

**PATHWAYS
TO CONFIDENCE**



OUR
FIRST
YEAR

ABOUT PATHWAYS TO CONFIDENCE

WE work with children and young people aged 8-14 years and their families in Bellshill, Hamilton, Blantyre and Uddingston.

Our aim is to help them build supportive relationships and give them the confidence to grow and reach their true potential.

Pathways to Confidence brings together Bellshill & Mossend YMCA and COVEY Befriending. The William Grant Foundation funds our work through Foundation Scotland. Our trained workers and volunteers meet regularly with the young people we work with, and with their parents if they want us to, to provide friendly, non-judgemental support.

This year, 26 young people and 23 parents or carers have been involved in our work and we plan to work with around 50 families in the coming year.

How to get in touch with us

If you'd like to know more about what we do and how we could help you and your family, or you'd like to make a referral, please get in touch with us.

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Family Support Co-ordinator, COVEY Befriending
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email: d.gavan@coveybefriending.org.uk

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Cover image: Family mentor – Chloe Grenfell

PATHWAYS TO CONFIDENCE for 8-14s and their families



REFLECTING ON THE FIRST YEAR OF OUR STORY

WHEN common values and vision are embraced, new and exciting developments emerge.

This was the experience for Bellshill & Mossend YMCA (BMYM) in North Lanarkshire and COVEY Befriending in South Lanarkshire.

In 2014, William Grant and Sons Ltd invited applications through Foundation Scotland for innovative early intervention projects for children and young people aged 8-14 years-old who were experiencing difficulty in their lives. Mentoring, strengthening links between school, home and the community, and literacy support had been identified as important elements in any successful project for young people.

From this, BMYM and COVEY were asked to put together a partnership bid and Pathways to Confidence was born! By October 2014, our project staff were in post and we were ready to start our journey.

Our unique whole-family approach began to take shape as we believed that to have the best impact on the lives of children and young people we needed to support not only them, but their parents and carers too.

We wanted to make sure we could offer the most effective range of services that we could to the families who were part of our project. So from the very start, we involved Airdrie Citizens Advice,



Family Mediation, Partners in Play and the Hamilton Information Project for Youth (HIPY).

They offer the more specialist services that emerge as we work with families and young people. These services include money advice and resolution, counselling, additional needs expertise and literacy support. All our staff have had family-centre training from KALM social care services, another one of our valued partners.

As with any journey, there have been exciting successes and a few challenges. Together, we've found out how we can be successful here in Bellshill, Hamilton, Blantyre and Uddingston.

With open hearts and minds, by quickly embracing our learning, and by always keeping our young people and their families at the centre of all we do, we've created something special that we're all proud to be part of.

Thank you to every young person, family, professional and partner for being part of our story so far, and we look forward to travelling the next part of our journey together.

In this, our first ever report, you'll find out what Pathways to Confidence means to us all. Happy reading!

RHODA REID,
Project Leader, Pathways to Confidence

HEATHER & AIDAN

WHEN nine-year-old Aidan was angry, he used to scream and have a tantrum.

Now he plays the piano, sleeps or watches TV and is able to deal with his emotions.

The turning point for Aidan and his family came when they got in touch with us.

Mum Heather recalls: "We were all fraught at home, and finding it hard to deal with Aidan's behaviour. I was starting to question everything that I was doing as a parent and was losing confidence."

One afternoon, our project worker Stephen and Aidan went out for a burger and a chat to get to know one another better, and they've been working together ever since.

"I was having a hard time at school and with my family," says Aidan. "When I meet up with Stephen, he talks to me and helps me feel happier."

"He's helped me with my confidence and tells me I can do it. I didn't like going on the flumes at the Time Capsule before, and now I love them!"

Mum Heather adds: "They've been a lifeline for us. Stephen's not a teacher or a professional – he's more like a friend to Aidan and someone he can confide in."

"We're all feeling much better and the house is a calmer and happier place to be. They've given us our life back."



“You can’t solve your problems in a day and my life’s not perfect yet. But I can see a brighter morning when I wake up.”

