



A whole family approach

Positive activities alongside group, one-to-one and drop-in sessions offered through CashBack 180 give young people access to holistic support that other services and organisations are not able to provide.

CashBack 180 is delivered by Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 project (Y2K). The programme provides support to young people in their local community both in and outside of a school setting. In this case study, Julie Hynes, a social worker based in Midlothian, explains how CashBack 180 can respond to and meet needs of young people and families. Julie highlights this by sharing her experiences of working in partnership with CashBack 180* to improve outcomes for a vulnerable young person.

Credibility with young people in the community

Julie first became aware of CashBack 180 when she started working with a family that were already being supported by Y2K, and she also acknowledged Y2K's reputation in the community.

“When I started working with them, they were already working with Y2K and it was really quite evident from the start, just the range of services and the support that they provided to the young people and how that supported the family.”

“As Charlie got a little bit older, once he got to the age and stage where they could be supporting him, he was keen himself to go to Y2K because he'd seen his older siblings going there, being involved in activities. So he started going as soon as he could be involved in that too, the kind of whole family support.”

“ I mean, they have played a massive role in us being able to maintain [young person] at home and him not coming into care.”

“The other thing that’s really important to note is that they’re actually seen by young people. There’s nobody that you will come across that speak about them negatively. Everybody sees them as a positive. As I say, you’ve got young people who may be involved in offending behaviour, they may be involved in various different behaviours, and yet, they still engage with Y2K. They still want to go there, they like the staff, they have good relationships.”

Valued partners

Julie reflected on CashBack 180’s successful partnership work with other agencies, and the value they add. Their contribution, strong communication skills and effective information sharing practices are seen as key strengths in partnership working.

“I phone them any time to share concerns, they would phone me, we email, they come along to multi-agency meetings, they totally contribute to Charlie’s plan. They help to put, for example, over the summer time, they were able to contribute to Charlie’s plan in terms of what Y2K had on offer to support the family, what they could be doing to support Charlie.”

“Communication with them is brilliant. If they’ve got any concerns, they will phone me and they have very good contact with the parents. Parents will phone them for support and then they will alert me if there’s anything, or we’ll discuss things. They’re very easy to get in touch with and the communication with them is brilliant.”

“They’ve also been able to work alongside us at times when we’re both working. One time I had to go and see Charlie, there was a bit of a breakdown at home and it was actually one of the Y2K staff that alerted me. I actually said, you know, can you come with me to support Charlie while I support Mum, because I knew that Charlie would respond really positively to them coming along.”

Whole family support

Julie described how support from CashBack 180 sometimes extends beyond the young people they work with to include the whole family, and she explained that this wider support was also key to supporting the young person. She also reflected on the wide range of services that Y2K offer and their valuable, unique position in the landscape of support provided by different agencies.

“They are a massive support to that family unit as a whole and they’re also in the local community. They’re available various nights of the week outwith hours that we wouldn’t be available to support the family. Also, I think the family see them as a supportive organisation as opposed to social work or police or whatever. So family will speak with them, they’ll share concerns and information, and Y2K staff will get permission to share that with us.”

“The range of activities that they’re able to offer Charlie, you know, whether that’s youth clubs during the week, and school holidays, there’s activities on almost every day of the week, there’s supportive groups, they’ll have one-to-one sessions with Charlie if need be. When we’ve had concerns about, for example, sexualised behaviour, they were able to pick that up with one-to-one sessions, and he has such a good relationship with them, that actually he’s much more open to discussing challenging things with them. “

“When the school come to the multi-agency meetings and, for example, when Y2K are telling us about what they’re able to put in place, the school’s absolutely always astounded as well with the range of services that Y2K can offer, especially somebody like Charlie. Whether it’s kind of one-to-one work on violence and aggression, whether it’s encouraging him to go to sports and activities, whether it’s for him to use as a kind of almost like a respite at night times. Everybody always thinks they really are a great resource.”

“The range of activities and groups and interventions that they can offer is far more than we can do on a day-to-day basis, to be honest.”

The brightest future possible

The boundaries and rules that young people need to adhere to when they are engaged with CashBack 180 were seen to be essential in setting expectations and creating a positive environment. Julie also highlighted the role that CashBack 180 had played in ensuring Charlie was able to remain in the family home, and her desire to have Y2K offer more programmes like CashBack 180, so that more young people could access this kind of support.

“They have very clear rules and boundaries for the young people. And that is so important. Charlie for example, he gets a clear message that if this is how you’re behaving, you can’t come here. For him, that is so important, because otherwise, that behaviour would just carry on. I also see that is why it’s such a positive place for him to be, because he knows when he goes there, there are expectations that he can completely comply with.”

“Because they are able to pick up calls from Mum, outwith times which we might not be able to respond. So I think they have played a massive role in just supporting Charlie to be able to stay at home. You know, at times when the family have been in crisis, we’ve got health issues with parents and other things, they’re very much there.”

“It’s actually one of these places, when I’m thinking about young people that have got in circumstances, I often think, why have we not got more places like this, because for me as a social worker, and to be allocated this family in particular, Y2K is a massive, massive support to me.”

*Pseudonyms have been used for family members to maintain anonymity.

In the accompanying case study, Charlie talks about his experiences of engaging with CashBack 180 and the importance of the support he has received.