

Volunteer Co-ordinators Network Meeting Thursday 19th November 2009 - Ridge Community Centre

Involving Young People as Volunteers

Notes from Discussion which was about examples of Successful Projects and the key to that success and problems/ barriers experienced – lessons learnt.

Success

- Ridge have been much more successful involving under 18s who are forming the core of their volunteering group at the moment. This is offering volunteering to young people who would not conventionally volunteer.
- “V Talent” Young Peoples Service
- Being flexible with the roles you can offer people – Lancaster CAB
- Students want to have varied experiences and skills from their volunteering opportunities
- Don't stereotype young volunteers;
- Volunteering opportunities must sound interesting and be well presented
- Pilot projects that can be expanded
- Peer training/mentoring is a good route for young people to move into volunteering for your organisation - Home grown volunteers senior members volunteering part of a developmental process for them (Children and Young People's Service)
- Cumbria Volunteering Unit organised a one day Community Challenge (a surprise event – the challenge being to organising a tea dance for older people in one day)
- Involve young people in the design and planning of the event you want them to be involved in as they will be more motivated if have ownership (LUVU)
- Get it Loud in Libraries – V involved event
- Build a rapport – use young volunteers to attract more young people to volunteer for your organisation
- Good marketing; social networking; attractive posters etc.
- Start with a Shorter piece of work – young people will then find out more about your organisation and come back to get involved in different ways (Signposts)

Barriers – lessons learnt

- **Fundraising Activities** – there was difference of opinion here. LUVU has found that Student volunteers do not want to do fundraising they want volunteering opps that are going to be more useful on their CV. However, V involved found that this was a good route in for some of their volunteers as this was accessible (time limited) introduction to organisations and what they do. Fundraising activities if well marketed can be fun.
- **Need to follow young volunteers up quickly so they don't lose enthusiasm (linked to above)**
- **CRBs** – time involved in getting these sorted can mean that volunteers lose their motivation. Ridge get round this by using this time for sound induction training.
- **Parental consent** for under 18s (Young People's Service have to do this). This is encouraged as good practice by Volunteering England – see their fact sheet.
- **Appropriate support** for young volunteers – are likely to need more support again time invested in proper induction very important.

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