



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

SUMMARY REPORT

**Partners and Policy Making
Social Impact Report 2022**

Preface

Partners in Policymaking is an internationally recognised Leadership program for parents of disabled children and disabled adults. It runs over eight months and exposes participants to the best practice in inclusion, legislation, human rights, and stories of change. The underlying belief is that we must invest in people who live with the risk of exclusion and discrimination and support them to imagine better for themselves and others and give them the tools to make their vision of a better future a reality.

The aim of this social impact report is to help us to understand how far across the horizon we can see our vision for Partners in Policymaking. In particular we wanted to capture;

- What the impact has been for graduates and their families
- What the ripple effects have been for policy, practice, and wider inclusion
- The real stories of those who have taken part

Being disabled or having a disabled child means that you may need support. The support can come from lots of different places and organisations such as health, social services, education and leisure services. Sometimes trying to get what you need and getting access to the right information seems very complicated.

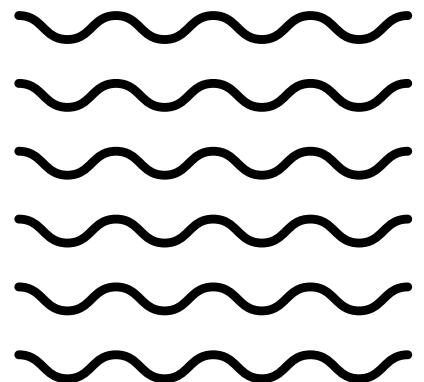
Graduates from all of Partners in Policymaking courses become part of a strong local, regional and national network. This network consists of people who have the skills and confidence they need to help each other plan for the future in a positive way. Many graduates have gone on to get jobs, are using a direct payment and self-directed support and have helped to bring about change by getting involved in local politics, formed support groups and most importantly have used their skills to make a difference in their own families. We firmly believe that working together is much more powerful than trying to do things by yourself.

Partners in Policymaking graduates have gifted their time to provide feedback that describes how the course has impacted their lives and also wider society. The information has been collated in a way that is raw and unsanitized.

This is a summary report, the full report can be made available on request.

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INTRODUCTION & SCOPE

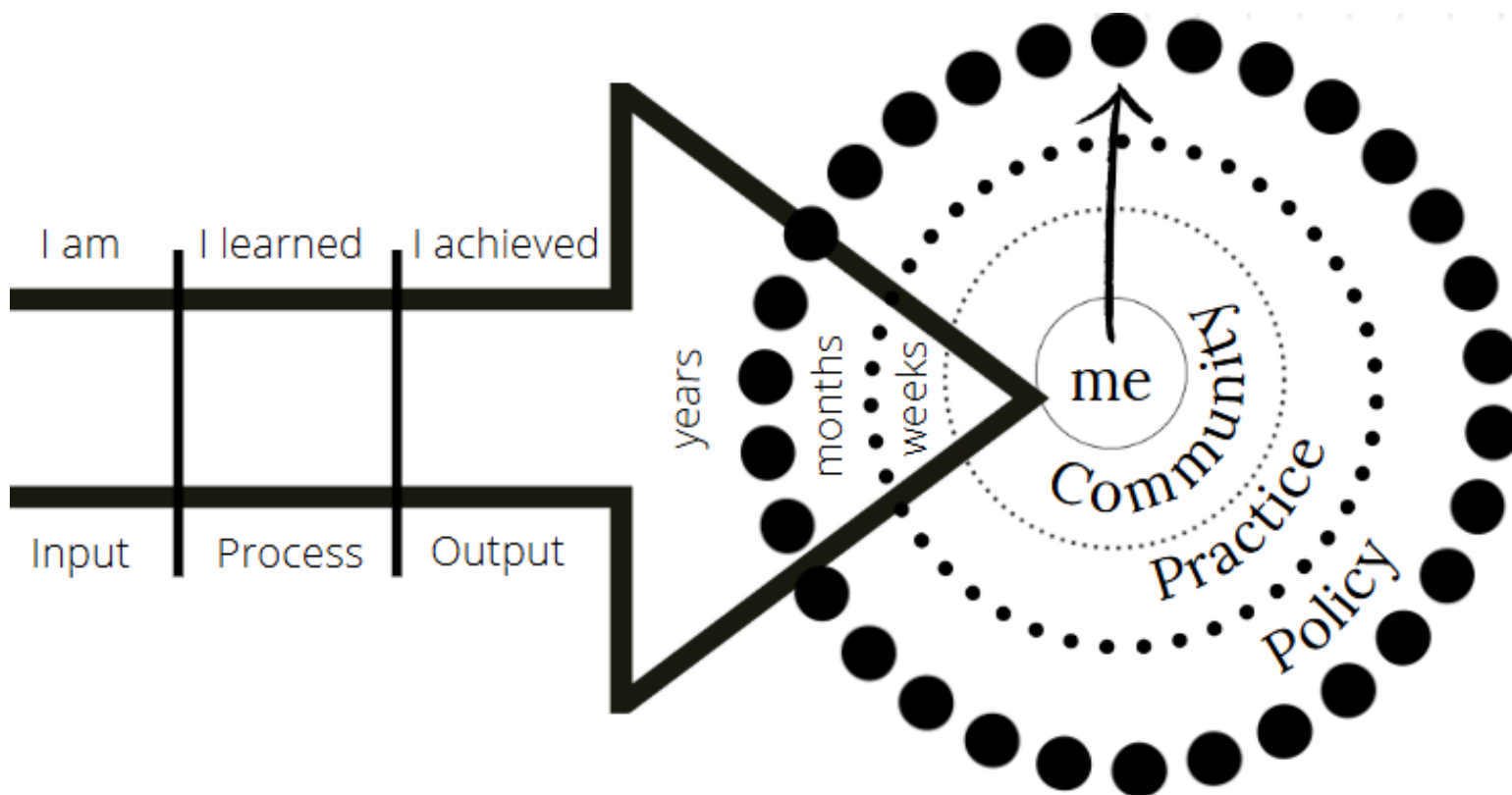
Graduates from the Partner in Policymaking courses were contacted via email and social media to ask if they would participate in research evaluating the impact of the course. Data was gathered and collated from June- November 2022.

