

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm that I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Youth Work Works!

Week:	Activity:
ONE	Untuned Percussion – learning the different types, techniques, and learning how to keep time and rhythms. Learning how to follow each other as musicians and how to improvise with a variety of rhythms.
TWO	African Drums - learning the different types, techniques, and learning how to keep time and rhythms. Learning how to follow each other as musicians and how to improvise with a variety of rhythms.
THREE	Recorders – learning how to read music, learning the notes on the instruments, learning how to play the instrument as well as learning how to play together, and how to listen to each other.
FOUR	Boomwhackers – This workshop can be a way of learning how to read music, learning the notes on the instruments, as well as learning how to play by ear, learning how to play the instrument as

	well as learning how to play together, and how to listen to each other. Also learning how to work together and observe each other and keep time together and keeping rhythms together and in the right places.
FIVE	PBuzz/P-instruments - learning how to read music, learning the notes on the instruments, learning how to play the instrument as well as learning how to play together, and how to listen to each other.
SIX	Ukuleles - learning how to read music, learning the notes on the instruments, learning how to play the instrument as well as learning how to play together, and how to listen to each other.
SEVEN	Soundtracks (music therapy) - using mostly well known songs and soundtracks, young people can learn physically, mentally, and emotionally, how to be able to regulate their emotions and how to be emotionally vulnerable, using a beneficial and positive outlet for their emotions.

EIGHT	Choir/Rounds - using either well known or easy to learn tunes, the young people can learn songs, how to sing, how to harmonise, how to sing in rounds, and how to listen to each other and how to communicate non-verbally as well as learning how to work in teams and alongside each other, supporting and encouraging one another.
NINE	Tuned Percussion - learning how to read music, learning the notes on the instruments, learning how to play the instrument as well as learning how to play together, and how to listen to each other.
TEN	Songwriting – using a creative outlet through the medium of music, young people can learn how to express themselves in an individual and personal manner, in a way that completely unique to them and their pathway of self-expression.
ELEVEN	Composing - using a creative outlet through the medium of music, young people can learn how to express

	themselves in an individual and personal manner, in a way that completely unique to them and their pathway of self-expression.
TWELVE	Make your own instruments - using a creative outlet through the medium of music, young people can learn how to express themselves in an individual and personal manner, in a way that completely unique to them and their pathway of self-expression.

This three-part essay will explore a programme of youth work that has been designed by the writer that should hopefully be sustainable for a significant amount of time after the original programme is run. The first part will explore the programme, in terms of the developmental needs of young people and its potential effectiveness. The second part of the essay will explore the broader social impacts of the programme and how it would affect young people, their families, their communities, and society at large. The third part of the essay will explore the communications plan about how you will communicate the programme to the young people, their families, their communities, and stakeholders and decision makers. All three parts of the essay are important to explore because they are essential to an intrinsically well-run programme.

The development needs of young people are, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2026); physiological, such as air, food, water, warmth, etc, safety, such as protection from danger, financial stability, and good health, love and belongingness, such as friendships, strong emotional connections, and a support network, esteem needs, which is described by McLeod (2026) as the "pursuit of self-respect" (McLeod, 2026), and lastly, self-actualisation, which is the "personal drive to reach your full potential" (McLeod, 2026). These are the needs of young people that should aid their development to their fullest potential. Several of these such as safety, love and belongingness, and esteem needs can be met through a music-based programme of youth work. The music-based programme of youth work has been created to also be adaptable to each project or organisation individually because it does not necessarily need to be one a week for twelve weeks but could also be one every fortnight, or one a month for a year. The programme can also be repeated as the workshops can be adapted as needed. This is essential for a youth work programme because of youth work's unpredictable and constantly changing nature.

These planned activities give young people the opportunity to learn new skills and to express themselves in a way that they may not have had the opportunity to do before. These activities also cover the "Five Pillars of Youth Work" from the "Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes" (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6). The pillars are as follows; "Educative," "Expressive," "Participative," "Inclusive," and "Empowering" (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6). Music is "Educative" (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6) because it uses numbers, literacy, sometimes science, sometimes history, and it requires individuals to learn new skills. Music is "Expressive" (Youth Work in Wales Review

Group, 2022, pg.5-6) because it gives individuals the safe space to learn how to belong, to learn about their identities, and to allow them to have a positive outlet for their feelings and emotions, which allows them to express themselves in a way that feels right to them as young people and as unique individuals. Music is “Participative” (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6) because if young people want to be involved, then music requires physical, mental and emotional action, and it can be adaptable to any individual of any ability, background, or learning need, which additionally makes music “Inclusive” (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6). Music is “Empowering” (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6) for all of the above reasons, such as the inclusiveness, being able to gain confidence through learning new skills, learning how to express themselves as well as being able to voluntarily participate in something that will benefit their physical, mental, and emotional health through a positive outlet.

