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Evaluative Social Return on Investment Analysis of West Lothian Council Intensive Family Support Service

August 2026

Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the social return from investing in the Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) in West Lothian.

This service aimed to improve family stability, home conditions, financial inclusion, skills development, and progression along the employability pipeline for those furthest from the labour market by providing personalised care strategies supported by multidisciplinary teams.

The benefits that are measured are those that are made possible by the investment of £100,000 by Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal managed by Capital City Partnership and have been identified following consultation with those who were most directly affected.

The analysis considers investment between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 and was undertaken by the Improvement Service.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) provides a principled approach that can be used to measure and account for a broad concept of value. It enables the social and economic benefits a service or activity delivers to be calculated and monetised. It is a stakeholder informed process and consultation is an integral part of the methodology.

The analysis identified those who derive benefits from the IFSS and values some of the changes to which participation in services supported by IFSS has contributed:

Parents **feel more valued and supported**, have **better health and wellbeing**, an **increased ability to cope with daily life** and for some, **increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications**.

Families have **improved family relationships**.

Staff have **increased opportunities to share learning and skills** and an **improved understanding of needs of service users**.

It was found that every

£1

invested would
generate around



£9

of benefits

By applying a sensitivity
analysis, or varying any
assumptions made in the
calculation, the value of the
benefits derived ranges from

**£7 to
£10.**



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1. Introduction

This analysis describes and quantifies the social return from investing in the Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) in West Lothian.

The period that is considered in the analysis is 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, although it should be noted that the project ran for five years. This time period was chosen because the initial planning and development phase was complete and data collection and reporting mechanisms were well established.

1.1 Background

The project was funded by the [Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal](#)¹ (ESESCRD) Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme. This is a £1.6 billion five-year programme whose purpose is to drive economic growth and create opportunities across the region. The deal has five themes, one of which is the delivery of an integrated Regional Employability and Skills Programme. Providing Intensive Family Support Services will enable:

“targeting significant pockets of persistent, entrenched worklessness and poverty that are evident throughout the ESES city region and implement(ing) a holistic whole family support approach that tackles intergenerational disadvantage and helps families meet their individual needs.”²

1.2 Subjects of the analysis

“The service focuses primarily on workless, lone parent and low-income households, supporting adults to provide a better environment for their young people and promote progression opportunities for every member of the family. Raising attainment levels, reducing the number of those leaving school to a negative destination and increasing employment levels in those families where work has not previously been seen as an achievable goal.”³

The West Lothian IFSS is delivered by West Lothian Council and supports high-risk families with children under 16 who are facing multiple barriers to escaping from poverty. Families were identified through council and health services, with a focus on those requiring recurring, intergenerational support.

The service aims were to improve family stability and home conditions, address financial exclusion, increase skills development, and support progression along

1 ESESCRD website: <https://esescityregiondeal.org.uk/>

2 Capital City Partnership (2023) Final IFSS Phase Two Specification, p4

3 Op. cit.

the employability pipeline⁴.

The service targeted geographical areas identified in West Lothian's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan⁵ and Tackling Poverty Strategy⁶, including Stoneyburn, Fauldhouse, Whitburn, Blackburn, Uphall, Broxburn, and Craigshill (Livingston). The service collaborates with family health practitioners, community groups, and council partners such as the Advice Shop, Housing, Education, and Social Policy to provide support for the most vulnerable families.

The delivery team consisted of two progression workers, led by an Employability Team Leader. The progression workers worked with those furthest from the job market, some of whom may have suffered abuse, supporting their wellbeing, providing advocacy, helping with debt management and employability.

The progression workers were responsible for⁷:

- Progression and employability support - including one-to-one support, group work, core employability skills, emotional and practical support, childcare advice, and support to access education, training, and local and national provision where appropriate
- Advice work - including signposting and supporting families to engage with local and national advice and employability provision
- Family support - including signposting and supporting families to engage with local and national family support / parenting support / mental health provision

West Lothian Council stated that the IFSS works with families experiencing complex needs, requiring an individualised approach:

*"... we begin with thorough assessments to understand each family's unique needs. Based on these assessments, we develop personalised care strategies and engage multidisciplinary teams to coordinate interventions. This tailored approach ensures that we address all aspects of the family's situation and provide holistic support."*⁸

