



**Institute for the
Study of Social
Change**

Making things, *better.*

An evaluation of the Troublesmiths youth employment initiative.

**Institute for the Study of Social Change
Impact Communities
Workskills Inc.**

October 2019



Evaluating Troublesmiths' youth employment program.

This report examines the 'Troublesmiths' youth coaching and social enterprise employment program in the period July 2017 to June 2019. It describes the employment and life skills that young Tasmanians acquired from the program, and the extent to which they translate into better employment outcomes. The report is based on a formal evaluation conducted by the Institute for the Study of Social Change at the University of Tasmania, together with updated data on the ways Troublesmiths might continue to offer opportunities to young Tasmanians.

Troublesmiths is delivered by Impact Communities, which is a social impact initiative of the Tasmanian not-for-profit organisation, Workskills Inc. Troublesmiths was initially called the Youth Entrepreneurial Service (YES), with the name changing to 'Troublesmiths' as part of a re-branding exercise driven by the youth participants. The concept behind the new name is that all the youth participants come to the program with some kind of 'trouble', and then make or 'smith' their challenges into opportunities. The name 'Troublesmiths' is used throughout this report.

The program was funded to operate in Hobart, for youth participants from across Southern Tasmania, between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2019 by the Australian Government as an 'Empowering Youth Initiative' (EYI).

The UTAS evaluation took a collaborative approach and was underpinned by a program logic model. The program logic is a representation of the theory of change underpinning the Troublesmiths approach that hypothesised:

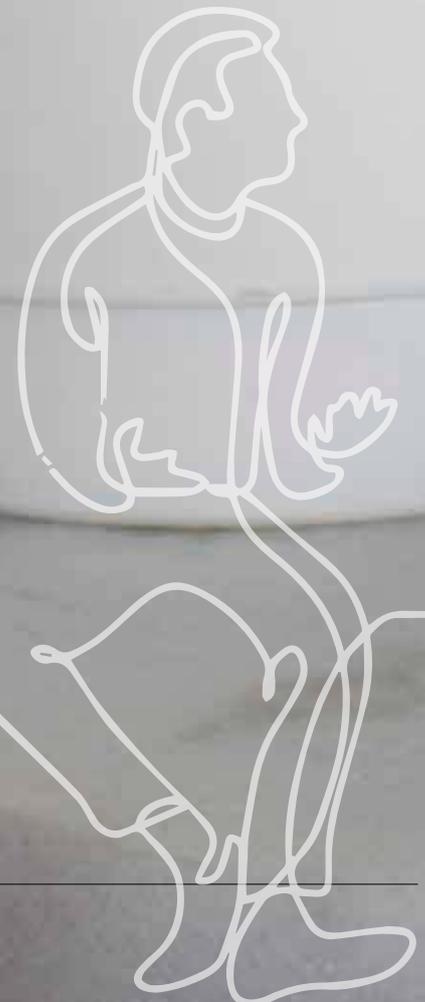
- If young unemployed people can identify and focus on their interests and strengths;
- and are provided with the opportunity to build both vocational and non-vocational skills in a supportive environment;
- and are able use and develop these work skills through operating a social enterprise;
- and have supportive partnerships with local business and the community;
- then they will be better positioned and prepared for the working environment and;
- better able to develop a career plan and to secure meaningful and sustainable employment.

A mixed methods approach was used for the UTAS evaluation:

- Qualitative data was collected from Troublesmiths program employees in individual or group interviews to track the implementation of the program.
- Qualitative data was collected from Troublesmiths participants in focus groups and individual interviews to track client experience and outcomes of the intervention.
- Activity data collected by the Troublesmiths program was analysed for changes in non-vocational skills for those completing the program.
- Quantitative data on Troublesmiths client outcomes was collected and analysed by independent researcher Mathew Fagan on behalf of Impact Communities.

CONTENTS

- 4 Overview and key findings
- 6 Tasmania's employment challenge and current/future approaches
- 8 Troublesmiths Program Logic
- 9 Troublesmiths participant snapshot
- 10 Troublesmiths employment outcomes
- 12 Troublesmiths coaching method
- 13 Participant profiles
- 14 Troublesmiths Social Enterprise Work Experience Program
- 15 Troublesmiths and best practice approaches to youth employment
- 16 Troublesmiths' value for money
- 17 The voices of Troublesmiths participants
- 18 References





