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Barnardo's NI *In Focus* is a series of outcomeinformed papers, including infographics, illustrating how our services effectively support children, young people and families in Northern Ireland.

Introduction



All of Barnardo's work is driven by the vision that the lives of children and young people should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination. Our purpose is to help the most vulnerable children and young people transform their lives and fulfil their potential.

Barnardo's NI is committed to a whole system approach to health and well-being. Alongside our work in child protection and family support we have been developing school and community based early intervention to improve children's outcomes. One decade ago we made a commitment to embed more of our work in schools and local communities and now work in over 200

schools throughout NI. We lead the implementation of a number of evidence based, early intervention programmes and are committed to building capacity to make prevention approaches sustainable.

We believe in helping children and families take greater control over their lives to create healthy, safe and united communities. For us, this means addressing the factors that impact on health and well-being in NI - before they become problems, or as early in the process as possible.

In achieving our purpose we strive to implement innovative, high quality, informed approaches with clear positive outcomes for children and young people.

This report highlights outcomes from the "All Stars" Programme - a universal programme designed to prevent risky behaviours and help young people envision a brighter future.



How **All Stars** was funded

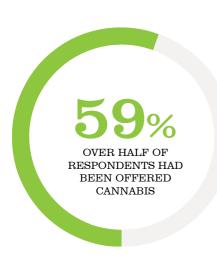
In 2012 Barnardo's Northern Ireland received a grant from the Big Lottery Fund "Realising Ambition" Programme to adapt and implement the "All Stars" Programme in Northern Ireland over a four year period. "Realising Ambition" is a UK wide initiative designed to help young people fulfil their potential and avoid pathways into offending.

Realising Ambition is supported by a Consortium led by Catch 22, including The Social Research Unit. Substance and The Young Foundation.

Why we need Prevention



Adolescence is a unique time of considerable change and development as young people strive to establish independence and identity in an ever changing society. Young people today face a number of challenges and situations which may increase their likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours. For example, the Belfast Youth Development Study (www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/YDS/) has explored self-reported levels of alcohol and drug use in NI and have revealed the following findings.









29%

ALMOST ONE THIRD HAD ACCESS TO ECSTASY **18**%

AROUND ONE IN FIVE HAD BEEN OFFERED COCAINE **49**%

BY THE AGE OF 16, NEARLY HALF OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEYED REPORTED HAVING USED CANNABIS



ONE IN FIVE YOUNG PEOPLE SMOKED ON A DAILY BASIS BY AGE 14







66%

TWO THIRDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE HAD BEEN DRUNK AT SOME STAGE IN THE LAST YEAR



1/3

ONE THIRD OF THOSE WHO DRANK ALCOHOL GOT DRUNK AT LEAST WEEKLY (15% of total sample) Over half of those young people who had tried an illicit drug had also reported being in trouble with the police.



The same study highlights a clear association between drug use and contact with the Criminal Justice System. Over half of those young people who had tried an illicit drug had also reported being in trouble with the police (56%) compared with one fifth of nonusers (20%).

Risky behaviours such as substance misuse have immediate, short term impacts on a young person's outcomes. But there are wider societal impacts also. Addressing misuse of alcohol costs NI an estimated £900 million each year, diseases where smoking could be a contributory factor another £164 million (PHA, 2013). Preventing poor choices in relation to health behaviour (such as smoking or mis-using alcohol) and building children's selfbelief and resilience through universal prevention programmes can be cost effective for society and improve outcomes for our young people.

About All Stars

All Stars is a school-based, early intervention and prevention programme for young people aged 8 to 14 years. It was developed in the US by Dr Bill Hansen and is based on almost 30 years of prevention research and practice. All Stars has two key aims;

- » Preventing risky behaviours (e.g. drug use and anti-social behaviour)
- » Helping young people build bright futures

However All Stars does more than prevent risky behaviour. By working on the two primary aims in tandem, the programme helps young people realise their potential by also promoting positive personal characteristics.



What is different about All Stars?

During adolescence, young people grow and mature. The transition through adolescence increases social awareness and peer influence as young people develop a desire to fit in, to gain personal identity and have social status.