Out of these activities, every young person is likely to get something completely different out of each activity and that is the extremely useful thing about music, which is that it is adaptable and flexible to every individual involved. For one young person, it may instil confidence, and for another young person, it may open a new way for them to express themselves. For the untuned percussion and African drums, fun games can be played like follow the leader or young people can learn to improvise with rhythms, which helps young people to watch each other and listen to each other. Workshops like choir and rounds workshops helps young people to listen to each other and learn how to harmonise and work together with other young people. Other workshops like the recorders, PBuzz, boomwhackers, and ukuleles allows young people to learn new instruments, learn new musical techniques, and learn how to read music, and learn how to play solo and with other people. The

music therapy workshop allows young people to feel their emotions and let them out in a beneficial way, which is essential and especially helpful to young people who struggle with emotional regulation and emotional vulnerability. The workshops with activities like songwriting, composing, and creating instruments with recycling and creative equipment and resources, allows young people to express themselves in a new way that they may not have thought about before, as well as allowing them to have expressive freedom and creative opportunities to help them explore their identity and express themselves as unique, confident, creative, and intelligent individuals. All of these workshops are useful to young people as they enable young people to have a creative outlet and one that they can learn to use outside of the workshops as well.

According to the Youth Work National Occupational Standards (CLD Standards Council Scotland, 2019, pg.4), the “key purpose” (CLD Standards Council Scotland, 2019, pg.4) of Youth Work is to:

“Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.”

Therefore, any kind of youth work programme has a broader social impact, as long as it is well run and in line with the Youth Work National Occupational Standards (CLD Standards Council Scotland, 2019), because of the purposes of youth work for young people and how it helps them develop into respectful, active, and influential residents in their local communities.

This has also been proven to be the case for young people who participate in the expressive arts. According to Holford (2026, np) from the Center for World Music,

there are “Eight Ways That Music Can Support Young People’s Wellbeing and Learning” (Holford, 2026, np). These eight ways are;

1. “Improving mood and calming the nervous system”: This is a well-known and powerful benefit of music, and this can be through accessing the creativity of music in a multitude of ways. Music can elicit emotions and feelings in a way that “no other activity can” (Holford, 2026, np). It can enable individuals to access a “state of flow” (Holford, 2026, np) and a certain state of attention focused on whatever task or activity is at hand, as well as enabling individuals to be more able to cope with difficult and stressful feelings. Additionally, music can calm a person’s nervous system as well as the fact that various studies have suggested that there is a biological pleasure principle in music which includes the release of dopamine and the stimulation of endorphins – chemicals that introduce a “feel-good” (Holford, 2026, np) state to a person’s systems. Holford (2026, np) also prints to research that suggests that people actually need to experience three things to achieve wellbeing. These three things are; to feel in control, to feel good at something, and to feel connected to others – these are as follows; autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

(Holford, 2026, np)

2. “Learning to regulate emotions and cope with challenge”: Making any kind of music take practice, includes taking risks as well as facing failures, facing challenges and being persistent in all of it. However, the more that someone fails and persists, the more that a person learns to regulate their emotions, as well as coping with an array of challenges and being able to believe in one’s own ability to succeed – this is called “self-efficacy”

(Bandura, 1977, pg.191, Holford, 2026, np). This is part of a person's "executive functioning" (Holford, 2026, np) which provides people with skills to manage themselves in everyday life. "Executive function skills" (Holford, 2026, np) such as; paying attention, understanding other's feelings, understanding other points of view, planning, problem-solving, and understanding and be able to see the consequences from one's actions; these can all developed and strengthened through the making of music and learning through music.

(Holford, 2026, np)

3. "Building confidence and self-esteem" (Holford, 2026, np): Music can easily provide a young person (or any person) with what they need to grow and build their confidence and self-esteem. This is because music provides young people with opportunities to engage with positive challenges and encourages young people to get out of their comfort zones. One significant part of this is that music gives young people the opportunity to perform with others and in front of others, peers or otherwise. Therefore, it is also important for young people to learn to make music in a group as it is an essential part of musical learning. In addition, building confidence, self-esteem and resilience is linked to several other of the "Eight Ways That Music Can Support Young People's Wellbeing and Learning."

