



# TRANSFORM

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

## Transform Youth Initiatives

### Youth Initiatives Belfast/Lisburn Cohort:

This year's Transform Cohort in Lisburn and West Belfast commenced in January with a cohort of 24 young people, 12 from each area. Activities and trips included: Break-Out Rooms, Pirate Adventure Golf and We Are Vertigo. Participants also shared some sessions working on Personal & Social Development before lockdown unfortunately impacted delivery.

At such short notice it was challenging to provide a new type of online programme, however staff were creative and innovative in adapting the programme. For those young people who were able to engage online, they completed the Targeted Life Skills Programme facilitated by ASCERT, and it was great being able to build relationships and provide a programme for young people stuck at home. For those who weren't able to engage online, we maintained contact via phone calls and messaging groups, and were even able to make home visits occasionally with Care Packs! Once lockdown restrictions were relaxed, we have been able to bring the groups together more often in outdoor, socially-distant groups (often facilitated by various shelters and



gazebos). We've been able to attend our annual Volunteer Awards Celebration remotely, and attend trips to Skytrek, Let's Go Hydro, Pirate Golf and even the cinema!

Currently our participants are helping to lead our first ever socially-distant Summer Programme in outdoor spaces across Lisburn and West Belfast! We also plan on completing a Level 2 OCN in Personal Success & Wellbeing before our project finishes in September. It hasn't been the programme we thought we'd be running back in January, but we are really proud of our cohort in how they've adapted and been able to show resilience in continuing to engage, and it has still been a lot of fun!

### Youth Initiatives Derry/Londonderry Cohort:

Our current Transform Derry/Londonderry cohort comprises 19 fantastic young people from both sides of the River Foyle. Before lockdown in March, we were beginning to build group identity, highlights included a trip to Lock N' Load Laser Tag, an African drumming circle and



young people performing hilarious sketches on the theme of 'Communication Skills'.

Once Lockdown was enforced, we realised we would have to be flexible to change our approach as the situation and restrictions evolved. We organised and delivered many Zoom calls and learned how to make it fun through games such as the very relevant 'Toilet Roll Challenge' involving keep-ups, long kick-shots and tricks. We also completed art competitions, fitness challenges and bake-offs. One of the highlights was being able to deliver care packages and baking kits for pizza or pastries, which young people were able to cook at home together on video call.

We commenced delivery of our OCN Level 2 in Personal Success and Wellbeing to our cohort before Lockdown and have continued with this during lockdown through Zoom. In response to the government guidelines, we have recommenced meeting with small groups of young people outdoors for summer programmes and are popping up in various locations around Derry/Londonderry with a gazebo and lots of activities ready to go. One young person said this was the first time that they have been with a group in months. There was a sense that this is a big deal and our role is to walk with young people and help them navigate the changing social context we are in right now. As we journey together over the coming weeks, we want to help our young people realise their own potential in all areas, rely on each other through friendship and be part of awakening hope in their city.

