Rapid Evidence Review: Supporting young people who are not in employment, education or training: Summary

1.   Introduction

1.1   The Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) is the Welsh Government's key commitment to provide everyone aged 16 to 24, living in Wales, with support to gain a place in education or training and help to get into work or self-employment (Welsh Government, 2023a). The YPG provides an umbrella structure that sits above Welsh Government funded programmes for young people, aiming to fully utilise existing interventions, develop new ones and create a straightforward journey for young people, regardless of circumstances and background. The Working Wales service provides one simple route, although not the only route, to access the programmes and services.

1.2   This paper reports on a Rapid Evidence Review, the objective of which was to identify:

- the cross-cutting barriers young people face to engaging with education, training or employment; and

- "what works" in supporting young people to overcome those barriers.

1.3   This was a primarily desk-based review drawing upon:

- a systematic search of literature to identify (i) the cross-cutting barriers young people face (ii) evidence of "what works"[1] and

- a desk-based review of government statistics (data derived from surveys, such as the Annual Population Survey and Labour Force Survey) and administrative data (including data from the Communities for Work Programme) to identify the characteristics of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

1.4   This was complemented by a small number of interviews with practitioners (n=7) involved in developing and/or delivering EET support interventions (in Wales).

1.5   Although the review mainly draws upon and draws together existing evidence, it considers the implications of changes in context, such as the pandemic, and uses a model of behavioural change,

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[1] In evaluating evidence about 'what works', the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) evidence standards were used, and evidence that was at level 3 or over was included. Evidence at lower levels 1 and 2 was considered under 'what else might work' and treated as promising, but unproven, practice.

the COM-B framework, to provide a fresh perspective on this evidence and its implications for policy in Wales.

2. The characteristics of young people who are NEET

2.1   Quantitative and qualitative data (such as data generated through surveys and interviews with young people who are NEET) identify a range of characteristics[2] associated with an increased risk that a young person will be NEET. Some of these characteristics, such as living in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, or adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), are 'distal' or underlying factors (or causes) which contribute to a young person's likelihood of being NEET. Other characteristics, such as low qualifications, are 'proximate', or more immediate factors, which directly contribute to a young person's likelihood of being NEET and which are usually shaped by distal factors.

The COM-B Model of behavioural change

2.2   The relationship between a characteristic, such as ACEs and an increased risk of becoming NEET is not always obvious. A model of behavioural change such as the COM-B model can help explain how and why these characteristics are associated with an increased risk of becoming 'NEET'. The model posits that a behaviour, such as effectively searching for, applying for and taking up work, requires:

- the ability - or **capability** – to perform the behaviour (e.g. having the skills and knowledge required);

- the intention – or **motivation** – to perform the behaviour; and

- the absence of environment constraint (e.g. not facing barriers such as childcare) or conversely, having the **opportunity** – to perform the behaviour (Michie et al., 2011).

2.3   These three factors form the basis of the COM-B model, illustrated by Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. The COM-B Framework
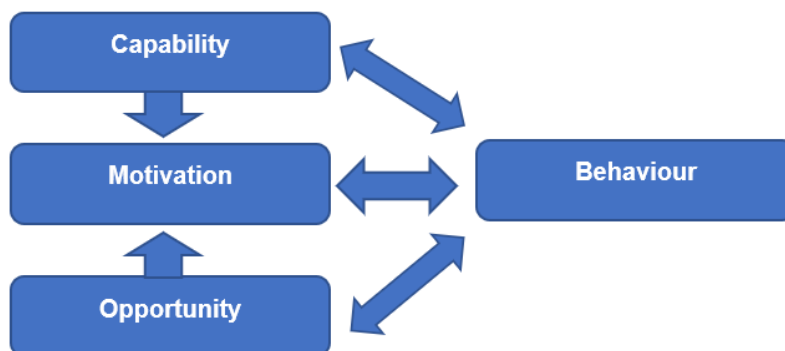
Source: Michie et al., 2011

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[2] The report considers 'barriers' but focuses primarily upon the 'characteristics' of young people associated with a higher risk of becoming NEET (and uses this language throughout). This is arguably more than a semantic distinction, as 'barriers' imply obstacles to an action or an outcome; sometimes these are clear, for example, where there are few employment opportunities or a young person experiences discrimination. However, the nature of obstacles created by some characteristics identified by the research as associated with a higher risk of becoming NEET, such as coming from a workless household, can be less obvious. Moreover, the language of barriers can be unhelpful when trying to understand why some young people overcome a 'barrier', such as having low qualifications or a caring responsibility, that other young people seemingly cannot overcome.

