



**Ipsos MORI**  
Social Research Institute

May 2019

# **Troubled Families Programme National Evaluation**

**Survey among Troubled Families Employment  
Advisers**

Conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of MHCLG



# Contents

<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
Methodology	1
<b>2 Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role</b>	<b>5</b>
Who are TFEAs?	5
TFEA role	8
Working with families on the programme	10
<b>3 Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme</b>	<b>16</b>
Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme	16
Impact of support	21
<b>4 Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants</b>	<b>25</b>
Support for claimants	25
Additional resources required	32
<b>5 Workforce development</b>	<b>35</b>
Training	35
Support and supervision	38
Developing TFEA skills	42
<b>6 Multi-agency working</b>	<b>46</b>
Working with partner services	46
Support from partners	47
Barriers to effective partnership working	48
<b>7 Conclusions</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>8. Appendices</b>	<b>55</b>

# 1. Introduction

Background

Methodology

# 1 Introduction

## Background

This report presents findings from the fourth research study among Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEAs), conducted on behalf of the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). TFEAs provide advice to help families to move towards employment.

The Troubled Families Programme aims to support up to 400,000 complex families with multiple high-cost problems. It is designed to help families with severe and persistent problems make significant and sustained progress towards their goals. Key features include promoting a whole family, early help approach across partner agencies including the police, Jobcentre Plus, housing, schools, voluntary sector and health.

This research is one element of the national evaluation, alongside a longitudinal quantitative family survey, qualitative case studies and monitoring via data collected as part of the National Impact Study and Family Progress Data.

The evaluation aims to explore the level of service transformation driven by the programme as well as the impact of whole family working approach on outcomes for families themselves, and the cost benefits that this has for the taxpayer.

## Methodology

Data was gathered from TFEAs through an online survey. DWP provided valid email addresses for 335 TFEAs, who were sent an email with a direct link to the survey. In total, responses were received from 212 TFEAs and the overall response rate to the survey was 63%. TFEAs from 128 of the 152 local authorities (84%) took part and the majority of these local authorities (89%) also took part in 2017. Fieldwork was conducted between 17 October and 16 December 2018.

Separate reports present findings for similar surveys of Troubled Families Co-ordinators (TFCs) and Troubled Families keyworkers or front-line practitioners. These surveys are designed to run annually over the five years of the evaluation; this is the fourth in the series.

The questionnaire was updated between waves to reflect changes in the delivery of the programme. However, many questions are consistent allowing for comparison over time. The majority of questions are asked of all TFEAs with the exception of two questions: those who reported they offered more than two types of help and support to Troubled Families claimants were then asked to confirm which were most effective in terms of offering positive outcomes for these claimants, and those who said that employment advice is not provided to claimants at the right time were asked why.

In 2018 new questions were asked to further explore TFEA's views on the single most important barrier facing Troubled Families claimants and the time spent upskilling colleagues.

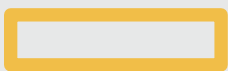
The following table outlines the fieldwork dates and sample sizes for each wave of research. As a guide, when looking at how a result varies, differences should be between  $\pm 3$  to 5 percentage points to be sure they represent statistically significant (or 'real') differences and are not due to chance (based on 95% confidence intervals).

	Fieldwork dates	Sample size	Response rate
Wave 1	26 <sup>th</sup> October - 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	194 TFEAs	60%
Wave 2	31 <sup>st</sup> October - 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2016	202 TFEAs	62%
Wave 3	23 <sup>rd</sup> October - 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	216 TFEAs	71%
Wave 4	17 <sup>th</sup> October – 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	212 TFEAs	63%

Where the 2018 result is significantly greater than in previous years this is highlighted by the use of a blue box, where it is lower it is highlighted by the use of a yellow box.



Result has significantly increased since the previous wave.



Result has significantly decreased since the previous wave.

## Notes for the reader

'N/A' is used to signify that a year-on-year comparison is unavailable due to the survey question not being asked in a comparable format, or at all.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding or multiple responses. To ensure the bar charts are easy to read, where an answer is three per cent or lower the figure is not shown.

Where data is available for more than two waves of the survey, this is shown in a line chart or included in tables in the report appendices.

## **2. Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role**

**Who are TFEAs?**

**TFEA role**

**Working with families on the programme**



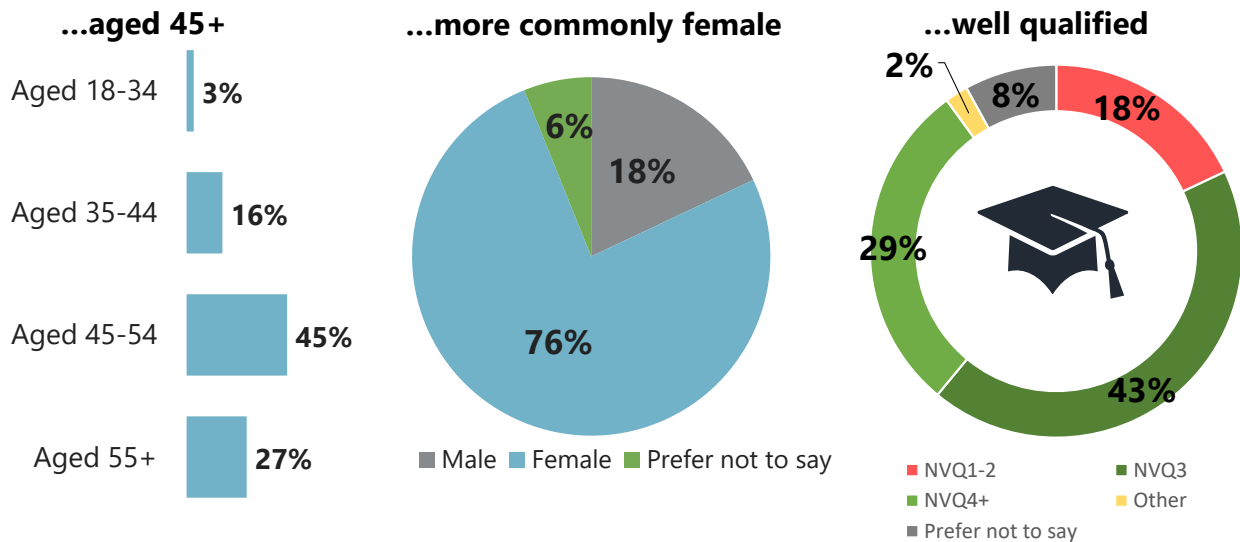
## 2 Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role

**The majority of TFEAs are female, aged 45 or over, and well qualified.**

### Who are TFEAs?

The majority of TFEAs who took part in the survey in 2018 are female (76%) and aged over 45 (72%). Almost three in ten (29%) say their highest qualification is at least a bachelor degree or equivalent (NVQ4+), and just over four in ten (43%) say they have an A level or equivalent (NVQ3). The profile of respondents in 2018 is very similar to previous waves of the survey.

### Troubled Families Employment Advisers tend to be...



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QD2, QD1, QD3)

## The majority of TFEAs represent DWP / Jobcentre Plus and are experienced.

Almost all (98%) TFEAs are employed by DWP / Jobcentre Plus. When asked what type of organisation they represent, nearly seven in ten (69%) describe themselves as representing DWP / Jobcentre Plus. Smaller proportions say they work within a specific Troubled Families team (22%) and nine per cent say they represent a children, young people and families team.

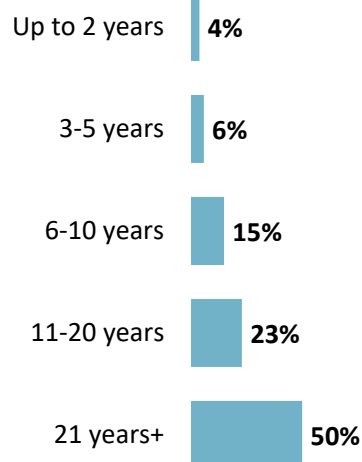
Most TFEAs responding to the survey are very experienced employees within DWP / Jobcentre Plus. Half (50%) have at least 21 years' experience, and nearly a quarter (23%) have been working within DWP / Jobcentre Plus for between 11 and 20 years. Fifteen per cent have six to ten years' experience, and ten per cent are relatively new employees with less than five years' experience.

### Troubled Families Employment Advisers tend to be...

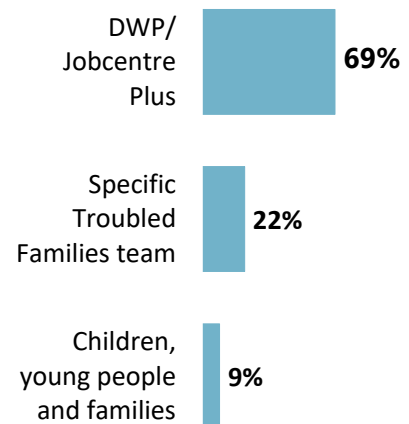
#### ...employed by DWP/ Jobcentre Plus

**98%** are employed by DWP / Jobcentre Plus.

#### ...experienced employees within DWP / Jobcentre Plus



#### ...representing DWP/ Jobcentre Plus



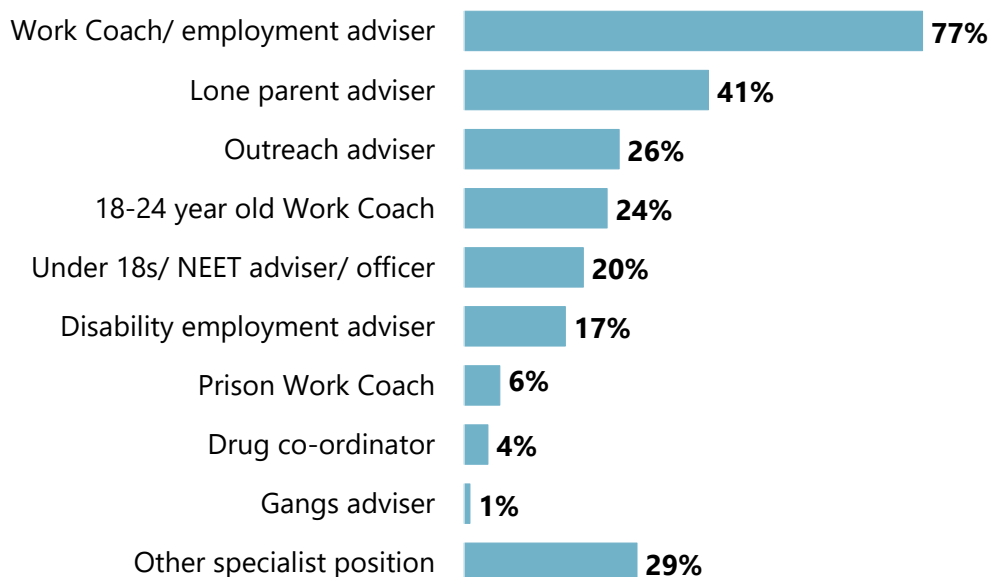
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QA4, W2QA7, QA5)

## Most TFEAs have relevant experience, having worked as a Work Coach or employment adviser before their current role.

Most TFEAs have been employed in a range of roles, prior to their current job. More than three quarters (77%) say they were previously employed as a Work Coach / employment adviser. Two in five (41%) have been employed as a lone parent adviser and a quarter (26%) have worked as an outreach adviser. A quarter (24%) worked as 18-24 year old Work Coaches, and a fifth (20%) worked as under 18/NEET advisers or officers. Other positions previously held include disability employment advisers, prison Work Coaches, drug co-ordinators and gang advisers.

New roles were added to this question in 2018, so figures are not comparable with previous waves.

### Prior to your current role in DWP/JCP, did you hold any of the following positions?



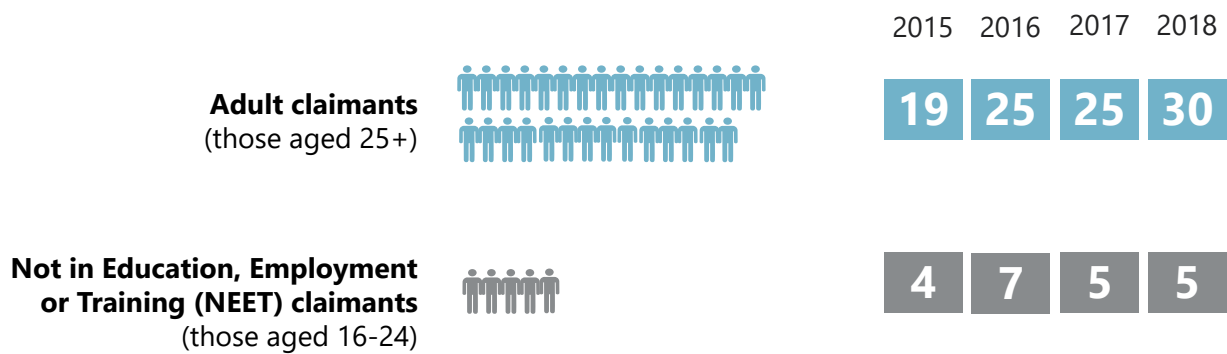
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QA10)

**On average, TFEAs continue to work with 5 NEET claimants at a time, but are working with more adult claimants than in previous years.**

### TFEA role

The average number of adult claimants (those aged 25+) that TFEAs are actively working with has increased since the last wave, from 25 in 2017 to 30 claimants in 2018, showing a steady increase since 2015. The caseload of NEET claimants (those aged 16-24) has remained consistent, at five on average.

