

Time for Change

The following letter was written by a young person to the Youth Justice Agency Chief Executive on completion of his youth conference plan. Initially he was considered to be at significant risk of reoffending and required careful management and supervision. When the Youth Justice Agency was given the opportunity to place a young person on the 'Time for Change' programme this young man's key worker recognised that this could potentially complement the work he was already engaged in with her by looking at making decisions about his life path and future. The programme was not part of any Court or other requirement and was entirely voluntary in nature.

He was fully supported and prepared for the programme by Youth Justice Agency staff and he really engaged in and enjoyed it, leaving with renewed hope for the future. He has sustained the change and is now actively pursuing a career in the forces. His mother also shared her delight at the difference in his attitude and behaviour.

The letter was written to acknowledge the work done by the Youth Justice Agency and the Time for Change programme and to share his story of change and hope with a wider audience.

Dear Paula!

My name is [redacted] I have been send here by the Court Im 16 and live in [redacted] I am writing this letter to tell you how I have changed coming here this is what I was like at the start- lazy, unreliable, unhappy, not listening to myself, taking drugs, drinking, causing family grief and worries and not listening to anyone. How I changed was when I went to donegal with the time for change witch was good before I went on that trip I wanted to change ~~but~~ I could not. Now I am off drugs, not drinking, attending appointments in the morning, causing less hassle with family, awake, active, motivated I listen to myself, I am a different person and im proud. I am joining the army and I care about my future now. If other young people ~~can~~ want to change the best thing to do is get them into time for change and do ^{not} give up on them and if the don't want to go on time for change ask them what they want to do because each person is different and tara was very good!