**TROUBLE
SMITHS**

**EVERYDAY
MASSAGE
OIL.**

We made it.
TROUBLESMITHS.COM.AU

**CANDLE
IN A CAN.**



Overview and key findings

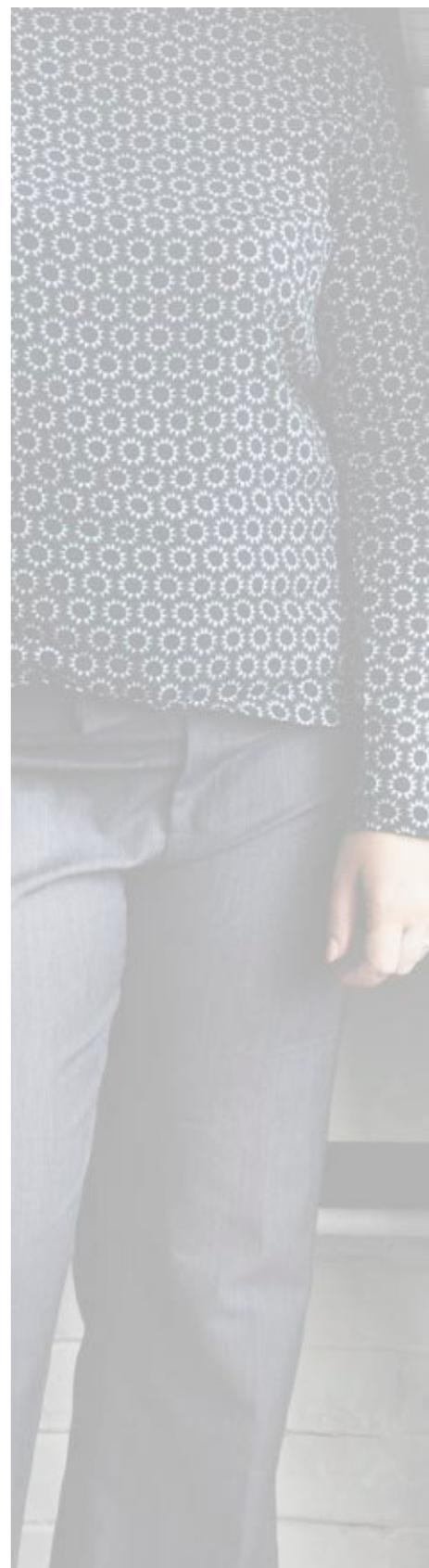
Troublesmiths is a Tasmanian social enterprise-based employment program for young people aged 15 to 24 years who are disengaged from education, unemployed and at risk of long-term unemployment.

Most Troublesmiths participants are receiving an Australian Government income support benefit known as Youth Allowance. This benefit currently pays between \$21.41 and \$32.51 per day if the young person is single, without children, and aged 18 to 21 years. More information on Troublesmiths participants is provided on page 13.

Troublesmiths has four key features:

- One-on-one and group coaching using a goal setting approach called 'Coaching Young People for Success'
- Work experience in the Troublesmiths social enterprise
- Support for Troublesmiths participants to leverage their work experience to achieve placement in a job, training and/or further education
- Support for Troublesmiths participants to stay in work utilising existing employment and apprenticeship programs and incentives.

From July 2017 to June 2019, 146 participants commenced the initiative. Of those who commenced, 121 (83%) were retained for a satisfactory period of attendance.



KEY FINDINGS OF EVALUATION

The Troublesmiths evaluation aimed to answer six key evaluation questions:

1. Does Troublesmiths result in better employment outcomes for at risk young people?

Employment outcomes for Troublesmiths participants in terms of verified job placements, verified 4-week outcomes and verified 12-week outcomes were greater than for a comparative group of young *jobactive* participants in Southern Tasmania who did not participate in Troublesmiths. It is too early to accurately compare 26-week, 12-month and longer-term outcomes.

2. Does Troublesmiths result in at risk young people improving 'employability skills'?

As a whole, young people engaged in Troublesmiths achieved significant improvements across eight employability areas identified by employers and governments as being critical to gaining and keeping a job including Communication, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Self-Management, Planning/Organising, Technology, Learning, and Initiative/Enterprise.

3. How do the different elements of Troublesmiths contribute to the program outcomes?

The holistic approach taken by Troublesmiths is fundamental to the outcomes achieved. The central innovation, a social enterprise where young people can develop and use practical work skills and have a true life 'work experience' worked well. The combination of life coaching and employment coaching allowed for flexibility so that young people got what they needed when they needed rather than just completing another 'program'.

4. How important are non-vocational skills to employment outcomes?

This evaluation found that young people gained much in terms of self-confidence, peer support and social inclusion through the Troublesmiths experience. The 'Coaching Young People for Success' framework allowed participants to identify strengths and interests and to be supported by the coaches in achieving their goals. Young people felt that someone was taking an interest in them as a person, not just a program outcome and this engendered personal growth. It remains to be seen if this translates into better long-term employment outcomes.

5. What is the potential for scaling up this approach to youth unemployment?

Troublesmiths demonstrates clearly that young people at higher risk of continuing unemployment face a number of challenges. Their needs differ due to their differing life circumstances, including mental health status, drug and alcohol use, family support and housing. The question of how employment initiatives such as Troublesmiths respond to these life circumstances needs further consideration. Does it fit into an employment preparation framework or does it require better coordination between employment providers and the wider social support system? If all Stream B and C jobseekers have a structured life coaching component in their ongoing support program, what are the resource implications?

6. How did Troublesmiths adapt and respond to clients and other stakeholders as the program evolved?

Throughout its implementation the Troublesmiths initiative evolved in response to program learnings and client feedback. Early implementation required staff to be flexible and responsive to the needs of young people. The program was initially designed to be delivered over 6 months incorporating different training modules, coaching, employment support and social enterprise workplace experience. Delivery was flexible rather than following a sequential rigid 'program'. This approach presented challenges for both staff and clients, and the program evolved to a more structured model as it matured. In the final months, YES developed an intensive eight-week course to enable continuing intake of clients as the EYI funding cycle neared its end.

Tasmania's employment challenge and an overview of current and future approaches

In August 2019 Tasmania had the highest general unemployment rate of any State/Territory at 6.8% (LMIP 2019).

In March 2019, the general unemployment rate in the Bridgewater-Gagebrook SA2 region was 27.9% and had increased 7% since 2017 (Department of Employment 2019). In 2019 Southern Tasmania was identified as a 'youth unemployment hotspot', with the Hobart region's youth unemployment rate at 16.9% and South-East Tasmania at 17.8% (Brotherhood of St Laurence 2019).

The Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) rate, measures young people in the same age group who are disengaged from the labour market and provides an important insight into the transition between school and work. NEET in Tasmania rose between 2008 (12%) and 2016 (15%) but has shown a decline in the younger (15-19 years) cohort since 2009 (Thomas and Vandebroek 2017).

Long term unemployment results in multiple negative social, economic, health and wellbeing impacts. Persistent high youth unemployment and multiple episodes of unemployment throughout the life course can seriously diminishes life chances for young people, resulting in downward occupational mobility and low incomes, often described in terms of 'unemployment scarring' (McQuaid 2015, Strandh et al 2014, Daly and Delaney 2013, Bell and Blanchflower 2011).

Unemployment at the beginning of a career can impact on both cognitive and non-cognitive skills development. The loss of cognitive skills is likely to affect productivity and adaptability in the worker with a flow on effect to earning capacity and future employment opportunities. Non-cognitive skills such as dependability, self-discipline, interpersonal skills, are also important assets for success in the job market (McQuaid 2015).

There have been a number of policy responses to youth employment in Australia. Skattebol et al (2015) distinguish between education focussed, employment focussed and hybrid education/employment programs. Education focussed programs work on raising aspirations and capacity building and knowledge of labour market possibilities and processes, while employment focussed programs have an emphasis on work experience using strategies such as work for the dole. Hybrid education /employment focussed programs contain elements of both (Skattebol et al 2015). The OECD (2013) advocates a cross sectoral approach which brings together educational institutions, industry organisations, employment agencies and relevant government departments to identify skills requirements, build career pathways and job opportunities.

Active labour market policies (ALMP) dominate the current policy discourse on youth unemployment. In Australia, ALMPs take three main forms, job search; work experience; and formal training and education mostly run by contracted employment service providers (Thomas and Vandebroek, 2017). However, evidence for the efficacy of ALMPs is mixed. In a meta-analysis of ALMPs, Card et al (2015) concluded they have only small effects in the short term with more positive effects in the longer term and effects are heterogeneous with disadvantaged young people showing fewer positive outcomes.

The most successful programs for disadvantaged young job seekers, take a comprehensive approach including training and education, social support, vocational and job-readiness training, career guidance and counselling and workplace training. These programs



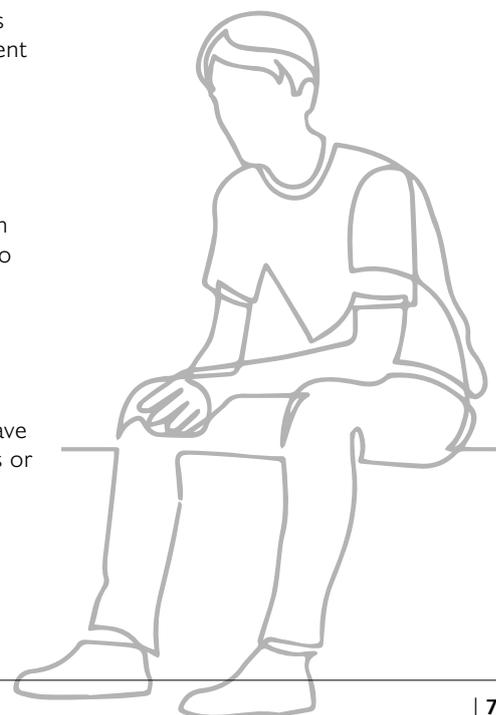


need to address skills deficiencies and provide a pathway to work via work experience, and are likely to be more feasible if they involve collaboration at a local level between service providers and employers (Thomas and Vandebroek 2017, Borland et al 2015).

Societal drivers include a young person's educational experience, opportunities for work experience and unemployment services.

Social Ventures Australia (2016) claims structural, societal and personal drivers all impact on a young person's success in securing and sustaining employment. Structural factors include such things as the number and type of vacancies available as well as macroeconomic factors such as interest rates and investment in public works. Societal drivers include a young person's educational experience, opportunities for work experience and unemployment services themselves. The latter are seen as fragmented with a lack of collaboration between education providers, employment agencies and industry which negatively impacts on already disadvantaged job seekers. On a personal level, young people need to be resilient and develop the skills that allow them to successfully transition from education into employment. Again, this is a particular challenge for young people with multiple and complex barriers and who may not have supportive family and social networks or positive role models.

The Australian Government released the report 'I want to work, Employment Services 2020 Report' in December 2018, prepared by the Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel. The report made a number of recommendations for changes to the employment services system to better address job seekers' needs, particularly the long term unemployed and those with complex needs. They recommended a more personalised and simpler to use system grounded in a 'digital and data ecosystem'. This system would allow job-ready job seekers to find work without the need to engage face to face with employment services. This would free up employment services to better support higher need clients including those in regional areas, indigenous Australians and people facing complex barriers to employment. A significant recommendation is the introduction of a licencing system for employment providers to replace the current five-year tendering process to 'enable strong performing employment services providers to make decisions for the long-term'.



