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Evaluative Social Return on Investment Analysis of the 'Making it Work for Families' in Fife

March 2026



Executive Summary

The report provides an evaluation of the social return from the investment in the Making it Work for Families service in Fife.

The Making it Work for Families service works with schools in the Mid Fife area and includes the catchment areas for Viewforth High School and Levenmouth Academy. Working in partnership with school staff, project workers seek to identify young people and families that would benefit from intensive family support.

The service supports individuals, particularly those experiencing health and social and economic inequalities, and in some cases substance abuse, to achieve their potential and address any barriers and challenges they face. Delivered by staff employed by Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up, Citizens Advice and Rights Fife and the Fife Intensive Rehabilitation & Substance Use Team, parents and carers and children and young people are able to access wide-ranging person-centred support.

The benefits that are measured are those that are made possible by the investment of £140,000 by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal 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 Making it Work for Families and values some of the changes to which participation in the services supported by Making it Work for Families has contributed:

Improving children's engagement with school which will ultimately contribute to improved attainment.

Supporting both parents and children to enjoy **improved family relationships**.

Enabling parents to **have an increased ability to cope with daily life, to feel more positive about the future** and to be able **to work towards securing employment**.

Increasing the skills and abilities of staff members.

Enabling school staff to focus on teaching and not managing the disruptive behaviour of pupils.

It was found that every

£1

invested would
generate around



£8

of benefits

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

£7 and £9.





Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1 Background	6
1.2 Subjects of the analysis	6
1.3 Strategic considerations	7
1.5 Purpose of the analysis.....	9
2. Scope and stakeholders	10
2.1 Scope	10
2.2 Stakeholder identification and consultation.....	10
3. Theory of change from the perspective of stakeholders	11
3.1 Parents/Carers	11
3.2 Families	13
3.3 Children and young people.....	14
3.4 Schools	16
3.5 Staff in Delivery Organisations	17
3.6 Delivery Organisations.....	17
4. Inputs and outputs	19
4.1 Investment (inputs).....	19
4.2 Outputs	19
4.3 Quantities	20
5. Outcomes and valuation	22
5.1 Outcomes evidence.....	22
5.2 Valuation.....	24
6. Social return calculation and sensitivity analysis.....	25
6.1 Duration and drop off	25
6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming.....	25
6.3 Calculation of social return	26
6.4 Sensitivity analysis	27
6.5 Materiality considerations	28



7. Conclusion and recommendations	30
1.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded	32
1.2 Engagement methods for ‘included’ stakeholders	33
1.3 Outcomes identified, but not measured.	33
1.4 Financial proxies.	34
1.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming	37
1.6 Calculation	38
Appendix 2: The Principles of SROI.....	40
Appendix 3: Value Map	41

1. Introduction

This analysis describes and quantifies the social return from investing in the ‘Making it Work for Families’ in Fife.

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 Edinburgh and South East Scotland City (ESES) Region Deal¹ 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. The purposes of providing Intensive Family Support are set out below.

“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. 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.”²

1.2 Subjects of the analysis

‘Making it Work for Families’ is a partnership project between Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up, Citizens Advice and Rights Fife and Fife Intensive Rehabilitation & Substance Use Team (which has been funded to deliver an Intensive Family Support Service in Fife). The project focusses on families affected by substance use who live in the Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth areas. The outcomes the project seeks to enable participants to achieve are as follows:

- Improve the engagement of families and young people with support services
- Decrease high risk behaviours and substance misuse

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

² Extract from Capital City Partnership Service specification Intensive family support service – phase two

- Improve the health and wellbeing, resilience, and confidence of families
- Improve family relationships
- Maximise family incomes

The activities of the project are targeted on the Mid Fife area and include the catchment areas for Viewforth High School and Levenmouth Academy. Working in partnership with school staff, project workers seek to identify young people and families that would benefit from intensive family support.

The service is delivered by the workers set out below who have the following individual remits:

One Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Family Support Worker with responsibility for:

- Family Support Work (including one-to-one support and whole family support). The role involves looking at the core issues that may affect the whole family and addressing these to stabilise families and increase independence.

One FTE Youth Worker with responsibility for:

- Youth Work (including one-to-one support and whole family support). The role involves providing support tailored to the individual needs of the young person.

