

Getting Young People Involved in Your Club: How to Find Them, Keep Them and Appreciate Them



Section 1: Understanding Youth Involvement

Background to this resource

In regional NSW and all over the State, sporting clubs are facing extinction because volunteers are often unwilling to take on the sometimes large work load of becoming the club's President, Treasurer or Secretary. Often it's a few key club members – mostly parents or grandparents of players – who are doing the job of many and trying to keep the club alive. This often leaves little time to plan for the future or build strategic processes into day-to-day activities.

This guide aims to encourage clubs to get young people involved in decision-making and planning in order to ensure the long-term survival of the club. Young people are often an untapped resource within the club. They have unique skills, fresh perspective and lots of energy. Now, more than ever, it's vital that sports clubs engage these young people and invest in their development so that they can take on leadership positions and carry the club in to the future.

In this guide you will find simple templates, sample documents and handy hints to help you to get young people involved in club decision-making. Whether it's inviting a young person to be on a committee or an advisory group, involving them in planning a fundraising event or simply encouraging them to gain coaching or umpiring accreditation, this resource aims to encourage greater youth participation in your club and guide you through engaging and retaining young people in an effective way. To find the most relevant information for your club check out the *Youth Engagement Guide Map* and follow the links.

The information in this guide has been taken from existing literature on youth governance and youth participation and from primary research carried out by NSW Sport and Recreation. Four focus groups were facilitated with sports clubs and young people in the community of Armidale, NSW. Surveys were also distributed throughout regional NSW to sports club committees, young people who currently volunteer in sports clubs and young people who do not volunteer. More than 160 people living in regional NSW completed these surveys.

NSW Sport and Recreation would like to thank all those that assisted with this research, especially the Armidale Sports Council in Armidale, NSW.

What is youth participation?

When we talk about involving young people in your club, we are talking about including them in the decision-making structures and processes of your club or, in other words, the governance of your club. This could mean inviting them to be on club boards and advisory groups or placing them in management positions. These roles will be more specifically outlined in Section 2, Step 3.

However, it's more than just placing them on a board and 'giving them a say'. It is about *actually listening* to what they say and valuing their contribution. It's about taking their views in to consideration and being influenced by them when making a decision. Too often, we consult young people and then do nothing with the feedback they give. To encourage good participation from young people, they must be taken seriously.

What age group are we talking about?

Most people agree the term 'youth' refers to young people aged around 14 – 24 years old. This resource has been developed to help sports clubs engage young people in this age bracket. However, it's important to note that this may also be useful for people slightly younger or older. It is also important to note that within the 14 – 24 years age bracket, the needs of young people will vary depending on life experience, skill levels and interest.

Why involve young people?

There are a number of reasons your club should be involving young people in club governance roles. Many clubs, especially in rural communities, suffer from a lack of willing and capable volunteers. Often the same handful of people will be on the board for the rugby league club and the cricket club, or the same person will be the secretary of the athletics club and the coach of the netball team.

If these few people decide to move on, it leaves a huge gap in the club and the community and the club scrambles to find replacements. Often, much of the knowledge and skill leaves the club with the departing volunteer. By involving young people from early on, the club creates a depth of knowledge and skill so that there is someone ready to take up the reins when key volunteers move on.

There are other important reasons for engaging young people in club management. Research shows a growing need to find new ways of engaging young people with their communities and vice versa. Too often, young people are overlooked and their capabilities are underestimated or undervalued. Taking on leadership within community clubs will allow young people to take ownership of decisions that affect their lives.

Sport is a huge part of many young people's lives and can help form their sense of identity. Empowering a young person to be a member of a committee or help plan a community event helps to build their capacity and strengthens their connection to community. It may also help them to find employment by introducing them to new skills and networks of adults.

Youth participation also relates to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the organisation. Most sport clubs are trying to meet the needs of young athletes. Who best to tell you what will work and what won't when delivering a service to young people than young people themselves?

By consulting young people and responding to their ideas and feedback, clubs can often avoid costly misjudgements and successfully run a club, event or activity that young people actually respond well to. Also, by listening to the voice of young people you are consulting a more diverse group of community members and gaining access to new and fresh ideas. This process could raise the profile of the club among young community members and make it more appealing to other young people.

Research Finding: Why do clubs want to involve young people in decision making?

We surveyed over 40 clubs in Western NSW and asked them what they would be aiming to achieve by involving young people in decision-making. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Keep the club alive in the long term/succession planning;
2. Share skills and knowledge with young people;
3. Get a better idea of young people's needs/wants in order to deliver better/more relevant events and activities;
4. Give young people opportunity to develop skills; and
5. Gain fresh ideas and skills.

What are the benefits?

The benefits of youth participation in club decision-making can be divided in to three categories: benefits for the individual, benefits for the club and benefits for the community. View the *Benefits of Youth Participation Handout* for an outline of these benefits. You may like to print this off and show other committee members this diagram. It may help to get them on board when you decide to 'take action'.

Research Finding: Benefits of Volunteering

We surveyed 40 young people (aged between 12 – 25 years) who are currently volunteering with a local sports club in Western NSW and asked them what they see as the benefits of volunteering. Below are the five most commonly identified benefits in order of frequency:

1. The chance to give back to the community;
2. Meeting people and socialising with friends;
3. Community recognition/personal gain;
4. Learn and develop new skills; and
5. Because it's fun.

Section 2: Taking Action: 10 Steps to Engaging Youth in Club Decision-Making

Step 1. Stop and Think

If you have identified the need to engage young people in the running of your club but you are not quite sure what to do next, the first thing to do is to gather your committee together and answer some simple questions. This will help to establish your key motivations and expectations. Before doing this you might like to present the *Engaging Young People in Your Club PowerPoint Presentation* to your committee so that everyone is aware of why you need to engage young people and the benefits of doing so.

Then, consider the following and complete the *Is Your Club Ready Quiz and Checklist*:

1. Why does our club want to engage young people in decision-making?
2. What are we aiming to achieve by doing this?
3. Why have we not done this before? What has stopped us?
4. What will young people get out of being involved in our club? What can we offer them?
5. Do we have appropriate resources to commit to this? If not, how can we get them?
6. What are our expectations of young people and the contribution they can make to our club?
7. Are we prepared to make changes to the way we do things to enable better youth participation?
8. Is this a short or long term plan?

Once you have completed the *Is Your Club Ready Quiz and Checklist* keep them as a record so they can be referred to in the future. These will help to act as a guide for putting a youth engagement plan in place.

Step 2. Identify Barriers to Participation for Young People

Before taking any steps to engage young people in your club, you need to identify potential barriers for young people who are trying to take on these roles. Basically, you need to know what stops them from getting involved. Once you know that, your club can begin to implement strategies to remove or reduce some of the obstacles that get in the way for young people.

These barriers will vary in each community and you will need to respond accordingly to the specific challenges faced by young people and clubs. One way of finding out what these challenges are is by asking.

Handy Hint

Gathering Information about Your Community or Club Members

If you are trying to find out what barriers might exist for young people in your community or how your club members feel about your plans to involve more young people, why not use a survey?

Surveys are a great, simple way of gathering information. You can also save the time and effort involved in distributing and collecting them by using online surveys. One example is Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com), a website that lets you create, distribute and collect surveys on line for free. You simply email the surveys to people, they click on a link, complete the survey online and then you can access and analyse their responses. There are other websites that do the same, so shop around and find the one that meets your needs.

Below are some common barriers to youth participation in community organisations and some suggestions for overcoming these barriers:

1. **Meeting location:** Often adults can be unaware that a meeting room or location is not youth-friendly and young people do not feel welcome there.

Strategies:

- Consult young people on where they would like meetings to be held.
- Make sure meetings are held in a familiar and a relatively informal space to appeal to young people.
- If you only have one meeting space, try to avoid the typical 'boardroom' environment. Perhaps arrange chairs in a circle to encourage interaction or have everyone sit on the floor.
- Hold a meeting in someone's home or perhaps a local café. Share a meal together or a cup of tea. This helps to create a social atmosphere and help young people feel welcome.

- For more information on how your club can make meetings more youth-friendly, check out the NSW Commission for Children and Young People Participation Kit. It has a chapter called '*Meeting Together – Deciding Together*'. To view the resource visit: <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au>.
2. **Language:** Often in committee meetings and even informal environments, young people are excluded from conversations because they don't understand what's being said.

Strategies:

- Read through your club policies or publications. Are they written in simple terms that everyone can understand? If not, can they be re-worked? Perhaps you could summarise the key points in clear and concise language and distribute this to new club volunteers.
 - At meetings, try not to use acronyms or technical jargon that a new volunteer might not understand. If this is necessary, print a one-page document that explains the terms and take time to go through it with the young person before the meeting.
 - Let other committee members know that you have a new young member and encourage them to communicate clearly with the young person.
 - Use butcher's paper or a white board and write down some of the key points being made.
 - Be aware that young people can express their ideas in different ways to adults. This might often be in a more informal manner. Be flexible in your approach to communicating with young people so they feel comfortable to use their own language to express ideas and opinions.
 - For more helpful hints check out the NSW Commission for Children and Young People - Taking Participation Seriously Kit. View the kits at: www.kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources.cfm.
3. **Attitudes:** This can be a significant barrier to overcome both for the young person and also for existing club volunteers. Often, older club members feel that young people are not *capable* of taking on positions of responsibility and they are reluctant to hand over any control. These attitudes can obstruct youth engagement in your club. By presuming that young people will not be able to help or that they don't want to help, you are ignoring a great opportunity!

Some adults also think that young people can only be trusted with simple, menial or tokenistic roles. This is a big mistake. Young people can be creative and innovative and can be a great gateway for your

club to connect with younger generations. Given only tokenistic roles with no real responsibility attached, young people will get bored and disconnected from the club. Clubs need to be thinking about what they can teach young people and also what they can *learn* from young people.

➤ **Common attitudes of adults and strategies to address them:**

'This generation Y, they just expect everything to be done for them and they can't commit to anything'.

- Leave all presumptions about generational traits and age limitations at the door of the committee room. Ask young volunteers to do the same.

'All this effort can't be worth it. What's the point of it anyway? Things are OK the way they are.'

- Make sure all club members are clear on the benefits of involving young people in decision-making so that you are all equally committed. Use the *Benefits of Youth Participation Handout* to illustrate this.

'In the past when we've had young volunteers they've been bored and quit after a month. They didn't contribute anything'.

- Make sure the tasks given to young people have a real purpose and make sure they are given adequate resources.
- Ask young people what they are interested in and what their strengths are. This will help you to give them appealing and relevant tasks. Use the *New Volunteers Skills Audit* and adapt the questions as you like.

'Young people couldn't do what I do. It's taken me years to get the hang of it. They simply don't have the skills'.

- Ask older members of the club to take on mentoring roles to help educate and train young volunteers in club management. Check out the mentoring section of this guide for more information.

Attitudes of young people themselves can also be a barrier to participation.

➤ **Common attitudes of young people and strategies to address them:**

'They don't need us. It's an adult's job':

- Invite them to be involved from the beginning. Make them feel needed and outline why you would like them to be involved.

'It's intimidating. They're all older than me and I don't know what I'm doing'.

- Invite young people to bring a friend along.

'I don't have time to take on anything else at the moment. I wouldn't be able to go to meetings because I have training that day'

- Schedule meetings so that they do not clash with schooling and sporting commitments. Take a flexible approach to young people's involvement in governance.

'I wouldn't know how to get involved'

- Educate all players in your club about how they can get involved behind the scenes if they want to. Who should they speak to? What roles can they play? What does the commitment involve? What skills can they learn by doing this? This can happen on registration day in a formal way but should be re-affirmed at club events, community events and informal conversations throughout the season.

Research Finding: Attitudes of young people

When we spoke to young people in focus groups about what was stopping them from volunteering, these were some of the responses:

- '[Adults] probably wouldn't take us young people seriously'.
- 'We are just used to our parents doing it. Young people don't really need to get involved in our club'.
- 'It's intimidating. We wouldn't know what to do'.
- 'The club doesn't have enough respect for young people. They think I'm only a young fella and they don't take me seriously'.
- 'I don't have enough experience'.
- 'We are busy with work and school and don't have time'.

4. **Young people are not asked to be involved**: This may sound simple but it is one of the most crucial barriers to participation. Clubs simply do not ask young people to get involved.

Research Finding: Why don't young people volunteer?

We surveyed over 50 young people (aged between 12 – 25 years) living in Western NSW who currently *do not* volunteer with local sporting clubs. We asked them why they didn't volunteer. The most common response was that they had not been asked.

