

Youth Kit



Contents

Youth Kit

Setting Up

- What do you need to do if you are thinking about setting up a youth club?
- Identifying a Need - consultation with young people and the community
- Logistics - venue, storage, time, accessibility

Essential Governance

- What do you need to have in place before opening the doors?
- Governance Structure - who is responsible?
- Policies and Procedures - doing things the right way
- Insurance - protecting the club, you and the young people
- Financial basics - keeping money safe

Keeping Safe

- What do you need to do to ensure young people and workers are kept safe?
- Health and Safety - being prepared?
- Safeguarding - promoting welfare and protecting from harm
- Safer Recruitment and Working Practices - making sure you are all safe to work with young people
- Managing Young People - expectations of behaviour
- Consent Forms and Registration - knowing your group

Finances

- What do you have to do to raise and manage money for the group?
- Handling Cash - what are you going to do with all those £1 coins?
- Income Generation - are all those £1 coins going to be enough?

Planning and Delivering Activities

- What do you need to do to plan, prepare and deliver activities?
- Planning Activities - What difference does planning make?
- Regular Activities - What do these look like?
- Young People Delivering Activities - Encouraging the group to 'own' their activities
- Managing the risks - What happens when it goes wrong in activities?

Off-site Activities

- What do you need if you want to do off-site activities?
- Planning and Preparation - what else do you need to do for an off-site activity
- Managing a Group - what difference does being off-site mean?

Self-Management

- How will you manage yourself?
- Dealing with emotional issues - how am I going to manage myself?
- Managing boundaries and difficult circumstances - how do you keep you safe?
- Personal development - how do I get better at this?

Evaluation

- How do you know if everything is working well?
- Reviewing the Previous Year - How well did we do?
- Identifying Future Provision - what do we do next?



What do you need to do if you are thinking about setting up a youth club?



Congratulations!

You have made a big step in wanting to support your community. Setting up a youth project can be a daunting experience as you need to ensure that activities are safe and fun, that offer positive experiences. There are lots of things you need to consider before going ahead.

This guide will help you navigate through what you need to do and why; and will illustrate the minimum requirements you need to have in place before opening your doors.

Please also use this guide to conduct annual reviews so any changes can be incorporated and to help you identify where gaps may be.



Identifying a Need - consultation with young people and the community

Setting Up

Summary

There are a number of reasons why you might want to set up a youth club, these include:

- Young people in your community have asked for one.
- You want to support the children in your community.
- You have children yourself and can see that young people need something to do.
- You want to deal with what can be perceived as bad behaviour from young people.

Whatever your reason, you need to make sure that you are well-informed before going ahead and that there really is a need for a local youth club/project in your area.

"You need to consult with young people before opening a youth club because young people want to feel that they are being listened to and that they can contribute their ideas. That way you can find out what they actually want, rather than what you think they want, and more young people will come along."

Bobbie, 14

Principles

- A good youth club/project meets an identified need. Without adequate research you may set up something that is either not used or duplicates something that's already happening in the community.
- Talking to young people and other members of the community is essential to ensure the project fits with the community needs.
- Good youth provision has links and access to other services that can support the delivery and outcomes for young people.

Things to do/consider

- Find out what is already happening in your area and how well attended the provision is? If it is well attended - do you need another group? If it is not well attended - what are the reasons for this?
- Find out by talking to young people. Ask them whether they want a group, and if they do what should it look like? Remember be careful about approaching young people hanging at local haunts, we have taught them to be wary of strangers and you should consider what it might look like if you approach young people on the street. Use existing mechanisms such as schools, or local Facebook pages to ascertain interest.
- Find out what other members of the community think. Are there possible objections, are there people who might want to help, is there local expertise in any of the areas that you need to consider?
- Talk to local services and organisations and see how you can get their support and what that might look like.
- What are you prepared for? Do you expect it to be a safe place for young people to come and do activities, or will it be somewhere where young people can come and talk about all their worries and concerns, or both?
- What age are you aiming the group at? Youth provision is classed as between 11 and 18 years old but an 11 year old has very different needs to an 18 year old.

Useful links

- You are already on the Momentum (Norfolk) website, there is lots of support, training and help you can access through this organisation.
- Contact Momentum for information on the Ambition 'First Steps Framework' that can help you get started and identify improvement areas.



Logistics - venue, storage, time, accessibility

Setting Up

Summary

Once you have established the need, you need to consider if there is a suitable and safe place from which to deliver. Young people have very good reasons for needing this.

"It's important to think about the venue and time of the youth club so it's accessible to everyone. It needs to be consistent so young people don't need to worry about changes."

Neve, 15

"I would like it to be accessible for me to get into the building and to get the support I need."

"I like it when it's welcoming."

Principles

- You are looking for a public building e.g. community centre or school. The venue should never ever be a private home.
- The venue should be easy to get to and accessible; in other words, it should be easy for all young people, including those with disabilities, to get inside the building.
- The venue should have enough space to do more than one activity safely.
- The availability needs to be at a regular time each week for a reasonable amount of time: do not take a venue because it is cheap if the only time you can have it is Monday evening 9-11pm.

Things to do/consider

- How will young people get there - are there safe routes to and from the venue? Is there enough room for parents/carers to drop their children off safely? What about public transport, is there a need for young people to use it?
- Is it welcoming to all young people - can disabled young people use the building with ease? How intimidating is the inside decor? Are the fixtures and fittings robust enough to cope with the use?
- What space do you have - is there room for quieter activities? Is there an outdoor area you can use when the weather is nicer? How easy is the space to supervise and manage?
- How is the venue governed - is there a supportive committee overseeing the venue? How easy is it to deal with the management?
- Who else will be using the building at the same time - will it be easy to keep the groups separate? Could either the young people or the other group cause each other distress in any way?
- What time do you have for the booking - is it convenient for volunteers and young people? Does it clash with any other commitments young people might have, for instance a homework club at their school?



Useful links

- Community Action Norfolk has a large database of existing community groups and the venues they use. They may be able to help with ideas of venues but also which venues may be suitable for your group. www.communityactionnorfolk.org.uk
- Equal Lives offer a range of support and consultancy services, including help with policies and an audit of premises; there is a charge for this service. www.equallives.org.uk

Resources

- A VIPER Guide to Participation in Decision-Making – <http://www.allfie.org.uk/docs/Viper%20Guide%20Hear%20Us%20Out.pdf> has some good tips about making your club accessible to disabled young people, and Participation Works - <http://www.participationworks.org.uk/resources/how-to-support-disabled-and-non-disabled-children-and-young-people-to-work-together-in-inc/> has some guidance for helping disabled and non-disabled young people work together inclusively.

What do you need to have in place before opening the doors?

So you have done your research, consulted with young people and found a suitable venue - see the Setting Up section for the basics around deciding what you want to do, who for and the reasons for doing this.

What is next? Before opening the doors for the youth project, there are some basics that need to be in place to protect you, the staff and most importantly the young people. It is not advised to do anything without having the following in place:

- Governance Structure (including young people governance)
- Financial Basics
- Insurance
- Policies and Procedures





Governance Structure - who is responsible?

