CASHBACK FOR YOUNG PARENTS

CASH BACK FOR COMMUNITIES

Annual Report
2025-2026



STARCATCHERS

Fife Gingerbread



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Facing photo: Roz receiving the Mellow Award on behalf of Fife Gingerbread and Starcatchers for Better Outcomes Through Partnership



"We've been coming since A was 5 weeks old. I met one of my best friend here!"
Young Parent

Executive Summary

In the third and final year of Phase 6 of CashBack for Communities funding, Starcatchers and Fife Gingerbread had key areas of focus based on the needs and interests of the young people at Mellow for Young People, and the young parents and their babies taking part in weekly sessions and those receiving one-to-one bespoke support.

One key difference in the final year of Phase 6 was embedding an additional artist into Play & Explore sessions. This benefited families in several ways including experiencing new and exciting creative explorations, and having an expanded, dedicated team each week at Play & Explore sessions. With the increase in uptake of PEEP accreditations, Katie Kinnaird's role expanded with PEEP delivery, and the team changes reflected this well, providing a robust infrastructure to sustain the additional element of delivery at Play & Explore. Starcatchers' Community Engagement Manager has provided a consistent and strong level of support to the whole team and worked to strategise the transition out of Phase 6 into Phase 7 of our CashBack for Communities funding.

Key considerations from Phase 6:

- The significance around signposting in Katie's role and the knowledge she retains around statutory services to support families to access adequate support.
- The need to continue trips out and about in the local community following feedback from the young parents that these trips are significant in breaking down barriers to access.
- The need to embed transitions in and out of the project into a young person's journey through CashBack for Young Parents to ensure smooth changes.

Local authority area: Fife (Cowdenbeath and Dunfermline)
Number of young people we expect to work with over three years: 150
Young people engaged in programme across Phase 6: 109

Introduction

"*The impact yous had on us went beyond this - yous helped me with confidence in my parenting and put so much time and effort into my boys*". Young Parent

About Starcatchers
Starcatchers is Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation. We believe that our youngest children, those aged birth-to-five, should be able to fulfil their rights under the UNCRC through access to arts and creative experiences that give inspiration, joy and wonder to early childhood in Scotland. Our mission is to inspire babies, toddlers and young children by including them in high quality live performances and creative experiences that fulfil their right to access a rich arts and cultural life in Scotland regardless of where they live or their background.

About Fife Gingerbread
Fife Gingerbread is a voluntary sector organisation that provides advice and support to lone parents and families in need all over Fife. Our aim is simple: to provide accessible, approachable and non-judgemental support, to families. We are the only voluntary sector organisation in Fife with charitable status that has lone parent families as the primary focus. Based in Glenrothes, we cover the whole of Fife, providing a variety of services to lone parent families, in their local communities.

Our work in Fife
Starcatchers and Fife Gingerbread have worked together in Fife communities for nearly ten years. We have established a strong professional relationship through various artistic projects, allowing participants a more holistic support experience, encompassing not only social and psychological support, but emotional support and an outlet for relaxation, family bonding and self-expression. The artist-support worker model developed through our partnership blends Starcatchers' artistic early prevention experiences with Fife Gingerbread's expertise in empowering parents to create a holistic approach to improving outcomes for young parents under 25 and their babies.



Phase 6 Programme Delivery

35
Young people gained an accreditation

33
Mellow for Young People participants across 2 local high schools

109
Young People engaged in the programme

112
Reports from young people feeling less inclined to participate in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour

9
Community trips and events

58
Employment, training, education and volunteering opportunities taken up

187
Hours of volunteering contributed by participants

76
Young parents engaged in intensive one-to-one support

123
Reports of increased confidence

76
Babies attended sessions with their parents

THE TEAM

Lead Artist | Roz McAndrew

Roz is an actor and arts facilitator based in Scotland. She is passionate about working with children and families who might not traditionally engage in the arts, as well as creating accessible work for early years audiences and children with additional complex needs. Roz joined Starcatchers in June 2021 to deliver artistic activities with families in Fife communities. She has worked across lots of different artforms - music, theatre, dance, visual art, storytelling, puppetry - across the areas of Lochgelly, Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy. Roz has cultivated strong positive relationships with the Play and Explore participants, and in Autumn 2022, won Fife Gingerbread's award for 'Trust', nominated by participants.