The research comprised:

- A standard survey
- A partner's achievement profile

Methodology

- Developed using the person centred planning tool, PATHS



Partners Survey Engagement Overview

Engagement of Graduates was sought through email mailing list contacts as well as through social media channels. Inclusive communication preferences were taken into consideration and a flexible approach was taken. Graduates were made aware that they could reach out and contribute in a way that worked for them including by phone, zoom and messenger.

48 Partner in Policy Making Graduates took part in the short survey
100% selected positive outcomes when describing their partners experience

100% of participants selected multiple answers

17 graduates filled out the C.V. Template timeline form that provided additional information of mapping the ripples capturing the immediate benefits as well as in the months and years after participating on the course.

Most of the graduates who took part in the survey added additional information to describe their experience on the course.

The questions and the breakdown of this can be seen on the following pages.

Survey Statistics

Partners has helped me better understand....

Please select the statements that apply to you.

There will be an opportunity at the end to share your views if you choose.

Partners has helped me better understand

86% the history of the social care and health systems, changing perceptions and why things are the way they are.

86% current context and best practice around personal budgets, self-directed support, inclusion and independent living.

88% self direction and how to develop person-centred approaches to support and planning, and how to support others to self-direct.

77% how to move things forward including national and local policy context, change management, creating a shift in culture and making positive change happen on a local and national level.

7% other.

(**100%** of participants selected one or more statement)

Survey Statistics

Partners Helped me....

60% to plan a better future through best practice person-centred planning techniques

70% to plan better support through best practice person-centred planning techniques.

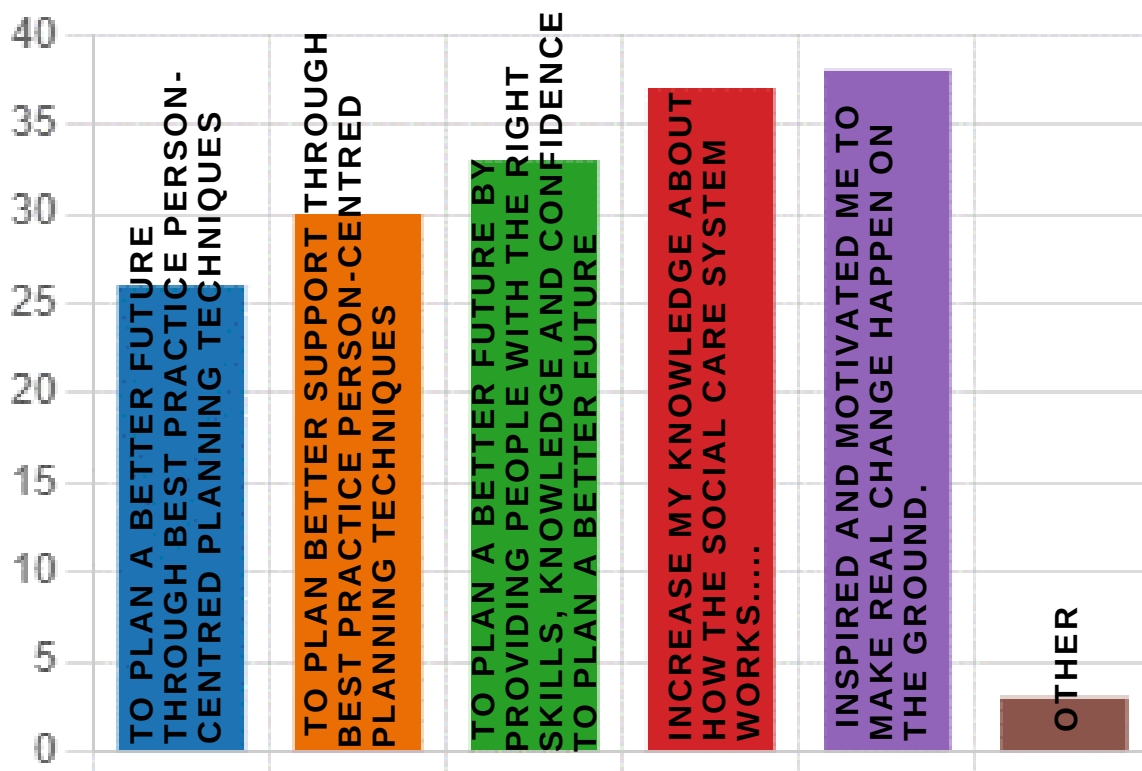
77% to plan a better future by providing people with the right skills, knowledge and confidence to plan a better future and ensure they have greater choice, flexibility and control over their care and wellbeing needs

86% increase my knowledge about how the social care system works, including what 'good support' looks like and how this all relates politically and in practice.

88% be inspired and motivated me to make real change happen on the ground.

7% other

(***100%** of participants selected one or more statement)



