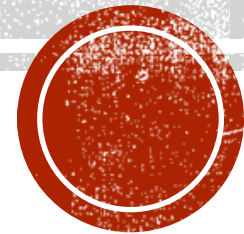# POVERTY, STIGMA AND WELFARE: REVIEWING THE EVIDENCE

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AGENDA

WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW

INTRODUCING OUR RESEARCH

COMMON FINDINGS

i)   The reach of benefits & poverty stigma

"I need a job; because I'm sick of **scrounging**. That's how I think of it, anyway I'm sick of scrounging." (Sam, Ruth's study)

COMMON FINDINGS

ii)   stigma's adverse impact

"You do feel a bit like a washed up…**sponging off society**, even though for years and years I've paid in and have been a good girl, and done what I was told to do. And now it's all **blown back** in my face." (Isobella, Ruth's study)

COMMON FINDINGS

iii)   The perverse consequences of welfare reform

"The Work Programme people were getting **impatient** with me as I was getting interviews but no job…The woman who was running the office told me that I needed to get a job ASAP, that I needed to start looking for any job, especially care work because TA jobs were very competitive because of holidays.   I felt so **demoralised**, I started to **doubt myself** and the decision I had made to pursue that [TA] job, which I chose to do because of being a single mum. I started getting anxious every time my appointment was coming up. At some point I believed that I was never going to get it." (Susan, Ruth's study)

https://doleanimators.wordpress.com/participants-stories-2/adra/ (could play?)

COMMON FINDINGS

iv)   The difference supportive interventions can make

"[The housing association] picked me up and helped me along… and they put me on the [employability] course which is all about improving your confidence and things…they've just given me that push and I kept going and going." (Rosie, Ruth's study)
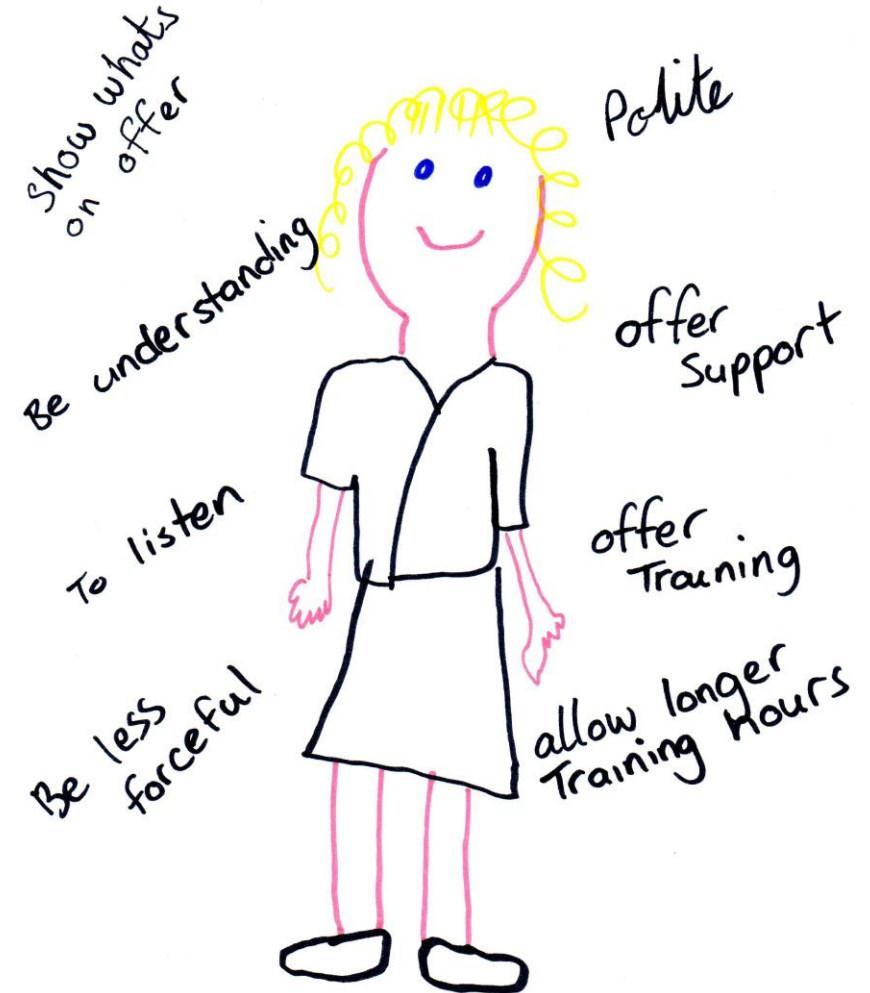
MAKING USE OF THE EVIDENCE BASE

- Do we need more evidence?

- Or do we need to get better at how we communicate and share the evidence we already have?

- Need to do more to think critically about where we place our analytical lens

- Also need to work harder to include expertise that comes with experience in policy design and development

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Working towards creating a shame-proofed social security system (Lister, 2015)

- Changing the culture in Job Centre Plus & among employment support providers

- reframing around the 'right' to social security

- PLUS efforts on benefit maximisation & welfare rights support

DEVELOPING AN ANTI-POVERTY AGENDA GROUNDED IN THE EXPERTISE OF EXPERIENCE