Play & Explore Artist | Kirstin Abraham

Kirstin Abraham is a visual artist and play practitioner born in Gibraltar and currently based in Fife, Scotland. Her work focuses on creating sensory experiences, installations and play spaces that increase wellbeing and positive mental health in children. She is passionate about collaborating with children and young adults with additional support needs, disabilities and visual impairments to co-design sensory installations.



Fife Gingerbread Support Worker | Katie Kinnaird

With an honours degree in Sociology and a strong background in trauma-informed practice, Katie brings both academic insight and frontline expertise to her role with the CashBack for Young Parents project. She supports young parents and young people facing complex challenges including domestic abuse, poor mental health, and poverty, using a relational, strengths-based approach to build trust, confidence, and lasting change. Katie's work is rooted in prevention — tackling the root causes of poverty and intergenerational trauma, while also addressing the justice element of youth violence, anti-social behaviour, and substance use. She helps young people explore mental health, safe relationships, and future choices and is passionate about creating safe, empowering spaces where young people feel seen, heard, and supported to thrive.



MELLOW FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

14

High school pupils aged between 11 and 15 years old

"I now am no longer nervous when I walk into the building, instead I now walk in with adrenaline. Mellow helped me understand my emotions."

Mellow for Young People is delivered by Fife Gingerbread Support Worker, Katie Kinnaird in two local Fife high schools, Beath High School and Lochgelly High School. The programme is focused on early intervention and consists of activities and support to help young people recognise and disrupt harmful behaviours in their relationships or in themselves. Through consistent relationship building and provision of that safe space for young people to share and reflect, Mellow for Young People has become a life line for the participants, and a place where they are included and are met with a non-judgemental, supportive group.

Mellow for Young People consists of volunteering opportunities, which Play & Explore participants have taken up, allowing someone with lived experience to mentor the young people and challenge behaviours and ideas. This early intervention has helped build up stronger connections in the young people's community, their relationships in school, their personal relationships, and crucially, how they see themselves.

The sessions have become a place where the young people feel free to be open and honest, where they will be empowered to seek out opportunities and chances to thrive.



Example of a *Dear Past Me* letter written by a Mellow for Young People Participant

Before this programme, *you might have thought that it would be another useless group that would push you away and ignore you like home did.*

...or felt worried about if they'd judge you because of how angry you were because of what happened at home everyday. If I'm honest, I would tell you to come to this programme because it was worth it – they helped you be yourself and was basically therapy for you lol. **Since being here, I've learned something important about myself***: My feelings matter and don't end it because it will be better.*

One thing I do differently now is*: I take wrestling lessons – it'll help with confidence and everyone there is nice. R, N and B are your best friends there. This helps me when I'm angry because I can take my anger out on the ring and I can pretend the people are a wrestler.*

People or places that helped me feel safe, supported, or understood *were O and the Mellow group. O helped me with wrestling and helped me fit in. I now am no longer nervous when I walk into the building, instead I now walk in with adrenaline. Mellow helped me understand my emotions. Mellow helped me communicate with people.*

If I could give you one piece of advice or reassurance, it would be*: Don't give up till you succeed. And your wrestling career is for you.*

From,
Me (now)
P.S. I love you.

1-TO-1 SUPPORT

"I have more confidence. I advocate for my child at nursery. I can reach out to services I need on my own. I am accessing psychotherapy."

