

Tomorrow's People

Getting Out to Work

Getting Out to Work is an innovative programme designed by Tomorrow's People to provide intensive one-to-one support and advocacy to ex-offenders aged between 16 and 24 to help them find and sustain long-term employment.

This document summarises the findings of an independent evaluation carried out by New Economics Foundation (nef) of a Getting Out to Work pilot project on Merseyside. It includes an overview of the project's impact on the individuals who took part and on the communities in which they live. Also included is a summary of the social and economic impacts of the initiative, as determined by the use of the Social Return on Investment model, which nef has introduced to the UK from the USA.

nef has calculated that the Social Return on Investment for Getting Out to Work is 10.5:1 – for every pound invested in the Getting Out to Work programme, £10.50 of social value would be created for society.

Danny's story

At 22 Danny had already spent time in prison and with virtually no previous work experience he faced an uphill struggle to find work. While in prison he had gained an impressive range of qualifications from GCSE passes in Maths and French to Food Aid Hygiene, BOWLA Leaders' Award (weight training), OCR Stage 1 computer training, and Key Skills Stages 1 and 2 adult literacy, together with various sports certificates and a City & Guilds in Wall and Floor Tiling. However, he had no clear idea of what he wanted to do, nor had he received any guidance on the options available.

Danny was introduced to Tomorrow's People's Getting Out to Work programme on Merseyside and confidential discussions with his adviser enabled him to identify his preferred and realistic options for future sustainable work. His aim was to secure a job in catering and although he would have liked to return to full-time education to take a catering course, this was not practical for him and his adviser introduced him to Chef Modern Apprenticeship opportunities, whereby four days are spent working and one day at college. With his adviser's support he prepared a CV and completed a number of job applications.

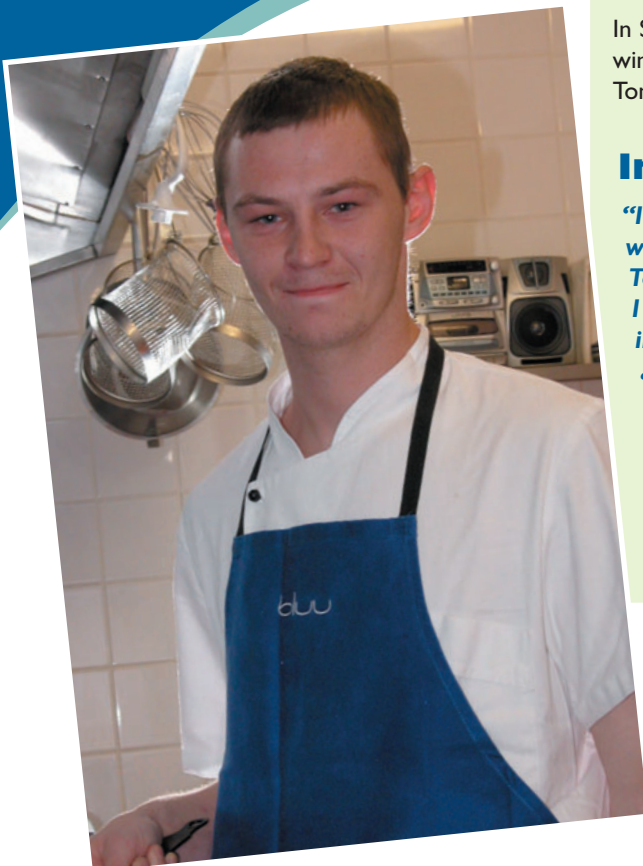
Danny was offered an interview for a commis chef position in a Liverpool restaurant and after practising interview techniques with his adviser, passed the real interview with flying colours. As a result, Danny started his first job in July 2003 and has now been in employment for more than fifteen months and was recently promoted to Chef de Partie. Furthermore, as the job incorporated a Modern Apprenticeship, Tomorrow's People helped Danny win a place on a one-day a week training course at Liverpool Community College where he studies NVQ Levels 1 and 2 in Food Preparation and Cooking. His employer says of him, "Danny has more than earned his place in the kitchen team and is an established and important member of the team here at Bluu."

In September 2004 Danny's achievements were recognised when he was winner of the Personal Achievement category for 16 to 24 year-olds in Tomorrow's People's Awards for Achievement.

In Danny's words

"I didn't have the confidence to get a job straight away, it was only when I met Tomorrow's People that they showed me I could. Tomorrow's People gave me the support I needed to make a go of it. I can see why many leaving jail don't know where to start and end up in trouble again."

"If someone told me ten years ago that I could be in this position I wouldn't have believed them. I am not proud of what I did and when I left prison I didn't think there would be opportunities for someone like me. But thanks to Tomorrow's People I have been able to go straight, work hard and have the life I should have had when I left school."



Background

Tomorrow's People's Getting Out to Work pilot programme was launched on Merseyside in July 2003. The programme is supported by the European Social Fund, Diageo Great Britain and the National Probation Service – Merseyside.