The service delivers the following activities which are supported by two full-time progression workers:

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- 4 Employability in Scotland <https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/resources-for-partners/the-employability-pathway/1/>
 - 5 West Lothian's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/44739/Local-Outcomes-Improvement-Plan>
 - 6 West Lothian Tackling Poverty Strategy <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/44745/West-Lothian-Tackling-Poverty-Strategy>
 - 7 APPENDIX 6 in Final IFSS Phase Two Specification
 - 8 West Lothian Council - Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) - No one left behind (NOLB) Quarterly progress report, 2024-25 (Quarter 2)

- ‘Chill and chat’ weekly sessions - a space for individuals to meet up and share experiences and support each other
- Budgeting workshops to help individuals with financial literacy, prioritise spending and create effective savings plans
- Job readiness activities to help individuals secure interviews (including CV-building, mock interviews, and job search strategies)
- Arts and crafts activities, promoting community family engagement
- Health and wellbeing promotion, focused on mindfulness, stress management, and relaxation

1.3 Strategic considerations

The Community Planning Partnership and Local Outcomes Improvement Plan strategic priorities underpin the work of West Lothian’s Local Employability Partnership (LEP), which sets a strategic direction for employability provision across the area. This forms part of the wider West Lothian Tackling Poverty Strategy (2023-2028), known as “Better Off West Lothian.”

The West Lothian LEP is “made up of key partners that contribute to the local employability landscape and represent the local community”.⁹ The Invest in West Lothian team, of which West Lothian Council IFSS is part, provides advice and support to individuals including parents.

There is some evidence of the effectiveness of intensive family support in terms of employability. One study suggests that emotional, holistic, and relational support fosters the confidence, self-belief, and resilience needed for progression towards employment¹⁰, while another suggests that the development of pre-vocational or soft skills can help support pathways into work¹¹. It has also been proposed that there is a “bi-directional” relationship between mental health and employment. “Good mental health is a key influence on employability, finding a job and remaining in that job.”¹²

In terms of improved family relationships, “By drawing on relational and strengths-based models of practice, evidence-based and evidence informed interventions,

9 West Lothian LEP <https://www.investinwestlothian.com/business-support/workforce-development/local-employability-partnership/>

10 Irvine, A. et al (2024) ‘Working With the Whole Person’: Employability Keyworker Experiences of Supporting People Furthest From the Labour Market, Social Policy and Society <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746424000022>

11 DWP (2025) What works to support disadvantaged groups towards employment?, p31, [PDF] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6874e80382370235232f931e/What_works_to_support_disadvantaged_groups_towards_employment_research_report.pdf

12 The Health Foundation (2021) Unemployment and mental health. <https://www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/briefings/unemployment-and-mental-health>

these [family support] services improve family functioning and resilience and can also help parents to build confidence and move towards employment...”¹³

1.4 Social Return on Investment

SROI provides a principled approach that can be used to measure and account for a broad concept of value.

SROI measures social and economic change from the perspective of those who experience or contribute to it. Using financial proxies, it is possible to identify and apply a monetary value to represent each change that is measured. The resultant financial value is then adjusted to take account of other influential factors. In this way the overall impact of an activity can be calculated and the value generated compared to the investment in the activities. This enables a ratio of cost to benefits to be calculated. For example, a ratio of 1:3 indicates that an investment of £1 in the activities has delivered £3 of social value.

Whilst a SROI analysis will provide a headline costs to benefits ratio, it will also deliver a detailed narrative that explains how change is created and evaluates the impact of the change through the evidence that is gathered. A SROI analysis is based on clear principles and progresses through set stages. SROI is much more than just a number. It is a story about change, on which to base decisions, and that story is told through qualitative, quantitative and financial information. The principles of the SROI approach are set out in Appendix 2.

There are two types of SROI analyses: a forecast SROI predicts the impact of a project or activity and an evaluative SROI measures the changes that it has delivered. This report is an evaluative SROI analysis.

1.5 Purpose of the analysis

This analysis seeks to add to the body of evidence supporting the multiple benefits of providing intensive whole family support by applying a social value/cost benefit approach to place a financial value or monetise the impact of activities delivered or supported by the Intensive Family Support Service. The methodology adopted examines the benefits from a stakeholder perspective and calculates the social return on investment.