Troublesmiths Program Logic (results chain)

Long Term Program Impacts

Reduced unemployment rates for young Tasmanians (15-24 years)
Reduced NEET('Not in Employment, Education and Training) prevalence for young Tasmanians (15-24 years)

Medium Term Program Impacts

Troublesmiths participants are employed in long-term, sustainable and meaningful work
Troublesmiths participants achieve education and/or training qualifications

Short Term Program Impact

Troublesmiths participants achieve short-term employment outcomes (up to 12 months in paid work)
Troublesmiths participants achieve short-term education outcomes (up to 12 months in education and training)

Program Outcomes

Troublesmiths participants are self-implementing strategies and actions to achieve their goals for success in life and work
At least 75% of Troublesmiths participants are placed in a paid job or formal education/training
100% of retained Troublesmiths participants have structured work experience through the Troublesmiths social enterprise

Program Output *Commencement*

- Young unemployed people engage with Troublesmiths as participants
- Troublesmiths participants are assessed for employability skills and support needs
- Troublesmiths participants inducted into coaching and social enterprise processes

Program Output

Coaching and Work Experience

- Through coaching, participants identify life and career goals and non-vocational barriers to employment
- Through work experience and self-direction participants achieve goals including improved employment skills
- Social enterprise provides a variety of opportunities for participants to build life and work resilience

Program Output

Employment and Education Placements

- Participants acquire practical labour market knowledge and job seeking abilities
- Tasmanian business sector and employers engage with and value Troublesmiths as a pre-employment program
- Troublesmiths participants have improved range of employment opportunities and post-placement support

Program Activities

- Market Troublesmiths to young at risk unemployed Tasmanians, particularly in high unemployment areas
- Accept all referrals, assess participants for suitability
- Assess commenced participants for employability skills and personal strengths and barriers
- Maintain records on participant progress
- Provide a safe working and learning environment
- Implement the CYPFS tools and methodology through one-on-one and group coaching sessions
- Operate the Troublesmiths social enterprise through paid (worker) and volunteer (participant) labour, providing customer service and manufacturing work experience
- Provide structured group sessions for young people to address eight key build employability skills
- Soft refer participants to non-vocational supports
- Place participants in formal education and training
- Partners with employers, including employers who 'pre approve' placement for suitable Troublesmiths graduates
- Support participants to apply for jobs and perform well at interviews to maximise chances of placement
- Provide intensive support immediately post-placement

Program Inputs

- External (government, corporate) funding for coaches, social enterprise coordinators, administration and rent
- Social enterprise revenue for other outings
- Impact Communities and Workskills knowledge, networks, systems, management, equipment, infrastructure
- Willing participation of at risk young people
- Participation of ethnic specific leaders/ organisations
- Community sector and education service providers
- Employers of young people at entry level
- Employment services system and resources

Troublesmiths participant snapshot

Nearly half of Troublesmiths participants in the period July 2017 to June 2019 were from the 10 areas of Southern Tasmania with an unemployment rate at least 30% higher than the Tasmanian state average of 6.8% (LMIP 2019). These areas are: Berriedale-Chigwell; West Moonah; Claremont; Moonah; Derwent Park-Lutana; New Norfolk; Mornington-Warrane; Glenorchy; Rokeby; Risdon Vale; Bridgewater-Gagebrook.



Unemployment rate in suburb where participant lives	Well above Tasmanian average rate (9% to 28%)	About Tasmanian average rate (5%-8%)	Below Tasmanian average rate (2%-4%)
	46%	15%	39%

About 60% of Troublesmiths participants had not completed Year 12 or equivalent. Nearly a third had not completed Year 10. Across Australia in 2016, the Year 12 completion for people aged 20-24 was 89% (AIHW 2017). Young people who complete Year 12 have much higher chances of securing employment than those who do not.



Education level	Less than Year 10	Year 10-11	Year 12 and above
	34%	26%	39%

While the proportion of Indigenous people in the Tasmanian community in the 2016 Census was 4.6%, nearly 1 in 6 Troublesmiths participants were Indigenous. Across Australia and in Tasmania, Indigenous Australians have higher rates of unemployment than non-Indigenous Australians (ABS 2016).



Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated
	16%	83%	1%

About a third of Troublesmiths participants had been registered as unemployed for at least 6 months, and 1 in 5 for more than 12 months. An unknown (but significant) number of those registered for less than 6 months had re-entered the employment services system after previously being registered as unemployed.



Time registered as unemployed	Less than 6 months	6-12 months	More than 12 months
	63%	16%	21%

Nearly 10% of Troublesmiths participants were homeless. Nearly two-thirds were living with parents or family, often in difficult circumstances, due a lack of affordable housing options. Many participants living in 'shared' housing experience housing insecurity.



Housing circumstances	Homeless	With parents or family	Independent/shared
	9%	67%	25%

Most Troublesmiths participants are in the 18-21 year old age bracket. It is difficult for people who are school age to legally engage with programs such as Troublesmiths.



Age (at commencement)	16-18 years old	18-21 years old	22 to 24 years old
	7%	61%	32%

More young men are registered as unemployed in Tasmania than young women (Department of Employment 2019). This same proportion is reflected in the genders of Troublesmiths participants.



Gender	Female	Male	Non-binary
	44%	55%	1%

Troublesmiths employment outcomes

Troublesmiths has two main employment outcome measures.

Employability skills outcomes

Employability skills are the essential skills, personal qualities and values that enable any person to thrive in any workplace. These are also called 'enterprise skills' or 'workplace skills'. The Foundation for Young Australian's 2016-2017 series of 'big data' youth employment reports found that young jobseekers with enterprise skills, high motivation and work experience were far more likely to gain employment, more quickly, across all industries.

All Troublesmiths participants from July 2017 to June 2019 were assessed against eight employability skills identified by the Department of Employment and Australian industry bodies as being particularly important in modern Australian workplaces. Participants were assessed at commencement of their time with Troublesmiths, and when they moved into employment and education or otherwise completed the program. The results demonstrate a significant increase in employability skills during a participant's time with Troublesmiths.

