

What do young people perceive the benefit of the Entry to Employment programme to be in their present place of learning and/or employment at least six months after completion?



Sharing our experience

Practitioner-led research 2008-2009

PLR0809/125



This report is part of CWDC's Practitioner-Led Research (PLR) programme. Now in its third year, the programme gives practitioners the opportunity to explore, describe and evaluate ways in which services are currently being delivered within the children's workforce.

Working alongside mentors from Making Research Count (MRC), practitioners design and conduct their own small-scale research and then produce a report which is centred around the delivery of Integrated Working.

The reports are used to improve ways of working, recognise success and provide examples of good practice.

This year, 41 teams of practitioners completed projects in a number of areas including:

- Adoption
- Bullying
- CAF
- Child trafficking
- Disability
- Early Years
- Education Support
- Parenting
- Participation
- Social care
- Social work
- Travellers
- Youth

The reports have provided valuable insights into the children and young people's workforce, and the issues and challenges practitioners and service users face when working in an integrated environment. This will help to further inform workforce development throughout England.

This practitioner-led research project builds on the views and experiences of the individual projects and should not be considered the opinions and policies of CWDC.

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Vanessa Potter

asphaleia

March 2009

E: vanessapotter@asphaleia.co.uk

W: www.asphaleia.co.uk

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Abstract

This research project looked at the perceived benefits of the Entry to Employment (e2e) programme to young people in their current place of learning or employment, at least six months after completing their programmes.

E2e is a Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded training programme for young people between the ages of 16–19 years old who left statutory education without achieving Level 2 qualifications. The programme aims to help learners develop numeracy, literacy, IT, independent living skills and employability skills through non-traditional workshops, practical sessions and mentoring. E2e is often viewed as a stepping-stone back into mainstream education or employment for young people who often have no clear direction in terms of progression goals.

Ten past learners were interviewed using focus groups, 1:1 'learning journey' metaphor timelines and 'distance travelled' self-assessment charts. They were asked to recall, reflect upon and evaluate their learning experience. They were then asked to relate any lessons learned and experience gained to real-life situations that they face in daily routines and challenges at college or work.

Several key developmental themes were raised which related to personal, social, employability and basic skills. The young people were very clear about the benefits of attending e2e, outlining the importance of being given the tools and opportunities to overcome personal barriers to progression and learning.

A number of practical implications have been drawn from the research relating to integrated working practice and the use of the 'learning journey' timeline and the chart as an evaluative and target-setting tool.

Overwhelmingly apparent was the perceived value of increased confidence, direction, motivation, self-belief and new social relationships. Learners left the course feeling empowered and motivated by a new found sense of self-belief enabling them to either face new challenges in the workplace or develop further their learning skills.

1. Research aims

This research project aimed to look at the perceived benefits of participating in an Entry to Employment (e2e) programme from the viewpoint of learners after completion.

The question 'In your current place of learning or employment, what do you perceive the benefits of e2e to be?' was posed. The objective was to gain a genuine insight into the learning journey, from the viewpoint of the young people, focusing on the aspects of the programme that the learners felt that they benefited from the most.

E2e is a national service provision for young people aged 16–19 years old funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The training programme works with often disaffected young people who leave statutory education with ongoing support needs. Having not achieved Level 2 qualifications, and often with no clear direction in terms of career goals, learners work towards overcoming barriers to learning and progression. These barriers include a lack of basic skills development, poor life skills, low confidence, domestic troubles, low aspiration, behavioural problems and mental health issues.

The programme aims to help learners develop numeracy, literacy, IT, independent living skills and employability skills through non-traditional workshops, practical sessions and mentoring. E2e is often viewed as a stepping-stone back into mainstream education or employment.

asphaleia is an organization that has been working with vulnerable young people in a variety of contexts for nearly ten years. Founded in 1999, they are dedicated to positively impacting the lives of young people through their training provision and working with young people in a number of different settings. They have delivered e2e for five years and hope to use this research to enhance their provision by applying our findings to staff training, company policy, curriculum development and design.

asphaleia currently employ a variety of methods to assess learners and evaluate our provision. It is hoped that research tools developed during this project can become part of the programme's initial assessment and target-setting processes, programme evaluation and youth participation strategy.

2. Context

asphaleia

asphaleia training has worked with young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) for nearly ten years, providing services for disadvantaged young people in a variety of different settings. Some of the services asphaleia provides are:

- training and housing for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- fostering services
- outreach projects
- training and mentoring services for disadvantaged young people
- consultancy services.

asphaleia believe that well-structured learning programmes, combined with the presence of a supportive, encouraging and approving adult, can greatly enhance a young person's self-esteem and help them to grow into confident and well-adjusted adults.

asphaleia is in continuous development, evaluating, improving and expanding its provision whilst striving for excellence, quality of service and maximum positive impact in order to change the lives of the young people they work with.