Survey Statistics

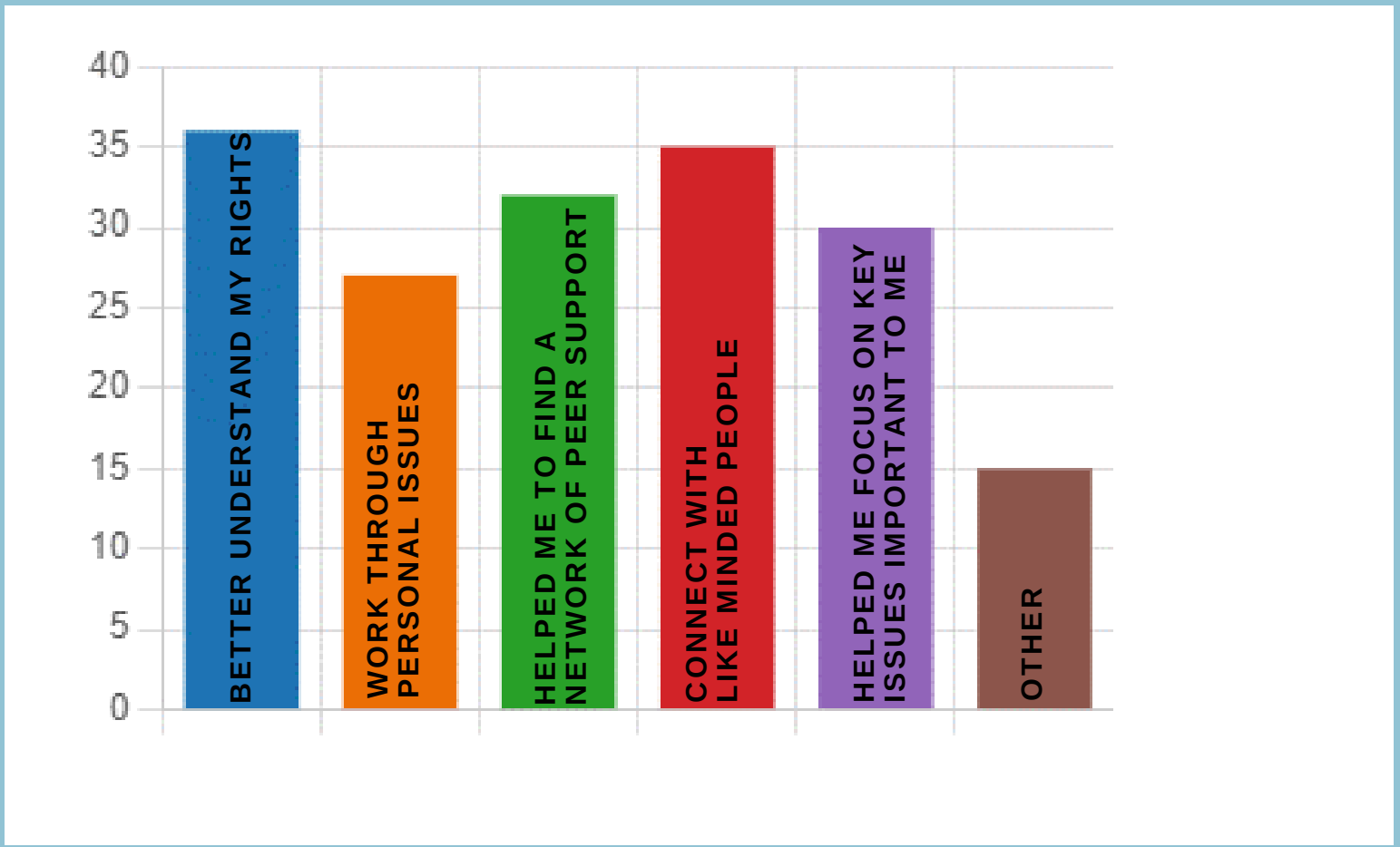
(For me)

Partners in Policy Making helped me.....

Direct help

- 83%** better understand my rights
- 63%** work through personal issues
- 74%** helped me to find a network of peer support
- 81%** connect with like minded people
- 70%** helped me focus on key issues important to me
- 35%** other

(100% of participants selected one or more statement)



Survey Common Themes

I am (Input)

- In the survey course graduates talk about the impact of the course and how the learning environment made them feel. The set up of the in person workshops create a safe, supported and nurturing environment that makes talking about difficult things easier.
- Many graduates describe feeling seen and heard and this in turn positively impacting on their mental health.
- Many graduates describe experiencing personal development and growth as a direct result of participating in the course.
- The overnight stay was described as crucial to allow for bonding and further discussions.
- The course has generated a huge amount of enjoyment and joy, generating many long term friendships.
- The survey evidences the course as good value for money because of its investment in people. Graduates speak about the lifelong impact of their experience both in their lives and the lives of others.

I learned (Process)

- Graduated described the course set up as a nurturing environment and speak about the importance of feeling invested in.
- Partners speak about the importance of understanding better the processes of the systems that are there to support them
- Partners talk about the importance of thinking about creative solutions, and thinking out of the box.
- Partners talk about the importance of learning and understanding policy and the law and what this means for them.
- Graduates are asking for further training. There is a an appetite for knowledge and understanding and a deep desire from people to not only use this information to help themselves but to support others along the way.

I achieved (Output)

- Partners who graduated describe going onto new jobs because of the course, evidencing the impact that the course has on the health and social care workforce as well as people's individual lives.
- Partners describe their network growing.

Survey Common Themes

Community

- Partners in Policymaking Graduates evidence ways in which they have positively contributed to their community, helping to ensure a more progressive Scotland in terms of realising rights.
- Many graduates are active in their community using their partners knowledge and lived experience to help realise equality.
- Some graduates have gone on to set up community groups and businesses that help others.
- Graduates comment on the positive benefits that ongoing peer support has on them.
- Many graduates have made lifelong friends as a direct result of participation on the course.
- Many graduates comment on how the course has helped them overcome periods of isolation and loneliness and the benefits of not feeling like they are going through a difficult time alone and knowing that they can reach out to a support network.

Practice

- Graduates comment on the benefits of cross locality best practice learning as well as being able to access information quickly, utilising with ease the law of 6 degrees of separation evidencing that partners view and respect each other as experts.
- Some graduates evidence a change in their approach to working with professionals and describe building better relationships as a result.
- Some graduates describe changing careers and utilising their Partners in Policymaking learning in their own community.
- Graduates commonly describe the Partners in Policymaking learning as "Best Practice."

Policy

- The ripple effect of the course leaks in to policy locally, nationally and even internationally with some graduates describing going to take part in influential work.
- Many graduates have gone on to do great work and make change plugging gaps in areas they have identified ranging from play parks to policy reform.

Partners in Policy Making helped me....