(Holford, 2026, np)

4. "Encouraging self-expression and processing of emotions" (Holford, 2026, np): Something significant about using music when working with young people, is that every form of music and making music allows young people

to individually express their “thoughts, feelings and ideas to the world” (Holford, 2026, np). Music is also a significant form of self-expression for young people as it allows any person, as well as young people, to express themselves with words or without words. It can also help people to process their experiences and making sense of them through an emotionally driven lense, which is important for young people to do and for them to learn how to do that within a safe space. As often attributed to the Danish author, Hans Christian Andersen (Horn, 2025), the quote “where words fail, music speaks” makes this point clearly and concisely, especially when young people often might not have the words to explain what they are feeling. Additionally, music can enable young people to experience strong emotions in a safe way – which is particularly and significantly useful and vital when working with children and young people who have experienced or who are experiencing especially challenging situations or circumstances.

(Holford, 2026, np)

5. “Developing social and emotional intelligence” (Holford, 2026, np): Being able to learn music with another person or within a group of musicians equips young people to develop a variety of social skills. It helps facilitate young people in learning how to pay attention to others, how to pick up on non-verbal cues, and how to notice what is happening in a group and being able to respond appropriately, as well as skills like taking turns and giving feedback. Many of these skills are also linked back to “executive function.”

(Holford, 2026, np)

6. “Connecting with others: creating social bonds and community” (Holford, 2026, np): When people, including young people, are enabled to learn and make music in a group, every individual is able to experience the plethora of benefits that “social bonding” (Holford, 2026, np) and feeling what it is like to be a part of a community. Holford (2026, np) also refers to the “Five Ways to Wellbeing” (Aked, Cordon, Marks and Thompson, 2008) which are; “Connect”, “be active”, “take notice”, “keep learning”, and “give” (Aked, Cordon, Marks and Thompson, 2008). However, in regard to this point to that Holford (2026, np) is making, “connect with young people” is the top priority when thinking about “creating social bonds and community” (Holford, 2026, np). In addition, all of this help to create a sense of belonging for young people as well as building up their self-worth. This also gives young people the opportunity to be able to share positive experiences as well as providing emotional support, and allowing facilitators and practitioners, as well as young people, to offer other young people support too. Holford (2026, np) highlights a 2021 study (Neuroscience News, 2021) that points to five key functions and mechanisms of the brain that contributes to social connection through music which are;

- Empathy circuits
- Oxytocin (‘love’ hormone) secretion
- Reward and motivation including (please and reward hormone) release
- Language structures
- Reduction of cortisol (the stress hormone)

(Holford, 2026, np)

7. “Learning to learn (metacognition) & self-assess” (Holford, 2026, np): To develop positive wellbeing, a sense of accomplishment is an important tool. Similarly to other good learning practices, music encourages self-assessment and reflection. This is because an individual musician or a group of musicians need to understand why, in musical terms, something did or did not work. This kind of reflection is better known as ‘metacognition’ - which means to be learning to learn. The concept of ‘metacognition’ helps young people to think about their learning differently and more explicitly, by setting goals, and being able to monitor and evaluate their own progress towards them. Holford (2026, np) also points to the fact that reflection helps musicians at all stages with their independent learning skills and their metacognition.

(Holford, 2026, np)

8. “Strengthening brains for lifelong resilience” (Holford, 2026, np): Learning music develops a person’s brain in “deep and powerful ways”, especially if one particularly plays an instrument. Holford (2026, np) suggests that “no other activity is found” (Holford, 2026, np) to join the three main parts of the brain; the auditory, visual, and motor cortices, specifically with such accuracy, speed, and flexibility. Holford (2026, np) even mentions how scientists have explained that playing an instrument affects the brain like it is the fireworks of the brain.

(Holford, 2026, np)

Barrett and Bond wrote a research article called “Connecting through music: The contribution of a music programme to fostering positive music development”

(Barrett and Bond, 2014). This research article suggests that there are “Five C’s to Positive Youth Development” (Barrett and Bond, 2014, pg.3). The five C’s are “Competence,” “Confidence,” “Connection,” “Character,” and “Caring,” which Barrett and Bond (2014, pg.3) suggest also lead to a sixth one of “Contribution”. Linking all of this back to the “Five Pillars of Youth Work” (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022, pg.5-6), these are all qualities that interlink extremely well, and all of the six C’s (Barrett and Bond, 2014, pg.3) are qualities that are essential to making a music programme work at its full potential. Confidence (Barrett and Bond, 2014, pg.3) is important to young people as it enables them to be active and well-rounded citizens in society and residents in their community, as well as allowing the young people to be confident in how they express themselves and in their communication with others. Connection (Barrett and Bond, 2014, pg.3) is also essential for young people as they need to feel safe and that they belong, as “Love and Belongingness” is one of “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs” (McLeod, 2026). Additionally, young people who can express emotional regulation and emotional vulnerability can be more active and stable citizens in society, and therefore, the impact of the young people being a part of a programme like this could actually be essential and almost intrinsic to a community functioning well and actively.