Summary

At this stage, most groups do not register as a charity, you are more likely to be what is known as an 'Unincorporated Association'. This basically means you are not registered either with Companies House or the Charity Commission. To remain an unincorporated group your income must not exceed £5000 per annum. This structure means you will be governed by a Constitution put in place by a Management Committee.

The management committee have the legal responsibility for the project as a group of individuals rather than as an organisation and they are the prime decision making body of the project. It is important to note that should the group incur debts it can't pay, or if there is a claim made against the project, then the management committee is personally liable. In addition, any hiring agreements must be made under an individual's name e.g. hiring a room at a community centre.

Alternatively, your group may decide to be a legal entity as an organisation as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) or a charitable company (limited by guarantee), alternatively you may look at becoming a Community Interest Company (CIC). These do mean, in most cases, limited liability for the governing body however it also means a requirement to comply with criteria set by Companies House, the Charity Commission or both.

It is not a recommended option to forego a management committee because without a governing body it will not be clear who has ultimate responsibility and this may fall to you personally. Also, having a team of people making decisions together will take the pressure off and other people can bring expertise and knowledge that you might not have.

It is good practice to have young people involved in the governance - they will often have opinions about how the group is run and how to improve it. You could start by having one or two keen young people come along to committee meetings and go from there. Some youth groups have set up 'Young Committees' where young people are elected by the group and have their own meetings where they discuss issues and make recommendations to the main committee.

Principles

- A Committee should have at least 3 people, for the three main roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- One person should also take responsibility for Safeguarding.
- The governance document - the Constitution - should be a working document that includes the aims, values, principles and powers of the group. It should also include how the committee will work, how decisions will be made and responsibilities of the various positions.
- Young people should be involved in the governance.

Things to do/consider

- What type of structure you want and are you clear about what each structure means for you and the group?
- What are the overarching rules that will guide decision making and responsibilities?
- How will young people get involved in a meaningful way?

Useful links



- The central government information site has some clear guidance on how to choose a structure - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-types-how-to-choose-a-structure>
- Sandy Adirondack has a website covering how to run a Voluntary Sector organisation. It is a site highly recommended by Bradford CVS <http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/legalstatus.htm>
- <http://www.governancepages.org.uk>

Resources

- “What Management Committees Need to Know: A Guide to the National Occupational Standards for Management Committee Members of Small Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups” - A free resource copyrighted by the Governance Hub and Bradford CVS. This was produced in 2007 and so is a little out of date; however it does detail the advantages and disadvantages of some legal structures (it does not look at Community Interest Companies for instance). The best way to find it is google.
- “Voluntary But Not Amateur: A Guide to the Law for Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups” by R. Hayes and J. Reason - written in 2009 but still useful. This is a book you will have to pay for.
- Code of Governance.
- Training by Momentum.

Policies and Procedures - doing things the right way



Summary

Any person in a good group/club will know how to act and react in most situations because you will have a set of policies and procedures in place (we can never 100% guarantee for all situations because life is unpredictable - that is called managing risk). Policies and procedures set out a consistent way of doing things for your group so that all volunteers are confident in knowing how your club wants to work with young people - your ethos and values; and what that actually looks like - what action to take and when.

Useful links

The NCVO KnowHowNonProfit have a policies and procedures page on their website with a checklist and links to some draft 'starter for 10' policies -
https://knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/operations/legal/copy_of_policies



Resources

If you are not sure, contact Momentum, they can talk through the most relevant and needed policies to get you started
info@momentumnorfolk.org.uk

Templates for some essential policies and procedures can be found on the resource page of Momentum's website -
<http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/resources/>

Principles

- Length does not equal a good policy. A good policy is clear, easy to understand and covers the relevant aspects.
- This also applies to the accompanying procedure - clear and understandable. A good procedure is not ambiguous, people should know what step to take and when.
- Don't copy other organisations - use them as a template to start but they have to be your own otherwise it will not work for you.
- Policies and procedures are working documents - they need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis e.g. annually.
- All volunteers should have read the policies and procedures before starting with the group and everyone including the young people should know how to access and read the policies and procedures.
- Once the group is up and running, get feedback from the young people and ensure you include them in the reviews.
- Don't start with too many policies and procedures - start with the essentials.
- The policies and procedures should link with the risk assessments - see the section Keeping Safe.

Things to do/consider

- Who is the policy and procedure aimed at - will they be able to understand it?
- Think about how you can get young people to review them as soon as possible but in a fun way - let's face it policies and procedures can seem dull to quite a lot of people.
- Think about how you want to do things as an organisation for example will you use a red/yellow card system or something else to manage behaviour?

Insurance - protecting the club, you and the young people

Summary

Insurance is an absolute essential as it limits some of the risks your group will face. Running a youth group can be difficult and risky so it is important that you find the right insurance for what you are doing. Insurance does not stop things from happening but providing you have followed policies, procedures and risk assessments then insurance can provide some peace of mind should a claim need to be made or you need support with a claim being made against your group.

Principles

- Insurance is essential - it is not an optional extra and it is not as expensive as you might think.
- Get the right cover for the activities your club does.
- Talk to a number of insurance companies to make sure they understand what it is you will be doing - look out for the ones who understand some of the risks involved in working with young people.
- Do not start the group until you have the insurance in place.

Useful links



- There is a sponsored article on CYPNow website – <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/sponsored-feature/1147138/what-insurance-do-youth-groups-and-children's-charities-need> which covers the basics, don't forget this is written by an insurance company so you may not need all that they are suggesting.
- There is a lengthier piece on the Premier Public Liability website – <http://www.premierpublicliabilityinsurance.co.uk/clubs-societies> which has lots of useful questions and scenarios to help you decide. Again don't forget that this is written by one insurance company.

Things to do/consider

- Think about how many people will be accessing the club, what activities you will be doing?
- Be clear about the insurance you will operate under at the venue you hire, what does it cover and not cover?
- What about your equipment, money and volunteers - what cover do you need for this?
- If you go off-site with your group, will you have the right insurance in place?
- Think about preparing a list of questions prior to phoning insurance companies so you can make sure everything is discussed before you then make a decision.

Financial basics - keeping money safe.

Summary

You will need to have money to run the club as hall hire, DBS checks (see Keeping Safe section), equipment etc all cost money. It is more than likely you will be collecting 'subs' from the young people to attend and that you may be eligible for some grants. Before any grants can be awarded it is important to have the right processes and systems in place to ensure money is accounted for and kept safe.

"Youth clubs need to make sure they don't run out of money and that the money is going towards the youth club, not spent on other things."

Alivia, 15

Useful links

All major banks offer free banking for small youth groups - they often aim the accounts at 'clubs and societies' and many of them call this type of account things like a 'Treasurer's account' - google 'banking for community groups'.



Principles

- Assign a person to act as Treasurer from the Committee, having one person monitoring the finances will make it easier.
- You will need to set up a bank account.
- There should be two signatories on cheques required from the management committee.
- Set up a basic spreadsheet to monitor money - record what comes in and what goes out (much like you may do for household expenses).
- Always check that the bank balance agrees with your spreadsheet at the end of each month.
- Have a system for handling cash and petty cash, making sure money gets handled and signed out in the correct ways.