One FTE Advice Worker with responsibility for:

- Income maximisation support (benefits calculations, debt advice, support applications and appeals, access emergency grants, housing issues, advocacy).

One 0.5 FTE Progression Worker with responsibility for:

- Progression and employability support including one-to-one person-centred support and group work.

Support activities are delivered by the workers in a range of locations that are appropriate to the needs of the individual and the nature of the activities offered.

This analysis measured the social and economic benefits of providing parents, carers and young people with access to the wide range of support services set out above.

1.3 Strategic considerations

There is a strong correlation between unemployment and poverty.

“Among unemployed working-age adults — those who are out of work ,but available for and seeking employment — the poverty rate was 53%, nearly 5 times higher than for those in work.”³

Fife Council has sought to improve opportunities for individuals to gain well paid, meaningful employment by establishing the Opportunities Fife Partnership. This is a cross-sector partnership which enables the delivery of a wide range of employability programmes covering all aspects of support from skills development to sustaining employment.

For children living in households experiencing poverty there is evidence of links between poverty and lower achievement of development milestones, lower school attendance, poorer attainment and poor health and wellbeing outcomes⁴. As well as having immediate adverse effects there are implications for the child’s long-term future. As the Child Poverty Action Group found, “children from higher income families significantly outperform those from low income households at ages 3 and 5. By age 5 there is a gap of ten months in problem solving development and of 13 months in vocabulary.”⁵

The Levenmouth area has the highest level of child poverty in Fife.⁶

“Mid Fife continues to fall behind other areas of Fife, with poverty a contributing factor. Poorer outcomes for local communities are firmly grounded in place, particularly in parts of Levenmouth, Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath areas.”⁷

As well as having long lasting adverse effects on individuals a report, ‘Counting the cost of UK poverty’ by Heriot Watt and Loughborough Universities⁸, illustrated how much poverty across all age groups costs the public purse. It found that c£69 billion, or £1 in every £5 of all spending on public services, was needed because of the impact and cost poverty had on people’s lives.

Whilst the causes and costs of inequalities have been highlighted for many years, they have still not been addressed. There are compelling arguments, both in terms of equity and economic prudence, to invest in initiatives, such as increasing employment opportunities, that reduce social and economic disadvantage. Although employment remains the best route out of poverty, gaining a job is not in itself sufficient. Rates of in-work poverty are increasing, and it is estimated that 60% of people living in poverty live in a household where someone works.⁹

3 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-statistics/work>

4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/costs-of-child-poverty-a-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-effect-of-income-on-child-outcomes/costs-of-child-poverty-a-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-effect-of-income-on-child-outcomes>

5 <https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/child-poverty/facts>

6 https://know.fife.scot/_data/assets/file/0023/18356/LSA-2025-Levenmouth-Area.pdf

7 [Fife-Strategic-Assessment-2024-Final.pdf](#)

8 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/poverty-costs-uk-£78-billion-year---jrf-report>

9 Birt, C., Cebula, C., Evans, J., Hay, D. and McKenzie, A. (2025) Poverty in Scotland 2025. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

1.4 Social Return on Investment

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. Through the use of 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.¹⁰

Whilst an SROI analysis will provide 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

There is a body of evidence supporting the multiple benefits of providing intensive whole family support, to which this analysis will contribute. This analysis considers an approach to providing support based on working with schools to target and support families affected by substance abuse. The methodology adopted examines the benefits from a stakeholder perspective and calculates the social return on investment.

The findings from this analysis may assist local authorities, funders and providers of family support and employability services to consider how they can improve the way these services in Scotland are delivered to ensure support for prevention, rather than crisis intervention, is provided which takes into account the holistic needs of individuals and families.

¹⁰ In SROI, 'social' is taken as a shorthand for social, economic and environmental value

2. Scope and stakeholders

2.1 Scope

This is an evaluation of the social return from investing 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 considered and how such changes might be measured 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 Making it Work for Families staff. Appendix 1.2 sets out the engagement methods used for each stakeholder.

It is important to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by staff at Clued-up whose help in engaging with young people was essential.

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 Making it Work for Families. 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.