Entry to Employment

Modern Apprenticeships: the Way to Work (October 2001), commissioned by the Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee, made recommendations regarding provision for young people at the pre-apprenticeship stage including a concept called e2e. In 2002 the e2e Programme was confirmed by the Green Paper *14–19: Extending opportunities, raising standards* (2002) as part of 14–19 phase reforms to Modern Apprenticeships.

Created to re-engage NEET 16–18 year olds, e2e was developed as part of a national strategy to reform 14–19 phase provision and thereby reduce national NEET figures. The LSC intended that a new specialist, flexible approach to education, designed to help young people overcome both social and educational barriers to progression, would lead to specific, individual learning needs and barriers to progression being overcome. (Green Paper, *14–19: Extending opportunities, raising standards* (2002)).

The Framework for Entry 2 Employment Programmes Issue 2 LSC (2006), specifies the following e2e learning objectives, recommending that 'e2e needs to be flexible in design and implementation' whilst also providing 'a structure for individuals, one which will enable them to progress against realistic measures'. The e2e learning objectives are:

- To improve motivation and confidence

- To develop basic and/or key skills
- To develop personal effectiveness
- To acquire knowledge, skills and understanding through opportunities to sample different work and learning contexts.

Local authority reports indicate that the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is moving towards a more integrated service (West Sussex County Council Children and Young People's Service Select Committee, 2007). DCSF also indicate that responsibility for supporting learners into progression and reducing the NEET population should be shared equally between any partnerships working with young people including Children's Trusts, 14–19 Partnerships, employers and the LSC (*Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) LSC research paper (2008)*).

asphaleia values partnership-working and sees it as central to meeting the complex and specialist needs of the NEET client group. asphaleia hopes that through effective partnerships and integrated working they can help learners overcome barriers to progression.

Research suggests that 'partnerships that evaluate local learners learning needs and development requirements and [evaluate] the capacity and capability needs of provision to meet these are most successful in engaging young people in the NEET group (*Approaches to e2e- developing effective partnerships*, Ralcliff (2005)). This research project will help asphaleia consolidate and improve current practice.

3. Ethical considerations

Participants were debriefed and told that their disclosures would be treated with confidence (due to the personal nature of the information being collected), interviews would be logged anonymously within the parameters of asphaleia's child protection procedures and the guidelines given in the Department of Health Document *Working together to Safeguard Children* and the Children's Act 1989.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted at asphaleia Training Learning Centre. These premises have been risk assessed and staff are trained in safe working practices including lone working and child protection. Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks for all staff are held by personnel on file.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study to ensure that they understood the aims, objectives and methodology of the study and were happy to participate. All participants were over 18 years of age and therefore guardian/parental consent is not required.

Participants were debriefed and told that they would be contacted regarding research findings.

Information obtained is handled accordance with the Data protection Act 1998.

4. Research methodology

This research project aims to analyse the perceived benefits of the e2e programme to learners by adopting a 'Learning Journey' analysis (N. Smith, 2004). We wanted this research to teach us how the programme service is perceived by the young people we work with in order to develop e2e provision. Learners were asked to recall their learning programmes through focus groups and 1:1 interviews. Learners focused on knowledge gained and practical skills developed and reflected upon and evaluated their overall experience in relation to its perceived value to their current situation.

A sample of learners was asked to participate in a research project investigating the benefit of e2e to their current place in learning. Learners were chosen at random based on their programme completion date. Learners who had completed their programme six months ago for whom we had up to date contact details, were contacted by phone and asked if they would like to participate in the research. Those who accepted had appointment times scheduled and were told that they would be thanked for their time by being offered a high street voucher and would be invited to attend a completion celebratory event.

4.1 Stages of the research methodology

Stage 1:

1.1 Focus group

Two focus groups were held, one group of two and one group of three.

The interviewer drew a 'learning journey timeline' on an A3 piece of paper (see Appendices 1 and 2). Each group was asked to consider three points on the timeline.

- a.** The beginning of their e2e programme
- b.** The end of the learning programme
- c.** Their current place in learning or employment

Learners were asked to recall their learning programmes, assigning learning outcomes to the timeline between points a. and b. as relevant to their experience on e2e (see Appendices 1 and 2).

Between points b. and c. learners were then asked to list how each learning outcome benefits their current place in learning.

Stage 2:

1:1 interview

The above process was carried out on a 1:1 basis with the remaining five participants. (See Appendix 1 for learner timeline example.)

Stage 3:

Self-assessment charts

Learners were asked to evaluate perceived benefits of e2e through the completion of a 'Distance Travelled Self-Assessment Chart'.

The researcher drew a series of 'measurement scales' on an A3 sheet of paper, Participants were asked to label each of the measurement scales with key words recorded during Stage 1 between points a and b on the learner journey timeline.

Participants were asked to allocate two self-assessment ratings for each programme outcome using a scale of zero to ten to assess confidence levels before and after e2e.