Things to do/consider

- When looking for a bank account don't just think about deals, think about ease of access - you will be dealing with cash a lot. Also, let the bank know you are setting up an account for a voluntary youth group; they will be able to direct you to the appropriate ones.
- Although the Treasurer will have the main responsibility for checking finances, how will you monitor that this is correct? Consider at least two people understanding the systems and how to do this. This covers holidays, allows smooth handovers and provides an audit check.
- When recording on the spreadsheet, don't just think about how much, write what the money was used for or where it came from e.g. used to buy a football, came from young person subs. Knowing where most of your money comes from and what you're spending it on can help with future planning including making applications for grants, and also help you spot if you're spending too much in one area.

What do you need to do to ensure young people and workers are kept safe?



The most important building block before opening the doors to the young people, is to ensure you do all that you can to keep them and you safe, and protected from harm. However, this needs to be happening all the time not just at the point of you first opening your doors. Therefore, it pays to spend some time on this section thinking about how you manage safety and safeguarding. The following are key areas that you need to have in place and give ongoing consideration to:

- Health and Safety (including risk assessments)
- Safeguarding (including confidentiality)
- Safer Recruitment, Induction and Management of Volunteers
- Boundaries and Expectations of Behaviour
- Registration and Consent Forms



Health and Safety - being prepared?



Summary

Possibly the three most attacked and yet most misunderstood words in the English language - Health and Safety. Being aware of Health and Safety, trying to anticipate and reduce risks is actually a good thing. It means you care about what you are doing and that you are going to do your best to keep everyone safe and in good health. Good health and safety awareness does not stop you from doing activities but it does mean you are careful about what you do and when. For example you don't get in a car and drive it without being aware of the risks, and yet driving a car can be a very dangerous activity. Therefore you should do your best to ensure your group manages risk, and the health and safety of all who come into contact with it.

"Risk assessments are important to ensure all the young people will be safe, and if any risks come up during the assessment you have time to fix them."

Jordana, 14

Principles

- Health and Safety is a legal requirement of which risk assessments are one aspect.
- The committee needs to lead on health and safety but everyone needs to have responsibility for it including the young people.
- Risk assessments do not eliminate risks but they do help you to think about what could happen, how you could avoid it and what to do if the worst does happen.
- You need to identify the hazards; consider who might be harmed and how; evaluate the risk and decide on the precaution; record and implement these findings.
- Health and Safety is not just about managing the physical environment e.g. mopping a puddle up off the floor, it is also about managing the group and yourself e.g. being aware of arguments and resolving them before they turn very nasty.
- The Health and Safety policy with accompanying risk assessments needs to be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Make sure you have communicated health and safety implications to all involved, this means doing things like telling the young people the rules of a game before you start and refereeing the game fairly, so that you don't have arguments.
- Don't forget the basics e.g. First Aid and fire drills.

Things to do/consider

- Having a named person on the committee who takes overall responsibility for ensuring the health and safety requirements are in place.
- Thinking the worst, that way you can prepare and do all that you can do to stop it from happening.
- Seeing Health and Safety as one part of the overall Safeguarding responsibility that you have (see Safeguarding section).
- Getting young people involved in assessing risks e.g. spend an hour assessing the venue you are using.

Useful links



- The NCVO KnowHow website has a useful page on Health and Safety -
<https://knowhownonprofit.org/people/employment-law-and-hr/policies-and-templates/healthsafety>
- Obviously the Health and Safety Executive have lots of general information -
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>
- The St John Ambulance website has an online tool that can help assess what your first aid requirements -
<https://www.sja.org.uk/sja/training-courses/requirements-calculator.aspx>
this is a good way of demonstrating how you have considered risks.

Resources

- An example of a risk assessment template can be found in the Resources section.

Safeguarding - promoting welfare and protecting from harm



Principles

Summary

Safeguarding is about promoting the welfare of children and protecting them from harm, it is more than 'child protection'. The work to ensure safeguarding is informed by the statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children (2015)' and this states that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility - so that includes you and everyone involved in your group. Trustees of charities must always act in the best interests of any vulnerable groups they serve e.g. children, and must take reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. It should be noted safeguarding principles applies to anyone under 18 and for those with additional needs up to the age of 25, so don't think that just because your group are teenagers that safeguarding does not apply to you.

Useful links



The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) provides the Safer Programme to help and support community and voluntary organisations with the safeguarding requirements. Safer, amongst various services, provides training, a resource pack, policy checking and informal advice and guidance. Find them at - <http://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/safer-programme/>

Obviously Momentum can give guidance and support.

The NSPCC also has lots of online information and support - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/>

- Safeguarding is more than having a policy and procedure (although you must have these), it is about the way you work with young people. It is fundamental to your work with young people; your values and approach are important.
- Don't see safeguarding as something you have to do, you should want to ensure that you protect young people from harm and promote their welfare. If you don't want this, then running a youth group is not for you.
- You must have a named committee member who takes responsibility for safeguarding.
- Getting basic awareness training is essential for all volunteers and workers.
- You need to use the Disclosure and Barring Service - see Safer Recruitment section.
- When in doubt - talk! Talk to each other and talk to experts. If you are not sure about anything, it is better to ask questions than to do nothing at all.
- This is also about protecting adults, in that clear policies and procedures, will ensure that adults do not put themselves or the young people in compromising situations.
- Be alert and be prepared.

Things to do/consider

- Who can help me? Momentum has a partnership with the Safer Programme (see below) and between these two organisations you have a considerable knowledge and experience base to draw from.
- Thinking about all potential issues e.g. managing relationships, handling disclosures, managing the physical environment, and practical aspects such as what happens if a young person is not collected as expected by a parent.
- What do you know of other organisations that may be able to support and help young people who perhaps may need something extra?



Safer Recruitment and Working Practices - making sure you are all safe to work with young people

Summary

Safer Recruitment is not just for organisations who have employees. Safer recruitment practices apply to everyone working with young people - paid or not. Because as Lord Bichard wrote:

“the harsh reality is that if a sufficiently devious person is determined to seek out opportunities to work their evil, no one can guarantee that they will be stopped. Our task is to make it as difficult as possible for them to succeed.” Richard Report, 2004, p12, para 79.

You need to have an approach that ensures, as best as is possible, that the adult volunteers and workers are suitable to work with young people.

“Young people need a safe environment in which they can trust people, so that’s why it’s important to make sure all volunteers and staff are DBS checked.”

Aidan, 15

Principles

- You should never just accept a person as a volunteer without doing checks, willingness does not equal suitability.
- Being clear about your commitment to safeguarding deters unsuitable people from wanting to work with you - so be very loud about it.
- Ensure you carry out the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks - if in doubt as to who is eligible ask Momentum or Safer to give guidance.
- You will need a robust policy and procedure that covers recruitment and code of conduct including use of personal phones and social media.
- Use the guidance and support available to you.
- No process or procedure can eliminate all risk, you must be vigilant, not let bad practices creep in and more importantly challenge inappropriate behaviours (adults or young people).
- You must be prepared to think - ‘it could happen here’.
- All information must be stored safely and confidentially.

