



There are some 790,000*
young people 'NEET' –
not in education, employment
or training – in the UK

*source: DCSF 2007

A free training programme to help practitioners
help 'NEET' young people make sense
of money

from the FSA's National Strategy for Financial Capability.



The National Strategy has developed a training and support package to help practitioners help NEET young people with money matters. Following a two-year pilot, the result is Young People and Money, a free and accessible programme of one-day intensive training for youth work practitioners working with NEET groups across the UK.

The FSA leads the National Strategy for Financial Capability. Our vision is to create

'better informed, educated and more confident citizens, able to take greater responsibility for their financial affairs and play a more active role in the market for financial services.'

Building Financial Capability in the UK, FSA, 2004

Young people face more responsibilities and challenges than ever, but the Financial Capability Survey shows they have lower financial capability than other groups (Financial Capability in the UK: Establishing a Baseline, FSA, 2006). And, 94% of 16-year-olds believe it is important to learn how to manage their money.

Reaching young people in the NEET group is essential but notoriously challenging. So we work through the organisations they know and trust. These organisations recognise the need to help young people make sense of money, but practitioners often lack the tools, training and confidence needed to do this.

Working in partnership, we developed Young People and Money with Fairbridge and Citizens Advice. The training programme is being delivered for us by Lifeline, A4E, Fairbridge West, and Citizens Advice (Northern Ireland). All have a proven track record in working in the NEET sector.

Young People and Money contributes to a number of policy imperatives including the Government's long-term approach to financial capability, the FSA's National Strategy for Financial Capability, 'Every Child Matters' in England, and NEET policy across the UK. In Local Government, the reduction of NEET young people was the most popular indicator chosen by English councils for Local Area Agreements in 2008.

'Being NEET is a major predictor of later unemployment, low incomes, teenage motherhood, depression and poor physical health.'

Department for Education and Skills, Public Service Agreement Review, March 2005

We aim that by 2011 financial capability is embedded within major government and charitable/voluntary sector organisations providing services to young adults NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. These organisations will be aware of the training, and most will routinely be providing training for their staff.

About Young People and Money

Young People and Money aims to give practitioners the understanding, information and skills to feel confident about including personal finance in their work with NEET young people.

It covers:

- understanding the psychology of young people and money;
- helping young people make the most of their money, manage debt, and make informed choices about saving and borrowing;
- embedding in practice.

A course schedule and booking information is available at www.ypam.org.

The results

We asked ECOTEC Research and Consulting to evaluate Young People and Money, to find out how practitioners are using the skills gained; and if they are helping young people become more financially capable and changing their attitudes to money. The results will shape the programme's UK roll-out from 2007 to 2010.

Those surveyed were from sectors representative of those attending the training – youth work; supported housing; information, advice and guidance; social care; criminal justice; and parenting workers. It also included a group from Centrepont, the charity for homeless young people, which helped us with a spotlight study from November 2007 to March 2008 giving us feedback to help development of Young People and Money.





Practitioners were interviewed at three separate time intervals:

- At the point of training;
- Interim – Between one and three months after training;
- Final – Between three and six months after training.

The findings show that the **Young People and Money programme is having an impact, and that by providing youth work practitioners with the tools to support young people in becoming financially capable it can positively impact on a young person's life.**

"Everything was useful. I had already covered some of the exercises in previous training, but it was the first that I worked on credit, debt, and the consequences, which I found really useful and will definitely put into practice in group workshops."

Practitioner, training attendee

At the Final survey they felt they had made the most significant impact in:

- helping young people make the most of their money – 83%
- helping them with planning ahead/unexpected changes – 83%
- helping them make ends meet/keeping up with bills and payments – 82%
- helping them to keep track of their finances – 82%.

(108 surveyed)

"You need to think ahead with your money, otherwise if you think about it, when it comes to it, that's when you start spending money on what you don't need".

Young person, survey respondent

the impact... on practitioners

Findings show that there is a positive impact for practitioners participating in Young People and Money.

Most (82%) had not previously undertaken money management training, but saw providing money matters support as central to their work:

- 84% said they need more training to be able to offer specific information and guidance;
- 97% said that money matters support is not a waste of time!