2.4   As Figure 2.1 illustrates, capability, opportunity, motivation and behaviour are all linked so that, for example, having confidence in the ability to successfully perform a behaviour, such as searching for work and the opportunity to do so, can increase a young person's motivation to search for work. Conversely, limited opportunities (for example, due to caring responsibilities or digital exclusion) or limited capability (for example, ill health or limited experience and understanding of the labour market), can undermine motivation.

2.5   Figure 2.2 illustrates the main distal and proximate factors identified by the review and how each of these factors increases the risk that a young person is NEET, by limiting young people's: capability, opportunity and/or motivation to engage in behaviour such as job search activity. It also illustrates two important messages from research into intersectionality (see boxed text) that:

- young people often have multiple characteristics associated with an increasing risk of being NEET; for example, they may have low or no skills, a mental health condition and/or be disabled; and

- that these different factors can interact and may compound or exacerbate each other.

2.6   Therefore, the experiences of young people who are disabled and have a mental health condition can be quite different to those who are either solely disabled or solely suffering from a mental health condition. As figure 2.2 illustrates, the COM-B framework can be used to help explore and better understand this and illustrate how disability and mental health conditions can:

- expose young people to discrimination (limiting their access to opportunities);

- constrain young people's capabilities; and

- as a result, demotivate them from seeking work (so they become economically inactive).

Intersectionality

Different aspects of a young person's identity, such as their ethnicity, gender, disability and social class, can intersect to create different and sometimes distinct experiences of discrimination or privilege; for example, racism can compound discrimination linked to sexism and mean Black, Asian and minority ethnic women can be "doubly disadvantaged"[3]. The ways in which different social divisions are 'intermeshed' and interconnected, is described as 'intersectionality' (Scottish Government, 2022; Yuval-Davies, 2006).

This is an important area of research and may be a growing area of interest. The qualitative and quantitative evidence included in this review highlights the impact of societal attitudes such as ableism, racism and sexism, upon young people's experiences of discrimination and privilege, and therefore their access to opportunities. As the COM-B model illustrates, this can in turn shape their motivation and behaviour, so for example, as a result of experiences of discrimination, they may feel there is no point trying to find work.

However, the evidence included in this review also highlights a range of factors, such as weak essential skills, that may shape a young person's identity (and sense of self)[4], and also others' perceptions of them, which can therefore limit or extend their access to opportunities, creating experiences which can be felt as 'discrimination' or 'privilege'. Importantly though, unlike other factors such as ethnicity or social class, they can also directly limit young people's capabilities to take up opportunities.

Intersectionality remains a contested term and it is important that, if used, it does not lead to too narrow a focus upon personal identity as the most important factor in understanding young people's position in society[5], which risks essentialising young people (i.e. defining them through one or more markers of identity). More broadly, a focus upon discrimination and barriers can cast young people as passive victims of structural constraint, denying them any sense of agency (and their ability to act and to try to overcome barriers) (Parken, 2010).

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[3] For example, the discrimination experienced by Muslim women may be exacerbated by Islamic dress, which makes them more visible and therefore more likely to experience discrimination.

[4] Characteristics such as weak essential skills can, in part, be considered a social construct (as a skill is not just the technical ability to do something but also a marker of the abilities that society values) and employers and education and training settings may be said to 'discriminate' against those with weak essential skills (limiting access to opportunities). However, this is a different type of 'discrimination' that is generally not seen as unjust compared to that rooted in, for example, racism, ableism or sexism.

[5] For example, while there are differences in the proportion of men and women, disabled and non-disabled people and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and from white backgrounds in education training or employment, it is unlikely that discrimination based upon these different identities is the only factor that determines these observed differences.

