

Workforce Survey: Views re Self-Directed Support - Staff Working in Perth and Kinross Education and Children Services

Thursday, August 27, 2020

Survey results

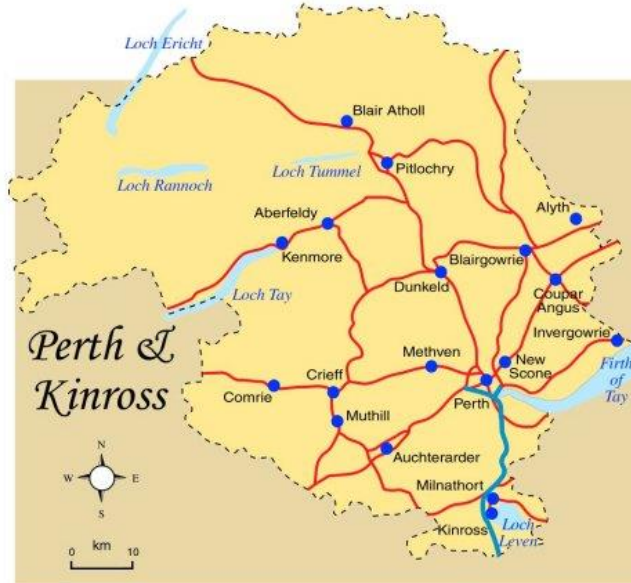
The survey was completed by staff working with children, families and young people in Perth and Kinross Education and Children Services in June 2020

The survey covered questions about the values, approach and processes of implementation of self-directed support for children, young people and families

For each of the questions in the survey, there were between 42 and 49 responses

Q1. Please tell us which Local Authority area you work in

Perth and Kinross



Q2. What team or locality do you work in?



Answered: 57 Skipped: 3

Strathearn & Kinross – **4%**

Change is a Must – **2%**

Woodlea – **9%**

Blairgowrie – **4%**

Family Focus – **9%**

Review Team – **0%**

Perth City & Highland – **4%**

Child Protection – **9%**

Reach – **12%**

Children & Disabilities – **12%**

Adoption Team – **4%**

Through Care
After Care – **4%**

Perth City – **5%**

Family Based Care – **5%**

Perth City & South – **4%**

Family Change – **2%**

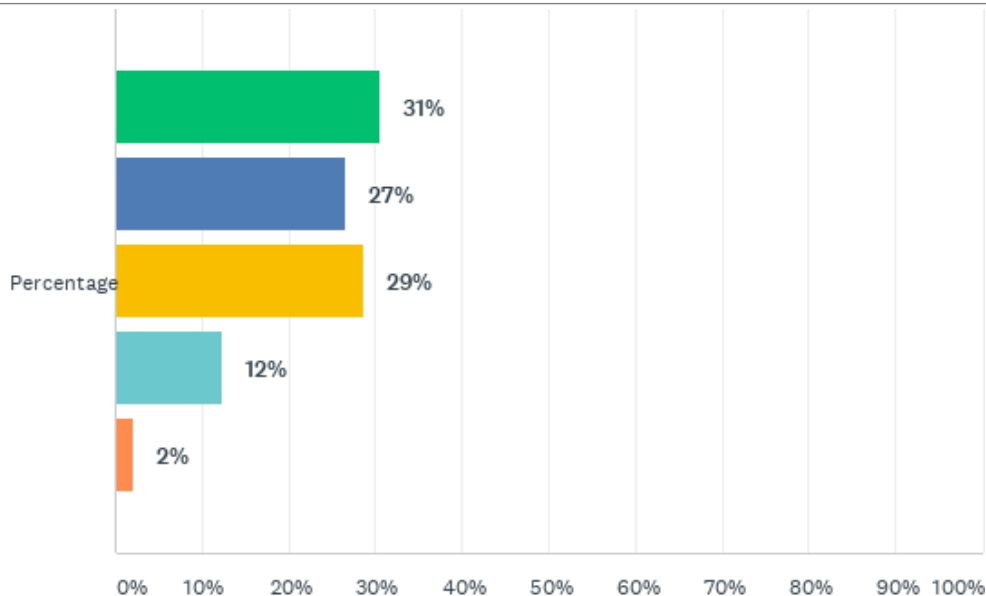
Youth Work – **14%**

Q3 At question 3, respondents were asked to choose ‘the three most important values that you believe underpin self-directed support’ from a list:

| Value | Percent |
|---------------|---------|
| Choice | 54% |
| Respect | 52% |
| Inclusion | 52% |
| Independence | 35% |
| Equality | 27% |
| Participation | 25% |
| Safety | 19% |
| Fairness | 17% |
| Freedom | 15% |
| Transparency | 4% |
| Individuality | 0 |
| Creativity | 0 |