¹³ Action for Children (2024) Family support and child poverty: How family support services can contribute to the Child Poverty Strategy (briefing note, p2) <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/policy-work-campaigns-and-research/policy-reports/family-support-and-child-poverty/>

2. Scope and stakeholders

2.1 Scope

This is an evaluation of the SROI in a service which provides all family members with access to intensive, wide-ranging support. The findings it contains are based on the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

2.2 Stakeholder identification and consultation

All those who were likely to experience change as a result of the project (the stakeholders), were identified, the nature of any changes that might be experienced was considered and how such changes might be measured was explored. This resulted in drawing up a list of those organisations or individuals whom it was believed would be significantly affected (the 'included' stakeholders). Details about the rationale for including these stakeholders are provided in Appendix 1.1.

A list of those whom it was thought would not experience significant change, and hence it was not considered appropriate to contact for further discussion, was also identified (the 'excluded' stakeholders). More details on this group and the reason for not considering them further in relation to the analysis can be found in Appendix 1.1.

A consultation plan was established for each of the identified stakeholders using methodologies that best suited their individual needs. Consultation was carried out by the Improvement Service with support from Intensive Family Support Service staff. Appendix 1.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

Stakeholders were consulted initially to confirm possible outcomes that had been identified by the reference group. Stakeholders were consulted, in a variety of ways, at all stages of the process.

3. Theory of change from the perspective of stakeholders

By engaging with stakeholders this analysis has identified, from the perspective of each, the changes that have taken place as a result of the advice and support provided by Intensive Family Support Services. Within each stakeholder grouping not all individuals experienced the same change and this is reflected in the quantities used to calculate the return on investment. The quantities used are drawn from survey results, focus group discussions and questionnaire responses and are considered further in section 4.3.

Consideration was also given to whether there were separate groupings within each stakeholder cohort who might have experienced different outcomes. For example, in relation to parents/carers would there be a difference based on age or tenancy type? In the course of the engagement that took place there was no evidence of stakeholder subgroups who experienced different outcomes.

All stakeholders were asked in their interview if there were any other stakeholders they knew of that should be consulted. None were suggested.

The outcomes reported by stakeholders are described in the following sections and are illustrated by direct anonymised quotes.

This analysis has identified, from the perspective of key stakeholders, the changes that have taken place for each group as a result of the support provided by the IFSS team in West Lothian.

There follows a description of the outcomes reported by stakeholders.

3.1 Parents/Carers

Outcome: Feeling valued and supported

Feeling more valued and supported was mentioned by parents, with comments made on how the IFSS team had helped improve their self-esteem. They also suggested that this was partly as a result of the time and understanding provided by the progression workers.



“[The progression worker] is absolutely amazing, and I wouldn’t be where I am today without her. I don’t know where I would have been... She was my lifeline, going above and beyond to get me into counselling.”

Outcome: Increased ability to cope with daily life

For some individuals, an increased ability to cope with daily life was mentioned as they were more confident to take part in the routine day to day activities, including social interactions.



“Going to college has helped with my confidence.”

Outcome: Improved health and wellbeing

Individuals reported that as a result of receiving support they felt that their mental health had been improved.



“They are a fantastic team and that the help has been invaluable. They basically saved my life.”

Outcome: Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications

While none of those interviewed said that they had secured employment, several mentioned that they had improved their ability to search for jobs and felt they had benefited from support with, for instance, CV preparation that could contribute to an increased likelihood of moving into employment.

Individuals also reported improvements in their skills and knowledge, including better English language and digital skills, which improved their chances of gaining employment.



“She [the progression worker] is good at helping me find a job and clear when talking to me”.

“The support is amazing, giving me the chance to understand what employers are looking for and what I need to include in my CV. I’m really thankful, as they make things easier for those who have left another country to come here.”

3.2 Families

Outcome: Improved family relationships

Parents reported that their family is more stable and that they had a better relationship with their children.



“I’m no longer getting calls from the police about my daughter.”

3.3 Staff delivering the service

Outcome: Increased opportunities to share learning and skills

The progression workers stated that they had gained an increased understanding of which services were available locally and how to engage with them to share learning and to gain new skills and experience.