MARY ANN

A parent’s story

THERE’S light at the end of the tunnel for Mary Ann after years of isolation and sadness.

Mary Ann (42) and her sons were one of the first families we ever worked with. When we first met her, Mary Ann’s problems felt so overwhelming that she was unable to leave the house or even open the mail.

“I was letting everything get on top of me and I had no-one to talk to. My mum and dad had died, and I was at rock bottom and it didn’t seem like there was any way out. I’d just given up.”

Our job was to help Mary Ann realise her problems weren’t as big as she thought they were – and help her solve them, of course.

“Knowing someone was there to help me and break it all down made it much easier for me,” explains Mary Ann. “There’s light at the end of the tunnel now, and I didn’t see the light before.”



And her advice to anyone who’s struggling and could do with a friendly face and some practical help is: get in touch.

“The biggest change for me is feeling more confident. I know Debbie’s at the other end of the phone if I need her, and that’s important to me.

“You can’t solve your problems in a day and my life’s not perfect yet. But I can see a brighter morning when I wake up.”

ANGI

Angi and her family started working with us at a very difficult time in their lives. Angi’s a keen writer, so we asked her to tell us in her own words how she’s finding her own pathway to confidence

I WAS given the chance to go to support groups to ‘improve my parenting’. What a way to make me feel inadequate.

At one of the groups, Debbie and Stephen came along for an informal chat to discuss Pathways to Confidence. At a home visit later on, I accepted befriending help for my youngest son. But I told them that I did not need support, only to learn that I am not a robot, and that everyone needs support.

Since working with Debbie and Pathways to Confidence, it has helped me find my own voice. Most importantly, they don’t judge me or make me feel inadequate. Debbie cares if I’m struggling and offers me advice and support.

Debbie has aided me to view life in a different way. I live with mental health daily and this is a challenge. She helps me grasp a better understanding of what’s being asked or what is going on at the time.

With support from this team of dedicated, loving people, I am managing to live and take each day as another chance to start again.

I am thankful for the support I receive from Debbie and Pathways to Confidence and this will continue until I am able to manage on my own.

The impact that Pathways to Confidence has had on my life has been so powerful and positive, even although I was negative about it when I was first offered support.

My metaphor for life is “Rome was not built in a day”.

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“Pathways to Confidence is life-changing for anyone going through a hard time. There are so many people out there who feel they have no-one. A lot more people should know about what they do.”

CHELSEA

“I WASN'T being a normal teenager, just enjoying my life,” says 14-year-old Chelsea, “but now I am, and it's amazing!”

After being bullied in her first year of secondary school, and then moving to a new school, Chelsea found she was so anxious she couldn't get through the front doors to get into classes.

Over the years, she'd tried everything from taking classes by herself to going into school part time. By the start of her fourth year, she hadn't had a full year in school.

Earlier this year, Stephen started working with Chelsea with the aim of getting her back into education. Debbie also started meeting up with her mum to find out how she could support her.

“I'd never had anyone – apart from my mum – saying they



believed in me and being on my side.” says Chelsea. “Stephen came to meetings with me and helped me build my confidence and give me the support I needed to go back.”

As her school life became more settled, so did her home life. “I don't have the arguments with my mum that we used to have.

“Pathways to Confidence is life-changing for anyone going through a hard time. There are so many people out there who feel they have no-one. A lot more people should know about what they do.”

Back at school now, Chelsea has her heart set on working with children with disabilities.

We know you'll succeed Chelsea!

THE TEAM'S VIEW

Stephen, Debbie and Nicola play a crucial role in our work. We asked them about what it's like to be part of Pathways to Confidence.

STEPHEN HENDERSON (below left), our Young Person's Co-ordinator, co-ordinates the work of our six befrienders and works with young people and their families.

“We've achieved so much in our first year. I think it can only get better for us now as people find out more about what we do and ask us to do more.

“I'm really passionate about the project. I see it as more than simply mentoring or befriending for the young people. As they grow and develop, they begin to experience the power of meaningful and trusting relationships.

