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How do I make it happen?

Getting Young People involved in setting the ground rules for their community based Youth Project.

Why is this important?

If young people have been involved in negotiating the ground rules for their project they will have a greater sense of ownership, and are more likely to keep within their own set of rules. They are also more likely to be self-regulating as a group i.e. challenging each other when rules are broken rather than simply looking the other way

How to go about it?

Try to run this as a short, focused activity with the young people in the project, as close to the first session as possible.

Use flipcharts – markers – discussion to establish a whole list of positive rules (or expectations for the project)

Share the non-negotiable expectations – in a positive manner if possible e.g. rather than simply saying "we don't allow smoking" – talk about the need for young people to be in a healthy environment and what will contribute to that

What's Non-Negotiable?

Be honest and clear with young people what expectations are non-negotiable and explain why.

Recording Young People's Views?

Encourage young people to discuss and negotiate which rules/expectations are the agreed ones. Keep the longer list as a record of the discussion – you might want to return to it when you review with the young people in the future.

Displaying an agreed outcome?

Once agreed produce a bright and cheery set of the agreed rules/expectations and display in as many places as is reasonable around the project. Young people should be proud of their achievement – it shouldn't be hidden away behind the football competition poster!

Resources you might use:



More overleaf 

Hot Tips!

- Keep this activity focused and time limited (we all get bored talking about rules!)
- Get young people talking about expectations – start with theirs rather than yours!
- Give examples of situations where certain rules are necessary!
- Be honest and clear about non-negotiables.
- Be positive!

Possible Pitfalls!

- Young people simply agree with the workers suggestions – the answer to this is to keep as quiet as possible – let them work it out!