38

young parents
under 25 years old

In Year 3 of the programme, bespoke one-to-one and intensive support continued to be a vital part of CashBack for Young Parents work. Fife Gingerbread support worker Katie worked closely with 52 young parents, building trusted relationships over time and responding flexibly to individual needs and circumstances.

A significant element of this work involved signposting and advocacy, supporting young parents to access a wide range of statutory and community services that many would not otherwise have felt confident approaching independently. Katie provided consistent encouragement and practical support, helping young parents navigate systems, attend appointments and access the support available to them and their families.

Katie also played a key role in supporting young parents to engage with the Play & Explore sessions. For some participants, simply crossing the threshold into a new environment required months of relationship-building. Through sustained and compassionate support, many young parents who initially felt anxious and isolated were able to build a sense of belonging within the programme.

"My worker did baby massage with me 1:1 in the house. This was really nice at first instead of being in a big group of people. Also going out on the group trips. Really good especially if you've made friends and memories with your child. The prices of Edinburgh Zoo is crazy so all that funding is amazing. My worker helped me apply for my carpets, cooker, washing machine. This helps as well with my dyslexia too because I find it difficult. It's also helped O make friends as well. It's a routine for her. She knows where she goes on a Tuesday. Her confidence has just gone up and up and up. Seeing her get up and play is so nice."

"Getting to group was hard - I needed someone to come with me. My worker introduced me to everyone. I'm a yapper but I'm also shy. It took time for me to come consistently. My worker was so nice. They listened with no judgement. If I was struggling with coming to the group, they would support me to come up with a plan to help me get there."

PLAY & EXPLORE

“I could breathe. It wasn’t crowded or overwhelming.”

Artist-Support Worker Model
Over the last three years of our CashBack for Young Parents programme, we have developed a unique and holistic method of engaging young parents and offering them the intensive support they need - our Artist-Support Worker model. This is the defining element of CashBack for Young Parents, an artistic environment that breaks down barriers to access, with support embedded into the weekly sessions through the presence of a Fife Gingerbread Support Worker.

Community Trips
Perth Art Gallery, Edinburgh Zoo, visits to Santa, Unicorn Dance Party, and so much more! Our community trips are an important part of our work with young parents, ensuring they feel a sense of ownership to cultural life and are supported to access activities for them and their babies that they wouldn’t otherwise have an opportunity to experience. These trips were hugely successful in Phase 6. Parents loved working together to decide the next adventure.

Voice of the Baby
Starcatchers has embedded their Voice of the Baby approach into Play & Explore to ensure we are capturing the needs and interests of the very youngest babies and their grown-ups at the heart of delivery. Our Engagement Signals are utilised by Roz and Kirstin week-to-week, building a picture of a family’s creative journey, and observing through their play the different levels of support they need in the moment and outwith the sessions from Katie. The Voice of the Baby approach ensures that the voices of our participants are heard and respected, that the families feel valued and that they have a sense of belonging and purpose.

"I have gained confidence and found a peer support group that feels safe and free from stigma and judgement. H's creative side has flourished. I continue to use ideas from group at home. I have gained a love of learning through programmes like PEEP. I have re-applied for university. I have been inspired to give something back. I'd love to give someone the support I got, maybe through support work or midwifery."

28
Young parents aged 16-25

24
Babies from birth to 36 months

Positive Destinations

PEEP delivery at Play & Explore

All Play & Explore participants are working towards their PEEP accreditation.

2 young people have progressed to level 4 of the accreditation.

In total across the 3 years of Phase 6, 33 young people have achieved an accreditation.

“I definitely wouldn’t know what I know now about her development through doing PEEP.”

MUMS IN FOCUS: OUR STORIES

*"There's so much sh*t goin on in the world today, ye need to be positive about summing."*
Young parent

Tuesday 19 May marked the opening of Mums in Focus: Our Stories, an art exhibition offering an intimate glimpse into the joys and challenges of parenthood, told by the parents of the Cashback for Communities Project.