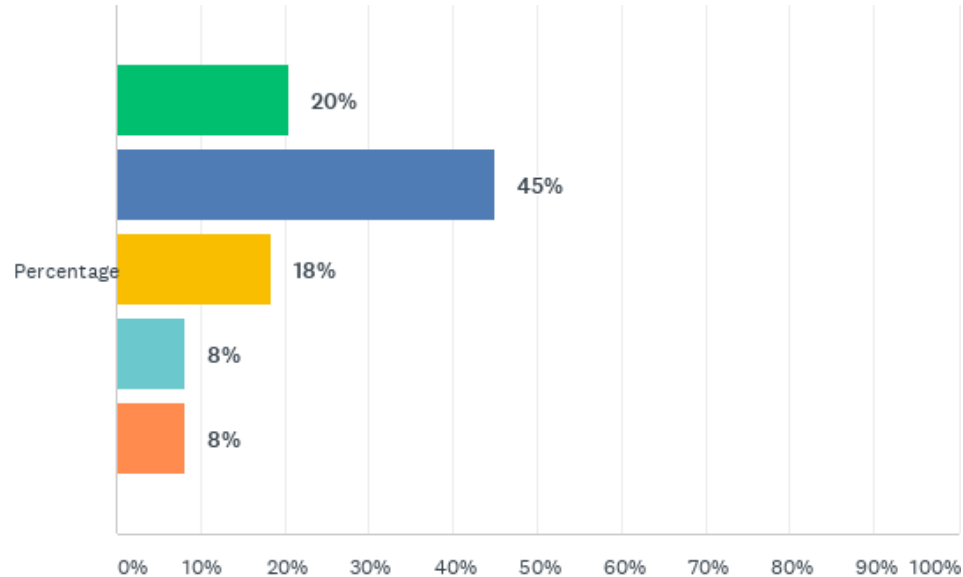
Q4. Please read the following statements and then 'mark' the scale to reflect what you think: The local authority where I work are really clear in public information about the values and reasons for offering self-directed support to children, young people and families.

Answered: 49



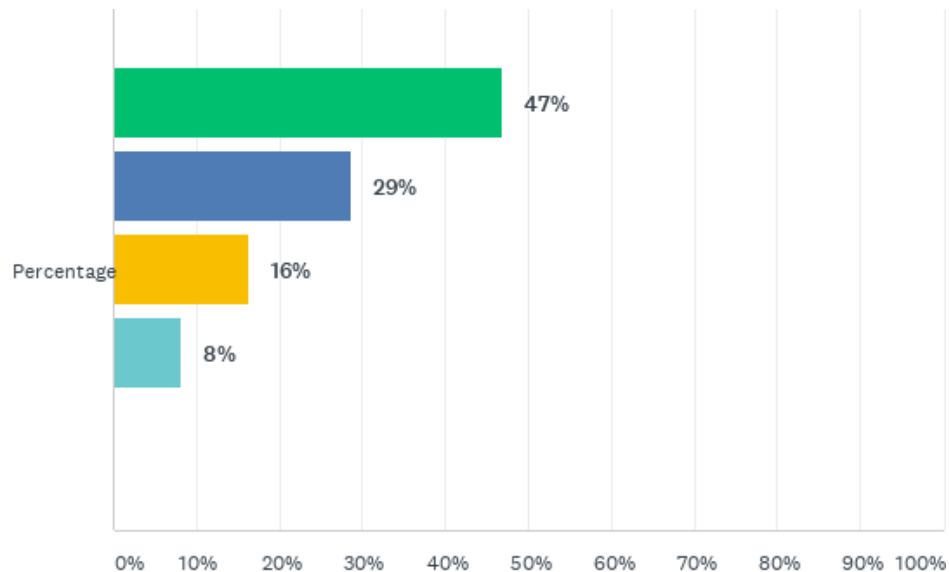
Q5. I feel really clear and comfortable explaining the values and reasons for offering self-directed support to children, young people and families

Answered: 49



Q6. We work with children, young people and families as equal partners.

