ Durak J. and Weissberg R: The Impact of After-School Programs that Promote Personal and Social Skills, 2007

Chart 5.2: Parents' worries about their children



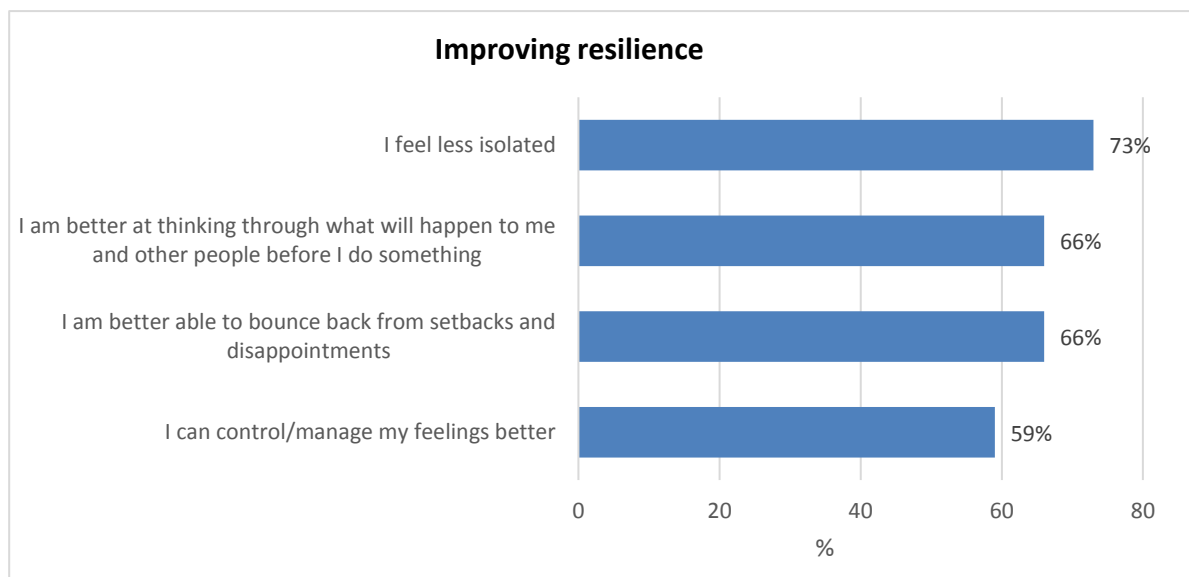
Source: Parent Survey

As other sections show, the impact of membership of the Youth Zones positively influences many of these factors whether in relation to more friendships, healthy lifestyle or better preparedness for the future.

How does the Youth Zone help young people face life's challenges?

The Impact Survey shows that majorities of young people can identify an impact in terms of resilience with the strongest impact felt in relation to a reduction in isolation:

Chart 5.3: Percentage of young people identifying impacts in relation to resilience



Note: Isolation question only asked of those aged 14+

Source: Impact Survey

41% of parents also reported that their child was less stressed as a result of their attendance at the Youth Zone.

In the Deep Dive Survey respondents were asked what activities contributed to their ability to cope better with situations and to think things through. Almost as many activities were identified as there were respondents, but the most frequently mentioned were:

- The gym
- Talking to staff
- Music
- Football
- Singing
- Dance

Their comments elaborate on what has made the difference to their resilience:

“Before I came I was sad. Now I can talk to staff about things, more often, get things off my chest.”
Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 15

“I am not sitting at home on an Xbox playing games. It’s good to be with other people, learning new things & helping.” The Hive, Male, Aged 11

“I can now talk to people and let them know how I feel instead of bottling everything up.” The Hive, Male, Aged 14

“If I was stressed out at home I would hurt myself. Now I have strategies to help me cope. I don’t self-harm as much.” Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 14

“I am more active and run about more, instead of on my Xbox.” Mahdlo, Male, Aged 12

“I used to lash out at people. An anger issue from my mum. I get angry and blame other people. I don’t lash out as much. I walk away instead of fighting. I can control it.” Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 9

The Impact Survey also asked about empathy and behaviour as well as self-knowledge and in all cases, a majority said that these attributes had changed as a result of attending the Youth Zone. The impact is broadly the same by gender, ethnicity and disability.

Table 5.1: Percentage of young people agreeing that their empathy and behaviour has changed

	%
I am better at understanding how other people are feeling	65
I am more likely to stay out of trouble	66
I know more of what my strengths/weaknesses are*	77

* Only asked of those aged 14+ Youth Zone Impact Survey

Source: Impact Survey

As with other findings, the intensity of impact generally increases with the amount of time that members have been attending the Youth Zone and the frequency of their attendance.

From the parents’ perspective:

- 78% consider that the Youth Zone has had a positive impact on their child’s life, a figure which rises to 95% amongst those whose children have been attending more than 2 years. There is no difference by gender.

