

Our Year in Review and Impact Report 2016-17



Empowering children and young people with additional needs to develop the skills to live independently and reach their potential.



Chairman's Foreword

I am constantly impressed with the hard work and dedication of all those within the Autonomie

community. In 2016-17 we delivered outcomes to empower young people with additional needs to reach their potential. A number of examples of this include:

- Continued success of our Freedom2Choose project empowering young people by providing recreation and social space, skills development and supported events/activities independently of families and carers.
- Delivery of a further education advisory service for parents and carers of school leavers with additional needs.

Throughout the year we engaged in an extensive planning and consultative exercise to develop a new strategy to guide our work over the three-year period 2016 to 2019. The months ahead look set to be an exciting time at Autonomie.

Paul Jeffers
Chairman



Matthew's story

Matthew (26) uses a wheelchair and has been left school for 10 years. He does some voluntary work with Grove Housing Association one day per week. Matthew started volunteering at Autonomie in May 2015 and has been a constant presence ever since.

Matthew is a positive role model to our young people and supports them in all activities in Freedom2Choose.

A snapshot of our impact

I look forward to every Saturday - wish we could do it every day

- **Freedom2Choose Young Person**

Freedom2Choose is a social lifeline for my son

- **An Autonomie mum**

It's great fun, and I love making things and trying new things. I love that my mum and dad don't have to stay

- **Freedom2Choose young person**

Freedom2Choose has given my daughter confidence, and she now talks to others which she did not do before it

- **An Autonomie mum**



I meet new friends, some I knew from school but I have made new ones as well, great fun

- **Freedom2Choose young person**



Measuring our impact

We heard directly from young people and their families. We listened to our parents focus group, made up of family members, friends and carers of young people who attended our pilot Freedom2Choose programme.

He became a member of the Management Review Committee in 2015 and attends every meeting. Matthew's confidence has developed and he also is the Chairperson of our Youth Forum for planning and reviewing all our programmes and activities.

Matthew says his reason for volunteering with Autonomie is "I want to give support when needed and to be there for the young people - we all learn from each other!"

We said we would empower young people with additional needs. We have.



100%
Confidence



90%
Communication



85%
Independence skills



95%
Participation



100%
Family advice support



Gary's story

Gary is a young man of 24 years of age with additional needs. Gary left school with very few options for social networking, or paid employment.

To prevent him becoming isolated Gary does voluntary work with Autonomie as often as he can. He also does voluntary work with USEL one day a week.

Gary's role within Autonomie is to welcome everyone to the Freedom2Choose programme every Saturday and to accept voluntary donations from parents/young people.



He is such a cheerful individual and ensures he compliments everyone throughout the day, he keeps everyone smiling and feeling good.

Gary loves his roles within Autonomie and when asked to describe it – he says: "I love this place and love all the people in it!"

But we know that there is still much that we need to do.

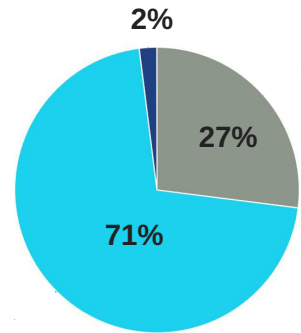
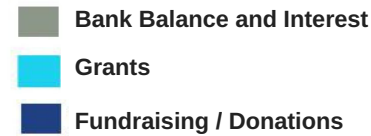
That's why in 2017-18 we will:

- Open a new centre, increase our number of front-line staff and volunteers.
- Launch Listening Links pilot project. Up to 25 young people with additional needs can gain a CPCAB Level 2 Award in Counselling Skill.
- Create a Wellbeing Room to promote relaxation and stress management in young people with additional needs and their families.
- Establish a Independent Living pilot project and offer short-term living experience for up to 20 young people with additional needs a year.
- Offer counselling services to parents, siblings and caregivers.
- Introduce a mentoring scheme that will provide structured opportunities for young people to support and befriend another young person with additional needs.
- Establish a Toy and Resource Library and enable families to short-term loan a variety of sensory toys and equipment to aid their child's development.
- Pilot a Toddlers Group. One day a week our professionally trained facilitators will offer a range of support and educational sessions. Toddlers will get a chance to explore a variety of sensory toys available at our toy library.
- Expand our careers advisory service with our dedicated career officer in order to support more young people and parents.

Financial overview

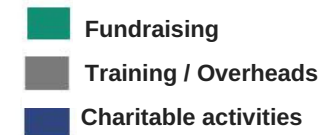
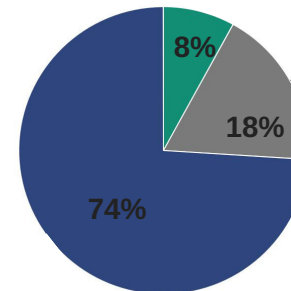
Income

Our total income for 2016-17 was £43133.34. This was possible thanks to the generosity of all our supporters over the past 12 months. Our goal is to use their support as effectively as possible to ensure that every child and young person with additional needs can reach their potential.



Expenditure

In the last year our total expenditure was £34975.19. Of this, 74% was spent on delivering our life-changing charitable activities.



Thank you to our supporters

We would like to thank the following organisations, foundations and individuals, and many others too numerous to mention, for their support during 2016-17. It is thanks to their investment that we have been able to empower young people with additional needs.

With special thanks to

- Michael Burke, Burke Systems

Partner organisations

- Finaghy Youth Centre
- South Belfast Area Project
- Education Authority



Trusts and Foundations

- Belfast Cathedral (Black Santa Appeal)
- Bombardier
- Comic Relief
- Community Foundation for NI
- Enkalon Foundation
- Greggs Foundation
- Halifax Foundation NI
- NIE Staff and Pensioners Fund
- People's Millions
- Santander
- TBF Thompson
- Ulster Bank Staff Fund
- Ulster Garden Village Fund
- Victoria Homes Trust

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