Employability Skill	Proportion assessed competent at <i>start</i> of Troublesmiths	Proportion assessed competent at <i>completion</i> of Troublesmiths	Increase in proportion of participants who are competent in each skill
Communication	24%	72%	+ 48%
Teamwork	5%	78%	+ 73%
Problem solving	2%	60%	+ 58%
Self-management	4%	60%	+ 56%
Planning/organising	5%	60%	+ 55%
Technology	6%	52%	+ 46%
Learning	5%	48%	+ 43%
Initiative/enterprise	6%	63%	+ 57%

Employment and training outcomes

The core focus of participation in Troublesmiths is to gain paid work or commence formal education and/or training. The recording of Troublesmiths job outcomes utilised *jobactive* data. This requires a placement to be verified in writing by an employer and retention outcomes (4 weeks, 12 weeks and 26 weeks) to be verified through evidence such as payslips and self-reporting to Centrelink. Outcomes are not recorded if participants do not achieve sufficient income to reduce their Youth Allowance payment by at least 60% for 4 and 12 week outcomes, and 100% for 26 week outcomes. So, for example, if a young person was working 4 hours a week at the legal minimum wage, this would be recorded as a job placement, but not as a job outcome.

At present, job outcomes are tracked for the 70% of Troublesmiths participants who are/were an employment services client of Workskills Inc. Correlating data from the 30% of participants who are registered with other providers does not suggest any significant difference in the proportion of outcomes achieved from placements.

As at August 2019, the following outcomes had been achieved:

Proportion of retained Troublesmiths participants achieving a job placement: **70.37%**

Proportion of placed Troublesmiths participants who partially/wholly reduced benefits for 4 weeks: **64.91%**

Proportion of placed Troublesmiths participants who partially/wholly reduced benefits for at least 12 wks: **56.14%**

Proportion of participants achieving an education placement*: **18.94%**

Proportion of retained Troublesmiths participants undertaking work experience**: **100%**

* Some participants achieved an employment and education placement (e.g. apprentices). Not all education placements recorded in *jobactive*.

** 'Work experience' as a structured component of Troublesmiths. Work experience is defined and recorded differently in *jobactive*.

It is not possible at this time to provide an accurate analysis of the proportion of participants achieving a 26 week outcome because a number of Troublesmiths participants were placed less than 26 weeks ago, and in some cases it can take longer than 26 weeks to achieve a 26 week outcome even if the young person has kept the same job (for example if the young person is employed on a casual basis and has fluctuating hours of work and/or takes leave for a period of time).

The outcome proportions provided above are being compared to all results for people aged 15-24 who were clients of Workskills; all people registered with *jobactive* in Tasmania; and all people registered with *jobactive* in Australia

using data from the Department of Employment's Employment Services System (ESS) and the Department's Employment Services Outcome Reports. As there is a lag in the published national figures (only figures for April 2017 to March 2018 are currently available for the Outcome Reports), it is not yet possible to provide 'like for like' comparative analysis. However, it is worth noting that Troublesmiths' job placement rate (70.37%) appears higher than has previously been recorded in *jobactive* against the Workskills, Tasmanian and national cohorts, while Troublesmiths retention outcomes (4, 12 and 26 weeks) are trending at about the same rate as the benchmarks.



Troublesmiths coaching method

Troublesmiths uses a coaching method called 'Coaching Young People for Success[®]' (CYPFS).

CYPFS is a two stage coaching approach based on the POWER Coaching Model and the GOAL Coaching Conversation, licensed to Impact Communities by Life Business Consultancy.

The POWER Coaching Model has five steps:

Step 1: Imagine possibilities for your life, career or study

Young people explore who they are and create a strengths based personal profile that will assist them to imagine possibilities and design an inspiring vision for their life, career and study that matches who they are and what is important to them.

Step 2: Be organised by settling goals and making a plan

Young people identify their short, medium and long term goals, review their current life satisfaction in eight key areas, identify the top priority areas they want to work on and then are assisted to create an achievable, clear plan of what they need to do to get there.

Step 3: Develop willpower to stay motivated

Young people realistically assess the costs and benefits of striving towards their goals in order to assist them build their motivation and promote commitment.

Step 4: Build emotional skills to overcome obstacles

Young people identify the emotional intelligence skills they have and the skills they need to strengthen in order to be able to overcome obstacles and move ahead.

Step 5: Achieve results by taking consistent action

Young people design S.M.A.R.T steps they can take straight away to experience success and build their sense of agency and belief that their goals are achievable.

The GOAL Coaching Conversation is designed to assist the Troublesmiths coach lead future-focused coaching conversations that result in the young person's plan. Using this tool, the participant develops and commits to a detailed action plan for each Life Area focus and Career Area focus, with timeframes and 'achieved' checklists. Each action plan identifies what could 'trip up' the participant; skills required to be successful; and options for support.

Stage 1: Goal

What is your goal? How important is it? Do you believe in it? Are you ready?

Stage 2: Options

What are all the options? What have you tried? What else could you try?