### How many claimants are you currently working with?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA1, QTFEA2)

## Over the last year, TFEAs have been more involved in training and less involved in strategic work.

When asked what their role involves, almost all TFEAs consistently report working with families with the most complex employment barriers and working face-to-face with families (mentioned by 97% and 95% of TFEAs respectively).

Most TFEAs (84%) also say that their work involves at least a fair amount of strategic work, although this has fallen slightly since 2017 (previously 89%), including making links to other employment programmes (such Work Choice, City Deals, Local Enterprise Partnership activities, European Social Fund programmes) and helping claimants to move closer to or into employment. A similar proportion (83%) report working with whole families rather than just main carers, an increase from 2017 (76%).

Training is also a significant part of most TFEAs' roles. More than three quarters (78%) are involved in training local authority staff, and nearly three in five (57%) train Jobcentre Plus staff. The proportion of TFEAs who say their role includes training has increased significantly from 2017, as shown in the chart below.



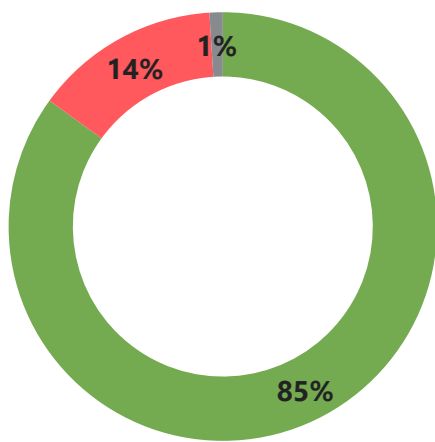
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA3)

## More TFEAs feel that they spend the right amount of time working face-to-face with families compared with previous years.

### Working with families on the programme

The majority of TFEAs (85%) feel that the proportion of time they spend working face-to-face with families among the other tasks involved in their role is about right. This has increased since 2017.

### How do you feel about the proportion of time you spend working face-to-face with families compared with other tasks?



	2016	2017	2018
<b>Too much time</b>	2%	1%	0%
<b>The right amount of time</b>	76%	76%	85%
<b>Not enough time</b>	21%	20%	14%

■ Too much time ■ The right amount of time ■ Not enough time ■ Don't know

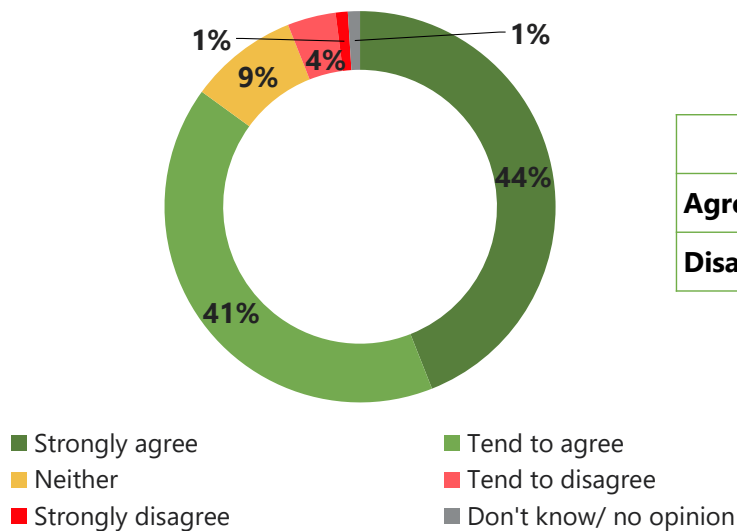
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W2Q1TFEA)

## Most TFEAs feel the amount of time they have to spend working with claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes.

The majority of TFEAs (85%) agree that the amount of time they have to work with Troubled Families claimants generally allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes. This is split fairly evenly between those who strongly agree (44%) and those who tend to agree (41%).

After a steady decline in the proportion agreeing between 2015 and 2017, this finding has remained consistent over the last year.

### To what extent do you agree or disagree that generally the amount of time you have to work with Troubled Families claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes?



	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Agree</b>	93%	89%	85%	85%
<b>Disagree</b>	4%	6%	7%	6%

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA4)

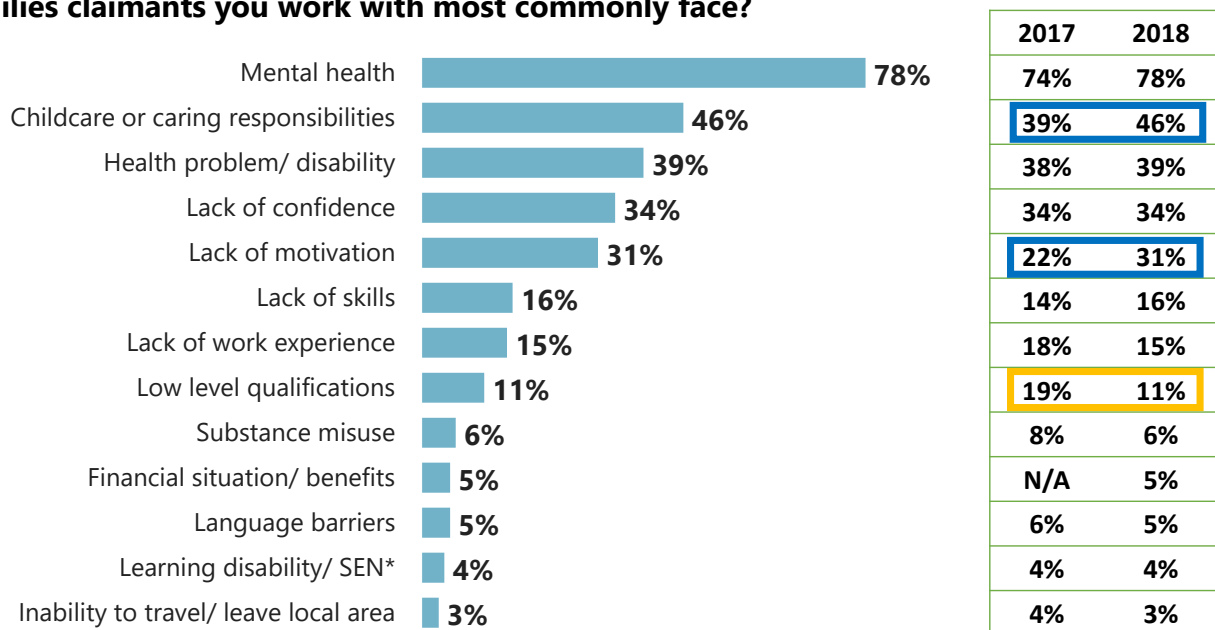
## Mental health continues to be the most commonly faced main barrier to work or training for claimants.

TFEAs consider mental health to be by far the most common barrier to work or training for Troubled Families claimants, mentioned by nearly four in five (78%) TFEAs. Mental health has been continually identified as a key barrier since the research started in 2015, with the proportion of TFEAs mentioning this increasing year on year.

The overall pattern of key barriers has changed slightly since 2017, with childcare or caring responsibilities now mentioned by nearly half of TFEAs (46%), followed by health problems or disabilities (39%). Lack of motivation is identified as a more common barrier than last year (mentioned by 31% compared with 22% in 2017). In contrast, and low qualification levels appear less of a concern (mentioned by 11% in 2018 compared with 19% in 2017).

A full table of results for all previous waves is included in the appendix.

### Which two or three, if any, of the following barriers to work or training do the Troubled Families claimants you work with most commonly face?



Base: All TFEAs (212): Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA5)

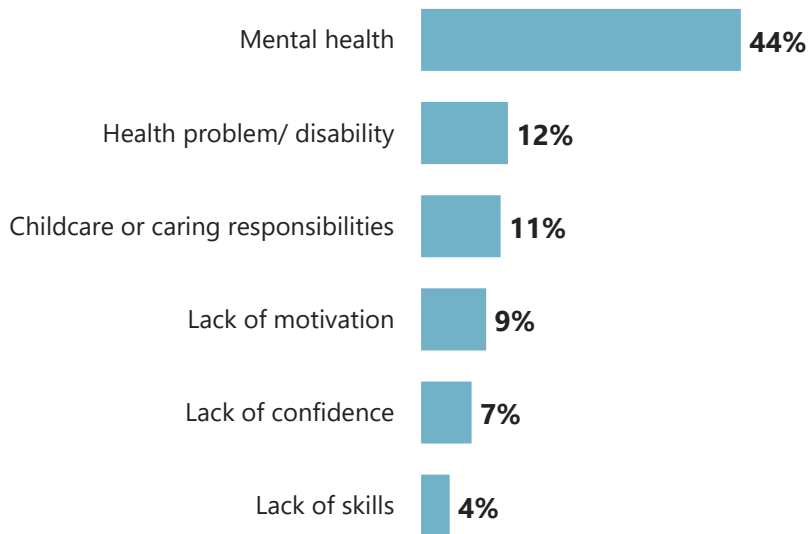
\*SEN stands for Special Educational Needs. Percentages only shown if 3% or more



## Mental health is considered the single most important barrier facing Troubled Families claimants.

For the first time in 2018, TFEAs were asked to identify which of the barriers facing Troubled Families claimants is the single most important. Two in five (44%) select mental health is seen as the single most important barrier.

### And which of these is the single most important barrier that Troubled Families claimants you work with face?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W4QTFEA5)  
Percentages only shown if 3% or more

## The TFEA role - Summary

The profile of TFEAs is consistent with previous years; the majority are female, aged 45 or over and educated to A level standard or above. Almost all are employed by DWP/ Jobcentre Plus and half have been working within the same organisation for more than 20 years.

On average, TFEAs are currently working with five NEET claimants, which is in line with the figures provided in previous years. However, the average number of adult claimants, who TFEAs are working with, has increased from 25 in 2017 to 30 in 2018.

Almost all TFEAs say their role continues to involve **face-to-face work with families, including those who are experiencing the most complex employment barriers**. Since, 2017 there has been a significant fall in the proportion who say they are involved in **strategic work**. In contrast, there has been an increase in the proportion of TFEAs who say they work with the **whole family**, rather than just the main carer, and an increase in their involvement with the **training of local authority and JCP staff**.

More TFEAs feel that they spend **the right amount of time working with Troubled Families claimants** than in previous years. Most TFEAs also agree that the amount of time they have to work with Troubled Families claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes.

**Mental health** problems are consistently identified by TFEAs the most common barrier to work or training faced by Troubled Families claimants.

## **3. Overall views of the Troubled Families Programmes**

**Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme**

**Impact of support**

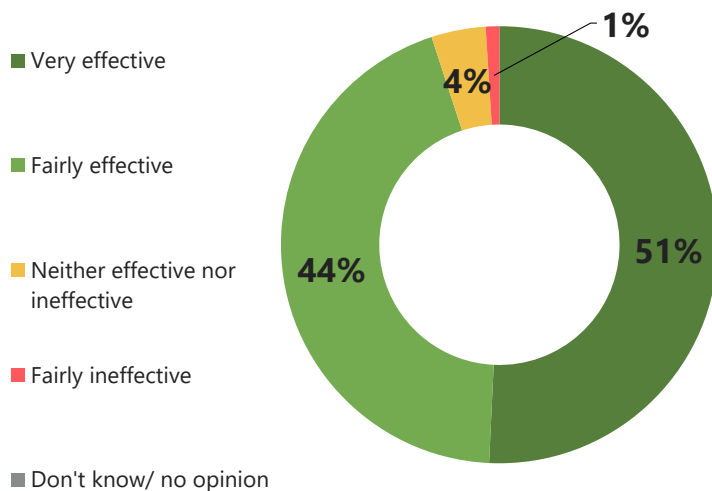
## 3 Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme

**Almost all TFEAs feel that the Troubled programme is effective at achieving long term positive change in families' circumstances.**

### Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme

Consistent since 2015, almost all (95%) TFEAs feel that the Troubled Families programme is effective at achieving long term positive change in families' circumstances. Half (51%) say the programme is very effective in this regard.

**How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Long term positive change in families' circumstances?**



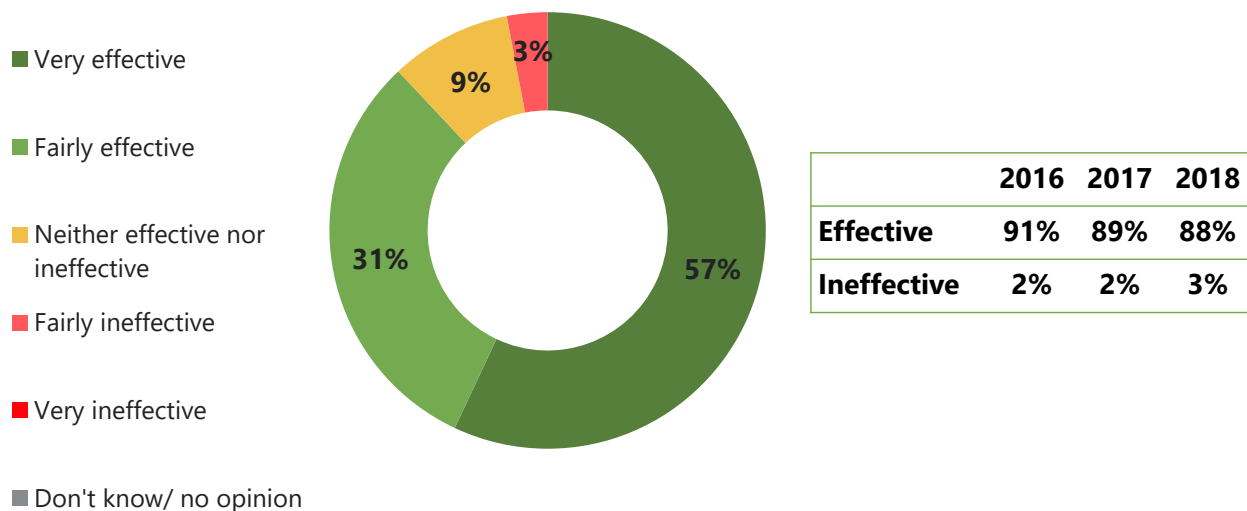
	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Effective</b>	92%	95%	93%	95%
<b>Ineffective</b>	3%	2%	4%	1%

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA24)

## TFEAs continue to feel that the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving whole family working.

Nearly nine in ten (88%) TFEAs say that the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving whole family working. More than half (57%) report that the programme is *very* effective. This opinion has remained consistent since the question was first asked in 2016.

