

EVALUATION OF THE ST GILES CHOICES PROGRAMME

The key findings from the evaluation of the Choices programme funded by Youth Futures Foundation (YFF) and delivered by St Giles, between August 2021 and September 2023. The programme was independently evaluated by Ipsos UK and Liverpool John Moores University.



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KEY FEATURES OF THE DELIVERY MODEL

Lived experience at the heart of the support: Case workers often had lived experience and volunteers were trained as peer advisors to provide peer-led support.

Bespoke, asset-based, and time-unlimited support, so that young people could engage at times and in a way that suited their needs and motivation. Asset or strengths-based approaches seek to move away from models of support which focus primarily on the deficits (i.e. what is going wrong or missing) of an individual and instead build on their strengths and existing resources when addressing challenges.



WHAT WE FOUND

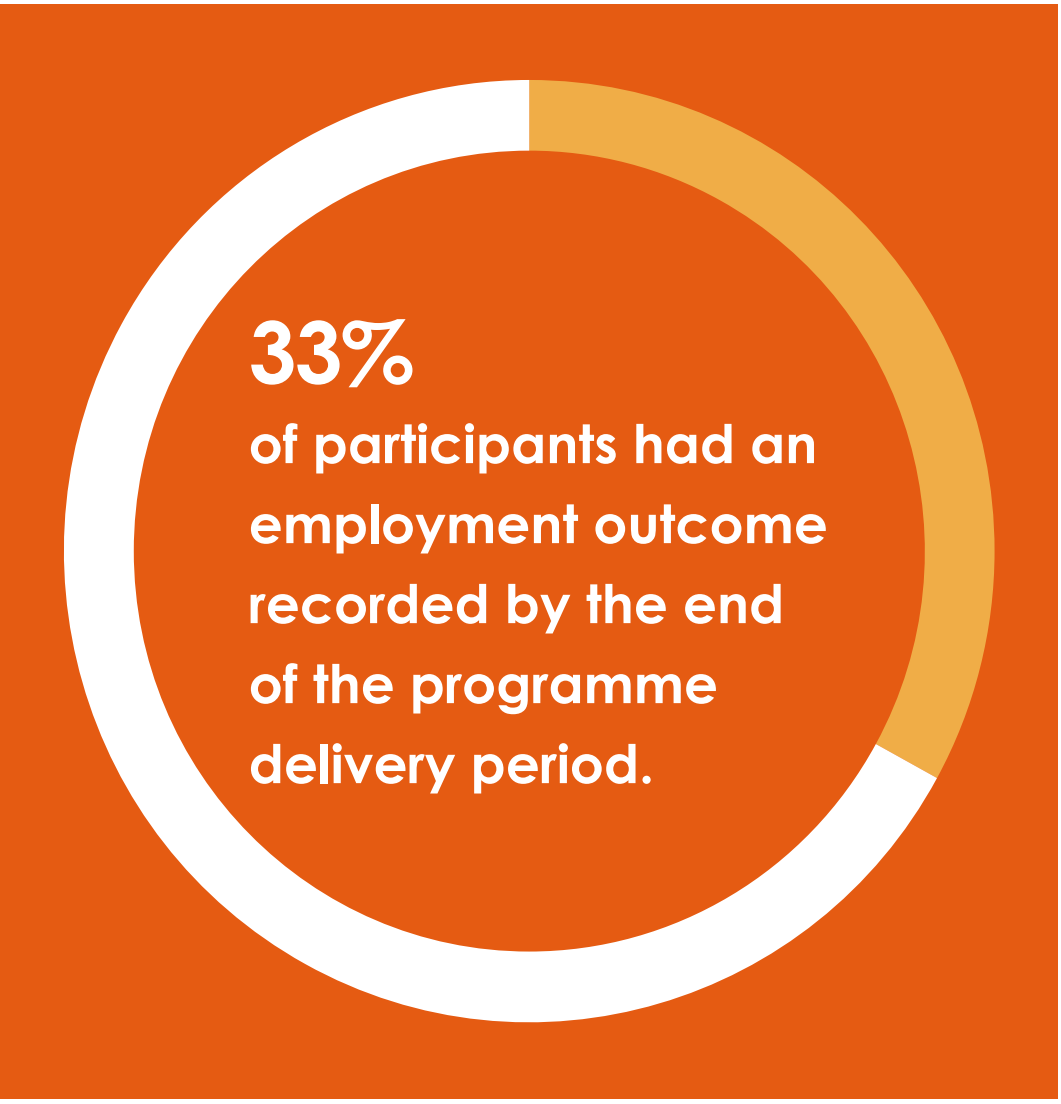
268 young people were referred to Choices during the pilot, far exceeding the original referral target of 150.

The support model had lived experience at its heart which engaged young people.

“[They] felt like a mentor... they had been in my position when they were younger and it was someone I could relate to, they grew up in the same area, and had had the same experiences as me.”

Choices programme participant

The support was participant-centred and led. Staff supported participants to determine their own path and choose whether to focus on employment or education, which job roles to apply for, and when and how to engage in the support, which facilitated engagement.



The most common sectors were **catering, hospitality and tourism, and construction.**

56% were on permanent contracts and the remaining **44%** were on temporary contracts.

73% were working part-time and the remaining **27%** were full-time.

32% of participants had a recorded education or training outcome by the end of the programme delivery period.

Types of courses included: Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), employability courses and Security Industry Authority (SIA) licencing.

Education opportunities included: college courses; apprenticeships and completing GCSEs.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWED

Emerging evidence from qualitative and quantitative sources that Choices made a positive contribution to participants’ wellbeing. **Some limited evidence** that Choices positively contributed to improving the relationships of participants, alongside improving their skills, knowledge and job search. There was also reasonable evidence that the support helped to reduce wider barriers to work such as housing and finance.