Things to do/consider

- Who will be responsible for checking the suitability of all adults working and volunteering, you need to ensure that this does not just fall to one person - that is also an unsafe practice.
- How will you ensure new volunteers know what to do and when - what will your induction process include?
- Having an informal, closely supervised trial period so you can assess the individual and they can see if this is right for them.
- How you will approach turning people away even if you are desperate for volunteers?
- Getting young people involved in selecting volunteers.

Useful links

- The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board has lots of useful information for safer recruitment and safer working practices – <http://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/publications-research/>
- Don’t forget to ask Momentum about DBS Checks - they are an official registered body for the Disclosure and Barring Service, and they have lots of experience in managing safer working.



Managing Young People - expectations of behaviour



Summary

Often people fail to recognise the importance of managing behaviour when considering keeping everyone safe. If you manage behaviour both for individuals and the group as a whole, then the risks of people getting hurt; emotionally or physically, are considerably reduced. It is important to recognise that an essential part of running a club is managing behaviour and every adult involved has a part to play in this. Having clear boundaries and expectations makes sure everyone feels safe at the group.

“It is important to have rules because then we know there are boundaries in what we can do and can’t do”

“I think it is important for rules to keep us safe and to respect each other”

Useful links

Somerset County Council have a concise two page guide to managing behaviour -

<http://www.somersetyouth.co.uk/UserFiles/File/running-your-own-club/Managing%20behaviour%20guide.pdf>



Principles

- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable and what isn't.
- Have a behaviour management system e.g. red card/yellow card.
- Every adult needs to ensure they apply the rules consistently and fairly - you cannot have favourites.
- You are not there to be their friend - you are a role model and must have professional boundaries, therefore do not be afraid of applying the rules even if you think they might not like it.
- Stay calm if a situation is escalating.
- You may have to raise your voice to get the group to pay attention but you should not have to do this with individuals.
- Never use physicality to enforce the rules.
- Make sure management is also about the good things and not just the bad - praise the good stuff, encourage respectful behaviour.
- Always start with the little things - praise a 'thank you', appropriately challenge a negative comment. Managing little things means managing the big things becomes easier.

Things to do/consider

- Having the young people help to formulate a code of conduct and the rules for attending the group, and then everyone signing up to it.
- Getting newcomers to sign the code of conduct before they start.
- What activities can you do that encourages respectful and friendly behaviour? This helps set the standard.
- You are always risk assessing when delivering to the group - how aware are you of the temperature of the group, are they happy, are they tired, what might you need to do to mitigate against possible problems?
- How will you deal with individuals who present particularly challenging behaviour?
- Remember - not all challenging behaviour is 'bad' behaviour, some young people have difficulties that may not always allow them to understand or do what you are asking. How will you deal with this?

Consent Forms and Registration - knowing your group



Summary

It is important that you know who is attending and any possible issues that may arise so that you can keep everyone safe. For example, you may decide to sell salted peanuts as part of your tuck shop, but do you know which of your young people is allergic to nuts?

Do you know who to contact in an emergency? Therefore, membership and consent forms provide you with essential information on the young people attending your group.

In addition, you need to keep a record of who attends each week, so that you know who you are taking responsibility for.

Resources

See the Resource section for an example membership and/or consent form.

Principles

- There is a difference between membership forms which are signed by young people, and consent forms which are signed by parents/carers - the difference may depend on whether you want a completely open access group or not. However, it is recommended that you have either one or both for anyone attending your group.
- The forms will contain personal information; ensure that they are filed in a confidential and secure place between sessions. Do not disclose information to others unless there is a child protection concern.
- Simple is best - don't make them too complicated.
- Ensure every young person attending has a corresponding form.
- If a form identifies a risk, then ensure you complete a risk assessment and put safeguards in place.
- Always have the forms on site when a session is taking place.
- If you do off-site activities, then you will need an additional parent/carers signed consent form - see the Off-site Activities section.

Things to do/consider

- Who will have responsibility for ensuring forms are completed and on site each week?
- Having an annual update of forms, so that information stays relevant.
- Which form do you want; a membership form signed by young people will ensure open access, however a parent/carers signed consent form will ensure that you have correct contact information (you will be surprised at the number of young people who have trouble with phone numbers, even with mobile phones).

What do you have to do to raise and manage money for the group?



As much as you may try to keep managing money to a minimum, there will be a need to have systems and processes in place to make sure you manage money effectively and safely. The basic building blocks were highlighted in the Essential Governance section and this section will go into some of these areas in more detail.

- Handling cash (petty cash & subs)
- Income generation
- Grant management





Handling Cash - what are you going to do with all those £1 coins?

Summary

It is a fact of life when running youth groups that you will inevitably end up dealing with lots of change. It is really important that you have systems in place to make sure that this is handled correctly and can all be accounted for. You will need to have systems in place that deals with petty cash and the collection of subscriptions (subs).

Things to do/consider

- Who will take responsibility for the cash if the Treasurer is not present?
- Think about how often you may need to visit the bank, how will you fit this in with your daily life?
- Getting the young people to help you manage the finances, although you should never burden them with looking after the cash, this must be an adult's role.
- Not just what you will need to spend your money on but what might be useful as the group gets established - include this in your budget.
- Being realistic, you won't be able to buy all that you want, so think about what is necessary and what is actually just a 'nice to have'. Budget accordingly.

Useful links

- The Resource Centre has a good page on financial rules you need for your group - <http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/financial-rules/>
- CVA Blyth Valley have produced a great factsheet to help with the finance basics - <http://cvabv.org.uk/docs/20.pdf>



Principles

- Simple but robust procedures will make your life easier when balancing the bank account.
- Treat petty cash separately from subscriptions - do not just take money out of the subs without recording the income first and have two signatories to confirm the income.
- Collect and record the money as you register young people.
- Have a cash book (either paper or computer based) in which you record all money that goes out and all money that comes in.
- Get receipts for everything you spend money on - keep all invoices and receipts in a file.
- Balance the account at least once a month, this will prevent any problems when it comes to compiling your annual accounts.
- Keep petty cash to a minimum - no more than £30 in the tin.
- Make sure all cash is collected and stored in a locked tin; these are very easy to find at stationery shops. Restrict who has access to this, balance this at the end of the session and have two signatories to confirm this.
- Prepare annual budgets so you know approximately how much money you will need - this means thinking about what you want to do in the next year, what it will cost and how you will raise it.
- Try and keep some monies in reserve, should you need it for an emergency or if you want to pay for something not included in the budget.

"Youth clubs need to make sure they don't run out of money and that the money is going towards the youth club, not spent on other things."

Alivia, 15



Income Generation - are all those £1 coins going to be enough?

Summary

The sustainability of the group will always depend on having enough funds to allow it to continue. Unfortunately, there are not many generous benefactors that come along to pay for everything, so it will be up to the Committee to ensure there is enough income to cover the expenditure. There are a number of ways to generate income for a small group:

- apply for grants e.g. District Councils, national charities
- fundraising events e.g. sponsored walks, discos, car washing etc
- donations
- direct payments e.g. subscriptions

As a Committee, you will need to plan as to what is the best fundraising method for what you want, as some methods may be restricted in what you can spend the money on. For example: Momentum has a small grants pot that you can apply for that will pay for DBS checks and basic training. The grant will only be allowed to pay for the items you define in the application. However, you can use subscriptions to pay for anything relevant to the running of the group.

