



amber

What are the most common outcomes of Amber's intervention?

The most common outcome Amber has had is that the young person has been able to remain at home. However, other outcomes include young people moving out with the support of their families, young people moving back to the family home from other accommodation or simply the family managing to re-establish a positive relationship.

Why does Amber work?

- Intervention by Amber can often be the first chance that parents and their children have had to be treated with equal respect and status.
- Amber's fast, non bureaucratic response is appreciated by clients, and the referring agencies.
- Amber's expertise generated by the partnership between SACRO and Edinburgh Cyrenians means that the service is very well positioned to both understand and assist.
- Amber fills a gap as a prevention service for the homelessness agencies – working with young people and their families.

How will Amber develop their relationship with referral agencies further?

- The awareness and understanding of the Amber service will be increased.
- The mediation process will be explained.
- The benefits that mediation can bring to current situations and relationships in the future will be illustrated.
- Work will be undertaken to increase their understanding of who can be referred and when they can be referred.

If you would like to find out more about Amber please contact us on: **0131 475 2493**
email us at: **amber@cyrenians.org.uk**
or visit our website at: **www.cyrenians.org.uk**



Information in this leaflet is taken from the independent evaluation of Amber carried out by Framework in January 2008.



2 years on



What is Amber?

Amber is a service working to prevent homelessness amongst 14-24 year olds by mediating between young people and their families.

A short term intervention, Amber aims to be involved for about 12 weeks from the first contact, diverting crisis and helping to avoid emergency homelessness situations.

Why was Amber set up?

It is estimated that up to 150 families a year in Edinburgh could benefit from homeless mediation.

Mediation is a well recognised way of preventing young people from ending up in emergency homeless situations. Mediation services are used extensively in England and Wales, and the City of Edinburgh Council wanted to trial a mediation service to help prevent youth homelessness. In May 2006 Amber was developed in partnership between Edinburgh Cyrenians and Sacro for the City of Edinburgh Council.

What has Amber achieved?

In the last two years over a 100 people have been referred to Amber and we have worked with over 60 families providing full mediation and support services, conflict resolution, advice and signposting as appropriate.

Currently Amber is receiving between 3 and 10 referrals a month and numbers are increasing.

What is the profile of the young people that use the service?

There was an equal split of young men and women who used the service in the last two years.

49% of clients were in the 16-17 year old age bracket. It is envisaged that this age group will continue to form the bulk of referrals.

Over 28% of those referred were over 18 while 23% were in the 14-15 year old age bracket.

Why are people referred?

Family conflict and the desire to make things better are the main reasons for referral. Young people might be at risk of becoming homeless; they might be in temporary accommodation already; they may have been living away from home for a while and are now ready to make contact with their families but need some help to do so.

What are the causes of the communication breakdown and family conflict?

There are a range of reasons why communication can breakdown. These might include:

- Overcrowding
- Interpersonal conflict
- Anti social behaviour
- Financial pressure

Where do referrals come from?

Referrals can come from anywhere, but in the last two years we have had referrals from:

- City of Edinburgh Council Housing and Homeless Services
- Social Work Departments
- Schools
- Voluntary sector organisations working with young people
- Police
- Health Service

We are also seeing an increase in the number of people referring themselves, finding out about Amber through other agencies. As the service matures we would expect to see an increase in “word of mouth” promotion of the service and a subsequent increase in the number of self referrals.