



SCOTCH WHISKY
ACTION FUND

MANAGED BY



Govan Youth
Information Project



@ScotchWhiskySWA

Organisation: **Govan Youth Information Project**

Date of Award: **2019**

Amount Awarded: **£10,000**

Project Name: **Youth Role Models and
Diversions Activities**



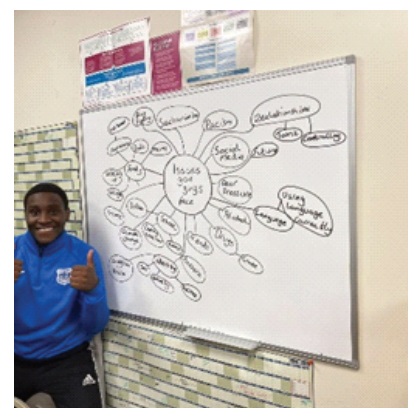
Govan Youth Information Project (GYIP) provides support services tailored towards young people in the local community to relieve poverty and offer opportunities for education and empowerment, particularly to those in deprived communities who may not have access to the same opportunities as their peers. Organising activities such as drop-in sessions; school surgeries; discussion groups; and youth provision activities, which have a fun element as well as educational. Most of their work takes place after school or on weekends, but they also have a popular programme of events during school holidays.

The Project: Creating Young Role Models

In 2019, GYIP received a grant of £10,000 from the Scotch Whisky Action Fund (SWAF) to contribute to the sessional costs for two Youth Workers to facilitate diversionary activities for young people at risk of alcohol misuse. Young people would also be trained as positive role models to deliver interactive diversionary workshops on the dangers of alcohol to their peers, and other youth organisations, giving them the opportunity to achieve a Youth Scotland's Dynamic Youth Award and Saltire Award for their volunteering efforts.

In the summer of 2018, GYIP was a key partner in delivering an eight week street work initiative. Through participating in this work on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings staff seen first-hand young people underage drinking and engaging in other associated risky behaviours. Youth Work staff signposted them to other youth provisions running at the weekend which worked for a short period of time until the funding ran out.

Young People were consulted through discussions about what they like and dislike in their community and the theme of alcohol was explored. This led young people to discuss alcohol and its wider effect on family, health, finances, and life choices. GYIP acknowledge education at an early age about these issues is the best way for young people to make informed choices. Therefore, GYIP staff and peers who lead on sessions delivered a message that was relevant, current, factual, and with the goal young people having the knowledge to make positive choices in relation to alcohol consumption.



GYIP set out to achieve the following four outcomes:

1. to reduce the acceptability of young people misusing alcohol.
2. to change young people's attitudes in relation to alcohol.
3. to fully explore the full implications of misusing alcohol, health, family, monetary, dependence, community, crime, employment, violence, accidents.
4. to help young people consider the risk, make more informed choices, and take control of their alcohol consumption.

The Process:

Shortly after the grant was awarded at the end of 2019, the world went into lockdown which affected the original plan of the project, many times over. The 12 month grant took 22 months in the end to spend.

Initially the project intended to use a two prong approach to deliver alcohol awareness message through providing diversionary activities and by training positive role models. The proposed methods of engaging with young people was through the Holiday Programmes, workshops in Secondary Schools, and Youth Provisions. However, they subsequently had to use the outdoors more than planned as centres where closed, and with schools unable to permit non-teaching staff entry, they used alternative methods like street work to deliver alcohol awareness messages instead.



They also engaged with large numbers of young people through outdoor "Twilight Football" in partnership with Police Scotland and Scottish Sports Futures. They also secured a grant to purchase bikes and used these to get young people out and about as they could socially distance.

In 2020 the holiday programmes were cancelled but in Summer 2021 were back to full strength and had 350 young people registered with an average attendance of 100 per session, twice a day. GYIP were able to use this setting in the holiday programme to engage with large numbers of young people. Although sessions never focussed solely on alcohol prevention, they offered diversionary activities. However, a constant theme that ran throughout was discussions around alcohol misuse and the associated risky behaviours.

With assistance from GYIP staff five young people trained as positive role models and took the lead in driving conversations around these risky behaviours. Activities using beer goggles for challenges as well as using alcohol props assisted the delivery of the alcohol misuse preventive message.