“A youth club that is financially healthy guarantees it will be around for a long time and will be able to cater for the amount of interest it gets. If the youth workers and volunteers are stressed about money, then the young people will be less likely to enjoy themselves.”

Liv, 14

Principles

- Good budgeting and record keeping are the basics for effective income generation.
- Talk about finances at each committee meeting; that way you will know where you are and can spot problems long before they happen.
- Applying for grants requires time and planning - you need a good idea, good financial projections and evidence of how you spend your existing monies - don't hope that funders will just like what you do and give you money. And even if you think your idea is brilliant, it doesn't necessarily mean that a grant giver will.
- If you're applying for external funding, find out how much reporting the funder will expect and in what format. Some funders will want you to send in regular written reports, which can be quite time-consuming, so you will need to make sure you plan for this.
- What you spend your money on is important - only spend it on items for your group and be aware of expenditure that could cause questions e.g. excessive spending on committee expenses.
- If you are successful in a grant application, the monies will only be allowed to be spent on what is stated in the application - it is restricted income. You must be thorough in accounting for this as you will be required to present evidence.
- This may seem obvious but remember the income is not yours - it belongs to the group, therefore you have to be thorough in accounting for it.

Things to do/consider

- Who will be responsible for fundraising within the committee?
- Start to monitor and evaluate what benefits your group brings to the young people accessing it; this provides a good evidence base should you wish to apply for money or encourage donations.
- Getting young people involved in the fundraising efforts.
- Who you will target for fundraising as different groups or organisations may consider different things as worthwhile.
- What is unique about your group, even location can be the thing that makes you different.
- Your aspirations for the group and the young people and how you will write this.
- In addition, don't just apply to everyone in your first year, this may affect who you can target in subsequent years - some funders will only fund each group once, others will allow you to apply again after a certain time.
- Getting help for setting up appropriate systems for managing restricted income such as grants. By doing this, you will be less likely to make mistakes and therefore cause problems for your group.

Useful links

The NCVO KnowHowNonProfit has a useful guide to fundraising -

<https://knowhownonprofit.org/funding/fundraising/individual-giving/local-community-fundraising-1>



What do you need to do to plan, prepare and deliver activities?

The basics are in place, you have a group of young people ready and raring to go - what are you going to do with them on a weekly basis? You want to make sure the activities are varied, safe, fun, informative and doable. Good planning is invaluable as it supports effective delivery and stops you from taking any risky actions. This section looks at what you need to do to ensure safe and fun delivery of activities in your group.

- Benefits of planning
- Regular activities
- Empowering Young People to deliver activities
- Managing when things go wrong
- Checklist



Planning Activities - What difference does planning make?

Planning and
Delivering
Activities

Summary

If you want young people to stay engaged and wanting to come to your group, it is essential to offer activities that are varied, fun, challenging and age appropriate. Each session needs to offer more than one type of activity and whilst you may have some regular favourite activities, it is also good to include other activities on a more infrequent basis.

Planning activities allows you to cater, as much as is possible, with the various needs and preferences of a diverse group of young people. It also solves the weekly problem of just turning up and hoping all goes well.

Things to do/consider

- How far in advance you want to plan - will you do it monthly, termly or something different?
- What age are you aiming the group at - are the activities appropriate to their age and possible interests?
- The needs of all the young people attending or wanting to attend when choosing activities - can everyone take part, will you need to make some changes or will you need to provide extra support?
- What adults do you have available, will this be enough for all the activities you want to complete in one session? Do some activities require more supervision than others?
- Being flexible - sometimes no matter how much you plan an activity, it just doesn't work at that point in time. It doesn't mean it won't ever work but have a back-up plan just in case.
- What activities can be put on weekly with minimum effort and become 'regulars'.
- Be aware of the traditional conflict points for youth groups - football, pool tables and ping-pong tables. Young people may argue over these, for instance if someone is accused of cheating or of 'hogging' the table.
- Finding out the skills and interests that both the young people and volunteers have - would they be interested in running something different based on their own hobbies?
- Utilising the local community - what happens locally, can you get a different section of the community in to try something different e.g. knitting with the older generation, or learning to play traditional card games such as 'Crib'. You may be surprised at the outcome.
- What events are happening that can provide a theme e.g. Christmas or 'Movember'?
- Is the activity accessible to everyone in the group or can you adapt it so that everyone can join in?

Principles

- Planning is the first stage in safeguarding and risk assessment - if you know what you are going to do, you can plan for possible risks.
- Having planned activities means young people are less likely to 'mooch' - if you don't have anything for young people to do, they become bored and find things to do. This may not be the constructive, positive activities we wish for our young people and potentially you will have to deal with more disruptive behaviour.
- Knowing what you are going to do means you arrive prepared with the right equipment.
- Planning allows young people and volunteers to know what is happening, this means everyone is prepared to participate.
- Good planning includes the involvement of young people.
- Structured sessions are easier to run as everyone knows what they are expected to do and when.
- Evaluation - knowing what works is an important part of planning.
- Always check your insurance covers the activities you plan to do.

"It's important to plan activities in advance so that young people can have confidence in you. They need to know you know what you're doing, not rushing around or having long gaps between activities. Also, knowing in advance what activities are planned can encourage young people to come along."

Summer, 17

Useful links



- Momentum has compiled an 'Activity Kit' which gives instructions on various types of activities from icebreakers to running sessions on issues such as positive relationships.
- Momentum also runs various training courses that can help, a good place to start is the Momentum Training Hub - <http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/the-training-hub/courselist.asp> which offers a great range of courses including an 'Introduction to Working with Young People' and a Level Two Award in 'Youth Work' Practice.

Regular Activities - What do these look like?

Summary

Regular activities can help set behaviour expectations, reinforce the rules, give your group an identity and provide lots of fun if they are managed correctly. They are the foundation for your group, and good regular activities mean young people keep coming back to the group. However, if they are not managed well, they can provide the backdrop for boredom and disruption.

What does regular activities mean? Well, it is anything you put on, on a regular basis. It could be that you always start with the same icebreaker to get everyone in the right frame of mind for the session, it could be that you always have a game of football going somewhere, or you always have a corner where young people can go and chill, and talk. It could be that the session always follows the same sort of format but with different choices of activity e.g. the session starts with an ice-breaker, then some sort of active game and art project, then finishes with a team-building exercise. Regular activities are the backbone of the group.

Things to do/consider

- Having more than one regular activity e.g. one active game and one 'quieter' venture such as always having a corner for colouring (surprisingly loved by adults and young people alike).
- Will the young people get bored of the standard activity and how can it be extended or slightly amended every now and again? For instance, table tennis might typically be 'winner stays on' but one week you could have a big table tennis tournament, or the tournament might be ongoing over a few weeks.
- How you can utilise your space most efficiently and effectively e.g. if you only have space for one active game then football might not be the best regular activity unless it is played for a very short amount of time.