3.1 Parents/Carers

Outcome: Improved health and wellbeing

As a result of engaging with support workers and taking part in activities, parents/carers experienced improved wellbeing. This included feeling less stressed and being better able to understand and deal with their emotions. As a result of being supported to start to address their socioeconomic problems, parents/carers started to regain control over their lives, several experienced a reduction in the level of stress-related illnesses and some reduced their reliance on drugs and alcohol.

Individuals had more time as they were no longer consumed with worry about debts, having money for food, paying their rent or other such challenges and were supported to focus on other aspects of their life. They also began to develop a more optimistic outlook towards the future.

Being able to access services delivered by approachable, knowledgeable and non-judgemental staff in a safe setting was critical. Individuals described how contact with their peers had enabled them to make new friendships which helped them cope with times when they were struggling.



“I feel more relaxed and don’t shout all the time, when things get on top of me I cope better.”

“If I felt bad I just had a drink now I phone (name of fellow participant).”

“Coming to the sessions gives me time for myself....I have a laugh.”

Outcome: Increased ability to cope with daily life

As Making it Work for Families adopts a person-centred approach the support provided is tailored to meet the needs and aspirations that are important to those who use the service. This varies from individual to individual. In some cases, it may be getting support or assistance to find employment but for many it is about having the help they need to tackle issues that have become overwhelming - such as worries about money or losing their home. Getting these issues addressed enables individuals not only to cope better on a day to day basis, but also gives them the time and confidence to think about their future and what it might involve. The support individuals need to start to be in control of their daily lives and not feel overwhelmed depends very much on their unique circumstances. The partner organisations involved in Making it Work for Families provide this tailored support in a non-judgemental supportive way.



“I had given upwouldn’t get out of bed ...couldn’t be bothered.....I feel more positive now.”

“Life’s not great all the time but I am getting along and doing what I can.”

Outcome: Feel more valued and supported

Individuals talked about how involvement in Making it Work for Families had made them feel valued and supported. Several described how before getting support they had felt worthless, and that their community did not accept or understand them. Individuals suggested that they were perceived as a problem and not as a person. Support from Making it Work for Families changed that by recognising them as a valuable human being who was facing challenges but, with support, could overcome them.



"I felt useless and didn't want to tell anyone about my problems but the worker didn't look at me like I was a bit of rubbish. She listened and sorted my s---e out."

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

Whilst a few individuals were able to secure employment, the majority were not at a stage at which getting a job was a realistic option. Several took part in training or volunteering opportunities as part of the process of getting ready for moving into employment. Many talked positively about the prospect of employment in the future - something that had not previously seemed a realistic possibility.



"I couldn't get a job now, not ready....but maybe one day."

"I went back to college, it didn't work out the first timethere was so much going on ...but with the worker's help its going OK now."

3.2 Families

Outcome: Improved family relationships

Families commented that relationships had improved as a result of the support they had received. Parents understood their children's needs better and tension and conflict had reduced. Others stated that whilst there were still arguments, they understood how they could be managed and resolved. Parents stated

that as they became more confident and less stressed their relationships with members of their wider family had also improved.



“Sometimes I think my heads exploding and I am gonna tear his face off so I call the worker.”

“The kids still get on my nerves but I don’t shout at them as much.”

“I got thrown outI’ve got my own place thanks to the worker and things are better.”

“I didn’t think that mind and body stuff was for the likes of us..... but it cools you down.”

Outcome: Increased household income

By getting access to welfare rights and money advice families were able to increase the income available to their household which may have contributed to the achievement of other, primarily health and wellbeing, outcomes. It enabled families to increase their financial resources and to make choices about how to spend the additional money that was available. Some families talked about improving their home whilst others described taking part in activities for the first time.

3.3 Children and young people

Outcome: Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education

Teachers reported that attendance levels had improved and that in class children were more comfortable and able to engage better with others. There is a strong correlation between regular attendance and improved attainment.¹¹



“I was always told I would never get an education. Now through the support, I am class rep at college, changed the curriculum to introduce stigma work and I am thriving in college. I was never going to have an education, but having clued up believe in me made me believe in me.”

