

Young people and the impact of recession - increased demand for Prince's Trust services February 2010

- Long term unemployment and dependence on the state is a growing issue for young people.
- We need to invest in support and training for young people now, to prevent them becoming a lost a generation
- Prince's Trust programmes work, getting more than three in four young people into education, employment or training
- Youth unemployment is now costing the state more than £3.5 million per day in Jobseeker's Allowance

Context

The effects of recession are hitting young people throughout the UK hard. The pattern emerging is of growing numbers of young people facing long term unemployment. Figures published in February 2010 show 923,000¹ 16-24 year olds are unemployed. Whilst this has slightly fallen, the number of 18 to 24 year olds claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for over a year has almost doubled from 11,800 in the last quarter to 21,900².

The numbers claiming Jobseeker's Allowance is currently at its highest figure since April 1997. There are 492,900³ 18 to 24-year-olds claiming Jobseeker's Allowance at a cost of more than £3.5 million per day. This figure is an increase since the last quarter and has doubled since 2007.

Despite a need for more apprenticeship places, these opportunities are continuing to fall, reversing almost a decade of apprenticeship growth. Last year saw 8,000 fewer places for under-18s and a drop of 5,400 for 18 to 25-year-olds. There have been 6,500 fewer apprenticeships in the first quarter of this academic year compared with last year, a decline of approximately 6 per cent⁴.

In response to the dramatic rise in youth unemployment, the Government launched its Backing Young Britain campaign in July 2009. The Prince's Trust welcomes the Government's campaign to help young people into work, avoiding the catastrophic consequences of previous recessions. However this is just a small step to conquer a much bigger problem. The Trust believes that British business must take up this challenge to provide structured, meaningful work experience placements for young people. Only by doing so can we tap into their lost potential and provide a much-needed boost to the UK economy.

The Prince's Trust is also in ongoing discussions with the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats about their policies relating to youth unemployment.

The decline in recruitment is creating a build up of young people who leave school trying to access a job market offering little opportunity. There is no doubt that

¹ Labour Market Statistical Bulletin February 2010

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Statistical First Release on Post 16 – Education and Skills (Jan 10) includes provisional number of apprenticeships and Train to Gain starts and achievements for the first quarter 2009/10

disadvantaged young people are among the most vulnerable in society to further social exclusion during recession.

Impact on The Prince's Trust

With rising youth unemployment, disadvantaged young people are being pushed further and further away from job opportunities as they compete with the more skilled unemployed young people. The Trust is clearly seeing a rise in enquiries from those young people who do not traditionally fit within our target groups, for example more skilled and qualified young people who have become unemployed for longer periods.

The impact of the recession on young people has led to an increase in demand for our services. Anecdotally we hear that demand for our programmes is soaring, for example when we recruited for Get Into Cars (our pre-apprenticeship programme) in Glasgow in January 2010, 200 young people applied for 15 places.

It is clear that Prince's Trust programmes continue to be effective during recession with more than three in four young people going on to positive outcomes.

How The Trust is responding to a rise in youth unemployment

The Trust recognises the negative impact that long-term youth unemployment and worklessness can have on individuals, their families and the wider community. We are responding to the rise in youth unemployment in a number of ways:

In January 2010 The Trust launched its '**Undiscovered**' campaign. The campaign aims to maximise the support available to young people and stop the unemployed becoming unemployable. The campaign highlights six young people who have turned their lives around and gained employment through support from The Prince's Trust. The campaign aims to inspire unemployed young people before their talents are potentially lost forever.

In February 2010 The Trust launched its '*Britain's Lost Talent?*' report, one of the largest ever surveys of young people not in employment, education or training. The report highlights how many nurses, plumbers, builders, police officers and mechanics the UK economy could potentially lose if young people are not given the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The Trust is working with employers, particularly through our Get Into programme, to provide real apprenticeship and job opportunities for unemployed young people across these, and other sectors.

In January 2010 The Trust launched its **Youth Index** report which highlighted the plight of unemployed young people who were less likely to be happy with every aspect of their lives compared with those who work. The Trust believes that supporting young people's emotional wellbeing during and following a recession is absolutely essential. While Prince's Trust programmes are principally designed to get young people into jobs and training, they can also have a **positive effect on overall wellbeing**. Through boosting young people's confidence and motivation, we enable them to take positive steps towards getting a job. To ensure young people get the right support to improve their resilience and emotional wellbeing, The Trust has recently introduced mental health first aid for staff and partners to ensure that the best possible support is being provided to young people. The Trust is also increasing emotional wellbeing support on our flagship programme Team through better trained staff and introducing social work students on placement as wellbeing support workers.

In July 2009, The Prince's Trust joined the **Backing Young Britain** campaign and is working with partners to identify job opportunities for young people, as well as work experience, internships, apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities. The Trust is considering new welfare initiatives such as the Young Person's Guarantee and the opportunities and potential challenges for our work with young people.

The Trust is currently improving support for unemployed young people, offering them **progression mentoring** following our programmes. This will offer personal support and job coaching to young people, helping them off benefits and into work.

In August 2009, The Trust undertook a review of job opportunities for young people during the recession. As a result of this we are increasing our focus on **industries with growth potential** such as social care, tourism, retail, healthcare and the green industries. The Trust is now identifying new partners to develop and deliver Get Into programmes linked to these sectors.

The Trust continues to build upon its **existing partnerships** with organisations in the private and public sectors that are still able to offer meaningful opportunities leading to employment for young people.

The Trust has tried and tested programmes encouraging **youth volunteering**. In the past year, through Prince's Trust projects such as Team, young people transformed their local communities through 1,000 Prince's Trust projects, an investment worth £6 million. The Trust has recently adjusted its positive outcome measures to include volunteering, alongside employment, education and training. This reflects the overwhelming benefits to our young people and their wider communities of volunteering in helping them become work-ready. It also reflects the need for young people to keep occupied in meaningful voluntary work whilst seeking employment during a recession.

If you are interested in finding out more about our work in this field please contact:

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