After ratings were recorded, they were discussed. Learners were asked to identify practical situations in their current place of learning and/or employment in which they benefit from e2e outcomes. These were recorded beneath each score line (see sample and Appendices 1 and 2).

Standardized question prompts were used, allowing the researcher to explore responses in need of elaboration wherever possible.

'Before e2e I didn't/couldn't/wasn't...' and 'but now I can/am/have...'

5. Analysis of methodology

Focus groups

The focus group proved to draw only limited generic information as learners were reluctant to openly disclose personal experiences. The learners stated that they felt exposed and lacked the confidence needed to talk in front of their peers about this topic. Pre-existing relationships and complicated personal situations involving participants impacted communication and open discussion.

An initial attempt to form focus groups involving learners who had attended e2e together was made, but this proved impractical due to lack of availability, need for flexibility, expired contact details and time lapsed. In addition to this, learners often missed or cancelled their appointments due to complex personal lives, resulting in unbalanced focus groups.

Whilst useful information was obtained using the focus group I felt that 1:1 interviews conducted by the learner's e2e key worker and advocate would provide more valuable and robust information. An existing level of trust and understanding between the key worker and the participant promoted an honest and open frank discussion. Learners also felt comfortable about disclosing personal as well as practical achievements. Experience of carrying out learner reviews and evaluations meant that skilful interview techniques and tools could be employed, thereby enriching the information retrieved.

The 'Learning journey timelines' and 'Self-assessment charts' were adopted for the following reasons:

1. Visualization: to aid memory recall and encourage reflection. Participants were asked to visualize their prior experience using the learning journey as a visual prompt.
2. Creativity: learners were asked to create their own timeline and self-assessment chart to encourage personalization and ownership.
3. Effective recording: participants were asked to list activities which would later be used to label the self-assessment charts. This could be reviewed, reflected upon, added to and amended as needed.
4. Low stress: stress would be reduced as space is allowed for pause and reflection.
5. Focus: learning journey as focal point aiding concentration and reducing participant pressure to perform.
6. Programme overview: participants could create an overview of their e2e experience and record it in relation to their current place in employment or learning. This will help participants speak about and see the connection between e2e and the benefits to their current place in employment or learning.
7. Platform created for open questions to explore learner perceptions in depth.

Limitations

Out of date contact details and unwillingness to participate affected the quality of the participant sample. Learners who had a positive experience with us would be more likely to update their details and be willing to get involved in the research.

The research focuses on perceived benefits: learners were asked to focus on the positive aspects of their programme looking at the perceived benefits, a further separate study would be equally beneficial focusing on perceived negative elements. In this case, I would recommend using a third party to carry out the interviews, for example, the e2e Connexions Support Worker.

A script was followed wherever possible to limit biased findings; however, given the client group, some flexibility was required to encourage reflective disclosure and to improve the depth and quality of the findings. Standardized question prompts were used to explore responses in need of elaboration wherever possible.

6. Sample 'Distance Travelled' Self-assessment results

Case Study

Learner X joined e2e without prior qualifications; her aim was to work in childcare and achieve numeracy and literacy qualifications. She was bullied at school and had low self-confidence. Pupil X joined e2e wanting to meet new people and make friends. She also wanted help with progression and college. Pupil X had low self-esteem and benefited from mentoring support which taught her to value herself and general wellbeing.

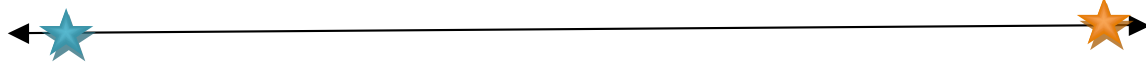
Figure 1 Learner X: Sample Distance Travelled Chart

Key – Self-assessment of Confidence Level

Before e2e 

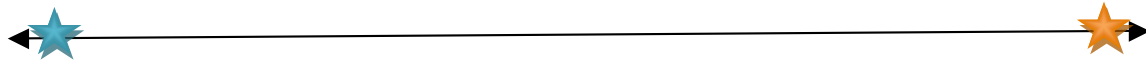
After e2e 

1. **Confidence** 0–10 +100%



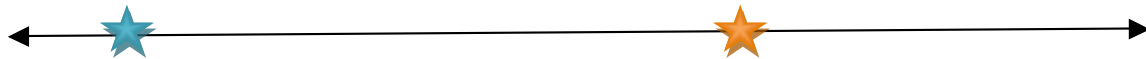
‘Before e2e I had no confidence but because of e2e I don’t worry so much about things I say or do, I can talk to people I don’t know and ask for help if I need it.’

2. **Applying for jobs** 0–10 +100%



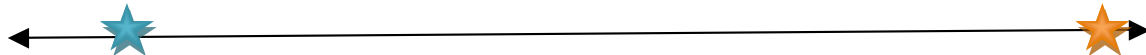
‘I didn’t like ringing up for jobs but now I feel fine making phone calls, applying for jobs and telephone interviews which meant I was able to get a job.’