Strategies:

- Include an option for volunteering or 'club management duties' on players' registration forms. Young people can tick the box if they are interested and leave contact details for the club to contact them in the future. View the *Club Registration Form with Volunteer Nomination* as an example.
- Target your promotion in a way that young people will respond. Use Facebook (For more information view Step 7: Effectively Communicating with Young People) and other communication tools to speak to young people. Visit the local schools and ask to speak with the students. Visit youth centres or put up notices in popular hang-out places. Don't expect them to read the papers and access the same information sources as adults.
- Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator to be responsible for recruiting and supporting young people. For more details view Step 5: Recruit Young People. Make the process easy for them. Avoid heavy paperwork as this will turn them off.

5. **Cost of participation:** Often there is a cost involved in participation for young people that many adults may not really notice. The cost of transport, a meal or even the opportunity cost of giving up a shift at work to attend a meeting or event is a significant factor for people making the decision to volunteer.

Strategies:

- Provide young volunteers with a travel allowance.
- Provide a meal or refreshments for volunteers.
- Coordinate car pooling.
- Assist with registration fees if possible.

6. **Parents:** As mentioned, often young people will need the support of their parents in order to be involved in your club. Sometimes clubs can view parents as an obstacle to participation if they do not provide the right support for young people wanting to be involved. At times, parents can lack enthusiasm about their child's involvement - they may have a lack of resources to help their child get involved or in some cases they may be over-powering.

Strategies:

- Educate parents on what is involved for them and their child, what the potential benefits are and what is expected of them. Make it clear how they can support their child's involvement in the club. This could involve an 'open day' type event when families of volunteers are invited along to a club event or simply send a letter home in the mail. View the *Letter to Parents Template* as a guide.

- Assess whether a young volunteer might need extra assistance from the club. This could be providing transport for them or perhaps covering registration fees if they are not able to afford them themselves.
 - Provide parents with relevant information such as season fixtures, important contact numbers and key dates.
7. **Time restraints**: This is a barrier to participation for people of all ages. A young person will often have commitments to school, university, part-time work and extra curricular activities. Clubs need to be aware of this and take a flexible approach.

Strategies:

- Consult young people in your club about meeting schedules. If they are a player, perhaps you could arrange meetings immediately before or after their training sessions. The key point is to ask what they think is the best time.
 - Be flexible. If they are a volunteer coach of more than one team, schedule their training sessions back-to-back or allow them to coach two teams simultaneously. Or, if they are on a committee, they may not be able to attend every meeting but if their input is important enough, allow them to attend more infrequently.
 - Give them control over their term on the committee or board so they don't feel trapped (this may be especially important to high school students approaching the end of their studies).
8. **Inexperience of young people**: Depending on the age of your young volunteers, many of them will be unfamiliar with processes involved in club governance and other duties involved in running a sports club. Often this results in a lack of confidence among young volunteers and older club members who don't trust the young people to get the job done.

Strategies:

- Be realistic and clear. Don't expect new volunteers to be experts. Communicate clear expectations to new recruits. This will help to avoid them feeling intimidated by the 'great unknown'.
- Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator to run young people through the ropes and act as the 'go to' person if they have questions.
- Be patient. Take the time to invest in new volunteers. This may mean providing formal or informal training.

- Devise a manual for volunteers with useful information and handy hints. For a list of suggested topic areas to be covered in this manual view the *Volunteer Manual Outline*.
- For more information about supporting the development of young volunteers in your club view the other sections of this website. You can use these other sections to guide new volunteers in running an activity, participating in a meeting and managing people.

Research Finding: What do young volunteers find difficult?

We also asked young people who do volunteer what areas of volunteering they find the most difficult. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Trying to fit it in around work, school and other commitments;
2. Communicating with older members in the club;
3. I don't feel my opinion is taken seriously;
4. Sometimes I don't hear about club events and activities; and
5. Being involved in meetings and formal situations.

Step 3. Decide *How* Your Club will Involve Young People in Decision-Making

Now that you have decided to engage young people to help with the running of your club, discussed the benefits of doing so with your fellow club members and identified some of the barriers to participation, it's important to consider *how* you are going to involve them in decision-making process.

Much of the research suggests that there are two main models that can be employed by clubs wanting to involve young people. The first is to include a number of youth representatives on your existing board or executive committee. This would usually mean that the young people become full voting members (however, they could also be non-voting members) of the board/committee.

The second approach is to create a separate committee of youth members, for example a 'youth committee' or 'youth council'. This body is composed of young club members and managed independently of the club board or executive committee. This youth committee might then report back to the board or executive committee on particular issues and vice versa. Table 1: Two Models of Youth Governance (p.11) outlines some of the benefits and drawbacks of both approaches.

These models relate to governing bodies like club committees or boards. However there are other ways to encourage greater participation by young people in the 'behind the scenes' stuff in your club. As you may have already picked up from this toolkit, the trick is to remain flexible! That is, your club needs to plan a strategy that works best for your particular young members and is sustainable over the long term.

It is important to think of creative ways to engage young people in decision-making in the short term because it might be this member who takes on greater decision-making responsibility in the future. Don't be too worried about trying to fit into one particular youth participation model. Feel free to use elements of all of them.

Perhaps your young players aren't keen on turning up to meetings but they don't mind coaching younger teams on a Saturday. That same young person, who likes coaching, might have strong opinions about club issues such as training programs, sideline behaviour or increasing participation in the club. While they might not be interested in becoming a member of a committee that meets regularly, they may still like to be consulted.

For example, hold a BBQ after training one evening, invite some young people to have a bit of a chat about club issues, ask for their suggestions to address these issues and record the results (this could just be on a bit of

butcher's paper or you could get people to fill out a survey). From this, you will have effectively run a little informal focus group and should have some solid feedback to pass back to the board.

At the BBQ you might also find an opportunity to invite young people to be involved in planning the next club fundraiser or presentation night or even just the next BBQ. Ultimately this process helps to open up a conversation between the board and young players and lets them know that their opinions matter. This may help the young people to take the step toward club-governance.

What's a Focus Group?

A focus group is a research method that involves getting a group of people together and facilitating discussion. It is a great way of finding out how people feel about a subject and why they feel that way. It helps to assess subjective information as opposed to discrete, objective data like participant numbers or demographics. It is not a group interview where you ask a question and people give you an answer. It is more like a group conversation. You can use a Dictaphone or a camera to record the session or make notes as you go.

These are some other ways to involve young people:

- Advisory groups
- Peer support
- Event organisers
- Focus groups
- Coaches, umpires or team managers
- Mentors for younger players
- Club fundraising
- Club promotion

Research Finding: Popular roles for young people

We asked young people what roles they would like to take on in their local club. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Umpire/referee;
2. Coach;
3. Event organiser;
4. Committee member; and
5. Fundraising coordinator.

Two Models of Youth Governance

Model	Pros	Cons
<p>Adding young people to an existing body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people bring fresh energy to the existing body. ○ Young people can be involved in serious decision-making and see first-hand the impact they are having. ○ Improves relationships between adult members and young people. ○ Adults and young people work together toward improving the club. ○ Young people can learn from more experienced committee members and be mentored by adults with expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people may feel intimidated and may not 'speak up' or actively participate. ○ Legal issues need to be considered – ie: if board members under 18 years can vote etc. ○ Young people may feel outnumbered and that their opinion doesn't count for much because they're a minority on the committee. ○ Adults might ignore the young people's input because they are a minority.
<p>Creating a decision-making body specifically for young people (e.g. a youth council).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people feel more comfortable to actively participate in decision-making because they are surrounded by other young people. ○ This model can provide good practice for young people as they get real experience of being part of a committee. ○ It allows more young people to be involved in decision-making which means the organisation benefits from a diverse range of perspectives. ○ This body can act as an advisory body to the board and a good source of information. ○ The group can work on a specific project or initiative that appeals to them. ○ Young people experience a level of autonomy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the body does not have a specific role with legitimate authority, young people can feel like their role is tokenistic and lose interest. ○ The adult body may not take on board the feedback from youth body. ○ Requires time, energy, resources and training to be invested in the young people. ○ The young people and adults do not experience the benefits of working together in partnership.

Table 1: Two Models of Youth Governance. This table was Adapted from *Two General Approaches* in '15 Points to Successfully Involving Youth in Decision-Making', (Young & Sazama 2006, p. 46, published by YouthBuild USA).

Step 4. Form Community Partnerships

Clubs need to tap in to community networks in order to engage young people and give them incentive to volunteer in the organisation. There are many ways of doing this and opportunities will vary depending on your community. When your club is considering recruiting young people and building their role within your club, consider forming partnerships with other community groups. Some examples are:

- Education institutions such as schools, TAFE and community colleges
- Community initiatives such as Duke of Edinburgh
- Employment agencies
- State and Federal Government agencies
- Local councils
- Youth Centres
- Community groups

Often these organisations will have similar aims to your club. That is, many will be looking for ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, get young people more involved in their local community and to develop their skills and experience. This may be achieved by carrying out work experience, engaging in 'community service' or through active volunteering.

Has your club ever thought about taking on a work experience student from a local school? Often high school students are required to do compulsory work experience in year 10 or 11 when students are 15 – 17 years old. Similarly for many TAFE and vocational courses, students are required to do work placement hours in a relevant organisation. When you think about it, the work experience a student gains from participating in club meetings, helping to organise Saturday games or even administering the season registrations is relevant to any business environment.

By taking on these work experience students, the club could be gaining valuable help in the short term but also opening up doors for young people to get more involved in the club and building the community profile of the club. Often students are required to do a one-week block, however it's worth speaking with the education institution to discuss flexible hours.

The *Duke of Edinburgh Scheme* is a community initiative that aims to provide community recognition and engagement outcomes for young people aged 14 – 25 years. As part of the program, students are required to do a number of hours of physical recreation, volunteering and developing a skill or hobby. These hours could potentially be spent assisting your club.

There are many other opportunities and the more creative your club is in forming these partnerships, the better.

Community Partnership Suggestions:

- Visit the Youth Volunteering page on the Volunteering NSW homepage. Visit www.youthvolunteering.com.au. The website offers advice on how organisations can link up with its Youth Volunteering Program.
- Contact The Duke of Edinburgh Award to find out more about the scheme. Visit the website www.dukeofed.com.au/NSW or phone 13 13 02 or email: mail@dukeofednsw.au.com.
- Contact your nearest Community Partnership Broker and discuss with them your idea of engaging young students. The partnership broking program works to build partnerships between business, schools and community. To find out more or to find your nearest office visit www.workplacement.nsw.edu.au/brokers_program.php.
- Contact your local High School and speak with the Principal or Careers Advisor to let them know you would be happy to supervise a work experience student and the kind of support your club can offer the student. Also, find out whether the school offers any TAFE courses for students and discuss how they relate to running a community organisation like a sports club. Relevant courses could include Business Services, Sport and Recreation, Community Recreation etc.
- If you are going to take on a work experience student, Contact NSW Department of Education workplace learning office or visit www.ezwp.det.nsw.edu.au. This website has great guides that help you to know what to expect and to be a good host employer.
- Contact your local Council to see what community events or programs they may be planning. There may be an opportunity for your club to be involved in youth week activities, host a 'come and try' day or perhaps have a stall at the annual show. Check if they have a Youth Council and go along to speak with the young people. They may be interested in getting involved in your club themselves or could help you get the word out to their friends. Local Councils can offer great exposure for your club to the whole community.
- Visit www.govolunteer.com.au to advertise the volunteer positions in your club for free.

The key is to use existing community networks and/or to develop new partnerships in your community that help you access young people and promote volunteering in your club. This is by no means a comprehensive list and there may well be other opportunities for you to tap into in your community.



Step 5. Recruit Young People

General Recruitment

Often, the recruitment of volunteers presents big challenges for sports clubs and community organisations. In most regional and rural communities, the same community members are involved in a number of community groups and resources are stretched. There is a constant need to recruit more volunteers but not a huge pool of available and skilled community members who are willing to take on roles within the club. There is no perfect solution for this problem and it often takes a lot of effort and energy.

⇒ Useful links for information on recruitment of volunteers:

- To access helpful information and tools about recruiting volunteers for your club visit:
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au/YouthServices/FindingNewStaff.html.
- To access a resource library for sports clubs, which includes information on recruitment and retention of volunteers, visit the Australian Sports Commission website.
www.ausport.gov.au.
- To access a number of job descriptions for sports club positions such as treasurer, volunteer coordinator or team manager visit the Western Australia Department of Sport and Recreation website and search in their 'club filing cabinet':
<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubhouse>

Creating a Youth Recruitment Strategy

Discuss the following questions with your committee and complete the *Youth Recruitment Strategy Template*:

1. Why are you recruiting young people? What does the club hope to gain from involving young people in club decision-making?
2. How many young volunteers do you need to achieve this?
3. Where will you find them? How will you find them?
4. What will be their role in the club? What tasks are involved in this? Is this realistic? Can young people carry out these tasks?
5. How long do you expect them to stay with your club?
6. What support can you provide them? Do you have sufficient resources?
7. What can the club offer young volunteers?
8. What incentives can you offer young people to get involved in your club?
9. How will you communicate this message to young people? What media (and networks) will you use?
10. How and when will you measure the success of your recruitment strategy?