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/link-between-attendance-and-attainment>

Outcome: Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives

Young people described how getting support from Making it Work for Families had given them the skills and confidence to express their views in a logical and coherent way. This had allowed them to influence and inform the decisions that affected their lives. Previously they had felt disempowered and ignored and didn't know how to address this, resulting in feelings of anger and frustration. Young people rated their new abilities very highly and said they were very important to them.



"It was the first time I got to think about the experiences I got from making it work and talk about them in public and realising my life has changed.made me realise the opportunities I could get."

"The worker turned up every single day when my life was upside down and made sure my voice was involved in putting it back together."

Outcome: Reduction in risk taking behaviour

Several young people described how, before taking part in Making it Work for Families they would sit in the park and drink or take drugs because there was nothing else to do. The activities and support from staff gave them other opportunities and helped them reduce their substance abuse.



"I was 12 years old, addicted to ecstasy and taking whatever else came my way. My mum was addicted to cocaine, no one knew, I was too afraid to tell anyone. I have achieved things I never thought I would because of the choices I made (with support from Clued-up). I'm at college, I have a job, life is just so different to what was written in my cards."

"If I wasn't here at the base I'd be in the house drinking buckie."

Outcome: Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment

Young people stated that their homes had not felt safe or secure. There were frequent arguments and, in some cases, having to move house on a regular basis. This created instability and insecurity and young people reported being stressed and worried. Making it work for Families staff helped by engaging with all members of the family and supporting families to address the underlying issues that resulted in conflict, insecurity and potentially homelessness.



“The worker listened to me and helped me be safe when my mum kicked me out. I was only 14 and it seemed like everything was against me, I knew it was for the best as I needed more support than what she could give me.”

3.4 Schools

Outcome: Saves staff time managing disruptive behaviour

Teachers described how children's behaviour in class had improved greatly as a result of being supported by Making it Work for Families. Children attended regularly and when in class behaved better and were able to concentrate on learning. They were able to engage meaningfully with both teachers and other pupils. This allowed staff to focus on teaching and not managing disruptive behaviour. It is estimated that as much as a quarter of time allocated for lessons is lost as a result of disruptive behaviour.¹²



“Having to manage disruptive behaviour in class takes up a significant amount of staff time and also has a negative effect on both the class teacher and other pupils. Teachers want to do their job- which is making sure children get the education they need and deserve. Disruptive behaviour in class usually occurs for a reason which often goes back to what is happening in the home environment and family relationships. If issues are occurring and can be resolved behaviour usually improves.”

¹² [National behaviour survey report: findings for 2022 to 2023 academic year](#)

3.5 Staff in Delivery Organisations

Outcome: New skills and increased job satisfaction

Staff members reported that they had gained new skills, been able to try new activities and benefited from widening their experience. These opportunities had arisen as a result of the design and delivery of the programme which encouraged engagement between workers from different professional backgrounds and disciplines. The staff were very enthusiastic and motivated and willing to do their utmost to help the individuals they supported to achieve their full potential.



“I have been able to try new ways of working.”

“My skills and knowledge have improved so much- I can do things now I would never have been able to do before or even thought were possible.”

“It’s been good to have the chance to work with others with different jobs and to learn how they do things differently.”

“We all work together and believe in the same approach even if we have different strengths.”

3.6 Delivery Organisations

Outcome: Increased opportunities to secure funding

By working together organisations were able to collaborate and not compete for funding. Funders often recognise the potential benefits of organisations coming together and make partnership working a funding condition. The organisations involved in Making it Work for Families were able to demonstrate how they had worked together in an effective partnership and could use the approach they had taken as an example of good practice. It was also suggested that by working together and speaking with one voice their views were more likely to be listened to by both funders and decision makers.



“At first working together was challenging but as time went on we learnt how to make the partnership work.”

“When it’s just one organisation saying something or asking for funds you are ignored or they pay lip service but when more organisations are saying the same thing and showing they can work together you have a stronger voice.”

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

The organisations in Making it Work for Families each focussed on providing support to individuals based on their unique area of expertise. This might be youth work, family support, employability assistance or money and welfare rights advice. Each organisation employed staff with the relevant skills that could be used to support families, however the individuals within a family usually had different needs that required support from more than one organisation. By working in partnership organisations could manage staff time and resources more effectively by sharing information, reducing referrals and allowing staff to focus on providing support in the areas in which they had the relevant experience.