3. **Maturity** 1–7 +60%



‘Before e2e I was immature, but I learnt to act more maturely when need to. I act like a young adult which helped me get through the college interview ... learning about appropriate behaviour helps me at college and at work.’

4. **Qualifications** 1–10 +80%



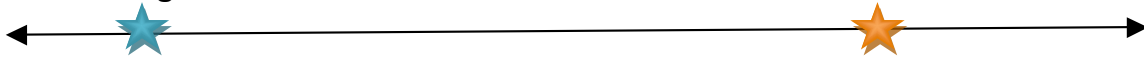
‘I was able to get into college with the qualifications I got on e2e which meant that I went on to get a childcare qualification so I can now get a job that I really want.’

5. **Trust** 0–5 +50%



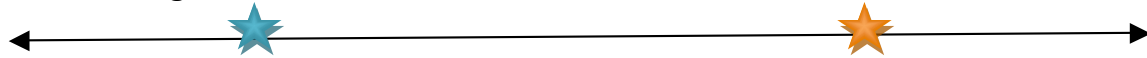
‘Before e2e I found it hard to trust people ... by making friends on e2e I learnt how and who to trust which helps me make friends and look after myself.’

6. **Progression** 1–8 +70%



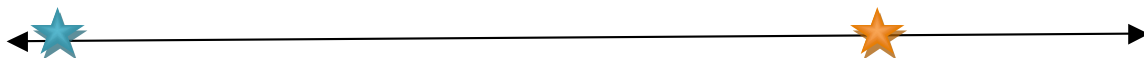
‘Before e2e I didn’t know what I wanted to do for a job but after finding about different jobs on e2e I decided to work with children.’

7. **College** 2–8 +60%



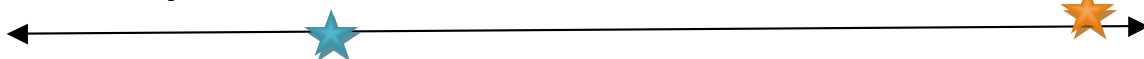
‘I hated filling in forms because I didn’t really understand them and I didn’t have references to put on my application form. After e2e I feel confident about filling forms and have references.’

8. **Independence** 0–8 +80%



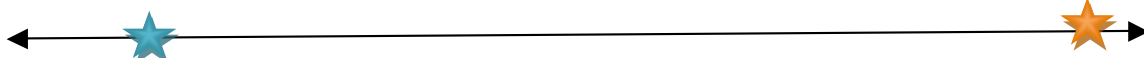
‘Before e2e I relied on other people for everything, I always asked my mum to help me fill in forms and for money. On e2e I have learned how to do most things for myself and earn my own money.’

9. **Safety** 3–10 + 70%



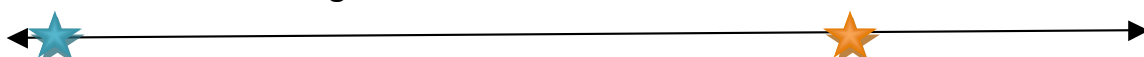
‘Meeting new people and being in an environment that I feel safe in means that I now feel okay about going into new situations like work and college.’

10. **Sexual health** 1–10 +90%



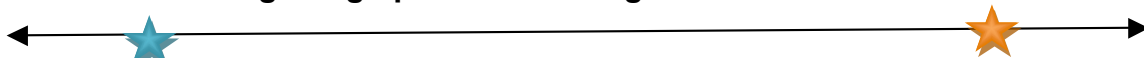
‘I didn’t know where to go for advice and STI testing but e2e took me to the Warren Brown Clinic and mentoring helped me think about how to keep safe.’

11. **CV and Covering Letter** 0–8 +80 %



‘Before e2e I didn’t know how to write a CV or Covering Letter or when to use them. Now I can and apply for jobs.’

12. **Motivation/getting up in the morning** 1–9 +60%



‘Before e2e I had nothing to get up for in the mornings but e2e made me motivated to learn and meet friends.’

7. Findings

Whilst exploring the main benefits of the e2e programme to learners, several main themes were common to all of the learners interviewed.

Confidence

- Increased levels of confidence appeared to be the most beneficial outcome to learners; all learners stated that increased confidence helped them achieve qualifications, progressions, self-esteem and develop social relationships.
- It would appear that increased confidence underpins the perceived benefit of the entire programme. Learners felt new-found confidence about their ability to get into college, meet new people and make friends, achieve their goals and take control of their lives.