Your responses to these questions should form the basis of your *Youth Recruitment Strategy*. In order to create an effective strategy, follow the Useful Tips below.

Useful Tips for Recruiting Young People:

1. Engage someone in your club to be Youth Volunteer Coordinator and put them in charge of youth recruitment. This person should be approachable and friendly and have good connections with young people. View the sample *Position Description – Youth Volunteer Coordinator* for an outline of key skills and responsibilities of the position.
2. Actively invite young people to be involved. Make sure they know they are needed and would be valued in your club.
3. Target your recruitment to appeal to young people. Consider the language and media (and networks) you use and the image you project of your club.
4. Be flexible.
5. Consider barriers to participation for young people in your community and take steps to address these.
6. Market the club. Consider what the young person gets out of volunteering with your club and promote these benefits. Emphasise the exciting opportunities and the benefits they gain by getting involved.
7. Provide incentives such as a reduction on registration fees or a travel allowance.
8. Emphasise the social elements of working with your club.
9. Encourage them to bring a friend with them.
10. Be specific about what they are expected to do and let them know what support will be provided. Use the *Job Description Template* to clearly outline each volunteer position.
11. Tap in to existing community networks such as local schools or community groups.
12. Recruit young people for appealing and relevant roles. Sometimes it is easier to engage young people with fun activities such as event organising or coaching before asking them to start coming to meetings.
13. Be creative in the way you communicate with young people and how you promote your club. View Step 7: Effectively Communicate with Young People.

Research Finding: A snapshot to help with recruitment

Our surveys of young people in Western NSW showed:

Why do you volunteer in sports clubs?

5 most common responses in order of frequency:

1. I love the sport and want to be involved;
2. Because it's fun;
3. Because the club needed help and I wanted to help them out;
4. To help others; and
5. To give back.

If you don't volunteer for your local sports club, why is that?

6 most common responses in order of frequency:

1. I have not been asked;
2. I am not a member of any sports clubs;
3. I don't have time;
4. I wouldn't know what to do;
5. I don't know how to get involved; and
6. I have too many other commitments.

Do clubs make it easy or difficult for you to get involved?

59.5% said clubs make it 'difficult'. The 3 most common explanations cited for this response, in order of frequency, were:

1. Clubs don't listen to young people;
2. Clubs don't ask young people to be involved; and
3. Clubs tend to rely on older people to run the club.

Would you like to be more involved and have a say in decision-making in your club?

51.4% of respondents said 'yes' they would like to be more involved.

What would make it easier to get involved in a local club?

1. If they asked me to;
2. If I could bring a friend along;
3. If the club promoted activities through school more so I knew what was going on;
4. If they taught me what to do and helped me with my responsibilities; and
5. If they made it more social and less serious.

What's the best way for people to let you know about events, games and activities?

5 most common responses:

1. Phone
2. Text
3. Facebook
4. Email
5. School Newsletter

Step 6. Induct Young People in to your Club

General Induction Information

It's important to provide new volunteers with adequate information about their new role in your club. Done well, the induction process can make new volunteers feel more 'at home' in the club and give them confidence in their new role. Inducting a young volunteer is about giving them the 'who, what, where, when and how' details of your club. It is also about outlining some of the legal requirements and relevant club policies.

⇒ Useful Links and resource relating to volunteer induction:

- Youth Services Tool Kit (Managing Staff and Volunteer section)
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au/youthservices/orientatingandinductingnewstaff.html
- Western Australia Volunteering Essentials
<http://www.wavolunteeringessentials.org.au/induction>
- Australian Sports Commission
http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/clubs/resource_library/people_management
- Wales Council for Volunteering Action
www.wcva.org.uk
- View their publication: Inducting Volunteers
www.wcva.org.uk/images.../volunteering/Inducting%20volunteers
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People
<http://kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources/participationkit>

10 Things to Remember when Inducting Young Volunteers

1. They may be completely new to a club/business environment so be careful not to presume they have background knowledge of processes and jargon.
2. Give them a chance to ask questions along the way.
3. Keep it simple and concise. Don't turn them off with a boring presentation.
4. Consider making the induction as informal as appropriate so as not to intimidate the young person.
5. Give them a 'go-to' person or a buddy they can call on while they become familiar with the club.
6. Introduce them to other club members.
7. Be clear on what the club expects from them and what they can expect from the club. Outline the commitment involved and discuss how this might interfere with schooling or other commitments. Try to have as little impact on their other commitments as possible.

8. Make sure you give them an overall picture of the club activities and the roles within the club. Help them to understand where they fit within the club.
9. Give them practical information that will help them in their role (for example, contact numbers, bus timetables, key dates etc.)
10. Allocate sufficient time to explain safety issues and OH&S procedures.

View the *Youth Volunteers Induction Checklist* as a guide.

Step 7. Effectively Communicate with Young People

When trying to engage and work with young people, it is important to consider the ways in which you communicate with them. This goes for when you are chatting with them on the sideline, trying to promote your club or including them in a meeting.

6 Things to Remember when Communicating with Young People

1. Avoid technical language or jargon they might not be familiar with.
2. Keep it simple but don't patronise.
3. Show respect for their views and opinions. Don't speak over them or dismiss what they say. Make sure they know their input is valued.
4. Don't expect them to have an understanding of the formal language used in some meeting environments. Make sure you explain what terms mean. You can do this by giving them the *sports club glossary*.
5. Make sure you listen and are open to feedback. In some cases, this may be negative feedback. Don't ignore it just because they are younger. Though you might not like hearing it, it could be valuable information. For example, the fact that training is held on a Friday night and clashes with social commitments could explain why you have falling numbers of players in the Under 16s team. It's vital that you take this feedback on board and take steps to address issues. If young people feel like they are being heard, they will be more likely to get more involved the next time you ask.
6. Don't push them to contribute. Let them build up their confidence and speak when they feel comfortable.

Communication Tools for Clubs

In the past, clubs have communicated with young people through their parents, often by direct mail-outs. It's crucial that clubs use a range of communication tools to reach young people. Here are some alternatives:

- **Email:** If your club is not already using email to communicate with its members then it probably needs to start doing so – today! Starting up a club email account is easy and free. Email is a cost-effective way of communicating with the masses. It also allows you to send registration forms, club policies, planning schedules and e-newsletters to members without spending lots on printing. Email is especially useful for communicating with young people because it can be informal and less daunting. There are a number of email providers you could register with. If the sound of creating an email address scares you, just ask a young person for help! Below is a list

of common email providers: Visit these links to sign up for an email account:

- www.hotmail.com
- www.yahoo.com
- www.gmail.com

- **Text Messaging:** We all know how much we rely on our mobile phones these days. Well, for young people it's certainly no different. Save the effort of calling around from player to player to let them know about a club event - just send a group text. Text messaging is comfortable, easy and quick for young people. Often, it won't cost more than a postage stamp or a phone call. However, be aware that young people will not have endless credit to respond to texts. Despite this, it is a good way of spreading the word about a big game, an important meeting or a volunteering opportunity. Speak to your phone company to see which phone plan is best for offering cheap text messaging.
- **Blogging:** If you need a quick and easy way of sharing information with club members of all ages about game results, upcoming events, ground closures or other breaking news, a blog is a great tool. Blogging is basically just a term for writing online. It is a way of sharing ideas, notices, displaying images and allowing your club members to make a public comment. You can create a blog online for free without too much hassle. There are a number of places on the web where you can create a blog (and we suggest you shop around). Some are free and some require you to pay a fee. One example of a free page is www.blogger.com. This site takes you through the step-by-step process of creating a blog. Once you have created a blog, make sure you let everyone know that it exists and how they can access it!
- **Notices on the website:** If you already have a website, you should be using it to communicate with young people. Let them know they are needed by posting an invitation to get involved. You can also provide links to your other pages such as a club blog or Facebook profile.
- **Social Networking:** Increasingly, the most effective and efficient way to communicate with a wide group of young people is through social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace or Twitter. These sites offer great FREE opportunities for promoting your club to young people and letting them know about upcoming events or club meetings. They also offer a great opportunity to capitalise on the social motivations of volunteering. By creating a profile or 'group' on one of these sites, you can invite members in to the

group, share information and photos with them and also help to encourage a more social atmosphere for members. It's a great way of keeping track of old members and finding new members. Existing members can invite others to become a 'friend' or 'member' of your group which expands your network immediately or they can share club information with friends simply by clicking a button.

It is important to keep up to date with emerging technology as these sites are constantly evolving and new sites are opening. Facebook has undoubtedly been the most prominent social networking site for young people in Australia over the last few years. However, this may change and it is important to ask young people what sites they are using and tap in to them.

To get started on one of these stages, you need to create a 'profile' for the club. Visit www.facebook.com or www.myspace.com or www.twitter.com to find out more or simply do a web search for social networking sites and pick the one that suits your club's needs. If you don't feel confident, why not ask a young person for help? It could be a great first project for a young volunteer. For an introduction to social networking check out these articles at www.webtrends.about.com:

- What is Social Networking?
http://webtrends.about.com/od/socialnetworking/a/socialnetwork_h.htm
- Social Networking Guide for Beginners
http://webtrends.about.com/od/socialnetworking/a/socialnetwork_b.htm
- 12 Tips for Nonprofits on Getting Started with Social Media
<http://nonprofit.about.com/od/socialmedia/tp/Tipsstartsocialnetworking.htm>

Before diving head first in to these sites however, take time to consider the security settings on your page. Much of the information you 'post' to your 'profile' becomes public information. Make sure you understand your own customised security settings before starting to use your page. In addition, take care with 'posting' images and other information about club members. Be sure to get consent before 'posting' this information.

You should also be aware that these sites can sometimes enable online bullying so you need to encourage members to act responsibly – and be prepared to monitor your site regularly (or give this job to a responsible young person). Don't be scared off though – these sites are very simple to use and easy to navigate!

Research Finding: Methods of communication

We asked young people who do not currently volunteer with sports clubs what was the best way of letting them know about upcoming events and activities. The three most popular methods of communication were:

1. Phone;
2. Text Message; and
3. Facebook.

Step 8. Invest in Young People

Many young people volunteer because they want to learn something new. It's the club's role to provide an opportunity for these young volunteers to develop skills, knowledge and the ability to participate in club governance. By supporting young people and providing training opportunities for them, the club is ultimately developing a stronger pool of available volunteers for the future and ensuring the club benefits from full participation of young people in decision-making. It is also an important step in retaining volunteers because you are providing tangible benefits for them. After all, what's the point in engaging young people if you can't keep them?

This skills building approach involves a two-way discovery of skills and knowledge. That is, adults learn from young people and young people learn from adults. The club must allocate adequate time and resources toward this investment in young people, otherwise efforts to involve them in the long run will be pointless.

A Recipe for Retaining Young Volunteers

Some of the key ingredients needed to invest and properly support young people's involvement in your club are below:

- support and supervision;
- mentoring;
- adequate resource allocation;
- feedback and ongoing evaluation;
- knowledge sharing; and
- training.

View Table 2 for more information about some of these key ingredients and possible strategies your club could adopt.

A Succession Planning Approach

Essentially, to support the development of your young volunteers and to encourage them to stay with the club for a long time, the club needs to take a succession planning approach. That is, clubs need to:

1. Identify the skills required to carry out various positions in the club, such as club secretary or treasurer.
2. Identify young members or volunteers who have the potential to move into those key roles in the future.
3. Work out where there is a gap in skills or knowledge among identified volunteers.
4. Take steps to address these skill shortages by providing training or other development opportunities that will enable young volunteers to take on key club positions in the future.

For more information on succession planning for sports clubs, view the Succession Planning section of the Youth Services Tool.



