**BARNARDO’S NORTHERN IRELAND**

**ALL STARS**

**About the project**

**Funding awarded:** £1,266,000  
**Duration of funding:** 5 years  
**Number of beneficiaries:** 8,706 young people aged 11 to 14 years  
**Areas of delivery:** Antrim, Ballymena, Belfast, Dundonald, Larne, Newtownabbey, Newtownards, Lisburn and Carrickfergus

Barnardo’s transforms the lives of the most vulnerable children across the UK through services, campaigning and research expertise. In Realising Ambition Barnardo’s Northern Ireland (NI) delivered All Stars, a school-based approach to preventing high-risk behaviours addressing youth substance misuse and violence by fostering development of positive personal characteristics. All Stars consists of highly interactive sessions that can be delivered as part of the school day and is delivered by teachers who have received specific training. Students are engaged through small group activities, group discussions, interactive worksheets, games and art activities and four home-link activities.

**Lessons learnt**

Barnardo’s NI’s experience shows that well-established evidence-based programmes can be successfully delivered as intended and at the same time be adapted for delivery to beneficiaries with different needs. It also demonstrates that adaptations to evidence-based programmes can be guided by co-production.

All Stars is an evidence-based programme developed in the United States. It had not been implemented elsewhere until Realising Ambition funding supported Barnardo’s NI to replicate All Stars, targeting schools in areas of economic and social disadvantage in Belfast and nearby towns.

Barnardo’s NI made very slight adaptations to All Stars to ensure that the concepts and language used within its curriculum reflected those of engaged young people. Some changes were also made to the training received by teachers. The programme developers were fully involved in the adaptation process and, in the spirit of reciprocity, some of the adaptations - especially those aimed at modernising the programme - have been adopted by the developers and now feature in the official All Stars programme resources.

Barnardo’s NI managed ongoing co-production processes to ensure that adaptations to programme resources aligned with the experience and expectations of young people in the UK. It worked with young people to evaluate and assess materials and to design new ones. Also, teachers delivering the programme were regularly consulted with and their feedback was used to inform future implementation and training. Additionally, Barnardo’s NI is working with staff and young people in Mencap to adapt All Stars so that it can be delivered to young people with learning disabilities.

The Realising Ambition consortium has mapped each project’s journey against our five ingredients of successful replication. The key points from this follow below. [Find out more about these ingredients.](#)
Barnardo’s NI has adapted All Stars so that it may be offered to young people in Northern Ireland with learning disabilities. The organisation has invested a small amount of unrestricted funding to ensure that it may continue to support schools already trained in the programme in Northern Ireland. Barnardo’s NI will also work with its national organisation to replicate All Stars in other parts of the UK, having already secured grant funding to support the programme’s delivery in Wiltshire.

Each organisation has sought to monitor outcomes of children and young people prior to and after service delivery. Find out more about outcome measurement in Realising Ambition.

Barnardo’s NI delivered All Stars to 8,706 young people across Antrim, Ballymena, Belfast, Dundonald, Larne, Newtownabbey, Newtownards, Lisburn and Carrickfergus. Outcomes questionnaires, using validated measures, were administered to 39% of recipients at the outset of the programme, and to 31% at the end.

Analysis of these outcomes indicate stability in terms of young people’s cooperation and sharing skills. However there was a small decline in terms of their aggression and misbehaviour. The majority (74%) scored within the ‘abnormal’ threshold range at the beginning of the programme, remaining there until the end. Barnardo’s NI also collected additional outcomes data relating to violence, substance use and parental attentiveness but these are not included in the Realising Ambition analysis as these were ‘in-house’ measures and are reported elsewhere (Barnardo’s In Focus report).

Whilst the results from the Realising Ambition outcomes analysis are mixed it should be noted that the size of the sample was large. Consequently it is possible to identify very small difference between pre- and post-test scores, which would be undetectable in smaller sample sizes. Further, without a control group to compare with, there is no way of knowing whether the decline in aggression and misbehaviour scores may have in fact been much more apparent without the programme.

What next

Barnardo’s NI has adapted All Stars so that it may be offered to young people in Northern Ireland with learning disabilities. The organisation has invested a small amount of unrestricted funding to ensure that it may continue to support schools already trained in the programme in Northern Ireland. Barnardo’s NI will also work with its national organisation to replicate All Stars in other parts of the UK, having already secured grant funding to support the programme’s delivery in Wiltshire.