Basic skills qualifications

- Gaining new qualifications helped learners in a number of ways and participants consistently referred to the impact on their progression.
- Learners felt that successful application to college was achieved in part because minimum entry requirements had been gained while on the e2e programme.
- Learners enjoyed achieving and discovered that learning could be fun which encouraged them to progress on to, and persevere with, further education.
- Having new qualifications made CVs more attractive to employers as it showed successful completion of a training programme with a qualification outcome.
- The physical act of holding the certificate was a confidence-boost, making them perform better in both workplace and college environments.
- Increased confidence in literacy and numeracy, eg mental arithmetic, spelling, reading and writing helped with key skills, college coursework and homework. It also made form filling and college/job applications more successful.
- Numeracy skills helped learners with budgeting, independent living skills, eg paying bills, understanding payslips and tax. Learners in employment stated that numeracy helps them in situations involving money handling.

IT skills

- Having access to facilities and learning new IT skills helped learners to complete college coursework and use IT in the workplace. They also felt more confident about using IT skills for job searches, letter writing and CV writing.

Employability skills

- Learning to create a CV, cover letter and develop interview skills helped them get their current and past positions at work and college. Learners reflected on the long-term benefits of job skills in terms of future job search activities, eg updating a CV.
- Developing interview skills made learners feel confident and prepared for both work and college interviews, knowing what to wear, what to say and what to expect.
- Knowing where to look for jobs and which jobs to apply for based on personal experience, qualifications and interests empowered learners and helped them conduct more effective job searches.
- Learning about professionalism and how to behave in the workplace and in college environments helps learners 'fit in', function and succeed in their current settings.

Careers guidance and IAG

- Having career options clearly outlined helped with career planning. Before e2e learners often had no clear progression aims nor had they been given the opportunity to plan their future goals.
- Learners who fell into this category enrolled on the programme to get help making choices and exploring their options. These learners felt that e2e helped them to do so.
- Learners appreciated practical support in terms of choosing courses, filling in application forms and applying for college courses and jobs. They also appreciated the encouragement and emotional support that they received throughout the application process.
- Regular contact with Connexions Personal Advisors within a familiar setting helped them organize and attend careers interviews set up by their e2e project worker or mentor.

Independent living skills

- Learners stated that a number of independent living skills (ILS) gained through discrete ILS sessions on e2e helped them in their current situations. For example, learning to use public transport helped some learners feel confident about travelling to college and work. This added independence also helps learners to feel in control of their personal circumstances.
- Again, budgeting skills helps learners to take control of their finances and spending, as well as being able to understand payslips and taxes. Learners felt that they benefited from an increase in maturity and responsibility.

In-house mentoring support

- Having someone to trust, turn to for help and talk to increased self-esteem, raised confidence levels and encouraged learners to overcome personal barriers. This helped to overcome personal challenges including low self-esteem, substance misuse issues, sexual health problems, domestic concerns and in turn reduced barriers to progression.
- Mentoring enabled learners to develop strategies to manage their own feelings and emotions, including anger management and social phobias. They felt that this helped them learn to cope with day-to-day life and succeed in their current placements.
- When asked how mentoring contributed to achievement in their current situations, learners stated that without mentoring they would still be where they were prior to the course both emotionally and environmentally. Learners detailed topics such as substance misuse, housing, lacking confidence and self-esteem as well as family problems. It was clear that learners saw direct application of their personal and social development to their current positions at college, work and in their personal lives. Learners felt that it was essential for them to overcome personal barriers in order to move on and achieve and felt that this benefited them the most.

Personal development

- Learners stated that their time on e2e helped them to develop maturity, assertiveness, self-acceptance, mental strength, self-belief and generally become stronger individuals.
- They felt that this helped them in life in terms of understanding their own strengths and weaknesses as well as being able to express their opinions and beliefs coherently. They were able to handle difficult situations and deal with conflict.
- Learners felt that they gained maturity during their time on e2e which helps them act more appropriately and maturely in their current place of learning or work. The learners stated that they 'learned not to annoy people' or 'wind people up' as it would hinder their success at college or work and would change the way people perceived and respected them.

Motivation

- Learners stated that participating in e2e increased their motivation to achieve because they 'had a reason to wake up in the morning', they looked forward to meeting friends each day and they benefited from 'having something to do'. This resulted in gaining a new-found sense of self-respect and motivation. e2e helped learners by taking an active interest in their progress, achievement and effort which left them feeling accountable for their actions.

- Working in a positive, supportive and friendly environment helped learners feel motivated and committed. They commented on how supportive and friendly teachers and classmates were and how this motivated them to achieve.
- The respectful adult environment helped learners become more engaged and motivated. They appreciated the fact that they were not being treated like children and saw a distinct difference between the way they were treated on the e2e programme and their experiences at school, thus reducing 'learning ghosts'. Learners found that attending e2e with peers who were in very similar situations to themselves made them realize that they were not alone, which resulted in them feeling less isolated and discouraged.

Referral to external agencies and support

- Learners felt that being referred on to external agencies for additional support helped them in terms of being able to access ongoing support and provision post-e2e. Learners often, in addition to in-house mentoring, appreciated being able to access professional support from external bodies.
- Additional support agencies included the Substance Misuse Team, Anger Management Counselling, Bereavement Counselling, Personal Counselling Services, The Information Shop, The Family Planning Clinic, Citizen Advice Bureau, Connexions and The Benefits Agency.