Key Ingredient	Sample Strategy	Tasks Involved	Useful Tools and Links (available on website)
1. Support and supervision	Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the need to coordinate youth engagement and retention efforts. Decide to appoint a Youth Coordinator. Outline key responsibilities of the Coordinator and skills required Identify someone within the club who is energetic, approachable and well-liked by young members and invite them to take on the role. Induct the Coordinator. Introduce the Coordinator to young volunteers and encourage them to go to this person for any assistance or help. Coordinator devises and implements recruitment plan, monitors progress, manages mentoring program, identifies areas of need or any potential issues arising and reports to Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample position description for Youth Volunteer Coordinator
2. Adequate resources	Budget allocation to young volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculate extra costs involved in supporting young volunteers and ensure these costs are included in your annual budget. Costs could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel allowance Catering for meetings Website development Promotional materials Social events Club levy reimbursements (as an incentive for volunteering) If young people form a sub-committee, for example, a fundraising committee, ensure they are well resourced and allow them to fully or partially manage their own budget (with guidance if required). This enables them to have a level of control over their work and ensures they feel needed and appreciated. Open up the club's resources to young volunteers. If you can, let them use the facilities, computers or phones. This can help them feel more like they are part of the club and may eliminate some of the barriers to participation. Chances are these young people do not have offices with business phones and computers to work from like many of the older volunteers might have. 	
3. Feedback and evaluation	Evaluation plan for new volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify development targets for young volunteers (i.e. the level of skill or experience they should gain, or what training they should carry out, by a certain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Development Target Template

		<p>deadline)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an evaluation plan to assess volunteers' progress. This does not need to be a long and technical document. It just needs to outline what steps the club will take to assess the progress of volunteers and how the club will provide feedback to these volunteers. For example, some of the steps in the plan might be for the Youth Volunteer Coordinator to meet with the volunteers before a club meeting to discuss how they have been going, and what challenges they have encountered. They might also discuss what is going to be discussed in the upcoming meeting and what was expected of them in the meeting room. Then, following the meeting, they could gather for five – 10 minutes to go over the meeting and make sure every understood what was said and what their responsibilities are following the meeting. By doing this, the Youth Volunteer Coordinator should have a good understanding of the volunteer's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample Volunteer Evaluation plan Handy Hint: Giving Good Feedback
4. Knowledge Sharing	Buddy System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify members of the Committee or Board who have a depth of knowledge or experience in your club. Invite them to be part of a buddy system to share knowledge with new volunteers. Ask young people, what particular part of the club they are interested in (e.g. coaching, umpiring being a treasurer, organising events or fundraising). Assign new volunteers a 'buddy' who is a long term club member with experience in managing aspects of the club. Try as much as possible to link young people with buddies who have experience in the areas of the club that the young person is interested in. Introduce the new volunteer to their buddy and encourage them to swap contact details and share information about themselves. This should also include the strengths and skills of the young person. A good buddy system should enable information sharing in both directions so both are learning from the other. At a club meeting or event, coordinate 'get-to-know-you' activities for all buddies and the new volunteers. The 'buddy' is then responsible for sharing his knowledge of club processes with the new volunteer. This should include information on key tasks, responsibilities, challenges and community contacts. Check out the <i>Knowledge Sharing Template</i> as a guide. This could be achieved through: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit the following link for suggestions of get-to-know-you games: http://www.icebreakers.ws/ Knowledge sharing template for buddies

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face to face conversations; ○ Simply including the new volunteer in the carbon copy line of all club-related emails; ○ Creating a manual with task time lines, key tasks, contacts outlined; ○ The young volunteer shadowing their 'buddy' and observing what they do; or ○ Including the new volunteer in relevant meetings or assigning five minutes to the beginning of club meetings for the 'buddy' to present what is expected of them in their role, what tasks they have completed this season and some of the challenges they have faced. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You may like to put a time limit on this buddy system or you might like to leave it as an ongoing program. It may be a good idea to swap 'buddies' at regular intervals so that volunteers can benefit from a diverse range of skills and personality types. 	
5. Training	Formal training courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the training needs of your volunteers. Consult your volunteers throughout this process. ● Determine whether someone in your club has the relevant knowledge or skill to train new volunteers in necessary areas. You might like to use the <i>Club Member Skill Audit Template</i> to identify volunteer skills. ● Research possible training providers or local opportunities for skill development. Visit the Training Staff section of the Youth Services Toolkit for a list of suggested providers. ● If external training is required, assess the cost of training and determine whether the club can afford it. If the funds are not available within the club, is there a grant or funding program that you can access? Or could the individual volunteer pay? ● Approach volunteers and invite them to carry out training. ● Ask volunteers to share new knowledge/skill with the rest of the Committee or club members. ● Monitor progress and continually identify emerging training needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Club Member Skill Audit Template

Table 2: Key ingredients for retaining young volunteers

Step 9. Mentor your Young Volunteers

About Mentoring

Everyone remembers that first day at a new job. Trying to learn how to work the photo copier, where the paper supplies cupboard is and the name of the person sitting opposite you can be daunting. Many volunteers face that same anxiety when starting out in a new role. If you can remember the nerves involved in starting at a new school, you would remember how nice it is when you finally meet that smiley and welcoming person in the locker-room - someone who shows you the dos and don'ts of the schoolyard or the office.

A mentor's role is very similar. They are there to support the new volunteer and to make sure they know:

- What to expect as a volunteer;
- What is expected of them as volunteers; and
- How to find relevant information and tools along the way.

Mentoring in sports clubs should be targeted and as specific as possible. Your club needs to consider what support new volunteers need and how a mentor can provide that support. For example, if you had a new volunteer who was not familiar with working with money but was expected to help with the running of your canteen, then a mentor with experience in this area (perhaps they work in a café or have had experience in the canteen in the past) could get involved to show the new volunteer the ropes. Or, if there was a new committee member who was not familiar with formal meetings, a mentor with relevant experience (for example, a previous club secretary or someone who has lots of experience in boardroom settings) could explain the processes and the key tasks and guide the new volunteer through their first meeting.

There are many ways mentors can be useful for new volunteers and it's best if time is taken to strategically match experienced club members with appropriate new volunteers and clearly outline the support required from the mentor. This helps to target mentoring efforts and make sure the volunteer is getting relevant experience. It also creates a more manageable role for the mentor as they are not expected to 'be all things to all volunteers'.

Starting a Mentoring Program in Your Club

The following is a step-by-step guide to developing a mentoring program in your club:

1. Put someone in charge of coordinating the mentoring program. If your club has a Youth Volunteer Coordinator, they should take on this task.
2. Invite existing club members to nominate to be mentors. Ensure they know what this involves. Click here to view a *Mentor Nomination Form Template*. Mentors don't need to be older than volunteers - they simply need to have relevant experience in a particular area.

3. Mentors use their nomination form to outline skill areas in which they feel they could guide new volunteers: (For example, chairing meetings, coaching, refereeing, fundraising etc.). Note that some skill areas may be less obvious than others. For example, someone may have excellent experience in public speaking but not necessarily think that's relevant to running a club. Or someone might feel their strength is simply being a 'friendly face in the club'. Encourage them to include skill areas they have experience in outside their role with the club. This might open up opportunities you might not have considered before.
4. Make a list of the skill areas that have been identified by mentors.
5. Volunteers complete a *Mentee Registration Form* and select the areas in which they feel they need support from the list of skills identified by mentors. If they have other areas they feel they need help with, make note of these. If you go back and ask your mentor group, you might find that someone has these skills but hadn't mentioned them.
6. Following this, match the mentors to the new volunteers.
7. Arrange an opportunity for mentors to meet new volunteers. If you can, make this a fun and social occasion so they can get to know each other. It's important for them to develop a relationship of trust, and social occasions could help this.
8. Encourage mentors to map out a plan for regular catch-ups with their new volunteer. This should be agreed on by the mentor and mentee. It is useful if mentors can meet up with their new volunteers before a significant event (such as a meeting, big game or rush hour at the canteen) to chat with the new volunteer and then again following the event. That way, feedback is given on the spot and the new volunteer has a chance to ask questions while they're fresh in their mind.
9. Schedule opportunities for mentors and volunteers to discuss with the Youth Volunteer Coordinator how things are going and to vent any concerns.
10. Recognise and thank mentors at club meetings or events. This could involve presenting them with certificates, prizes, or simply just making a mention of their contribution.
11. Continually evaluate the program and get feedback from participants. Make changes as necessary.

View the *Tips for Mentors and Mentees Handout*. You can distribute this handout to mentors and young volunteers.

Step 10. Recognise Volunteers and Thank Them for Their Work

As you are probably already aware, an important part of retaining volunteers is making them feel valued and appreciated. For young people this is equally important and may take some creativity on the club's behalf. The Managing Staff and Volunteers Section of the Youth Services Toolkit offer great advice and useful links for recognising volunteers of all ages.

When you are recognising young people, consider why they have chosen to volunteer. Is it because they want to learn new skills? Is it because they want to add it to their resume? Is it because they want to meet new people?

In recognising their contribution, think about what motivates people and how you might be able to best reward the individual. For example, if they are hoping to expand their social network, thanking them might involve organising club social events. Here are some ideas for showing your appreciation for young committee members, coaches, umpires, fundraisers and other volunteers according to various volunteer motives:

Ideas for How to Recognise and Appreciate Young Volunteers

Below is a list of common motivations for volunteering and some suggestions for how you can show your appreciation or recognise your volunteers accordingly.

- **Community Recognition Motivation**

For all volunteers, especially those who are motivated by 'giving back to the club and community':

- Listen to them. Give them your attention when they are communicating with you. Take their opinions seriously.
- Thank them informally at every opportunity.
- Make a public announcement at a presentation evening.
- Present them with a trophy or certificate of appreciation. Find three certificate templates on the website for your convenience.
- Submit an application for a public award such as the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award. Visit www.nswvolunteerawards.com for more information.

- **Skills and Training Motivation**

For the volunteer who hopes to learn new things through volunteering:

- Offer training in their area of interest. This might involve subsidising their study at training organisations or adult learning centres or paying for them to get coaching accreditation. Often this will benefit both the club and the young person.
- Take time to teach new skills and share knowledge with them.

- **Social Motivation**

For the volunteer who wants to meet new people and have fun:

- Send cards for special milestones like birthdays.
- Create a Facebook group where they can connect socially with other club volunteers.
- Hold a BBQ lunch or host a dinner party to thank all volunteers.
- Hold club volunteer excursions (e.g. a trip to the zoo or an overnight camp).

- **Career Focussed Motivation**

For the volunteer who would like to add the experience to their resume:

- Offer to write a reference they can use in future job or university applications.
- Give them a certificate they can add to their resume. To customise a certificate for your club volunteers view the three *Certificate of Appreciation Templates*.
- Write a letter to inform their school or parents of their role in your club and the skills they have demonstrated.

- **Incentive-based Motivation**

For volunteers who like to see the benefits of their contribution:

(This would motivate many volunteers to varying degrees.)

- Give an award or gift of appreciation. This could be a gift voucher, movie tickets, music, an item of sports clothing or a homemade cake.
- Subsidise club fees, travel expenses etc.
- Pay them for services where appropriate.
- Reserve a parking space at your local venue on game day.
- Provide food and drink at club meetings.

There are many ways of showing your appreciation for young volunteers. Again, it is probably best to consult young people on what would be the best way of thanking them and employ a combination of the options listed above. Consider this process an investment in the future of the club. Often volunteers are doing it simply to 'give back' to the club. However, it's vital they feel their contribution is being noticed and appreciated.

Section 3: Helpful Links and Resources

⇒ Websites and Organisations

- **Children and Young People’s Participation Consortium for Wales.**
This is an excellent site with a series of helpful booklets to help guide you through the process of including young people in decision-making.
www.savethechildren.org.uk
- **Participation Works Partnership** has a website for organisations trying to encourage greater youth participation. It has great ‘How To’ guides that deal with various elements of including young people in governance.
www.participationworks.org.uk
- **Western Australia Department of Sport and Recreation** has an excellent library of resources for sports clubs on a great range of topics. Check out their *Clubs Online* page ‘Club House’ resources.
www.dsr.wa.gov.au
- **NSW Sport and Recreation’s Youth Services Toolkit** is an excellent website that can help guide you through managing people, events and activities for your club.
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au
- **Volunteering NSW** has useful information for volunteers and organisations.
<http://www.volunteering.com.au>

⇒ Publications and Resources

- **NSW Commission for Children and Young People Participation Kit** is a resource for organisations who want practical advice about how to involve children and young people in activities, events and decision-making about issues that affect their lives.
<http://kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources>.
- ***Let’s Get On Board: A handbook encouraging young people to join committees and boards*** - published by the Tasmania Department of Premier and Cabinet. Download the document here or visit their website.
<http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/>.
- ***Young People on Boards and Committees: A handbook for organisations working with young people*** - published by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. Download the document or visit the website to view other handbooks in the *Taking Young People Seriously* series.
www.yacvic.org.au
- ***15 Points: Successfully Involving Youth in Decision-Making*** - published as part of the Youth on Board project by YouthBuild USA. It is a simple to understand booklet that has useful tips and tools to better including young people in decision-making. You can purchase the booklet on the website.
www.youthonboard.org.