“Each of us brings something to the partnership and we can play to our strengths. This saves time and resources and allows workers to do what they know best and are good at.”

“We trust each other and work together to provide the best support to our clients.”

4. Inputs and outputs

4.1 Investment (inputs)

The money invested by the stakeholders below 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	140,000

It should be noted that the Making it Work for Families Partnership received funding from other sources to support related activities.

4.2 Outputs

The outputs describe, in numerical terms, the activities that took place as a result of the inputs. It is these activities which resulted in the changes (or outcomes) for each of the identified stakeholders. The outputs reported below relate to the year covered in the analysis.

Table 2: Outputs by stakeholder

Stakeholder	Relevant outputs ¹³
Parents/Carers	72 parents/carers were supported by Making it Work for Families
Families	65 families were supported by Making it Work for Families
Children/Young People	30 Children/Young People were supported by Making it Work for Families
Schools	Making it Work for Families had sustained engagement with 2 schools
Staff	9 staff supported or delivered Making it Work for Families services
Delivery Organisations	4 organisations helped deliver the Making it Work for Families programme

¹³ It should be noted that the activities provided by the service have been described in Section 1.2.

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 did so to varying degrees. For example, whilst 72 parents/carers have been able to access Making it Work for Families services not all experienced improved health and wellbeing or increased job opportunities.

Parents/Carers

The table below details the numbers of the cohort of parents/carers who have experienced the reported outcomes. The findings have been scaled up based on the responses received from the interviews and surveys.

Table 3. Outputs by stakeholder - parents/carers

Parents/carers	Feel more valued and supported	57
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	60
	Improved health and wellbeing	57
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	7

As well as carrying out focus groups and one to one interviews, a SMS Survey was sent to a representative sample. The sample size was small but the responses were consistent.

Families

In the course of engagement with adults/carers and children /young people questions were included about whether there were any changes, either positive or negative, on family relationships. The findings have been scaled up based on the responses received from the sample surveyed. The number of positive responses was sufficient to ensure that there can be a 95% confidence level with a low margin of error.

Increased household income gains are based on verifiable data.

Table 4. Outputs by stakeholder - families

Families	Improved family relationships	56
	Increased household income	1

Children/Young people

Children and young people were interviewed in focus groups and on an individual basis. In addition, Clued up staff facilitated separate discussions. Engagement took place with 15 young people.

The table below details the numbers of children/young people who have experienced the reported outcomes. The findings have been scaled up based on the responses received from the sample surveyed.

The sample size and responses were sufficient to ensure that there can be a 95% confidence level with a low margin of error.

Table 5: Outputs by stakeholder - Children/Young people

Young people	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education	7
	Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives	20
	Reduction in risk taking behaviours	10
	Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment	5

Schools, Delivery Organisations and Staff supporting delivery

All of the above stakeholders were interviewed on an individual basis and reported achieving all outcomes recorded.

Social Work

In the course of the interview no outcomes were identified for social work services.

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 in the course of the analysis but could not be measured and the reasons for this are listed in Appendix 1.3.

Table 6: 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 towards employment	Data provided to Capital City Partnership
Families	Improved family relationships	Number of families reporting improved family relationships	One to one interviews, focus groups and surveys
	Increased household income	Total reported financial gains	Data provided to Capital City Partnership

Stakeholder	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Source
Young People	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education	Number of children/ young people re-engaging with school	Data provided to Capital City Partnership
	Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives	Number of children/ young people reporting increased ability to be actively involved in decisions about their lives	One to one interviews and focus groups
	Reduction in risk taking behaviours	Number of young people reporting a reduction in risk taking behaviour	One to one interviews and focus groups
	Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment	Number of children/ young people reporting feeling safer and more secure	One to one interviews and focus groups
Schools	Saves staff time managing disruptive behaviour	Number of hours staff save managing disruptive behaviour	One to one interviews
Delivery Organisations	Increased opportunities to secure funding	Additional funding secured	One to one interviews
	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	Number of organisations reporting being able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	One to one interviews
Staff supporting delivery	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	Number of staff reporting new skills and learning	One to one interviews and focus groups
	Improved understanding of needs of service users and increased ability to initiate and sustain engagement	Number of new/sustained engagements	One to one interviews and focus groups

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. These were taken into account in the final selection. In identifying the value given to a financial proxy attempts have been made to link the financial amount 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 were 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. Outcomes relating to improved skills and potential employment opportunities are predicted to last for three years or more and hence will be affected by 'drop off'.