Direct Quotes

"Think clearly about the direction I wanted my life to go in. Give up my job!"

"advocate"

"HELPED ME TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT TO ACHIEVE MY DREAMS."

"Job"

"Realise how really bad was the situation for disabled people in the UK and specifically in Scotland."

"Partners set me on a good track for making the right choices for my child and to then to share that good practice and philosophy with others."

"confidence"

"Helped my understanding of my child's rights."

"HELPED ME WITH MY ANXIETY AND CONFIDENCE."

"HELPED ME UNDERSTAND AND BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE ISSUES FACING DISABLED PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND, AND THEIR HISTORIC ORIGINS."

"Helped me be a better advocate."

"Improved my confidence & sense of worth. It gave me a sense of purpose"

"SEE A POSITIVE FUTURE - MY CHILD CAN THRIVE AND THE STEPS I TAKE EVERY DAY WILL ENABLE HER TO LIVE AN INDEPENDENT AND FULFILLED LIFE."

"understand rights"

"HELPED ME UNDERSTAND MY DISABLED DAUGHTERS RIGHTS AND EMPOWERED ME TO ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED TREATMENT, SERVICES, SUPPORT ANHUMAN RIGHTS OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE."



Direct Quotes (Partners in Policy Making Helped me)

"I didn't work when I did the course. I now work 2 days per week in a carers centre, offering support and knowledge to other carers. I bring lots of knowledge and practice to my peers too. I sit on my local authority Patient, Service User and Carer group and sit on a HSCP Strategic Planning Group. In addition, I sit on a Scottish Government SDS PA group and offer support to Scottish Government group looking at the provision of Social Work services in Scotland. I'm regularly asked if i would like to join other groups but I just can't fit more in."



"I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MAKING POSITIVE CHANGE INTERNATIONALLY. I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT HOW TO USE MY STRENGTHS TO ADVOCATE AND MAKE CHANGE."

"I was able to open my mind to a bigger, better future for my family."

"positive future"

"See a positive future - my child can thrive and the steps I take every day will enable her to live an independent and fulfilled life."



"I have tried to make positive changes in service provision in the area I work - starting AAC support early, developing knowledge and confidence in supporting the implementation of AAC."

"positive change"

"The course got me to think more about positively making changes & explaining why changes are needed. "

"Partners helped me be more focused. It helped me take charge of my life. It also helped me feel more comfortable saying no when I wasn't happy about something."

"more accessible"

"Because of Partners and with the support of everyone on the course I started a local project called Bridge of Allan Play Together to raise funds for accessible play equipment for my local park. After raising lots of money to make my park more accessible I have since moved on to helping with the national movement to make play parks more accessible across the country. I have also continued to work in my community to improve accessibility in general. I'm currently working on dropped kerbs and access to shops as well as plans for a Changing Places Toilet."

"This change is so far individual but I am hoping it can go further soon."

"communication"



Direct Quotes (Partners in Policy Making Helped me)

"PARTNERS HAS MADE ME FEEL MUCH MORE CONFIDENT IN UNDERSTANDING HOW TO WORK WITH SOCIAL WORK, EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONALS TO REACH POSITIVE OUTCOMES. PARTNERS WAS AN EDUCATION NOT ONLY IN DISABILITY, BUT IN THE IMPORTANCE AND SIMPLICITY OF A GOOD LIFE AS WELL AS THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AND NETWORKS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOOD LIFE MY CHILD WILL CHOOSE FOR HERSELF BUT I KNOW I HAVE THE SKILLS TO HELP HER DREAM IT AND ACHIEVE IT. "



"achieving dreams"

"ABLE TO SOURCE INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON HOW TO BETTER ACCESS RIGHT SUPPORT FOR MY FAMILY. EMPOWER PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY."



"It has given me the confidence to do what needs to be done by myself rather than expecting there to be facilities/organisations genuinely wanting to support and advise."

"Prior to participating on the Partners in Policy Making course I had no idea about Self Directed Support. I hadn't thought about how the choices I made for my daughter's primary education could shape the rest of her life. Being on the Partners course prior to my daughter starting school was key to me making the best choices for not just her education but also making the best choices to have her be a known person in our local community with the right both paid and natural. "

"Empower"


"IT COMPLETELY CHANGED OUR LIVES FROM THE MOMENT I STEPPED IN TO THAT VERY FIRST WEEKEND. ALMOST 5 YEARS ON FROM STARTING I FEEL MORE GROUNDED AND CONFIDENT THAN EVER BEFORE AND OUR LIVES ARE IRREVOCABLY CHANGED FOR THE BETTER. "

"FIRE UP A DESIRE TO HELP MAKE CHANGE."

"changemaker"

I have used my learning to


Direct Quotes



"Partners has given me more confidence. It allowed for emotional growth in a safe space."

"I GOT A NEW JOB AS A RESULT OF THE COURSE."


"Start the change my local authority needs to give more choice and flexibility to families that apply to SDS."



"Gained understanding that it is not selfish to think or do something for yourself."

"Understanding"


"I AM HELPING OTHER FAMILIES CHANGE THEIR MINDSET AROUND DISABILITY AND HOW THEY SEE IT. WE ARE OFTEN MEDICALISED WHICH IS NEGATIVE WE DON'T SEE THE SOCIAL BENEFITS OF WHAT EACH INDIVIDUAL CAN BRING. I OFFER PEER SUPPORT AND OFTEN FEED LIVED EXPERIENCE INTO MY DAILY WORK."




"I CAN'T REALLY SAY ONE THING BUT I WILL TRY. "NEVER GO DIVING WITHOUT YOUR PARTNER". SINCE THEN I HAVE BEEN WORKING IN CHANGING AND CHALLENGING OUR LOCAL AUTHORITY WITH A GROUP OF OTHERS WHO I MET ON THE COURSE."

"New Job"

"BOTH MY RESEARCH AND MY WORK AT THE COMMUNITY HUB ARE CONTRIBUTING TO MAKING REAL CHANGE HAPPEN ON THE GROUND IN RURAL HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS."