Before attending, 85% of practitioners considered providing money matters support a way to meet the Every Child Matters agenda or equivalent. (230 surveyed)

After training, practitioners felt that training had helped them support young people. They had increased confidence in their ability to:

- engage young people in money matters – 83%
- support them to manage their money and keep track of their finances – 80%
- help young people to plan ahead with their money – 79%.

(155 surveyed)

Practitioners found it useful to have a local advice worker attend the training day: this increases their awareness of local services and enables them to refer young people to specialist advice when necessary.

Over 90% of practitioners said they were satisfied with the training pack provided (3,732 surveyed). Usage of the materials increased between Interim and Final surveys.

the impact... on young people

Practitioners are positive about the impact of the training on the young people they worked with.

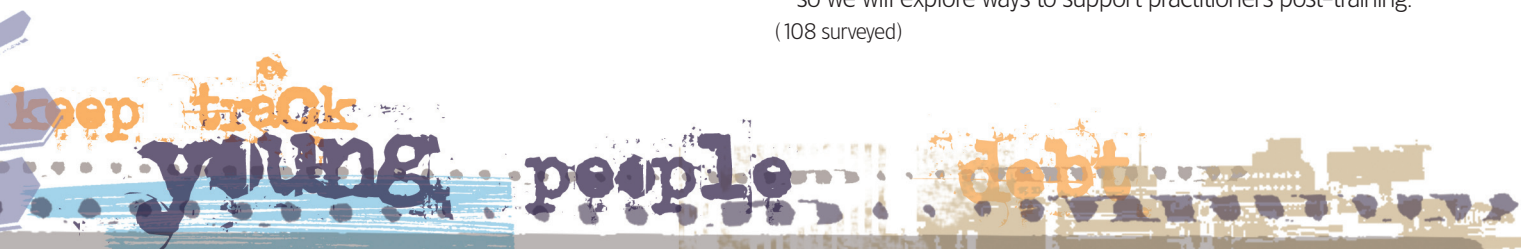
At Interim

- 61% of practitioners felt the programme would help them to signpost young people to specialist debt advice;
- 59% thought they would be able to help young people to make the most of their money and keep track of their finances.

(155 surveyed)

At Final, these figures changed to 50% and 36% respectively. This may reflect the continued economic downturn and organisational pressures. It may indicate the need for further support to enhance the skills and knowledge of the practitioners – so we will explore ways to support practitioners post-training.

(108 surveyed)





Practitioner participation in Young People and Money had a positive effect on how NEET young people managed their money and how they felt about money issues.

NEET young people are interested in improving their savings behaviour despite two-thirds having no savings or not able to afford to save. The programme improved saving behaviour, seeing:

- a 17% reduction overall between 'At point of training' and Final in the number of young people with no savings;
- a 15% reduction in young people who were in debt, indicating greater understanding of debts and debt management.

(Surveyed: At point of training – 84; Final – 132)

Although relatively small numbers, for a group relying almost solely on benefits this is an encouraging finding.

"It impacts on me because I am the sort of person, I like to spend money. When I am spending it a good way I feel even better about it because I know I am getting my money's worth on what I am spending, and saving money for when I get a place... I've got the money there".

Young person, survey respondent

Young people showed increased confidence with money: When asked 'How do you feel about your money situation?' fewer described themselves as 'worried/stressed' at each of the three survey stages.

"I can budget my money now but before I got the help I couldn't. It was all going down the drain."

Young person, survey respondent

There was a small but indicative and sustained increase of 2–3% in the proportion of young people gaining employment at each survey stage – suggesting that those who had received more support in money matters were more likely to get a job.

(Surveyed: At point of training – 84; Interim – 158; Final – 132)

Conclusion

Practitioners believe that providing money matters support for young people is part of their role, but say that they lack the training and resources to do so. Through the Young People and Money programme, practitioners gain increased confidence in providing money matters support, and are able to help young people effectively.

In turn, young people feel more confident with their money matters, are better able to keep track, reduce their debt, and possibly increase their chance of gaining employment.

ECOTECs research makes a number of recommendations. We are considering how to respond to these and further develop the Young People and Money programme.

For more information on Young People and Money and the work of the National Strategy for Financial Capability visit

www.fsa.gov.uk/financial_capability

For a schedule of events and booking information, visit the Young People and Money web site at

www.ypam.org