

# COVID related employment changes

how have young people been affected and what could be done?

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07<sup>th</sup> July 2021



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus  
Cymru  
Public Health  
Wales

# Generation Z – a lost generation?

## Covid: Out-of-work young in Wales 'face being scarred'

4 March | Comments

Coronavirus pandemic



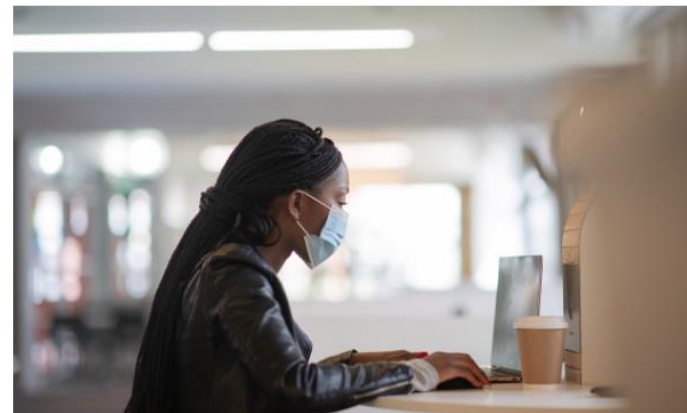
BBC Wales, March 2021

## Black youth future prospects among 'worst affected by Covid-19'

Comment

**EXCLUSIVE**  
**Natalie Morris**  
Thursday 17 Dec 2020 9:27 am

f t i s 90 SHARES



Metro, December 2020

## Covid generation: UK youth unemployment 'set to triple to 80s levels'

Resolution Foundation report warns young people could be lost to long periods out of work

- [Coronavirus - latest updates](#)
- [See all our coronavirus coverage](#)