Staff indicated that they appreciated the flexibility in approach that they were allowed, being able to test and learn from what might work with the parents and families they were trying to engage with.



“I’ve enjoyed working on the project and senior staff have been accommodating and supportive [in letting them try new ideas.]”

Outcome: Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement

The ability to work one-to-one with families, and to be able to engage with them over a long period led to a better understanding of family circumstances and the barriers that they face.

Outcome: More confident to try new approaches

Progression workers were more confident to try new or different approaches. The team leader stated that this had led to innovation in how the project was delivered, particularly the success of the ‘chill and chat’ peer support sessions.

3.4 Partner organisations

Outcome: Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise

Other council services commented that the IFSS were often able to respond more quickly than they could. For example, they could visit and assess individuals for the homelessness unit.



“On occasions we can’t assist immediately due to other meetings, the IFS team will go to the client... and record their actions in the [shared] social work Mosaic system.”

4. Inputs and outputs

4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal was used to meet staffing and associated costs.

Table 1. Investment levels by stakeholder

Stakeholder	Description	Amount (£)
Funder- ESES Region Deal- Capital City Partnership	Grant funding to cover staff, overheads and activity costs	100,000

4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place because of the inputs. It is these activities which resulted in the changes (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders.

Table 2: Outputs by stakeholder

Stakeholder	Relevant output
Parents	42 parents accessed Intensive Family Support Services
Families	23 families accessed Intensive Family Support Services
Partner organisations	One organisation reported significant engagement with IFSS. Several were approached for interview but did not respond and two had limited engagement with the service.
Staff	Two staff delivered the Intensive Family Support Service in West Lothian

4.3 Quantities

It is important to clarify the number in each stakeholder group who actually experienced the outcome that has been identified. In many cases, not all of the stakeholders involved experienced change, or indeed may do so to varying degrees.

i. Parents

The table below details the numbers of parents/carers who have experienced the

reported outcomes. The findings have been scaled up based on the responses received from the sample surveyed.

Table 3. Outputs by stakeholder - parents

Number of individuals reporting feeling more valued and supported	39
Number of individuals reporting increased ability to cope with daily life	35
Number of individuals reporting improved health and wellbeing	37
Number of individuals progressing/sustaining employment	17

As well as carrying out one to one interviews, a survey was sent via SMS text messaging to 39 individuals in receipt of IFSS. 18 surveys were completed (with a few opting out of certain questions). The responses from each question have been scaled up to represent the whole cohort.

The sample size and responses were sufficient to ensure that there can be a 95% confidence level with a low margin of error. At a 95% confidence level with a sample size of 39 out of a population of 42 the margin of error is +/-<5%” .

ii. Families

Table 4. Outputs by stakeholder - families

Number of families reporting improved family relationships	20
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iii. Partner Organisation

Table 5. Outputs by stakeholder - partner organisation

Number of organisations reporting able to use time and resources more effectively by focusing on areas of expertise	1
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iv. Staff

All of the staff members providing services reported achieving all outcomes recorded.

Table 6. Outputs by stakeholder - staff

Number of staff reporting new skills and learning	2
Number of staff reporting trying new approaches	2

5. Outcomes and valuation

Detailed results from the stakeholder engagement and information collection are represented in the impact map information in Appendix 1.

5.1 Outcomes evidence

The changes (or outcomes) which were identified, following consultation with each stakeholder, are detailed below along with information on how the outcome was measured (indicator). All of the outcomes reported were positive. The outcomes which were identified during the analysis but could not be measured and the reasons for this are covered in section 6.5.