Figure 2.2. Conceptual map of characteristics associated with an increased risk of a young person being NEET
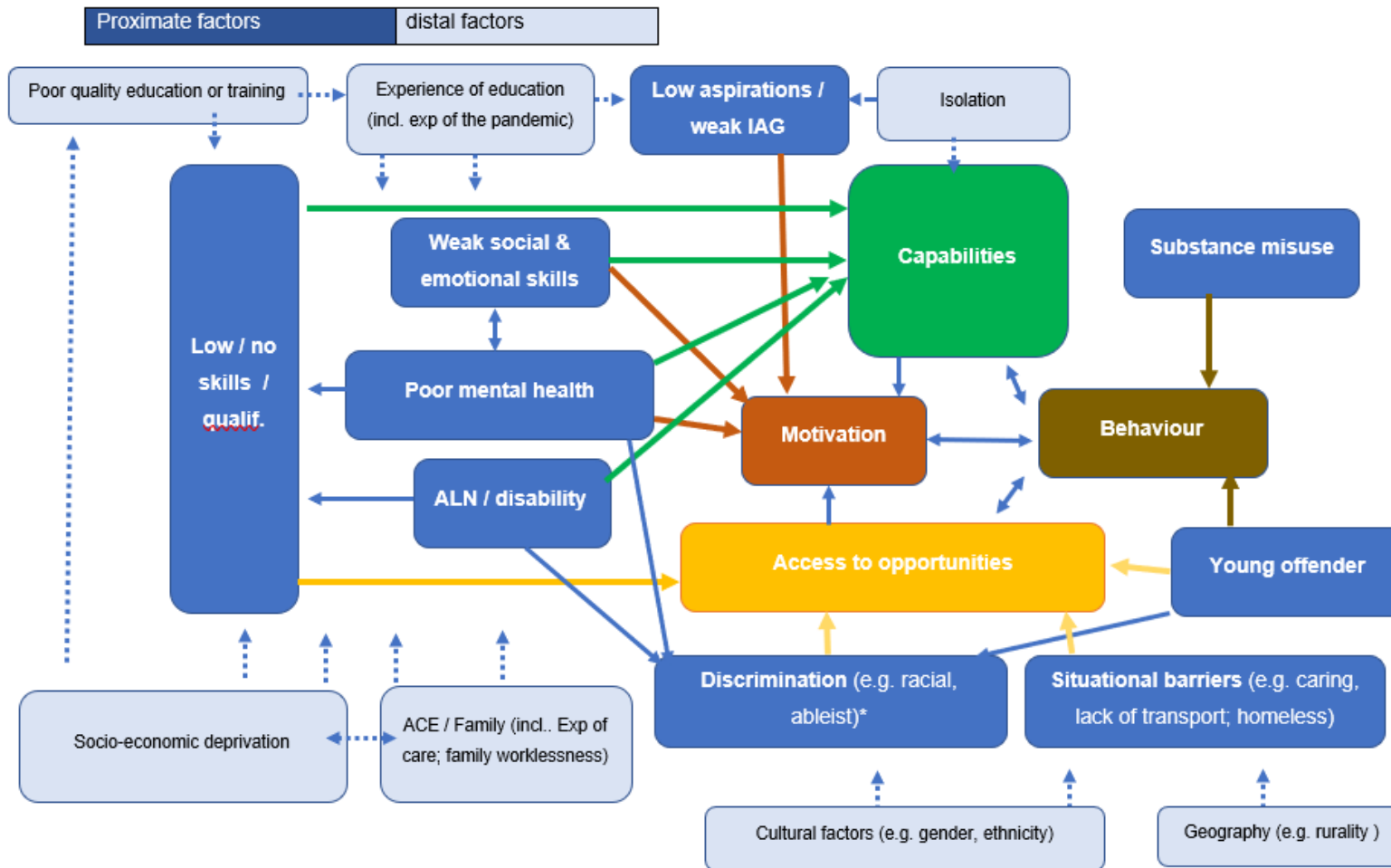
Source: Figure created for the review

*'Ableist' describes policies, behaviours, rules, etc. that result in unfair or harmful treatment of disabled people, which can constrain access to education, training or employment opportunities.