The Guardian, October 2020

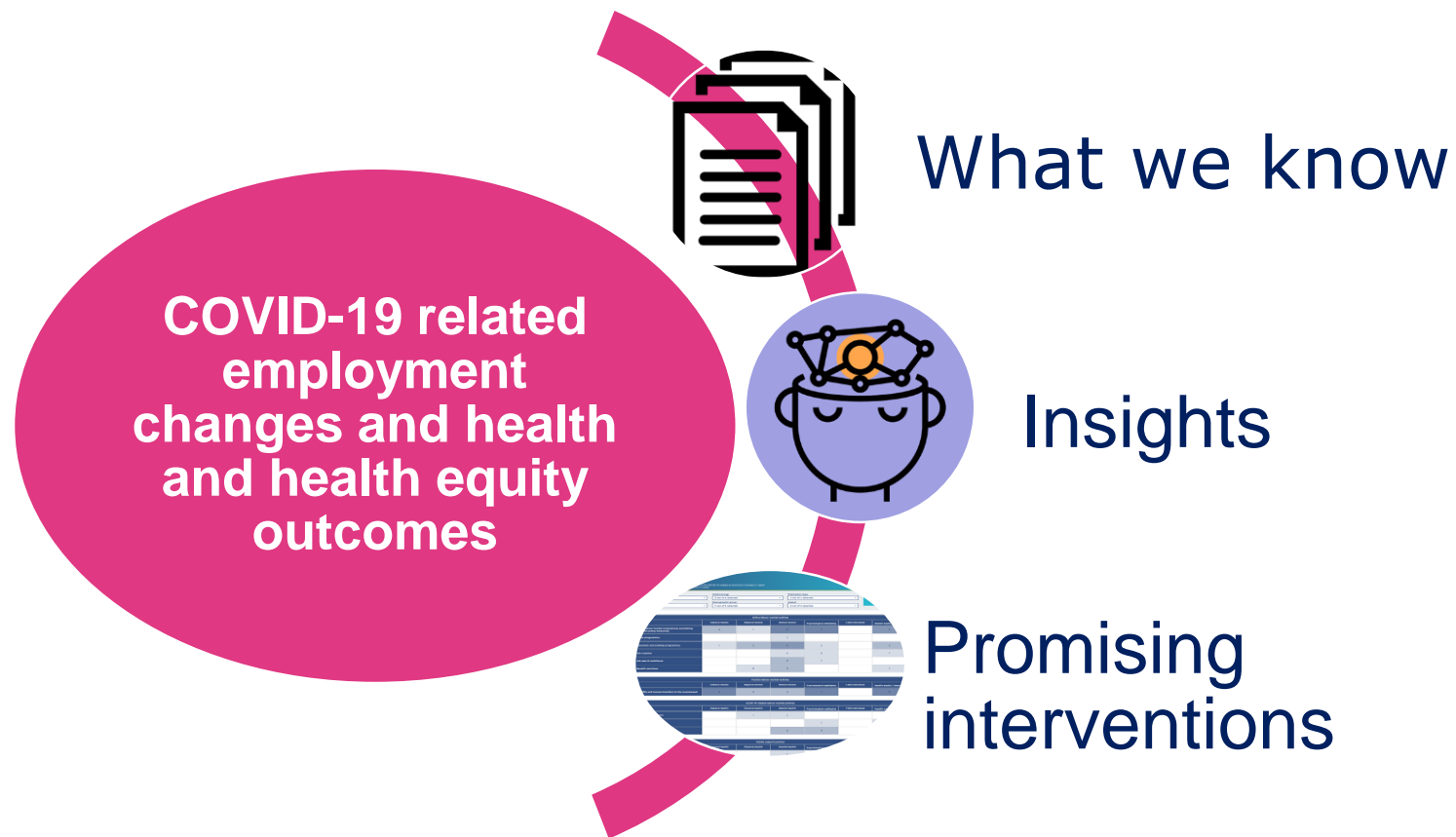
# Key facts

## Young people have been affected disproportionately

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- 35.9% of young people in employment in Wales worked in shutdown sectors<sup>1</sup>
- 46.9% take up rate of furlough scheme in July 2020 (UK figures)<sup>2</sup>
- 7,770 apprenticeships in Wales were furloughed in May 2020<sup>3</sup>
- 9.5% of 18-24 year olds in Wales were claiming benefits in July 2020<sup>4</sup>
- Backlog of around 440,000 driving tests in UK due to pandemic<sup>5</sup>

# Improving the life chances of current and future generations



# Qualitative insights

## Method and sample size

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**33** young people aged 18-24,  
range of circumstances, 6 online focus groups

**17** in-depth interviews  
with policy makers and  
influencers



**16** third sector  
organisations, online  
workshop



**Young people's  
experiences regarding  
employment and  
pathways to  
employment  
since the pandemic  
began**



# Qualitative insights - findings

## Challenges

### Pre-pandemic challenges exacerbated

- **Precarious working conditions** intensified, less commercial pressure to adopt fair work practices
- A challenge to secure **good, fair work**
- Some would still settle for **any kind of employment**
- Widening **inequality**

### New challenges due to the pandemic

- Affecting **mental health and wellbeing**
- **Disruption** to employment pathways, including vocational learning
- **Childcare issues**
- **Challenges** with motivation
- Longer term **scarring effect**

# Qualitative insights - findings

## But some positive impacts

- Most young people in stable employment generally felt **well supported** by employer
- Changes to employment circumstances, can act as a **catalyst** to follow ambition
- Third sector organisations felt there was an increasing interest in **entrepreneurship** among young people

“

*Some of my friends have done online courses and they're trying to start up their own businesses as eyelash technicians and stuff like that. So they're moving away from the hospitality bit and becoming like entrepreneurs.*

”