The exhibition featured photographs taken by participants and their children, alongside acrostic poems created by the families. Each family was given a disposable camera and invited to capture images reflecting what parenthood means to them, as well as what matters most to them within their local community. Complementing these personal photographs is a series of professional images by photographer Brian Hartley, documenting the joy and connection experienced by participants throughout the project. The acrostic poems were later transformed into original songs by artist/Musician Claire Docherty.

The exhibition has been created through a series of weekly creative play sessions delivered by Starcatchers Artists, offering beautiful, accessible and unique play experiences for the young parents of the programme and their babies from birth to two years. All the elements of the exhibition have been created by the parents and children themselves with support from artists Roz McAndrew, Kirstin Abraham and Claire Docherty, and Fife Gingerbread Support Worker, Katie Kinnaird, who offers bespoke one-to-one sessions to the parents taking part in the programme.

The art exhibition was held at the Glen Pavillion at Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline, offering an opportunity for families to come together and celebrate all they have achieved through the project.









"I absolutely love the exhibition and feel proud of it! It's been really nice showing my grandparents what we've been doing. It's been so fun doing all the different activities to put it together. We especially loved the music one! And it's so special to have a song especially for my daughter."
Young Parent



Here we share a series of case studies that highlights the transformative impact that CashBack for Young Parents continues to have on the young people we work with in Fife, and their babies. These personal stories offer valuable insight into the real-life outcomes achieved through the programme, bringing to life the data and demonstrating the depth of change experienced by participants.

1. **Diversion from Antisocial and Criminal Behaviour** – showcasing how positive engagement and supportive environments have helped young parents make constructive choices and avoid harmful behaviours.
2. **Access to Learning and Employability** – illustrating the ways in which participants are taking positive and lasting steps toward meaningful change in their lives.
3. **Improved Mental Health and Wellbeing** – revealing the crucial role of emotional support and stability in empowering young parents to look after both their own mental health and that of their children.
4. **Community Connections** – highlighting the value of local networks, peer support, and inclusion in strengthening a sense of belonging and purpose.
5. **Personal Confidence and Resilience** – capturing the growth participants experience as they develop self-belief, overcome challenges, and shape more hopeful futures.

Looking at the Year 3 figures alongside the Phase 6 totals, the strongest narrative is not about target achievement alone, but about the depth of change achieved with a cohort of young parents facing significant barriers. Year 3 appears to have been particularly strong in wellbeing, confidence, community connection and resilience outcomes, which aligns closely with what young parents themselves consistently report as the most meaningful changes.

Outcome 1: Young people are diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the criminal justice system

Indicator
Young people report they feel less inclined to participate in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour
32 in year 3 (112 in Phase 6 against a target of 150)

Year 3 continued to demonstrate the programme's positive impact in supporting young parents to make positive choices and reduce engagement with risk-taking behaviours. Five young people reported that their own participation in antisocial or criminal behaviour had reduced, while 32 young people reported feeling less inclined to participate in antisocial or criminal behaviour. Across the full Phase 6 programme, 112 young people reported feeling less inclined to engage in antisocial or criminal behaviour, achieving 107% of the overall Phase 6 target. This reflects the strength of the programme's relationship-based approach, where young parents are supported to build confidence, develop positive support networks and strengthen their sense of belonging. While reducing criminal behaviour is not always the primary presenting need for young parents entering the programme, the evidence suggests that increasing connection and aspirations can play an important preventative role in reducing risk-taking behaviours and supporting positive life choices.

Outcome 2: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations).

