

Introduction

Cool Choices is a ground-breaking and innovative initiative bringing together Start360, Northern Ireland's leading provider of support services to young people, and Cool FM, the province's foremost commercial radio station with the largest audience reach to young people. The Big Lottery Fund has funded the pilot programme over a 2-year funding period August 2014-September 2016.

Cool Choices is a 15 week programme that aims to help young people, aged 16-24, who are not in employment, education or training, to develop their broadcast, production and digital media skills whilst also providing the support necessary for them to deal with their barriers to employment and support them to pursue a career in line with their ambitions. Transferable skills include communication, negotiation, working in a team, interpersonal skills and general research skills.

What people have said

Service Users

"Start360 are giving me more opportunities to grow and I'm very appreciative of this. I feel like I'm building a life for myself and I wouldn't be where I am now if it wasn't for all the help, support and guidance over the past 8 months."

"I am very grateful for this opportunity. This year I also stepped inside a university and did a short course in community development. For somebody with my background to step into a university is somewhere that I thought I would never be."

"I really can't thank these guys enough for everything they have done for me! I've come so far with the help of these guys!"

"I can fully say with confidence that I might not be here today without this programme. It has completely changed my life."

"I had been dealing with my mental health; anxiety and depression. I was in a bad place and to think that I would ever get better was impossible!"

Family and carers

"She is much keener for employment, has a better idea of what she wants to do, she is more confident. She really enjoyed the programme and she loved being part of the Cool team."

"The thought of doing anything would have terrified him. He can visualise his future pathway now."

Coolchoices



www.mycoolchoices.co.uk

CoolFM **START360**
Putting YOU in the centre

BIG LOTTERY FUND

Social Impact 2016

ACTIVITY FOR 2014-2016 IN NUMBERS

92

Cool Choices participants

78

OCN in peer education qualifications gained

77

ONC in digital media qualifications gained

385

Media Bus contacts

30

People into further education

20

People have gained employment

29

Have been referred to further support

£500,000

Funding from Big Lottery Fund

SERVICES PROVIDED



Broadcast and digital media training



Recording and editing audio experience for broadcast & web



Developing and producing a dedicated digital radio show



Website maintenance and blogging



Employability training and peer education training with coaching experience



Presenting and interview skills development



One to one tailored mentoring support



Supported work placements and employment taster opportunities

SOCIAL IMPACT

Start360 and Cool FM commissioned Gauge NI to carry out a Social Return on Investment (SROI) assessment of the Cool Choices programme. The SROI model uses monetary value to represent the social costs and benefits of the programme and the evaluation found that for every £1 invested in services in 2015-2016, approximately £24 of social and economic value will be returned. The SROI analysis was based on one year's data as per SROI standards.

For every

£1

invested

£24

is generated in social value

£78,841

Family / carers

£4,840,158

Cool Choices participants

£26,273

Start 360 Cool FM

£310,503

Health & social care

£209,083

Justice system

The most significant outcomes relate to the service users and include:

- Increased skills and qualifications in digital media and peer education
- Increased employment
- Increased involvement in further education
- Increased levels of confidence and self-esteem
- Reduced social isolation & improved relationships
- Improved levels of mental health and resilience
- Improved communication and coping
- Decreased reduction in use of alcohol and drugs

There have been considerable outcomes for the other stakeholder groups too including:

- Peace of mind for carers and family members
- Improved relations for the families
- Increased processes for Cool FM and Start360
- Programming concepts for Cool FM
- Succession planning and recruitment for Cool FM

Health and Social Care benefits from:

- Decreased engagement of service users in health and social care
- Time and resource savings for Intermediate Care Teams
- Decreased reduction in use of alcohol and drugs

Justice System benefits from:

- Decreased engagement of service users in justice system
- Time and resource savings for juvenile justice, jail and probation

Our impact summary:

- £1: £24 SROI ratio of £1 so for every pound put into the programme £24 of social value is generated
- £5,466,979 Social value created by Cool Choices in 2015-2016
- £59,401 Social value generated for each service user