### How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Whole family working?

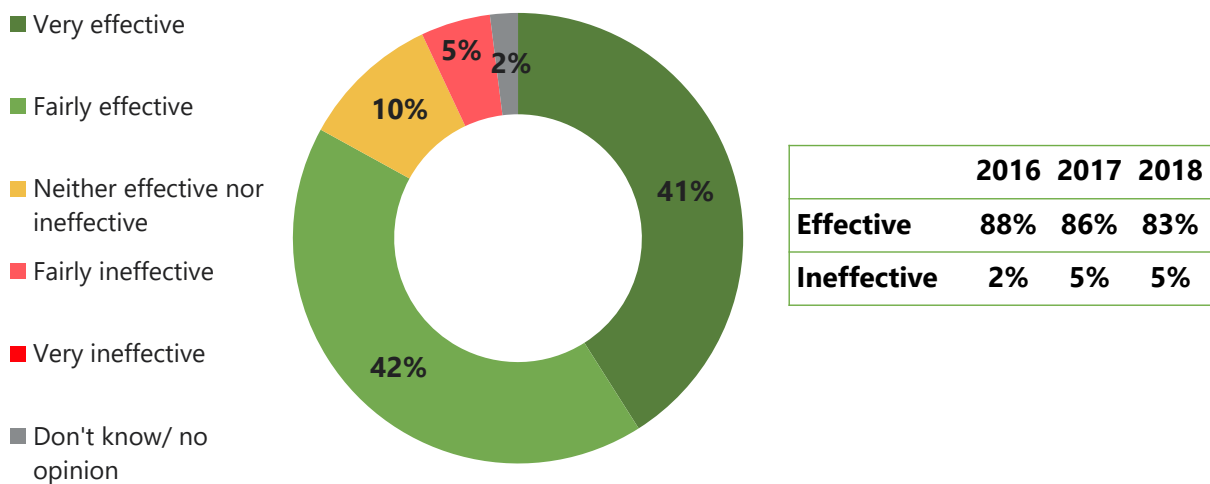


Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA24)

## TFEAs also feel that the Troubled Families Programme has been effective at achieving long term positive change in wider system reform.

The majority (83%) of TFEAs say that the programme is effective at achieving long term positive change in wider system reform or service transformation in their local authority. Two in five (41%) feel that the programme is *very* effective.

### How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Long term positive change in wider system reform/ service transformation in your local authority?

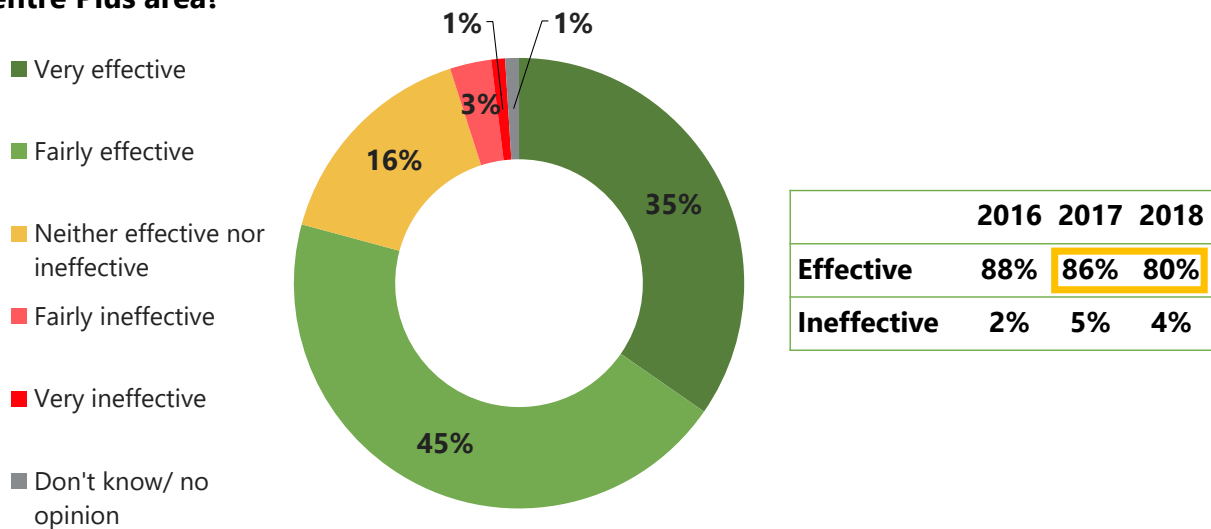


Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA24)

## TFEAs are positive about how effective the Troubled Families Programme has been at achieving long term positive change and wider system reform in their Jobcentre Plus area.

TFEAs were also asked how effective the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving long term positive change or service transformation in their Jobcentre Plus area. The majority of TFEAs (80%) are positive. However, fewer say that it is effective than in 2017 (previously 86%).

### How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Long term positive change/service transformation in your Jobcentre Plus area?

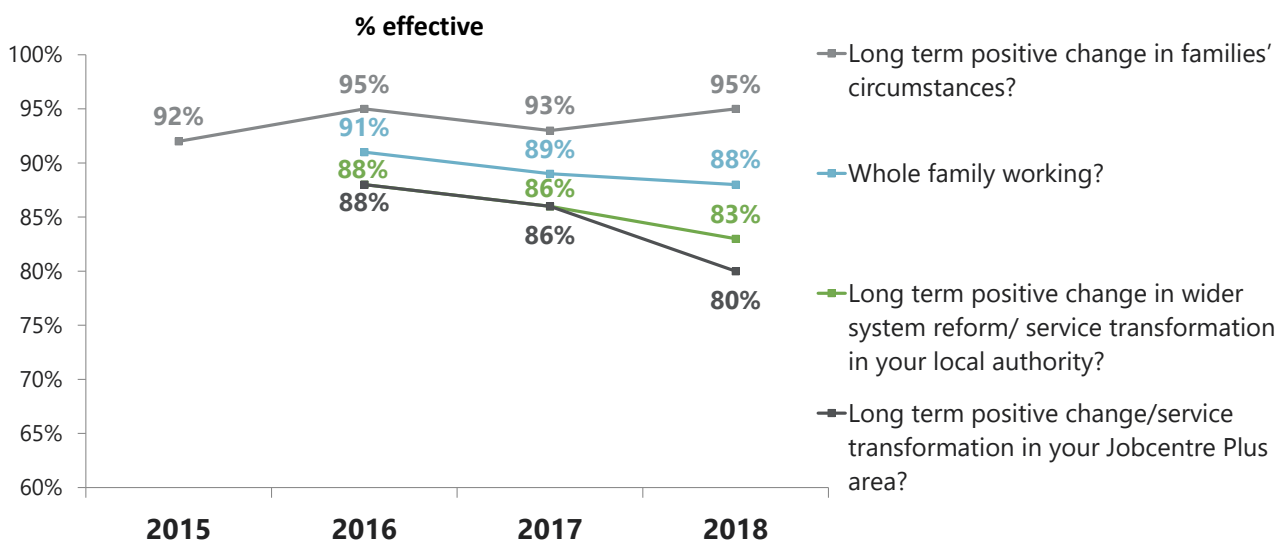


Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA24)

## Effectiveness of delivery of the Troubled Families Programme: Trend data (2015-2018)

TFEAs views on the effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme have remained consistent across waves, with the exception of achieving long term positive change or service transformation in their Jobcentre Plus area.

### How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving...



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA24)

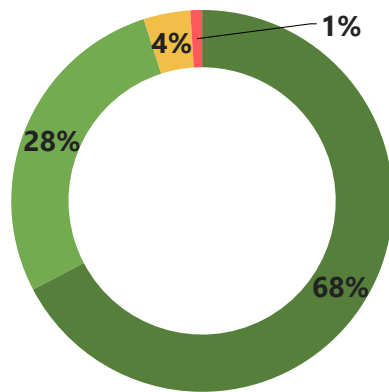


## TFEAs feel that their work with claimants significantly improves whole family outcomes.

### Impact of support

Almost all (96%) TFEAs agree that, among the Troubled Families claimants they work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole. Two thirds (68%) strongly agree with this statement. As shown in the chart below, the proportion who agree has increased in 2018 compared with previous waves.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that among the Troubled Families claimants that you work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole?**



	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Agree</b>	96%	99%	92%	96%
<b>Disagree</b>	0%	0%	3%	1%

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/ no opinion

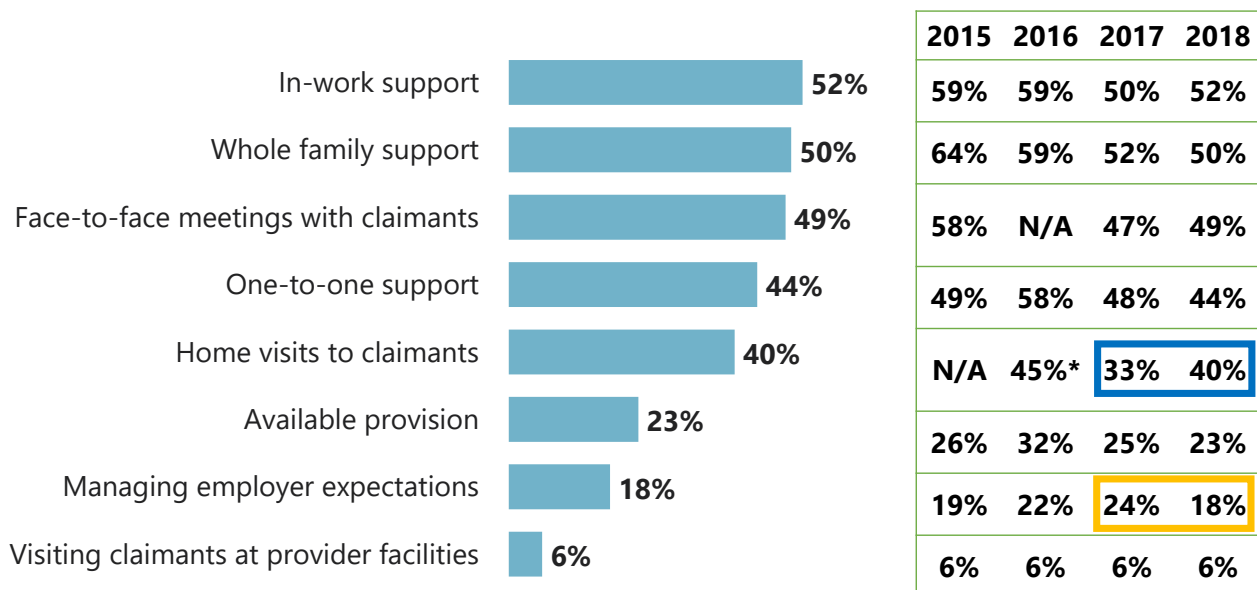
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA13)

## TFEAs consider in-work support, whole family support, and face-to-face meetings with claimants to be most important for ensuring sustainable positive outcomes for claimants.

TFEAs feel that a range of types of support are important for ensuring that positive outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable. Around half consider in-work support (52%), whole family support (50%) and face-to-face meetings with claimants (49%) as important.

The types of support that TFEAs consider important for sustainable outcomes has generally remained consistent since 2015. However, it should be noted that the question is not directly comparable across years as the list for TFEAs to choose from has changed across surveys. A full table of results for all previous waves is included in the appendix.

### What are the two or three types of support, if any, are most important to ensure that positive outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.

\*New code added. (QTFEA14)

## Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme - Summary

TFEAs continue to regard the Troubled Families Programme as **effective at achieving long-term positive change** in both **families' circumstances** and **whole family working**. The majority also view the programme as **effective in terms of achieving long-term positive change in wider system reform** within their local authority.

TFEAs also continue to hold the programme in high regard in relation to **achieving long-term positive change/ service transformation in their Jobcentre Plus area**. However, the proportion who regard the programme as effective in terms of **service transformation** has fallen since the question was first asked in 2016.

Almost all TFEAs agree that among the Troubled Families Programme claimants they work with, **employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole**. In order to ensure that outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable, **in-work support, whole family support** and **face-to-face meetings** are most commonly identified as important. The fourth wave of the survey highlighted an increase in the proportion who identify **home visits to claimants** as important, and a decrease in mentions of **managing employer expectations**.