Getting Young People Involved in Your Club: How to Find Them, Keep Them and Appreciate Them

Section 1: Understanding Youth Involvement



Background to this resource

In regional NSW and all over the State, sporting clubs are facing extinction because volunteers are often unwilling to take on the sometimes large work load of becoming the club's President, Treasurer or Secretary. Often it's a few key club members – mostly parents or grandparents of players – who are doing the job of many and trying to keep the club alive. This often leaves little time to plan for the future or build strategic processes into day-to-day activities.

This guide aims to encourage clubs to get young people involved in decision-making and planning in order to ensure the long-term survival of the club. Young people are often an untapped resource within the club. They have unique skills, fresh perspective and lots of energy. Now, more than ever, it's vital that sports clubs engage these young people and invest in their development so that they can take on leadership positions and carry the club in to the future.

In this guide you will find simple templates, sample documents and handy hints to help you to get young people involved in club decision-making. Whether it's inviting a young person to be on a committee or an advisory group, involving them in planning a fundraising event or simply encouraging them to gain coaching or umpiring accreditation, this resource aims to encourage greater youth participation in your club and guide you through engaging and retaining young people in an effective way. To find the most relevant information for your club check out the *Youth Engagement Guide Map* and follow the links.

The information in this guide has been taken from existing literature on youth governance and youth participation and from primary research carried out by NSW Sport and Recreation. Four focus groups were facilitated with sports clubs and young people in the community of Armidale, NSW. Surveys were also distributed throughout regional NSW to sports club committees, young people who currently volunteer in sports clubs and young people who do not volunteer. More than 160 people living in regional NSW completed these surveys.

NSW Sport and Recreation would like to thank all those that assisted with this research, especially the Armidale Sports Council in Armidale, NSW.



What is youth participation?

When we talk about involving young people in your club, we are talking about including them in the decision-making structures and processes of your club or, in other words, the governance of your club. This could mean inviting them to be on club boards and advisory groups or placing them in management positions. These roles will be more specifically outlined in Section 2, Step 3.

However, it's more than just placing them on a board and 'giving them a say'. It is about *actually listening* to what they say and valuing their contribution. It's about taking their views in to consideration and being influenced by them when making a decision. Too often, we consult young people and then do nothing with the feedback they give. To encourage good participation from young people, they must be taken seriously.

What age group are we talking about?

Most people agree the term 'youth' refers to young people aged around 14 – 24 years old. This resource has been developed to help sports clubs engage young people in this age bracket. However, it's important to note that this may also be useful for people slightly younger or older. It is also important to note that within the 14 – 24 years age bracket, the needs of young people will vary depending on life experience, skill levels and interest.

Why involve young people?

There are a number of reasons your club should be involving young people in club governance roles. Many clubs, especially in rural communities, suffer from a lack of willing and capable volunteers. Often the same handful of people will be on the board for the rugby league club and the cricket club, or the same person will be the secretary of the athletics club and the coach of the netball team.

If these few people decide to move on, it leaves a huge gap in the club and the community and the club scrambles to find replacements. Often, much of the knowledge and skill leaves the club with the departing volunteer. By involving young people from early on, the club creates a depth of knowledge and skill so that there is someone ready to take up the reins when key volunteers move on.

There are other important reasons for engaging young people in club management. Research shows a growing need to find new ways of engaging young people with their communities and vice versa. Too often, young people are overlooked and their capabilities are underestimated or undervalued.



Taking on leadership within community clubs will allow young people to take ownership of decisions that affect their lives.

Sport is a huge part of many young people's lives and can help form their sense of identity. Empowering a young person to be a member of a committee or help plan a community event helps to build their capacity and strengthens their connection to community. It may also help them to find employment by introducing them to new skills and networks of adults.

Youth participation also relates to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the organisation. Most sport clubs are trying to meet the needs of young athletes. Who best to tell you what will work and what won't when delivering a service to young people than young people themselves?

By consulting young people and responding to their ideas and feedback, clubs can often avoid costly misjudgements and successfully run a club, event or activity that young people actually respond well to. Also, by listening to the voice of young people you are consulting a more diverse group of community members and gaining access to new and fresh ideas. This process could raise the profile of the club among young community members and make it more appealing to other young people.

Research Finding: Why do clubs want to involve young people in decision making?

We surveyed over 40 clubs in Western NSW and asked them what they would be aiming to achieve by involving young people in decision-making. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Keep the club alive in the long term/succession planning;
2. Share skills and knowledge with young people;
3. Get a better idea of young people's needs/wants in order to deliver better/more relevant events and activities;
4. Give young people opportunity to develop skills; and
5. Gain fresh ideas and skills.

What are the benefits?

The benefits of youth participation in club decision-making can be divided in to three categories: benefits for the individual, benefits for the club and benefits for the community. View the *Benefits of Youth Participation Handout* for an outline of these benefits. You may like to print this off and show other committee members this diagram. It may help to get them on board when you decide to 'take action'.



Research Finding: Benefits of Volunteering

We surveyed 40 young people (aged between 12 – 25 years) who are currently volunteering with a local sports club in Western NSW and asked them what they see as the benefits of volunteering. Below are the five most commonly identified benefits in order of frequency:

1. The chance to give back to the community;
2. Meeting people and socialising with friends;
3. Community recognition/personal gain;
4. Learn and develop new skills; and
5. Because it's fun.

Getting Young People Involved in Your Club: How to Find Them, Keep Them and Appreciate Them

Section 2: Taking Action: 10 Steps to Engaging Youth in Club Decision-Making



Step 1. Stop and Think

If you have identified the need to engage young people in the running of your club but you are not quite sure what to do next, the first thing to do is to gather your committee together and answer some simple questions. This will help to establish your key motivations and expectations. Before doing this you might like to present the *Engaging Young People in Your Club PowerPoint Presentation* to your committee so that everyone is aware of why you need to engage young people and the benefits of doing so.

Then, consider the following and complete the *Is Your Club Ready Quiz* and *Checklist*:

1. Why does our club want to engage young people in decision-making?
2. What are we aiming to achieve by doing this?
3. Why have we not done this before? What has stopped us?
4. What will young people get out of being involved in our club? What can we offer them?
5. Do we have appropriate resources to commit to this? If not, how can we get them?
6. What are our expectations of young people and the contribution they can make to our club?
7. Are we prepared to make changes to the way we do things to enable better youth participation?
8. Is this a short or long term plan?

Once you have completed the *Is Your Club Ready Quiz* and *Checklist* keep them as a record so they can be referred to in the future. These will help to act as a guide for putting a youth engagement plan in place.

Step 2. Identify Barriers to Participation for Young People

Before taking any steps to engage young people in your club, you need to identify potential barriers for young people who are trying to take on these roles. Basically, you need to know what stops them from getting involved. Once you know that, your club can begin to implement strategies to remove or reduce some of the obstacles that get in the way for young people.

These barriers will vary in each community and you will need to respond accordingly to the specific challenges faced by young people and clubs. One way of finding out what these challenges are is by asking.

Handy Hint

Gathering Information about Your Community or Club Members

If you are trying to find out what barriers might exist for young people in your community or how your club members feel about your plans to involve more young people, why not use a survey?

Surveys are a great, simple way of gathering information. You can also save the time and effort involved in distributing and collecting them by using online surveys. One example is Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com), a website that lets you create, distribute and collect surveys on line for free. You simply email the surveys to people, they click on a link, complete the survey online and then you can access and analyse their responses. There are other websites that do the same, so shop around and find the one that meets your needs.

Below are some common barriers to youth participation in community organisations and some suggestions for overcoming these barriers:

1. **Meeting location:** Often adults can be unaware that a meeting room or location is not youth-friendly and young people do not feel welcome there.

Strategies:

- Consult young people on where they would like meetings to be held.
- Make sure meetings are held in a familiar and a relatively informal space to appeal to young people.
- If you only have one meeting space, try to avoid the typical 'boardroom' environment. Perhaps arrange chairs in a circle to encourage interaction or have everyone sit on the floor.
- Hold a meeting in someone's home or perhaps a local café. Share a meal together or a cup of tea. This helps to create a social atmosphere and help young people feel welcome.

- For more information on how your club can make meetings more youth-friendly, check out the NSW Commission for Children and Young People Participation Kit. It has a chapter called '*Meeting Together – Deciding Together*'. To view the resource visit: <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au>.
2. **Language:** Often in committee meetings and even informal environments, young people are excluded from conversations because they don't understand what's being said.

Strategies:

- Read through your club policies or publications. Are they written in simple terms that everyone can understand? If not, can they be re-worked? Perhaps you could summarise the key points in clear and concise language and distribute this to new club volunteers.
 - At meetings, try not to use acronyms or technical jargon that a new volunteer might not understand. If this is necessary, print a one-page document that explains the terms and take time to go through it with the young person before the meeting.
 - Let other committee members know that you have a new young member and encourage them to communicate clearly with the young person.
 - Use butcher's paper or a white board and write down some of the key points being made.
 - Be aware that young people can express their ideas in different ways to adults. This might often be in a more informal manner. Be flexible in your approach to communicating with young people so they feel comfortable to use their own language to express ideas and opinions.
 - For more helpful hints check out the NSW Commission for Children and Young People - Taking Participation Seriously Kit. View the kits at: www.kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources.cfm.
3. **Attitudes:** This can be a significant barrier to overcome both for the young person and also for existing club volunteers. Often, older club members feel that young people are not *capable* of taking on positions of responsibility and they are reluctant to hand over any control. These attitudes can obstruct youth engagement in your club. By presuming that young people will not be able to help or that they don't want to help, you are ignoring a great opportunity!

Some adults also think that young people can only be trusted with simple, menial or tokenistic roles. This is a big mistake. Young people can be creative and innovative and can be a great gateway for your

club to connect with younger generations. Given only tokenistic roles with no real responsibility attached, young people will get bored and disconnected from the club. Clubs need to be thinking about what they can teach young people and also what they can *learn* from young people.

➤ **Common attitudes of adults and strategies to address them:**

'This generation Y, they just expect everything to be done for them and they can't commit to anything'.

- Leave all presumptions about generational traits and age limitations at the door of the committee room. Ask young volunteers to do the same.

'All this effort can't be worth it. What's the point of it anyway? Things are OK the way they are.'

- Make sure all club members are clear on the benefits of involving young people in decision-making so that you are all equally committed. Use the *Benefits of Youth Participation Handout* to illustrate this.

'In the past when we've had young volunteers they've been bored and quit after a month. They didn't contribute anything'.

- Make sure the tasks given to young people have a real purpose and make sure they are given adequate resources.
- Ask young people what they are interested in and what their strengths are. This will help you to give them appealing and relevant tasks. Use the *New Volunteers Skills Audit* and adapt the questions as you like.

'Young people couldn't do what I do. It's taken me years to get the hang of it. They simply don't have the skills'.

- Ask older members of the club to take on mentoring roles to help educate and train young volunteers in club management. Check out the mentoring section of this guide for more information.

Attitudes of young people themselves can also be a barrier to participation.

➤ **Common attitudes of young people and strategies to address them:**

'They don't need us. It's an adult's job':

- Invite them to be involved from the beginning. Make them feel needed and outline why you would like them to be involved.

'It's intimidating. They're all older than me and I don't know what I'm doing'.

- Invite young people to bring a friend along.

'I don't have time to take on anything else at the moment. I wouldn't be able to go to meetings because I have training that day'

- Schedule meetings so that they do not clash with schooling and sporting commitments. Take a flexible approach to young people's involvement in governance.

'I wouldn't know how to get involved'

- Educate all players in your club about how they can get involved behind the scenes if they want to. Who should they speak to? What roles can they play? What does the commitment involve? What skills can they learn by doing this? This can happen on registration day in a formal way but should be re-affirmed at club events, community events and informal conversations throughout the season.

Research Finding: Attitudes of young people

When we spoke to young people in focus groups about what was stopping them from volunteering, these were some of the responses:

- '[Adults] probably wouldn't take us young people seriously'.
- 'We are just used to our parents doing it. Young people don't really need to get involved in our club'.
- 'It's intimidating. We wouldn't know what to do'.
- 'The club doesn't have enough respect for young people. They think I'm only a young fella and they don't take me seriously'.
- 'I don't have enough experience'.
- 'We are busy with work and school and don't have time'.

4. **Young people are not asked to be involved**: This may sound simple but it is one of the most crucial barriers to participation. Clubs simply do not ask young people to get involved.

Research Finding: Why don't young people volunteer?

We surveyed over 50 young people (aged between 12 – 25 years) living in Western NSW who currently *do not* volunteer with local sporting clubs. We asked them why they didn't volunteer. The most common response was that they had not been asked.