Acronyms:
ACE – Adverse Childhood Experiences
ALN – Additional Learning Needs
IAG – information Advice and Guidance

3. The prevalence of different characteristics associated with an increased risk of a young person being NEET

3.1   Many of the characteristics outlined in figure 2.2. associated with an increased risk of being NEET, such as having mental health difficulties or low or no qualifications, are common and around a fifth of young people have at least one of these characteristics (i.e. a mental health disorder or low or no qualifications[6]). However, as Table 3.1 illustrates, not all young people with these characteristics will be NEET; for example, the number of young people in Wales with low or no qualifications or a mental health disorder is much larger than the number of young people with low or no qualifications or a mental health disorder who are NEET[7]. It should be noted that table 3.1 uses data from a range of different sources (listed below), collected using different methods, and covering different time periods and populations, and should therefore be treated as indicative estimates and direct comparisons between the number of young people with each characteristic and (where available) the number of young people who are NEET with each characteristic, should not be made.

Table 3.1. The estimated total number of young people aged 16-24 with selected characteristics associated with an increased risk of being NEET, and the estimated number[8] of young people who are NEET with these characteristics (where data is available)

Characteristic	Estimated number of young people with this characteristic (rounded to the nearest 000)	Estimated number of young people who are NEET with this characteristic (rounded to the nearest 000)
Aged 16-24 who had an ALN in secondary school	76,000	N/A
Aged 16-24 who are lonely	75,000	N/A
Aged 16-24 who have a probable mental health disorder	74,000	11,000
Aged 16-24 who are caring for others	74,000	N/A
Aged 16-24 who report using any drug in the last year	63,000	N/A
Aged 16-24 and disabled	52,000	18,000
Aged 16-18 with no qualifications at level 2 or above	15,000	9,000
Aged 19-24 with no qualifications at level 2 or above	23,000	20,000
Aged 16-18 with no qualifications	9,000	3,000
Aged 19-24, with no qualifications	12,000	10,000
Young people (aged 16-24)	*337,000*	*52,000*

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[6] For example, data from the Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) survey in England, identifies that 22 per cent of young people aged 17 to 24 years had a probable mental disorder (NHS Digital, 2022) and it is reasonable to infer that rates in Wales will be similar. In 2022, 17.6 per cent of young people had qualifications below level 2 (StatsWales, 2022).

[7] Gender is not included in the chart, because the rates at which men and women are NEET have been converging. Ethnicity is not included, because the proportion of young people who are NEET varies across different ethnic groups (LWI, 2022).

[8] Estimates were calculated by applying percentages derived from other studies about, for example, the proportion of young people who are NEET who have no qualifications, to the total number of young people who were NEET in 2022.

Sources:

Number of young people who are NEET: ONS (Mid-Year Population Estimates & Annual Population Survey), HESA, Welsh Government Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR), Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), StatsWales 2023a
Loneliness: National Survey of Wales, Wales Centre for Public Policy, 2021
Mental Health Disorders: Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) [in England] survey, NHS Digital, 2022; Labour Force Survey (England) UK Government, 2022
Caring for others: National Survey of Wales, Welsh Government, 2021
Drug use: Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS, 2022
No / Low qualifications: APS, unpublished Welsh Government Analysis of APS; Welsh Government, 2022b; Welsh Government, 2012
Additional Learning Needs (ALN): PLASC, StatsWales 2023b
Disability: APS, StatsWales, 2022, Welsh Government, 2022a

3.2   As table 3.1 illustrates, some characteristics, such as being disabled or having no qualifications, are more closely correlated with a young person's risk of being NEET (research or statistics suggest that around 40 per cent of young people who are NEET are either disabled and/or have low qualifications). Equally, they also show that these characteristics are not determinative, and while they may increase the risk, they do not necessarily mean a young people will be NEET. table 3.1 also illustrates how gaps in the data mean that this analysis is only possible for some of the characteristics associated with an increased risk of being NEET.