Communication skills

- Learners felt that they gained a number of communication skills while on e2e. Listening skills developed through mentoring and classroom activity helped learners participate in college activities as well as communicate with peers.
- Learning to express feelings and opinions helps learners feel more empowered and to build positive relationships. It also helps learners to become more assertive and to avoid confrontation.
- Learners stated that increased confidence regarding telephone skills helps them overcome fears, allowing them to apply for jobs, training places and build social relationships.
- Learning to create and give presentations helped learners at college and at work.

Building social relationships

- This category was given high importance by learners. The learners enjoyed meeting new people and building new social relationships which in turn increased their confidence. Learners often lacked positive social relationships for a variety of reasons.

- Peer relationships at school may have included bullying, loneliness or reinforcement of negative behaviour through destructive peer relationships. Learners said that there was an unusually friendly and welcoming atmosphere created by staff. While most learners experienced an overall positive experience of building friendships with their classmates, others found it difficult to integrate. This seemed to be the result of previous school experiences. Learners were helped through these difficulties by mentors.
- Both groups of learners, those who easily made friends as well as those who needed support to overcome initial fears, stated that the experience of meeting new people and making friends while on e2e gave them the confidence to attempt to do the same in their current and previous places of learning and work.
- Learners also felt that e2e was an opportunity to meet and integrate with a wider variety of people whom they would normally not socialize with. They saw this as an opportunity to overcome stereotypes. Learners stated that before e2e they felt intimidated by or malice towards people from different 'sub-cultures'. They stated that being given the opportunity to get to know and build solid relationships with people from different social groups, eg 'chavs', 'Goths' and 'introverts' meant that they learned to be more open and make a greater effort with those around them.

Relationships with others

- Learners felt able to use the experiences gained from e2e to work in teams at either work or college. Having a positive experience of e2e meant that learners felt confident about being able to succeed at college in this respect. The building of positive relationships with peers and staff meant that learners were confident about experiencing the same success at college.
- Learning to respect others helped learners act appropriately in their settings, they learned to employ equal opportunity ethics and respect people's differences. Learners felt that this was because they were given both the space and the opportunity to talk stereotypes, prejudices and preconceptions through.
- Learners who feared college because they were worried about having to work in large groups stated that being able to do group work in a non-threatening environment while on e2e helped them feel more comfortable about being in a large college environment.

8 Data

Figure 2 Self-assessment chart

Self-assessment of confidence levels before and after e2e, using data obtained through the 'Distance Travelled Self-assessment Chart' using a scale of 0–10. Mean average.