The communication of this project to the young people, to the community, and to the stakeholders, decision makers and others, is essential to the programme being well run. At first, leaflets and posters will be made to be shared around the community because it becomes more personal and inviting and community based. Social Media, such as Instagram and Facebook, can be helpful, especially in communicating its results and presenting them for the community, family, and decision makers and stakeholders in the programme and/or project. All of these

methods of marketing create a space where the community can feel involved and additionally where testimonials and anecdotes from participants can be extremely useful. Digital platforms are also very useful when looking at a target audience of young people and their families. For example, this could include keeping an easy access, easy read, colourful, attractive, interactive, and up-to-date websites, and social media, in addition to easy read and attractive posters and leaflets (see below poster and trifold leaflet example). On top of this, another way to communicate with stakeholders and decision makers is through self-efficacy, which is a theory by Bandura (1977, pg.191) that is based on tracking behavioural changes and psychological changes, and not just performance and/or achievements. This way of communicating the effectiveness of the programme to stakeholders and decision makers because the success of the programme is not reliant on the achievements which may not be immediate or visually confirmed, but on the gradual improvements and growth that a young person is making from session to session, beginning to end, or that several young people are making throughout the sessions, beginning to end. This is how the benefits of the programme can be effectively observed and communicated to other people, including the stakeholders, decision makers, and people who have sponsored and/or funded the programme.

MUSIC WORKSHOPS!

Available for any young people
aged 11-25



Workshops including...

Percussion

African Drums

Ukuleles

Songwriting

Composing

Recorders

P8uzz

Boomwhackers

Creating
instruments



**ALL
ARE
WELCOME!**



The community and society will gain well-rounded and active citizens in their young people, ones with positive attitudes and creative outlets.



**MUSIC
WORKSHOPS!**



Available for
any young
people aged
11-25



Workshops
including...

**Percussion
African Drums**

PBuzz

Recorders

Boomwhackers

Composing

Creating instruments

Ukuleles

Songwriting



What Young
People can gain:

- Physical health benefits
- Mental health benefits
- Emotional health benefits
- Emotional regulation
- Emotional vulnerability
- New skills
- Fun and Friendship
- Connection and confidence
- A safe space of belonging and unique self-expression



In conclusion, this music based programme of youth work could work well and its potential effectiveness and impact on the lives of the young people, their families, and communities could be significantly beneficial, if it is run at its full potential and the absolute best it can be. The impact of running music workshops with young people could have extremely beneficial outcomes, in terms of the young people's lives, their families, and their community, and in the bigger picture of society as well. Young people's involvement in creative opportunities including music and other types of arts has proven to be essential to young people's development and their physical, mental, and emotional health. This includes how music and various types of expressive arts can enable young people to learn how to be emotionally vulnerable and how to regulate their emotions. This is even more important when working with young people who have mental health conditions or illnesses, young people with neurodiversity, young people with disabilities, and young people with additional learning needs or special educational needs.

To conclude and encapsulate the potential effectiveness of this music-based youth work programme, especially considering the developmental needs of young people; Holford (2026, np) directly quotes **Dr. Nina Krauss** of Northwestern's University's Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory, who says;

"Making music can have a profound and lifelong impact. The experience of making music appears to create a more efficient brain, in a sense it super-charges the nervous system, and enhances a person's ability to listen, learn and communicate, especially through sound – and that can have long-term affects on a person's wellbeing."

(Holford, 2026, np)

Reference List:

Aked, J. Cordon, C. Marks, N. Thompson, S. (October 2008). *Five Ways to Wellbeing Communicating the Evidence*. New Economics.

Bandura, A. (1977, pg.191). *Self-efficacy: Towards a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change*. Psychological Review Stanford University.

Barrett, M., Bond, N. (2015, pg.39). *Connecting through music: The contribution of a music programme to fostering positive youth development*. SAGE Publishing.

Holford, A. (Accessed 2026). *Eight Ways That Music Can Support Young People's Wellbeing and Learning: In 'Catch-Up' and Beyond*. Center for World Music.

<https://centerforworldmusic.org/2021/08/music-wellbeing-and-learning/>

Horn, H. (2025, accessed 2026). *"Where Words Fail, Music Speaks – Hans Christian Andersen*. Firefly at Sunrise Medical.

<https://firefly.sunrisemedical.com/uk/en/blog/where-words-fail-music-speaks-helen-horn-2025/>

McLeod, S. (2026). *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. Simply Psychology.

Neuroscience News. (2021, accessed 2026). *What Happens in the Brain When People Make Music Together?* Bar-Llan University.

<https://neurosciencenews.com/music-collaboration-brain-18607/>

Youth Work in Wales Review Group. (2022). *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes*. Education Workforce Council.