The economic and social conditions prevailing on Merseyside, particularly for young people facing the challenge of finding employment and keeping their lives on track after time in prison, made the region a good testing ground for the pilot programme. In 2003 Merseyside continued to suffer some of the highest deprivation and unemployment rates in the country. In April 2003, at the start of the Getting Out to Work programme, unemployment across Merseyside was 7.7% versus 5.2% in North West England and 5.1% nationally. Out of a total 118 wards across Merseyside, 19% were in the top 1% of the most deprived in England, while 43% were in the top 5%.

The Getting Out to Work Programme

Getting Out to Work is designed to help 16-24 year-old male and female ex-offenders break the vicious cycle of re-offending and find long-term employment. It focuses on helping individuals to overcome their personal barriers towards employment and other related factors causing them to re-offend, such as drug and alcohol misuse, poor basic skills, low self-esteem, motivation to work and problems with debt and housing.

The emphasis is on providing tailored, one-to-one intensive support at every stage of an individual's rehabilitation, from a detailed assessment of their capabilities and training needs (incorporated within an Individual Action Plan), to practical help with preparing for interviews, job placement and post-employment aftercare support and employer liaison. When other problems arise for a client – for example with housing, debt or drug or alcohol abuse, Tomorrow's People introduces other agencies to provide targeted, specialist support.

There are six key stages to the Getting Out to Work programme:

Offender assessment	Programme candidates are identified through a network of partners, including Probation Service, prisons' pre-release schemes, NACRO, New Deal initiatives and self-referral.
Issues identification	A Getting Out to Work adviser meets with each candidate to assess the individual's personal barriers to employment. The adviser seeks to identify all related factors, such as drug and alcohol misuse, poor communication skills, low self-esteem and financial problems.
Action planning and advocacy	Based on the individual's issues assessment, the Getting Out to Work adviser develops a personal action plan that identifies what support programmes are needed to make practical changes. The adviser then works one-to-one with the individual to ensure the action plan is followed, and to advocate on behalf of the individual, organising his/her job search, training or any specialist support.
Job placement	The Getting Out to Work adviser identifies potential employers, contacts them on behalf of the individual, and 'sells' the individual to the employer. The adviser explains the individual's circumstances and ensures ongoing contact and support from Getting Out to Work for the first twelve months of employment. Aftercare will also continue beyond the initial twelve months should the client feel in need of support. The adviser also works closely with the individual, doing whatever is necessary to help them get and keep the job. This can include helping with the mode of dress for interviews, accompanying the individual to interviews, and accompanying the individual to the door on his/her first day of work.
After care (post employment)	During the first week of employment the Getting Out to Work adviser makes separate contact with the employer and employee, daily if necessary, to ensure any initial problems are addressed quickly. In weeks two through to four the adviser makes contact twice weekly; in months two and three, once weekly; and in months three through to six, as frequently as required.
Monitoring and tracking	The Getting Out to Work adviser continues to track and monitor the individual in sustained employment up to one year after leaving the programme.

The vulnerability of young ex-offenders

Young offenders are among those facing the greatest barriers to sustainable employment, with the result that re-offending continues to be a chronic problem amongst this group. According to the Home Office, more than half of all ex-offenders, and almost 75% of those with 11 or more convictions, will be charged with further offences.

The Social Exclusion Unit has identified nine key factors contributing to re-offending rates: education; employment; drug and alcohol abuse; mental and physical health; attitudes and self-control; institutionalisation and inadequate life skills; housing; financial support and debt and family networks. While employment is often the single most important factor in reducing re-offending rates, all causes can play a significant role, so it is important that initiatives targeting ex-offenders must work in concert with each other.

With only 23% of young ex-offenders having a paid job arranged before their release from prison, they form a very vulnerable group within society. To reduce the risks of re-offending it is vital that an extra level of support is provided to help individuals rehabilitate themselves when they leave prison.

Tomorrow's People's Getting Out to Work programme takes a holistic approach to helping re-offenders tackle the challenge of finding sustainable employment.

Tomorrow's People has established a network of multi-agency partnerships at local, regional and national levels with private, public and voluntary sector bodies to help young ex-offenders address the various issues they face. Tomorrow's People's goal is to help each individual gain the necessary life skills and qualifications to enable them to find and keep a long-term job.

Positive Outcomes On Merseyside

The Getting Out to Work programme continues to run on Merseyside. The outcomes described below relate to those who registered in the first year of the programme, which ran from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004. Of the 110 young ex-offenders who registered, the following positive outcomes have so far been achieved:

- 19 clients successfully obtained work, 17 of whom were still employed at 30 June 2004, with one of the two who no longer had a job returning to Tomorrow's People for further support. Tomorrow's People will continue to monitor this group and provide ongoing support until each individual has been in a job for a year.
- 19 clients started training; seven of whom found jobs as a result of this; four remain in training; eight dropped out of the programme.
- 39 clients were still engaged in job search activities as at 30 June 2004, with Tomorrow's People continuing to provide one-to-one support.
- Success rates improved with age. Of the 30 clients aged 18-20, 4 (13%) obtained a job. For clients aged 21-22, the results were six out of 30 (20%); and for those aged 23-24, 8 out of 20 (40%).