"My status as a graduate of Partners in Policymaking helped me secure a funded PhD in Mental Health Inequalities in Rural Areas with the University of Highlands and Islands, Digital Health dept. It also helped me get a part-time post at my local Community Hub where I implement much of what I learned with Partners."



"LEARNING HOW TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNER."

"Confidence"

Direct Quotes (I have used my learning to)

"I HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE FOR PARENTS OF KIDS FROM MY SONS ASN SCHOOL- PROVIDING LOADS OF RELEVANT INFO. TWICE IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, I HAVE HELPED FAMILIES WITH THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF GUARDIANSHIP AND TRANSITIONS AS NEITHER THE SCHOOL NOR SOCIAL WORK HAVE DONE THIS FOR THEM."

"CAMPAIGN NATIONALLY!"

Guardianship

"Realised how bad the support available was."

Help

"I AM GOING TO MAKE REAL CHANGE HAPPEN ON THE GROUND!"

"I continue to use everything I have learned to share the message of true inclusion in everything I do, from my personal life to my volunteer role and within my work. Sharing positive changes with those around me."

"PARTNERS IN POLICY MAKING GAVE ME THE DRIVE TO PUT MY PASSION FOR INCLUSION INTO MY DAILY LIFE WHICH RESULTED IN ME GETTING A NEW JOB WHERE I TRY TO EFFECT CHANGE FOR A MORE POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY"

"As well as my major local project, I've also been able to improve the life of my child in finding support for him and helping him live his best life. I use my own experiences to support others in similar situations."

Support

Because of Partners in Policy Making I feel....

Direct Quotes

"I FEEL I BELONG TO A BIGGER COMMUNITY, PARTNERS IS MUCH BIGGER THAN MY GRADUATES COHORT. WHEN I HAVE ZOOM MEETINGS ON WEDNESDAYS WITH THE COLLABORATIVE, I SEE OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE PART OF PARTNERS BUT WEREN'T MY PEERS, PLUS OTHERS FROM DIFFERENT CHARITIES."

"I have organised other like-minded people in my community and set up a charity that will eventually meet the needs to many vulnerable people in a safe and friendly environment."

"Partners has given me more confidence. It allowed for emotional growth in a safe space."

"Partners in policy made me feel seen. It helped me to come to terms and accept the issues. I was facing in my life as a parent of a disabled child. "

"It gave me the strength to work through everything that was going on at a really difficult time in my life, feeling included and without judgement were key to this Thank you!"

"I SEE FAMILIES IN MY KIDS ASN SCHOOL AND THEY'RE LONELY, FRUSTRATED, LACKING IN CONFIDENCE AND WITH NO UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OR CONTROL OVER SITUATIONS- EACH NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE JOURNEY OF THEIR KIDS LIFE JUST WIPES THEM OUT AS THEY'RE ESSENTIALLY ON THEIR OWN. PARTNERS HAS ENSURED THAT I'M NOT ONE OF THEM- THAT I HAVE A BIT OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE JOURNEY I'M ON- AND A BIT OF KNOWLEDGE TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS AND ULTIMATELY FOR MY CHILD AND MY FAMILY TO LIVE A REASONABLY HAPPY, SECURE LIFE."

"PARTNERS HELPED ME BE MORE FOCUSED. IT HELPED ME TAKE CHARGE OF MY LIFE. IT ALSO HELPED ME FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE SAYING NO WHEN I WASN'T HAPPY ABOUT SOMETHING."

Happy



acceptance

safe



Security

Strength

knowledge
community



Confidence

Partners in Policy Making helped me better understand....

Direct Quotes

"It's helped me understand good practice. It's also helped me connect with people who are doing things differently. This creative thinking approach has been useful. I feel surrounded by experts who live the life. This feels safe and makes this difficult journey less lonely."



"How British system really works."

"I'M JUST MORE CONFIDENT AND I KNOW I'M DOING ALL I CAN TO PROVIDE MY SON WITH THE BEST LIFE WE CAN."

"WHAT IT MEANS TO BE DISABLED."

"understanding systems"

"Partners made me feel like I was worth investing in. After years of being ground down by systems and processes, being put up in a hotel and connecting with other people going through similar made me feel like my needs were being addressed in a really nurturing and efficient way. I am now surrounded by people who walk the path with me."

"THE APPROACH AND MINDSET OF BRITISH SOCIETY AND BRITISH INSTITUTIONS HAVE TOWARDS DISABILITY AND THE CARE OFFERED."

"creative thinking"



"How and where to find the information I may need to support and help my family and others."

"It has helped me better understand some systems and processes."

"mindset"

"good practice"

Direct Quotes (Partners in Policy Making helped me better understand)

"Knowledge"

"Learning"

"It's helped me understand good practice. It's also helped me connect with people who are doing things differently. This creative thinking approach has been useful. I feel surrounded by experts who live the life. This feels safe and makes this difficult journey less lonely."

"I USED TO RANT AND FIGHT AND GET FRUSTRATED WHEN I HIT ROADBLOCKS WHILST TRYING TO GET SUPPORT. I DON'T WORK LIKE THAT, I'VE LEARNED BETTER WAYS AND BETTER APPROACHES TO GET ROUND THE SAME PROBLEMS - PLUS MY KNOWLEDGE IS SO MUCH BETTER THESE DAYS"

"THE WONDERFUL QUALITIES MY CHILD HAS AND TO ENSURE THOSE OUTWITH THE FAMILY SEE HER STRENGTHS AND PERSONALITY."

"Connection"

"better strategies"

"I believe that in order to "move things forward in national and local policy context" there would need to be ongoing post-Partners training/courses/focused groups, support etc"

"Don't kick down doors that may be open."

"good practice"

"experts"

What was the best part about the Partners in Policy Making course?

Direct Quotes

"inspiration"

"INSPIRATION IT PROVIDED. AMAZING, WELL INFORMED SPEAKERS. BEING AROUND PEOPLE WHO CARE AND WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE (RATHER THAN JUST MOANING)."

