

Case Study – Jobs Club

Introduction

The aim of the Jobs Club is to enable its participants to plan, actively seek and achieve realistic work opportunities. This is done through identifying the individual's skills and strengths and relating them to work opportunities.

Working in a Jobs Club means supporting clients seeking employment or training. Some clients are very job ready and just require a little advice or assistance. On the other hand some individuals are a long way from being job ready, on occasions that call may come from the individual themselves or from a family member. Clients may also be referred from a number of other sources e.g Social Protection, VEC, Health Board, Internally from fellow Ballyhoura staff.

This example of a client will give an indication of support a mother of a young man, Jack, who was at the time 29 years old. Jack's mother requested a one to one meeting with the Jobs Club to give us some background information of her son. Jack suffered from epilepsy and was becoming more and more withdrawn in himself. Jack was coming from a rural area, both mother and father working as were all his siblings. Because of his disability it was not possible for him to drive. Prior to the first meeting Jack had a part time job which he did not like, that position lasted only seven months.

Activities

A number of one to one meetings were held with Jack in order to gain trust and also to encourage him that, yes, it was possible for him to follow a career which he would enjoy and gain a great deal of satisfaction and personal independence from. Apart from his disability his school experience and the subjects he had studied did not help. Prior to contacting the Jobs Club, the lady had tried various training courses for Jack but at no stage did Jack himself get anything out of them i.e. computers course, and a horticulture course. His big interest was in sports of all types but mainly Gaelic football and hurling. Jack had won medals and trophies at underage with his club and also as a teenager he assisted in the training of underage teams to compete in the County Community Games. He had fantastic potential but the lack of a challenging career coupled by his disability was beginning to cause depression and as a result his epileptic seizures were becoming more frequent.

The same year, 2006 Ballyhoura had got funding to deliver the first Transition to Employment Programme. Jack got his place and settled in to the group from the beginning. For the full nine months of the programme Jack gained in confidence more and more as the programme went on. He rarely missed a day and on some occasions would even thumb a lift if he could not get a drive. Through that programme he was encouraged to take up evening woodwork classes with the VEC where he learned to make hurleys and picture frames. Jack even gave a demonstration back at the Transition to Employment programme on woodwork.

Progressing from the Transition to Employment programme Jack went on to further his education in computers and personal development skills with Ballyhoura Folklore and Heritage, Local Training Initiative in Bruff. While there he also took Occupational First Aid, Fetac 5. Jack completed two years in the Folklore and Heritage LTI and enjoyed the group and work element. On finishing there, Jack's mother informed us that his epilepsy seemed to be very much under control and that he was almost

two years without a seizure, which his mother felt was totally down to all the assistance and encouragement through the various interventions delivered from Ballyhoura.

Jack is now happily employed as a Life Guard Assistant at a Hydro Therapy Pool on a part time basis

Lessons Learned

The lesson learned from this case is that each individual needs support at various levels over different amounts of time. It possibly took five years from the initial intervention from the Ballyhoura Job Club and continued support and linkage through the various progression routes working together using various soft methods to help Jack get where he is today – a happy employed young man.

It is vital that all individuals are listened to and encouraged to work at their own pace and that we are there to assist them achieve their goal.