

Carers Music Fund Summit

Nancy Hey
Executive Director
What Works Centre for Wellbeing

whatworkswellbeing.org
@whatworksWB
@Work_Life_You



Building on the shoulders of the global knowledge base

older people



- Regular group singing can enhance morale and mental health-related quality of life and reduce loneliness, anxiety and depression in older people compared with usual activities.
- Participatory singing can maintain a sense of wellbeing and is perceived as both acceptable and beneficial for older participants.
- Singing can maintain a sense of wellbeing in healthy older people.

healthy adults



- Group singing can foster happiness as well as provide musical and social benefits
- Being a member of a music ensemble can enhance subjective wellbeing, support the development of musical identity and a sense of purpose.
- Brief group singing can enhance perceived psychological wellbeing.

group singing has wellbeing benefits, with a lot of evidence available for older adults

Wellbeing benefits from group singing can relate to connecting in a community...

- Engagement in music activities can help older people to connect with their life experiences with other people, and be more stimulated.
- Participants from marginalised groups value the benefits of group singing and the opportunity to learn, build relationships and engage in a meaningful exchange with the wider community
- Active music making in community choirs and music ensembles may be an effective way to support individuals from marginal communities, enabling them to build a sense of community and share culture and heritage..
- Older adults are motivated to participate in musical activities to broaden their social networks and to learn.

...and finding identity and expression

- Membership of a choir or musical ensemble can provide a vehicle for identity construction and revision in later life, including people with little or no previous experience of music.
- Performing and sharing their songs with others can be significant and meaningful to participants. Music can help older people to develop self-identity, or connect with other people, expressing spirituality and reminisce.
- Song-writing and performing can contribute to happiness in older people. Performing and sharing their songs with others can be significant and meaningful to them.
- Learning music may help older adults to realise long-held ambitions and promote spiritual growth.



marginalised groups and learning for empowerment

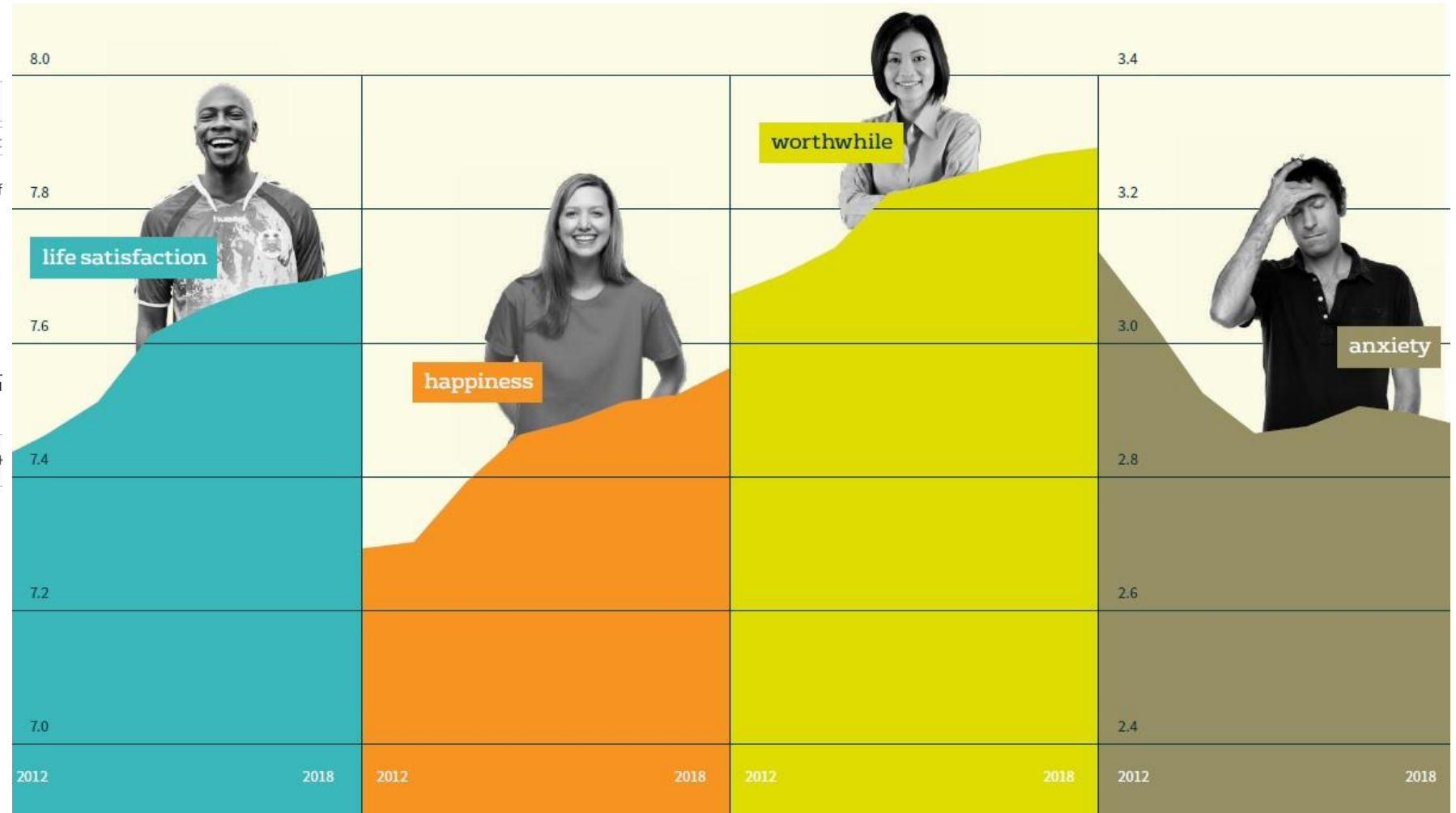
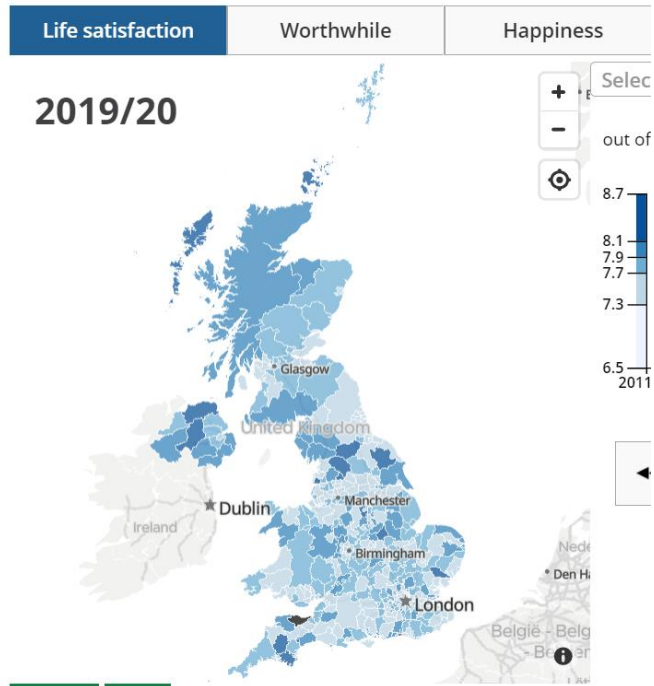