- 32% have seen an improvement in their children's behaviour, 54% have not seen any change and 14% did not agree that behaviour had improved. However, there is a sharp contrast between the views of parents whose children have been attending for less than 6 months (16%) and those that have been attending for between 6 and 12 months (40%). Although, the Youth Zones were not specifically set up to address behaviour change, the fact that 1 in 3 have seen improvements is encouraging.
- Further, a majority (56%) believe that their child's membership had had a positive impact on their family life. This figure rises to 71% amongst the longest standing members (2 years+) and 79% amongst frequent attenders (4 or more times per week).

6. Goal 4: Help young people to raise their aspirations and achieve in education and employment

Introduction

The overarching aim of OnSide is to “give all young people somewhere safe and inspiring to go in their leisure time” and earlier sections illustrate that this vision is being delivered. As a consequence of improved happiness and well-being, and in the light of anecdotal evidence that OnSide’s work was also positively impacting on other areas of young people’s lives such as behaviour in school, in this section we report on findings in relation to attainment, attitudes to school and preparedness for the future. However, it should be noted that the relationship between disadvantage and attainment is highly complex; disadvantaged children are not a homogenous group: outcomes and experiences of education vary by many factors, including gender, ethnicity, first language, special educational needs and disability (SEND) status, family history of disadvantage, and geography, and depend on what performance measure is used.

Impact on schooling, qualifications and the future

The findings in relation to this goal are less clear cut. In the Impact Survey, majorities of members said that there had been a positive impact across a whole range of indicators, especially in relation to the encouragement young people have to prepare for the future (78%):

Table 6.1: Young people’s views on whether the Youth Zone has made a difference to a range of factors around education

Education factors	%
The staff and volunteers at the Youth Zone encourage you to prepare for the future	78%
I feel better prepared for the future	68%
I'm more confident in getting the qualifications/experience I need to progress	66%
I'm clearer about what I need for the job I want to do/what work I want to do in the future	66%
I work harder at school/college/work/training	64%
I get better marks in class/I perform better at work/training	58%
I'm less likely to miss school/college/work/training	55%
I enjoy school/college/work/training more	55%

Source: Impact Survey

Individual comments highlight the difference made:

“Helped me improve my results in my SATs.” Mahdlo, Male, Aged 11

“I am better at school, I listen more.” Mahdlo, Female, Aged 15

“I'm happier so don't want to miss school.” Wirral, Male, Aged 16

“I was calmer during revision and definitely got better marks. People came in to talk about different subjects in college. It made me more serious about my A-Levels.” Wirral, Female Aged 16

“Lots of people to talk to here and they give you goals to aim for.” The Hive, Female, Aged 12

“I'm more pushed to meet more people, then I have more confidence to push myself in School. I'm more confident to ask questions or to go into situations I'm uncomfortable in. I can concentrate longer.” Wirral, Male, Aged 13

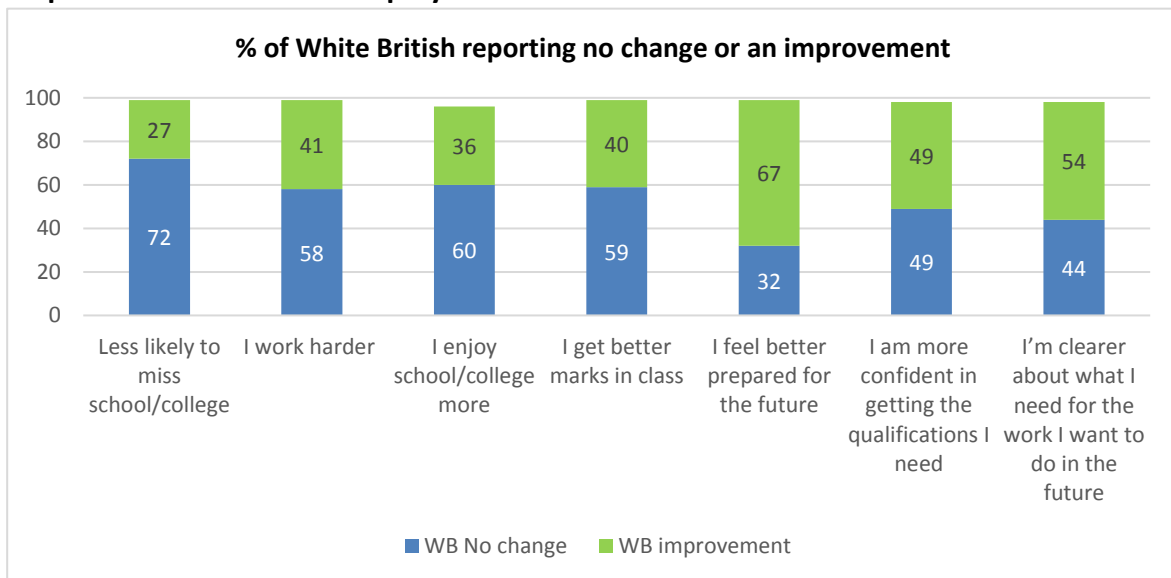
“I can use what I learn here in school. I can talk to other people, make new friends.” The Hive, Female Aged 15

“I've improved at maths by doing the activities here” Wigan, Female Aged 10

Whilst these findings are positive, of course, it is not known how many respondents do not record a difference simply because they already confident/work hard/enjoy school. In these instances, the margin for improvement is therefore **limited** and, as a result, respondents are most likely to say there has been no change on what is already a positive situation. i.e. it could be that they are not less likely to miss school because they don't miss school in the first instance. It should also be noted that the Youth Zones run a number of targeted educational support and employability programmes and universal surveys of the type undertaken are unlikely to pick up large numbers of members who have benefitted from more tailored support. Data on these members is reported separately later in this chapter.

