



Being led by Youth Voice

Below we have some great tips from Amplify and StreetGames, to guide you through your steps in engaging with young people, and being youth voice led.

1 UNDERSTAND YOUR REASONING FOR ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people always have lots of very valuable things to say - whether you are setting up a new project, trying out a new session or want to hear ideas and views about the local community and ways to improve it etc.

All engagement of young people must be purposeful and meaningful. This might mean that you start out with an advisory group, or involving young people in certain project decisions. Supporting them to become ambassadors or young trustees might be the goal but doesn't have to be the starting point.

Ask yourself, why is youth voice important to your organisation? What are the outcomes you're hoping to achieve for both the organisation and the young people who get involved?

2 UNDERTAKE YOUR RESEARCH

There are lots of different ways of gathering views, opinions and attitudes, it doesn't just have to be done through a structured interview, survey or group discussion. It can sometimes be really helpful to use enabling activities (or what is sometimes called facilitation or projective techniques) to help gather views and opinions.

This can be particularly helpful, where there are people who don't feel comfortable speaking up in a group, or don't want to be interviewed one-to-one. It can also be a really useful way of delving a little deeper - to help understand different people's attitudes, opinions, behaviours and motivations. Using enabling activities also provides the opportunity for research & consultation to be undertaken in a much more interactive and engaging way - so often really useful with young people and it can give them a chance to get actively involved in decisions about their local area or project.

3 BUILD YOUR ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

Going it alone is a maverick approach but not one that tends to work well when embedding youth voice in an organisation. It's important that your colleagues are on board, but so too are senior leaders and potentially your board. If you can get project champions who can allocate the appropriate resource (even if that's mainly staff time), the chances of developing a sustainable project with real influence is greatly increased.

As well as getting these champions bought in, think about developing awareness and strategy alignment. Help colleagues to understand what you're doing youth voice work and how it supports the organisation's mission, strategic objectives or any other metrics and plans that you're working towards. Demonstrating value, and bringing youth voice work as close to the core delivery of an organisation as possible helps young people to have real influence and for their views to be taken seriously - as part of your work, not in addition to.

4

GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED

Test and trial approaches that work for you, the young people you get involved, and your organisation as a whole.

Enable young people to help formulate plans, to set direction and to take action to deliver youth voice projects. They can help you mould your plans and are very adaptable. Don't worry about planning the perfect project every step of the way, concern yourself more with ensuring young people get real value from being involved and that your organisation can see the benefits of their involvement too.

Even small projects, small steps, can echo in to greater impact. Something which makes a difference but grows in a sustainable way is much better than a one-off 'big bang' project where young people's views get lost in future.



USEFUL LINKS

[Read more from Amplify](#)

[Take a look at some great tips on how to gather your research from Street Games](#)

[Action for Children have some great share and learn tips](#)



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