

# Youth Club Young Volunteer Handbook

## Task Training



# Representing young people in the community

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# Youth Club Young Volunteer Task Training – Representing young people in the community

## Training Plan

**Aim:** To enable the group to understand the basics of representing young people in their community

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the session the participants will:

- Understand the role of an Activ8r on a youth club management committee
- Understand the need to represent others and not just themselves
- Be aware of who else may want their views
- Understand 3 different ways they can find out the views of other young people

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Group size:** 6 to 8 young people

**Venue:** Large room with chairs

**Materials:**

- What is the Management Committee and what does it do? Cards
- Representation Handout
- Letter from the Chair
- Flipchart paper and marker pens
- Evaluation forms and biros

TIME	WHAT	WITH
5 mins	Explain <b>aim of session</b> and set basic ground rules including respect for each other, listen to who is speaking and only one person speaking at a time. Ask the group 'when do you think you might be asked to represent other young people?'. Discuss councillors and organisations who may want to ask their views.	
15 mins	<b>Role of the Management Committee:</b> Split the group in half and give each a set of Management Committee Roles Cards. Ask them to split them into piles 'The Management Committee does this' and 'The Management Committee doesn't do this' (5 mins). Then, ask the group to feed back their piles to the other group, discussing any differences. Make sure you correct any misconceptions.	What is the Management Committee and what does it do? Cards
5 mins	Ask the group why they think the Management Committee wants young people to be represented on their group? Ensure the discussion covers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young people often know best what other young people think. Knowing what young people think is important when the Management Committee is trying to make decisions in the best interests of the club</li><li>• Young people are great at predicting what other young people will think of decisions and the Committee need to know this too</li><li>• Young people are good at finding out the views of other young people (better than adults as young people can be more honest with each other) and the Management Committee need to find out these views</li></ul>	

TIME	WHAT	WITH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The club is for young people, it is only right that they are on the group that manages the club</li> <li>The Management Committee is committed to the principle of young people taking more responsibility in their club and their community and being on the Management Committee is a good way to start</li> </ul>	
20 mins	<p><b>Representing others:</b> Tell young people that if they sit on the committee, or go to it, they are representing all young people who use the club, not just themselves. What follows is an exercise to help them understand the possible difficulties of this.</p> <p>Give all members of the group copies of a letter supposedly received from the Chair of the Millennium Trust Fund. In it, the opinion of the group members is sought to help make a decision. The Chair of the Trust fund will abide by their decision. Tell the group that the aim of the exercise is to examine the principles of decision making and representation.</p> <p>Split the group into two and give them five minutes to discuss the letter. In five minutes time, one member of each of group should have been briefed to give the group's decision to the whole group.</p> <p>Everyone returns to the large group. The representative of each group should sit in the circle along with you, you are playing the role of the Chair. The remaining young people should sit silently in an outer circle - they are not allowed to speak whilst the meeting is in progress.</p> <p>As Chair you should work toward reaching an acceptable solution to the issue, whilst being sensitive to the decision making process of the group. However, should both groups agree on what should be funded, you may need to play 'devil's advocate' to pressure the young people playing the representatives and increase the level of debate.</p> <p>Try to elicit learning points for the discussion afterwards e.g are reps giving their own or their groups' opinion? Check if you suspect. Are they representing minority views - fairly or unfairly? Are you able to make any of them change their minds and vote against their brief? Finish the discussion when most points about representation have emerged.</p>	Letter from the chair
10 mins	<p>Thank the group reps. Facilitate a discussion around the following:</p> <p>How did it feel to be representing others?</p> <p>Was it easy? Did the small groups agree?</p> <p>What about the onlookers - were their views given fairly?</p> <p>Did the representatives give their own views?</p> <p>Were minority views represented?</p> <p>If you were on the losing side, can you explain why you lost?</p> <p>As a rep, did you know your operating limits and freedom to act, concede or compromise?</p>	

