



Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *Dunn Lewis F3style*

Location: New South Wales

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?

This project supports at-risk young people in the Shoalhaven region to build self-confidence, skills and work experience that will lead to better engagement with meaningful employment.

What is *Dunn Lewis F3style*?

An initial engagement and assessment with each young person helps identify barriers to employment and tailor the supports and activities offered.

A mentor plays a key role, helping participants identify their passions, maintain engagement in the project and pursue work and study goals.

Depending on individual need, referrals to other support services are provided as well as in-house and external training opportunities. Participants have three hours' paid work experience every week through in-house opportunities including planning and operating a garden to table pop up cafe and contributing to the *Living Life in Ulladulla* online directory. When ready, participants move on to employment rotations at four local businesses, with mentor support. The aim is for participants to develop work skills, understand their needs and goals, and move to meaningful long-term employment.

What does the evidence tell us?

- Young unemployed people face a variety of barriers to further education, training and employment.
- If nothing changes, 48 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 37 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

How is this initiative new and innovative?

The combination of mentoring and in-house work experience, followed by work experience in local businesses, is a service offer that differs significantly to those currently available.

Local retirees provide mentoring, imparting valuable life experience and passing on intergenerational skills. The community centre provides training, education and work experience, all on site.

Fast facts

Priority group: At-risk young people

Target participant number: 72

Locations: Ulladulla, NSW

Trial period: 31 months

Total funding: \$1.09 million

Service provider: Dunn and Lewis Youth Development Foundation Ltd

Potential future saving: The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 21 per cent of participants (15) 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.