- The development of self-esteem or self-worth are key outcomes of the learning process that benefit the wellbeing of a range of groups. [11.13.15.16.23](#)
- Learning in order to build confidence [11.13.16.20.23](#) is a key wellbeing benefit and can help individuals to progress in education and personal development.
- Learning has direct and positive effects on reducing depression and stress [1.15.16.25](#)
- Learning for marginalised groups can help people to develop a sense of purpose in life. [11.13.23](#)

Music & Singing
Adult Learning and wellbeing
Tackling Loneliness
Big impact of Hobby & leisure learning



Using national metrics we can see the difference this makes





Why the different measures matter

Evaluative

Life Satisfaction – moves more slowly but more lasting. Affected by employment, health & relationships

Positive Affect

Happiness – moves more rapidly and more impacted by time use. Needs regular top up and greater frequency.



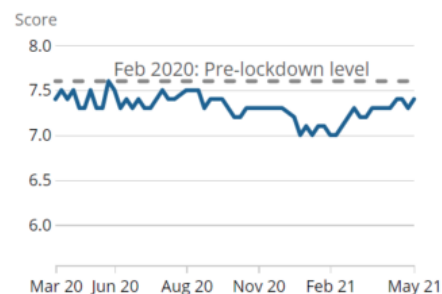
Figure 3: Measures of well-being remained relatively stable this week

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to May 2021

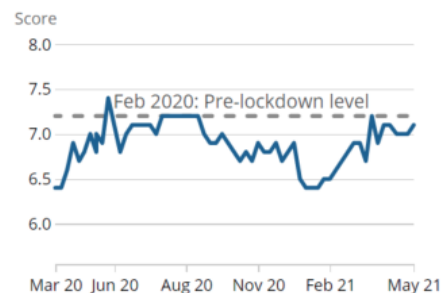
Overall, how **satisfied** are you with your life nowadays?