All Stars achieves prevention goals by focusing on the key factors that influence behaviour and choices

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All Stars uses the research and evidence base of adolescents' lived experiences and matches programme content to the social and cognitive development of young people. In this way All Stars targets the root causes of behaviour. This evidenced based approach makes sense - we know that not every young person engages in risky behaviours but that some young people do. All Stars focuses on developing the specific attributes that research shows prevent young people getting involved in risky behaviour - these are called 'mediators'.

All Stars Key Mediators:

- Normative beliefs: challenging common mis-conceptions about how common/acceptable risky behaviours actually are 'everyone is doing it'. Correcting such perceptions reduces risk and reinforces positive peer norms and appropriate peer support.
- Idealism: Young people are encouraged and supported to visualise and develop an 'ideal' positive future and to understand how risky behaviour could prevent this being achieved. The incongruence between risky behaviours and their desired lifestyle is highlighted.
- Commitment to achieving their preferred vision of their future. Young people who make commitments to their vision of the future (and share these with other people) are more likely to strive to reach that vision and therefore less likely to engage in risk taking behaviours.
- Bonding to school or other supportive groups where the above mediators can be supported and encouraged.
- Parental / carer attentiveness to support relationships and communication to help young people make positive choices.



Summary of All Stars Evidence Base:

All Stars is based on robust research into the mechanisms and mediators for changing adolescent attitudes and beliefs (e.g.Goldberg et al 2000; Hansen, 1996; Ellickson, Bell & Harrison, 1993, Fearnow-Kenny et al, 2003). The programme has also been subject to a range of robust evaluations in the US, including longitudinal and randomised controlled trials.

Fearnow-Kenny, Wyrick, Jackson-Newsom, Wyrick & Hansen (2003) carried out an experimental evaluation of the All Stars programme in North Carolina. Results indicated that students who participated in the programme were increasingly likely to view drugs use, stress and poor nutrition as incongruent to their future visions. In addition participants were less likely to engage in tobacco use.

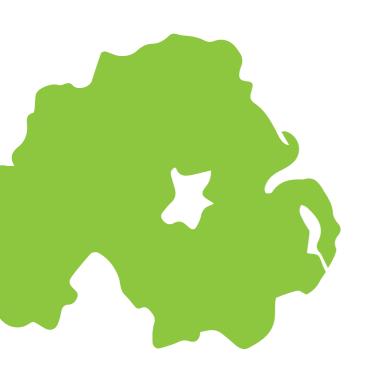
Harrington and colleagues (2001) evaluated the All Stars programme using a longitudinal design in 14 mid-western middle schools. Results indicated that the All Stars Programme was shown to have immediate but

short-term impacts on bonding commitment, ideals and normative beliefs.

In 2004, McNeal, Hansen, Harrington and Giles tested All Stars programme effectiveness using a randomised controlled trial in 14 middle schools in Kentucky. In addition to measuring outcomes this trial sought to identify variations in impact by type of delivery either by trained specialists or regular classroom teachers. The results indicated the largest effects were found when children received the programme delivered by teachers. Students in these groups reported significantly lower levels of alcohol, cigarette and inhalant use than those in the control group. Delivery by trained specialists was also positive but not statistically significant. This highlights the additional impact gained by embedding the programme as part of the school day and using existing teachers rather than external specialists.

All Stars in Northern Ireland

Adaptation Process



The grant from Realising Ambition enabled Barnardo's to offer All Stars to schools in Northern Ireland – the first time the programme had ever been delivered outside of the US. As the programme is delivered by class teachers as part of the regular school day it was vital the programme content was aligned to the curriculum and enabled teachers to meet their statutory requirements. To achieve this, Barnardo's worked with Stranmills University College to align All Stars to the 'Learning for Life & Work' and 'Personal Development & Mutual Understanding' curricula.

This included substituting US spellings and terminology, using names more familiar to local children, introducing a plenary session and learning intentions as per good classroom practice. Barnardo's liaised regularly with teachers to capture when and if further adaptations were needed. The team from Stranmillis also worked closely with the Developer to ensure the programme logic model and fidelity were unaffected.