TIME	WHAT	WITH
	<p>If you were being represented, did you brief your rep' properly and arrange to meet afterwards?</p> <p>How frustrating was it to rely on one person?</p> <p>Give Representation handout.</p>	Representation Handout
5 mins	<p><b>Who else may want their views?</b> Talk through others in the community who may want to hear their views, as representatives of other young people. This will be specific to your community, but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors – town / parish, district or county</li> <li>• Officers of the town / parish, district or county council</li> <li>• The police</li> <li>• Other youth organisations hoping to provide youth services, for example, church groups</li> </ul>	
5 mins	<p><b>How can they find out the views of other young people?:</b> Link this back to the fact that they will be acting as representatives of other young people, so they need to know what other young people think. Ask 'how can you do this?', make sure that the following come up in the conversation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By talking to other young people (friends) informally and keeping this in mind when being consulted on anything</li> <li>• By thinking about what other young people have said in the past on different subjects and keeping this in mind when being consulted on anything</li> <li>• By trying to put themselves in other young people's places when thinking about responses to be consulted on anything</li> <li>• By asking young people about specific things. For example, if they are going to be consulted on what young people think of the youth club, making a point of going round and asking young people at the club and noting the answers</li> <li>• By using questionnaires. Simple questionnaires can be designed (with worker help) and young people can ask the set questions and note the answers, at youth club and school</li> <li>• By giving out surveys that other young people can fill in for themselves and return</li> <li>• By holding group discussions at youth club (with help if needed)</li> </ul> <p>Note responses in a flipchart so that the young people can see the number of different ways they can consult other young people.</p>	
10 mins	<p>Spilt the group in half and give each some flipchart paper and marker pens. Explain that they are going to put together a short questionnaire to try to find out what young people think about their youth club and what they would change. On a flip chart, write the following guidance and explain what each means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions should be easy to understand (short is generally good)</li> <li>• Questions shouldn't be leading as this might influence what young people say</li> <li>• Open or closed questions can be used</li> <li>• A variety of question styles is good</li> </ul> <p>Tell the group that need to come up with at least five questions.</p>	Flipchart paper and marker pens

TIME	WHAT	WITH
10 mins	Ask each group to feedback their questionnaires and discuss. Using both questionnaires, create a composite, with the best of both. Decide when they will use it and how they will collate the information.	
5 mins	Give out evaluation forms, pointing out that they are a form of questionnaire.	Evaluation forms & pens

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee pays the bills for the rent / utilities / repairs and decoration of the building

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee is made up of volunteers from the community and representatives from organisations in the community

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee is made up of influential people from the community who get things done for the club

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee make decisions about the type of youth work that happens at the

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee raises funds to be spent on youth work

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee lets others in the community know about what it's doing and gets support for the club (this can be goodwill, services or even money)

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee believes that young people are the future and deserve / need support.

**Who are the Management Committee and what do they do?**

The Management Committee runs the building and arranges for it's up keep and maintenance



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# **The Chair's letter**

Dear Friends

I am writing to seek your advice.

You may have heard that the engineering firm of Winterton and Co., wish to donate £1,000 to help a needy club provide equipment. They wish to donate the whole sum to a single club to make publicity arrangements easier.

After informal discussions with my Committee, I had thought that the Phoenix Youth Club would be deserving. As you may know they are a small rural club with some 40 young people attending. They would dearly like to obtain some independent means of transport and have been saving toward that end for some time. The £1,000 would enable them to finally purchase a second hand minibus with which they could make contact with other clubs and take part in County wide events as well as other worthwhile uses.

In the meantime, we received an urgent plea from Club 2000 who believe that their need for £1,000 is greater. They would use it to install radio alarms in the houses of elderly people living alone in the large estates around their club. They could raise £1,000 themselves in a year but don't wish to delay the project, also, they have other commitments for any funds that they raise.

Finally, we have also had a plea from Britaunvil Youth Club, who believe their need is greater than the previous two. The club has recently lost its County Council youth workers and the Management Committee is short of money after paying to employ youth workers to replace those lost. The Club would use this money to fund their youth club programme as they have no money to pay for equipment, arts and craft materials, visiting speakers, trips out and subsidising the coffee bar.

My Committee is in a quandary as to which club should receive the donation. Can you discuss it and let me have your views?

Yours sincerely

**U.R. SHARPE**  
**Chair**  
Millennium Trust Fund

# **Representing other**

## **Before you represent others:**

- Do you have all the facts?
- Have you considered every aspect of the situation?
- Do you know the views of all the individuals?
- Can you anticipate reactions to your group's views?
- Is the group unanimous?
- Are there any different points of view and shades of opinion?
- Is there an agreed group position?
- What authority have got to act?
- What leeway have you been given?

## **When you represent others:**

- Give all views, majority and minority
- Respect the opinions of others
- Compromise only within agreed boundaries
- Carry decisions back to the group
- Arrange to feedback to those you represent

## **When others represent you:**

- Make sure the representative knows all your views
- Clarify the representatives' boundaries and freedom
- Arrange for feedback and listen to it!
- Question when you need to