Working with young people who are digitally excluded

Introductions

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Workshop Aims

- Explore digital inclusion challenges specific to young people

- Share best practice and learnings

- Develop networks and signpost useful resources in this space

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Young people are digital natives, right?
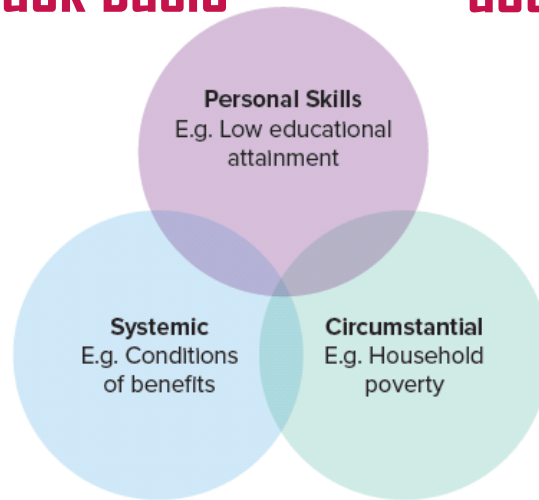
Young people are digital natives, right?

"a person born or brought up during the age of technology and so familiar with computers and the Internet from an early age"

7% (or 500,000) young people aged 15-24 across the UK lack basic digital skills
(Nominet, Trust 2016)

700,000 11-18 have no home access to a computer or tablet
(Lloyds Digital Index, 2018)

Personal Skills
E.g. Low educational attainment

Systemic
E.g. Conditions of benefits

Circumstantial
E.g. Household poverty

What does digital exclusion look like for a young person?

Consider their digital life:

- What do and what don't they do online?
- What do they enjoy?
- How confident are they?
- What devices do they have access to?
- How do they connect to the internet?
  - Who pays?
- Where (physically) do they go online?
- What offline digital skills do/don't they have?
- What barriers prevent them from being digitally included?
- Are there other life or context considerations
- What else may influence their digital experience?

Note your assumptions!

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Feedback

Some considerations

- **Assumptions** and presumptions around digital skills can be held by everyone, including young people themselves. "Digital native" label can be harmful and produce **shame and fear** as barriers to learning (especially in groups)

- **Access** – growing number of 'smartphone only' households

- **Not just technical skills** – social or behavioural skills online e.g. how to address an email

- **Wider skillsets** – digital challenges can be compounded by other skills issues e.g. literacy.

- **Skill level** – advanced skills in one digital area can mask lower skills in other digital competencies.

- **Context and motivation** are key to engaging in discussions about 'purposeful' digital skills.

- **Adult support networks** can significantly affect the digital mindset of a young person.

- **Identification** – would you be able to identify a digitally excluded young person?

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What are the enablers for positive change?

- What are some principles of working with young people experiencing digital exclusion?

- Which youth projects have been most effective in having impact?

- What resources are available?

- What can you take from other programme not necessarily designed for young people?

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Feedback

Recommendations from CarnegieUK TRUST

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- ✓ Specific consideration of vulnerable young people within digital participation strategies and digital within young people related strategies.

- ✓ Embedding digital skills learning into existing development programmes in formal and informal education settings.

- ✓ Provision of appropriate training for key support networks.

- ✓ Improve understanding into the compounding challenges e.g. basic literacy.

- ✓ More data about the extent, impact and implications of digital inclusion for all young people.
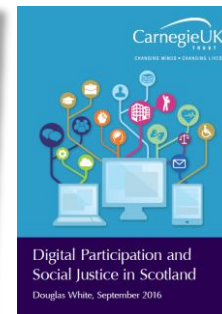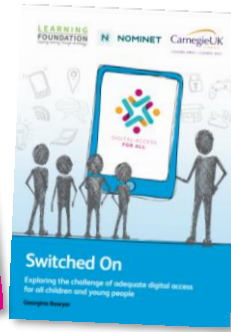
Learnings from UK YOUTH

- ✓ **Co-production** is more powerful than ever with digital
- ✓ **Trusted relationships** are vital to give holistic support to young people facing complex barriers
- ✓ Front line staff need to have **shared diagnostic tools & language.** Referral partnerships are key.
- ✓ Digital skills **"by stealth"** and embedded in other delivery have been most effective
- ✓ Improving **access** is not one-size fits all – bespoke advice and grants for equipment have to suit needs
- ✓ **Digital addiction** & safety should be considered, built into approach and tackled head-on
- ✓ **Digital fear** in support staff doesn't have to be a barrier – working together to learn the basics has proved to be a leveller
- ✓ **Motivation** to learn was most effective when digital could help specific goals e.g applying from UC
- ✓ Digital skill acquisition **pace varies dramatically** - outcomes measures better than time measures
- ✓ **Be creative & ambitious**! Multi-format resources and approaches help different learners e.g Vlogs & portfolios

"by starting them off with pretty advanced and exciting software, we piqued their interest and they wanted to learn – from there, we worked backwards to teach the basic digital skills that are the building blocks to the advanced stuff."

01 TRUST

If we had to pick just one key ingredient for success across the pilots, it would be trust. Trusted relationships are the gateway to digital inclusion for the hardest-to-reach young people.

02 RELEVANCE

Any digital skills programme for disadvantaged young people needs to start with a common understanding of what digital skills are and why they are relevant. Together we need to paint a picture of a digital world for everyone.

03 ACCESS

To develop digital skills, young people need easy, unrestricted access to the internet through computers as well as phones.

04 MOTIVATION

Successful activities put young people – not tech – at the centre of programme design, drawing on their motivation to achieve the goals that are important to them.

05 CONFIDENCE

Young people gain the confidence they need to learn and grow new digital skills when the people around them are digitally confident too.

06 TIME

It takes time to build trust, time to spark motivation, time to build confidence. Digital skills programmes need to build in flexible time – and lots of it.

1. Disposition = skills for life... not just life skills
2. Mindset *over* skillset
3. Digital disposition *over* digital skills
4. Confidence + motivation = disposition = skills
5. Relationships and Trust come before all

SOCIAL TECH TRUST

"If we're not careful, in 20 years time we'll be picking up the pieces that others forgot about. We have a responsibility to include young people from all backgrounds in the conversation on how their future is being shaped through the advancement of technology."

Youth worker, Bradford YMCA

How was today?

- What one thing did you learn from the workshop that will be most useful in your practice?

- What one thing was missing for you and would potentially help you in your work?

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