

Job Description of a Youth Club Young Volunteer

Main Purpose of Role:

The Youth Club Young Volunteers can have many different roles, depending on what you want to do and have the opportunity to do. The important thing is that roles are negotiated and agreed with your youth worker.

Main Responsibilities:

While the Young Volunteer can have many different responsibilities there are a set of core values that go with being a Young Volunteer.

Your main responsibilities are to:

- ☆ Behave safely
- ☆ Not take advantage of your position
- ☆ Be a positive role model
- ☆ Be honest and trustworthy
- ☆ Be reliable
- ☆ Ask for help when in doubt
- ☆ Respect any facilities and equipment
- ☆ Actively promote equal opportunities
- ☆ Be open and positive
- ☆ Be constructive
- ☆ Be proud of what you achieve
- ☆ Enable other young people to take on more responsibility and encourage them to work up to taking on a Young Volunteer role too.

In general, being a Young Volunteer is about doing more for yourself, making things happen in your club / project / community and encouraging other young people to also take more responsibility, both for themselves and what happens in their lives.

What to avoid

Whilst being a Young Volunteer is a very rewarding experience, there are pitfalls. However, these can be avoided. It is useful to also know what being a Young Volunteer **isn't** as well as what being a Young Volunteer is.

You need to avoid:

- ✘ Being seen as part of an elitist group
- ✘ Bossing other young people about
- ✘ Counselling other young people
- ✘ Pretending to know more than you really do
- ✘ Keeping things from the youth worker
- ✘ Becoming Miss or Mr Fixit
- ✘ Splitting up fights
- ✘ Blocking others from having their say
- ✘ Ignoring/disadvantaging other young people because you dislike them
- ✘ Taking sides in arguments and fights that are nothing to do with you personally
- ✘ Pretending to have more power than you really do
- ✘ Being bullied by other club members to do things you know you shouldn't (for example giving away free tuck, letting people in free)
- ✘ Making decisions based on what you want and not considering the views of other young people

Other young people in your club/project will see being a Young Volunteer as a position of power and may be jealous. This can cause major problems. It is up to **you** to ensure that you don't encourage this by abusing your power. Remember to help other young people to become Young Volunteers if they want to. It often helps to talk about the responsibilities that you have to take on so that other young people understand that it's not all getting your own way and doing interesting things.

Remember if you have any problems, talk to your youth worker.

So, why bother?

There are many things that you can get out of being a Young Volunteer, these include:

- ☆ The opportunity to develop skills that will be useful to you in later life
- ☆ The opportunity to try new things
- ☆ A fat wad of certificates for your Record of Achievement!

If you are interested in youth work as a career, being a Young Volunteer is a good way to start and get a feel for whether or not you'll enjoy it. Many youth workers started off that way.

Also, employers are impressed by things that young people have done in a youth work setting. That is because employers can see that you're developing skills that are very useful in the work place (for example communication skills, working in teams, planning and taking responsibility). You will also be able to use your activities towards any NVQs you may take in the future. You may even be able to get national accreditation for some of your projects through Youth Achievement Awards and Endeavour Credits.

Most importantly, you also get opportunities that you can't get elsewhere. Where else would you be able to organise a day trip, open a skate park, have barbeques or tell the politician what's what? You will get out of being a Young Volunteer just as much as you put in – and more!

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