



Transforming
a generation

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Third of young out of work as jobless rises

A THIRD of young people in Hackney are out of work, figures released by the Department for Work and Pensions reveal.

The statistics show 33.5% of 16-24 year-olds in the borough were unemployed between July 2009 and June 2010, up from 22.5% the year before.

This is the 6th highest rate in the country and well above the national average of 19.5%.

The news comes in the same week that Jobcentre plus has launched a work experience scheme, allowing young job-seekers to do an eight-week placement without risking

their benefit.

Matthew Waterfall, branch secretary of Hackney Unison, said: "There are not enough jobs. While the government cuts back on public spending, jobs that could be provided by local authorities will be few and far between."

He added: "Hackney Council has announced that it intends to reduce the size of its youth service from 181 staff to 86. That doesn't necessarily mean that jobs will be lost, but the service is reducing and it will affect young people who benefited from that service. Some of that support and assistance to help them get jobs will be removed."

Ali Okoubi, 23, from Stoke Newington,

spent 12 months out of work after finishing college, before signing up to the TAG programme, which helps young people find paid placements in the health and fitness industry.

He said: "I was back in the job market, struggling, going to the job centre three times a week.

"I did a training course to help with my reading and writing because I am dyslexic. I applied for any job you can think of, but it felt like I would never find one. I finish my TAG course at the end of this week and I hope I get the job, or I will be back again, down the job centre."

David Blagborough is the director of Inspire, a Hackney charity which helps young people find work.

He said: "The situation is not going to be particularly bright for many young people in the borough leaving school and seeking employment."

He added: "Quite a large number of people get the Education Maintenance Allowance in the borough, which encourages them to stay in school. Without that there is every likelihood the number of young people coming into the job pool will increase.

"One of the solutions I favoured was the Future Jobs Fund. It is providing an opportunity for young people to get into employment with no extra burden on the employers. It's a win-win situation. The fact that it is disappearing is a great sadness."