

Volunteering – Extra

Young People

- Schools play a vital role. Young people are more likely to take up volunteering in their post school years if they experienced volunteering at school. It becomes normalised behaviour.

Have you talked to your local school about how your group could facilitate students volunteering?

- Promoting social connections amongst potential young volunteers can also encourage their engagement.

- Enabling young volunteers to work in cooperative groups and promoting social contact between young volunteers can ameliorate the anxieties, which may prevent them from beginning or sustaining their volunteers efforts.

- The creation of volunteering activities that are relevant and meaningful for young people as well as enjoyable and that foster young people's development and learning; an emphasis on enabling young people to identify issues of concern to them and to address these issues in flexible and creative ways that reflect their own values and priorities and that build on their strengths and abilities; and the creation of an emotionally safe environment characterised by supportive relationships and support from skilled volunteers who can also act as role models.

At a fundraising BBQ/Community event, include an activity/information that appeals to young people. If you already have some young people volunteering, support them to recruit other young people. Why do they like it? What attracted them? Why do they continue to volunteer?

Check out local data to see what the young people of your area are interested in and/or concerned about. How could you use this information to engage young people in volunteering?

Livingstone Shire Council has a number of publically available Needs Analyses and Community Consultations (e.g. Youth Needs Analysis, Active Livingstone Strategy, Access and Inclusion Consultation) outlining local data (this is also useful for grant applications)

<http://www.livingstone.qld.gov.au/1223/Not-for-Profit-Community-Organisations>

Women

- Common reasons women give for not volunteering;

'Lack of knowledge about what the actual work would be or the expectations of me'.

'I can't lock myself in to times and days regularly as I have children/work or both and I need to be able to attend to them if something comes up.'

'I would need childcare or be able to bring my child to volunteer with me'.

'I don't know if women would be welcome in that organisation'.

How flexible is your organisation? Do volunteers have to commit to a minimum amount of service? Is this working for your organisation and your volunteers?

Having volunteer position descriptions assist in debunking myths and clearly outlining expectations.

- Promote your organisation as an equitable organisation internally and externally.

How is your organisation seen in relation to its inclusion of women? Are the volunteer roles gendered? For example; it is only women who are expected to take the canteen roles? Is it only men who are encouraged to take on the president/chair role?

- Promote other ways of volunteering.

Eg. Think about how technology can be used. A social media/website volunteer can do their work from anywhere in the world at a time that works for their schedule.

Did you know that Council has a staff volunteering policy? How could your organisation link with this? What other large organisations/businesses (eg. CQU) may have similar arrangement?

For all volunteers, their success is dependent on the organisation's culture. A culture driven by shared commitments, a focus on reciprocity and an emphasis on positive, bonding relationships encourage the continued engagement and retention of volunteers.