Answered: 49



7. What are your views on your local authority's approach to the values and reasons for offering self-directed support

“To enable our service users to have as much control as possible over the support they receive”.

“The Local Authority values are about the safety of children primarily (rightly so) respect and inclusion..... I do believe that they want families children and young people to participate and be included in the plans about themselves, services they receive and in their local communities”.

People have a right to having as much control over their lives as possible. Having self directed support can reduce dependence on statutory services and increase self-reliance. SDS recognises individuality”.

I have an impression that SDS is being offered because there is a government expectation/requirement to do so (and)... I believe my LA supports....the principles around SDS but I have an impression that the system for SDS is very complicated and funding is limited”.

“Whilst I think PKC are proactive in helping staff.... I am not sure that the values and reasonsis always clear to the families themselves....my experience is that most families are asking for respite as this is the one thing that helps families to cope on a day to day basis (and) ...the wider public are (not)aware what Self directed support is”.

We aim to give young people the tools to be more in control, safe...., however it is often the case that if they do not engage with us, more formal measures need to be taken that reduce the choices available for the young person. We can be part of a process that gives the illusion of choice, but is really directing a young person by the very means of the options given to them

“I think it's important to offer this support as it does allow families to have more control over their lives and family situations”.

“Our local authority encourages a flexible approach to the use of this money”.

“I believe the opportunity to be able to offer SDS to families/children it allows them the choices, and freedom to obtain something they want or need to help them attain their own personal goals for development”.

“I don't really know much about how our authority is approaching / implementing this”.

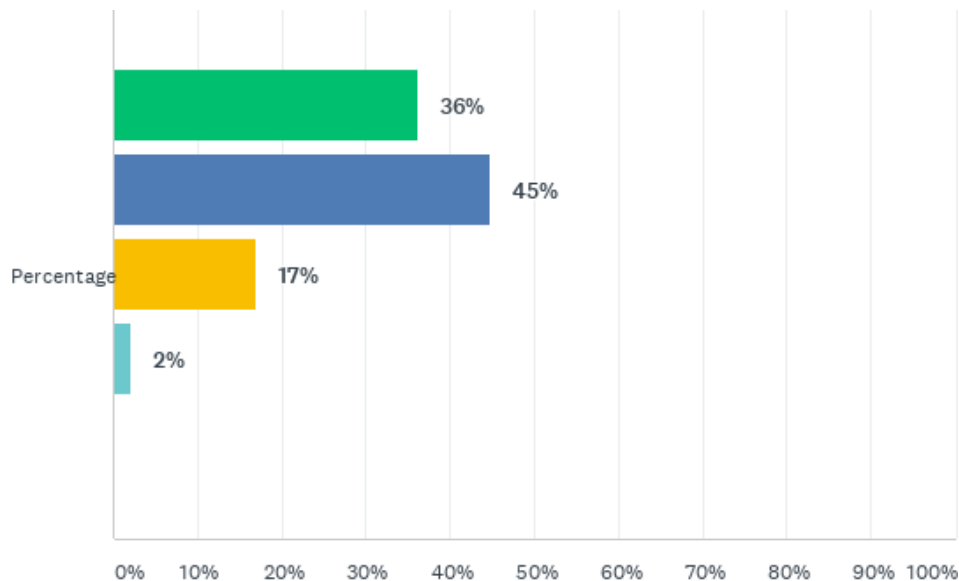
My work does not often get me involved in supporting people to access/manage self-directed support. I'm not very aware of my local authorities approach to providing such support....”.