"Making friendships with people that understand what it's like to have a learning disability and hearing the wide range of different speakers."

"bonding"

"The space to discuss matters that are important with like minded people. Especially with the way the course was set up. The overnight was crucial for bonding and further discussion."

"over night stay crucial"

"I attended the Partners Policy Making course when my child was very young (only 8 years of age). I have to say it was life changing. I have carried the knowledge I gained forward and use it on a daily basis. I have been on numerous courses since Partners but it is still by far the most beneficial course I have attended."

"Enabled"

"community"

"beneficial"

"feeling nurtured by the course"

"IT ENABLED ME TO SEE A FUTURE FOR MY SON AS PART OF THE COMMUNITY."



What was the best part about the Partners in Policy Making course?

Direct Quotes

"There were so many good things about the course. For me meeting so many inspirational people who motivated me to make change both in accessible play parks but also in inclusive education. It made me think specifically about how to help my son live his best life but also what difference I could make to other children who are like him. It was really helpful learning about the history and the people who have come before us in the campaign for inclusion."

"I THINK THE BEST PART IS YEARS LATER WHEN YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND YOU SEE THEIR PRACTICES AND PHILOSOPHIES WORKING FOR YOU. IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IN THE COURSE, ITS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE..."

"THE PERSON CENTERED ASPECTS."

"5 years after the course I am still in touch with some of the people I met on the course. To sit with like minded people is good for the soul."

"THE BREADTH OF SUBJECTS DISCUSSED"

"IT ENABLED ME TO SEE A FUTURE FOR MY SON AS PART OF THE COMMUNITY."

What was the best part about the Partners in Policy Making course?

Direct Quotes

"I THINK THE BEST PART IS YEARS LATER WHEN YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND YOU SEE THEIR PRACTICES AND PHILOSOPHIES WORKING FOR YOU. IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IN THE COURSE, ITS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE..."

"Helped me make big decisions in my personal life and helped me make new friends.....Being in a room with lots of people from different backgrounds and circumstances and seeing how true inclusion works in a real life setting, this really added value to what we were learning and is a vital part of the course connecting together and learning from those with lived experiences."

"MAKING LIFE LONG FRIENDS."

"THE BEST PART FOR ME WAS MEETING PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SIMILAR OBSTACLES TO MY OWN FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR FAMILIES.."

"Being in a room with lots of people from different backgrounds and circumstances and seeing how true inclusion works in a real life setting, this really added value to what we were learning and is a vital part of the course connecting together and learning from those with lived experiences."



What was the best part about the Partners in Policy Making course?

Direct Quotes

"MAKING LIFE-LONG CONNECTIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT."



"THE COURSE UNDOUBTEDLY PULLED ME OUT OF A VERY DARK PERIOD OF MY LIFE. THE SUPPORT NETWORK PARTNERS HAS PROVIDED IS SO INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT FOR MY DAUGHTER'S WELL-BEING AND MY MENTAL HEALTH."



"I felt really looked after on the course. There is something about the warmth of the set up, with teas, coffees, dinner and an overnight stay that really made me feel valued and invested in. I know if I had of went home some of the learning and bonding would have been lost. The set up is a safe and protected, nurtured, inclusive learning environment."

"Feeling seen and heard. Connecting, learning, feeling in a safe place to talk, the love in the room, human connection, being in an environment where everyone wanted to learn and encourage one another."

"The inclusivity! Opportunities to make friends and learn from others experiences. The residential nature of the course gave opportunity for much needed 'respite' from caring duties while learning how to be a more effective carer AND the importance of looking after my needs too."




"MEETING OTHER PEOPLE IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS AND OPENING MY WORLD UP TO ALL MY FELLOW FAIRIES. THE PEER SUPPORT AND FRIENDS I HAVE MADE FOR LIFE THROUGH THIS COURSE HAS BEEN INVALUABLE."



What was the best part about the Partners in Policy Making course?


Direct Quotes

"I DISCOVERED THE POSITIVITY IN DISABILITY. FOR TOO LONG ALL I HEARD WAS FEAR, DESPAIR AND NEGATIVITY. PARTNERS ALLOWED ME TO DREAM BIG AND SEE A POSITIVE OUTCOME FOR ME AND MY SON."




"THE LOVE AND CONNECTION WITH NOT ONLY MY YEAR BUT ALL THE OTHER GRADUATES. WE ARE AN INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY AND AN AMAZING FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. I AM BEYOND PROUD TO BE A PARTNERS GRADUATE."

"THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE AWAY FROM MY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES AND MEET OTHERS IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS TO LEARN, DISCUSS AND EXPLORE ALL THE DIFFERENT TOPICS."



"Meeting and making new friendships with like minded, curious and determined parents of disabled children and disabled adults. Over the years since Partners these relationships have become deep and powerful. We share information and experiences, support each other and build each other up through difficult times. In particular the relationships with disabled adults has helped me dream for my daughter and understand more about the experiences on disabled adults. My daughter has disabled adults and teens as role models because of the people i met on Partners. I feel much better prepared to help my daughter navigate her future because of these friendships. "



"CONNECTION."



"Able to source information and advice on how to better access right support for my family. Empower people in the community. "

"THE GUEST SPEAKERS KNOWLEDGE."

What would you like to see more of?

Direct Quotes



"More stuff about employment."

"INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKERS."

"Support for partners and funding for more cohorts."

"It would be great to be able to meet once a year with all the graduates to see what are we changing, the ripple effect of our own journeys in our communities to build a better and fairer Scotland."

"I THINK THE CONTENT IS FANTASTIC. I THINK OUR GROUP MISSED OUT ON THE SMALL GROUPS WITH LEARNING TO LISTEN. I NEED MORE OF THAT! NOT A CRITICISM AS IT WAS COVID RELATED."

