



Time for change

CashBack 180 is delivered by Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 project (Y2K). It provides one-to-one and group support for young people across Midlothian. Young people have an opportunity to develop valuable skills and learn about making positive life choices.

In this case study, a group of young men from Newbattle High School tell us about why they chose to engage with Y2K and what they have learned through their participation.

“ Like other people in the school that you hear their stories and what they’ve done when they’ve been drunk or they’ve been in a fight and when you see them in school you just wouldn’t expect that, and I reckon there are other people that could come to this and get the same understanding”

A chance to change

CashBack 180 was viewed by the young men and trusted adult at school as an opportunity for change. They were encouraged to engage with the programme and recognised that their choices and behaviour leading up to their engagement with Y2K was not acceptable.

“I got charged by the police for assault back in December, and the school thought it would be best for me to come to here to help make sure I wouldn’t do it again.”

“My behaviour in school, and in class, it was pretty disgusting, just being stupid and mucking about.”

“I came along because of my attendance, it’s not good, skipping school and stuff, usually a couple times a week.”

“I’ve just been getting in fights and stuff, so came to this.”

“We were all given the option about coming here and we decided to give it a shot, it was a chance for us to change.”

“I just wanted the chance to turn my behaviour around.”

Expectations and experiences of CashBack 180

They young men described initial scepticism about what to expect during the programme. However, everyone in the group enjoyed their experiences with CashBack 180 and engaged with sessions that made them stop and think.

“I thought honestly it was going to be some pish about how I need to turn it around or I’ve got nae future, but it’s no been like that at all.”

“The session on alcohol gave us another perspective on drinking, the dangers, like this could happen, that could happen kinda thing. You just don’t think about it.”

“The thing where there was like gangsters telling their stories and how they went down the wrong path of drugs and alcohol, gets you thinking, well I don’t want my life to turn out like that.”



“It made me realise how easy it is to hurt someone that badly, and that quickly, just a few punches, especially when I’m a lot bigger than a lot of people my age.”

A place for frank conversations

The group also reflected on how it was easier to talk about sensitive subjects and be completely open with Y2K staff, rather than with teachers.

“Teachers carry themselves with too much professionalism, when it comes to talking about thing like sex and stuff, but with [Y2K staff] it’s not that they’re no professional but you can just talk about it easier.”

“It’s better than trying to do this sort of thing in PSE. [Y2K staff] are easier to talk to and they understand it better than the teachers.”

“I wouldn’t have shared as much as I’ve spoken about or about the things that I have done with any of the teachers. So I can talk to [Y2K staff] about something I’ve done, I realise it’s been stupid and I see that now, and talking it through with them means it doesn’t need to keep getting brought up.”

Making change

The opportunity to discuss, share and reflect on past behaviour and choices, and the chance to think about actions and consequences has led to the young men making positive change.

“As much as I can still be a bit of a **ick, it has helped me to think about my actions, and understand my actions and the consequences.”

“It’s made me think about the consequences before I do something bad. It’s helped me to think twice and try to stop myself from doing something.”

“I’m not skipping school as much, it’s helped me realise that I’m just losing out on education.”

“I think some of my teachers will have noticed an improvement in class.”

In the accompanying case study Fiona MacDonald, Head of House at Newbattle High School, reflects on the importance of Y2K’s support provision to the school and the difference she has seen in the young men that completed the group programme.