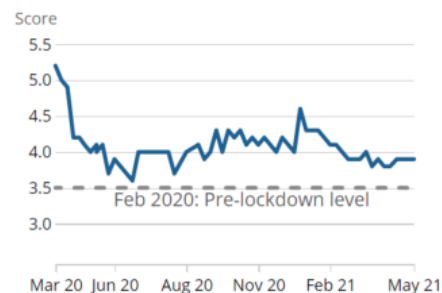
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are **worthwhile**?



Overall, how **happy** did you feel yesterday?



Overall, how **anxious** did you feel yesterday?



Source: Office for National Statistics – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

Eudaimonia / Purpose

Worthwhile – moves more slowly but important. Affected by job quality, relationships, time use, religion, caring/giving.

Negative Affect

Anxiety – moves more rapidly and linked with fear, safety and financial concerns



Making the difference

Work related factors that improve sense of worthwhile and associated relationship with life satisfaction:

GOOD FOR WELLBEING	
More important for SENSE OF PURPOSE	More important for LIFE SATISFACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In employment• Job satisfaction• Volunteering• Working from home (women)• Managerial or professional role• Being a student (but also higher anxiety)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job security• Not underemployed• Longer working at current employer
Important for SENSE OF PURPOSE but not necessarily life satisfaction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self employment – Not associated with Life Satisfaction• Smaller organisation (50 employees or less) – Not associated with Life Satisfaction• Working part time – Not associated with Life Satisfaction• Working in the public or third sector (rather than private) , particularly for men in the third sector – Working in the public sector not positively associated with Life Satisfaction and working in the third sector is negatively associated with life satisfaction• Looking after the home as main occupation – Higher sense of worthwhile, but lower life satisfaction	

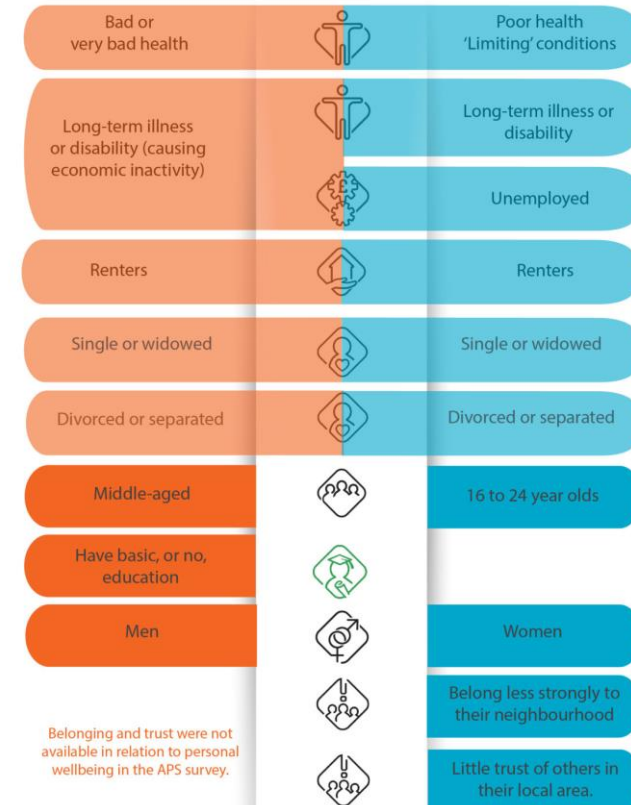
Who is at risk of the lowest wellbeing and loneliness?

Loneliness affects most people, but chronic loneliness has been linked to poor physical health, mental health, and poor personal wellbeing. The visualisation provides a useful illustration of the determinants that are consistently associated with people experiencing the poorest wellbeing and loneliness.

Lowest wellbeing*
Around 1% of people in the UK (over half a million people) were estimated to report the lowest wellbeing in 2014-16.



Loneliness**
5% of adults in England who reported feeling lonely "often" or "always" in 2016-17.