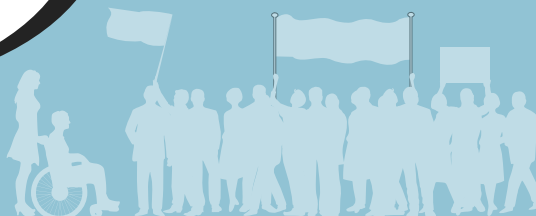
"I think the balance was spot on and would not change the format."

"More course offerings than currently. More on UN CRPD and what a human rights based approach is."

"SUPPORTING EACH OTHER WITH ONGOING ISSUES, THERE'S POWER IN THAT."

"MORE ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENT VIEWS TOWARDS DISABILITY."

"Partners in policy making course availability to others."



What would you like to see more of?

Direct Quotes

"More of the same. People's stories are so very powerful. The format worked well providing learning, space to explore as well an opportunity to network and make connections."

"More opportunities to meet up once the course is finished to stay connected."

"SUPPORT FOR PARENT CARERS."

"A little focus / sessions on self care."

"OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE FROM AREAS FURTHER AWAY FROM THE CENTRAL BELT AND MORE FOCUS ON INEQUALITIES IN RURAL AREAS- SO PERHAPS A HIGHLAND BASED COURSE?"

"In an ideal world, I would love to do the whole thing again but starting at this point of knowledge. I would love to see the discussions and thought processes that would come through with this level of knowledge."

"Post-course training and perhaps more structured groups with specific functions(ie. promote change, provide support in difficult aspects of caring roles etc)"

"More opportunities for partners to get together to affect change."

"MORE ACCESSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES."

Direct Quotes (What would you like to see more of)

"Stories"

"More courses for more families this should be rolled out to all families that has someone in their household with a disability. The more families who get this information and knowledge then we can change societal views on disability."

"More personal stories from graduates. Especially those who have gone on to make change. I found these incredibly inspiring!"

"lived experience"

"REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES TO COME TOGETHER. WHEN YOU GO HOME YOU GET SWAMPED WITH NORMAL LIFE, THEN YOU ATTEND A PARTNERS EVENT AND LEAVE WITH THE PARTNERS BUZZ COURSEING THROUGH YOUR VEINS."

"More learning (accredited) being part of some sort of big movement of change that involves lobbying the government . Development work."

MORE COURSES AVAILABLE TO MORE PEOPLE, MORE ON-GOING LEARNING / GET TOGETHERS

"MORE INCLUSION OF ALL ATTENDEES."

"PARTNERS NEEDS TO CONTINUE."

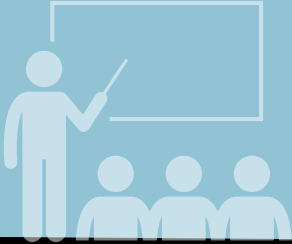
"More in person meet ups and for Partners to continue in the future so we can keep growing this movement of empowered changemakers."

"Inclusion"

" I would like to see more opportunities for partners graduates to come together to continue learning and develop new skills, connections and friendships. Together we are more powerful."

What would you change?


Direct Quotes



"MORE POST-COURSE TRAINING, MORE PATHWAYS TO DEVELOP SKILLS AND STRATEGIES TO HELP IMPLEMENT LASTING CHANGE."

"Letting parents and carers really express themselves without feeling they are judged when they don't agree with the approach of the course leaders. So everyone one can learn from everyone."



"IT WAS ALL GREAT."



"Nothing about the course itself or the people who facilitate it - the whole experience was a joy! I regret not keeping better contact with other graduates and the facilitators. My bad, not theirs as they use social media to make access to everyone as easy as possible. "

"NOTHING - I WOULD ONLY PERHAPS ADD A FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION AND AAC. COMMUNICATION ISSUES CAME UP AGAIN AND AGAIN. MANY OF THE PARENT/ CARER'S CHILDREN HAVE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS IN THEIR LIVES. I THINK AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS SOME OF THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL - WHAT COULD BE TAKEN FORWARD/ TRIED."

"Nothing. This course has the right balance."



" I love the structure of partners. Don't try and fix something that isn't broke. I would only add to the end- there are a lot of talented people who could be connected after the course- links to brokerage services or advocacy training or similar would be good. Or have a recruitment event after where the narrative is flipped and recruiters are hooking people up with jobs in the field."

Direct Quotes (What would you change)

"Fantastic"



"IF I'M HONEST...(DON'T STRIKE ME DOWN BUT...) THOSE WHO HAVE KIDS WITH LESSER LEVELS OF DISABILITY TEND TO VANISH FROM THE COMMUNITY OVER TIME BECAUSE THEY HAVE LESS OF AN EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT IN THE DISABILITY WORLD. THEIR KIDS TEND TO GO OFF AND FUNCTION IN THE REAL WORLD SO THEY DON'T HAVE A PASSION TO CHANGE."

"I wouldn't change anything. The course was fantastic & still impacts on me years after completing it."

"Ideas"

" I WOULD HAVE LIKED A FOLLOW UP AFTERWARDS. IT'S HARD TO THINK OF IDEAS DURING THE COURSE. THESE CAN TAKE A FEW MONTHS TO FORMULATE. AND PERHAPS A SIX MONTHLY CATCH UP TO ASK WHAT PEOPLE'S IDEAS ARE. WHAT ARE THE STUMBLING BLOCKS? CAN THE PARTNERS OR IN CONTROL HELP WITH IDEAS OR CONNECTIONS."

"Person centred"



"Additional time given to legislation and its application relevant to education and local authorities responsibilities coupled with additional time for person centered planning etc."




"I think the attitude of the course towards split placement education and to specialist provisions was always negative, but I don't feel that this issue is quite that black and white. In an ideal world everyone would have a mainstream education, but there are bad mainstream schools too."

"I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO CHANGE ABOUT THE COURSE."