Barnardo's have now adapted 5 All Stars programmes, the programmes were adapted and introduced incrementally, as shown in Table 1.

All Stars delivery in NI

The programmes for Post Primary pupils are designed to be sequential, each one builds upon the last. Typically young people participate in Core in Year 8. Booster in Year 9 and Plus in Year 10. Character Education and Challenge programmes have been delivered in Primary schools from P5 to P7 and are not sequential.

All Stars has reached over 7000 young people. It has been delivered in 20 Post Primary Schools reaching almost 4000 young people, mainly in the Greater Belfast area. The programme has also reached over 3000 children in

35 Primary Schools in Greater Belfast, Antrim, Larne and Ballymena. Almost 2500 young people participated in at least 2 All Stars programmes and a further 450 of this group participated in 3 programmes.

Barnardo's selected schools to participate in the programme, using free school meal entitlement and pupils from areas of high disadvantage as the main criteria. This is referred to as 'targeted universalism'. However, it is important to highlight that All Stars is a universal programme and deals with issues that all young people need support with.



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Table 1. All Stars replication by Year and Programme									
Programme	Year 1 2012/13	No of Pupils	Year 2 2013/14	No of Pupils	Year 3 2014/15	No of Pupils	Year 4 2015/16	No of Pupils	Total
Core 11-12 years	~	381	~	1289	~	1124	~	1021	3815
Booster 12-13 years			~	259	~	972	~	509	1740
Plus 13-14 years					~	25	~	308	333
Character Education 8-11 years			~	1202	~	1122	~	881	3205
Challenge 8-11 years					~	621	Not offered	O	621

Delivery through Capacity Building Training

260 local teachers have taken part in All Stars training



All Stars is delivered in schools by the classroom teacher – as part of the regular school day.

Rather than training Barnardo's staff to deliver All Stars. capacity building was at the heart of the replication model. Capacity building involves sharing of information, knowledge and skills with a view to increasing impact in a sustainable way. Through the funding provided, Barnardo's was able to offer high quality training from the All Stars National Trainer. Kathleen Nelson-Simley. Both the All Stars trainer and

Developer travelled to NI once or twice per year to train teachers, visit schools and meet with the team in Barnardo's. This training along with on-going technical assistance from Barnardo's ensures that teachers have the skills and resources required to deliver the programme themselves.

To date 260 local teachers have taken part in All Stars training. Capacity building matters because it provides systems and communities with sustainable, selfmanaged methods of promoting positive outcomes.

All Stars Outcomes

This report focuses on outcome data from All Stars Core programme. All Stars Core was the first All Stars programme implemented in NI schools and as such reached the greatest numbers of participants.

In total 3815 young people participated in the Core Programme between 2012 and 2016. Of this group 3175 completed a questionnaire, of whom 54% of participants were male, 42% female and 4% chose not to specify.

After initial data cleaning, full data sets were available for approximately 60% (n=1900). Of these young people 44% were female and 56% were male. The majority (92%) were in Year 8 with a smaller number (8%) in Year 9, giving an age range of 11-13 years. The majority were 11 years old at pre-test and 12 years old at post-test.



Core Programme Activities

The Core programme aligns closely with the Learning for Life and Work (LLW) Curriculum, a statutory subject in NI schools. Table 2 highlights some of the activities completed during the All Stars Core Programme.

Table 2. All Stars Core Programme Activities

Activity	Description	Purpose
Opinion survey	An anonymous survey to find out opinions on a variety of different topics	To reveal that a majority of pupils have opinions that support positive norms about risky behaviours
Inventing the future	A group based task where pupils invent something that will be useful to them in 20 years	To assist pupils in starting to think about their futures. To emphasise that the future is exciting and full of new ideas and technologies
Envisioning ideals	Discussion of ideal, vision, hope, knowledge and effort	Pupils envision an ideal future that is achievable with effort and responsibility
Understanding good habits	'Habits That Make it Happen' worksheet and associated discussion	Pupils understand what habits they need to support their ideals and commit to developing and commit to developing these habits
Good citizenship	Discussion on social norms and violating social norms	Pupils establish the rules of good citizenship which include not using alcohol and tobacco



Measuring Impact

The impact of the All Stars Programme has been tested using a bespoke All Stars Questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed by the programme developer and is used extensively in the US.