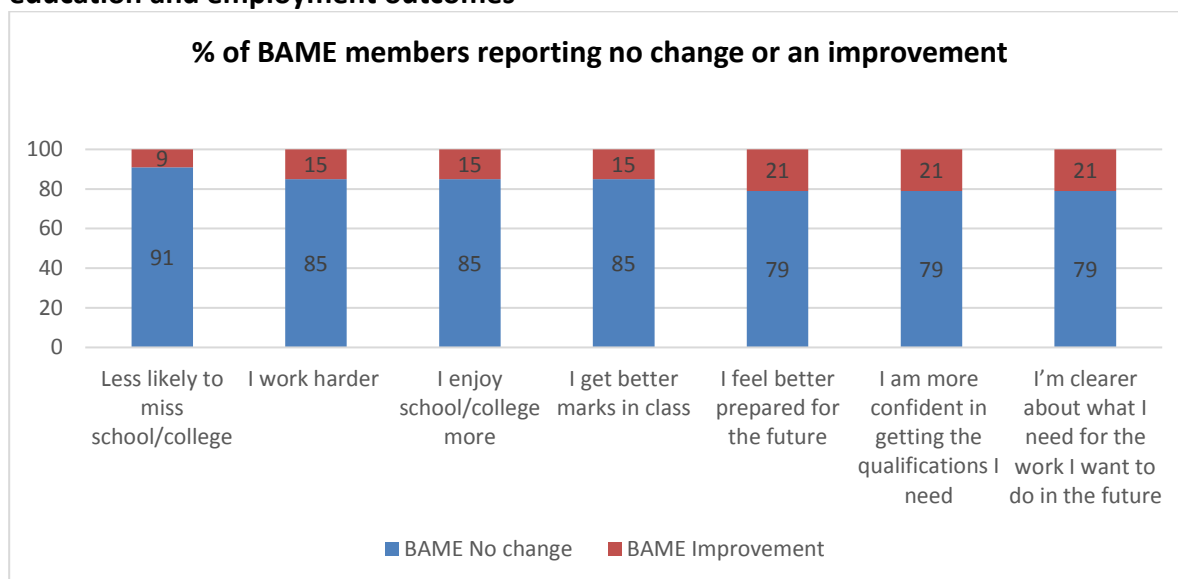
However, closer analysis of the Deep Dive Survey does provide valuable findings, in that those most likely to say there has been an impact display a consistent pattern of improvement amongst members of White British origin relative to other ethnicities for all of the following areas (as shown in the two charts below). Thus, 67% of White British members feel better prepared for the future compared with 21% of BAME members:

Chart 6.1: Percentage of White British members reporting no change or an improvement in respect of education and employment outcomes



Source: Deep Dive Survey

Chart 6.2: Percentage of BAME members reporting no change/improvement in respect of education and employment outcomes



Source: Deep Dive Survey

As research¹⁰ shows, the academic attainment of disadvantaged pupils at 16 varies significantly between different ethnic groups. White working class pupils achieve the lowest grades at GCSE of any main ethnic group, with just a quarter of boys and a third of girls achieving 5 good GCSEs. In contrast, disadvantaged Bangladeshi, Indian, Black African and Pakistani pupils from poorer homes all perform well above the national average for disadvantaged pupils. Even at the earliest stages White boys from disadvantaged family backgrounds are significantly underachieving as results of the 2018 phonics screening check for six-year-olds have shown¹¹. They are also the group most likely to be classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

In the light of this, the above data shows that for young people of White British backgrounds the Youth Zones are making a difference to significant minorities of the cohort, particularly in relation to ‘feeling better prepared for the future’, ‘gaining qualifications’ and clarity about what is needed for future work. The impact on other ethnicities is less marked because of already high baselines and hence limited scope for impact.

The individual comments illuminate the ways in which the Youth Zones have an impact. Essentially they create spaces and informal opportunities for young people to grow and develop through activities, conversation and support, rather than direct help focused solely on education:

“Helps you get mindset for the future. I talk to people here who can point me in the right direction.”
Wigan Youth Zone, Male, aged 16

“Had opportunities pointed out to me by the leaders: It's made me feel I can achieve things.” The Hive, Female, Aged 19

“ I have been able to talk to staff here, I talk it all out. It makes me able to cope better in school” Wigan Female, Aged 11

¹⁰ Sutton Trust: Class differences, 2016

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-and-key-stage-1-assessments-england-2018/national-curriculum-assessments-at-key-stage-1-and-phonics-screening-checks-in-england-2018>

“It’s made me more confident in dealing with people of different abilities made me consider my future more.” The Hive, Male, Aged 19

“Able to complete more things. Maintain disabilities I have, being able to progress.” Mahdlo, Female, Aged 13

“Making me feel a lot more accomplished. Able to do things I never thought I would do.” Mahdlo, Male, Aged 16

Another key finding from the Deep Dive Survey is that impact is significantly greater amongst frequent attenders: thus 79% of those attending for 4 or more days per week agreed that they felt better prepared for the future, this is significantly higher than the 40% of those attending once per week.

