



HOW TO ENGAGE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR SPORTS CLUB

This how-to looks at some of these alternative ways of reaching young people, and – more importantly – how to keep them engaged.

1 Trusted Support

For many young people getting involved in sport and physical activity can be daunting and sports clubs seem like very intimidating places. See if you can arrange for young people to be supported by someone they trust during their initial visits, perhaps arrange activities for everyone to have a go at together. **Buddy up the newcomer with a young person of the same age in the club.**

2 Involve the whole family

This is not always the easiest thing to do, but there are some great success stories that come through family involvement. Think about how you can engage each member of the family, communicate what you have been doing and young people's, involve a parent in one of the sessions, and send home information about the club and what it is trying to achieve. **Offer the parents/family members to get involved in club – administration, teas/coffees, timing races, washing/ordering kit, communication, match reports....etc**

3 Spread the word

Direct advertising can be ineffective when it comes to attracting young people, so individual referrals are a good way to attract new participants. Attend local events and groups to ensure word spreads as widely as possible, and through this networking encourage service providers such as schools, GPs and Police Community Support Officers to signpost young people to your club. Don't forget to use social media and word of mouth. **Bring a friend(s) for taster session during school holidays.**

4 Power of peers

Most young people cite "friends" as the most influential in terms of decision making. And often young people will take part in activities if they have the support of their peers. Look at ways to engage friendship groups to take part in taster activities, for example encourage your existing members to bring along friends or take club information into school. **Bring a friend(s) for taster session during school holidays – fun activity days with food.**

5 Take sport to young people

There are lots of barriers to young people's participation in sport and physical activity, not least finances, location, family support. Try to make the first introductions to your sports club as easy and accessible as possible. Go to where young people are, meet them at a MUGA, at schools, at a youth club – make it easy for them to see what you do and take younger club members with you who can tell give their story. Give tasters or show films of you in action – young people are visual learners!

5 Be flexible

This is one of the biggest challenges for voluntary sports clubs, as coaches often work and are only available in the evening, but young people may want sessions at 4pm. Talk to young people and ask them what would suit them, then as a club think how you can be flexible to meet these needs. Could you set up a session one afternoon targeted specifically at new participants, who once engaged could move onto the main club sessions? Might a Satellite club make it easier for young people to access you sport?

6 Consult with other Sports Organisations.

Maybe a young person is giving up their sport or finding it difficult to progress – but needs a new challenge or a more suitable sport to try.

Further information

Try these things:

- Offer a wide range of activities – something for everyone!
- Involve families – if possible/appropriate.
- Involve young people in planning processes ... and then listen!
- Involve young people in feeding back to their peers.
- Promote through word of mouth & referrals.
- Show off successes – award achievement, and trial projects with other sections of the community.
- Assess needs on an ongoing basis – don't forget that young peoples' needs change over time!
- Work in partnership with other agencies.
- Be aware of the young person's support needs.
- Create space for older teens to move on to, to ensure experience remains relevant.

List of Youth Organisations by Borough

	Youth Organisation/ Charity
Elmbridge	Community Motors Creative Colony Walton Firs Foundation
Epsom & Ewell	Boys' Brigade (Kingston, Merton & Mid Surrey) Epsom and Ewell Phab
Guildford	Matech Technical Services CIC Guildford Sea Cadets Wey Kayak Club Disability Challengers The Matrix Trust GASP Motor Project Guildford Diocese The Halow Project YMCA - Downslink (Guildford)
Mole Valley	Bookham Youth and Community Association Leatherhead Youth Project - B Free Youth Café Freewheelers The Amber Foundation
Reigate and Banstead	Old Pheasantry YMCA East Surrey
Runnymede	Woodcraft Folk East to West Eikon White Lodge Centre
Spelthorne	Dramatize
Surrey Heath	Camberley Youth for Christ
Tandridge	The Orpheus Centre
Waverley	A Place to Be Youth Group The Sayers Croft Environmental Educational Trust 40 Degreez Change of Scene Skillway Workshop Project Step by Step
Woking	Sea Rangers Association (Woking Sea Rangers SRS Wakeful) British Red Cross Linkable Peer Productions KEEPOUT The Crime Diversion Scheme
Surrey-wide	Girls Brigade Surrey Army Cadet Force South Eastern Baptist Association Surrey Young Farmers Surrey Wing ATC Girlguiding Surrey East/ Girlguiding Surrey West Surrey Scouts High Sheriff Youth Awards Surrey Clubs for Young People Surrey Cricket Transform Housing SATRO Surrey County Football Association Action for Carers (Surrey) The Surrey Care Trust Sanctuary Housing Sight for Surrey Learning Space