## **4. Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants**

**Support for claimants**

**Training opportunities**

**Additional resources required**

## 4 Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants

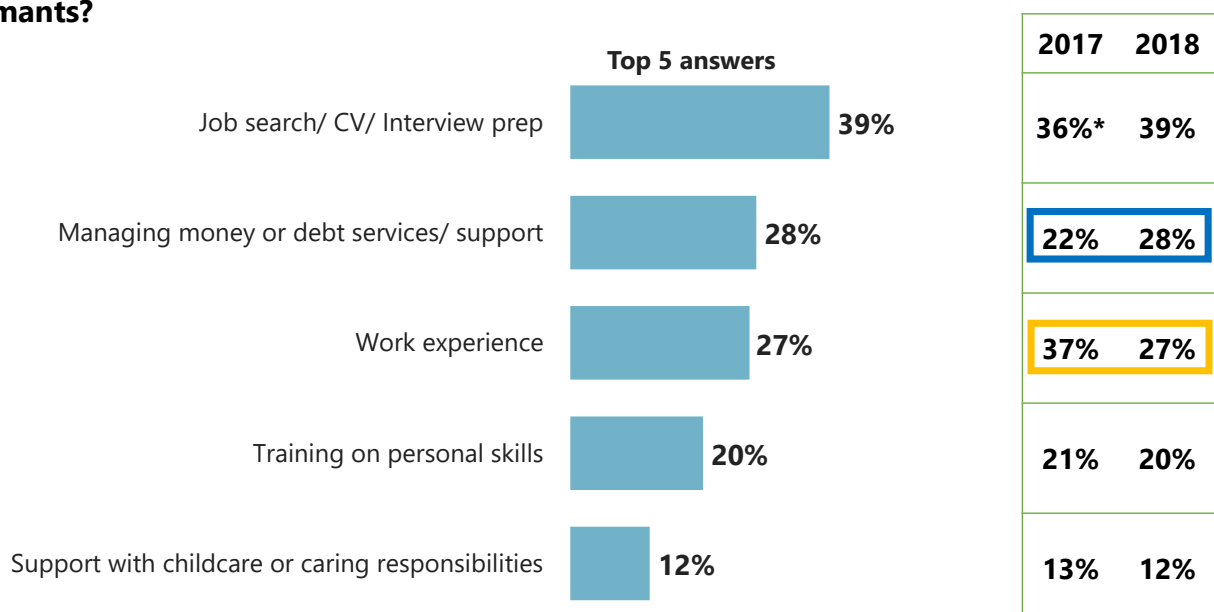
**Job search, CV or interview preparation are considered most effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants.**

### Support for claimants

TFEAs offer a range of support to Troubled Families claimants, with job search, CV, or interview preparation considered the most effective (by 39% of TFEAs) in terms of positive outcomes. Managing money or debt services or support and work experience are also considered effective, mentioned by 28% and 27% of TFEAs respectively.

The overall pattern of types of support that TFEAs consider effective has changed since last year, with work experience seen as less important (27% in 2018 compared with 37% in 2017) and managing money or debt services moving higher up the list (from 22% in 2017 to 28% in 2018).

### And which two of these are most effective in terms of positive outcomes for these claimants?



Base: TFEAs who offer more than two types of help or support to Troubled Families claimants (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.

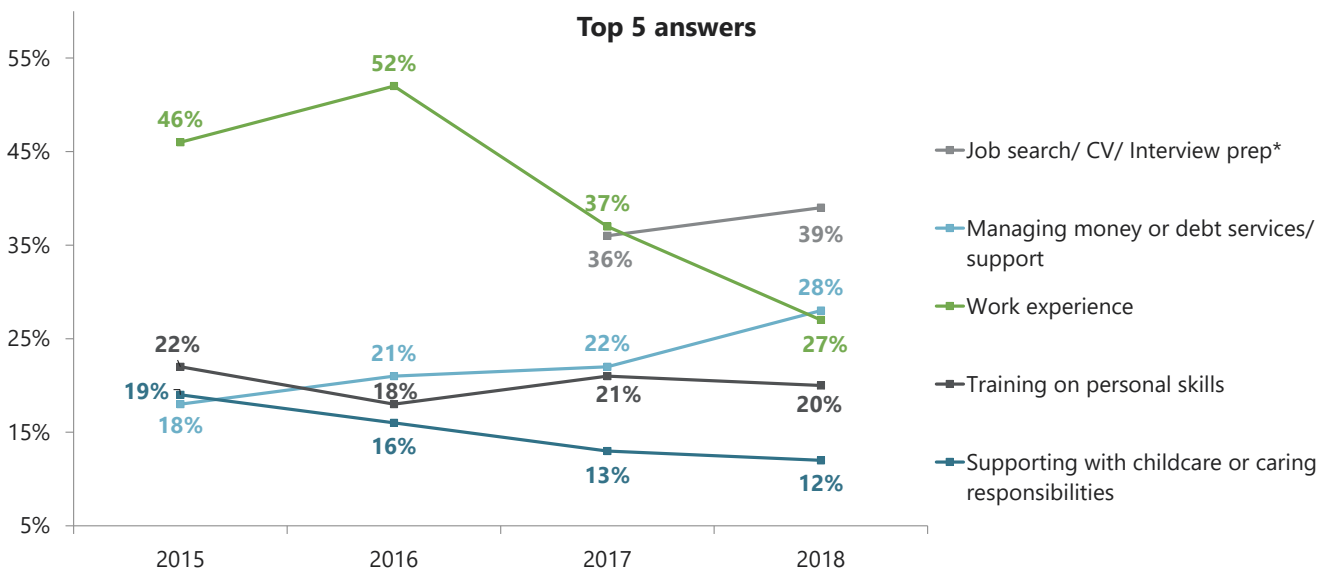
\*New code added in 2017. (QTFEA7)

**Types of support considered most effective: Trend data (2015-2018)**

Job search, CV, or interview preparation was asked about for the first time in 2017, which may account, at least in part, for the drop in the proportion of TFEAs selecting work experience as effective.

Managing money or debt services or support is unlikely to have been greatly affected by the added code, and has seen a gradual increase since 2015.

**And which two of these are most effective in terms of positive outcomes for these claimants?**

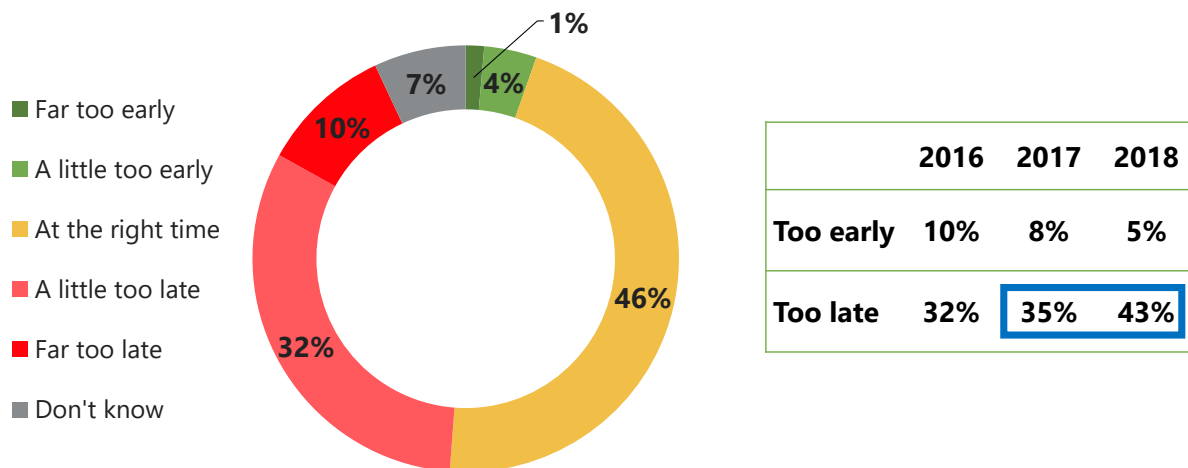


Base: TFEAs who offer more than two types of help or support to Troubled Families claimants (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.  
 \*New code added in 2017. (QTFEA7)

## More than two in five TFEAs think employment support is being offered to families too late.

While half of TFEAs (46%) think that employment support is being offered at the right time, more say it is being offered to families too late compared with previous years (43% in 2018 compared with 35% in 2017).

**In general, would you say that employment support is being offered by TFEAs, to families too early, too late or at about the right time during their time on the programme?**



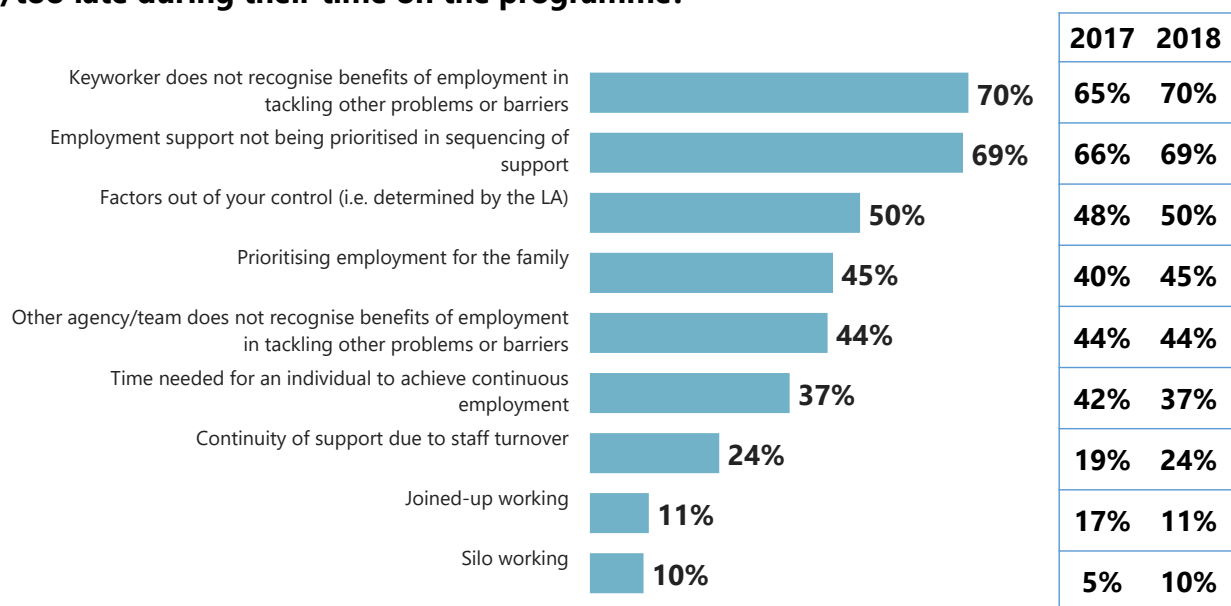
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W2Q2TFEA)

## TFEAs who feel that employment advice is not offered to families at the right time say this is because keyworkers do not recognise its benefits for tackling other problems or because employment support is not prioritised.

Since 2017, TFEAs who think employment support is not being offered to families at the right time have been asked why. TFEAs most commonly feel that keyworkers do not recognise the benefits of employment advice in tackling other problems, or that employment support is not being prioritised in the sequencing of support (reported by 70% and 69% respectively). Half of TFEAs (50%) also feel that factors outside of their control affect the timing of employment support.

Figures have changed slightly since 2017, but not significantly, and the overall pattern of response has remained consistent.

### Why would you say employment advice is being offered by TFEAs to families too early/too late during their time on the programme?



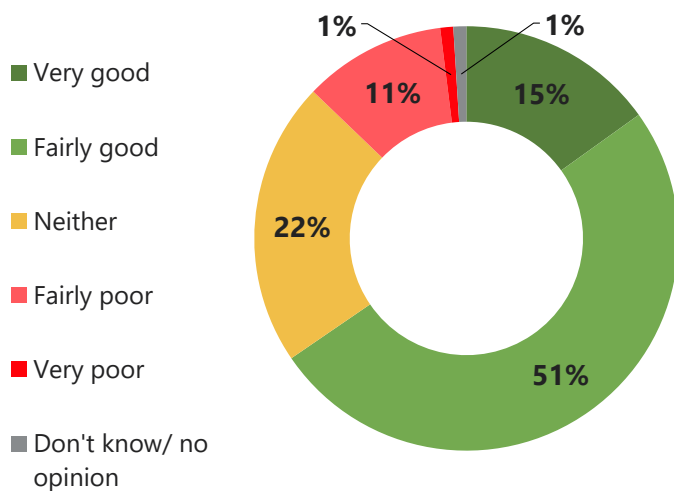
Base: TFEAs who think employment support is not offered at the right time (100): Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W3QTFEA2)



## TFEAs continue to be positive about the education and training opportunities available for Troubled Families claimants.

In line with previous years, TFEAs are positive about the education and training opportunities available for Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area: two thirds (67%) consider the opportunities to be good and just 11% say they are poor. Findings are consistent with previous waves.

### How good or poor would you say that the education and training opportunities available for Troubled Families claimants are in your Jobcentre Plus area?



