



Time to Talk Next Steps Executive Summary Report

July 2024

Time to Talk Next Steps (*TtTNS*) has been a three-year (2021 – 2024) rights-based support programme for young people with additional needs aged 16 – 25 in England. The programme has been delivered in partnership by [NDTi](#) and [Contact](#), and funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

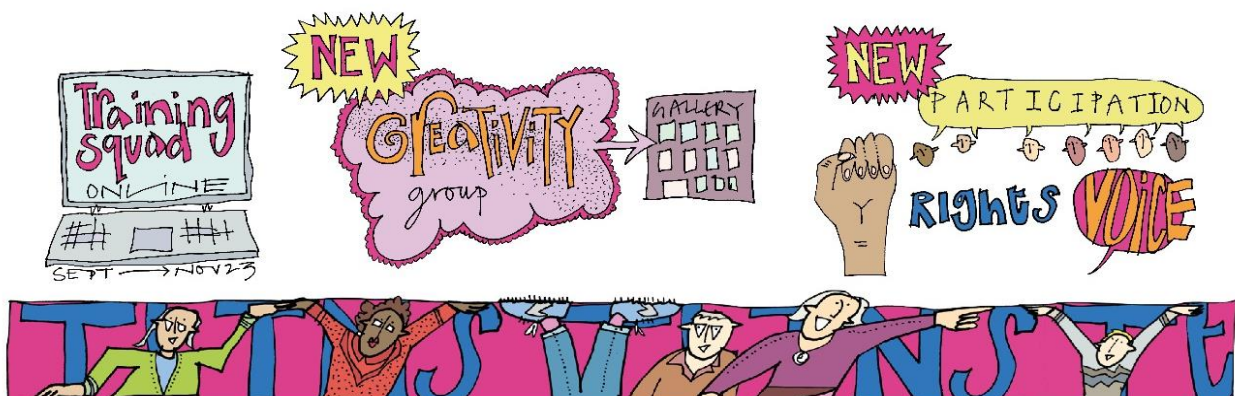
About Time to Talk Next Steps

TtTNS offered short-term, online, one-to-one support sessions to young people (aged 16 – 25) with additional needs to build confidence and focus on goals. Young people did not require a diagnosis or ‘label’ to receive support from the programme. They could request support for themselves or have someone request it for them. Support was delivered by trained and experienced supporters employed by NDTi.

In addition to the online, one-to-one support, the programme also offered young people the opportunity to join a Peer Support Group to meet with and learn from other young people, as well as being part of a ‘Training Squad’ which codesigned and delivered training to professionals who work with children and young people with additional needs in England.

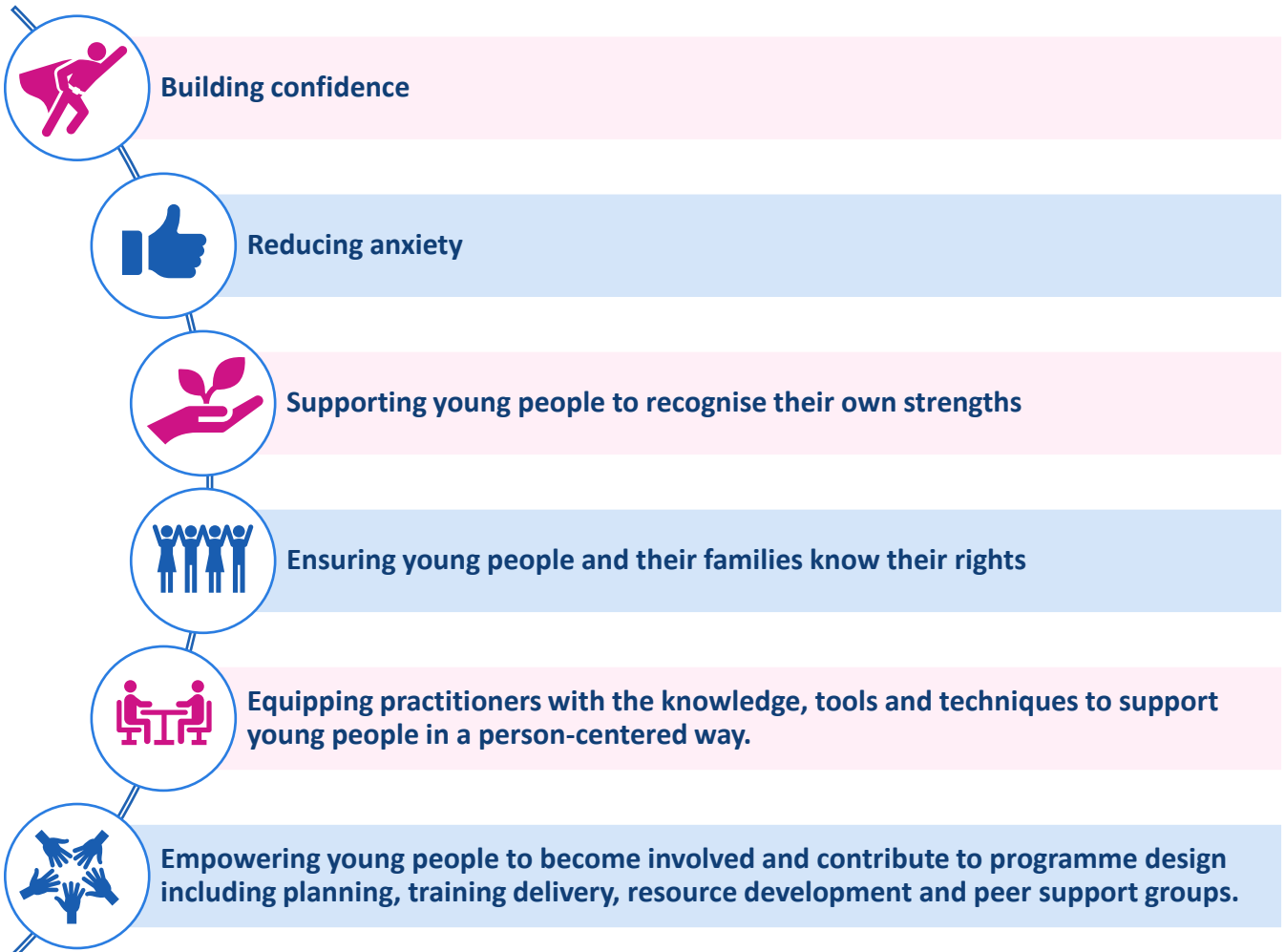
Partnership work with Contact provided advice, support, and information to the families of young people with additional support needs about preparation for adulthood and managing transition.