Closer analysis of the Parent Survey does not show the same difference by ethnicity, but illustrates a clear difference between parents of children eligible for Free School Meals and those not eligible for FSM, with statistically confident findings in relation to working harder and getting better grades:

Table 6.2 Percentage of parents identifying an impact in relation to a range of education outcomes by eligibility for Free School Meals.

My child is.....	Parents of children eligible for FSM	Parents of children NOT eligible for FSM
Less likely to miss school/college/work/training	32%	19%
Works harder at school/college/work/training	36%	21%
Enjoys school/college more	34%	23%
Gets better marks in class/ performs better at work/training	29%	16%
Gets better grades in coursework/exams	28%	14%

Source: Parent Survey

Analysis of secondary data

In this section we explore the data on attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. The way in which Key Stage 2 results are presented changed in 2016 so comparisons with earlier years are not possible. Schools used in the analysis are the 3 primary and 3 secondary schools in each location with the greatest number of members and hence where impact is most likely to be evident. For some schools e.g. special schools data is not published, so these are excluded. Other schools have converted to academies in the past 2 years so some trend data may not be comparing like with like. Full tables are in the Technical Report but the findings are summarised below:

The 2016 and 2017 data does not show a clear pattern but indicates that:

- In the majority of schools in the study, attainment at Key Stage 2 is below regional and national averages.
- There has been above average increase in KS2 attainment in 60% of the schools analysed including all those in Carlisle, Oldham and Wolverhampton.

It should be noted that a number of factors affect SATs scores apart from the quality of teaching and school standards, including the size of a cohort. Where this is small, the results of one or two pupils can

make a significant impact on the overall percentages. Another factor which can lower pupil attainment scores is where there are high levels of 'churn' in a school with pupils entering and leaving during their schooling meaning that those who join shortly before their SATs have not had the benefit of the new school. Discussions in Oldham, for instance, suggested that this is a key issue with some areas having significant levels of transient pupils.

Exploration of absenteeism rates found no linkages between rates and schools rates of membership.

While attainment figures tell us about the performance of a school's pupils at the end of a key stage, it is important to consider that pupils have varying levels of ability and many different starting points. We have therefore explored progress data to assess whether those schools which have a high number of OnSide members have made above average progress. Given that the Youth Zones are located in areas of high deprivation we have focused on progress scores for disadvantaged pupils. Datasets are included in the Technical Report but the analysis shows that:

- Disadvantaged pupils do not generally make above average progress in the primary schools with the most members. It is not possible to assess statistically whether the 'average' progress made is better than would have otherwise been the case without the presence of a Youth Zone.
- Critics of the measures argue that the progress measures are just not subtle enough to capture the nuanced learning journeys that pupils with SEND make and this will affect the scores of primary schools with a large proportion of pupils with SEND.
- Children changing schools between reception and year 6 is another issue, which again has an impact on how accurate and therefore fair the progress measures can be.

Key Stage 4 data (GCSEs)

As with KS2 data, changes to the way in which GCSE results are classified makes any longitudinal analysis difficult. In 2017, pupils sat reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and maths for the first time, graded on a 9 to 1 scale. New GCSEs in other subjects were phased in for first teaching from September 2016 to 2018.

The measure used in assessing GCSE attainment is known as the Attainment 8 (A8) score, which is the average score of a pupil's best 8 GCSEs. In England, the average Attainment 8 (A8) score per pupil has decreased in comparison to 2016 but this reflects the introduction of grades 9 to 1 GCSEs in performance tables.

The analysis shows that:

- 17 of the 20 schools for which there was data had improved their performance or had seen less decline than the national average.
- Schools in Chorley, Carlisle and Manchester outperformed the national average in 2017.
- In 85% of relevant schools the gap between all pupils and disadvantaged pupils was lower than the national average.

Employability

As noted earlier, the Youth Zones run a number of targeted educational support and employability programmes including the 'Get A Job' programme targeted to support young people's employability. Data from the programme shows very positive findings. Since it started in 2014, 1573 young people have been supported through Get A Job. Retention rates have been high and have averaged 87% over the past 5 years.

In terms of other outcomes, 87% reported a change across one or more outcome, with majorities of participants believing that they can make a difference to their lives; respect and value themselves; feel ambitious for the future; are job ready; have the skills to interact with other people in the workplace and understand the options for further education, employment or training.

Outputs have been impressive and across the lifetime of the programme, 85% of participants have moved on to education, employment or training (EET).

“I did work enterprises, gets you ready for a job”” Helped me get confidence to go for interviews” The Hive Female 20

“Their get a job course and their jobs fair and after exam support is the best in Wirral. I have personally seen the improvements in so many young people that other organisations had given up with.”