Principles

- Regular activities should be simple and easy to deliver, they should be the section of the programme you don't have to think about too much.
- The first few times you deliver them, make sure everyone is clear about the rules and expectations (according to you). This way it sets a safe boundary that the young people can follow.
- Make sure all volunteers know how this activity is delivered, so that you can ensure a consistent approach.
- Have the regular activity(ies) ready so that as soon as young people walk in, they have something to occupy them.
- Make sure the activity is thoroughly risk assessed and that this is regularly reviewed.

"I like the rules to help myself to keep me calm"

"I would like to do gardening, cooking, art, sports"

Resources

The Momentum Activity Kit provides a number of activities for you to try with your group, you may find that a couple of these become favourites with the young people and become regular activities.



Young People Delivering Activities - Encouraging the group to 'own' their activities

Planning and
Delivering
Activities

Summary

The best groups get into a safe, welcoming and comfortable rhythm where everyone knows what is expected of them. When this happens, you will find that young people will naturally take more responsibility and want to do more to help run the activities. They become empowered. It is really beneficial to encourage and empower young people, as taking responsibility, working with others, risk assessing real life situations and generally being positive are fantastic life skills.

Things to do/consider

- The complexity of the activity - is it something that could cause lots of arguments? If so, how are you going to help the young person manage this, if you deliver the activity at all?
- How are you going to guide and give support without stepping on their toes? Subtle and underplayed support allows the young person to flourish.
- When to step in and reassert your presence if the activity is starting to go wrong. If this happens, make sure you spend time reflecting with the young leader to ensure they know the reasons for you intervening and how to avoid this in the future.
- Making delivery part of a wider programme of learning such as the Norfolk Youth Award administered by Momentum, or the Young Sports Leaders Award - see Active Norfolk for more details.

Principles

- Trust is important for truly empowering young people - it has to work both ways if you want the young people to lead activities with success.
- Take a step by step approach so that the young people learn from their mistakes and apply this learning next time e.g. they deliver just one part of the activity first.
- Don't just expect young people to be able to deliver an activity with no problems straight away - as you will know it takes time to get confidence and skill in leading a group, your role is to support them in developing their confidence and skills.
- Encourage them to think about what they did after the activity - what went well, not so well, what would you change etc.
- Don't always have the same people leading, this is not fair on the others but remember some young people may need more support than others.
- Remember you are still responsible for the group safety and well-being including the young person(s) leading the activity.

"I feel empowered when I'm
praised for doing something"

Young Person



Useful links

- The information for the Norfolk Youth Award can be found at -
<http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/norfolk-youth-award/>
- If you want to know more about the Young Sports Leaders Awards -
<http://www.sportsleaders.org/courses/awards/>
- There are some guides to empowerment, these are more wordy and quite lengthy but if you have an interest –
https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1263/everp_usersguide_web_english.pdf (this is a European funded site and reflects research from across Europe), alternatively look up the Carnegie Trust report -
<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/02/pub1455011710.pdf>

Managing the risks - What happens when it goes wrong in activities?

Summary

In an ideal world, young people will gather and participate in activities in a joyful, happy and trouble free manner. But we all know that put any group of people together and because we are all human, things can go wrong. Your role is to avoid this as much as possible - see the sections of 'Keeping Safe' and 'Managing Yourself' to help you with this.

However, despite all the risk assessments and all the group management techniques occasionally things can and will go wrong. At this point, you will have to manage the immediate situation and the aftermath.

Things to do/consider

- Where are all your volunteers at any one point - as a working team, you should always know where each other are, so that you can call on each other if needed.
- The layout of your space - where are the doors, are they easy to get everyone through quickly, where are the hiding spaces etc?
- Taking a training course that will give you confidence and skills in dealing with difficult circumstances.
- How you learn from the situation and move forward positively.

Principles

- Being proactive is better than being reactive - so keep alert to what is happening in the room, and intervene as soon as you notice things going wrong.
- Make a loud noise if you need people to stop what they are doing immediately - raise your voice or alternatively make several blasts into a whistle, people generally react to a loud noise.
- If any situation arises whether it is conflict, first aid or an emotional outburst get other adults to clear the room, take the rest of the young people away and find something else for the group to do while you deal with the situation.
- Remember safeguarding is your first priority (see the Keeping Safe section) - this means preventing people being hurt and dealing with first aid situations.
- If young people are being physically aggressive with each other, your first duty is to protect people from getting hurt - including yourself. Only you can risk assess the situation and decide whether it's safe to intervene or whether you need to take another course of action such as calling the police.
- Stay calm and take things one step at a time e.g. calm down the aggressors, hear their side of the story, listen to the aggrieved party, and consider solutions.
- If an argument or 'fight' has broken out, sit those involved down separately and talk to each one before making a decision about what to do. Encourage the young people involved to think about how they can resolve the situation.
- Don't take sides but ensure if that sanctions are suitable and proportional.
- Don't be inflexible; allow them to negotiate solutions with you and/or the other person.
- Whilst dealing with any young person whether angry or upset or hurt, try not to be alone in a room with them and never behind a closed door where people cannot see you properly.
- Don't get angry and shout at individuals - Remember that young people have lives outside of the group and you do not know what has happened to them that day so just shouting at people may just be exacerbating whatever is going on for them. It also shows you have lost control of the situation.
- Make sure you listen and acknowledge the feelings of all parties.
- Tell the committee members and make a written record of the incident.

Useful links



- The Momentum Training Hub has a number of courses that are appropriate including an Introduction to Working with Young People, if you are not sure what you are need, talk to Momentum's Training Administrator
- The NSPCC deliver Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) with a website that includes lots of useful resources and information. This link takes you to the CPSU Briefing - Managing Challenging Circumstances - <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/managing-challenging-behaviour/>
- The Youth Work essentials site has some pointers for preventing and managing challenging situations - <http://www.youthworkessentials.org/volunteer-induction/challenging-behaviour.aspx>

Resources

- Incident Record

What do you need if you want to do off-site activities?



Once your group is up and running and you have a good established rapport and respect with the young people, you may want to start doing activities that require you to go off-site. Taking a group to an outdoor centre for example can be a hugely rewarding experience both for them and you, however off-site activities require some further planning and management for any trip to be successful.

- Planning and Preparation
- Managing the Group





Planning and Preparation - what else do you need to do for an off-site activity

Summary

So your weekly group sessions have been going well, the young people have requested a summer trip and so you agree. Then the reality hits - you are taking 15 young people away for a few days and you will be responsible for them. The key to any off-site activity whether it's two hours or five days is to ensure you have done your planning and preparation thoroughly. Remember the best way to deal with challenging circumstances is to try and prevent them happening in the first place.

Things to do/consider

- Not taking too many young people away at a time - up to 15 is manageable if this is your first time.
- Not travelling too far - anywhere between 30 mins and an hour is perfect for the first time. This means the young people won't know the area but you are near enough to home should things happen. Make sure that you know the route well and have identified possible stops for comfort breaks.
- Getting some training - you are responsible for the young people, someone will have signed a consent form that says this. This is not a holiday or fun break for you, you need to have some knowledge of what could happen and what you are responsible for.
- Talking to experienced youth workers about what to expect and how to avoid any pitfalls.
- Getting the young people involved in the planning - what activities do they want to do, how can they help write the risk assessments etc?