6.2 Reductions in value to avoid overclaiming

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 aim is to be pragmatic about the benefits actually provided by the ability to access advice and/or support in a school setting. The SROI methodology does this by taking all these factors into account in calculating the actual impact a project or activity delivers. In this case there is limited existing research that can

be drawn on to support the predictions made and hence these are tested in the sensitivity analysis.

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 instance, it is likely that other factors, such as participation in support groups or medication may have contributed to the improved health and wellbeing of parents/carers. 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 £8 for every £1 invested based on the assumptions set out above.

¹⁴ [11 Health and Wellbeing - The Scottish Health Survey 2023 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-labour-market-insights-april-2025/pages/people-not-in-work/)

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-labour-market-insights-april-2025/pages/people-not-in-work/>

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 £8.38.

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

Table 7: Results of Sensitivity Analysis

Factor	Variation	Result
Attribution	Increase by 10%	£7.35
Attribution	Decrease by 10%	£9.39
Deadweight	Increase by 10%	£7.39
Deadweight	Decrease by 10%	£9.38
Quantities of families	Decrease by 50%	£7.92
Quantities of Organisations	Decrease by 25%	£7.98

Reducing the numbers of families does not have a major impact on the investment ratio. Given that this is the area of least confidence in the analysis a particularly robust approach to testing was adopted.

As many stakeholders reported that the outcomes identified would not have happened if the activity had not taken place the levels of deadweight have been set at a fairly low level with the exception of 'improved relationships for families' for the reasons set out above.

There is limited research available that can be used to support the findings and in line with adopting a conservative approach varying the levels of attribution and deadweight have the greatest impact on the ratio. However, it should be noted that the variances are still within an acceptable range. .

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.

For the reasons outlined above there can be a degree of confidence that between £7 and £9 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 and 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 e-mail requests for comment, TEAMS and telephone interviews, focus groups and one to one meetings.

Sample sizes for parents/carers

The qualitative phase of engagement with stakeholders enables their outcomes and the level of importance they attach to them to be identified. The purpose of this stage in the analysis is to identify outcomes from the perspective of the stakeholder. To do this discussion takes place with a representative sample of stakeholders. In identifying the individuals to be interviewed consideration is given as to whether they are representative of all stakeholders in that group, and also if there are other stakeholders in the group that may experience different outcomes, e.g. as a result of different demographic characteristics.

In relation to both of these points, based on the responses from parents/carers, no further engagement with other members of this stakeholder group was required.

If there are a large number of stakeholders then quantitative analysis is needed. The purpose of this is to identify the numbers within the stakeholder group who experience the identified outcomes.

This was carried out with parents/carers using a text survey and the response rate was low. The survey asked individuals to rate the extent to which they had experienced the four outcomes identified. Whilst the number of responses was low, there was a degree of consistency in the importance respondents attached to the identified outcomes and as a result it was possible to scale up the findings.

It should be noted that in relation to all the other stakeholder groups it was possible to interview at least 50% of the cohort, and in some cases all the members of the stakeholder group.

Unexpected outcomes

Potential outcomes were identified through individuals and focus group discussions during the qualitative phase of the analysis. Those potential outcomes that were identified formed the basis of structured questionnaires/surveys designed to quantify the benefits, which were distributed to the wider sample of stakeholders.

Both questionnaires and surveys included open ended questions and it was through the answers given to these that it was possible to identify unanticipated outcomes. As there is some uncertainty about the number (or quantity) of the stakeholder cohort who are likely to experience these outcomes they have not been valued and included in the calculation.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this analysis was to consider the benefits of Making it Work for Families and to calculate the social return on investment.

Making it Work for Families focusses on families affected by substance use who live in the Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth areas and seeks to enable parents/carers and children /young people to access and engage with life changing support services.