Stakeholder, The Hive, Community Stakeholder

7. Goal 5: We strengthen communities by supporting young people to be empowered, active, caring citizens.

Introduction

The Youth Zones do not work in isolation, they are a key part of their community and work in partnership with a network of public and voluntary sector organisations. Close partnership working enables the multiplier effects of joint working and resources to have greater impact, with each organisation strengthening each other's work. In particular, youth services tend to be based in the communities in which they serve and work to enrich the community as a whole rather than focusing solely on individual benefits.

This chapter focuses on how young people feel about their community and highlights the nature of partnership working with other local organisations.

Feeling part of the community

2 out of 3 members felt more part of their community as a result of attending their Youth Zone and the same proportion felt that they could make a positive difference to their community. These views were consistent by age, gender and ethnicity. The qualitative research conducted for the Deep Dive Survey showed that a whole range of activities made a difference to how they felt about their community from community talks to climbing to music. The impact of the Youth Zones is such that it increases people's confidence, friendships and social skills which in turn leads to a greater sense of belonging:

"I take part in charity events which make me feel positive about myself. I'm doing something good for other people." The Hive, Male, Aged 15

"This is a community in itself and I can help people here to do what they want to do." The Hive, Male, Aged 13

"I'm a musician I'm able to use my music and I can encourage others to do new things, I've managed to help others do new activities." The Hive, Male, Aged 19

"Made me feel less isolated, more in the community." Wigan Youth Zone, Male, Aged 10

"Sometimes I sing as part of a group, I feel part of the community." Wigan Youth Zone, Female, Aged 13

56% of parents believed that their child's membership made a positive difference to the community. The intensity of impact increases with length of the child's membership, from 48% of parents of children who had been members for under 6 months increasing to 66% of parents of members for over two years.

A comparison of the Baseline Survey and the Impact Survey does not, however, suggest that the Youth Zones lead to an increase in volunteering or other responsibilities. Although the larger sample for the Inspire Baseline has lower scores than the Impact Survey the difference is not significant:

Table 7.1: Comparisons of the impact survey with the baseline surveys in relation to volunteering

	Yes: Baseline	Yes: Inspire Baseline	Yes: Impact
Do you hold any responsibilities e.g. as a carer, patrol leader, sports captain or volunteer leader?	31%	27%	28%
Do you take part in any voluntary work?	30%	18%	22%

Impact on crime and anti-social behaviour

Whilst the Youth Zones have not been established to tackle crime, there are a number of targeted programmes in some Youth Zones focusing on early intervention and anecdotal police evidence linked falling crime to the work of the Youth Zones. Indeed, members own words illustrate that when asked what they would be doing if they were not at the Youth Zone, several freely said they would be involved in antisocial behaviour/drug taking.

“Doing drugs, now doing the right thing, I don’t even think I’ll be alive.” Wigan, Senior (age and gender not provided)

“Criminal activities.” Oldham, Male, Aged 15

“Out with friends causing trouble”, Oldham, Female, Aged 15

“Getting into trouble on streets” Blackburn, Male, Aged 14

Official reports show that:

- Since the opening of Inspire at Chorley, youth anti-social behaviour has halved.
- In Manchester, local police have pointed to a 13% reduction in anti-social behaviour in Year 1 and a 51 per cent reduction in Year 2 since the Youth Zone opened.
- There has also been a significant fall in deliberate secondary fires started, with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service crediting the Youth Zones as having made a significant contribution to this reduction.
- In Oldham, police report a 30 per cent reduction in anti-social behaviour involving young people and a 40 per cent decline in young people being victims of street crime. Greater Manchester Police commented in interviews conducted for this research that: *“Of particular note is the reduction of Violence against the Person offences in the current year, against an increase of crime recording due to NCRS, the level of youth Violence against the Person is particularly low and could in some part be attributed to the youth work being undertaken at the Youth Zone.”*
- In Wigan, local police point to a 77 per cent reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents in nearby Mesnes Park following the establishment of the Youth Zone.

The work of the Youth Zones is clearly having a wider impact on local communities through these reductions in incidents following the opening of a Youth Zone. Adding further weight to these findings 97% of stakeholders consider that the Youth Zone make a positive contribution to community cohesion and 94% consider that it raises pride in the local area.

Police force data was analysed to assess whether there has been any measurable impact on crime figures within the vicinity of the Youth Zones. Overall, arrests of children have fallen sharply by more than two-thirds across England and Wales since 2010, as police work to put fewer young people into

custody. This 68% reduction came after police forces changed their response to crimes committed by vulnerable young people, following years of campaigning by charities to reduce the criminalisation of children.

Analysis of recent trends on the rates of first time entrants to the youth justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds in local authority areas of the Youth Zones shows a complex pattern. Broadly, the data shows:

- Rises in the rate of youth first time entrants in Wolverhampton have put Wolverhampton well above the national rate, although between 2016 and 2017 rates have fallen.
- In Blackburn and Lancashire (used as a proxy for Chorley) rates have fallen from above the national average to below average.
- Blackburn, Lancashire and Wirral have recorded the steepest falls in first time entrants, with Cumbria recording an increase.
- The rates of first time entrants in Wirral and Wigan, Blackburn and Manchester are well below the national average.