Young people gain an accreditation for a new skill **17 in year 3 (35 in Phase 6)**
Young people gaining/taking up: Modern apprenticeship/employment **8 in year 3 (16 in Phase 6)**
Young people gaining/taking up: Training/work experience **8 in year 3 (17 in Phase 6)**
Young people gaining/taking up: College/University placement **4 in year 3 (9 in Phase 6)**
Young people gaining/taking up: Volunteering **7 in year 3 (16 in Phase 6)**

Young people achieving qualifications in Phase 6:
SCQF 3 = 5, SCQF 4 = 19, SCQF 5 = 2, SCQF 6 = 6, SCQF 7 = 1, Non-SCQF = 13

Supporting young parents towards positive destinations remained an important focus throughout Year 3. During the year, 17 young people gained an accreditation for a new skill, 14 improved their attendance at school and eight young people progressed into employment or modern apprenticeships. A further eight young people engaged in training or work experience opportunities, four progressed into college or university placements and seven took up volunteering opportunities. Across the full Phase 6 programme, 35 young people achieved accredited learning opportunities, alongside positive progression into employment, training, volunteering and further education. While these figures did not fully meet the ambitious targets originally set, they represent significant achievements given the realities many young parents face, including childcare responsibilities, poverty, mental health challenges, housing insecurity and limited access to flexible learning and employment opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, the programme supported many young people to re-engage with education and learning in ways that felt achievable and relevant to their circumstances. Improved attendance, stronger relationships with school and increased confidence in accessing opportunities represent important foundations for future progression that may continue beyond the lifetime of the programme.

Outcome 3: Improved mental health and wellbeing

Young people report increased SHANARRI indicators: **59 in Year 3, 113 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report improved mental health and positive outlook on life: **53 in Year 3, 110 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report their confidence has increased: **48 in Year 3, 123 in Phase 6, target of 105**

Outcome 3 continued to be one of the strongest areas of achievement during Year 3. 59 young people reported increased SHANARRI wellbeing indicators, 53 reported improved mental health and a more positive outlook on life, and 48 reported increased confidence. 19 young people reported being less inclined to engage in harmful substance use, while 20 reported increased awareness of the risks and impacts of substance misuse. 19 participants also increased their participation in physical or sporting activities. Across Phase 6, the programme exceeded targets for SHANARRI indicators, mental health improvements and confidence-building. Confidence was one of the most significant outcomes achieved, reflecting the value of creating safe, welcoming and non-judgemental spaces where young parents can connect with others and build trusting relationships through creative play and participation. The wellbeing outcomes achieved throughout Phase 6 demonstrate that investing in young parents' emotional health and self-belief creates the foundations for wider positive change for both parents and their children.

Outcome 4: Community connections

Young people report their perception of their neighbourhood improves: **35 in Year 3, 89 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report heightened sense of belonging to a community: **32 in Year 3, 99 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people think their social links, contributions and interactions are improving: **58 in Year 3, 129 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people go on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations: **7 in Year 3, 13 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Hours of volunteering contributed by participants: **80 in Year 3, 187 in Phase 6, target of 300**
Community focused awards gained by participants: **Actual 0 Planned 360**

Throughout Year 3, young parents reported increasing levels of connection to their communities and growing confidence in their ability to contribute positively to the lives of others. 35 young people reported improved perceptions of their neighbourhoods, 32 reported a stronger sense of belonging to a community and 58 reported improvements in their social connections, interactions and contributions. 23 young people reported feeling motivated to positively influence what happens within their communities. 7 young people progressed into volunteering, mentoring, coaching or leadership roles during Year 3, contributing a total of 80 volunteering hours. Across the full Phase 6 programme, community participation outcomes were mixed. While formal volunteering and leadership targets were not fully achieved, community connection outcomes were particularly strong. A total of 129 young people reported improved social links and interactions, exceeding Phase 6 targets, while 99 young people reported a stronger sense of community belonging. For many young parents, becoming actively involved in their communities begins with overcoming isolation and being able to form relationships with peers. The programme successfully created opportunities for these connections to develop, with many participants taking important first steps towards community participation, even where formal volunteering was not yet realistic due to parenting commitments and other life pressures.