Table 7: Outcomes evidence

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	Number of individuals reporting feeling more valued and supported	One to one interviews and surveys
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	Number of individuals reporting increased ability to cope with daily life	One to one interviews and surveys
	Improved health and wellbeing	Number of individuals reporting improved health and wellbeing	One to one interviews and surveys
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	Number of individuals progressing	Data provided to Capital City Partnership
Families	Improved family relationships	Number of families reporting improved family relationships	One to one interviews and surveys
Partner organisation	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	Number of organisations reporting able to use time and resources more effectively by focusing on areas of expertise	One to one interviews
	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement in education	Number of children/ young people re-engaging with school	Consultation with schools/parents as proxy and feedback from support workers

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Staff supporting the service	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	Number of staff reporting new skills and learning	One to one interviews
	Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement	Number of new/sustained engagements	One to one interviews

5.2 Valuation

Financial proxies have been identified which allow a monetary value to be placed on the changes experienced by individual stakeholders. In each case stakeholders, or their proxies, have been consulted on the appropriateness of these measures and given the opportunity to make suggestions on potential financial proxies. Stakeholders can find this process challenging and, if this was the case, were encouraged to think about comparing the benefits of the change they had experienced to something they were able to value. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy, attempts have been made to link the financial value to the level of importance placed on the change by individual stakeholders.

Further information on how each outcome is valued is provided in Appendix 1.4.

6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis

6.1 Duration and drop-off

Before the SROI calculation can be finalised, the period of time the changes produced by the activity will last must be considered. This is so that their future value can be assessed. The question to be answered is *'if the activity stopped tomorrow, how much of the value would still be there?'*

To predict the length of time changes will be sustained, stakeholder opinion and independent research are both taken into account. There will be variations in the length of time benefits last according to the nature of the change and also the characteristics of individual stakeholders. If significant assumptions have been required about the likely duration of changes then these will be tested in the sensitivity analysis.

In the absence of relevant research or stakeholder views that would suggest the time period the benefits are likely to last, the duration of all outcomes has been set at between one and three years. It is likely that several outcomes will endure for a longer period but, at this stage, in the absence of robust evidence to support this hypothesis, a conservative approach has been adopted.

Outcomes lasting several years cannot be expected to maintain the same level of value for each of these years. This is dealt with by assuming that the value will reduce or 'drop off' each year.

6.2 Reductions in value to avoid over-claiming

As well as considering how long the changes a service or activity delivers will last, it is necessary to take account of other factors that may be influential. The recorded change might have happened regardless of the service, something else may have made a contribution to it or the service may have displaced changes taking place elsewhere. In considering the extent to which each of these factors have played a part in the total impact, a realistic approach should be adopted. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers.

6.2.1 Deadweight

A reduction for deadweight reflects the fact that a proportion of an outcome might have happened without any intervention. For example, it is estimated that

approximately one in five people in Scotland will face a mental health problem and require help during their lifetime.¹⁴ Of the total number unemployed, around a quarter are considered to be long term unemployed.¹⁵ Given the level of uncertainty about the recorded outcome for families for improved relationships, deadweight has been set highly.

The assumptions about deadweight are contained in Appendix 1.5.

6.2.2 Attribution

Attribution takes account of external factors, including the contribution of others that may have played a part in the changes that are identified. For example, it is likely that other factors, such as mental health interventions, may have contributed to the improved health and wellbeing reported by parents. The assumptions about attribution are contained in Appendix 1.5.

6.2.3 Displacement

Displacement applies when one outcome is achieved but at the expense of another outcome, or another stakeholder is adversely affected. In the analysis this is not considered to have occurred.

6.3 Calculation of social return

Appendix 1.6 details the values for each outcome that a stakeholder experiences and takes into account deductions to avoid over-claiming. These individual values have been added together then compared with the investment in the service provided at section 4.1 above.

The results show a social return on investment of around £9 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

6.4 Sensitivity analysis

Sensitivity Analysis

In calculating the social return on investment, it has been necessary to make certain assumptions which may include the use of data which is either not subject to universal agreement, or which cannot be adequately evidenced. To assess how much influence this has had on the final value that has been calculated, a sensitivity analysis is carried out and the results recorded. By doing this the value of the benefits can be expressed within defined limits. The base level for testing is £8.66.

¹⁴ [Scottish Government \(2024\) The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report](#)

¹⁵ [Scottish Government \(2025\) Scotland's Labour Market Insights: April 2025](#)

The most significant assumptions that were made were tested in the sensitivity analysis as detailed below:

Table 8: Results of Sensitivity Analysis

Factor	Variation	Result
Attribution	Increase by 10%	£7.51
Attribution	Decrease by 10%	£9.14
Deadweight	Increase by 10%	£7.51
Deadweight	Decrease by 10%	£9.81

Attribution considers the contribution made by others to the changes recorded. It has been set relatively low for most outcomes and therefore variation has not had a significant impact on the ratio.