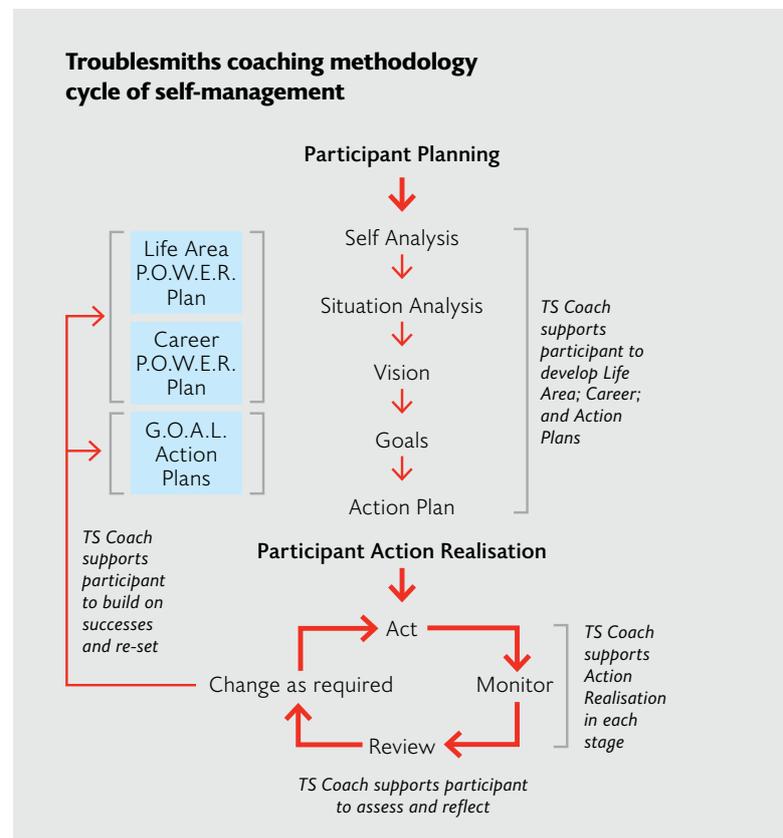
Stage 3: Action

What action will you take? When will you take it? How will you feel when you do?

Stage 4: Likelihood

How likely are you to act? What could stop you? What could support you?

Goals and action steps can be reviewed and evaluated and re-set during every coaching session.



What participants say about Troublesmiths coaching

"I definitely think the goal setting helps because in the end having a goal is going to help you, you know, go, "Hey, I need to go to this job to get to my end goal," sort of thing... it's also a sense of pride when you complete a goal or something like that that you've set for yourself, like it's always good when you do something like that."

"...[it's] really what helps me go through this because they help with, you know, learning life skills because sometimes you just don't learn them out in the world until someone sits you there and tells you how to do it. So, they helped with like motivation, learning and planning and developing goal setting."

What coaches say about the CYPFS methodology

"I really enjoy CYPFS for a lot of reasons. The first module really helps them figure out who they are. When you can figure out who you are, then you can start planning a life that matches that... 'Coaching YP' is really good and I've worked with a lot of personal development programs – and this is the best one I've worked with."



Participant profiles

ELLIE RANSOM

"Troublesmiths has really given me the skills to integrate myself back into society and I know that it's helped me incredibly...and I think it's important that other people get that same opportunity. I've learnt really all sorts of stuff, both from back of house and front of house, I've learned how to work point of sales, how to manufacture products, how to organise storefronts, I've pretty much got a little bit of everything experience wise now...I'm looking at doing a Cert II in retail next...I've noticed a huge difference in myself...I'm more confident, I'm a lot more bubbly, I'm happier...Troublesmiths has really helped me to become the best version of myself. It's been a very positive and uplifting experience, I'm really grateful for it." 2019

ELLIE'S EMPLOYER

"Ellie has brought a really friendly positive attitude into the work place. At her interview it was clear that she was a little bit nervous, however I saw potential from the get go, and a real mover and shaker. It was interesting coincidence because I saw a post from the Troublesmiths Facebook page, and Ellie's resume had been sitting on my desk stating her involvement. What really got her over the line for an interview was her positive friendly phone manner. She has settled in really well with the team and is really open and friendly... as long as she keeps her positive attitude up I think she will settle in really well." 2019

JAKE OXLEY

"Troublesmiths helped me find my confidence, I really found myself again. The lessons I learnt about personal responsibility, and really taking ownership of my life, enabled me to achieve the things I wanted in life. I no longer leave things to other people, as things don't happen unless I do it myself. I learnt that life isn't just about doing what everyone else is doing...but really thinking about who I am as a person and what career or job is going to bring me a sense of purpose and meaning to life. Working in my current role [disability support] has just opened so many doors for me and the possibilities are now endless. I am really keen to just be helpful and help those who need it. It's been an exciting journey so far and I can't wait to see what comes my way next." 2019

Troublesmiths Social Enterprise Work Experience Program

Troublesmiths began as a six-month program. A structured 8-week program was developed over the course of this initiative in response to feedback from participants and staff and program learnings. The program can be delivered over longer and shorter formats, depending on the needs and preferences of participants and stakeholders.

Participants are referred to Troublesmiths at the recommendation of other service providers (including jobactive and Transition to Work providers); via peer recommendation (word of mouth from friends and family); and 'self-referred' via Troublesmiths marketing, social media, media stories and walking into the Troublesmiths shopfront.

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction; Site familiarisation; Expectations; OHS requirements; POS systems; Baseline assessments (survey) • Group Session: Coaching Young People for Success methodology introduction and overview • Allocation of rotating Front of House and Back of House duties in social enterprise; confirmation of work roster • One-on-one Coaching Young People for Success sessions (establish Career Area Plan and Life Area Plan) • Employability skills development: Week 1 focus is Teamwork and Communication 	
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability skills development: Week 2 focus is Financial Literacy 	<p>Each week participants work with the coaches and the social enterprise coordinator to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocate rotating Front of House and Back of House duties in social enterprise • work in the social enterprise according to the agreed roster • review and evaluate the previous week's strengths and improvements • have one-on-one Coaching Young People for Success sessions (at least one per participant per week).
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Session: Interviews, resumes, applications • Employability skills development: Week 3 focus is Digital Literacy; Written Communication 	
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Session: Career Planning • Streaming of participants to industry pathways • Employability skills development: Week 4 focus is Presentation Skills; Creativity 	
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability skills development: Week 5 focus is Critical Thinking; Problem Solving 	
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group and one-on-one preparation for arranged job interviews (interview skills; resumes; presentation) 	
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one review of arranged job interviews using Coaching Young People for Success framework 	
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Coaching Young People for Success one-on-one session (moving to self-management of goals) • Confirmation of job offer or process of progressing towards job offer • Confirmation of post-placement support plan • 'Graduation' ceremony 	