The questionnaire was adapted for use in Northern Ireland by amending US language and spelling and adding additional standardised measures as recommended by the Realising Ambition consortium. The questionnaire is completed by young people before and

after participation in the All Stars Programme. Items on the questionnaire include demographic information (age and gender) and key issues including substance use, physical aggression and the targeted mediating variables (normative beliefs, ideals, bonding and commitment). The items are answered on a Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Data was collected in both quantitative and qualitative format including case studies and focus groups.

All Stars Core -Results

Quantitative Findings

Results indicate an overall positive improvement across all measures with improvement in both understanding / attitude and in behaviour (Table 3).





86%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED AN IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR COMMITMENT TO AVOID ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & DRUGS



OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED AN IMPROVEMENT IN COMMITMENT TO AVOID VIOLENCE



90%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED IMPROVEMENT IN UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR ON THEIR FUTURE LIFESTYLE



86%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED AN IMPROVEMENT IN UNDERSTANDING THAT SUBSTANCE USE IS UNACCEPTABLE



91%

OF PARTICIPANTS
REPORTED AN
IMPROVEMENT
IN PARENTAL
ATTENTIVENESS





89%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED
AN IMPROVEMENT IN
UNDERSTANDING THAT
FIGHTING HAS CONSEQUENCES
FOR THEIR FUTURE LIFESTYLE



77%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED AN IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING THAT VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE

Table 3: Percentage of Young People Reporting Improvement



Overall improvement

Improvement in commitment to avoid alcohol, drug or tobacco use

Improvement in commitment to avoiding violence

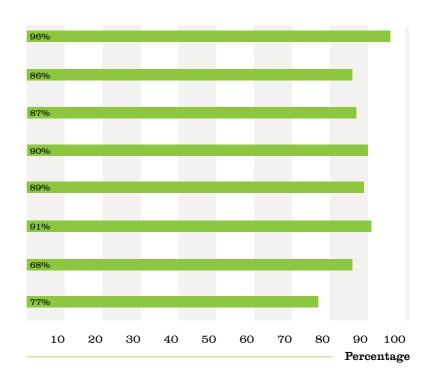
Improvement in understanding the impact of negative behaviour on future lifestyles

Improvement in undersatnding the impact of fighting on future lifestyle

Improvement in parental attentiveness

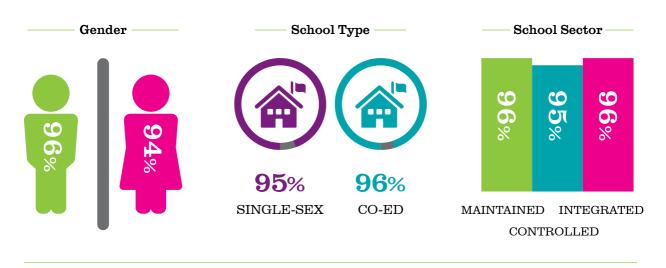
Improvement in understanding that substance use is unacceptable

Improvement in understanding that violence is unacceptable



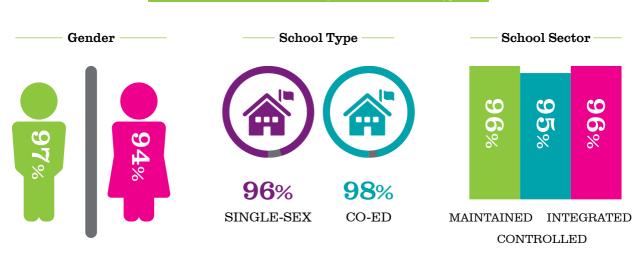
This level of overall improvement is consistent across a number of different factors, for example:

Table 4: 'Core' Results by Gender and School Type



The follow-up programme to Core is called Booster and is typically delivered in Year 9. Although we only gathered data from a sample of schools the results are worth including. In total we have data for 338 students who participated in Booster. Again we find a 96% overall improvement in terms of attitude and commitment and again this remains consistent for different school types and genders.