	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Good</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>

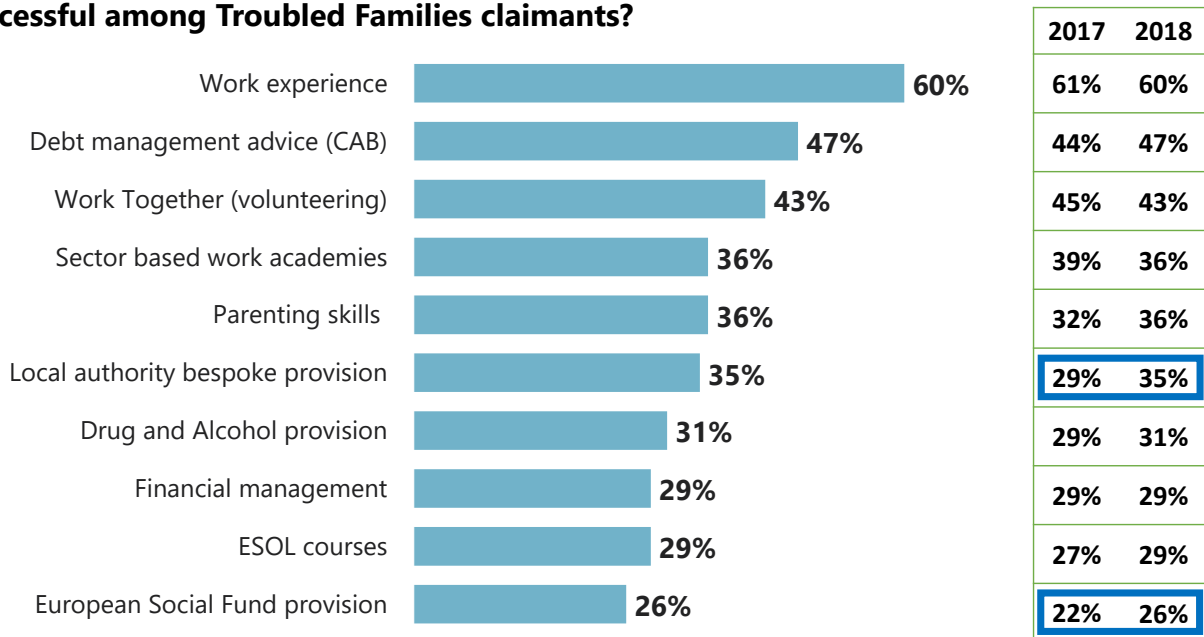
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA10)

## TFEAs consider work experience to be most successful among Troubled Families claimants.

TFEAs were asked to identify which types of education and training opportunities are most successful for Troubled Families claimants. The majority of TFEAs (60%) report that work experience is one of the most successful types of education and training opportunities. Debt management advice (from the Citizen's Advice Bureau) and Work Together (volunteering) are also considered successful, mentioned by 47% and 43% of TFEAs respectively.

The types of education and training opportunities seen as most successful are generally consistent with those identified in 2017, with the exceptions of local authority bespoke provision and European Social Fund provision, which are both seen as more successful in 2018. A full table of results for all previous waves is included in the appendix.

### Which of the following types of education and training opportunities, if any, are most successful among Troubled Families claimants?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.  
Top ten responses in 2018 shown. (QTFEA11)

## Mental health support and mentoring are increasingly identified as gaps in provision.

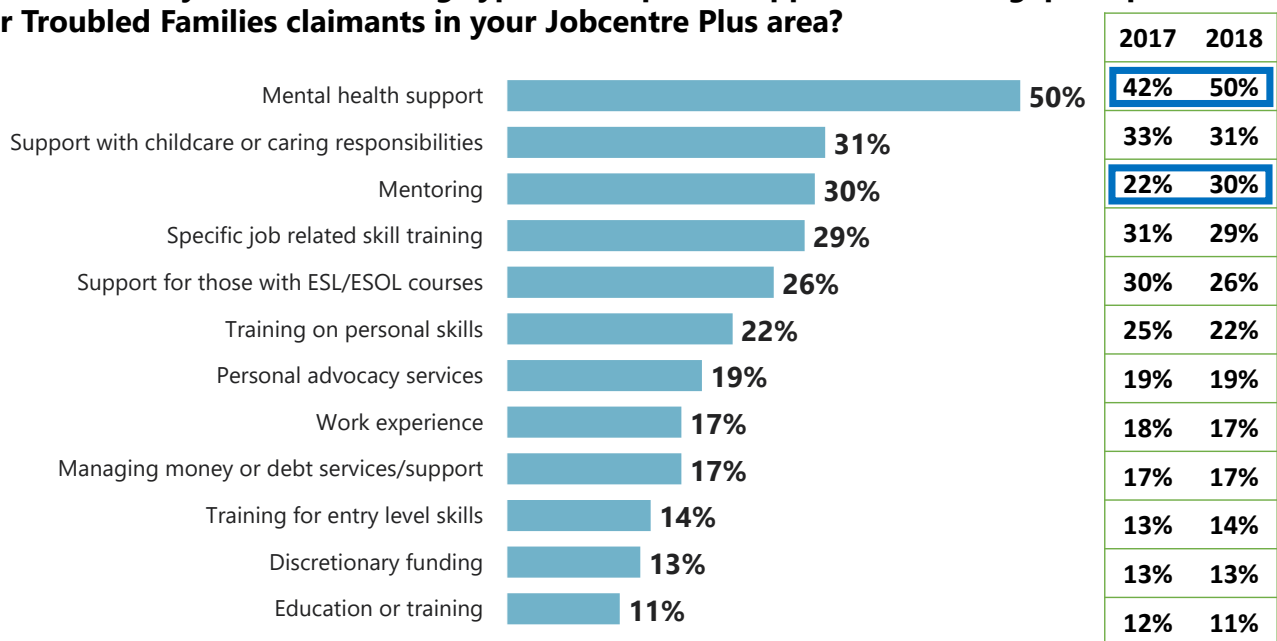
### Training opportunities

When asked about gaps in provision of help and support for Troubled Families claimants, mental health support is most commonly mentioned by TFEAs (50%).

Three in ten (31%) TFEAs feel that support is missing for claimants with childcare or caring responsibilities. Similar proportions say there are gaps in provision for mentoring and specific job related training (identified by 30% and 29% respectively).

Mental health and mentoring are seen by a greater proportion of TFEAs as gaps in provision compared with TFEAs in 2017, as shown below.

### In which, if any, of the following types of help and support are there gaps in provision for Troubled Families claimants in your Jobcentre Plus area?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.  
Responses mentioned by 10% or more of TFEAs shown. (QTFEA8)

## TFEAs need more mental health support and advisers to address the most common problems faced by claimants.

### Additional resources required

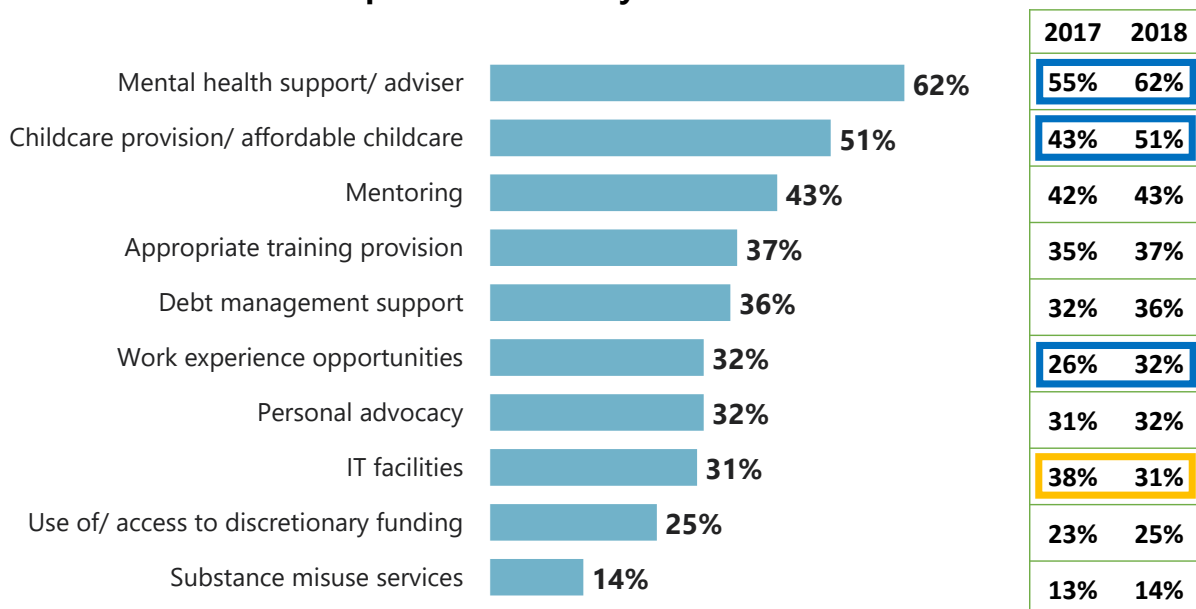
Reflecting the perception of a gap in mental health support, three in five (62%) TFEAs feel they need additional mental health support or advisers in their Jobcentre Plus area. This has increased significantly since 2017, from 55% to 62% in 2018.

Half (51%) say they need additional childcare provision or more affordable childcare. This proportion has also increased since 2017 (43%).

In 2018, TFEAs would also like more work experience opportunities than in 2017 (32% compared with 26% previously). However, this year fewer identify a need for more IT facilities (31% compared with 38% in 2017).

The level of need for other types of additional resources or provision identified by TFEAs has remained consistent with 2017, as shown in the chart below. A full table of results for all previous waves is included in the appendix.

### What additional resources or provision, if any, do you need in your Jobcentre Plus area to address the most common problems faced by Troubled families claimants?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.  
Top ten responses in 2018 shown. (QTFEA12)

## Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants - Summary

Over the last year the proportion of TFEAs who say that employment support is being **offered too late** to families on the Troubled Families Programme, has increased. When asked why, TFEAs increasingly identify keyworkers not realising the benefits of employment in tackling other problems or barriers, alongside employment support not being prioritised in the sequencing of support.

Two thirds of TFEAs say that **the education and training opportunities for Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area are good**; identifying work experience and deb management advice as the most successful elements. Both findings are consistent with previous waves of the research.

TFEAs increasingly highlight **mental health support** as a key **gap in provision** for Troubled Families claimants in their local area. Reflecting this perceived gap, TFEAs are most likely to identify a **need for additional mental health support/ an adviser** to address the most common problems faced by Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area. In 2018, a higher proportion of TFEAs mention mental health support and childcare provision as the key resources needed to meet the problems faced by claimants.

## **5. Workforce development**

**Training**

**Support and supervision**

**Developing TFEA skills**

## 5 Workforce development

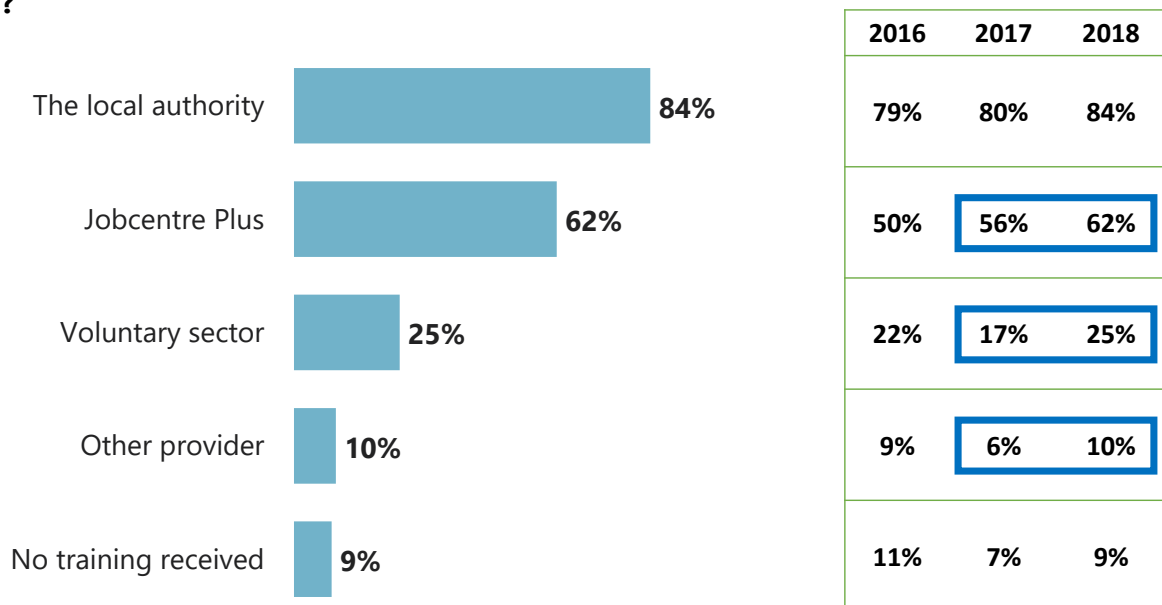
**Local Authorities are the main training provider for TFEAs, followed by Jobcentre Plus.**

### Training

The majority of TFEAs (84%) have received training provided by their local authority. Three in five (62%) have attended training provided by Jobcentre Plus, and a quarter (25%) have received training from the voluntary sector. Nearly one in ten (9%) have not received any training.