The outcomes identified, measured and valued have been achieved as a result of stakeholder engagement, and represent the benefits they actually experience. The analysis provides compelling evidence of the multiple benefits this approach delivers for parents/carers, children and young people, schools and delivery organisations and their staff.

Using an accessible, person centred model for service delivery supported by a collaborative approach to service design has resulted in significant impacts.

For an investment of £140,000 funders are able to deliver benefits that can be valued at a little over £1 million.

However, investment is not justified solely on the 'best value' or the economic advantages that it delivers in the short term. The nature of the outcomes experienced by the individual members of the families who benefited will result in earlier intervention and reduced inequalities which research shows in the long term reduces health costs and lowers demand for welfare benefits.¹⁶

This approach provides a practical and cost effective way of addressing social, economic and health inequalities.

Making it Work for Families is a good example of the way organisations can work collaboratively to support families. The staff in each organisation are able to use their unique skills and experience in the most effective and efficient way. Although there were initial tensions in developing and delivering the partnership approach all organisations now see the benefits of true collaboration from both an organisational and service user perspective.

Working with a family, but meeting the support needs of the separate family members in a way that meets their individual needs, delivers both short and

¹⁶ <https://iris.who.int/items/e36917dd-1084-4450-b641-b2f3539928b7>

long term benefits. In the short term family relationships improve and stress and tension is reduced, whilst in the longer term families have increased stability and security.

By engaging with schools, Making it Work for families is able to offer an early intervention approach and to engage with individual families before crises point is reached. It is not just the children and young people who benefit, teachers are able to spend less time managing disruptive behaviour and more time teaching. The value this approach offers to schools could be highlighted and support with future funding (e.g. Pupil Equity Funding) sought.

The most important findings from the approach taken by Making it Work for Families are the multiple benefits true collaborative working offers and the importance of establishing relationships with and supporting all the members of a family in a way that meets their needs.

Appendix 1: Audit trail and value map information

1.1 Stakeholders identified who were included or excluded

A meeting was held with the delivery organisations to identify and consider potential stakeholders and outcomes.

Table 8: Included and Excluded Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Included/excluded	Rationale
Families *	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Children / Young People	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Parents/Carers	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes.
Fife Young Carers	Excluded	Not likely to experience significant outcomes
Third Sector Organisations	Excluded	Not likely to experience significant outcomes
Staff of Delivery Organisations	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes
Delivery Organisations	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes
Police	Excluded	Not likely to experience significant outcomes
Schools	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes
Social Work	Included	Key stakeholders and likely to experience significant outcomes
NHS	Included	Long term benefits in relation to reduced demand/ cost savings are likely but are out with the scope of this analysis

* Outcomes will be considered as part of interviews with Children and Young People and Parent's Carers

1.2 Engagement methods for 'included' stakeholders

Table 9: Engagement methods for 'included' stakeholders

Stakeholder	Method	Number	Medium
Parents/Carers	Structured Questionnaire	8	One to one interviews
		3	Focus Groups
	Survey	4	SMS Survey
Children /Young People	Structured Questionnaire	8	One to one interviews
		6	Focus Groups
School	Structured Questionnaire	1	One to one interviews
Delivery Organisations	Structured Questionnaire	4	One to one interviews
Delivery Staff	Structured Questionnaire	9	Focus Group
Social Work	Structured Questionnaire	1	One to one interviews

1.3 Outcomes identified, but not measured

The reasons that it has not been possible to measure and value all outcomes have already been explained in section 6.5 on materiality.

No negative outcomes were identified in the analysis - a negative outcome is one which has an adverse effect on stakeholders.

1.4 Financial proxies

All outcomes included had a financial proxy assigned to them.