*(Female, 18-24, unemployed)*





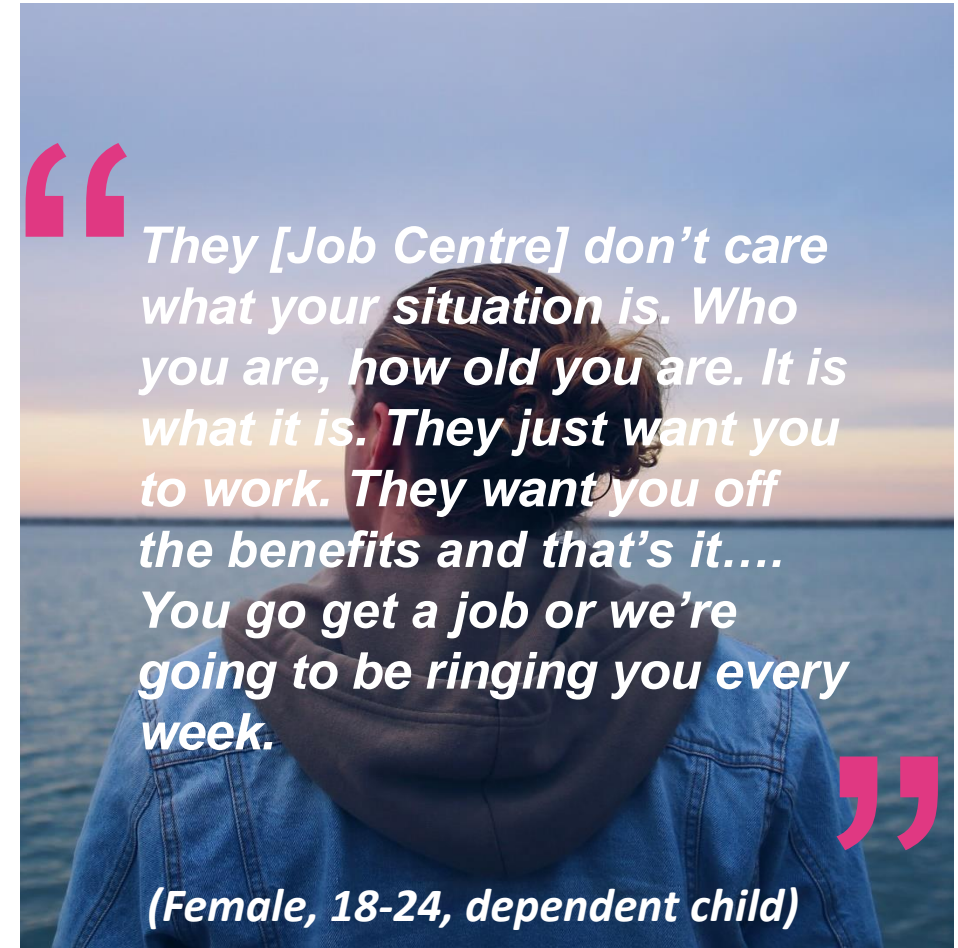
**Current  
interventions and  
their  
perceived  
effectiveness**



# Qualitative insights - findings

## Young people not aware of support

- **Support not top-of-mind for most young people.** Very few formal sources of support mentioned
- Most said they relied on **family or friends** for emotional and sometimes financial support
- Often **unclear where** to seek support work related issues
- **Mixed experiences** for the few who had used such external support



# Qualitative insights - findings

## Interventions making some difference but limitations

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Some decision-makers & influencers felt