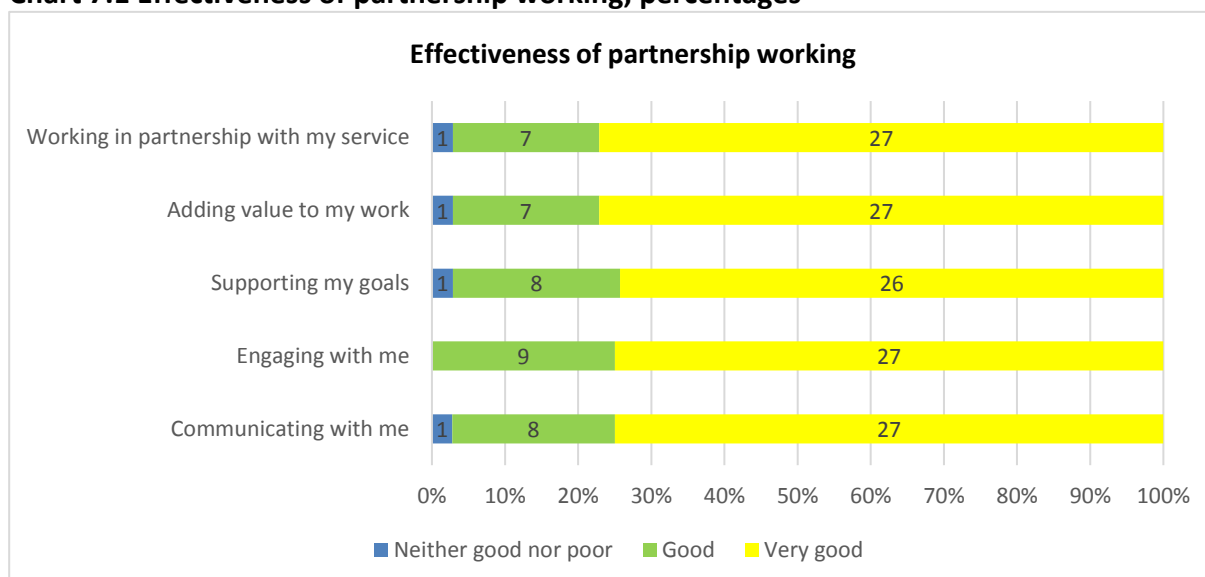
Partnerships are strong and effective

The stakeholders were overwhelmingly positive:

- 91% said that their Youth Zone strengthened local communities by supporting young people.
- 97% said it was good or very good at encouraging people to volunteer/ take part in social activity.
- 94% that it supported youth empowerment.
- 97% that it made a positive contribution to community cohesion.
- 94% that it raised pride in the local area
- 91% that it enhanced community identity

96% said that their Youth Zone had made an impact on supporting them achieve their objectives and 97% of stakeholders said that the Youth Zone worked effectively with them in their role. The Youth Zones were further rated highly for adding value to their work and supporting their goals. Partnership work, communication and engagement were all rated very highly with the majority rating their Youth Zone as ‘very good’.

Chart 7.1 Effectiveness of partnership working; percentages



Source: Stakeholder Survey

As a result, 97% thought that their area was better since their Youth Zone opened. More specifically, 94% thought it was better to some extent/a great extent for visitors; 100% thought it better for local businesses; 91% that it had improved the area for local visitors and 97% for local residents. Comments give a flavour of stakeholder views in these respects:

"I help families struggling to focus on thinking about going into work – The Hive offers bespoke courses to tailor to young people's confidence, aspirations, skills and motivation, with a key to access the facilities (which are amazing). To top this off, they have staff that know how to respond and will keep me updated and also enable a perfect partnership to multi-agency work. My aim is to connect them to relevant and positive opportunities." Stakeholder, The Hive, Community Programme

"We share a clientele, and we are working to the same goals for our young people. We have had productive discussions on how we can share resources and expertise for the benefit of our common goals." Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Education Provider

"Good partnership working creating more positive opportunities." Stakeholder, The Hive, Local Government

"It has really supported us within the community in tackling hate crime." Stakeholder, Manchester, Education