Also, varying the levels of deadweight does not impact greatly on the result

High value financial proxies have not been tested as those used are derived from UK Government research or are included in supplementary guidance for the UK Government's Green Book.

Taking the results of this sensitivity analysis into consideration, there can be a degree of confidence that between £7 and £10 of social and economic benefits are likely to be created for every £1 that is invested.

6.5 Materiality considerations

At every stage of the SROI process judgements have to be made about how to interpret and convey information. Sometimes the rationale behind the decision is obvious and fully evidenced; on other occasions additional explanation or information may be required. SROI demands total clarity and complete transparency about the approach that is taken so that there is no possibility of confusion or misinterpretation. Applying a concept of materiality means that explanations must be offered for information that can be interpreted in different ways and which can exert influence on the decisions others might take.

The concept can be of particular importance in ensuring that outcomes for stakeholders are relevant, are not perceived as being duplicated and that the different values individual stakeholders may ascribe to the changes they experience are understood.

In assessing issues that are material SROI requires that various factors are taken into account. Stakeholder view is of paramount importance from the outset, and throughout the preparation of this analysis stakeholders were invited to comment on the interpretation of data and the inclusion of information. Engagement took

various forms including email requests for comment, telephone interviews and one to one meetings.

Proxies

It was not possible to engage directly with children and young people, and while parents could sometimes be used as proxies, there was insufficient consistent evidence from them to identify outcomes for children. This is a weakness in the analysis as it was not possible to identify and value children's outcomes.

Outcomes identified but not valued

While the WLC IFSS project did record the number of individuals who had experienced financial gain, it did not record the amount gained. As a result, the outcome of increased household income for families has had to be excluded from the calculation.

No negative outcomes were identified.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this analysis was to consider the benefits of the West Lothian Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) and by monetising them to calculate the social return on investment.

IFSS provides support to improve family stability and home conditions and increase household income. Support is also offered to develop skills and to progress along the employability pipeline.

The outcomes recorded, measured and valued have been identified as a result of stakeholder engagement, and represent the benefits they actually experience. The analysis provides evidence of the multiple benefits this approach delivers for parents, families, the delivery organisation and the progression workers.

Based on an investment of £100,000, the analysis estimates that approximately £9 of social and economic benefit is created for every £1 invested, with a range between £7 and £10.

Overall, the evidence suggests that the IFSS project represents an effective use of public investment delivering value through its approach to supporting parents and families.

Recommendations

In the Intensive Family Support Service in West Lothian the approach has been effective because it combined personalised, relationship-based support along with practical help to address the multiple barriers experienced by families. The evidence gathered points to the value of sustained one-to-one engagement, flexibility in responding to individual family circumstances, and close working with partner services.

This appears to have helped parents feel valued and supported, improve their ability to cope with daily life, strengthen family relationships and, for some, move closer to employment.

Future intensive family support projects should retain this holistic approach and allow sufficient flexibility for staff to adapt support to meet the needs of families.

It is recommended that future projects strengthen the recording of financial gains for families so that the full value of improved household income can be captured in subsequent impact analyses.

Appendix 1: Audit trail and value map information

1.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

The key stakeholders identified in West Lothian by the project lead (team manager) and progression workers were parents/carers and children/young people. Other stakeholders identified included other parts of the council - education (a school and adult learning), housing (homelessness unit) and social work.

Table 9: Included and Excluded Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Included/excluded	Rationale
School	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Parents/Carers	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Children/Young People	Included (via proxies)	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Staff	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Funders	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Partner organisation – West Lothian Council - Housing	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes
Partner organisation – West Lothian Council - Social work	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
DWP	Excluded	Long term benefits in relation to reduced demand but limited as majority of individuals are pre-employability.
Community Learning and Development	Excluded	Unlikely to experience outcomes directly due to low level of likely referrals.

1.2 Engagement methods for 'included' stakeholders

The IFSS primarily engaged with families through home visits and advised that there would be a reluctance amongst the individuals they supported to be interviewed in-person about their experiences of the service. As such, the majority of consultation with parents had to be undertaken by phone, with only one agreeing to an in-person interview. Overall, nine adults were interviewed.

