

Press Release

September 5 2011

Inbetweeners' debts spark call for financial education

Leading debt charity Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) has warned that a large number of 18- and 19-year-old "inbetweeners" are starting adult life in serious debt.

A total of 753 young people aged 18 and 19 contacted CCCS in 2010, seeking advice on how to deal with an average of £2,254 in unsecured debt. For those who had overdraft debt, the average amount owed was £671, for those who had a personal loan, the average borrowed was £2,610, and for those who had credit card debt, the average outstanding balance was £898.

The charity is concerned by the proportion of 18- and 19-year-olds who blame lack of budgeting for their debt problems, which is twice that for CCCS clients overall. In 2010, one in 10 clients in this age group cited a lack of budgeting as the main cause of their debt problem, compared to five percent of clients across all age groups.

The charity says that these figures underline the need for financial education to be added to the school curriculum. CCCS recently gave its backing to an e-petition, launched by moneysavingexpert.com founder Martin Lewis, calling for financial education to be made compulsory in schools.

The charity's director of external affairs Delroy Corinaldi said:

"These figures show how quickly young people can fall into debt in the first few years of adult life. While financial education is not a silver bullet, it is essential that we give

young people the tools to be able to make informed decisions about their finances – both to help them avoid falling into debt, and to help them out of it if they do.

“We also need to get across the message that free, non-judgmental help is available if you fall into financial difficulty - and with several debt charities offering free advice and support, there should never be a reason to pay for it.”

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Notes to editors:

1. Martin Lewis' financial education e-petition is available at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/8903>
2. To read the CCCS MoneyAware blogpost on Martin Lewis' campaign, see <http://moneyaware.co.uk/2011/08/should-financial-education-be-part-of-the-school-curriculum>
3. CCCS's ethos is to help the “can't pays”, not the “won't pays”, and does not condone debt avoidance. CCCS always aims to help its clients pay back what they owe, in a realistic timescale and manner that is suited to each individual's situation.
4. CCCS is self-funding. Lenders share with the charity the benefit they receive from its operation, making a donation from the money repaid to them. This allows CCCS to retain its independence and ensure that its advice is always in the best interest of the client.
5. The CCCS free phone helpline 0800 138 1111 is open 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.
6. *CCCS Debt Remedy* is available at www.cccs.co.uk
7. Follow us on Twitter: @CCCSPressOffice

Media enquiries:

All media enquiries should be directed to:

Frances Walker - francesw@cccs.co.uk

Una Farrell - unaf@cccs.co.uk

Matt Hartley - matthar@cccs.co.uk

Tel: 0207 391 4583 (07950 469101 if outside office hours)