Q8 Respondents were asked to what three characteristics best reflect self-directed support in your area from a list:

| Characteristic | Percent |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Planning Together | 63% |
| Outcome Focussed | 50% |
| Being involved in decision making | 46% |
| Being creative | 35% |
| Whole family thinking | 33% |
| People as experts | 26% |
| Encouraging Flexibility | 22% |
| Being open to yes | 13% |
| Positive thinking about risk | 13% |
| More good days | 2% |
| Person Centred | 0 |
| Listening | 0 |

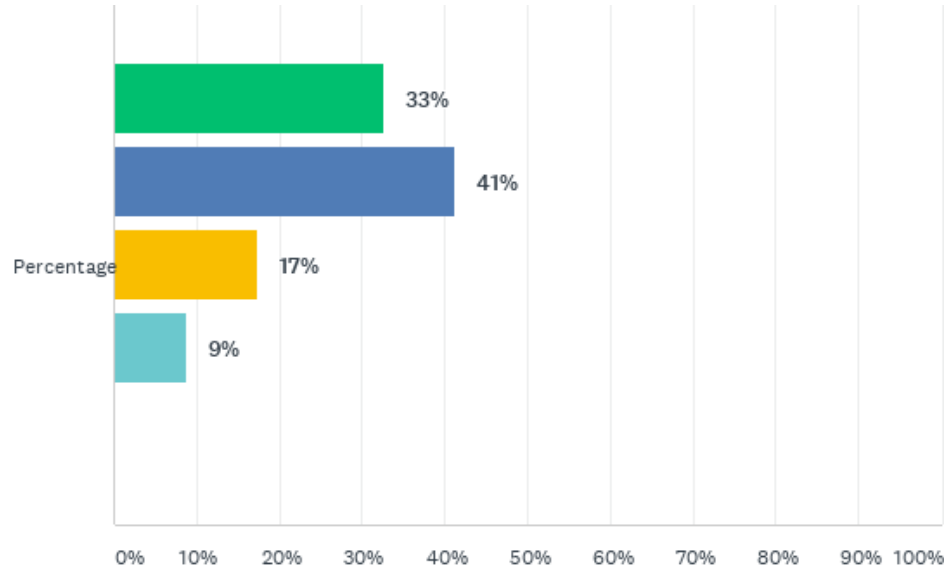
Q9. Please read the following statements and then 'mark' the scale to reflect what you think: *Self-directed support means that support that makes sense to each child, young person and family will be different to that offered to any other child, young person or family in your area.*

Answered: 47



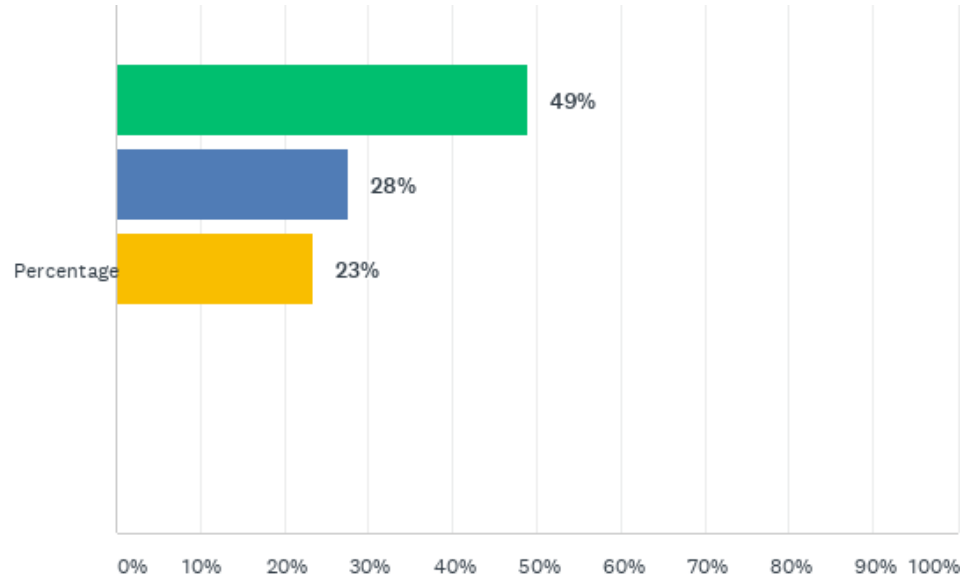
Q10. Our practice demonstrates that we see children, young and families as experts in their own lives and the support they need

Answered: 46



Q11. Self-directed support nurtures and sustains family relationships and a safe healthy home life.

