

Evaluation

Evaluation is one of the most important elements of the work. A good practice approach is to start with a tool that can measure where a young person is when they join the club. As they go through the journey of being with you, keep doing a skills audit of their development and so you monitor their personal growth.

The most important element of this is that the young person is developing through learning and we all like to reach milestones in our life. The secondary factor is that you can evaluate the impact of your work so when applying for funding the value of your work and the positive impact it has is clear.

When evaluating, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data is needed. This will allow you to have a clear measurement, for example numbers who attended and statistical information, but also allow softer skills to be evaluated such as attitudes and feelings.

Options of evaluation can be for example filming young people and asking them a number of questions, then repeating this over a two year timescale and note their development.

Doing case studies of young people (with their consent)

End of programme evaluation using a quiz at the beginning and one at the end.

Gathering attendance figures and participation in project work.

Also collect anecdotal evidence from workers taken from sessional sheets.

Programme

The programme is vital to consistency of the club and ensuring young people feel a part of the club and are listened to. A programme gives structure that enables young people and parents to clearly know what is happening in the club. The workers are also clear about what parts of the programme they are responsible for and this enables them to prepare for their sessions. The programme should be advertised all over the community, this raises its profile and also people are aware of the work that the youth club does.

When planning there will be an element of needs and want. The youth workers should have already discovered through conversations, observation and professional judgement what the needs of the group are. The young people will not have identified some of the issues but want to do fun, exhilarating activity. The skill is to blend both together so all sessions are interactive and fun, but with a learning element attached.

All young people should have a democratic say on what is on the programme. Some things suggested will not be achievable but instead of saying no, ask the young person to go and research what they have suggested and find a way that it becomes achievable.

At first young people will have no ideas for the programme, but if they do it on a regular basis they will begin to come up with ideas – but only if the programme has been followed.