Outcome 5: Personal confidence and resilience

Young people report feeling more resilient: **40 in Year 3, 112 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report positive, supportive networks: **31 in Year 3, 95 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report increased access to appropriate services: **39 in Year 3, 95 in Phase 6, target of 105**
Young people report positive changes in their behaviour: **37 in Year 3, 129 in Phase 6, target of 105**

Year 3 saw significant achievements in building resilience, support networks and positive life skills. 40 young people reported feeling more resilient, 31 reported stronger and more supportive relationships with family, friends and peers, and 39 reported increased access to appropriate services. A further 37 young people reported positive behavioural changes, including reduced risk-taking, improved decision-making and increased understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Across the full 3-year programme, these outcomes remained consistently strong. More than 100 young people reported increased resilience, while positive behavioural change significantly exceeded Phase 6 targets. Participants consistently described feeling more able to cope with challenges and make positive choices for themselves and their children. The intensive one-to-one support provided by the programme was particularly important in achieving these outcomes. Through relationship-building, advocacy and practical support, young parents were able to access services and develop the confidence needed to navigate challenges both during and beyond their involvement in the programme. Overall, Outcome 5 highlights the lasting impact of the programme's holistic approach, supporting young parents not only to address immediate challenges but also to develop the resilience, relationships and skills needed to thrive in the future.

Case Study: B
Before engaging with the CashBack for Young Parents programme, B was experiencing a number of challenges common to many young parents. She was socially isolated, had limited support networks, and was struggling with low confidence and self-esteem. As a young mum, B often felt judged and unsure of her parenting abilities, which impacted both her wellbeing and her ability to engage in community activities.

When B first engaged with Fife Gingerbread, she was quiet, reserved, and hesitant to participate. Attending her first Play & Explore sessions with her baby, K, both appeared withdrawn, finding it difficult to settle into the unfamiliar group setting. However, with consistent encouragement and the safe, welcoming environment created by Fife Gingerbread and Starcatchers, B began attending more regularly. A turning point came after a few weeks when B began initiating conversations with peers and practitioners - something she hadn't felt confident doing before. Her confidence grew steadily, supported by the routine and reassurance of the group and the relationships she formed with others in similar situations. B has since shared that she now feels a greater sense of belonging and connection to her community, which has reduced feelings of isolation. This change has been mirrored in her baby, K.

B's experience of the CashBack programme has been overwhelmingly positive, with a clear progression in both her personal development and future opportunities. Through consistent attendance at Play & Explore sessions, B has built strong relationships with staff and peers, which has helped boost her confidence, self-worth, and parenting skills. A significant milestone been securing part-time employment, something B previously didn't believe was possible. The programme helped her recognise her strengths, prepare for the workplace, and feel ready to take that step. Her success has inspired others and she has encouraged her sister, who is also a young parent to join the programme.

Case Study: S

S is a young parent who, in earlier conversations, shared feelings of stigma around her pregnancy. In a 1:1, she reflected that she had hidden her pregnancy and did not have a baby shower, describing this as something she felt ashamed of at the time. These experiences impacted her confidence and how she viewed herself as a parent. S's son was showing signs of developmental delay, which brought additional worry and uncertainty. Despite already using nurturing and responsive approaches, S found it difficult to recognise these as strengths. With encouragement from her mum, she began engaging with the PEEP Communication and Language strand, where she started to reflect more positively on her role.

S engaged with the PEEP Communication and Language strand and the Play and Explore group, gradually building trusting relationships with facilitators and peers. Through a warm, supportive environment, she became more comfortable sharing her experiences and reflecting on her parenting.
Partnership working between practitioners and S's Family Nurse supported a consistent, strengths-based approach. Together, they helped S to recognise her existing skills and capacity to nurture her son, reinforcing her sense of competence. Through the voice of the baby trained facilitators, it was observed that S's son showed a strong interest in playing with objects that bounce. Sharing this insight with S created a meaningful connection, helping her understand how to engage him in ways that felt enjoyable and accessible. As a result, her son became more confident participating in a new environment and within the group. S spoke positively about the experience, sharing she "hand on heart" knows the group has had an effect on her son.