What participants say about the Troublesmiths Social Enterprise

"I just recently came out of rehab, and I was looking to get as much support... and try and find, you know, another open door for me to walk through. You know all my life I've been, sort of, running around in circles so it was a good thing to be able to get that opportunity to learn, and do something for myself...I think in a way it helps you develop different skills for different areas of work...it definitely helped me... I'm grateful for that."

Thanachot 2019

"It was really nerve wracking at first because I didn't have that experience, and I'm also not social to begin with, but since being here I've gained a lot of confidence and I can happily go up to a customer and greet them. It's a great opportunity for people looking to get experience in the workforce."

April 2019



What coaches say about the Troublesmiths Social Enterprise

"...whilst the [social enterprise coordinator] is looking at participants' engagement with the social enterprise, the [coach] maps that across to employment readiness and the [coaches also] look at the personal development and the coaching and goal setting ... the whole end is about getting employment but it crosses through the three domains - work readiness, personal development and social enterprise activity." *Troublesmiths Coach 2018*

Troublesmiths and best practice approaches to youth employment

As outlined on page 6, studies conducted in the last five years have examined best practice approaches to Australian youth employment, including reports published by Social Ventures Australia, Foundation for Young Australians, Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Melbourne Institute, the OECD, the Australian Government's Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel and the University of NSW. Five best practice approaches are common across these studies.

Best practice approach (from research)	How Troublesmiths does this (from evaluation)	What Troublesmiths can do better (feedback from participants and staff)
<p>Identity and self-perception Young people should define their own identity and identify their own interests, skills and talents and match to relevant industries and roles. Comprehensive assessment should set baselines and track progress for the participant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Area coaching and planning via the Coaching Young People for Success (CYPFS) methodology • Employability skills assessment • Barriers assessment (survey) • One-on-one coaching sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of tools that assess motivation and resilience (such as Esher House) • More effort in pre-program interviews to ensure participants understand the Troublesmiths journey before they commence.
<p>Goal setting and action realisation Job seeker personal responsibility, independence and choice should be encouraged and supported through goal setting. Young people set goals based on values, interests and research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Area coaching and planning via the CYPFS methodology • Documented goal setting and action plans • One-on-one coaching sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better use of digital and mobile technologies to set, report and update plans – including real-time 'checking-off' completion of actions, review history of success and re-setting goals.
<p>Personalised, comprehensive support The most successful programs for disadvantaged young job seekers take a comprehensive approach including training and education, vocational and job-readiness training, workplace training, one-on-one career management advice, coaching, mentoring, case management, counselling or psychological support. Personalised support can be critical.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one and group based coaching • Peer-to-peer support encouraged and facilitated • Integration of social enterprise work experience, employability skills training, career planning and life area planning • Identification of mental health and other social barrier issues at commencement • Soft referrals to other providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house or 'on demand' mental health support for participants • Clearer and faster options for participants to access a range of social supports including family violence, drug and alcohol, housing crisis • Clearer and faster options for participants to receive support to improve literacy and numeracy, including 'pausing' Troublesmiths participation while literacy and numeracy barriers are addressed.
<p>Employability skills Awareness of employability skills and those a young person needs to develop to improve job readiness are critical to gaining work. More employers prioritise 'enterprise skills' over 'hard, technical skills' in rapidly changing work environments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of employability skills at commencement and completion • Awareness and practice of skills reinforced through coaching and social enterprise work experience • Specific group sessions on skills incorporated in program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased transparency for participants in the improvement in each of the employability skills areas, including through digital technologies.
<p>Work Experience Young jobseekers with employability skills and high motivation and work experience are far more likely to gain employment, more quickly, across all industries. An opportunity to build confidence, knowledge and skills in a supportive working environment can be a bridge to the open labour market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical work experience is at the heart of the Troublesmiths approach to youth employment • Suitable for participants with no or little previous experience • Participants are rotated through a range of customer facing and manufacturing duties • Confidence building is reported by nearly all participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clearer information, for participants and employers, that skills and experience gained via the Troublesmiths social enterprise are transferable across industries, not just retail and hospitality • Expand the range of products and roles associated with the social enterprise.
<p>Reflect how employers work Ensure value is offered to employers and connections are made to the right job seekers. Effective cross sector partnerships with business can create better outcomes for disadvantaged job seekers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troublesmiths social enterprise is based on a 'real workplace' approach familiar to employers • Demonstrating workplace resilience over at least eight weeks gives employers confidence about participants • Applications and interviews are reviewed and refined to meet employer expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effort to secure employer partners who can offer 'pre approved' job placements for graduates of Troublesmiths • Supported pathways from Troublesmiths to apprenticeships and traineeships • Better tools to allow employment services to 'sell' Troublesmiths graduates to employers.

Troublesmiths' value for money

In December 2013, the Australian Government commissioned a review into Australia's 'welfare' system, chaired by Mr Patrick McClure AO.