Strategies:

- Include an option for volunteering or 'club management duties' on players' registration forms. Young people can tick the box if they are interested and leave contact details for the club to contact them in the future. View the *Club Registration Form with Volunteer Nomination* as an example.
- Target your promotion in a way that young people will respond. Use Facebook (For more information view Step 7: Effectively Communicating with Young People) and other communication tools to speak to young people. Visit the local schools and ask to speak with the students. Visit youth centres or put up notices in popular hang-out places. Don't expect them to read the papers and access the same information sources as adults.
- Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator to be responsible for recruiting and supporting young people. For more details view Step 5: Recruit Young People. Make the process easy for them. Avoid heavy paperwork as this will turn them off.

5. **Cost of participation:** Often there is a cost involved in participation for young people that many adults may not really notice. The cost of transport, a meal or even the opportunity cost of giving up a shift at work to attend a meeting or event is a significant factor for people making the decision to volunteer.

Strategies:

- Provide young volunteers with a travel allowance.
- Provide a meal or refreshments for volunteers.
- Coordinate car pooling.
- Assist with registration fees if possible.

6. **Parents:** As mentioned, often young people will need the support of their parents in order to be involved in your club. Sometimes clubs can view parents as an obstacle to participation if they do not provide the right support for young people wanting to be involved. At times, parents can lack enthusiasm about their child's involvement - they may have a lack of resources to help their child get involved or in some cases they may be over-powering.

Strategies:

- Educate parents on what is involved for them and their child, what the potential benefits are and what is expected of them. Make it clear how they can support their child's involvement in the club. This could involve an 'open day' type event when families of volunteers are invited along to a club event or simply send a letter home in the mail. View the *Letter to Parents Template* as a guide.

- Assess whether a young volunteer might need extra assistance from the club. This could be providing transport for them or perhaps covering registration fees if they are not able to afford them themselves.
- Provide parents with relevant information such as season fixtures, important contact numbers and key dates.

7. **Time restraints**: This is a barrier to participation for people of all ages. A young person will often have commitments to school, university, part-time work and extra curricular activities. Clubs need to be aware of this and take a flexible approach.

Strategies:

- Consult young people in your club about meeting schedules. If they are a player, perhaps you could arrange meetings immediately before or after their training sessions. The key point is to ask what they think is the best time.
- Be flexible. If they are a volunteer coach of more than one team, schedule their training sessions back-to-back or allow them to coach two teams simultaneously. Or, if they are on a committee, they may not be able to attend every meeting but if their input is important enough, allow them to attend more infrequently.
- Give them control over their term on the committee or board so they don't feel trapped (this may be especially important to high school students approaching the end of their studies).

8. **Inexperience of young people**: Depending on the age of your young volunteers, many of them will be unfamiliar with processes involved in club governance and other duties involved in running a sports club. Often this results in a lack of confidence among young volunteers and older club members who don't trust the young people to get the job done.

Strategies:

- Be realistic and clear. Don't expect new volunteers to be experts. Communicate clear expectations to new recruits. This will help to avoid them feeling intimidated by the 'great unknown'.
- Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator to run young people through the ropes and act as the 'go to' person if they have questions.
- Be patient. Take the time to invest in new volunteers. This may mean providing formal or informal training.

- Devise a manual for volunteers with useful information and handy hints. For a list of suggested topic areas to be covered in this manual view the *Volunteer Manual Outline*.
- For more information about supporting the development of young volunteers in your club view the other sections of this website. You can use these other sections to guide new volunteers in running an activity, participating in a meeting and managing people.

Research Finding: What do young volunteers find difficult?

We also asked young people who do volunteer what areas of volunteering they find the most difficult. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Trying to fit it in around work, school and other commitments;
2. Communicating with older members in the club;
3. I don't feel my opinion is taken seriously;
4. Sometimes I don't hear about club events and activities; and
5. Being involved in meetings and formal situations.

Step 3. Decide *How* Your Club will Involve Young People in Decision-Making

Now that you have decided to engage young people to help with the running of your club, discussed the benefits of doing so with your fellow club members and identified some of the barriers to participation, it's important to consider *how* you are going to involve them in decision-making process.

Much of the research suggests that there are two main models that can be employed by clubs wanting to involve young people. The first is to include a number of youth representatives on your existing board or executive committee. This would usually mean that the young people become full voting members (however, they could also be non-voting members) of the board/committee.

The second approach is to create a separate committee of youth members, for example a 'youth committee' or 'youth council'. This body is composed of young club members and managed independently of the club board or executive committee. This youth committee might then report back to the board or executive committee on particular issues and vice versa. Table 1: Two Models of Youth Governance (p.11) outlines some of the benefits and drawbacks of both approaches.

These models relate to governing bodies like club committees or boards. However there are other ways to encourage greater participation by young people in the 'behind the scenes' stuff in your club. As you may have already picked up from this toolkit, the trick is to remain flexible! That is, your club needs to plan a strategy that works best for your particular young members and is sustainable over the long term.

It is important to think of creative ways to engage young people in decision-making in the short term because it might be this member who takes on greater decision-making responsibility in the future. Don't be too worried about trying to fit into one particular youth participation model. Feel free to use elements of all of them.

Perhaps your young players aren't keen on turning up to meetings but they don't mind coaching younger teams on a Saturday. That same young person, who likes coaching, might have strong opinions about club issues such as training programs, sideline behaviour or increasing participation in the club. While they might not be interested in becoming a member of a committee that meets regularly, they may still like to be consulted.

For example, hold a BBQ after training one evening, invite some young people to have a bit of a chat about club issues, ask for their suggestions to address these issues and record the results (this could just be on a bit of

butcher's paper or you could get people to fill out a survey). From this, you will have effectively run a little informal focus group and should have some solid feedback to pass back to the board.

At the BBQ you might also find an opportunity to invite young people to be involved in planning the next club fundraiser or presentation night or even just the next BBQ. Ultimately this process helps to open up a conversation between the board and young players and lets them know that their opinions matter. This may help the young people to take the step toward club-governance.

What's a Focus Group?

A focus group is a research method that involves getting a group of people together and facilitating discussion. It is a great way of finding out how people feel about a subject and why they feel that way. It helps to assess subjective information as opposed to discrete, objective data like participant numbers or demographics. It is not a group interview where you ask a question and people give you an answer. It is more like a group conversation. You can use a Dictaphone or a camera to record the session or make notes as you go.

These are some other ways to involve young people:

- Advisory groups
- Peer support
- Event organisers
- Focus groups
- Coaches, umpires or team managers
- Mentors for younger players
- Club fundraising
- Club promotion

Research Finding: Popular roles for young people

We asked young people what roles they would like to take on in their local club. The five most common responses in order of frequency were:

1. Umpire/referee;
2. Coach;
3. Event organiser;
4. Committee member; and
5. Fundraising coordinator.

Two Models of Youth Governance

Model	Pros	Cons
<p>Adding young people to an existing body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people bring fresh energy to the existing body. ○ Young people can be involved in serious decision-making and see first-hand the impact they are having. ○ Improves relationships between adult members and young people. ○ Adults and young people work together toward improving the club. ○ Young people can learn from more experienced committee members and be mentored by adults with expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people may feel intimidated and may not 'speak up' or actively participate. ○ Legal issues need to be considered – ie: if board members under 18 years can vote etc. ○ Young people may feel outnumbered and that their opinion doesn't count for much because they're a minority on the committee. ○ Adults might ignore the young people's input because they are a minority.
<p>Creating a decision-making body specifically for young people (e.g. a youth council).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people feel more comfortable to actively participate in decision-making because they are surrounded by other young people. ○ This model can provide good practice for young people as they get real experience of being part of a committee. ○ It allows more young people to be involved in decision-making which means the organisation benefits from a diverse range of perspectives. ○ This body can act as an advisory body to the board and a good source of information. ○ The group can work on a specific project or initiative that appeals to them. ○ Young people experience a level of autonomy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the body does not have a specific role with legitimate authority, young people can feel like their role is tokenistic and lose interest. ○ The adult body may not take on board the feedback from youth body. ○ Requires time, energy, resources and training to be invested in the young people. ○ The young people and adults do not experience the benefits of working together in partnership.

Table 1: Two Models of Youth Governance. This table was Adapted from *Two General Approaches* in '15 Points to Successfully Involving Youth in Decision-Making', (Young & Sazama 2006, p. 46, published by YouthBuild USA).

Step 4. Form Community Partnerships

Clubs need to tap in to community networks in order to engage young people and give them incentive to volunteer in the organisation. There are many ways of doing this and opportunities will vary depending on your community. When your club is considering recruiting young people and building their role within your club, consider forming partnerships with other community groups. Some examples are:

- Education institutions such as schools, TAFE and community colleges
- Community initiatives such as Duke of Edinburgh
- Employment agencies
- State and Federal Government agencies
- Local councils
- Youth Centres
- Community groups

Often these organisations will have similar aims to your club. That is, many will be looking for ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, get young people more involved in their local community and to develop their skills and experience. This may be achieved by carrying out work experience, engaging in 'community service' or through active volunteering.

Has your club ever thought about taking on a work experience student from a local school? Often high school students are required to do compulsory work experience in year 10 or 11 when students are 15 – 17 years old. Similarly for many TAFE and vocational courses, students are required to do work placement hours in a relevant organisation. When you think about it, the work experience a student gains from participating in club meetings, helping to organise Saturday games or even administering the season registrations is relevant to any business environment.

By taking on these work experience students, the club could be gaining valuable help in the short term but also opening up doors for young people to get more involved in the club and building the community profile of the club. Often students are required to do a one-week block, however it's worth speaking with the education institution to discuss flexible hours.

The *Duke of Edinburgh Scheme* is a community initiative that aims to provide community recognition and engagement outcomes for young people aged 14 – 25 years. As part of the program, students are required to do a number of hours of physical recreation, volunteering and developing a skill or hobby. These hours could potentially be spent assisting your club.

There are many other opportunities and the more creative your club is in forming these partnerships, the better.

Community Partnership Suggestions:

- Visit the Youth Volunteering page on the Volunteering NSW homepage. Visit www.youthvolunteering.com.au. The website offers advice on how organisations can link up with its Youth Volunteering Program.
- Contact The Duke of Edinburgh Award to find out more about the scheme. Visit the website www.dukeofed.com.au/NSW or phone 13 13 02 or email: mail@dukeofednsw.au.com.
- Contact your nearest Community Partnership Broker and discuss with them your idea of engaging young students. The partnership broking program works to build partnerships between business, schools and community. To find out more or to find your nearest office visit www.workplacement.nsw.edu.au/brokers_program.php.
- Contact your local High School and speak with the Principal or Careers Advisor to let them know you would be happy to supervise a work experience student and the kind of support your club can offer the student. Also, find out whether the school offers any TAFE courses for students and discuss how they relate to running a community organisation like a sports club. Relevant courses could include Business Services, Sport and Recreation, Community Recreation etc.
- If you are going to take on a work experience student, Contact NSW Department of Education workplace learning office or visit www.ezwp.det.nsw.edu.au. This website has great guides that help you to know what to expect and to be a good host employer.
- Contact your local Council to see what community events or programs they may be planning. There may be an opportunity for your club to be involved in youth week activities, host a 'come and try' day or perhaps have a stall at the annual show. Check if they have a Youth Council and go along to speak with the young people. They may be interested in getting involved in your club themselves or could help you get the word out to their friends. Local Councils can offer great exposure for your club to the whole community.
- Visit www.govolunteer.com.au to advertise the volunteer positions in your club for free.

The key is to use existing community networks and/or to develop new partnerships in your community that help you access young people and promote volunteering in your club. This is by no means a comprehensive list and there may well be other opportunities for you to tap into in your community.



Step 5. Recruit Young People

General Recruitment

Often, the recruitment of volunteers presents big challenges for sports clubs and community organisations. In most regional and rural communities, the same community members are involved in a number of community groups and resources are stretched. There is a constant need to recruit more volunteers but not a huge pool of available and skilled community members who are willing to take on roles within the club. There is no perfect solution for this problem and it often takes a lot of effort and energy.

⇒ Useful links for information on recruitment of volunteers:

- To access helpful information and tools about recruiting volunteers for your club visit:
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au/YouthServices/FindingNewStaff.html.
- To access a resource library for sports clubs, which includes information on recruitment and retention of volunteers, visit the Australian Sports Commission website.
www.ausport.gov.au.
- To access a number of job descriptions for sports club positions such as treasurer, volunteer coordinator or team manager visit the Western Australia Department of Sport and Recreation website and search in their 'club filing cabinet':
<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubhouse>

Creating a Youth Recruitment Strategy

Discuss the following questions with your committee and complete the *Youth Recruitment Strategy Template*:

1. Why are you recruiting young people? What does the club hope to gain from involving young people in club decision-making?
2. How many young volunteers do you need to achieve this?
3. Where will you find them? How will you find them?
4. What will be their role in the club? What tasks are involved in this? Is this realistic? Can young people carry out these tasks?
5. How long do you expect them to stay with your club?
6. What support can you provide them? Do you have sufficient resources?
7. What can the club offer young volunteers?
8. What incentives can you offer young people to get involved in your club?
9. How will you communicate this message to young people? What media (and networks) will you use?
10. How and when will you measure the success of your recruitment strategy?