Through her involvement in CashBack, S has experienced a noticeable shift in how she sees herself as a parent. She now speaks with confidence and pride about her ability to nurture and support her son, moving on from earlier feelings of stigma and self-doubt.

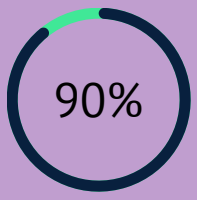
Following completion of the PEEP Communication and Language progression pathway, her son has been referred to a specialist for further support. S shared that they feel confident he will overcome challenges "as they have before," demonstrating a hopeful and resilient outlook. The Play and Explore group has supported both S and her son, strengthening his confidence in social settings and deepening S's understanding of how to respond to his needs. S has also moved towards positive destinations in her own life. She has secured a place at college to study nursing and has passed her driving test, increasing her independence and future opportunities. Overall, S's journey reflects growing confidence, strengthened relationships, and a positive sense of direction for both her and her child.

EQUALITIES DATA

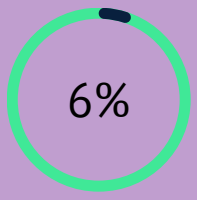
All data is based on 52 young people engaged in the programme in year 3



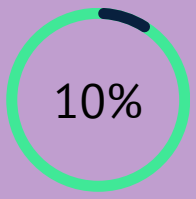
SIMD Profile
(Scottish index of multiple deprivation)
0-20% = 34



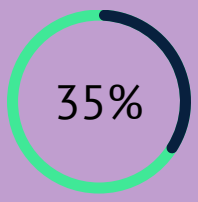
47 female



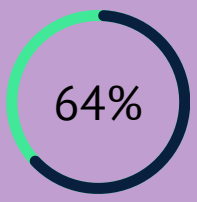
Scottish white x49
Ethnic Minority x3



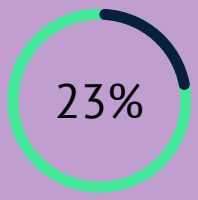
5 Male



Aged 11-15
19 young people

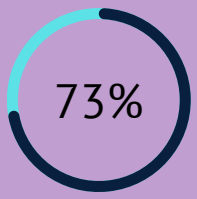


Aged 16-25
33 young people

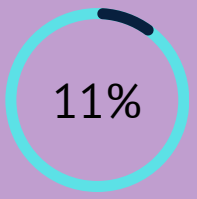


Disability
Vision 1
Mobility 4
Learning or understanding or concentrating 22
Memory 4
Socially or behavioural 49

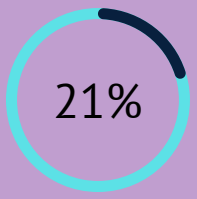
Priority Families



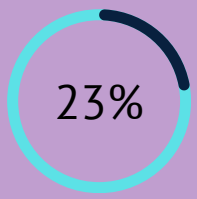
38 Parents under 25 years old



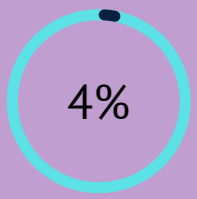
6 parents with a baby under 12 months old



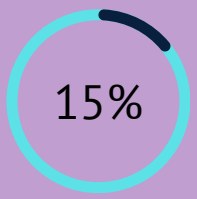
11 Lone parents



12 households with a disabled family member



2 Ethnic Minority family



8 young people pregnant in last 12 months

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FOUR PRIORITY AREAS

1. **Children's Rights**
The programme is underpinned by the General Principles of the UNCRC and these principles shape all three programme strands. Sessions create nurturing and safe spaces for young people to thrive and realise their rights. Staff are trained in children's rights, and a CRWIA guides delivery.