Groups of young people

3.3   Young people who are NEET do not form a homogeneous group. Their diversity, in terms of their characteristics, their capabilities, access to opportunities, motivations and behaviours, is marked. Also, as a result of intersectionality and the ways that different dimensions of their identities and characteristics can shape their experiences, it can be difficult to generalise about young people who are NEET, as it is rarely a single factor or characteristic that defines their experiences. However, if young people are defined not by their specific characteristics, but by their orientation toward EET, amongst young people aged 16-18 who are NEET (approximately 14,000 young people in Wales, it has been estimated that around:

- 40 per cent are 'cyclical', 'in transition' or 'open to learning', with generally positive attitudes toward education or training. These are very likely to re-engage in the short-term and therefore only need light touch support (which would equate to around 5,500 young people aged 16 to18 in Wales);

- 20 per cent are 'undecided', unsure of, or unhappy with, the education or training offer available to them but do not face severe or complex barriers (which would equate to around 3,000 young people); and

- 40 per cent are 'stuck', or even regressing, 'sustained' NEETs who are likely to need more support as they face multiple barriers to re-engaging (Speilhofer et al., 2009; WAO, 2014) (which would equate to around 5,500 young people). [9]

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[9] These figures are based upon the two sources: statistical segmentation analysis of Youth Cohort Survey data from the mid 2000s, to identify the size of each group (Speilhofer et al., 2009) and Statistical First release data on the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): April 2021 to June 2022. The figures should not be considered precise estimates, because, for example, the analysis of Youth Cohort Survey data is now dated; and the numbers of young people who are NEET changes from year to year. Instead, they are included to give a sense of the estimated size of the different groups.

3.4   Comparable quantitative data is not available for 19 to 24 year olds who are NEET (approximately 38,000 young people in Wales).[10] Although it is common in the literature covering those aged 19 to 24 to identify three similar groupings, the sizes of each group may differ. Given scarring effects (Bell and Blanchflower, 2011) young people who have been NEET for longer (for example, since age 16 to 17) are likely to have more entrenched barriers.

3.5   Given the differences in their characteristics (in terms of motivation, capabilities, behaviours and access to opportunities) it is reasonable to infer that different groups of young people will need different levels and types of support and therefore, a one size fits all approach will not work for all. This is also a key message from the first phase of the YPG National Conversation (Welsh Government, 2023b).

The impact of the current context

3.6   The prevalence of different characteristics changes over time; for example, the number of young people with low or no qualifications has been declining. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the prevalence of mental health difficulties which has, in turn, demotivated some young people, reducing their capabilities and/or access to employment opportunities[11]. The impact of the cost of living crisis is less clear; for example, cuts in real incomes may help motivate young people to seek employment but may also add to the stresses and strains of daily life, which can reduce people's mental bandwidth[12] and therefore their capability to effectively search for work.

4.   Young people who do not engage

4.1   Although young people may want and would benefit from support, many do not take it up.   This is a key challenge; as an International Labour Office (ILO) review of European youth guarantees concluded, engaging 'non-registered NEETs', typically those with the most complex barriers, is seen as 'one of the most acute challenges that countries are facing in meeting the guidelines of the European Commission's (EC) recommendation' with regards to the Youth Guarantee (ILO, 2017).

4.2   Within Wales, the search of literature to identify the cross-cutting barriers young people face, identified that some young people have:

- weak or weakened capabilities (for example, as a result of mental health difficulties, neurodevelopmental conditions or difficulties in school);
- constrained access to quality opportunities (for example, as a result of caring responsibilities, difficulties travelling and/or weaknesses in local labour markets);
- a mismatch between their aspirations and their capabilities and/or access to employment opportunities; and/or
- negative experiences of EET (such as school or college or 'poor work') and/or EET support services.

4.3   This is illustrated by figure 2.2. These challenges have left many demotivated and either stuck or regressing (for example, where capabilities that are not exercised weaken, particularly in the wake of the pandemic). This is a key concern as the longer they are NEET, the greater the risk they will struggle to re-engage in the future (an effect described as 'scarring').

4.4   Conversely, many of those young people who do engage with EET support services, may be less in need of support because, for example, they are in a period of 'transition', and would be likely to re-

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[10] As above , this is based upon Statistical First release data on the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): April 2021 to June 2022. The figures should not be considered precise estimates, because the numbers of young people who are NEET change from year to year.