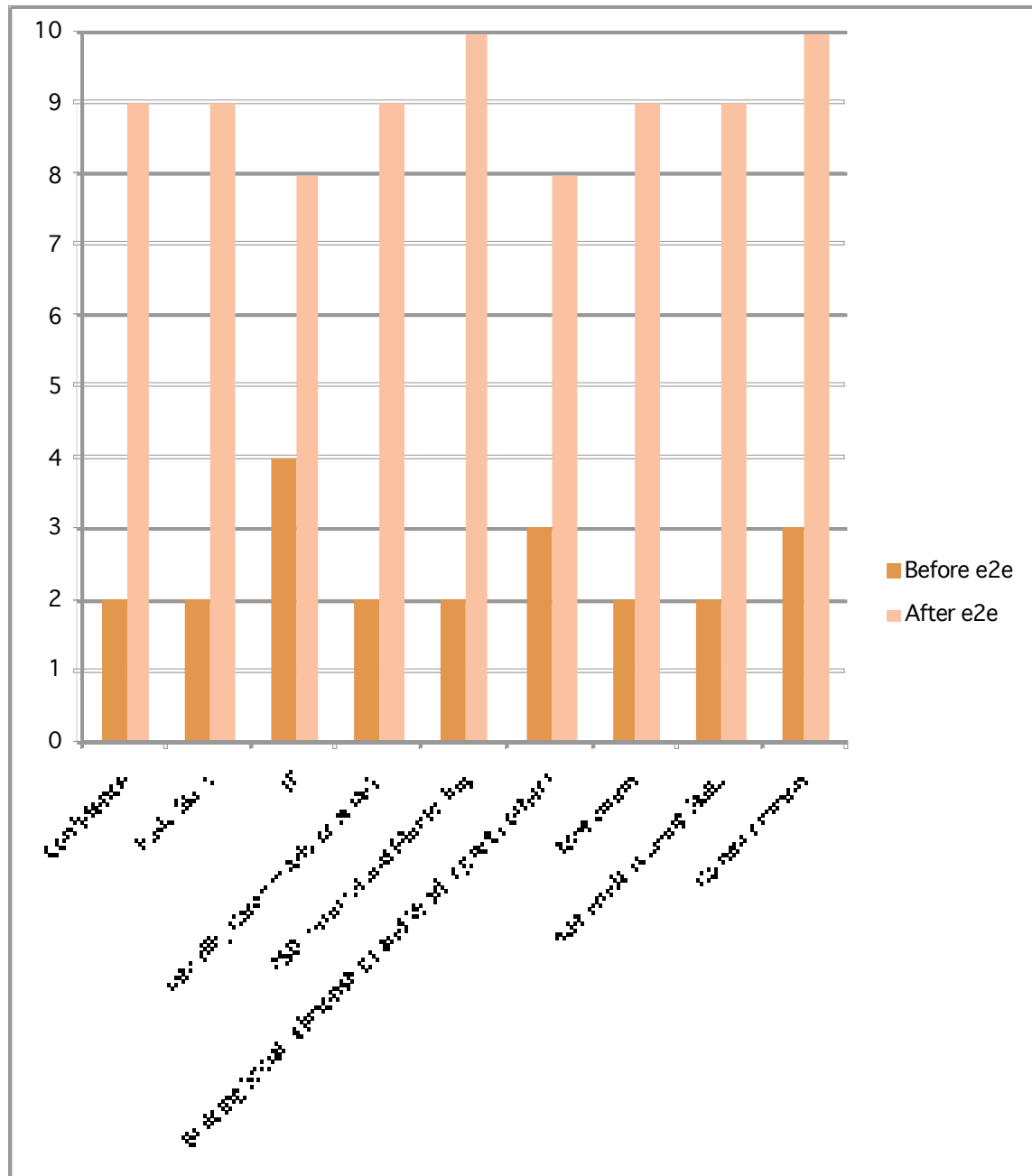
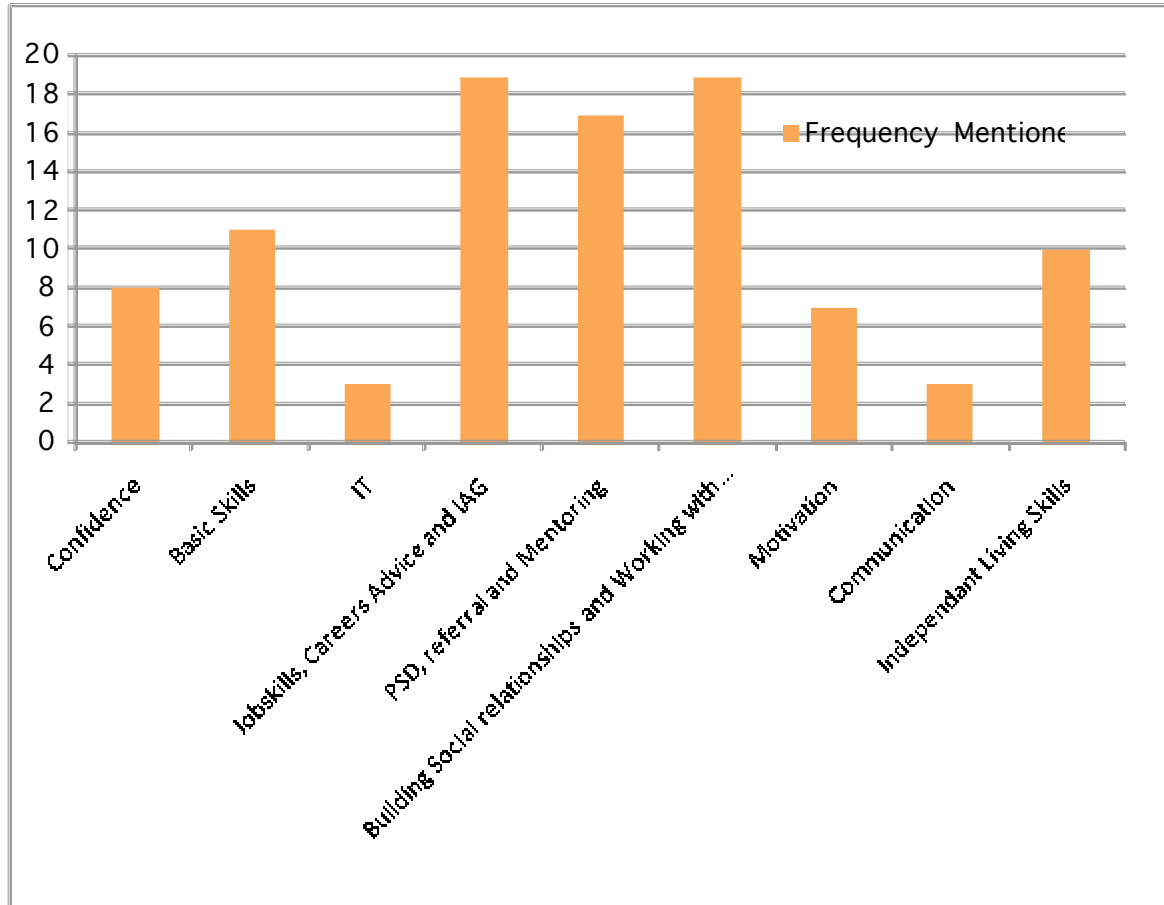


Figure 3 Frequency themes

Frequency themes mentioned by learners during 121 'Distance Travelled Self-assessment Chart' interviews.