Useful links

- The NSPCC has guidance on supervision including ratios for different age groups – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children-guidance/>
- Momentum runs a training course for people new to taking groups away.



Principles

- You will need to ensure you get special consent from parents/carers to do an off-site activity - make sure this includes details of all relevant information including medication and allergies, permission (or not) for photographs and filming, and details of an emergency contact at all times. You will also need to have pertinent details including emergency contact for all the adults.
- It is best practice to have all persons 18 years and over DBS Checked. Momentum recommends all DBS Checks are updated every three years.
- Visit where you are going so that you can talk to the relevant providers about your group and what you want to happen.
- Do the relevant risk assessments - this is why a pre-site visit is essential. This should include managing travel, mealtimes, bedtimes and showers (if staying overnight).
- Ensure you have the right adult to young person supervision ratios. From aged 13-18, there should be at least one adult to 10 young people, however there should always be at least two adults even if you only have 6 young people you are taking away. If it is a mixed group, then there should be both a male and a female worker.
- All the consent forms need to be copied and left with a suitable emergency contact who is not going on the trip. The original consent forms need to go with you and be on your person at all times.
- Some young people might need to take regular medication - details of which should be on their consent form. You may want to find out more details, such as what time they should take their medication, whether it should be taken with food and if they are confident taking it themselves. Remind them to bring at least enough for the whole stay.
- Ensure your insurance covers you for the trip and that if you are going to an activity provider, check they have appropriate insurance and safeguards in place.
- If the young people are paying, make sure all money is collected from young people prior to any important cancellation dates with the provider.
- If young people will be sharing rooms, it can be helpful to plan room allocations in advance so you don't have a 'free for all' when you get there. Think about young people's ages and personality types - the shyest member of the group probably won't want to share a room with three very loud and excitable young people.
- Do a timetable, know what you are going to do and when with the young people. Remember that if going to a provider, you will need to occupy the young people when the formal activities are not taking place. However, see the next sheet concerning managing the group.



Managing a Group - what difference does being off-site mean?

Summary

No matter how positive your relationship with your group is on a weekly basis, it is important to realise that you are having to start again when you take a group of young people away. There are basic group theories that illustrate this but it is enough to know that you are taking a group of young people away from home with all that this entails. You can be assured that the young people will be excited and a bit worried as they will be doing something new away from the glare of their parents/carers which may also lead to the belief that suddenly they are free from their normal obligations. It is your job to ensure that you maintain safe boundaries and expectations on behaviour so that everyone has a good time, hopefully trouble-free.

Things to do/consider

- How many adults are you taking? It is better to have too many so that when problems arise they can be dealt with safely and the rest of the group still managed well. A good number is 1 adult to 5 young people.
- Talking with your staff team, how you will all deal with specific problems that may arise. Consistency from all members of the team is really important.
- Getting some training to help you understand and deal with some of the scenarios that may happen.
- The routine – this becomes very important when managing a group of people. People generally like to know what they should be doing and when, this helps manage expectations and behaviours.

Useful links

Momentum run a training programme useful for taking groups of young people away -

<http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/the-training-hub/courseDetails.asp?CourseId=406>



Principles

- You need to start preparing the group for what to expect prior to going away - talk about how things will be different, this is part of the experience, so learning to cope with the change is important.
- Work out a behaviour contract with the young people that includes acceptable bedtimes, use of mobile phones, mealtimes, things you are not allowed to bring and what happens if you do bring them e.g. alcohol and drugs.
- Remember if you notice the little things, it mitigates against future risks so praise helpful behaviour and challenge negative behaviour e.g. saying (or not) please and thank you.
- It is important to ensure that everyone is eating and drinking, as soon as people become hungry and/or thirsty behaviour problems can arise. However unless the consent form states otherwise, don't start trying to cater individual meals - you will end up with lots of problems. Remember not liking food is not the same as having an allergy or an eating disorder.
- Ensure girls and boys sleep in separate corridors/areas and that these are appropriately supervised by staff of the same gender.
- Ensure time is always supervised - it may say 'freetime' on the timetable but that does not apply to the adults. Put on informal activities when there are lulls and ensure you know where all your young people are at any point.
- Be flexible with the timetable, if something is not working don't be afraid to get it changed or do something completely different.
- You will be tired - understand this as you cannot be taking breaks whenever you feel like it - you are responsible for a group of young people.
- You will be dealing with lots of possible different problems that could include tiredness, homesickness, overheating, arguments etc - be prepared for this.
- Have fun - off site activities should be loads of fun for everyone.

How will you manage yourself?



Working with young people is hugely rewarding whether this is your full time job or something you volunteer at; you will feel elated, have pride in their achievements, have lots of laughs, and be privy to their thoughts and feelings. It can, also, be hard work, extremely frustrating, upsetting, thankless at times and sometimes dull. These are a lot of emotions and feelings that not only do you have to understand and recognise in yourself, but then will have to deal with, so that you lead the group safely, appropriately and positively. This section looks at you and covers:

- Dealing with emotional issues.
- Managing boundaries and difficult circumstances.
- Personal development.





Dealing with emotional issues

- how am I going to manage myself?

Summary

Providing a youth group or a youth club is not just about putting on activities for young people to take part in. Successful and safe groups are built around positive relationships between young people and adults, the group bonds over common experiences. As they get to know you more and feel secure with you, young people will naturally tell you more about their lives, and what is happening. Sometimes they will start to talk about difficulties, or about things at home, or how school is going, and sometimes the information is enough for you to initiate safeguarding procedures.

In all of this, you will experience a reaction to what the young person says, no-one can say how you will feel after a disclosure for instance but whatever you feel you will have to learn how to deal with this.

Things to do/consider

- Getting an experienced youth worker to do group supervision with the volunteer team on a regular basis.
- How do you cope with stressful situations in your day to day life? Where do you go for support or how do you cope, is this constructive? Use this to think about how you might cope if disclosures are made to you.
- Talking to family members generally about what is happening at the youth group; if they have a picture of what is happening they can support you when it is more challenging. However, please don't disclose confidential and private information including names.
- More training - you can never have too much if you want to do a good job.
- Getting professional help to talk through issues.

Principles

- It is human to have emotional reactions however it is professional to learn how to manage these.
- When a young person is talking to you, it is not appropriate to show them how upset, angry or disgusted you are with what they are telling you. Your role is to be a supportive listener and stay calm. Express your reactions elsewhere.
- Conversely, it is great to share your happiness and excitement over positive things in their life.
- You should not be judgemental about others, particularly other workers or volunteers - any issues should be discussed when young people are not around.
- You must always follow your safeguarding policy and procedures - so make sure everyone knows these and has regular safeguarding training.
- Talk to other volunteers when situations arise so you can work through difficult times, although any details of disclosures should only be discussed on a need to know basis.
- Have a 15 minute debrief time at the end of each weekly session once the young people have gone home to discuss any successes, issues or other events that have arisen.

Useful links



- Obviously Momentum have a range of courses that can help you, visit The Training Hub - <http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/the-training-hub/>



Managing boundaries and difficult circumstances - how do you keep you safe?