“It's great that we can also offer support to their parents, which can make all the difference. Getting the chance to help young people and their families is a really worthwhile thing to do in life.”

DEBBIE GAVAN (centre), our Family Support Co-ordinator, co-ordinates volunteer family mentors and works closely with our families and young people.

“We all need some extra support at some point in our lives, and that's what we're providing here at Pathways to Confidence.

“We all care very deeply about our work, and we believe in what we do. We don't just turn up for work - we bring ourselves fully to our work!”



“We all need some extra support at some point in our lives, and that's what we're providing here at Pathways to Confidence.”

“This year, I've grown professionally, and as a human being. I'm so proud of every family member and of the whole Pathways to Confidence team. What a year we've had together!”

NICOLA WILLIAMS (below right) is our Family Support Worker and works alongside our families each day.

“I work face to face with the families, providing one-to-one support. My work involves being a listening ear, attending visits such as CAB or housing visits, or helping to complete paperwork.

“Pathways to Confidence is such a special project as it looks at the family unit as a whole. Everyone who's part of this project is inspirational. It's an amazing project and I'm so proud to be part of it. I can only see it growing and growing.”



LEE PETTIGREW

Befriender

EVERY young person needs a role model in their lives to help them make the right decisions.

One of our befrienders, Lee Pettigrew, says that when he went off the rails when he was younger, he had no-one he could turn to.

"It's why I'm so passionate about being a befriender," he explains. "I want to help the young people I'm working with set goals, break down barriers and feel more confident. I want them to know that I'm by their side and will be with them every step of the way."

Lee, who's also a football coach, says that the biggest challenge of being a befriender is getting someone to trust you.

"It's important to get to know each other well so you can start to build up that trust. Once you trust one another, you can start to make a difference.

"One of my biggest achievements as a befriender was helping a young person get fit, become more active and eat healthily. He now goes to the gym with his friends!"

"I feel strongly and passionately about befriending and the positive impact it can have. It's a rewarding and satisfying job helping young people choose the right path in their lives."

So what would he say to others who may be thinking that befriending is for them?

"I'd say get involved. I feel strongly and passionately about befriending and the positive impact it can have. It's a rewarding and satisfying job helping young people choose the right path in their lives."

BEFRIENDER: Every young person who's part of our project has a befriender. A befriender's job is to be a good role model and help build young people's confidence through a trusting one-to-one relationship. Activities to help the relationship grow can be anything from a trip to the bowling or cinema, a chat about what's happening in their lives, a walk in the park or arranging for them to go to clubs outside school where they can meet new friends.

PATHWAYS TO CONFIDENCE BEFRIENDERS

Anna Halliday, Eileen Reilly, Elle Scott, Lee Pettigrew, Richard Leach, Stacey Chalmers.

THE REFERRERS' STORY

WE'RE proud of our links with local partners. They are a vital part of our work and refer children, young people and their families to us.

YVONNE MACBEAN is the Home School Partnership Officer at Bellshill Academy and thinks that Pathways to Confidence is a great way to support young people.

Yvonne says: "I'm impressed by the work Pathways to Confidence is doing at crucial times in vulnerable young people's lives.

"By looking not just at what young people need, but also at what's going on at home, the team can be a real help to them. They offer a level of support that's beyond what we can do in school, for example at nights and at the weekends.

"I think Pathways to Confidence positively influences the lives of the young people and their families just when they need it."

LIZ HIGGINS is the co-ordinator for the Strengthening Families Programme, a joint project set up by the Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and Integrated Addiction Service. The eight-week programme is for vulnerable families with children aged 10-14 years who have been affected by drugs and alcohol misuse.

Liz says: "Our links with Pathways to Confidence have brought real benefits to everyone.

"We've referred children and young people if they need support in the longer term, for example, for befriending, to help them build their confidence after the programme.

"Working with Pathways to Confidence has been a very positive experience for us all. They not only support children and young people, but their families too, and this is really important."

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"Pathways to Confidence helps people move forward with their lives without depending on the project, but knowing there's always help there if they need it."