Clients gained work in a range of industries, with the most common jobs found in heavy industry (5 clients), retail (3), construction (2) and sports and leisure (2). Those with higher qualifications were more likely to obtain sustainable jobs than those with lesser or no qualifications – for example, 11 out of 39 clients (28%) with NVQ 1 or higher qualifications.

Not surprisingly the nature of young offenders means that they are a difficult population to monitor over a sustained period – it can be difficult to keep in touch with them, particularly if they drop out of the programme or leave their job. Against this background, it is inevitable that Tomorrow's People would lose contact with some of the individuals who registered – three notified Tomorrow's People that they had moved out of the area, while 54 others dropped contact, so Tomorrow's People is unable to report an outcome for these people.

These outcomes demonstrate that Tomorrow's People's Getting Out to Work model of personalised, intensive support for ex-offenders can significantly improve their chances of finding long-term sustainable employment.

Independent Assessment of Getting Out to Work On Merseyside

Tomorrow's People commissioned the New Economics Foundation (nef) to conduct an independent evaluation of the Getting Out to Work project on Merseyside, which assessed the initiative's impact in terms of its effectiveness and its social and economic return to the wider community. A full copy of nef's evaluation report is available from Tomorrow's People.

nef's findings included:

- In its first 12 months the Getting Out to Work programme placed 17% of its clients into jobs, exceeding funding objectives and regional averages.
- Re-offending rates for Getting Out to Work clients were 15-20% lower than national averages.
- Over a five-year period Getting Out to Work clients will benefit on average by an incremental £3,700 per year, which does not include other less tangible benefits like improved life stability, which over the long-term can generate significant social impact for the client.

Return on Investment

As part of its evaluation nef carried out an assessment of the return on the investment. nef did this by calculating the Social Return on Investment (SROI), which enables organisations to quantify the social value that they are creating. Key findings included:

- For every £1 invested in the Getting Out to Work programme, £10.50 of social value would be created for society in terms of reduced welfare costs, increased tax contribution, and reduced costs of crime. This translates into an average gain for the State of an incremental £9,400 per Getting Out to Work client each year.
- The incremental social value created by the Getting Out to Work programme is £492,000, or £4,470 per client. Furthermore, nef calculated that Getting Out to Work would need to help 13 people into sustainable employment in each year to break even on the programme investment – in the first year alone Getting Out to Work helped 17 clients into sustainable work.
- nef estimated that society as a whole saved £12,400 in non-criminal justice costs (eg victims' medical costs and property damage) for every Getting Out to Work client that did not re-offend.

In its report nef commented that its analysis did not attempt to measure less tangible benefits, such as increased life stability, which are potentially significant. On that basis nef acknowledged that the social returns calculated understated the true social value represented by the Getting Out to Work programme.

nef concluded that:

“Getting Out to Work has shown that personalised, intensive support for ex-offenders can significantly improve their chances of finding long-term, sustainable employment. Moreover, sustainability of employment is arguably a key differentiating factor in the initiative’s success.”

Next Steps

Tomorrow's People's Getting Out to Work pilot programme provides good evidence that with one-to-one intensive and practical support, young ex-offenders can be helped to find and sustain employment. This undoubtedly benefits the individual and the community in which they live and provides measurable economic benefit both at a local and a national level.

There is considerable scope for setting up and running similar programmes throughout the UK and Tomorrow's People is urgently seeking ways to:

- Develop and deliver the Getting Out to Work model with other relevant partner organisations at a local level.
- Secure sustainable funding to enable Tomorrow's People to establish a sound national infrastructure in order to deliver this service to the target group.
- Work with the relevant government departments to help inform future strategy for supporting this group, and to identify and implement effective national programmes that help young ex-offenders to achieve their individual potential and to move from being a drain on society to being contributors.

Tomorrow's People has wide-ranging experience of helping young people to shape their life through education, training and employment. Tomorrow's People is keen to work with your organisation to explore how a programme like Getting Out to Work can be developed, funded and run in your area. For an initial discussion please contact us at the address opposite:



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
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NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

DIAGEO

Merseyside

How Social Return on Investment analysis works

Social Return on Investment analysis is the process of understanding, measuring and reporting on the social, environmental and economic value that is created by an organisation.

For example, when a previously unemployed person completes a training programme and starts a new job, not only does s/he increase his/her personal income, but also s/he creates value for the government by paying taxes and no longer claiming welfare benefits.

Furthermore, there are other benefits to society that arise from programmes like Getting Out to Work such as reduced crime, which Social Return on Investment analysis puts a value on.



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