9. Conclusions – Implications for practice and integrated working

‘e2e was a big step forward to massive change.’

Findings suggest that the development of independent living skills was perceived as most beneficial when addressed 1:1 with a mentor or counsellor rather than during groupwork sessions. This reinforces the importance of mentoring and integrated working.

Learners commented on the central role that mentoring played in terms of personal development, achievement and overcoming of personal barriers to progression and we should therefore ensure that specialist provision is made available to all learners.

It is vital that strong working links are developed with local services so that learners can access specialized support within their learning environment. Co-ordinating guest speakers from local services and building in visits to local support agencies would help establish firm relationships and referral procedures.

Information sharing procedures and joint support plans would also help different agencies work together more effectively in order to help learners overcome barriers to achievement.

The ‘Distance Travelled Self-assessment Chart’ has proven to be a useful development in our provision. The *Learning journey* process can be used at key points in the learner programme; target setting, progress review and as an evaluative tool. The tool will be adopted as an exit interview tool to evaluate the programme as a whole. The ‘Distance Travelled Self-assessment Chart’ can be used to identify areas where continued support is needed, ensuring referrals are made to relevant support services.

The tool can be used to conduct an initial assessment of need, thus allowing us to involve relevant support services and agencies at initial assessment and thus preventing learners from becoming disengaged.

In relation to integrated services, *the journey* can be used to evaluate the impact or contribution that different services have had in relation to a young person reaching their target goals. Learners can then go on to complete the *distance travelled chart* in order to compare the perceived impact each service has had, identifying possible areas where continued support may be needed.

The tool could be employed to help with target setting. The learners appeared to have little recall of target setting and review practice, so perhaps adopting a speculative *learning journey* to help learners set personal goals would help them plan their targets. Both the ‘journey timeline’ and the ‘distance travelled chart’ could be revisited at review to ensure Recognizing and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) principles are in place and learners feel progress has been made.

The tool can be used to encourage youth participation in project planning, where learners can identify topics they feel should be covered during a course depending on their perceived confidence.

Learner perceptions

Together with increased confidence and motivation, learners recognized benefits from e2e in three key areas:

Personal and Social Development:

- 1:1 mentoring, referrals to outside agencies for specialist support, eg CAMS, Substance Misuse Service and Family Planning Service, communication skills, increased motivation, making friends, learning appropriate behaviour, team skills, ILS sessions.

Employability Skills Development:

- Careers guidance, job skills, CV writing, interview skills.

Basic Skills Development

- Qualifications, Literacy, Numeracy, IT, study skills.

Participants recognized that increased motivation and confidence levels underpin all three key areas of development, as listed above. In combination, these create a full programme helping learners to achieve successful progression and personal development.

These findings demonstrate that learners seemed to benefit from the core areas of learning, basic skills, job skills, independent living skills and mentoring, thus affirming the original aims of e2e. While this is the case on a simple level, it is clear from the findings that learners placed a greater emphasis on personal achievement, social development and the value of the learning environment in which they develop social connections together.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (*A Theory of Human Motivation*, 1943) suggests that in order to reach self-actualization, learn and achieve, people must first have physiological security and needs of belonging and love met. Conclusions support this and suggest that in order to enable learners to progress and achieve we must ensure that basic level needs are being addressed, and that those most in need feel motivated to access the support on offer.

e2e offers support to a client group who have a wide spectrum of learning and support needs. It is clear that we need to offer a highly individualized programme in order to engage and support our learners into positive progressions.

In order to provide value to our learners it is imperative that we establish an integrated multi-agency approach to education as integration encourages learners to engage and overcome their barriers to progression.

Being NEET is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, teenage motherhood, depression and poor physical health. (Department for Education and Skills, Public Service Agreement Review, March 2005)

e2e has made a big difference in learners' lives, enabling them to go on to achieve future happiness and success.

'e2e gave me a reason to get up in the morning.'

Appendices

1. Sample Learner Journey Analysis 1
2. Sample Learner Journey Analysis 2
3. Sample Learner Case Study Appendix 3

3. This case study was prepared by an e2e key worker. The key worker was asked to reflect upon the learning journey of a typical beneficiary in order to complete the Case Study Pro Forma. Information was obtained through learner file notes and contact logs. Case studies are often produced to provide management and funders with learner 'snapshots'.

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or visit **www.cwdcouncil.org.uk**

Or write to CWDC, 2nd Floor, City Exchange
11 Albion Street, Leeds LS1 5ES
email info@cwdcouncil.org.uk
or fax us on 0113 390 7744

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