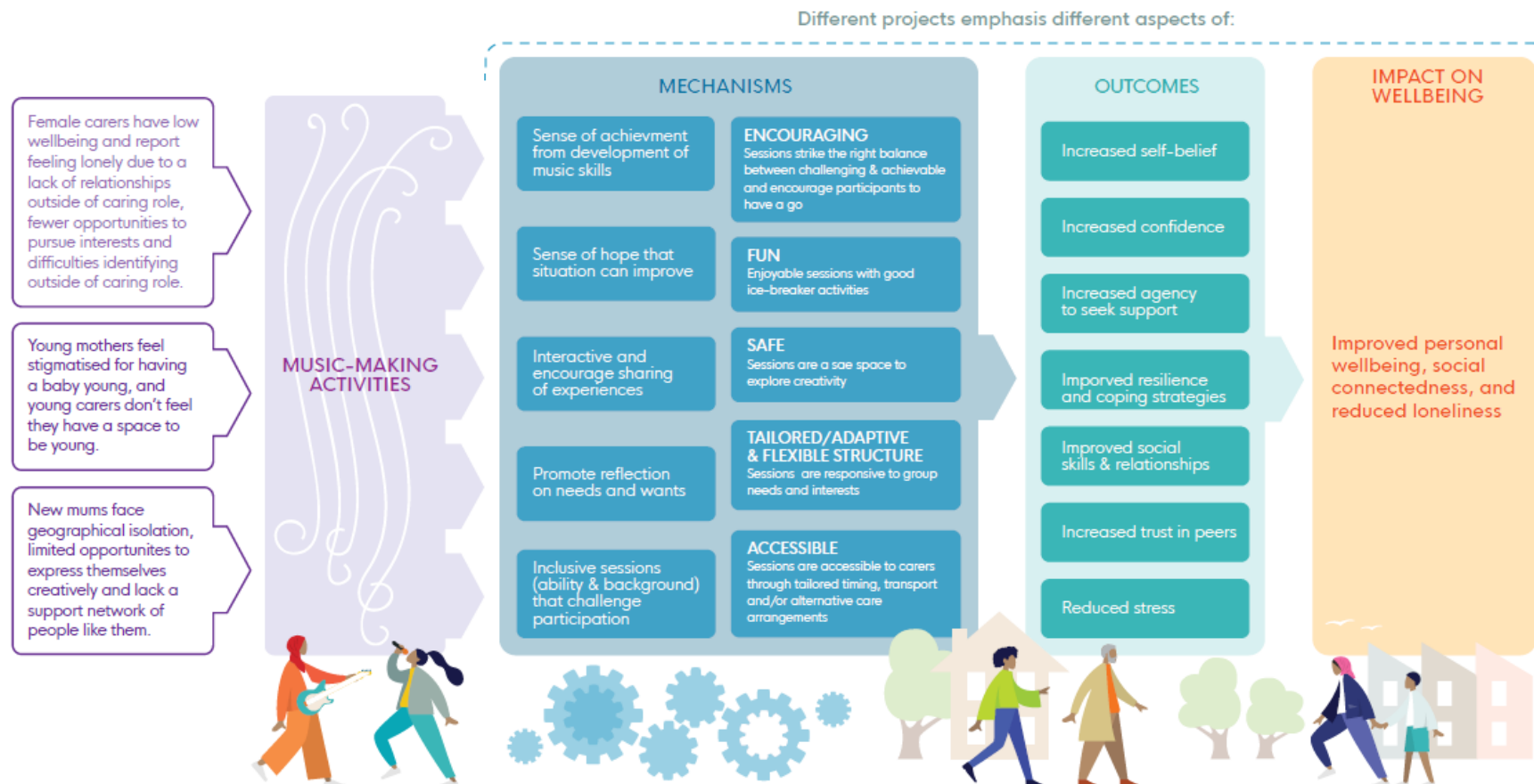
*ONS (2018), data from the Annual Population Survey (APS), 2014-2016.

**ONS (2018), data from the Community Life Survey (CLS), 2016-2017



Expanding the knowledge of What, How & for Whom

Figure 2: Aggregate Theory of Change





Moving the dial on what matters

Table 1: Average Personal Wellbeing scores for Carers' Music Fund participants – all projects all cohorts