Table 5: 'Booster' Results - by Gender and School Type



Qualitative Data

What do the young people say about All Stars?

Young people were asked several informal questions about their All Stars experience. The table below provides some examples of young people's opinions:

DID YOU ENJOY THE PROGRAMME?



DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING ABOUT YOURSELF OR YOUR CLASSMATES?



Yes it was amazing.I enjoyed figuring out my commitments.

I liked designing a personal crest.

It gives you a positive future.

Yeah it was brilliant.

wy Yeah I liked thinking of my four ideal futures. And I liked doing this year's posters too.

☑ I learned that I am braver than I thought I was.

I've learned that I never want to smoke.

... I've learned there are things I want to achieve in my life, like the things on the stickers, I would never have thought of those.

..... I've learned about myself - about things I want and what I want to avoid like bullying and smoking.

I learned that you need to be brighter about the future.

I have learned about how to deal with stuff.

I have learned about my ideal futures and how I want my life to be.

ive learnt to speak up.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE STUDENTS WHO MIGHT TAKE PART IN ALL STARS IN THE FUTURE?

Listen and follow your goals.

Have a good commitment.

HAS ALL STARS CHANGED THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE?



HAS ALL STARS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENT / TRUSTED ADULT? Its made me think that I want to be something with my life.

EY Yep, cause now this is like reality you have to go out and get a job...... you have to go through different stages to get a job.

I thought I had a couple of years to think about what I want to do in my future but now I realise that I need to be thinking about that sort of thing now.

🖳 I didn't know what I wanted to achieve from school before but now I do .

with people – and so I know that I need to act in the right way.

Now that I know what I want to do I am committed to helping people and going into youth work.

in committed to never smoking, drinking or bullying and to caring for people. I want to look after people; it's a good way to get to know people too.

Mum has learned more about my life and how I want to live it.

I have a better relationship with my mum now, we've bonded. She likes hearing how my life is going (which is well). I wouldn't have it any other way.

At the start when I brought the homework sheets home she would say 'Can you not do it yourself' but now she's happy to do them with me.

Feedback

"Feedback from teachers was very positive, highlighting the effective training, high quality and well laid out materials." Feedback was collected routinely from teachers – post-training, during delivery and through Focus Group sessions at the end of each school year. Feedback from teachers was very positive, highlighting the effective training, high quality and well laid out materials, useful support from Barnardo's, high levels of pupil engagement and strong fit with curriculum and school ethos.

Some teachers did highlight that finding time to deliver the sessions could be difficult (e.g. some schools have shorter lessons than others) and in larger classes facilitating group work and enabling every pupil to contribute to discussions could be challenging.

ALL STARS CORE TEACHER FEEDBACK

TEACHER FEEDBACK ON ALL STARS CORE TRAINING

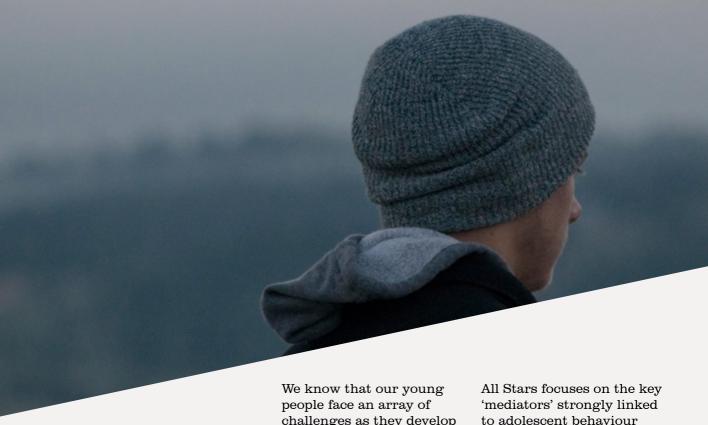
- 66 Engaging tasks allowed the pupils to think about their futures regardless of their background. Each pupil was treated the same and given the same opportunities. 99
 - 66 Training, support and follow-up all excellent. 99
 - 66 I thought the programme training plus support offered was superb. 99
 - 66 It is student led and you are not spoon feeding them. 99
 - 66 A very worthwhile programme which we are very happy to be involved in. 99
 - 66 I really enjoyed facilitating this project. 99
 - 66 This has been a fantastic course for myself and my Year 8 students they have really benefited and it has been a great way for me to engage with my class.

