



Going Forward – Bridges Project Case Study

Since May 2017, Fast Forward's Going Forward team has worked with over 30 organisations, across Edinburgh and the Lothians, to deliver 200 group - work sessions for high-tariff, vulnerable and at-risk young people. One organisation that we have worked with is Bridges Project in Musselburgh. Read on to hear more from Nicola Falconer, Tutor on Bridges Project's Skills for Life team.

Can you tell us a bit about what Bridges Project does?

Bridges Project is an independent, local charity that works with young people in East Lothian and Midlothian to help them manage the transition from adolescence to young adulthood and life beyond school. Our one-to-one and group-work services are flexible and tailored to meet the needs and ambitions of young people. Services are offered on a voluntary basis and are free and confidential.

How did find out about Going Forward?

In Autumn 2017, two members of the Fast Forward team came to Bridges Project to give a talk explaining their new Going Forward service at a staff meeting. Following on from this, I spoke to the Going Forward team, explained what I was looking for, and asked for a programme that was tailored to the needs of two separate client groups that I work with. Since then, Going Forward has delivered several blocks of sessions for the Skills for Life, Transitions and Way 2 Work#Cashback teams at Bridges Project.

How have the Going Forward sessions integrated with the work that you already deliver?

These sessions have provided group-work and supported learning opportunities for young people who have not consistently engaged with school, meaning that they have missed vital PSE and Health and Wellbeing sessions. Many of the young people that attended the sessions have missed significant amounts of education and many face risky behaviour choices. These sessions provide vital information that can affect their long-term employment prospects.



What did you particularly like about the sessions?

Whilst everything has been fantastic about the sessions, and thanks again to the Going Forward team for their continued support, we particularly liked the way the sessions are always planned in a way that fits the needs and requests of the young people. The sessions also fit really well with our current activities and work.

What sort of impact do you think the sessions have had on the young people that you support?

Well, I certainly feel that all of the young people that have attended Going Forward sessions now have an increased awareness of risk taking behaviours and have an increased knowledge of how these behaviours can affect their own health and wellbeing.

The group work environment has encouraged some young people, who have struggled in the past, to integrate and work with others in a group setting. This has enabled some to express their thoughts on issues that, in the past, they might have remained silent on. I'm confident that the interpersonal and communication skills developed in the safety of the group setting will enable young people to express their knowledge and views when in a social setting.

Would you recommend Going Forward to another organisation?

Absolutely! After starting with the delivery of sessions for my area of work (Skills for Life) the Going Forward team has gone on to deliver sessions for our Transitions team and our Way 2 Work#Cashback team. I am very keen to continue to work with the Going Forward team, and will do so with future groups.

Want to find out more about Going Forward?

To find out more about the Going Forward project, or discuss ways in which Going Forward could work with your organisation to develop and deliver a programme of sessions tailored to the specific needs of the young people that you support, simply e-mail one of the team, or give us a call:

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