[11] People are more likely to hold negative attitudes toward working with or for people with mental health impairments, compared to those with physical impairments (NatCen, 2022).

[12] The concept is derived from the work of Shafir and Mullainathan (2013), who highlighted the demands that poverty places upon people's mental energy and capacity, identifying that scarcity means that the poor are more likely to make mistakes and bad decisions than those with higher incomes.

engage even without support. This may help explain the high levels of deadweight identified in impact evaluations; for example, as one recent review identified:

> 'In the higher quality evaluations included here, an impact on employment was found, but the additional impact was often only around 10 percentage points (and often less). In other words, many of the participants would have gone on to get jobs without the evaluated support' (IES, 2020, p.7).

5. What works in supporting young people's engagement with EET and what else might work?

5.1 There is a reasonably large body of evidence identifying 'what works' to help young people enter and sustain education, employment and training. As figure 5.1 illustrates, this focuses upon 'what works' in three stages.

Figure 5.1. Support for re-engagement

Source: Figure created for the review

Key considerations for each stage

- What would motivate young people to want to re-engage with EET? *and* what would motivate them to engage with EET support services?[13] (and what might discourage them e.g. delays, having to wait[14])?

- What capabilities do they need to engage with EET support services? (e.g. self-efficacy)

- What are the EET support opportunities open to them? and what might stop them re-engaging (e.g. childcare; digital exclusion)?

- What would motivate young people to continue their engagement with EET support services? (and what might discourage them? (e.g. feeling disrespected).

- What capabilities (e.g. skills, health) do they need to develop in order to take up EET opportunities?

- What might stop them progressing (e.g. housing insecurity)?

- What would motivate young people to sustain their re-engagement with EET? (and what might discourage them? (e.g. poor pay and conditions; 'toxic' work places)

- What capabilities do they need to sustain their re-engagement with EET (e.g. an understanding of work place cultures and expectations)?

- What might stop them progressing (e.g. housing insecurity)?

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[13] Young people who want to re-engage with EET are also more likely to engage with EET support services, but this cannot be taken for granted; for example, as the YPG National Conversation (Welsh Government, 2023a) identifies, there is a lack of awareness of, and for some young people, a stigma attached to, and/or fears about accessing support services.

[14] Young people's motivation to re-engage may be fragile and even transitory, and delays or difficulties may mean the opportunity is lost.

5.2   The review identifies that there is no 'silver bullet' (or panacea), but what works at each stage is reasonably well understood and involves:

- focusing upon young people to better understand their motivation, capabilities and/or access to opportunities, which can enable and constrain their engagement with EET support services as much as their engagement with EET opportunities;
- focusing upon employers and also education or training providers, to better understand their expectations and the EET opportunities open to young people. This can help ensure that support for young people equips them with the capabilities, attitudes and behaviours employers or education and training providers expect; that those providing support can broker access to opportunities; and that young people's aspirations are aligned with their capabilities and the EET opportunities they can access;
- supporting young people in a flexible, responsive, person-centred way, through the dual roles of a trusted adult and lead professional, who can provide pastoral and practical support themselves and broker access to EET opportunities and support from others (e.g. health and housing services) where needed; and
- doing all of this well by, for example, ensuring that staff have the motivation and capabilities and access to opportunities (such as support from partners) they need to perform their roles and that programmes are adequately funded and robustly evaluated.

5.3   However, this evidence base is largely restricted to 'what works' for those young people who engage with EET support services (as they are included in evaluations) and much less is known about 'what works' with those who do not engage (who are generally not included in evaluations).

The likely efficacy of youth guarantees

5.4   There is evidence from the EU that youth guarantee schemes in Finland and Sweden resulted in lower unemployment. However, the evidence reviewed for this study suggests that there is nothing necessarily transformative about youth guarantees, particularly when made up of the existing interventions, whose efficacy is only moderate. What countries choose to do (the integration that underpins a youth guarantee) and how they do it (in terms of resourcing and delivery), are therefore more important than the making of a guarantee. The design and implementation of the YPG in Wales will be further explored in the forthcoming evaluation of the YPG.

6.   Conclusions

Why are some young people NEET?