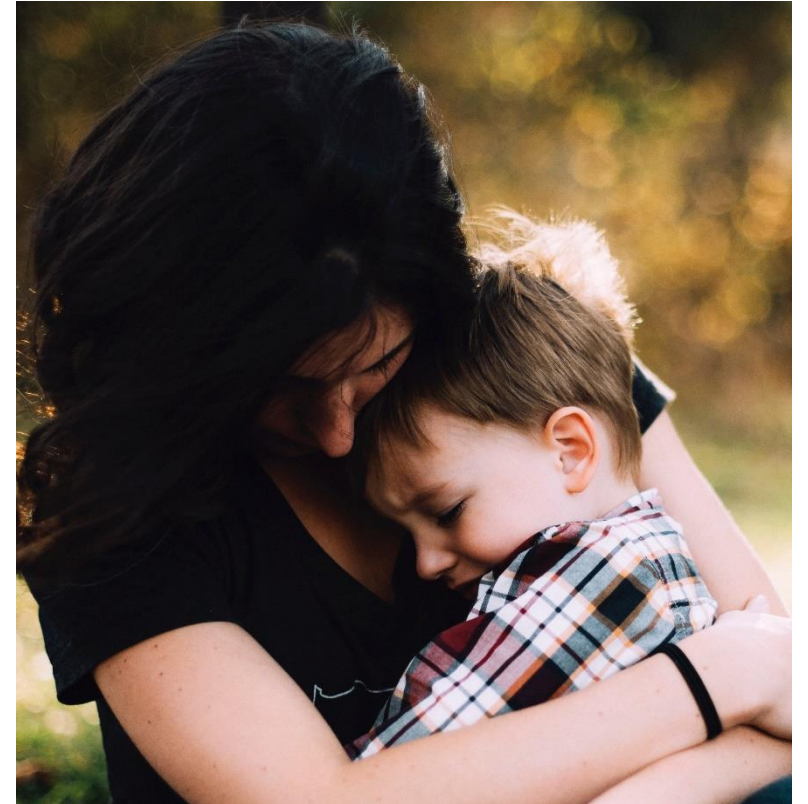
- Interventions **giving more disadvantaged young people work experience**, apprenticeships, placements or jobs were effective policies
- **Kickstart** making a difference - but sometimes **criticised** for limited reach and bureaucracy
- **Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus** sometimes singled out as helping young people to develop employability skills
- **Furlough** considered successful but expected to be **hiding** good deal of unemployment



# Qualitative insights - findings

## Interventions making some difference but limitations

- Very few **health and wellbeing** focused interventions raised
- Limited reference to current approaches aimed at helping young people access **fair work**
- Little mentioned regarding interventions for young people with **dependent children**
- Some third sector organisations working closely with individuals on **mental health and self-confidence**

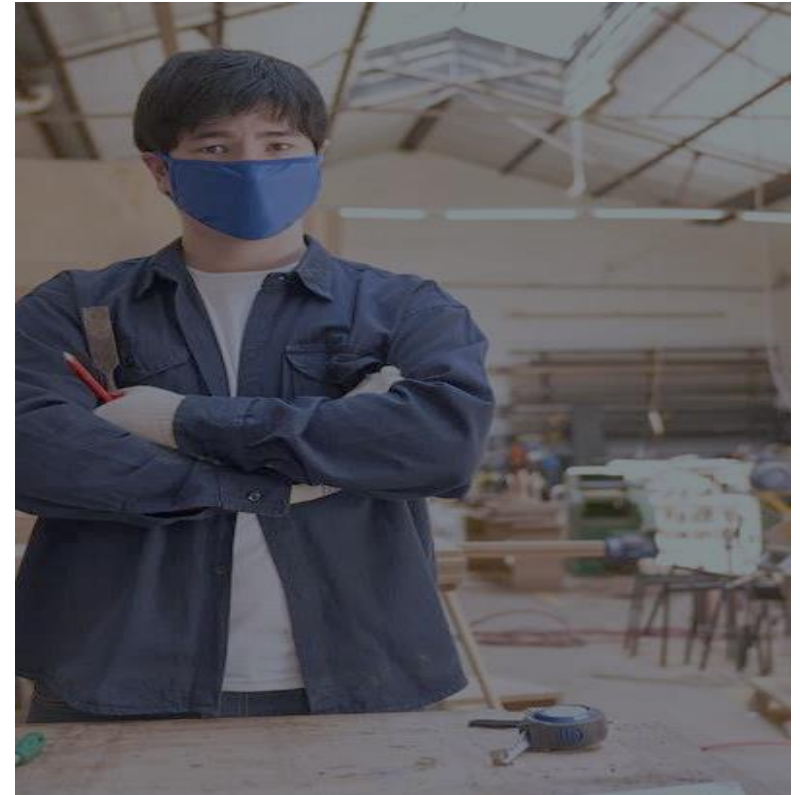


# Qualitative insights - findings

## Interventions making some difference but limitations

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- **Beyond Wales**, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Denmark and Quebec were highlighted as adopting approaches that helped support young people – and should be explored
- **Too early** to be able to properly evaluate effectiveness of current interventions to support young people