Your responses to these questions should form the basis of your *Youth Recruitment Strategy*. In order to create an effective strategy, follow the Useful Tips below.

Useful Tips for Recruiting Young People:

1. Engage someone in your club to be Youth Volunteer Coordinator and put them in charge of youth recruitment. This person should be approachable and friendly and have good connections with young people. View the sample *Position Description – Youth Volunteer Coordinator* for an outline of key skills and responsibilities of the position.
2. Actively invite young people to be involved. Make sure they know they are needed and would be valued in your club.
3. Target your recruitment to appeal to young people. Consider the language and media (and networks) you use and the image you project of your club.
4. Be flexible.
5. Consider barriers to participation for young people in your community and take steps to address these.
6. Market the club. Consider what the young person gets out of volunteering with your club and promote these benefits. Emphasise the exciting opportunities and the benefits they gain by getting involved.
7. Provide incentives such as a reduction on registration fees or a travel allowance.
8. Emphasise the social elements of working with your club.
9. Encourage them to bring a friend with them.
10. Be specific about what they are expected to do and let them know what support will be provided. Use the *Job Description Template* to clearly outline each volunteer position.
11. Tap in to existing community networks such as local schools or community groups.
12. Recruit young people for appealing and relevant roles. Sometimes it is easier to engage young people with fun activities such as event organising or coaching before asking them to start coming to meetings.
13. Be creative in the way you communicate with young people and how you promote your club. View Step 7: Effectively Communicate with Young People.

Research Finding: A snapshot to help with recruitment

Our surveys of young people in Western NSW showed:

Why do you volunteer in sports clubs?

5 most common responses in order of frequency:

1. I love the sport and want to be involved;
2. Because it's fun;
3. Because the club needed help and I wanted to help them out;
4. To help others; and
5. To give back.

If you don't volunteer for your local sports club, why is that?

6 most common responses in order of frequency:

1. I have not been asked;
2. I am not a member of any sports clubs;
3. I don't have time;
4. I wouldn't know what to do;
5. I don't know how to get involved; and
6. I have too many other commitments.

Do clubs make it easy or difficult for you to get involved?

59.5% said clubs make it 'difficult'. The 3 most common explanations cited for this response, in order of frequency, were:

1. Clubs don't listen to young people;
2. Clubs don't ask young people to be involved; and
3. Clubs tend to rely on older people to run the club.

Would you like to be more involved and have a say in decision-making in your club?

51.4% of respondents said 'yes' they would like to be more involved.

What would make it easier to get involved in a local club?

1. If they asked me to;
2. If I could bring a friend along;
3. If the club promoted activities through school more so I knew what was going on;
4. If they taught me what to do and helped me with my responsibilities; and
5. If they made it more social and less serious.

What's the best way for people to let you know about events, games and activities?

5 most common responses:

1. Phone
2. Text
3. Facebook
4. Email
5. School Newsletter

Step 6. Induct Young People in to your Club

General Induction Information

It's important to provide new volunteers with adequate information about their new role in your club. Done well, the induction process can make new volunteers feel more 'at home' in the club and give them confidence in their new role. Inducting a young volunteer is about giving them the 'who, what, where, when and how' details of your club. It is also about outlining some of the legal requirements and relevant club policies.

⇒ Useful Links and resource relating to volunteer induction:

- Youth Services Tool Kit (Managing Staff and Volunteer section)
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au/youthservices/orientatingandinductingnewstaff.html
- Western Australia Volunteering Essentials
<http://www.wavolunteeringessentials.org.au/induction>
- Australian Sports Commission
http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/clubs/resource_library/people_management
- Wales Council for Volunteering Action
www.wcva.org.uk
- View their publication: Inducting Volunteers
www.wcva.org.uk/images.../volunteering/Inducting%20volunteers
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People
<http://kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources/participationkit>

10 Things to Remember when Inducting Young Volunteers

1. They may be completely new to a club/business environment so be careful not to presume they have background knowledge of processes and jargon.
2. Give them a chance to ask questions along the way.
3. Keep it simple and concise. Don't turn them off with a boring presentation.
4. Consider making the induction as informal as appropriate so as not to intimidate the young person.
5. Give them a 'go-to' person or a buddy they can call on while they become familiar with the club.
6. Introduce them to other club members.
7. Be clear on what the club expects from them and what they can expect from the club. Outline the commitment involved and discuss how this might interfere with schooling or other commitments. Try to have as little impact on their other commitments as possible.

8. Make sure you give them an overall picture of the club activities and the roles within the club. Help them to understand where they fit within the club.
9. Give them practical information that will help them in their role (for example, contact numbers, bus timetables, key dates etc.)
10. Allocate sufficient time to explain safety issues and OH&S procedures.

View the *Youth Volunteers Induction Checklist* as a guide.

Step 7. Effectively Communicate with Young People

When trying to engage and work with young people, it is important to consider the ways in which you communicate with them. This goes for when you are chatting with them on the sideline, trying to promote your club or including them in a meeting.

6 Things to Remember when Communicating with Young People

1. Avoid technical language or jargon they might not be familiar with.
2. Keep it simple but don't patronise.
3. Show respect for their views and opinions. Don't speak over them or dismiss what they say. Make sure they know their input is valued.
4. Don't expect them to have an understanding of the formal language used in some meeting environments. Make sure you explain what terms mean. You can do this by giving them the *sports club glossary*.
5. Make sure you listen and are open to feedback. In some cases, this may be negative feedback. Don't ignore it just because they are younger. Though you might not like hearing it, it could be valuable information. For example, the fact that training is held on a Friday night and clashes with social commitments could explain why you have falling numbers of players in the Under 16s team. It's vital that you take this feedback on board and take steps to address issues. If young people feel like they are being heard, they will be more likely to get more involved the next time you ask.
6. Don't push them to contribute. Let them build up their confidence and speak when they feel comfortable.

Communication Tools for Clubs

In the past, clubs have communicated with young people through their parents, often by direct mail-outs. It's crucial that clubs use a range of communication tools to reach young people. Here are some alternatives:

- **Email:** If your club is not already using email to communicate with its members then it probably needs to start doing so – today! Starting up a club email account is easy and free. Email is a cost-effective way of communicating with the masses. It also allows you to send registration forms, club policies, planning schedules and e-newsletters to members without spending lots on printing. Email is especially useful for communicating with young people because it can be informal and less daunting. There are a number of email providers you could register with. If the sound of creating an email address scares you, just ask a young person for help! Below is a list

of common email providers: Visit these links to sign up for an email account:

- www.hotmail.com
- www.yahoo.com
- www.gmail.com

- **Text Messaging:** We all know how much we rely on our mobile phones these days. Well, for young people it's certainly no different. Save the effort of calling around from player to player to let them know about a club event - just send a group text. Text messaging is comfortable, easy and quick for young people. Often, it won't cost more than a postage stamp or a phone call. However, be aware that young people will not have endless credit to respond to texts. Despite this, it is a good way of spreading the word about a big game, an important meeting or a volunteering opportunity. Speak to your phone company to see which phone plan is best for offering cheap text messaging.
- **Blogging:** If you need a quick and easy way of sharing information with club members of all ages about game results, upcoming events, ground closures or other breaking news, a blog is a great tool. Blogging is basically just a term for writing online. It is a way of sharing ideas, notices, displaying images and allowing your club members to make a public comment. You can create a blog online for free without too much hassle. There are a number of places on the web where you can create a blog (and we suggest you shop around). Some are free and some require you to pay a fee. One example of a free page is www.blogger.com. This site takes you through the step-by-step process of creating a blog. Once you have created a blog, make sure you let everyone know that it exists and how they can access it!
- **Notices on the website:** If you already have a website, you should be using it to communicate with young people. Let them know they are needed by posting an invitation to get involved. You can also provide links to your other pages such as a club blog or Facebook profile.
- **Social Networking:** Increasingly, the most effective and efficient way to communicate with a wide group of young people is through social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace or Twitter. These sites offer great FREE opportunities for promoting your club to young people and letting them know about upcoming events or club meetings. They also offer a great opportunity to capitalise on the social motivations of volunteering. By creating a profile or 'group' on one of these sites, you can invite members in to the

group, share information and photos with them and also help to encourage a more social atmosphere for members. It's a great way of keeping track of old members and finding new members. Existing members can invite others to become a 'friend' or 'member' of your group which expands your network immediately or they can share club information with friends simply by clicking a button.

It is important to keep up to date with emerging technology as these sites are constantly evolving and new sites are opening. Facebook has undoubtedly been the most prominent social networking site for young people in Australia over the last few years. However, this may change and it is important to ask young people what sites they are using and tap in to them.

To get started on one of these stages, you need to create a 'profile' for the club. Visit www.facebook.com or www.myspace.com or www.twitter.com to find out more or simply do a web search for social networking sites and pick the one that suits your club's needs. If you don't feel confident, why not ask a young person for help? It could be a great first project for a young volunteer. For an introduction to social networking check out these articles at www.webtrends.about.com:

- What is Social Networking?
http://webtrends.about.com/od/socialnetworking/a/socialnetwork_h.htm
- Social Networking Guide for Beginners
http://webtrends.about.com/od/socialnetworking/a/socialnetwork_b.htm
- 12 Tips for Nonprofits on Getting Started with Social Media
<http://nonprofit.about.com/od/socialmedia/tp/Tipsstartsocialnetworking.htm>

Before diving head first in to these sites however, take time to consider the security settings on your page. Much of the information you 'post' to your 'profile' becomes public information. Make sure you understand your own customised security settings before starting to use your page. In addition, take care with 'posting' images and other information about club members. Be sure to get consent before 'posting' this information.

You should also be aware that these sites can sometimes enable online bullying so you need to encourage members to act responsibly – and be prepared to monitor your site regularly (or give this job to a responsible young person). Don't be scared off though – these sites are very simple to use and easy to navigate!

Research Finding: Methods of communication

We asked young people who do not currently volunteer with sports clubs what was the best way of letting them know about upcoming events and activities. The three most popular methods of communication were:

1. Phone;
2. Text Message; and
3. Facebook.

Step 8. Invest in Young People

Many young people volunteer because they want to learn something new. It's the club's role to provide an opportunity for these young volunteers to develop skills, knowledge and the ability to participate in club governance. By supporting young people and providing training opportunities for them, the club is ultimately developing a stronger pool of available volunteers for the future and ensuring the club benefits from full participation of young people in decision-making. It is also an important step in retaining volunteers because you are providing tangible benefits for them. After all, what's the point in engaging young people if you can't keep them?

This skills building approach involves a two-way discovery of skills and knowledge. That is, adults learn from young people and young people learn from adults. The club must allocate adequate time and resources toward this investment in young people, otherwise efforts to involve them in the long run will be pointless.

A Recipe for Retaining Young Volunteers

Some of the key ingredients needed to invest and properly support young people's involvement in your club are below:

- support and supervision;
- mentoring;
- adequate resource allocation;
- feedback and ongoing evaluation;
- knowledge sharing; and
- training.

View Table 2 for more information about some of these key ingredients and possible strategies your club could adopt.

A Succession Planning Approach

Essentially, to support the development of your young volunteers and to encourage them to stay with the club for a long time, the club needs to take a succession planning approach. That is, clubs need to:

1. Identify the skills required to carry out various positions in the club, such as club secretary or treasurer.
2. Identify young members or volunteers who have the potential to move into those key roles in the future.
3. Work out where there is a gap in skills or knowledge among identified volunteers.
4. Take steps to address these skill shortages by providing training or other development opportunities that will enable young volunteers to take on key club positions in the future.

For more information on succession planning for sports clubs, view the Succession Planning section of the Youth Services Tool.