Summary

Building positive relationships is so important for achieving success with your group, however occasionally this can be taken too far and either adults abuse this position (see Keeping Safe) or they try and take on too much responsibility towards the young people, which is also inappropriate. As a responsible, positive role model you need to:

- choose the information you disclose about yourself so they get to know you without giving away lots of personal information
- not undermine the parents/carers of the young people whilst being aware of your safeguarding duties
- be professional whilst also being approachable

This is a tricky balancing act to achieve but you must work towards this to ensure the group relationships are safe and constructive. This is even trickier when you are all members of the same community.

Things to do/consider

- Thinking about how you will answer questions politely but without disclosing personal stuff.
- Agreeing as a team what you will reveal about each other e.g. you may all be happy to talk about your favorite football teams but not say what you did at school.
- Shadowing an experienced youth worker to see how they manage the relationship boundaries.

Principles

- It is better to listen and ask questions, rather than to talk about yourself.
- Know what questions you are happy to answer e.g. a wedding ring will show that you are married but if you are asked, all you have to do is confirm you are married - you don't have to say who to or for how long or that you got married in 2001 on a beach in Greece.....
- Keep in mind that anything you tell one young person is likely to get round to the others, so don't share any private information about yourself that you wouldn't be happy for the whole group to know.
- Never promise to keep things a secret or confidential - you cannot do this as part of your safeguarding responsibilities - see safeguarding.
- Remember you are responsible for the young people in your care but you are not their carers - don't tell the young people what they should do, help them explore the right course of action.
- Never take a young person back to your home - whatever your reason for doing so.
- If young people are not getting on, don't take sides - whatever you are privately thinking.
- Think about the motives behind your questions. Are you asking because you have a genuine safeguarding concern, you are building relationships with them or are you just being nosy? Think of the impact your questions may have on the young person and about other people who might be listening.

Useful links

- Momentum has lots of training courses that can help - particularly the course titled 'Professional Boundaries' <http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/the-training-hub/coursedetails.asp?CourseId=468>
- Each district in Norfolk has a Youth Advisory Board which has a role in building community capacity - that is you. They may be able to help and support with shadowing and learning opportunities - check out the Youth Advisory Boards web pages - <http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/youth-advisory-boards/>



Personal development - how do I get better at this?



Summary

We know that for most people reading these guides, running a local youth group is just one part of what you do and so considering your learning and development might not be a priority. However, we urge you to think about how you and other staff/volunteers will develop your skills and experience so that the young people get the best possible service and achieve good outcomes. Just like in your day job, you should think about what continuous learning and development you can do, so that you learn and build on the practical experiences you have working with the group.

Principles

- Get as much training as you can before you open your doors - at the very least you will all need Safeguarding training and at least one person with a First Aid certificate.
- Learn from what you are doing - talk to each other about what went well, what you could do better and how you would change things next time.
- Learn from more experienced professionals - ask to see how other groups do things, or ask someone to visit you and give feedback on how to improve.
- Delivering safe, fun and constructive activities does not just happen; you will learn and get better. If something doesn't work first time, talk to the other leaders about what went wrong and how you will do it better next time.
- You can never have too much knowledge - go to courses and speak to others, learn from their experiences.

Things to do/consider

- Having a 15 minute wash-up period once all the young people have left - so you can review the session and plan changes for next time.
- What worries you about dealing with young people, then find a course or a learning opportunity to boost your confidence in that area.
- Getting an experienced youth worker to provide regular supervision to the staff team.
- Talking to as many people as possible and asking them about how they deal with situations that arise.

Useful links

- Momentum is your first point of call for all things training - see The Training Hub for a full list of courses - <http://www.momentumnorfolk.org.uk/our-services/the-training-hub/courselist.asp>
- MTM Youth Services CIC specialises in providing experienced and qualified youth workers, talk to them about possibilities for supervision - <https://mtmyouthservices.jimdo.com/>



How do you know if everything is working well?



There are lots of very good groups running in Norfolk. Some of these are excellent, some of these are good and some of these continue to run when they are past their sell-by date. It is important that you understand what you do, that you are able to say this works and this is how we know. You also need to regularly review what you do so you can continue to be relevant and effective going forward. This section looks at monitoring and evaluation.

- Reviewing the previous year.
- Identifying future provision.



Reviewing the Previous Year - How well did we do?



Summary

Evaluation is an important but often overlooked part of running a youth group. Many people do not bother with it but if you take the time to stop and think about it, there are a number of ways that evaluating is hugely beneficial:

- It is an ideal opportunity to learn from what you are doing and do things even better.
- It allows young people to understand that their opinion matters and they can have influence.
- It provides a good evidence base for when you want to apply for funding.

Principles

- Evaluation starts at the planning stage - know what you want to do, how you are going to do it, and who will benefit from this (see Setting Up Section). Finally you need a system to measure you are doing this.
- You should have regular checks so that you can monitor that you are on the right track - you need to have a system of gathering evidence.
- Gathering evidence is not just about collecting numbers; it is also about getting feedback from a wide range of people (aka stakeholders), and using different ways to get this.
- An annual evaluation report is good practice even if it is only one A4 side in length.
- Young people should be central to the monitoring and evaluation process.

Things to do/consider

- How can young people get involved? Seek their ideas and get them to lead as much as possible.
- All the different ways you can collect evidence - surveys, small groups, case studies, taking photographs/video, doing art projects. Be creative.
- How the evidence collected supports the aims of the group, how does it prove that you are achieving what you intended to?
- How you will respond to feedback and make changes, particularly if you feel the feedback is negative?

Useful links



- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has produced a short guide to Evaluating Community Projects - <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/1859354157.pdf>
It is aimed at wider community projects but has some useful information nonetheless.
- The European Union Youth Partnership has several guides on their website, including one on Educational Evaluation in Youth Work which has some helpful tips and examples.
<http://pip-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work?inheritRedirect=true>

Identifying Future Provision - what do we do next?



Summary

A big mistake that groups make is becoming complacent; things are going well so there is no need to change anything. However, every group needs refreshing and re-energising from time to time, this is not likely to mean a complete overhaul but it may mean changing little things. This is important because the context you started in may no longer be the context you operate in. For example: you start with a group of 11 and 12 year olds but they stay with you. As they get older and new youngsters come in means you are delivering to a wider age group (younger and older), therefore you may need to do things differently to accommodate all ages. This section should be read in conjunction with the Planning Activities section.

Principles

- The previous year evaluation will help you to understand what is going well and not so well.
- Plan what changes need to be made as part of your usual planning cycle.
- Get help from the young people in the planning stage to think about what comes next.
- Don't change provision based on one comment, talk to the group to understand what the consensus is.
- Identifying what you do next should be part of an ongoing conversation with the young people and volunteers building on the strengths of both.

Things to do/consider

- What aspects of delivery are you comfortable in changing or trying? Is there a need to get more experienced youth workers to the group to either support changes or to deliver the changes?
- What other skills and knowledge can you draw on in the community or with specialist groups to deliver appropriate activities?
- When the group may need to close - this does happen and sometimes it may be better to call it quits rather than providing something that is no longer needed.
- When the committee may need new people to help guide the group?

Useful links



- Ambition Quality provides a framework which can help you identify areas to improve. Contact Momentum's Supporting Excellence Officer for more information.