"Brilliant staff & have formed an excellent partnership" Stakeholder, Wigan, JCP

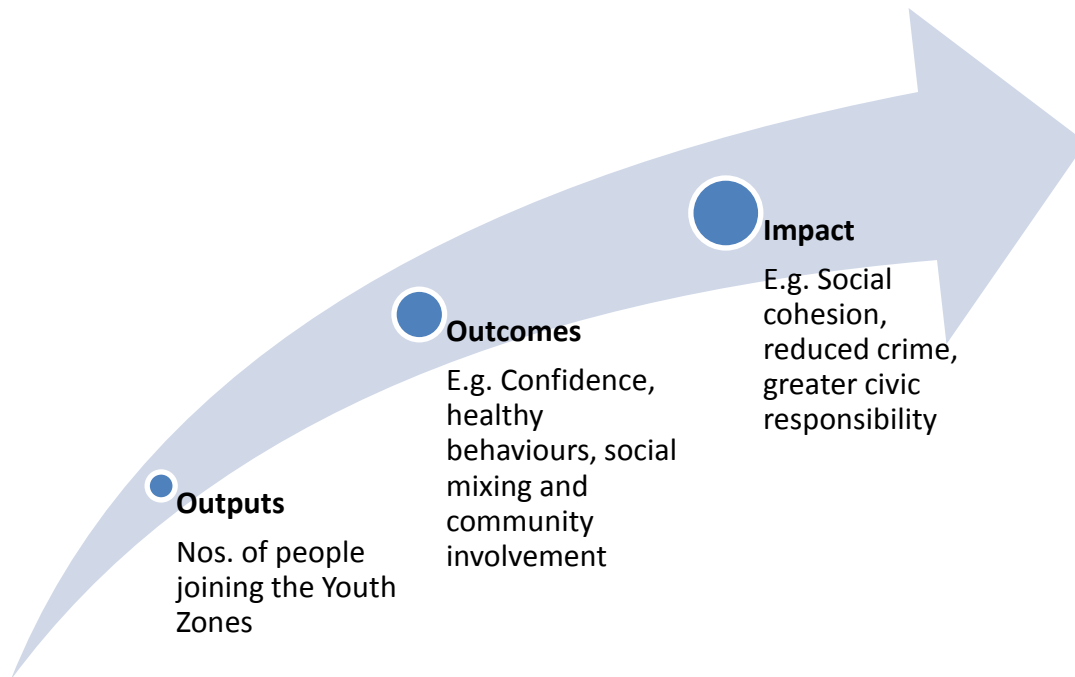
8. Summary: Understanding impact

Introduction

In this final chapter we assess in which areas the Youth Zones have the greatest impact and why. In measuring impact it is necessary to be clear on terminology. The definition of impact the BIG Lottery uses is:

“Any effects arising from an intervention. This includes immediate short-term outcomes as well as broader and longer-term effects. These can be positive or negative, planned or unforeseen.”

Impact involves the aggregation of outcomes from individual projects generating overall impact over the short and long term in terms of positive and negative effects on individuals and their communities, for instance in terms of behaviour change through volunteering and greater social cohesion. Impact often describes change in a wider area than the original target, and many organisations and experiences may play a part in achieving impact.



Understanding impact is an area of growing importance in many areas of life. OnSide has set 5 goals against which the range of surveys and secondary analysis have sought to identify impact. These were:

- Goal 1: To give young people a safe place to go to have fun and grow
- Goal 2: Help young people lead healthier happier lives
- Goal 3: Enable young people to better face life's challenges
- Goal 4: Help young people to raise their aspirations and achieve in education and employment
- Goal 5: We strengthen communities by supporting young people to be empowered, active, caring citizens.

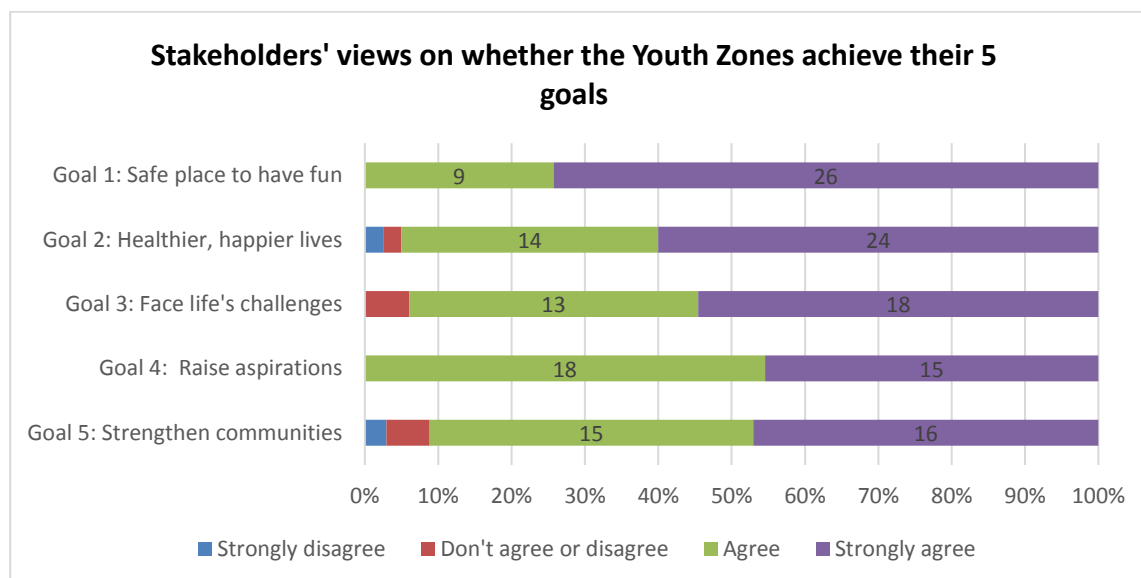
The evidence is clear in relation to the impact of the Youth zones and shows that:

- The Youth Zones operate in some of the most deprived areas of the country and successfully engage people from the communities in which they are situated. In particular, they successfully

attract boys, ethnic minorities (with the exception of people of Asian origin) and vulnerable groups, including young people with disabilities.

