

Young Offenders Employment Project



The context

- **‘The ultimate goal for any young person is sustainable, fulfilling employment. If this goal is met, the risks of offending diminish.’**

Youth Justice Board

- *In 2008-9 48% of 16-18 young offenders finished their orders without suitable education, training or employment. (Less than 16 hours provision.)*
- *Currently we have 35 NEET offenders out of a cohort of 94 with open orders (June 2009) (37.23%)*
- *Citywide the 3 month average NEET figure in 2008 was 7.78%*

**National Indicator 45 – Engagement by young people who offend in suitable education, training and employment
(25hrs for school age and 16hrs for above school age)**

Objective	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Improve ETE hours of those of school age	80% in suitable ETE	76%	55%	57%	58%
Improve ETE hours of those above school age	55% in suitable ETE	60%	50%	39%	56%
Improve ETE hours of all young people with YOT	70% in suitable ETE	66%	52%	44%	57%

The process

- Young people are referred to the project by their caseworker, or picked up through data sharing.
- They are given an interview and matched with an employer.
- They are escorted to an interview to discuss the job.
- They are supported to attend for the first couple of days and then checked over the duration of the placement.
- They are paid for the work they have done and given post placement support.



Current Situation

- The Project receives funding from OLASS, Connexions and Brighton and Hove City Council.
- The Project has been recognised as an example of good practice by OLASS and visited by Hampshire and Kent YOTs.
- 55 young people were referred in 2008/9.
- Of these 28 completed at least 2 weeks on a placement and 7 had more than one placement.
- 26 young people progressed onto training or employment.
- 16 different employers were used with Rainbow Builders, Hove YMCA and Honeycroft Nursery as the main ones.
- Reasons for failing to complete or progress included moving out of area, becoming a parent and going into custody.

Keys to success



- Personal relationships with employers.
- Personalised placements- each organised individually between young person and employer.
- Pay!
- ‘Safe’ environment for young person to start the process.
- Emphasis on ‘soft skills’ learned – develop self esteem and self belief.
- Good record keeping, data sharing and communication.
- Staff experienced in dealing with disengaged young people.

Barriers to success

- Most young people are not 'job ready'.
- Low levels of Literacy and Numeracy.
- Poor communication skills.
- Low self-esteem.
- History of failure within the education system.
- Poor personal organisation skills.
- Lack of appropriate job opportunities in the City.



Ways forward



- Develop working arrangements with the largest employer in the city (the Council!) to improve access to appropriate work placements for 16-18 yr olds.
- Secure long term funding to ensure the future of the project.
- Seek to influence those contracting large projects within the city to guarantee placement opportunities for vulnerable groups. (eg. Falmer developments)
- Bid in place for a part time Teacher to develop Job Readiness Skills.
- Discussions ongoing to assess Connexions provision and links between the project and progression routes.
- Support strategic work to help develop relevant training opportunities on the job and find employers for apprenticeships.