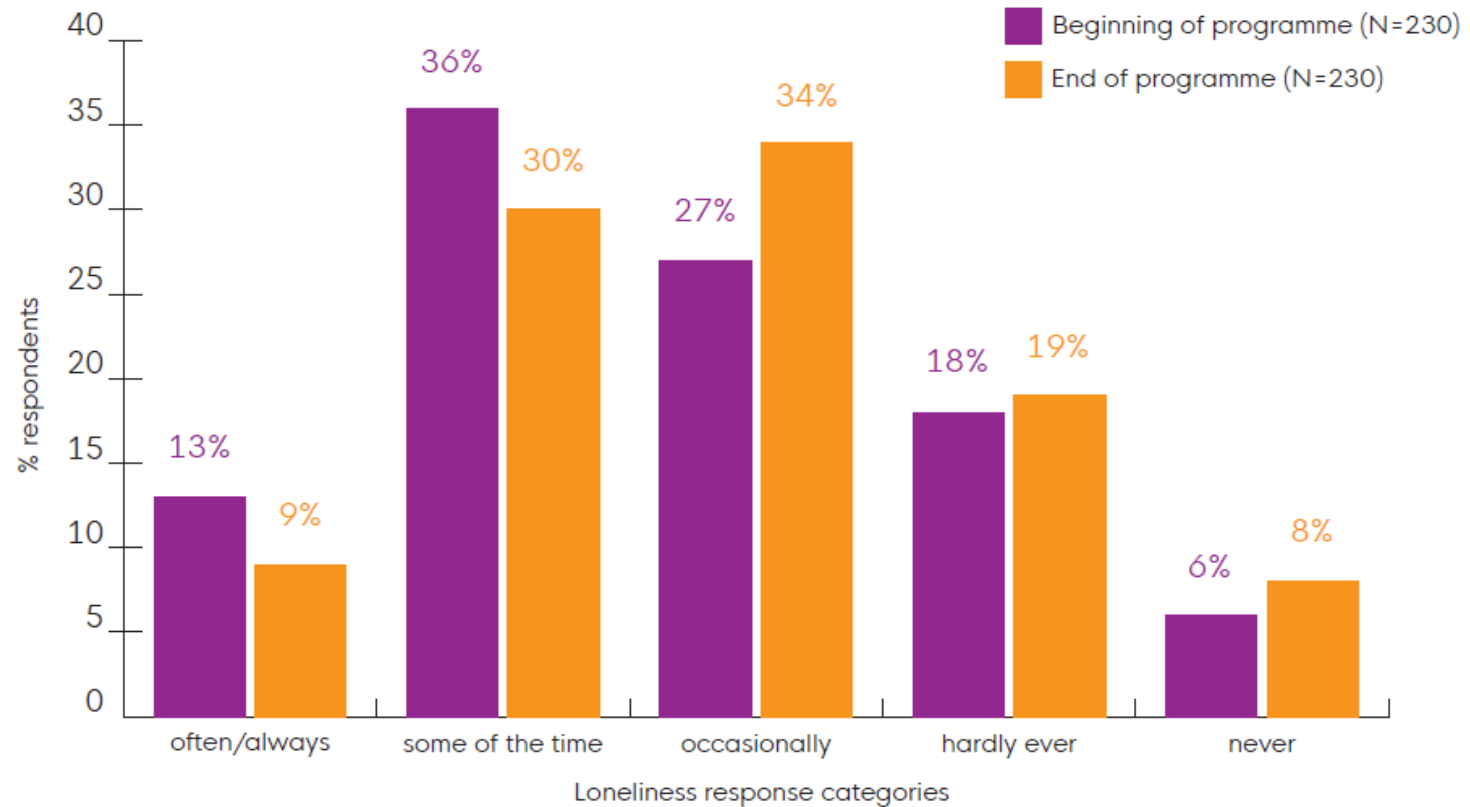
Wellbeing measure	Carers' Music Fund		
	Baseline average	End of cohort average	Average change
Life satisfaction	6.3	7.2	+0.9
Feeling worthwhile	6.7	7.4	+0.5
Happiness	6.1	6.9	+0.8
Anxiety*	5.4	4.8	-0.6

* NB: lower scores for anxiety reflect **higher levels of wellbeing** as the scale is inverted for this measure.



Tackling loneliness as a core aspect of wellbeing for the long term

Figure 1: How Often do you feel lonely? Average loneliness scores for Carers' Music Fund beneficiaries, before and after the programme





Building Blocks & Key Ingredients

PRE-REQUISITES

- High quality music leaders and facilitators
- Making music (and learning music) accessible
- Music as something that cheers people up and connects them
- An existing interest (in music) or a desire to learn and connect



FACTORS (a combination of...) *

- A focus on learning and developing new skills quickly
- Being able to articulate how you feel as a carer
- Relating the music to the lives of carers
- Effectively blending social interaction and care/support into the sessions (and beyond)
- Working towards an end goal/output together



RESULTS

- Strong group bonding and commonality
- Providing a structure/lifeline (especially during Covid)
- People feel valued and appreciated



IMPACTS

- Having fun, enjoyment and laughter
- Stimulating creativity and enjoying the creative process together
- Building confidence
- Being able to have some time without the stress of daily life
- Making new friends

* The balance of the different factors at play will depend on the type of music activity, delivery model, and individual preferences and circumstances of participants.

Friendship, Happiness, Support, Confidence



Thank you!

Nancy.hey@whatworkswellbeing.org

www.whatworkswellbeing.org

[@whatworksWB](#)

[@work_life_you](#)



what works
wellbeing