

YOUNG BORO CHAMPIONS PROJECT 5 CASE STUDY

Following the successful completion of the distribution of Christmas hampers to nominated people in the TS3 area, it was agreed we would join the Youth Focus North East youth club in Thorntree to deliver our next social action project.

There were initially 9 young people showing interest but this expanded to up to 12 at times. Numbers were, understandably reduced during school holidays but overall attendance was good and consistent.

The young people were introduced to the concept of social action and available budget and were keen to be involved in something different to their usual youth club sessions. Those who committed agreed to do the project prior to the youth club session so they could give full concentration to the planning and not miss out on the excellent youth club facilities.

The young people generated lots of ideas ranging from litter picking, garden planting and animal fostering but eventually unanimously voted on a fun day based at Thorntree Community Hub.

The young people were quick to grasp the budget constraints, practical issues and managing expectations and worked extremely well together to prioritise what would make the fun day a success. They used a voting system regarding events at the fun day and were keen to cater for everybody's needs both young and old and include vegan food on the menu.

The young people devised a letter for local businesses to ask for donations and designed a leaflet advertising the event. They had all generated ideas for the title of the event and decided on "The Big Boro Bash". We then delivered them to local shops and all the young people demonstrated confidence when explaining about the event and behaved in a way that was a credit to Youth Focus North East. They proudly wore their "staff badges" with the Young Boro Champions logo to further encourage involvement and responsibility.

A shopping list of required items was then devised and a menu and price list agreed on. The young people expressed preferences for various roles on the day taking into account their skills and interests.

The climax of the project was the actual event. Included were bouncy castles, food, arts and crafts, activities, tombola and raffle plus face painting and balloon artistry. Entrance to the event was free and over 100 people attended. It was a huge success; raising £400 of funds which the young people decided would go back into their youth clubs.

POSITIVES OF THE PROJECT

- Young people experiencing a social action project and the benefits to the wider community.
- Young people learning or increasing their budgeting skills.
- Young people developing negotiating and decision making skills.
- Young people taking responsibility for key roles on the event day.
- Young people seeing their hard work come to fruition on the event day.
- Young people engaging with NWA research who were looking at the impact of youth provision in the area.
- NWA research participating in the event day and filming the activities on offer.
- NWA research gaining an insight into social action and the benefits of Youth Focus North East.

CHALLENGES OF THE PROJECT

- Weather issues restricting delivery of letters / posters prior to the event.
- Managing various strong personalities to ensure all young people had a voice and could participate fairly.
- Keeping young people focused on social action whilst in their usual youth club environment.
- Securing bouncy castles after confirmation issues.