# What could be done?

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- Promising Interventions
  - Evidence map
- Qualitative insights:
  - Young people
  - Third sector
  - Decision makers and influencers



# *Promising interventions to improve health and health equity*

## Evidence map



# Evidence map

## Interactive online tool

- Intervention & health outcome
- Demographic group
- COVID/Economic downturn/ other
- Impact

Interventions to mitigate against the adverse effects of the COVID-19 related employment changes on health and health equity of current and future generations in Wales

Country: 8 out of 8 selected | Methodology: 8 out of 8 selected | Publication type: 3 out of 3 selected | Period of analysis: 3 out of 3 selected | Demographic group: 5 out of 5 selected | Impact: 4 out of 4 selected | Clear all filters

| Active labour market policies   |                |                 |               |                         |                |                          |
|---|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
|   | General health | Physical health | Mental health | Psychological wellbeing | Child outcomes | Health equity / inequity |
| Active labour market programmes (combining different policy measures) | 4              | 1               | 8             | 7                       |                | 5                        |
| Youth programmes  |                |                 | 2             |                         |                |                          |
| Education and training programmes                                     | 1              | 3               | 6             | 2                       |                | 3                        |
| Job creation  |                |                 | 2             | 2                       |                | 1                        |
| Job search assistance   |                |                 | 3             | 1                       |                |                          |
| Benefit sanctions   |                | 2               | 3             |                         |                | 1                        |

<https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/wider-determinants-of-health-unit/good-fair-work/>

## Six categories of intervention

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## Promising interventions to improve health and health equity

### Active

- Training,
- Job creation,
- Job search assistance

### Passive

- Unemployment benefits

### Covid specific

- Job retention scheme,
- Kickstart

### Family support

- Parental leave,
- Childcare,
- Welfare to work

### Income transfer

- Universal basic income,
- Tax credits
- Cash transfers

### Labour legislation

- Employment protection,
- Minimum wages

**What can be done?**

Qualitative insights





# Qualitative insights – what could be done?

## Four themes

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Specific  
support

Good, fair  
work

Wider  
interventions

Ways of  
working

# Qualitative insights – what could be done?

## Support for young people

- A guaranteed offer e.g. job, work experience, apprenticeship
- Education time, transferable skills
- Careers advice, coaching
- Structured pathways
- Carers funding
- **Focus on those hardest hit**



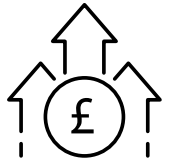
“ If you’re doing more than 21 hours of study a week you lose your Carer’s Allowance. I’ve had young people who’ve had to drop out of college... to be able to afford to live. And young people shouldn’t have to make that choice. ”

Third sector organisation

# Qualitative insights – what could be done?

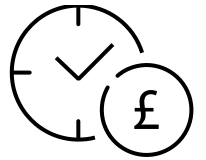
## Good, fair work

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- Raise minimum wage

- More certainty with working hours (young people)



- Fair work requirement if receive Welsh Government funding

- Low cost or free childcare (young people)