Since 2017, the proportion of TFEAs selecting each provider has increased, but the proportion who have not received any training has remained consistent. This suggests that the TFEAs in receipt of training are more likely to be attending multiple events or receiving training from multiple providers, compared with previous years.

**If you attended any training, who was responsible for providing the training you have received?**



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W2Q4TFEA)

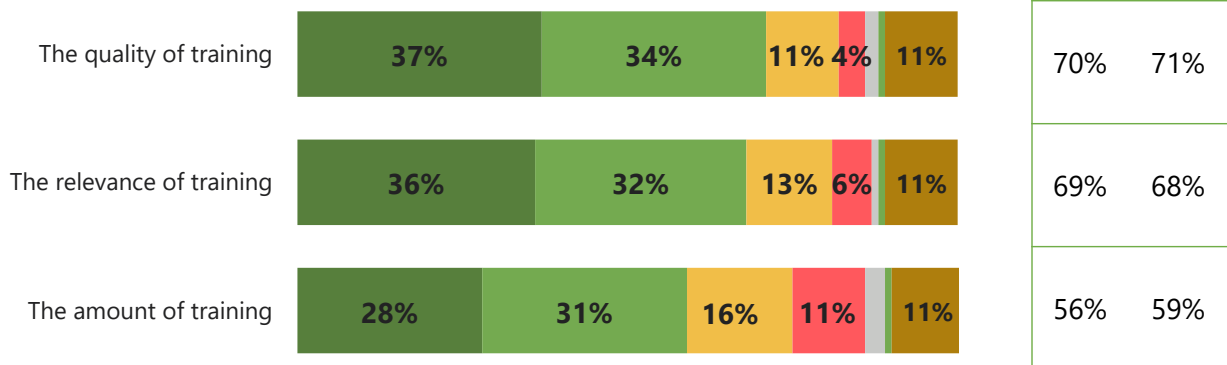
## The majority of TFEAs are positive about their training, in terms of quality, relevance and amount.

TFEAs are positive about the training they have received in relation to delivering their role. Seven in ten (71%) feel that the **quality of training** is good, and a similar proportion (68%) think that the **relevance of training** is also good. However, slightly fewer TFEAs (59%) are positive about the **amount of training**.

These findings have been consistent since 2015.

### How would you rate the quality of the following aspects of the training you have received in relation to delivering your role with Troubled Families?

- Very good
- Fairly good
- Neither good nor poor
- fairly poor
- Very poor
- Don't know
- No specific training



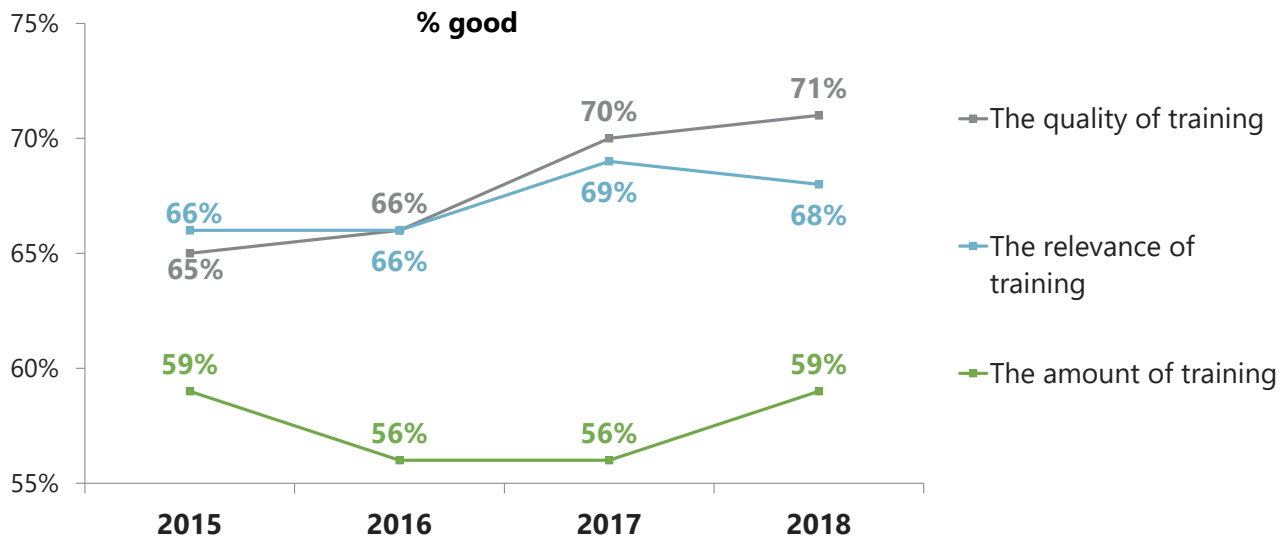
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.

Percentages only shown if 3% or more (QTFEA16)



**Ratings of training: Trend data (2015-2018)**

**How would you rate the quality of the following aspects of the training you have received in relation to delivering your role with Troubled Families?**



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA16)

## TFEAs are generally positive about the support and supervision available in their role.

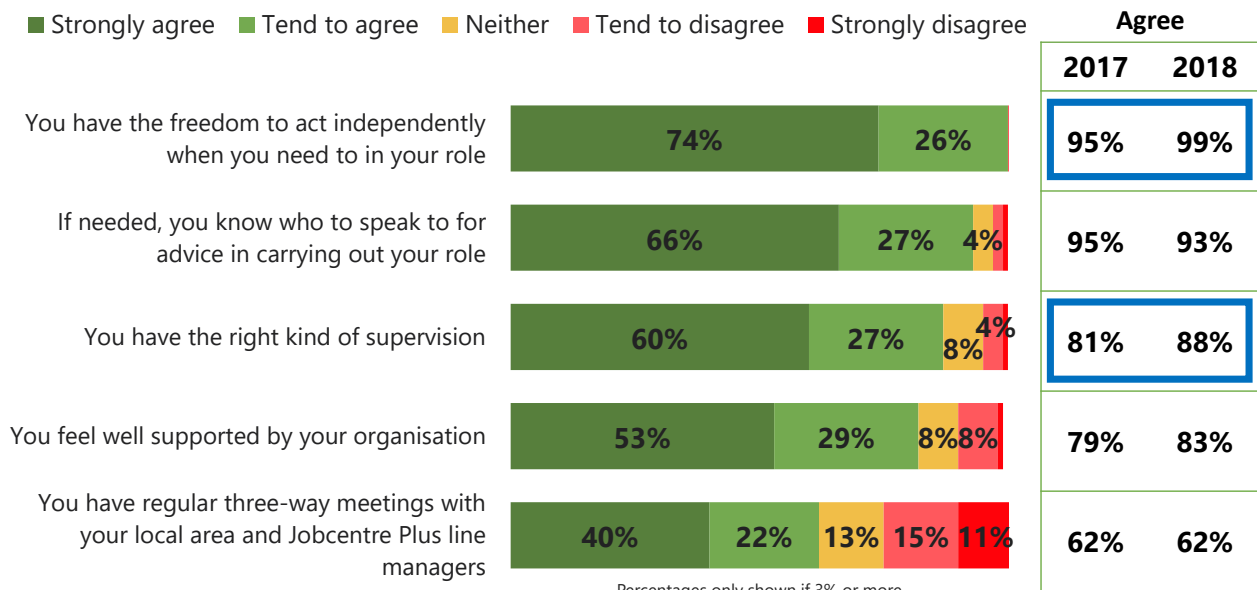
### Support and supervision

TFEAs are generally very positive about the support and supervision available in their role. Almost all TFEAs (99%) agree that they have the **freedom to act independently** when they need to, with nearly three quarters (74%) who *strongly* agree. This proportion has increased over time.

The majority of TFEAs (93%) also agree that they **know who to speak to for advice** in carrying out their role if they need to and 83% **feel well supported** by their organisation. Almost nine in ten TFEAs (88%) agree that they feel they have the **right kind of supervision**, a proportion that has increased since 2017 (previously 81%).

In line with 2017, fewer TFEAs (62%) agree that they have **regular three-way meetings** with their local area and Jobcentre Plus line managers.

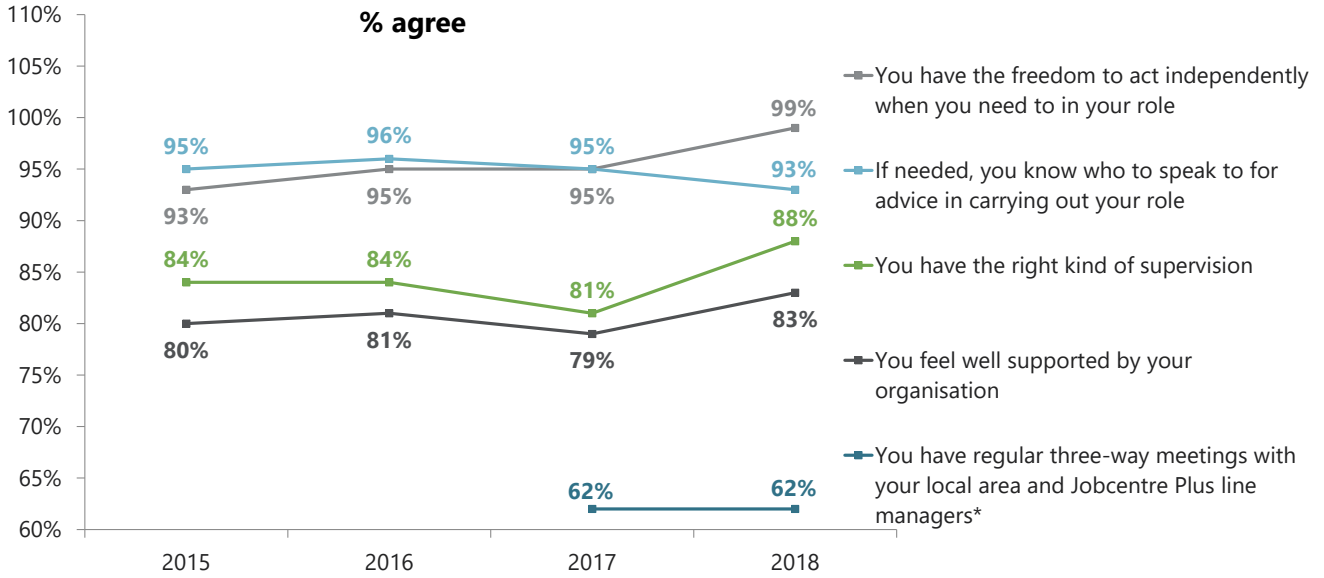
### To what extent would you agree or disagree that...



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA17)  
Percentages only shown if 3% or more.

**Support and supervision: Trend data (2015-2018)**

**To what extent would you agree or disagree that...**



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.

\*New statement added in 2017. (QTFEA17)

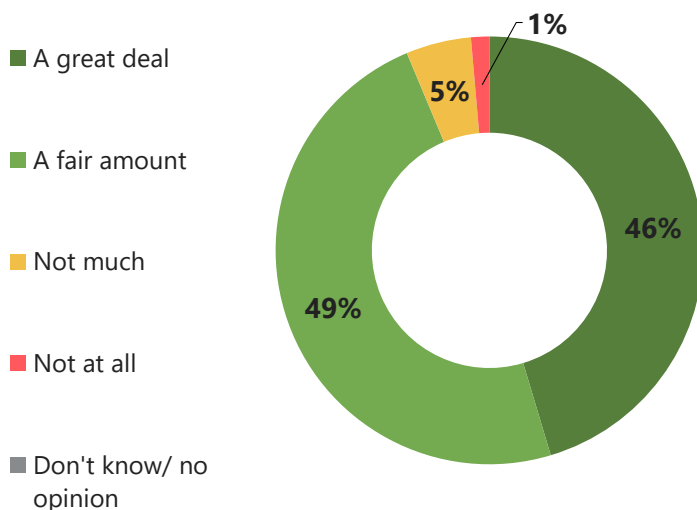
## TFEAs feel they have a good amount of opportunity to share and learn from good practice locally.

Almost all TFEAs (94%) report that they have at least a fair amount of opportunity to share and learn from good practice locally in their Jobcentre Plus or local authority area, an increase since 2017.

Nearly half (46%) say they have a great deal of opportunity to do this.

Reflecting this, fewer feel they do not have much or do not have any opportunity at all; six per cent in 2018 compared with 11% in 2017.

### To what extent would you say that you have the opportunity to share and learn from good practice locally within your Jobcentre Plus/ local authority area?



	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>A great deal/ a fair amount</b>	86%	89%	88%	94%
<b>Not much/ not at all</b>	13%	10%	11%	6%

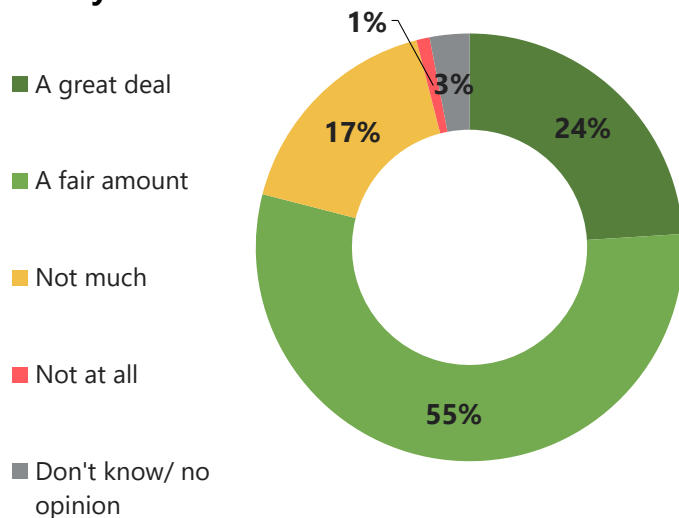
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA19)

## Most TFEAs think that working with Troubled Families claimants has changed the way Work Coaches work more generally.

More than three quarters of TFEAs say that working with families on the Troubled Families Programme has prompted changes at least a fair amount in the way Work Coaches work with claimants more generally. This proportion has increased since previous years (67% in 2017 compared with 78% in 2018).