“When I started TtTNS I hardly looked at the screen and spoke through my mother. I was struggling to leave the house, I was out of school, not accessing social activities. TtTNS definitely helped me take some steps towards thinking of alternative plans for the future.” (Young person)



Programme Aims

The aims of TtTNS evolved during the three years to reflect the changing nature of the programme, but remained focused on:



"I think the creativity group was a smart idea because a lot of young people enjoy using their imagination and creativity in their own different ways, but it can be quite difficult expressing it to other people. With this group, everyone is free to share whatever they like and in a safe, friendly environment. Big plus if you ask me."

(Young person)

What did we find out?

Data from across the three years of *TtTNS* suggests the programme had an overwhelmingly positive impact on the young people who received support. Learning captured during the evaluation highlights that receiving one-to-one support and engaging with the social and training activities provided by the programme offered the following benefits:



It was evident that **young people** participating went on to achieve things they could never have dreamed of before requesting support from the programme. These included being able to speak to their parents/families about their wishes, having a group of people their own age they feel comfortable socialising with, and having paid employment opportunities both within *TtTNS* and more broadly.

The programme also had a positive impact on **the parents/carers** who received support either from NDTi, Contact or both. Many reported feeling better informed and less alone as a result of the support they received, which made them feel more confident and able to face challenges. Many parents/carers also found that the support increased the aspirations they had for the young person in their family.

Finally, **the professionals** who engaged with *TtTNS*, either by requesting support for a young person or attending training delivered by the Training Squad, reported feeling more confident and better equipped to support young people with additional needs in a person-centred way and had higher aspirations for their futures than they had previously. There was also some indirect evidence that professionals were reminded of young people's rights from their engagement with the programme and pledged to ensure they were embedded more prominently in their places of work.

Recommendations



Free, strength-based support like that provided by *TtTNS* should be **rolled out across England** to ensure it is available to as many young people with additional needs as possible. This roll out should be supported and guided by NDTi based on the learning garnered in the last three years, including capturing evidence of how different organisations deliver work to achieve similar outcomes.



Any roll out of the programme should continue to utilise the '**Request for Support**' form format and not incorporate a more formal referral process.



The roll out of the programme should consider **offering support** to those **under 16** in a bid to provide more preventative rather than reactive support. The roll out should also consider offering support to those **over 25** where the need is high, as well as face-to-face support sessions and support groups.



If possible, NDTi should continue to provide **space and support for the established Peer Support Group** to continue meeting on a bi-weekly basis. Part of the support offered should include enabling the Group to take steps towards self-governance.



NDTi should continue to work, where possible, with members of the **Training Squad** and other interested young people, as well as with parent/carers, to **develop and deliver Human Rights training for professionals**.



Support and information for the parents/carers/families of young people with additional needs in England should continue to be offered via a series of **webinars, recordings, and conversation spaces with other parents/carers/family members**.



The **findings** from *TtTNS* should be **widely disseminated** to assist mainstream schools support young people with additional needs/SEND in England,



The **findings** should be used **to inform conversations** and the development of new streams of work across NDTi and its partners.



The Research and Evaluation team at NDTi should use the learning from this evaluation to inform future evaluations of programmes for children and young people. In particular, the team should further **develop and deliver evaluation training for peer evaluators**.

More Information

The National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) hope that you find the learning from Time to Talk Next Steps shared here useful. If you would like more information about the information in this document, or about Time to Talk Next Steps more generally, please refer to the project website www.ndti.org.uk/projects/time-to-talk-next-steps or contact:

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