 Excellent activities. Thank-you! 99

- 66 Engaged me with the materials and helped me to really buy into the impact it will have on the children's decisions and behaviours. 99
- 66 I was totally engaged throughout. 99
- 66 Explained how one lesson leads to next so all activities must be done - don't skip. 99
- 66 Made me visualise the lessons and understand the outcomes. 99
- 66 Put things in the perspective of the students made me think! 99
- 66 I came very negative and not knowing and am leaving very optimistic and enthused with the programme. 99



What do these findings tell us?





RESULTS SUGGEST THAT ALL
STARS HAS THE
POTENTIAL TO
BE AN EFFECTIVE
METHOD OF
PROMOTING
DESIRABLE
FUTURES.

challenges as they develop but we don't always know which young people will be at risk or who will struggle to make positive choices. Universal prevention programmes such as All Stars offer a consistent approach which is integrated into the school day and ethos to prevent or delay risky behaviours. These are behaviours which can negatively impact on young people's health, education and safety.

and found to account for a large proportion of the variance in the onset of risky behaviours (Fearnow-Kenney et al, 2002). Erosion of certain positive characteristics as children enter adolescence (e.g. commitment not to use drugs) is also believed to be associated with the onset of risky behaviour. The Core programme was delivered mainly during the first year of Post Primary School (92% of

participants were in Year 8) a time of considerable change for our young people. Some deterioration of pupils attitudes would naturally be expected over time so it is positive that the data has found consistent improvement across every mediator for the vast majority of young people.

These results suggest that All Stars has the potential to be an effective method of preventing risk taking behaviours and promoting desirable futures. A striking finding is the consistency of the results – with a consistent improvement in attitude across gender, school type and school sector. This tells us that All Stars works equally well for boys and girls, in single sex and co-educational settings and in controlled, maintained and integrated schools.

Although we only have a sample of data from the Booster programme (follow-up to Core) it is encouraging to see equally consistent findings emerging and again these are maintained across gender and different school types / sectors.

There are several strong findings including an increase in commitment to avoid alcohol, tobacco and drug use. Making a commitment to avoid substances and understanding that drug use is incongruent with desired

future lifestyles, is understood to be a protective factor against alcohol and cigarette use both of which are leading public health problems. Results indicated an improvement in young people's understanding of the impact of risky and undesirable behaviours on their preferred futures. Young people reported an understanding that drug use, poor nutrition and stress do not fit with their desired futures. Having a clear vision of the future and understanding the factors that can interfere with goals helps young people to recognise what is important and where their priorities lie. The act of setting goals and understanding the necessary steps to achieve these goals is an important aspect of All Stars and one which helps motivate young people.

This is reflected in the young people's behaviour with 2% reporting having taken alcohol at pre-test and 2% again at posttest.

There were positive findings also in relation to normative beliefs and social norms. The ability to correct 'myths' in relation to young people's perception about peer engagement in substance use or use of violence, helps young people realise that such behaviours are "atypical". The idea that alcohol is a normal part of growing up and young

The act of setting goals and understanding the necessary steps to achieve goals is an important aspect of All Stars and one which helps motivate young people.



YOUNG PEOPLE REPORTED ACTIVE ENJOYMENT

OF THE
PROGRAMME.
THEY REPORTED
DISCOVERING
POSITIVE
QUALITIES AND
ATTRIBUTES
ABOUT
THEMSELVES.

people's tendency to believe that "everyone does it" is an erroneous belief that the All Stars programme directly addresses. Early alcohol use is correlated with higher likelihood of a range of negative outcomes including alcohol dependency, criminal activity and poor mental health. Through All Stars, participants discover that the vast majority of their peers (if not all) share positive peer attitudes and norms to risky behaviours and those who hold different views learn that these views are not widely held or supported by others.