Table 10: Financial proxies

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	Self awareness course	Self awareness course	Regaining Confidence and Self-Esteem WEA
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	Session with an average cost per advocacy intervention of £912	Session with an average cost per advocacy intervention of £912	P86 Unit costs social care
	Improved health and wellbeing	WELBY	WELBY	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	Annual Minimum Wage	Minimum wage rates for 2026 - GOV.UK
Families	Improved family relationships	1 month of Local Authority Foster Care	1 month of Local Authority Foster Care	gmca-unit-cost-database-v3-0-final.xlsx
	Increased household income	Financial Gains	Financial Gains	Records

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Young People	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education	Future earnings differential expected to be realised by someone who completes 0 grades compared to having no qualifications	Future earnings differential expected to be realised by someone who completes National 4 or 5 compared to having no qualifications	Income returns to education - Social Mobility Commission State of the Nation - GOV.UK
	Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives	Cost of self esteem and confidence course	Cost of self esteem and confidence course	Know Your Worth
	Reduction in risk taking behaviours	Average cost for one month of 'looked after' child across all care settings updated to 2026	Average cost for one month of 'looked after' child across all care settings updated to 2026	Research: Cost Benefit Analysis - Greater Manchester Combined Authority
	Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment	Homelessness application - average one-off and on-going costs associated with statutory homelessness	Homelessness application - average one-off and on-going costs associated with statutory homelessness	Research: Cost Benefit Analysis - Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Schools	Saves staff time managing disruptive behaviour	Average teacher's annual salary- £42,000	Average teacher's annual salary- £42,000	What are teachers paid in Scotland? Full pay scales up to 2026-27 Tes
Delivery Organisations	Increased opportunities to secure funding	Estimate of additional funding	Estimate of additional funding	-
	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	10% of cost of average staff member	10% of cost of average staff member	Staff records

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy	Value £	Source
Staff supporting Service	Increased opportunities to share learning and skills	Spend on training	Spend on training	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	Cost of advertising campaign	https://radioadvertising.co.uk/radio-advertising-costs/

1.5 Deductions to avoid over-claiming

Table 11: 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	21%	0%	50%
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	25%	0%	10%
Families	Improved family relationships	50%	0%	10%
	Increased household income	0%	0%	0%
Young People	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education	25%	0%	25%
	Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives	25%	0%	25%
	Reduction in risk taking behaviours	10%	0%	10%
	Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment	25%	0%	25%
Schools	Saves staff time managing disruptive behaviour	25%	0%	0%
Delivery Organisations	Increased opportunities to secure funding	0%	0%	0%
	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	10%	0%	10%
Staff supporting Service	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 12: Calculation

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Drop Off	Impact
Parents	Feel more valued and supported	57	£96.00	25%	0%	25%	25%	£4,428
	Increased ability to cope with daily life	60	£912.00	25%	0%	25%	25%	£29,241
	Improved health and wellbeing	57	£15,000.00	21%	0%	50%	25%	£337,725
	Increased employment opportunities as a result of new skills or qualifications	7	£24,784.50	25%	0%	10%	25%	£117,107
Families	Improved family relationships	65	£3,180.00	50%	0%	10%	25%	£93,015
	Increased household income	1	£117,024.38	0%	0%	0%	0%	£117,024.38
Young People	Increased chances of attainment through re-engagement with education	7	£1,539.80	25%	0%	25%	0%	£6,063
	Increased ability to inform and influence important decisions about lives	20	£400.00	25%	0%	25%	25%	£4,500
	Reduction in risk taking behaviours	10	£6,828.00	10%	0%	10%	25%	£55,307
	Increased feelings of safety and security in home environment	5	£2,976.00	25%	0%	25%	10%	£8,370
Schools	Saves staff time managing disruptive behaviour	1	£42,000.00	25%	0%	0%	25%	£31,500

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity	Value	Less Deadweight	Less Displacement	Less Attribution	Drop Off	Impact
Delivery Organisations	Increased opportunities to secure funding	1	£40,000.00	0%	0%	0%	0%	£40,000
	Able to use time and resources more effectively by focussing on areas of expertise	4	£3,400.00	10%	0%	10%	25%	£11,016

The 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 £ 1,033,847; the total investment figure in the same period to generate this value is £140,000

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

The social return from investing in the Making it work for Families Project was found to be in the region of £8 for every £1 invested.

Appendix 2: The Principles of SROI

Table 13: 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. This can be downloaded at <https://www.socialvalueint.org/guide-to-sroi>

Appendix 3: Value Map

A copy of the value map is available on request from karen.carrick@improvementservice.org.uk

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