It was not possible to interview the children/young people, though some of the comments provided by parents were relevant and described the changes children/young people experienced.

Other organisations that the service engaged with were approached for interview but only a small number responded and only one had a sufficient level of engagement with the service to be included in this report.

All of those involved in delivery of the service were interviewed, the team manager and both progression workers.

Table 10: Engagement methods for ‘included’ stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method	Number	Medium
Parents/Carers	Structured Questionnaire	9	One to one interviews
	Survey	39	SMS Survey
Children/Young People	With parents/carers as proxies	NA	One to one interviews
Staff	Structured Questionnaire	3	One to one interviews
Partner organisation	Structured Questionnaire	1	One to one interviews

1.3 Financial proxies

All outcomes included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Table 11: Financial proxies

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	Self awareness course	£96.00	Workers' Educational Association courses
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	Session with an average cost per advocacy intervention of £912	£912.00	[PDF] Costs of Health and Social Care 2021, Care and Outcomes Research Centre
	Improved health and wellbeing	WELLBY or Wellbeing-adjusted Life Year	£15,000.00	HM Treasury. (2021). Wellbeing guidance for appraisal: Supplementary Green Book guidance
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	Annual Minimum Wage	£24,784.50	Minimum wage rates for 2026 - GOV.UK
Families	Improved family relationships	1 month of Local Authority Foster Care	£795.00	[spreadsheet] Unit Cost Database, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Partner organisation	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	10% of cost of average staff member	£5,362.00	Staff records
Staff	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	Spend on training	£1,650.00	Employers spending a fifth less on employee training than a decade ago New Economics Foundation
	Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement	Cost of advertising campaign	£5,000.00	Radio Advertising Costs, https://radioadvertising.co.uk/

1.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Table 12: Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Stakeholder	Outcome	Deadweight %	Displacement %	Attribution %
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	25%	0%	25%
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	25%	0%	25%
	Improved health and wellbeing	25%	0%	50%
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	25%	0%	10%
Families	Improved family relationships	25%	0%	25%
Partner organisation	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	10%	0%	10%
Staff	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	10%	0%	10%
	Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement	10%	0%	10%

1.6 Calculation

The table below summarises the factors that have been considered in calculating the total impact.

Table 13: Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Drop Off	Impact
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	39	£96	25%	0%	25%	25%	£2,117
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	35	£912	25%	0%	25%	25%	£18,194
	Improved health and wellbeing	37	£15,000	25%	0%	50%	25%	£208,125
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	17	£24,785	25%	0%	10%	25%	£284,402
Families	Improved family relationships	23	£795	25%	0%	25%	25%	£8,914
Partner organisation	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	1	£5,362	10%	0%	10%	25%	£4,343
Staff	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	2	£1,650	10%	0%	10%	25%	£2,673
	Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement	2	£5,000	10%	0%	10%	25%	£8,100

The SROI calculation is expressed as a ratio of return from investment. It is derived from dividing the monetised value of the sum of all the benefits by the total cost of the investment.

In this report the total present value is £865,966; the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £100,000.

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing the present value by the investment.

The social return from investing in the West Lothian Intensive Family Support Service was found to be in the region of £9 for every £1 invested.

Appendix 2: The Principles of SROI

Table 14: Principles of SROI

Principle	Description
Involve stakeholders	Inform what gets measured and how this is measured and valued by involving stakeholders
Understand what changes	Articulate how change is created and evaluate this through evidence gathered, recognising positive and negative changes as well as those that are intended or unintended
Value the things that matter	Use financial proxies in order that the value of the outcomes can be recognised. Many outcomes are not traded in markets and as a result their value is not recognised
Only include what is material	Determine what information and evidence must be included in the accounts to give a true and fair picture, such that stakeholders can draw reasonable conclusions about impact
Do not over-claim	Only claim the value that organisations are responsible for creating
Be transparent	Demonstrate the basis on which the analysis may be considered accurate and honest, and show that it will be reported to and discussed with stakeholders
Verify the result	Ensure independent appropriate assurance

Social Value International has published a comprehensive guide to SROI, which can be downloaded from <https://www.socialvalueint.org/guide-to-sroi>



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