A Priority Investment Approach (PIA) to welfare was a key recommendation of the McClure review. Specifically, the review recommended that actuarial analysis should be used to identify groups at high risk of long-term welfare dependency. This analysis would provide an evidence base for investments that improve people's life chances and 'get people who can work, into work'. According to the Australian Government, the valuations estimate the future lifetime cost of welfare payments to the Australian population and groups within it. This method is similar to the way that insurance companies estimate their future costs.

A key rationale of the PIA is that employment has significant health and social benefits that save governments money. Having a job also helps individuals build financial independence, and therefore reduces income support costs.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) was contracted by the Australian Government to undertake the actuarial analysis.

According to the Department of Social Services, the actuarial valuations are informed by social security administrative data from the Department of Human Services. This data is supplemented by other data sources such as Australian Bureau of Statistics population data, and data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey.

In 2017, the PIA valuation showed young people aged 16 to 21 years receiving Youth Allowance in 2016 had an average future lifetime cost of \$306,000 per person.

The estimated total future lifetime cost for this group of young people across Australia is \$33.4 billion. On average, this group is expected to receive income support for some or all of 35 years over the rest of their lives. Eleven per cent are expected to receive income support for some or all of every year for the rest of their lives. The analysis posits that if nothing changes, 42 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 33 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

In 2018 the updated PwC valuation report estimated that these costs had increased.

With ongoing corporate and in-kind support provided by Workskills Inc. – and maintenance of the current level of self-generated revenue from the Troublesmiths social enterprise – it is estimated that Troublesmiths will require approximately \$300,000 in funding to operate in 2019/2020.

This includes the Troublesmiths social enterprise operating 2440 hours per year and delivering at least 1728 hours of coaching support (including recruitment, assessment, one-on-one coaching, group coaching and employability skills training) for up to 60 participants per year.

Troublesmiths aims to place at least 75% of participants into work and/or formal education.

Troublesmiths intensive coaching and social enterprise support methodology does require a significant upfront investment, but as the Australian Government's own PIA analysis suggests, the long term benefits of participants aged 16-21 years currently receiving Youth Allowance securing ongoing employment and no longer requiring government income support over the course of their lives, can produce lifetime savings to government in excess of such investment.

Troublesmiths aims to place at least 75% of participants into work and/or formal education, with at least half of these young people reducing their income support payments within the first six months of placement and at least 25% moving off income support payments altogether within the first year. If achieved, these outcomes represent significant 'value for money' and 'return on investment'.

The case for investment is arguably enhanced for programs, such as Troublesmiths, which attract participants from areas of Southern Tasmania with extraordinarily high levels of general unemployment, inter-generational unemployment and youth unemployment.

The voices of Troublesmiths participants

Focus groups and interviews were conducted by the Institute for the Study of Social Change with 25 young people in August and September 2018, after the program had been operating for just over 12 months and had just transitioned to adopting the name 'Troublesmiths'.



In confidential participant surveys, over 90% of participants rated the Troublesmiths program as good or very good. Comments from participants to the UTAS researcher reflected this survey outcome:

"I've been able to get customer service experience, retail experience, visual merchandising experience, point of sales and cash handling experience. So stuff that

I can put on my resume that makes me a little bit more appealing to potential employers I hope, as well as doing a lot of administrative stuff around here."

"I was super shy... being here gave me the confidence to actually like go in and do stuff because... I was always the kind of person that would just like send in (job applications) and like over the Internet and then just like hope and pray... I know my confidence just sky-rocketed when I was here, like, I became friends with everyone. I would talk to anyone..."

'I've been receiving a Centrelink benefit for about three years now. This is the first sort of activity I've been referred to that I've enjoyed and can see the value in. All the other ones have just sort of been manual labour or barely anything at all.'

"... it definitely encourages, you know, physically getting out there and, you know, putting a face to your resume rather than just words on paper. I'm a very introverted person by nature... it's a great outlet for not only helping you find, I guess, what you want to do career-wise, but it's also a great way to meet people and learn how to interact with people if you're not too familiar or comfortable doing that, for sure."

But Troublesmiths was not for everyone, and not every participant valued each part of the program:

"The career path I want to go down isn't really in any of the making or particularly selling products to people, whether it be retail or any of that. So, a lot of the skills that I'm learning here don't really have an effect on my career path either, but they are still skills and stuff, I guess."

"I thought (goal setting in coaching) was pointless because I don't really go by goals. I just go by every day. I don't set goals and be like, 'I'm going to do that this day.' Like I just forget about it. Like I write it down, but then I don't actually accomplish them."

"(some participants) were semi told by (employment services provider) that they should do it as a Work for the Dole so they weren't fully invested. They were just doing it because they had to... (and these people) wouldn't give really opinions, it made it harder for them."

And participants pointed out where Troublesmiths systems needed to improve:

"... after a couple of months it became a bit disorganised with the (group coaching) modules, because new people had to do them as well as the old people (who) have to do a different module. So, it just sort of became hard to have like different groups of people doing modules at the same time."

However, most participants valued Troublesmiths highly, and for some, the impact was profound:

"I feel like I have a purpose."

"I've learned stuff, done stuff, and it gives me a reason to wake up in the morning."

"It has actually changed my persona of (where) I want to... go."

"It helps you figure out where you want to be in life."

And sometimes this was expressed in way that surprised the Troublesmiths staff:

"... we had some guys who I had trouble interacting (with) for a number of reasons and they did this news conference where they raved about the program – their understanding of what the program was doing for them was so mature and the way they articulated it – that was so well thought out – I was very pleased to see how it all came full circle."

Troublesmiths manager 2018

The Institute's evaluation was approved by the Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), University of Tasmania (reference number H0016996).



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