



Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *Brighton Integrated Community Engagement Model*

Location: Tasmania

Using insights from the Priority Investment Approach, the Try, Test and Learn Fund is gathering evidence on new or innovative approaches to addressing barriers to work.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will help achieve the objectives of welfare reform — that is, to develop a modern welfare system that increases the capacity of individuals, reduces the risk of welfare dependency and maintains a strong welfare safety net.

What are we trying to achieve?

Improvement in the employability of young people who are disengaged from education or employment by boosting their self-confidence and engaging them in community work that helps build both practical life and work skills.

What is *Brighton Integrated Community Engagement Model*?

Disengaged young people living in the local community are referred to the project through schools, local employment services providers, community organisations or through self-referrals. The young people's barriers to employment — for example, self-confidence, social anxiety or disengagement from school or training — are assessed alongside their interests and abilities.

The young people participate in four to six months of supervised volunteering at the Bridgewater Police & Citizens Youth Club including in external programs run by the club in local primary schools. They receive work skills training and a gradual progression into work experience that focuses on their strengths. Participants are matched with a mentor, and supported to identify and work on addressing any barriers to education or employment. For example, transport is a key employment barrier in the region, and so transport assistance and driving skills development is provided. Participants are also referred to support services, if required.

What does the evidence tell us?

- The barriers to further education and employment for young unemployed people are varied. While some will face minimal barriers to engaging in further education or taking up employment opportunities, others will face a number of challenges to making a successful transition.
- If nothing changes, 45 per cent of 16-21 year olds currently receiving with Youth Allowance (other) or Disability Support Pension with mental health as the primary condition will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 34 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

How is this initiative new and innovative?

The support offered to participants is centred in their immediate community and makes use of existing community networks. It aims to overcome a key barrier — poor access to transport — and provides support to identify and address other barriers to education or employment.

Fast facts

Priority group: At-risk young people

Target participant number: 97

Location: Brighton Municipality

Trial period: 26 months

Total funding: \$298,118

Service provider: Bridgewater Police & Citizens Youth Club

Potential future saving: The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 4 per cent (4) of participants move off income support because of this project, the savings to the welfare system are likely to outweigh the costs of the project.

Note: Due to changes in circumstances, adjustments have been made to target participant numbers, trial period and total funding.