"Mainstream"

Direct Quotes (What would you change)



"Without Partners in Policy Making I wouldn't have raised as much money or had as much support to make my play park project so successful. With the help, inspiration and motivation of all the people on the course I raised an incredible amount of money and also an amazing amount of awareness of the need for accessible play equipment. From making a small change in my own community I am now using that as example for positive change on a national level."

"Helped me to accept ok is not good enough and to aim to reach as far as I can in life."

"Positive Change"

"support"

"I DO THINK I COULD DO WITH FURTHER SUPPORT TO HELP MAKE CHANGE."

"I BELIEVE THAT IN ORDER TO "MOVE THINGS FORWARD IN NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT" THERE WOULD NEED TO BE ONGOING POST-PARTNERS TRAINING/COURSES/FOCUSED GROUPS, SUPPORT ETC"

"Understanding"

"Maybe a more structured sharing forum for "good practice" 'good support' and successful example of system change would help keep graduates motivated and inspired. The daily stresses and complexities of our caring roles so easily bogs us down, and it's dangerously easy to slip back into a pessimistic attitude to change/overwhelmed state."

"more on going training"

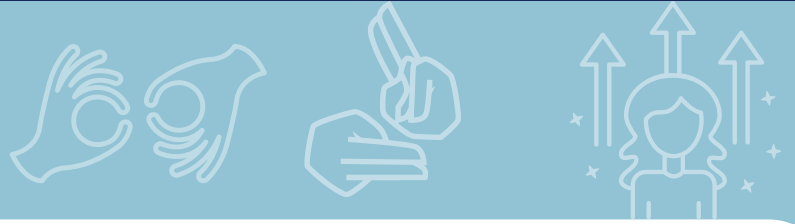
"understanding"

"fundraising"

Because of partners I have.....

Direct Quotes

"CONFIDENCE"



"Partners gave me the confidence to find part time work in a carers centre- so i support other carers with my knowledge. I have passed an SQA course in Community Brokerage, i've set up a singing group for families from our school and their kids: I'm a representative at my local authority's Patient, Service User and Carer group; i'm a Carer rep on the authority's Strategic planning Group; at national level, I attend the Scottish Governments SDS Personal Assistants Board and I'm involved in consultations for the Scottish Association of Social Workers too."

"strategic planning"

"REPRESENTATION"

"When my family was in a difficult situation, I was able to draw on a strength I never knew I had. I think the seeds of this resilience were planted during partners, listening and sharing our experiences, I knew we could do things differently and that I would have to fight to be heard. Personally, I didn't expect to ever want to stand in front of a room speaking to a large group ever again but I seem to be drawn to work in this area. Again the seeds of confidence were planted during my time at partners, sharing our experiences really do help others and if sharing our story can help then I'll get up and share it no matter how anxious I am. "

"listening"



"RESILIENCE"

"SHARING EXPERIENCES"

"PARTNERS SAVED MY SANITY, NOTHING MADE SENSE THEN THINGS FELL INTO PLACE AS I LEARNED MORE."



Direct Quotes; Because of Partners I have....

"Determination"

"I'M NOW EVEN MORE DETERMINED TO MAKE A CHANGE. I READ COMMENTS AND STORIES ABOUT EVEN THE MOST CAPABLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE OF US STRUGGLING TO GET SUPPORTED BY THE SYSTEM. I'M CONFIDENT NOW THAT I'M NOT THE PROBLEM, THE SYSTEM IS AND I WANT TO USE MY KNOWLEDGE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE TO HELP BUILD A BETTER SYSTEM THAT MEANS PEOPLE GET THE SUPPORT THEY NEED AT THE TIME THEY NEED IT."

"MEETING PEOPLE WHO WERE GOING THROUGH SIMILAR SITUATIONS. I FELT THAT THERE WAS A SENSE OF UNDERSTANDING."

"Confidence"

"Partners has made me feel much more confident in understanding how to work with social work, education and professionals to reach positive outcomes. Partners was an education not only in disability, but in the importance and simplicity of a good life as well as the power of community and networks. I don't know what good life my child will choose for herself but I know I have the skills to help her dream it and achieve it."

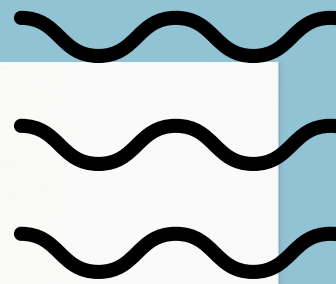
"changed my perspective"

"Partners changed my perspective on my caring responsibilities and my son's disability. I was in a negative place and this course helped me to see another way to help my child and others going through similar experiences. The course changed my thoughts on policy and legislation and made me more determined to change things on a personal and national level. I ended up changing my job and now use lived experience to inform policy and legislation in my new job role."

"IT COMPLETELY CHANGED OUR LIVES FROM THE MOMENT I STEPPED IN TO THAT VERY FIRST WEEKEND. ALMOST 5 YEARS ON FROM STARTING I FEEL MORE GROUNDED AND CONFIDENT THAN EVER BEFORE AND OUR LIVES ARE IRREVOCABLY CHANGED FOR THE BETTER."

"Better systems"

Conclusion



Partners in Policymaking graduates speak passionately about becoming changemakers and being part of the solutions required to help realise equality. One of the things that shone through in survey results was the willingness to help others.

Many graduates have gone on to help others. They have become the changemakers flipping the narrative from the person requiring support to one providing the support. Graduates speak about the warmth of the course and the benefits of encouraging one another and the power of belonging. Many Partners graduates described the course as being part of a tribe. They feel the power of being part of a moment for good.

It's about the meeting of minds coming together for a common aim. It is the strength in knowing that those you are surrounded by are those who are walking similar paths, knowing you are not truly alone and that it is the wisdom and strength that helps.

It's about being invested in and feeling supported.

It's about having hope.

There is reciprocity within this means of support, a deep-rooted kindness, born from the pain and frustration of systemic barriers. You enter the course alone with courage and hope and leave fueled by the collective energy created, believing in change, like a phoenix rising.