Reflecting this, a much smaller proportion of TFEAs than previously feel that there has *not* been a change in the way Work Coaches work with claimants, falling from 30% in 2017 to 18% in 2018.

### To what extent would you say that working with families on the Troubled Families Programme has prompted changes in the way Work Coaches work with claimants more generally?



	2016	2017	2018
<b>A great deal/ a fair amount</b>	63%	67%	78%
<b>Not very much/ not at all</b>	35%	30%	18%

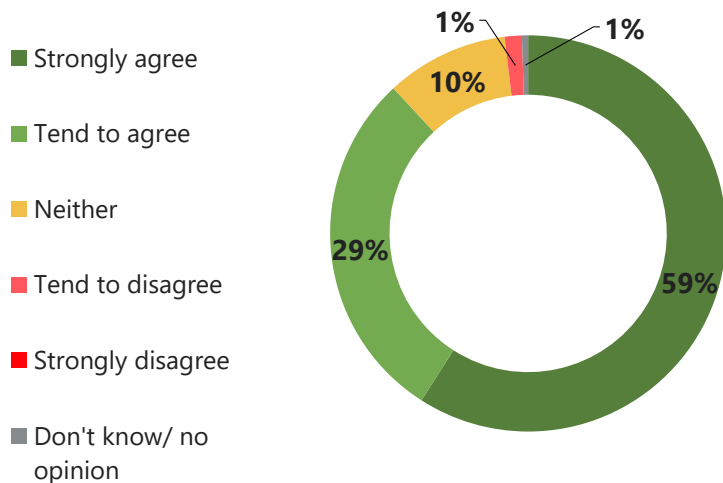
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W2Q5TFEA)

## TFEAs continue to be interested in developing their skills further to help deliver effective services from families.

### Developing TFEA skills

Most TFEAs (87%) agree that they would like to develop their skills further to help deliver effective services for families, with three in five (59%) who *strongly* agree. This appetite for developing their skills has been consistent since it was first asked about in 2016.

### Troubled Families involves different ways of working for staff across public services. To what extent would you agree that you would like to develop your skills further to help you deliver effective services for families?



	2016	2017	2018
<b>Agree</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

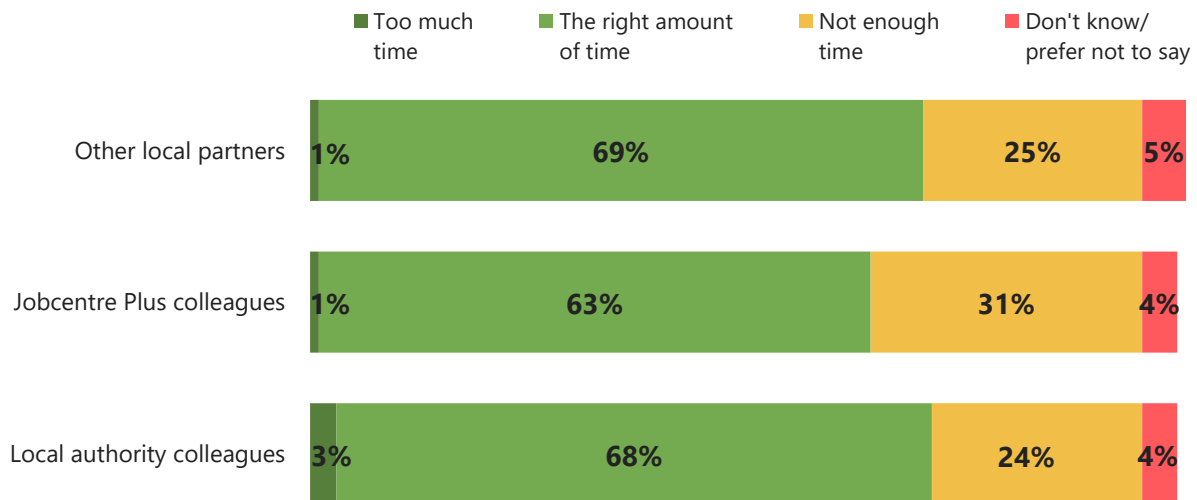
Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W2Q3TFEA)

## Most TFEAs feel they spend the right amount of time upskilling colleagues, but some feel they need more time to upskill Jobcentre Plus colleagues.

For the first time in 2018, TFEAs were asked how they feel about the proportion of time they spend upskilling colleagues compared with other tasks.

TFEAs generally feel they spend the right amount of time upskilling colleagues from a range of different organisations. Seven in ten (69%) say they spend the right amount of time upskilling other local partners, and a similar proportion feel they spend the right amount of time with local authority colleagues. Slightly fewer (63%) report spending the right amount of time with Jobcentre Plus colleagues.

### How do you feel about the proportion of time you spend upskilling colleagues compared with other tasks?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (W4Q5TFEA)

## Workforce development - Summary

TFEAs general perception of **training is good in terms of quality and relevance**, with findings in line with previous years. **Local authorities continue to be the most common training providers**, followed by Jobcentre Plus.

The proportion of TFEAs who have received no training remains consistent with previous years. However, there has been an **increase in training received from each source**; suggesting that TFEAs who are attending training courses are now more likely to access training via multiple providers or attend multiple events. That said, there is a continued appetite for more training; a significant *minority* of TFEAs continue to rate the **amount of training** they have had in relation to their role with Troubled Families as poor.

TFEAs increasingly highlight how they have the **freedom to act independently**, if needed, in their role but feel they have **the right kind of supervision**. Consistent with previous year's most say they would **know who to speak to for advice** in carrying out their role, and feel **well supported by their organisation**.

Just over three in five TFEAs say that they have **regular three-way meetings with their local area and Jobcentre Plus line managers**; which is consistent with 2017 when the question was first asked.

In 2018, more TFEAs feel that they **have the opportunity to share and learn from good practice locally**, than in previous years, with interest in **developing skills further** to help deliver effective services something that most TFEAs agree on. Currently, TFEAs generally feel that they spend the right amount of time upskilling colleagues.

More TFEAs in 2018, in comparison with previous years, say that working with families on the Troubled Families Programme has prompted **changes in the way Work Coaches work** with claimants generally.



## **6. Multi-agency working**

**Working with partner services**

**Support from partners**

**Barriers to effective partnership working**

## 6 Multi-agency working

**TFEAs would like more input from mental health services, housing services and schools.**

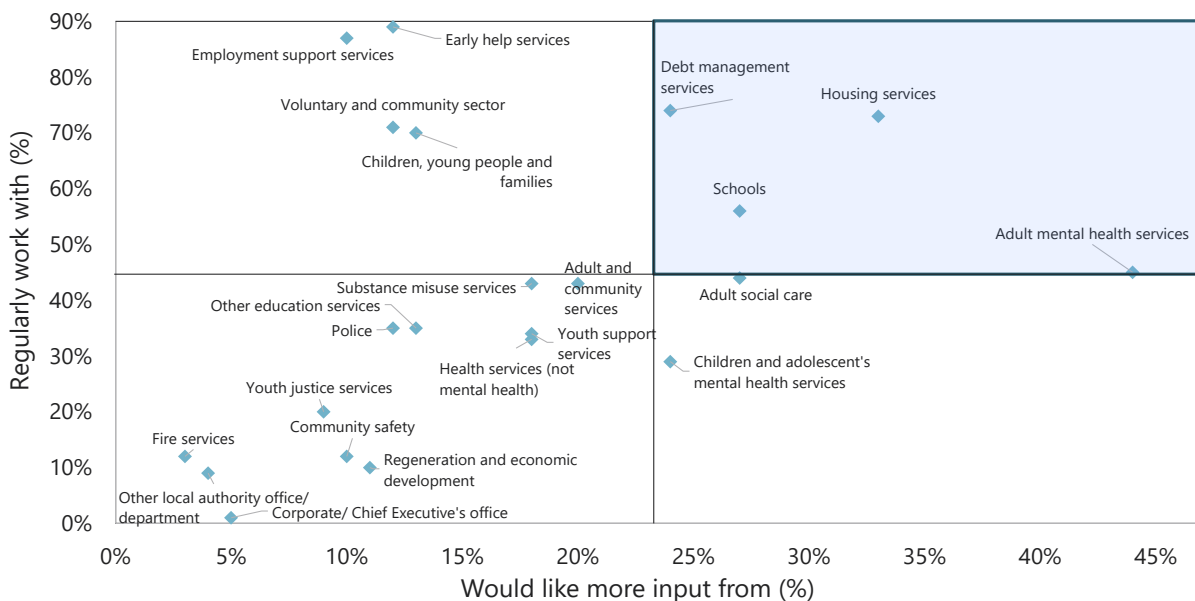
### Working with partner services

TFEAs work with a range of services to deliver solutions for families. TFEAs regularly work with **early help (89%), employment (87%), debt management (74%), housing (73%), voluntary and community sector (71%), and children, young people and families' services (70%).**

The chart below shows the services that TFEAs work most regularly with against those they would like more input from. In relative terms, the bottom left hand quadrant includes the services they work with less frequently but feel they have sufficient input from; the top left includes those worked with more frequently but again, most feel that the level of input is good; and the top right indicates those services that TFEAs would like more input from even though they are among those they already work with most regularly.

This analysis identifies housing, adult mental health, and schools as the services that TFEAs would like more input from. While these questions have changed slightly since last year the findings are generally consistent in terms of the services identified.

### Services TFEAs regularly work with compared with those they would like more input from



Base: All TFEAs (212): Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA20, QTFEA21)

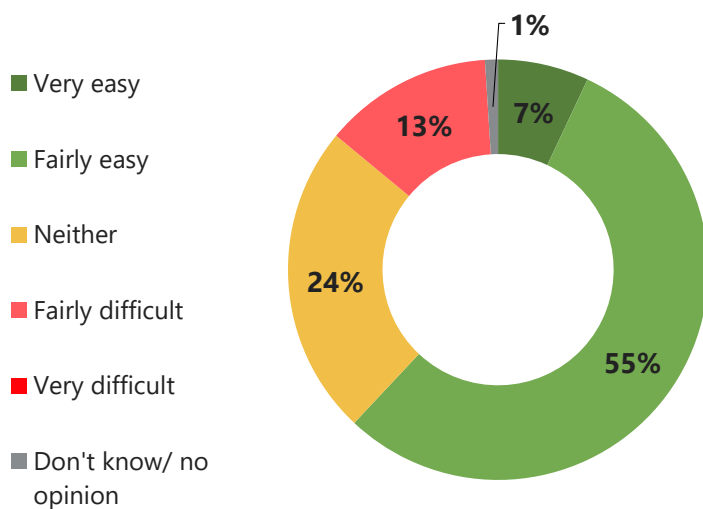
## TFEAs say there is room for improvement in how easy it is to get the support they need from partner organisations.

### Support from partners

Three in five TFEAs (62%) report that it is easy to get the support they need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families. However, more than half (55%) say it is *fairly* easy rather than *very* easy, and a quarter (24%) say it is neither easy nor difficult.

The overall proportion who say that getting support from partners is easy has remained consistent since 2015, but in 2018, a smaller proportion say it is *very* easy compared to 2017.

### In general, how easy or difficult would you say it is to get the support you need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families?



	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Easy</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Difficult</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA22)

## Data sharing protocols are still seen as the main barrier to effective partnership working.

### Barriers to effective partnership working

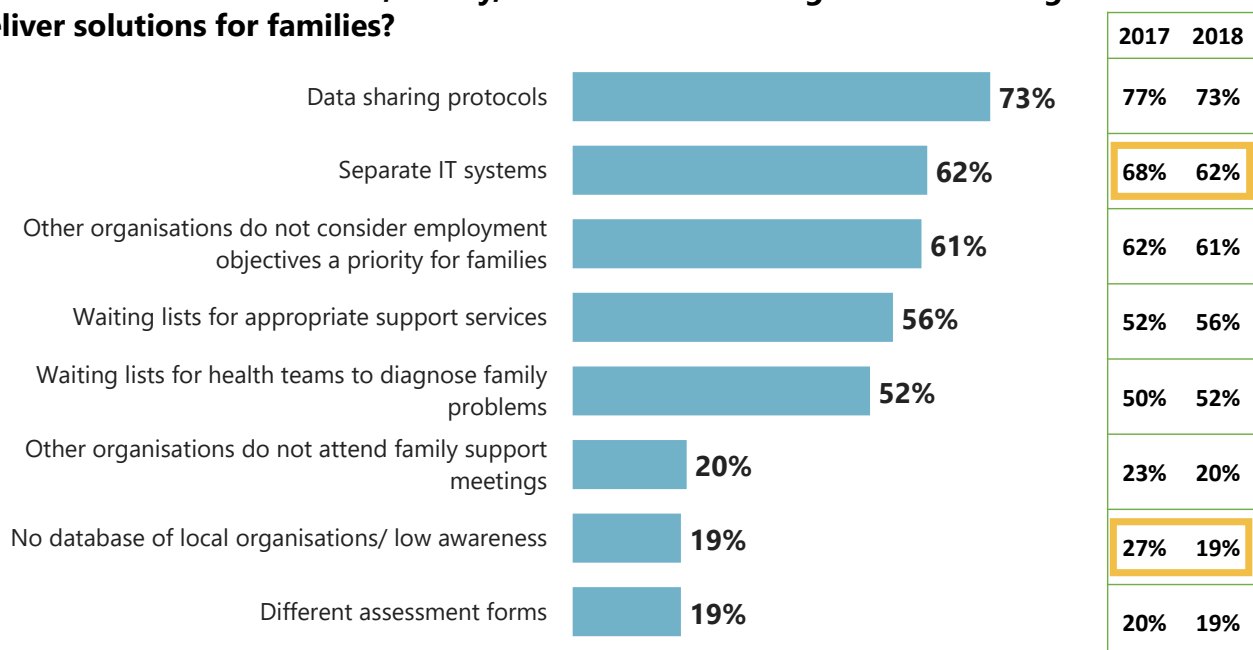
TFEAs identify several barriers to effective working with other organisations to deliver solutions for families.