2. **Climate**
Environmental sustainability is embedded in the programme. Sessions prioritise reuse and recycling, use eco-friendly materials, and take place in accessible, community-based venues to reduce travel impact. Care is taken to ensure climate messaging is inclusive and does not exacerbate climate anxiety, modelling equitable climate responsibility in practice.

3. **Poverty – Best Start, Bright Futures**
We work with young families most at risk of adverse outcomes. The programme targets identified Priority Family groups, providing consistent, year-round support. Mellow training offers early intervention and lived-experience mentoring to young people at risk of anti-social and criminal behaviours. Young parents are supported with tailored pathways toward positive destinations.

4. **Fair Work Framework**
Our staff benefit from flexible working, wellbeing support, and protected time to manage the emotional demands of frontline delivery. Young people engaged in the programme gain volunteering opportunities—such as contributing to peer training—and work towards accredited awards, helping build skills, confidence, and long-term employability.



Conclusion

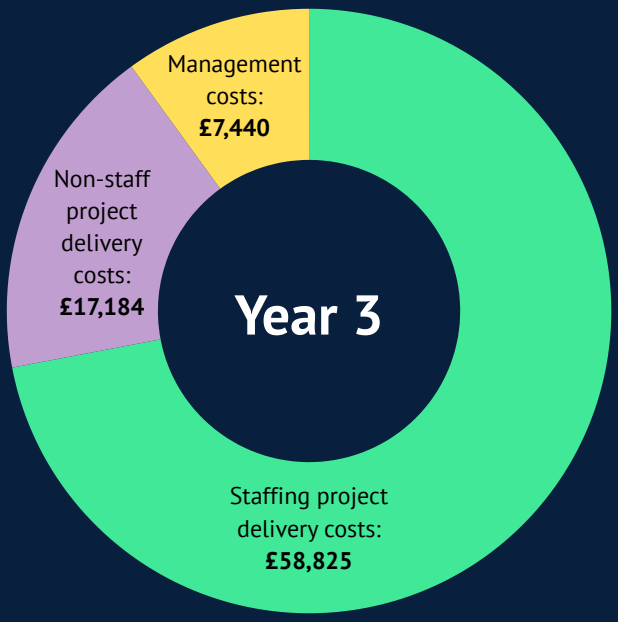
Year 3 of Starcatchers' CashBack for Young Parents programme has demonstrated the continued value and impact of creative, relationship-based and trauma-informed support for young parents and their children. Across all five outcome areas, the programme has supported young people to build confidence, strengthen relationships, improve wellbeing and increase their connection to their communities.

This year, the impact of intensive one-to-one support has been particularly evident. Through trusted relationships developed over time, young parents were supported to access services, overcome barriers to participation and access, and build the confidence to engage in opportunities that previously felt out of reach. For many participants, simply attending sessions consistently or stepping into a new environment represented a significant achievement and important personal progress.

The programme has continued to create welcoming and nurturing spaces where young parents felt listened to and valued without judgement. Through Play & Explore, artist-led experiences, peer connection and tailored support, participants reported increased resilience, improved mental health, stronger support networks and greater optimism about the future. The voices of young parents throughout this report highlight the transformational impact that consistent care, creativity and connection can have on both young people and their children.

We are incredibly grateful to CashBack for Communities for their continued investment in young parents, babies and families across Scotland, and for recognising the importance of early intervention, creativity and relationship-based practice in supporting long-term positive change.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT



It cost **£83,449** to run the programme in Year 3.



It cost **£244,558** to run the programme in Phase 6

Cumulative totals as at Phase 6

Management costs: **£22,320**
Non-staff project delivery costs: **£48,179**
Staffing project delivery costs: **£174,059**

TOTAL: £244,558 to run the programme to end of Year 3.

STARCATCHERS

Fife Gingerbread

CASH BACK FOR COMMUNITIES

starcatchers.org.uk

Charity Registration Number: SC042222

fifegingerbread.org.uk

Charity Registration Number: SC024254