Answered: 47



12. Comments and thoughts about the approach to self-directed support in your area?

“Staff in the Children and Disability team still talk in terms of families being offered hours as opposed to getting a budget. There needs to be a clear process as to what the criteria is for accessing different budgets and there needs to be more people involved in the decision making process. The processes need to be the same across the service”

“I don't have a vast amount of experience in this area, but one common experience is that it is very difficult to put support in place which is going to last long or be effective long term. My view is that there is not enough continuity in key-workers, particularly during the transition years of ages 16 to 19 and the move from child to adult services”.

“Why are we ranking things 1,2,3... etc if the support is unique to each person / family? It is a range of different factors in play to a greater or lesser degree. Some things can be of equal importance”.

“I think staff are increasing their understanding of the flexibility and breadth of using SDS but we still have a way to go and funding restrictions are still an issue. Staff would apply more for SDS if funds were available”

“It gives the client some thing for them only . in our case a special time with their carer to go out and do things try new experiences time away from family to build their own identity”.

“I found number 8 very hard to answer. The approach to self directed support can be nurtured and developed to a point where all families are being supported according to their personal situation and long term outcomes. At present I do not believe we are achieving this”.

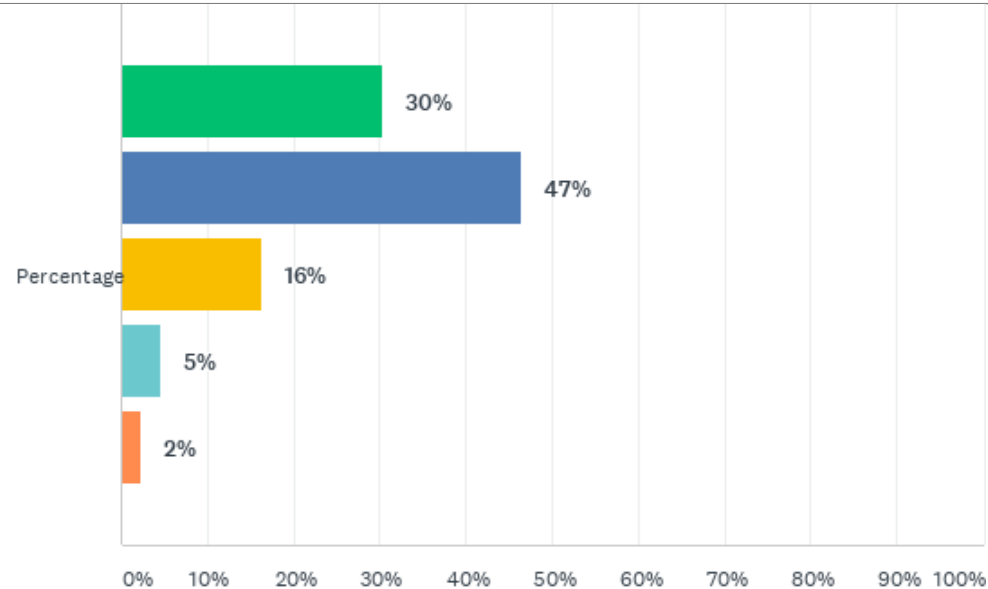
“As before, I don't know much about SDS yet but imagine that with good support and risk assessment it could open the door to more creative and inclusive support for families”.

Q13 Respondents were asked to choose what three words best describe the local self-directed support process and system in your area from a list:

| Words | Percent |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Person Centred | 74% |
| Time consuming | 43% |
| Rights based | 40% |
| Fit for purpose | 33% |
| Straightforward | 31% |
| Complicated | 31% |
| Difficult to find | 21% |
| Other | 12% |
| Easy to understand | 10% |
| Simple | 5% |