Wider key achievements, over and above the project were, being the first service back up and running for young people in the area during and after COVID and positive feedback from the Police about how GYIP's youth provision makes a difference for young people and the community.



Challenges and How They Were Overcome

One of the main challenges of the project was the stop start nature through the various lockdowns, young people isolating, and staff isolating proved problematic. For long periods staff felt that every time a new plan was made, it had to be torn up and re-written. This was immensely frustrating but resigned themselves to "control the controllables".

Another challenge was not being able to get access to schools due to COVID restrictions to offer the workshops they normally would provide. This was overcome by targeting alcohol misuse on street work shifts which ran three nights per week. This helped to ensure those young people missed via the school sessions had a chance to hear an alcohol preventative message on the streets.

Another unexpected, but positive, outcome of the project was through discussions with some young people about the number of alcohol establishments and bookmakers, and their proximity to each other in Govan. This evolved into a project called "Booze, Bet & Bust". Looking at Govan, an area of deprivation, and comparing it to a more affluent area like Bearsden young people visited both areas and mapped such establishments. Once their findings revealed Govan had many more, they were then asked is this by default or design?

A report of the findings was produced and subsequently picked up and featured on a Peer Inspiration Project Scotland website. GYIP were then asked to present the findings at a Gambling Summit and Gambling Network Meeting. This was then further picked up by Alcohol Focus Scotland who seen the bitesize video made about GYIP's project and have asked if any young people involved would like to present their findings to the government as there was a consultation about alcohol marketing with evidence showing children and young people being exposed to this are more likely to increase the amount they drink and reduce the age they start drinking. Although in its infancy GYIP hope to contribute to these discussions further.

The Impact:

Over the course of the grant GYIP delivered the following:



- 108 Youth Provision Sessions
- 12 Drop-in Evenings
- 55 Outdoor Sessions
- 27 Bike Rides
- 9 Weeks of Holiday Programme Activities
- 203 Sessions of Street Work
- 5,143 young people interacted with services/staff
- 402 young people registered and interacted with GYIP services by the end of the grant (this excludes street work as young people do not need to register for this).

Case Study

Ryan is 17-year-olds and has used some of GYIP's services on and off for several years. Ryan's life could be quite turbulent with several different family issues affecting his life. Ryan's social circle was getting him into trouble with the Police and he had been warned another charge would send him to juvenile detention.

His antisocial behaviour escalated as he was drinking several nights per week and by his own admission he would be in a black out stage and oblivious to some of actions. After one incident, GYIP street workers tried to assist him while he was in a state of hysteria in handcuffs after being detained by the Police on the street. Although he was still taken into Police Custody the workers calmed him down to be more co-operative. From that point Ryan popped into the office more often.

He became a regular member of the youth provisions and took on more of a lead role and gained four Accredited Youth Awards, a cycle ride leader British Cycling Award, completed a "wee peak challenge" which involved climbing 3 mountains in the one day, and he went to Belfast and learned about Irelands past and its troubles.

Through GYIP's connections with Police Scotland via its street work programme the Police have noted they no longer see him and that the social circle he was involved with continue to be involved in low level crime. Such is his turnaround meant GYIP were able to offer him a short term paid contract to assist the delivery of the holiday programme. His turn around was further endorsed by his school who awarded him the John Muir Award for his dedication to schoolwork and emailed GYIP crediting the work it had in assisting him to achieve this.

Working as a positive role model in GYIP youth clubs, Ryan has learned more about the risks of alcohol consumption and has a more mature balanced view about alcohol.

Ryan said: "I realised I had two choices in life. I did not want to go to jail. I was basically a young alcoholic. I was leaving school and heading to get a drink. I was getting into lots of trouble in school and was being aggressive towards teachers and pupils. I was getting so bloated every day. I did not want a life of crime. I chose to make better choices. GYIP's clubs give me something to do and we get to do some cool stuff. The workers have helped me make better choices in life."



"The last 20 months has taught us that in times of crisis youth work is still a front-line service young people rely on. As a result of the funding from The Scotch Whisky Action Fund we have been able to demonstrate our diversionary work benefits young people and assists them to make positive choices in relation to alcohol. We have been able to secure Youthlink Funding to continue our youth provisions and continue to offer diversionary activities."

- Kevin Burke, Project Manager (pictured)