- The greatest impact reported by members across the surveys is in relation to Goal 1. The vast majority of members gain more friends and improved self-confidence. The Youth Zones offer them a safe place to go and have fun. Whilst the analysis has taken each goal separately it is clear that the impact from achieving this central goal is the foundation for improvements in other areas. Greater self-confidence, for example, leads to a greater willingness to try new things, get more involved in the community and reduced isolation.
- In the absence of the Youth Zone young people are most likely to spend their time bored and isolated in their bedrooms on phone, PlayStation or computer screens. It is notable that one of the most significant impacts of membership is a reduction in isolation.
- Frequency of visits and length of membership are *positively correlated* with impact across a range of factors including self-confidence, friendships and understanding how other people are feeling.
- Although young people were asked what is it about the Youth Zone that makes a difference, they struggled to identify one factor and it is clear that *the range* of activities, their inclusivity and the staff all contribute to the impact that they have. In this sense it is difficult to measure causality since so much of what happens results from a complex combination of factors and activities with no beginning and end but which between them lead to the Youth Zone making an important contribution to members' lives.
- Partnership working is a strength allowing all parties to maximise resources for impact and contributing to the public sector's ability to meet its goals. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly positive on the impact of their Youth Zone with over 90% identifying impact against each goal and 100% agreeing that the Youth Zones achieve against Goals 1 and 4:

Chart 8.1: Stakeholders' views on whether the Youth Zones achieve their 5 goals; numbers of responses



Source: Stakeholder Survey

- In respect of Goal 2, survey findings show that young people consider that they live healthier, happier lives as a result of their involvement with the Youth Zones. Almost 3 out of 4 (73%) say they are happier as a result of their membership.

- In terms of resilience and Goal 3, more than 1 in 2 young people have worries in their life, mainly in relation to school performance. As a result of their participation 2 out of 3 members say they can better bounce back from setbacks and disappointments.
- Least impact was found against Goal 4 in relation to aspirations and achievements, but this is largely because, on the whole, there is less room for improvement for the majority of young people and not all those surveyed have benefitted from the targeted work undertaken to impact on these issues. This targeted work amongst those most likely to miss school and who do not enjoy education appears, however, to be having an impact, a finding supported by parents of this cohort and to some extent the secondary data analysis. All stakeholders agreed that impact was positive in this respect and it may be that it takes more time for impact to become evident. It is plausible that the Youth Zones play a valuable role in preventing a variety of problems occurring further down the line.
- 2 out of 3 members felt more part of their community as a result of attending their Youth Zone and the same proportion felt that they could make a positive difference to their community (Goal 5). As yet, this does not appear to have impacted on the likelihood of their being engaged in voluntary work.
- Impact is generally consistent benefitting girls, boys, all ages, all ethnicities and people with disabilities equally.

Conclusions

The breadth and depth of the surveys undertaken has provided a wealth of intelligence on the impact of the Youth Zones on their members and the communities they serve. The research provides overwhelmingly positive support that the OnSide model works; and that their members are happier, healthier and more involved in their local communities. Further, in general, the longer they have been members and the more frequently that they attend, the stronger the impact is. As one member said: *“It can change your life around, I would recommend it!”* Member, The Wirral, Female, 18 Years

It should also be noted that impact is generally consistent, benefitting all genders, all ages, all ethnicities and levels of ability. Partnership working is a strength allowing all parties to maximise resources for impact and contributing to the public sector’s ability to meet its goals. Overall, the findings are a tribute to the hard work of the OnSide Network, Youth Zone staff and close partnership working.

The last word

The comments from different contributors perhaps best sum up the difference that the Youth Zones make:

“It has everything that has been missing for the youths of Chorley.” Stakeholder, Inspire, Police

“The staff are amazing and want the very best for the youngsters. They go above and beyond to truly make a difference to young people’s lives - especially those who are disadvantaged.” Stakeholder, Carlisle Youth Zone, Education Provider

“Young people are able to socialise and have fun whilst being supported by wonderful dedicated staff. This gives them confidence and have aspirations for their future.” The Hive, Local government

“I am not bored or lonely any more.” Member of Mahdlo, Male, Aged 10

“It’s a life-changer, it’s really good, it makes you think” Member of Wigan, Male, Aged 16

“More friends, confidence, opportunities to do things I never thought I would be doing” Member of The Way, Female, Aged 15

“I come to the youth zone because it's the best place ever and the youth members are nice.” Member of Manchester, Female, Aged 10

“My older child also attends regularly. She has autism and was also unable to socialise and had no friends prior to joining. Her confidence has grown immensely as have her social skills. She now volunteers as a youth leader and attends college. She now has a clear idea and a real possibility of a career which we never thought would ever happen.” Parent of Male, Aged 13, The Hive



Ask for Research Ltd

Pell Wall Court, Market Drayton, TF9 2AD

Tel: 01630 658000

Website: www.askforresearch.co.uk

Email: info@askforresearch.co.uk



Chartered Marketer 