**Data sharing protocols** are seen as a main barrier by nearly three quarters (73%) of TFEAs, and has been consistently highlighted by the highest proportion of TFEAs since 2016. **Separate IT systems** are the next most common issue to effective multi-agency working, mentioned by 62%. A similar proportion (61%) identify the fact that **other organisations do not consider employment objectives a priority** for families.

Around half of TFEAs say **waiting lists** are a barrier, both for appropriate support services and for health teams to diagnose family problems (mentioned by 56% and 52% respectively).

Barriers to effective partnership working have remained generally consistent since 2017. However, separate IT systems and low awareness or having no database of local organisations are considered less of a barrier than in 2017. A full table of results for all previous waves is included in the appendix.

### What are the main barriers, if any, to effective working with other organisations to deliver solutions for families?



Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA23)

## Multi-agency working - Summary

TFEAs regularly work with a **wide range of services** to deliver solutions for families, identifying Early help services, employment support services and debt management services as their most common partners. However, going forward, TFEAs would like **more input from adult mental health services and housing services**. This message was also highlighted in 2017.

The research findings suggest that there is continued room for improvement in terms of making **access to support from partners** easier. While three in five TFEAs say it is easy to get the support they need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families, a quarter are unsure and more than one in ten find it difficult.

**Data sharing protocols** continue to be identified as the main barrier to more effective partnership working. The proportion of TFEAs who regard **separate IT systems** as a barrier, has dropped significantly since the first wave of the research.

## 7. Conclusions

## 7 Conclusions

This is the **fourth annual survey of Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEAs)** involved in delivering the Troubled Families Programme. The research set out to explore their views on the impact of the programme, particularly the role of the TFEA model. Overall TFEAs are positive and the **results are mostly consistent** with those found previously – both in terms of the TFEA role and their views of the programme.

### Delivering the Troubled Families Programme – the TFEA role

Almost all (98%) TFEAs surveyed work for **DWP/a Job Centre**. They are **experienced**; half (50%) have worked with DWP/Job Centre Plus for more than 20 years and almost all **previously worked in a specialist position**, for example, as a Work Coach/employment adviser (77%) or lone parent adviser (41%).

Almost all TFEAs spend at least a fair amount of their time working with **families with the most complex employment barriers** (97%) and this work is largely **face-to-face** (95%). Most also say their role includes working with **the whole family rather than just the main carer** (83%). Average case loads are around 35 claimants, including 30 adults (aged 25+) and 5 NEETs (16-24 years); which is an increase since the first wave of research in 2015 (23 claimants).

The most common **employment barriers faced by claimants relate to mental health issues and childcare/ other caring responsibilities** (mentioned by 78 and 46%, respectively). The proportion of TFEAs who highlight problems with childcare/ other caring responsibilities and a lack of motivation has increased since 2017, with a fall in those who identify low level qualifications as a potential barrier to employment.

TFEAs feel supported in their role, and are **content with the level of support and supervision** provided while also feeling that they have the **freedom to act independently**. The majority (84%) have attended training delivered by the local authority in relation to their role and three in five (62%) have been to Jobcentre Plus training. Seven in ten rate the **quality and relevance of training** as good (71% and 68% respectively), with slightly fewer saying the **amount available is good** (59%). However, an appetite for more training remains: most TFEAs (87%) **would like to develop their skills further**.

## TFEAs are positive about the Troubled Families Programme approach

TFEAs continue to be very supportive of the Troubled Families Programme approach and its key elements. Almost all TFEAs (95%) say it is effective at achieving long-term positive change in families' circumstances, and 96% agree that among the families they work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole.

TFEAs also consider that the impact of the Troubled Families Programme is felt more widely; more than four in five (83%) say it is effective at achieving **long-term positive change in wider system reform or service transformation** in their local authority.

Half say **whole family support** is important to ensure that positive outcomes for Troubled Families Programme claimants are sustainable, but similar value is placed on **in-work support** (50% and 52% respectively) as well as **face-to-face meetings** with claimants (49%). These views reflect those seen in the previous survey. However, in 2018 a greater emphasis is placed on home visits to claimants (40% in 2018, compared with 33% in 2017).

Two thirds of TFEAs are **positive about the education and training opportunities** available for Troubled Families Programme claimants (67% say it is good), and consistently single out **work experience** as the most successful opportunity helping people into work (60%). However, work experience is less likely to be identified as effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants (27% in 2018, compared with 37% in 2017). Instead TFEAs highlight job search/interview preparation (39%) and managing debt/ debt services (28%).

Most (85%) agree that **the amount of time they have to work with Troubled Families Programme claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes**, which is consistent with 2017. More TFEAs (85%) say they have the **right amount of time working face-to-face with families compared with other tasks** than in 2017 (76%).

## Areas for development

The Troubled Families programme aims to bring about change in the delivery and management of local services for families, through whole family working, across partner agencies, including Jobcentre Plus. TFEAs are consistently positive about both aspects of the programme, but persistent challenges remain:



**Improving relationships with mental health services to promote genuine partnership working:** Mental health is identified as the single most important barrier to work or training faced by Troubled Families claimants. However, mental health support is considered to be a key gap in provision for claimants, mentioned by a higher proportion of TFEAs than any other forms of help and support. This message has been consistent every year with TFEAs highlighting the need for more resources from mental health services in order to address the most common problems faced by Troubled Families claimants.

**Offering money management and debt advice to claimants:** Support relating to job search and interview preparation is considered the most effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants. However, this is closely followed by money/ debt management support, which is increasingly recognised as effective in terms of offering positive outcomes. In addition, almost half consider debt management advice as the most successful form of education/ training opportunities among Troubled Families claimants. However, over a third of TFEAs identify debt management support as an additional resource required in their area to address problems faced by claimants.

**Providing employment support at the right time and ensuring it is embedded:** There is continued evidence of time pressures and competing demands: with a rise in the proportion of TFEAs who say that employment support is being offered to families too late in the engagement. The most frequently mentioned reasons are keyworkers not recognising the impact of employment in tackling other problems and employment support not being recognised in the sequencing of support. In fact, concerns about keyworkers not recognising the importance of employment support has increased over the past year (70% in 2018, compared with 65% in 2017), suggesting a need for wider awareness raising of the benefits of this type of help in tackling other problems.

## 8. Appendices

## 8. Appendices

### Trend data tables

Barriers to work or training most commonly faced by Troubled Families claimants (Trend data 2015-2018)

#### Which two or three, if any, of the following barriers to work or training do the Troubled Families claimants you work with most commonly face?

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Mental health	50%	64%	74%	78%
Childcare or caring responsibilities	33%	45%	39%	46%
Health problem/ disability	35%	33%	38%	39%
Lack of confidence	31%	32%	34%	34%
Lack of motivation	29%	25%	22%	31%
Lack of skills	18%	18%	14%	16%
Lack of work experience	30%	29%	18%	15%
Low level qualifications	27%	17%	19%	11%
Substance misuse	11%	5%	8%	6%
Financial situation/ benefits	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%
Language barriers	5%	6%	6%	5%
Learning disability/ SEN*	5%	2%	4%	4%
Inability to travel/ leave local area	3%	4%	4%	3%
Domestic abuse	N/A	N/A	N/A	1%
Criminal record	8%	6%	4%	1%
Cultural barriers	1%	1%	1%	1%

Base: All TFEAs (212): Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA5)

\*SEN stands for Special Educational Needs

Most important types of support to ensure sustainable positive outcomes for claimants (Trend data 2015-2018)

### What are the two or three types of support, if any, are most important to ensure that positive outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable?

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>In-work support</b>	59%	59%	50%	52%
<b>Whole family support</b>	64%	59%	52%	50%
<b>Face-to-face meetings with claimants</b>	58%	N/A	47%	49%
<b>One-to-one support</b>	49%	58%	48%	44%
<b>Home visits to claimants</b>	N/A	45%*	33%	40%
<b>Available provision</b>	26%	32%	25%	23%
<b>Managing employer expectations</b>	19%	22%	24%	18%
<b>Visiting claimants at provider facilities</b>	6%	6%	6%	6%

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018.

\*New code added in 2016. (QTFEA14)

Most successful types of education or training opportunities for claimants (Trend data 2015-2018)

### Which of the following types of education and training opportunities, if any, are most successful among Troubled Families claimants?

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Work experience	63%	73%	61%	60%
Debt management advice (CAB)	40%	34%	44%	47%
Work Together (volunteering)	44%	52%	45%	43%
Sector based work academies	47%	42%	39%	36%
Parenting skills	27%	33%	32%	36%
Local authority bespoke provision	38%	33%	29%	35%
Drug and Alcohol provision	30%	23%	29%	31%
Financial management	27%	37%	29%	29%
ESOL courses	27%	26%	27%	29%
European Social Fund provision	10%	12%	22%	26%
Work Clubs	31%	36%	32%	25%
New Enterprise Allowance	23%	25%	23%	22%
Skills Funding Agency courses	16%	18%	14%	13%
Flexible Support Fund ad hoc provision	12%	17%	16%	12%
Community work placements	10%	12%	15%	10%
Work Choice	11%	14%	20%	9%
Flexible Support Fund-Grant Aided provision	6%	7%	7%	7%
Anger management	11%	9%	10%	6%
Flexible Support Fund Rapid Response provision	2%	2%	3%	3%
Mandatory Work Activity	4%	4%	3%	2%

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA11)

## Additional resources or provision needed to address problems faced by claimants (Trend data 2015-2018)

**What additional resources or provision, if any, do you need in your Jobcentre Plus area to address the most common problems faced by Troubled families claimants?**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Mental health support/ adviser	N/A	N/A	55%*	62%
Childcare provision/ affordable childcare	43%	50%	43%	51%
Mentoring	42%	43%	42%	43%
Appropriate training provision	41%	36%	35%	37%
Debt management support	31%	28%	32%	36%
Personal advocacy	31%	29%	26%	32%
Work experience opportunities	30%	29%	31%	32%
IT facilities	36%	35%	38%	31%
Use of/ access to discretionary funding	45%	30%	23%	25%
Substance misuse services	13%	8%	13%	14%

Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA12)

Top ten responses in 2018 shown.

\*New code added in 2017, as such a degree of caution should be taken in comparing trend data.

## Main barriers to partnership working (Trend data 2015-2018)

**What are the main barriers, if any, to effective working with other organisations to deliver solutions for families?**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Data sharing protocols	78%	82%	77%	73%
Separate IT systems	82%	76%	68%	62%
Other organisations do not consider employment objectives a priority for families	61%	59%	62%	61%
Waiting lists for appropriate support services	36%	38%	52%	56%
Waiting lists for health teams to diagnose family problems	31%	39%	50%	52%
Other organisations do not attend family support meetings	19%	19%	23%	20%
No database of local organisations/ low awareness	37%	34%	27%	19%
Different assessment forms	25%	23%	20%	19%

Base Base: All TFEAs (212); Fieldwork dates 17 October to 16 December 2018. (QTFEA23)

**Dr Rachel Williams**

Research Director  
[Rachel.williams@ipsos.com](mailto:Rachel.williams@ipsos.com)

**Emily Mason**

Research Executive  
[Emily.mason@ipsos.com](mailto:Emily.mason@ipsos.com)

**Anna Tench**

Graduate Research Executive  
[Anna.tench@ipsos.com](mailto:Anna.tench@ipsos.com)

## For more information

3 Thomas More Square  
London  
E1W 1YW

t: +44 (0)20 3059 5000

**[www.ipsos-mori.com](http://www.ipsos-mori.com)**  
**<http://twitter.com/IpsosMORI>**

### **About Ipsos MORI's Social Research Institute**

The Social Research Institute works closely with national governments, local public services and the not-for-profit sector. Its c.200 research staff focus on public service and policy issues. Each has expertise in a particular part of the public sector, ensuring we have a detailed understanding of specific sectors and policy challenges. This, combined with our methods and communications expertise, helps ensure that our research makes a difference for decision makers and communities.