How people view alcohol and its effects also influences their drinking behaviour, including whether they begin to drink and how much. All Stars challenges assumptions around alcohol and ultimately mediates future risk taking behaviours. All Stars also takes place in a group environment helping reinforce or establish positive group norms. The baseline of 2% remained consistent with 2% reporting alcohol use at posttest.

Participants also reported an increase in parental attentiveness. Extensive research confirms the general positive role of authoritative, active, involved parenting in adolescent development (for e.g. McNeal, 1999). Parental attentiveness and involvement in the programme also highlights the systemic nature of All Stars and its capacity to reach beyond the classroom.

Feedback from young people provides further evidence of the programmes potential. Young people reported active enjoyment of the programme. They reported discovering positive qualities and attributes about themselves. They reported having future aspirations and were able to visualise preferred futures. It is also possible that participant's enjoyment of the programme may positively impact on their willingness to engage and consider the learning opportunities available through school.

Teachers highlighted the benefits of additional training and support and the manualised approach. The positive reception on behalf of teaching staff has important implications for implementation and capacity building in particular. It could be argued that the perceptions of teachers and the degree to which they adopt a positive attitude to the programme has significant implications for outcomes, notably bonding towards school. When delivered with integrity and enthusiasm, All Stars can be a tool to promote communication and prosocial bonding.

Feedback from teachers and pupils highlights that All Stars was successfully integrated into the regular school day and had a strong fit with the curriculum and the ethos of participating schools. Teacher's feedback indicates that the initial All Stars training and on-going support made an important contribution to this.

Conclusion



Estimated return:



In the US All Stars is a wellestablished programme; it is recognised as a model program by the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP) and as a promising programme by the U.S. Department of Education. A cost-effectiveness study (SAMSHA, 2008) evaluated All Stars as the most costeffective programme in its class, estimating a return on investment of \$34 for every \$1 invested.

As this is the first delivery of All Stars outside of the US these initial findings are promising. In addition to achieving positive impact across all the targeted mediators there is evidence that the programme is highly suitable for implementation in local schools and could be scaled up using a similar capacity building model.

The results suggest that the All Stars programme is well received by teachers and pupils and has the potential to influence norms, address social ideologies and promote commitment and resistance. By doing so All Stars has the potential to prevent harmful behaviours and facilitate positive futures and wellbeing.

- WELL RECEIVED
 BY TEACHERS
- WELL RECEIVED
 BY PUPILS
- HAS THE
 POTENTIAL TO
 INFLUENCE
 NORMS
- ADDRESS SOCIAL IDEOLOGIES
- PROMOTES
 COMMITMENT
 AND RESISTANCE



Next Steps

Thanks to The Big Lottery for funding All Stars will continue this academic year (16/17). During this time Realising Ambition are also funding Barnardo's and Mencap to pilot All Stars with young people with a learning disability; if successful this will have potential for further replication.

Barnardo's are also conducting a small qualitative study with young people now in Years 11 and 12 who have previously participated in All Stars. The purpose is to capture young people's reflections on the impact of the programme in making future decisions and lifestyle choices.

The Realising Ambition funding has demonstrated that All Stars can be successfully implemented in NI and there has already been interest in All Stars from other parts of the UK. Barnardo's are keen to work with schools and funders to sustain and widen implementation of the programme and look forward to hearing from anyone interested in All Stars.

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Many Thanks to

- » All of the young people, their parents, teachers and schools who participated in All Stars.
- Dr Bill Hansen (Programme Developer) and Kathleen
 Nelson-Simley (All Stars National Trainer).
- Anne Page and team at All Stars Prevention.
- The Big Lottery and Realising Ambition
 Consortium members
 Catch 22, The Young
 Foundation, Social
 Research Unit and
 Substance.
- Stranmillis University
 College team Dr Patricia
 Eaton, Dr Lisa McKenzie,
 Joanne Gardiner and
 Danielle Hanna.
- Dr Hannah Jane Braiden (Psychologist) and Paul Scott (Information Management Officer, Barnardo's).

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