- Employers supporting health, including mental wellbeing

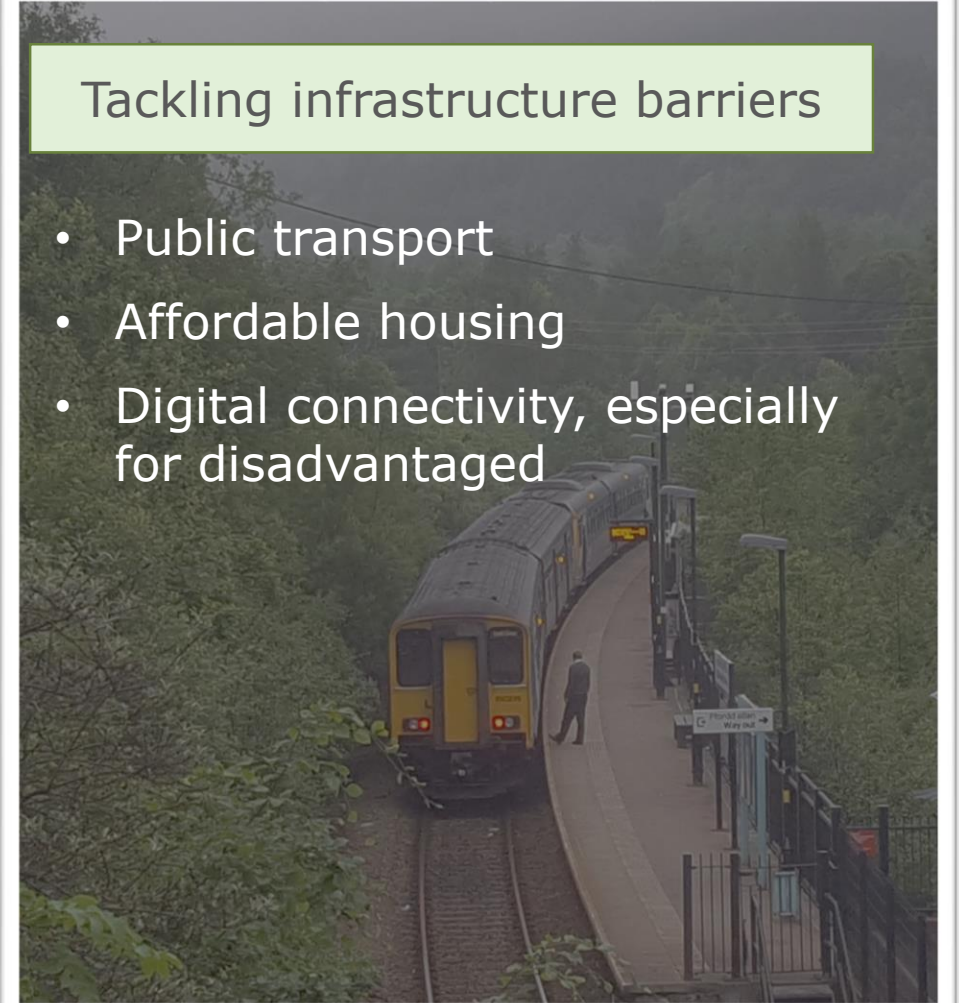
# Qualitative insights – what could be done?

## Wider interventions

- Green jobs
- Role of public sector

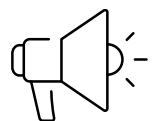
### Tackling infrastructure barriers

- Public transport
- Affordable housing
- Digital connectivity, especially for disadvantaged



# Qualitative insights – what could be done?

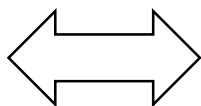
## Ways of working



- **Voice of young people** - in research, co-producing solutions, interventions



- Employers and others to **value** what young person has to offer



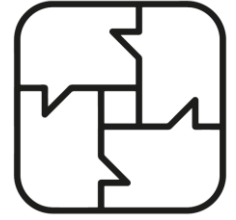
- Expanding **existing interventions** rather than attempting to begin from scratch

### More partnership working

Stronger **collaboration** between organisations to support young people more effectively

e.g. developing policy; between business and local authorities





# LLESIANT CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS



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Cymru  
Public Health  
Wales

**Diolch**

**Thank you**