EVELYN ANDERSON, AIRDRIE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

A partner's story

HAVING practical help and support to sort out problems such as money and housing can have a big impact on a family.

One of our delivery partners, Airdrie Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), is an important part of the jigsaw for us.

CAB officer Evelyn Anderson is delighted at the strong relationship we've built up with her organisation this year and says that it's had a really positive impact for people.

"We work well with the team at Pathways to Confidence, and that helps us build up a good working relationship with the clients we're working with," she explains.

And Evelyn thinks that our work helps people do things for themselves.

"Sometimes we can find it difficult to get clients to buy into what we do, and that can make things more difficult.



"The clients who come to us through the project are often confident and relaxed and that means we can get straight to work."

Reflecting on the work we've done together, Evelyn adds: "It's been a really positive experience for us.

"Pathways to Confidence helps people move forward with their lives without depending on the project, but knowing there's always help there if they need it."

COULD YOU BE A PATHWAYS TO CONFIDENCE VOLUNTEER?

Family Mentors

If you have a few hours to spare each week and would like to be involved with our project, then we'd love to meet you.

We'll give you all the training you need to be a volunteer family mentor and we'll pay for all your expenses.

After your training, you'll be linked with one of our families. Once you've got to know one another, you decide together how best to spend your time together. This may simply be going for a coffee and a chat or supporting a parent as they attend an appointment.

Emily Brown (pictured right) has just finished her training and is ready to meet her first family.

She tells us why she wanted to get involved with our work: "I had some time to spare and I thought I'd like to help someone.

"I found the training eye-opening and it's helped me feel a lot more confident to take on the challenges ahead. I feel like I'm growing already and I'm more knowledgeable now about the work I'll be doing and ready to get started."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer family mentor, then please get in touch with us.

Aspire Mentors

OUR Aspire mentors are linked with younger pupils in their school or community and act as a support and role model.

This is a unique volunteering opportunity for fifth and sixth-year pupils to gain experience in working with young people. Our co-ordinator works with local schools to encourage their involvement.

Young mentors receive specific training and ongoing support in their role.

"I found the training eye-opening and it's helped me feel a lot more confident to take on the challenges ahead."



WILLIAM GRANT FOUNDATION

NICK ADDINGTON,
Chief Executive, William Grant Foundation

OUR Foundation supports charitable causes in Scotland across five key themes, one of which is Youth Opportunities.

For us, Youth Opportunities is about enabling every young person to thrive and fulfil their potential. It's about funding initiatives that work with young people to build on their strengths and overcome challenges that prevent them achieving the future they're capable of.

Relationships are at the heart of this: the relationships within families, between young people, their school and community and the relationships between the workers and volunteers from organisations seeking to work with them.

The William Grant Foundation – with the support of grant-making experts Foundation Scotland – has identified this web of relationships as central to our approach to promoting youth opportunities.

We're very proud to have facilitated the partnership of local charities led by COVEY Befriending and Bellshill & Mossend YMCA that's devised and created Pathways to Confidence. And we're inspired by the impact it has already achieved for young people and families in its first year.

Our commitment to the project runs until 2017 with the prospect of at least 250 young people and families participating overall. We expect many lives will have been changed by then and a lot will have been learned.

But we anticipate there will still be young people and parents who could benefit from having someone walk with them on their Pathway to Confidence.

Part of our commitment is to help the charities build new relationships with other supporters – volunteers, funders and partners.

If you think you might be able to help, please do get in touch. You can contact Rhoda Reid at COVEY Befriending, or reach me at foundation@wgrant.com



ABOUT THE WILLIAM GRANT FOUNDATION

The William Grant Foundation was set up to manage the charitable work of William Grant & Sons Ltd.

The company is a significant employer in Lanarkshire at its bottling facility and customer service centre in Bellshill. Each year, the company donates one per cent of its pre-tax profits to charitable causes.

The Foundation is donating £440,000 over three years to Pathways to Confidence.



COMMITMENT OPENNESS RESPECT INNOVATION PASSION