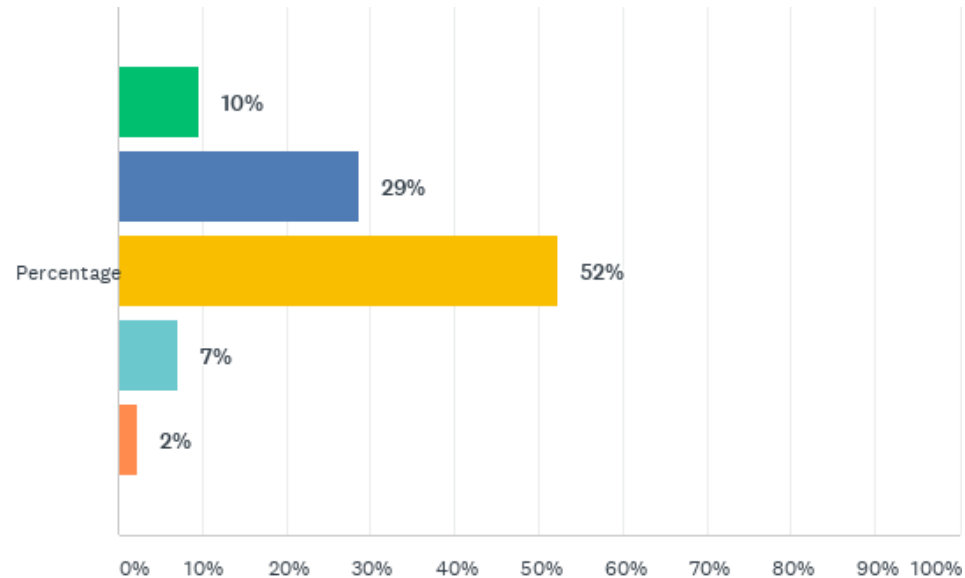
Q14. Please read the following statements and the 'mark' the scale to reflect what you think: *Our assessment helps gather all the information needed to help the child and family to get the support that works best for them.*

Answered: 43



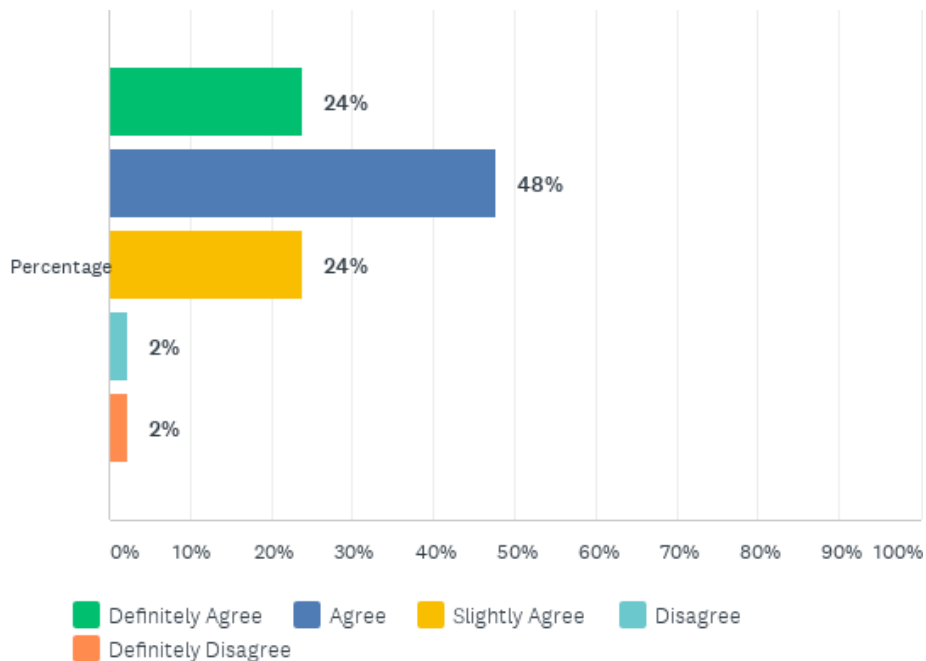
Q15. Our current system for allocating a budget is fair, equitable and transparent.

Answered: 42



Q16. All our self-directed support plans for children and families make it very clear how the person-centred support will achieve the outcomes agreed by us all.

Answered: 42



17. What is the most important system change that you feel needs to happen to improve your local self-directed support offer to children, young people and families?