6.1   Understanding why young people are NEET and how this is likely to change as the context changes (e.g. in the wake of the pandemic) is crucial to informing support to encourage and enable them to re-engage with and then progress in education, training or employment.

6.2   Although, there is no 'defining' characteristic, or even a set of characteristics, that means a young person will be NEET, a model like COM-B can be helpful in understanding why some young people are NEET, while most are not. It focuses attention upon a series of risk factors, which can interact with each other, further increasing the risk that a young person will be NEET, by limiting their motivation, capability and/or access to opportunities.

What works?

6.3   Existing programmes and approaches to support young people who are NEET appear to work best with those who are more highly skilled, qualified and motivated. However, the degree of additionality is often modest; that is to say, many young people engaged by the programmes would have entered employment without the evaluated support (IES, 2020). As one study identifies, 'the experience of many labour market programmes is that support ends up benefiting those closest to the labour market, many of whom may find work without support at all' (Damm et al., 2020).

6.4   In contrast, those with the weakest capabilities, motivation and/or most constrained opportunities, who are less likely to re-engage with EET without support, are also both generally the hardest to engage and support and the least likely to achieve positive outcomes if they do engage with EET support services.

6.5   This raises difficult questions about where best to target scarce resources, for example to:

- focus upon interventions whose effectiveness has been demonstrated, but demonstrated to only have a moderate impact and to not reach some target groups; or
- to focus upon interventions whose effectiveness has not (yet) been demonstrated (evaluated), but which may benefit groups who are not currently being effectively engaged and/or supported by existing interventions.

Implications for Wales

6.5   The (limited) evidence from this review (which was not a comprehensive evaluation of policy) suggests that existing policies are evidence based, for example:

- the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) has a strong focus upon early identification of 16-18 year olds who have or are at risk of disengaging (WG, 2016);
- programmes like Working Wales and Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) offer personalised advice, coaching and support (Welsh Government, 2022c, 2023c); and
- programmes such as Jobs Growth Wales (JGW+) and CfW+ offer additional support and access to training and work placements (Welsh Government, 2023c).

6.6   However, the evidence suggests that they only work moderately well, as illustrated by:

- the proportions of some groups of young people, such as disabled young people who are NEET, are very high;
- large numbers of young people who are NEET are not engaging with EET support services and they risk becoming stuck, or even regressing, if their capabilities and motivation to re-engage with EET decays over time; and
- many of those who are supported by EET support services would be likely to re-engage in the absence of support (meaning there is limited additionality), although they might do so more slowly and/or struggle to sustain their re-engagement with EET in the absence of support.

6.7   Therefore, simply doing more of the same is unlikely to be sufficient. As table 6.1 illustrates, the review highlights three broad areas for action. The review is also clear that it is not just what is done but how well it is done that makes a difference. Therefore, it is possible, although beyond the scope of this review to assess this, that the problem is more a gap between policy intent and practice, rather than gaps in policy. So, rather than new programmes, what may be required is a change in the culture and practice of existing programmes.

6.8   The Well-Being of Future Generations Act's focus upon prevention, collaboration, integration and involvement is also likely to be highly relevant in shaping service provision; for example:

- the potential 'scarring' effects of disengagement from EET and the difficulties and costs of re-engaging some young people who are NEET highlight the importance of prevention;
- the importance of better understanding the lived experience of young people and their motivations, capabilities and access to opportunities and behaviours, in order to better understand how to engage and support them, reinforces the importance of co-production; and
- the range of factors that shape young people's motivations, capabilities and access to opportunities, reinforces the importance of collaboration and integration.

6.9   To enable collaboration and integration in order to help ensure that young people can access the additional support they require, when they need it, it is vital that, for example, staff in both EET support services and other support services, such as mental health services, housing services, financial advice services, and drug and alcohol misuse services:

- understand each other's services and what they offer; and
- know about referral pathways and have the confidence to make referrals (for example, they have confidence that the services they are referring young people to, will respond effectively and with respect, in a timely way).