Key Ingredient	Sample Strategy	Tasks Involved	Useful Tools and Links (available on website)
1. Support and supervision	Assign a Youth Volunteer Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the need to coordinate youth engagement and retention efforts. Decide to appoint a Youth Coordinator. Outline key responsibilities of the Coordinator and skills required Identify someone within the club who is energetic, approachable and well-liked by young members and invite them to take on the role. Induct the Coordinator. Introduce the Coordinator to young volunteers and encourage them to go to this person for any assistance or help. Coordinator devises and implements recruitment plan, monitors progress, manages mentoring program, identifies areas of need or any potential issues arising and reports to Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample position description for Youth Volunteer Coordinator
2. Adequate resources	Budget allocation to young volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculate extra costs involved in supporting young volunteers and ensure these costs are included in your annual budget. Costs could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel allowance Catering for meetings Website development Promotional materials Social events Club levy reimbursements (as an incentive for volunteering) If young people form a sub-committee, for example, a fundraising committee, ensure they are well resourced and allow them to fully or partially manage their own budget (with guidance if required). This enables them to have a level of control over their work and ensures they feel needed and appreciated. Open up the club's resources to young volunteers. If you can, let them use the facilities, computers or phones. This can help them feel more like they are part of the club and may eliminate some of the barriers to participation. Chances are these young people do not have offices with business phones and computers to work from like many of the older volunteers might have. 	
3. Feedback and evaluation	Evaluation plan for new volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify development targets for young volunteers (i.e. the level of skill or experience they should gain, or what training they should carry out, by a certain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Development Target Template

		<p>deadline)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an evaluation plan to assess volunteers' progress. This does not need to be a long and technical document. It just needs to outline what steps the club will take to assess the progress of volunteers and how the club will provide feedback to these volunteers. For example, some of the steps in the plan might be for the Youth Volunteer Coordinator to meet with the volunteers before a club meeting to discuss how they have been going, and what challenges they have encountered. They might also discuss what is going to be discussed in the upcoming meeting and what was expected of them in the meeting room. Then, following the meeting, they could gather for five – 10 minutes to go over the meeting and make sure every understood what was said and what their responsibilities are following the meeting. By doing this, the Youth Volunteer Coordinator should have a good understanding of the volunteer's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample Volunteer Evaluation plan Handy Hint: Giving Good Feedback
4. Knowledge Sharing	Buddy System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify members of the Committee or Board who have a depth of knowledge or experience in your club. Invite them to be part of a buddy system to share knowledge with new volunteers. Ask young people, what particular part of the club they are interested in (e.g. coaching, umpiring being a treasurer, organising events or fundraising). Assign new volunteers a 'buddy' who is a long term club member with experience in managing aspects of the club. Try as much as possible to link young people with buddies who have experience in the areas of the club that the young person is interested in. Introduce the new volunteer to their buddy and encourage them to swap contact details and share information about themselves. This should also include the strengths and skills of the young person. A good buddy system should enable information sharing in both directions so both are learning from the other. At a club meeting or event, coordinate 'get-to-know-you' activities for all buddies and the new volunteers. The 'buddy' is then responsible for sharing his knowledge of club processes with the new volunteer. This should include information on key tasks, responsibilities, challenges and community contacts. Check out the <i>Knowledge Sharing Template</i> as a guide. This could be achieved through: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit the following link for suggestions of get-to-know-you games: http://www.icebreakers.ws/ Knowledge sharing template for buddies

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face to face conversations; ○ Simply including the new volunteer in the carbon copy line of all club-related emails; ○ Creating a manual with task time lines, key tasks, contacts outlined; ○ The young volunteer shadowing their 'buddy' and observing what they do; or ○ Including the new volunteer in relevant meetings or assigning five minutes to the beginning of club meetings for the 'buddy' to present what is expected of them in their role, what tasks they have completed this season and some of the challenges they have faced. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You may like to put a time limit on this buddy system or you might like to leave it as an ongoing program. It may be a good idea to swap 'buddies' at regular intervals so that volunteers can benefit from a diverse range of skills and personality types. 	
5. Training	Formal training courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the training needs of your volunteers. Consult your volunteers throughout this process. ● Determine whether someone in your club has the relevant knowledge or skill to train new volunteers in necessary areas. You might like to use the <i>Club Member Skill Audit Template</i> to identify volunteer skills. ● Research possible training providers or local opportunities for skill development. Visit the Training Staff section of the Youth Services Toolkit for a list of suggested providers. ● If external training is required, assess the cost of training and determine whether the club can afford it. If the funds are not available within the club, is there a grant or funding program that you can access? Or could the individual volunteer pay? ● Approach volunteers and invite them to carry out training. ● Ask volunteers to share new knowledge/skill with the rest of the Committee or club members. ● Monitor progress and continually identify emerging training needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Club Member Skill Audit Template

Table 2: Key ingredients for retaining young volunteers

Step 9. Mentor your Young Volunteers

About Mentoring

Everyone remembers that first day at a new job. Trying to learn how to work the photo copier, where the paper supplies cupboard is and the name of the person sitting opposite you can be daunting. Many volunteers face that same anxiety when starting out in a new role. If you can remember the nerves involved in starting at a new school, you would remember how nice it is when you finally meet that smiley and welcoming person in the locker-room - someone who shows you the dos and don'ts of the schoolyard or the office.

A mentor's role is very similar. They are there to support the new volunteer and to make sure they know:

- What to expect as a volunteer;
- What is expected of them as volunteers; and
- How to find relevant information and tools along the way.

Mentoring in sports clubs should be targeted and as specific as possible. Your club needs to consider what support new volunteers need and how a mentor can provide that support. For example, if you had a new volunteer who was not familiar with working with money but was expected to help with the running of your canteen, then a mentor with experience in this area (perhaps they work in a café or have had experience in the canteen in the past) could get involved to show the new volunteer the ropes. Or, if there was a new committee member who was not familiar with formal meetings, a mentor with relevant experience (for example, a previous club secretary or someone who has lots of experience in boardroom settings) could explain the processes and the key tasks and guide the new volunteer through their first meeting.

There are many ways mentors can be useful for new volunteers and it's best if time is taken to strategically match experienced club members with appropriate new volunteers and clearly outline the support required from the mentor. This helps to target mentoring efforts and make sure the volunteer is getting relevant experience. It also creates a more manageable role for the mentor as they are not expected to 'be all things to all volunteers'.

Starting a Mentoring Program in Your Club

The following is a step-by-step guide to developing a mentoring program in your club:

1. Put someone in charge of coordinating the mentoring program. If your club has a Youth Volunteer Coordinator, they should take on this task.
2. Invite existing club members to nominate to be mentors. Ensure they know what this involves. [Click here to view a *Mentor Nomination Form*](#)

Template. Mentors don't need to be older than volunteers - they simply need to have relevant experience in a particular area.

3. Mentors use their nomination form to outline skill areas in which they feel they could guide new volunteers: (For example, chairing meetings, coaching, refereeing, fundraising etc.). Note that some skill areas may be less obvious than others. For example, someone may have excellent experience in public speaking but not necessarily think that's relevant to running a club. Or someone might feel their strength is simply being a 'friendly face in the club'. Encourage them to include skill areas they have experience in outside their role with the club. This might open up opportunities you might not have considered before.
4. Make a list of the skill areas that have been identified by mentors.
5. Volunteers complete a *Mentee Registration Form* and select the areas in which they feel they need support from the list of skills identified by mentors. If they have other areas they feel they need help with, make note of these. If you go back and ask your mentor group, you might find that someone has these skills but hadn't mentioned them.
6. Following this, match the mentors to the new volunteers.
7. Arrange an opportunity for mentors to meet new volunteers. If you can, make this a fun and social occasion so they can get to know each other. It's important for them to develop a relationship of trust, and social occasions could help this.
8. Encourage mentors to map out a plan for regular catch-ups with their new volunteer. This should be agreed on by the mentor and mentee. It is useful if mentors can meet up with their new volunteers before a significant event (such as a meeting, big game or rush hour at the canteen) to chat with the new volunteer and then again following the event. That way, feedback is given on the spot and the new volunteer has a chance to ask questions while they're fresh in their mind.
9. Schedule opportunities for mentors and volunteers to discuss with the Youth Volunteer Coordinator how things are going and to vent any concerns.
10. Recognise and thank mentors at club meetings or events. This could involve presenting them with certificates, prizes, or simply just making a mention of their contribution.
11. Continually evaluate the program and get feedback from participants. Make changes as necessary.

View the *Tips for Mentors and Mentees Handout*. You can distribute this handout to mentors and young volunteers.

Step 10. Recognise Volunteers and Thank Them for Their Work

As you are probably already aware, an important part of retaining volunteers is making them feel valued and appreciated. For young people this is equally important and may take some creativity on the club's behalf. The Managing Staff and Volunteers Section of the Youth Services Toolkit offer great advice and useful links for recognising volunteers of all ages.

When you are recognising young people, consider why they have chosen to volunteer. Is it because they want to learn new skills? Is it because they want to add it to their resume? Is it because they want to meet new people?

In recognising their contribution, think about what motivates people and how you might be able to best reward the individual. For example, if they are hoping to expand their social network, thanking them might involve organising club social events. Here are some ideas for showing your appreciation for young committee members, coaches, umpires, fundraisers and other volunteers according to various volunteer motives:

Ideas for How to Recognise and Appreciate Young Volunteers

Below is a list of common motivations for volunteering and some suggestions for how you can show your appreciation or recognise your volunteers accordingly.

- **Community Recognition Motivation**

For all volunteers, especially those who are motivated by 'giving back to the club and community':

- Listen to them. Give them your attention when they are communicating with you. Take their opinions seriously.
- Thank them informally at every opportunity.
- Make a public announcement at a presentation evening.
- Present them with a trophy or certificate of appreciation. Find three certificate templates on the website for your convenience.
- Submit an application for a public award such as the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award. Visit www.nswvolunteerawards.com for more information.

- **Skills and Training Motivation**

For the volunteer who hopes to learn new things through volunteering:

- Offer training in their area of interest. This might involve subsidising their study at training organisations or adult learning centres or paying for them to get coaching accreditation. Often this will benefit both the club and the young person.
- Take time to teach new skills and share knowledge with them.

- **Social Motivation**

For the volunteer who wants to meet new people and have fun:

- Send cards for special milestones like birthdays.
- Create a Facebook group where they can connect socially with other club volunteers.
- Hold a BBQ lunch or host a dinner party to thank all volunteers.
- Hold club volunteer excursions (e.g. a trip to the zoo or an overnight camp).

- **Career Focussed Motivation**

For the volunteer who would like to add the experience to their resume:

- Offer to write a reference they can use in future job or university applications.
- Give them a certificate they can add to their resume. To customise a certificate for your club volunteers view the three *Certificate of Appreciation Templates*.
- Write a letter to inform their school or parents of their role in your club and the skills they have demonstrated.

- **Incentive-based Motivation**

For volunteers who like to see the benefits of their contribution:

(This would motivate many volunteers to varying degrees.)

- Give an award or gift of appreciation. This could be a gift voucher, movie tickets, music, an item of sports clothing or a homemade cake.
- Subsidise club fees, travel expenses etc.
- Pay them for services where appropriate.
- Reserve a parking space at your local venue on game day.
- Provide food and drink at club meetings.

There are many ways of showing your appreciation for young volunteers. Again, it is probably best to consult young people on what would be the best way of thanking them and employ a combination of the options listed above. Consider this process an investment in the future of the club. Often volunteers are doing it simply to 'give back' to the club. However, it's vital they feel their contribution is being noticed and appreciated.

Getting Young People Involved in Your Club: How to Find Them, Keep Them and Appreciate Them

Section 3: Helpful Links and Resources



Section 3: Helpful Links and Resources

⇒ Websites and Organisations

- **Children and Young People’s Participation Consortium for Wales.**
This is an excellent site with a series of helpful booklets to help guide you through the process of including young people in decision-making.
www.savethechildren.org.uk
- **Participation Works Partnership** has a website for organisations trying to encourage greater youth participation. It has great ‘How To’ guides that deal with various elements of including young people in governance.
www.participationworks.org.uk
- **Western Australia Department of Sport and Recreation** has an excellent library of resources for sports clubs on a great range of topics. Check out their *Clubs Online* page ‘Club House’ resources.
www.dsr.wa.gov.au
- **NSW Sport and Recreation’s** Youth Services Toolkit is an excellent website that can help guide you through managing people, events and activities for your club.
www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au
- **Volunteering NSW** has useful information for volunteers and organisations.
<http://www.volunteering.com.au>

⇒ Publications and Resources

- **NSW Commission for Children and Young People Participation Kit** is a resource for organisations who want practical advice about how to involve children and young people in activities, events and decision-making about issues that affect their lives.
<http://kids.nsw.gov.au/kids/resources>.
- ***Let’s Get On Board: A handbook encouraging young people to join committees and boards*** - published by the Tasmania Department of Premier and Cabinet. Download the document here or visit their website.
<http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/>.
- ***Young People on Boards and Committees: A handbook for organisations working with young people*** - published by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. Download the document or visit the website to view other handbooks in the *Taking Young People Seriously* series.
www.yacvic.org.au
- ***15 Points: Successfully Involving Youth in Decision-Making*** - published as part of the Youth on Board project by YouthBuild USA. It is a simple to understand booklet that has useful tips and tools to better including young people in decision-making. You can purchase the booklet on the website. www.youthonboard.org.