“Sharing of information as to who can access this and how we access it”.

“I'm not sure”. “Unsure”.

“Within my team I feel there should be a multi agency resource panel that makes a decision regarding SDS Support”.

“I know you asked for one but I am giving you three Transparency re how decisions are made; Child's plans should incorporate self directed support plans; better outcome focused assessments”.

“More flexible communication plan”

“Better information for service users and workers, in relation to the options available, type and amount of support available, the processes involved, time-scales, costs, contact details of key workers/services, details of how to make changes to care packages etc”.

“Our clients are the ones with the answers. Our job is to support and know that the decisions are being made in mind with the families and young people we work with. every family is going to be different so don't treat them all the same”.

“System which ensures equitable access to resources”.

“Clearer information and accessible application process”.

“It needs to be easy to apply for, with a good chance of funding being available to meet the assessed need”.

“Leaflets should be made available for families to understand about SDS”.

“I feel the process for application for SDS funds from a worker on behalf of a young person/client is adequate however, I feel it is the workers responsibility to provide suggestions and thoughts to young people/parents/ carers as to how SDS money would best suit their needs as they often do not know where to start. I feel if a way to bridge this gap were found, this would provide better outcomes young people/ families or carers”.

“Simplified forms and easy for families to understand”.

“Resources available to meet the needs of more complex and difficult cases”.

“More funding to local authorities from central government”.

“Recruitment of appropriate personal assistants”.

“Decreasing the number of people involved in the decision making process to allow decisions to be made faster”.

“Easier to access, more advertisement of how to get self direction”.

“Can't answer the previous question and would need more information to answer this one”.

“Easier to access”.

“More providers for option 2 or 3 - choice More availability of personal assistants Consideration of transport issues in rural areas”.

“More personalised and creative. A lot of people have the same package i.e., 4 hours SDS per week”.

18. Feedback you have received from children, young people and families about how self-directed support is working in your area?

Answered: 21

"I have no experience of self directed support within the client group I am currently working with".

"Most of the children and families I support are really happy with how SDS is/has improved their situation. The only negative I hear is how difficult it can be to recruit PAs or get support from agencies, especially if the family live locally".

"Most families have been really positive about the support they get. I think that there is a lack of understanding that they could use their budget in alternative ways to getting care. However for most families we work with short periods of respite is what they want".

“I haven't any direct experience of working with children/families with SDS”.

“I only have experience of one-off SDS payments being made to families and in those circumstances the feedback has been positive”

“Where I am a lot of 1-1s happen. I have never asked for feedback on how we do this. As it is a personal and confidential time. Everyone is different and there will be good days and bad days so nothing is going to be perfect however it is better to only have one main person to go to about stuff. Instead of having a person from a load of services in on your personal life”.

“Due to my part of the service, our involvement soon ends once self-directed support becomes involved and we don't often see or hear about the successes or failings of the packages put in place. We sometimes get involved when things don't go to plan and young people become homeless again/in crisis again (which understandably can happen), so we don't get the full picture and maybe get a slanted view of the local situation”.

“Generally positive, families like having flexibility to purchase care at the times that fit with their needs. Children & YP are able to use SDS funding to access activities and increase participation in the community”.

“Allowing funds to go directly to the family to be creative with is extremely positive and beneficial”.

“Children 's confidence has grown through the opportunities they have had using SDS to promote their wellbeing”.

“This can be fantastic depending on the needs of the individual, resources can be limited but I believe that this is at times impacted by the rural location in which the team operate”.

“The families/children have been pleasantly surprised and happy that social work is able to fund something that they need or want. I only have one family currently using this support and they have found the support of SDS invaluable”

“Parents and children feel that they have felt included in the process and have come to trust workers to improve situations for their family”.

“Varies - Direct payment works well for those with consistent personal assistant. Works well when they can use their budget flexibly - especially when no P.A available. Many don't want all the responsibility of being an employer - paperwork etc - for just a few hours per week. Processes such as holiday pay, lockdown payment etc can be confusing. Some young people have a very good relationship with their personal assistant/support worker”.

“I only have one family currently using this support and they have found the support of SDS invaluable”.