6.10. The exercise of systems leadership that goes beyond existing models of partnership working (such as establishing mechanisms to refer young people between partners, without changing how each partner works) to changing and challenging the system, so that it is more person than service centred, is also likely to be important; for example (focusing upon mental health), this could include:

- the experiences of young people engaging with EET support services informing the development of mental health services for young people; and
- the expertise in mental health services being deployed to help build the skills and confidence of EET support services in working with young people with mental health difficulties.

6.11. However, as well as ensuring that services are young person centred, the review also identifies that EET support services need to be EET centred: they need to understand the expectations of employers and post-16 education and training providers and the opportunities they offer. In effect, they need to look both ways; if, for example, they only focus upon young people's needs, without also having a strong understanding of the demands and expectations of EET, they risk setting young people up to fail, and also potentially entrenching young people's disengagement from EET. Without this understanding EET support services:

- cannot properly prepare young people for re-engagement (e.g. by enhancing their capabilities and helping align their aspirations with the opportunities open to them); nor
- can they undertake the effective EET matching, which is vital to help increase the sustainability of young people's re-engagement with EET.

6.12. Collaboration and systems leadership is likely to be important here too, with, for example, EET support services helping shape young people's EET opportunities and employers and education and training providers helping shape EET support services' offer to young people.

Table 6.1. Strengthening support for re-engagement: what works and what might work (in italics)

	Engagement with EET support services	Support to re-engage with EET	Support to help young people sustain re-engagement with EET
Motivation	- Identifying and reaching out to young people who are at risk / who are NEET with the offer of support; - ensuring the offer of support (including e.g. financial incentives and other 'magnets') and the expectation of the benefits of re-engaging with EET are: - more attractive than other options (e.g. work in the informal economy; gaming); - such that young people can have confidence, that the process feels human (including, for example, support by 'trusted adults') and treats them with respect; and - are flexible and holistic enough to accommodate the diversity of young people, who will have different motivations, capabilities and access to opportunities (i.e. person centred) and also the differing expectations of different employers and education and training providers (so it is also EET focused). *Encouraging self-referrals, most commonly through social media campaigns and through word of mouth recommendations and peer engagement.*		- Effective job (or education and training) matching (to ensure a good fit between a young person's aspirations and capabilities and the EET opportunities they take up), which is more important than in work support. - Access to in EET support to help resolve problems (see below) and encourage progression in EET, which may be important for those at higher risk of disengaging.
Capability	*'Stabilisation': ensuring that people's basic needs are met, so they have the capability and can develop the motivation to engage with employment support;* *Patience and persistence: waiting until some young people are ready and able to re-engage (e.g. when they reach a potential turning point in their lives).*	- Information, advice and guidance on job searching, application and employment opportunities. - Providing both pastoral and practical support (e.g. developing self-confidence, self-motivation and vocational skills) that helps young people get the most of the EET support services' offer. - Access to education and training opportunities (including work placements) that can enhance the capabilities that employers' expect/demand (which requires effective employer engagement). *Bridging the gap between employers' expectations of young people and young people's understanding of what is expected of them (e.g. through work placements).*	- Enhancing young people's capabilities, including their skills, resilience and access to EET support to (i) help resolve problems in the workplace / education or training setting (e.g. relationships with colleagues) and outside (for example, childcare breakdowns) and (ii) support progression in EET, which may be important, when for example, initial entry is into jobs without training or post-16 education or training without clear progression pathways. *Developing more specialist in-EET support (such as in-work support) for key groups, such as neurodiverse*

		• *Improving EET services' understanding of the impact of, and young people's access to, specialist support, e.g. for mental health difficulties or ACEs.*	*young people to help them sustain their engagement with EET.*
Opportunity	• *Enhancing the physical and psychological accessibility of EET support services through local (community) place-based delivery of support and innovations in public transport.*	• Dismantle or help young people overcome situational barriers such as caring responsibilities, or housing insecurity and/or create new opportunities though, for example, subsidies for employers. • Supported employment for groups who may face additional / specific barriers, such as neurodiverse young people or young people with mental health difficulties. • *Building EET support staff confidence and capabilities in working with groups who may face additional / specific barriers. such as young people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.*	• *Working with employers and education and training providers to identify, understand, and cultivate new opportunities (e.g. through wage subsidies; funding for new post-16 education and training provision).*

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