

Volunteering with Derbyshire Youth Offending Service

Derbyshire Youth Offending Service offers a range of volunteering opportunities to work with young people. The Service is committed to developing the skills of volunteers to deliver the highest quality services. This will be achieved by ensuring that all volunteers are given rigorous basic training, enhanced by additional specialist training where appropriate.

Volunteering as a Referral Order Panel Member

Referral Orders are one way of responding to young people who commit offences and take responsibility for their actions by pleading guilty at court. Young people are directed by the Youth Court to attend a Youth Offender Panel meeting. At this meeting the young person with the support of a parent/carer will be encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and to agree a programme of activities designed to stop them getting into trouble again. They will also be given the opportunity to make amends for their behaviour either directly to the person harmed or to the local community.

A Panel is made up of two volunteers recruited directly from the community alongside one member of the Youth Offending Service. They meet with the young person and their parents/carers to discuss the offence and agree a contract between the young person and the Panel.

Panel members will listen to everyone present in order to agree a contract with the young person. If the victim is unable to attend their views will be represented by a member of the Youth Offending Service. The contract runs for the length of the Referral Order as stipulated by the Court and will be reviewed by the panel every three months.

Volunteering as a Buddy Plus Mentor

Buddy Plus is a mentoring project for young people between the ages of 10 and 18 who are at risk of social or educational exclusion or of committing antisocial or offending behaviour.

‘Mentoring is a one to one, non-judgemental relationship in which an individual voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another. This is typically developed at a time of transition in the mentee’s life and lasts for a significant and sustained period of time.’ (Home Office)

The aims of Buddy Plus are to improve the young person’s self-esteem through a positive relationship with a mentor, and their confidence through achievement. It further aims to provide positive role models for the young person to reduce the potential of offending behaviour.

How do I become a volunteer?

You must be over 18 years of age; have empathy with young people and a wish to be a positive role model for them in them. Be patient, reliable, non-judgemental and have good communication skills. You will be asked to commit initially to a minimum of twenty hours training arranged outside of normal working hours. In addition further training such as safeguarding children and young people will also be provided.

Bail Supervision

Derbyshire's Bail Supervision and Support Scheme offers a bail support service to young people in Derbyshire who are appearing before the Courts and who would otherwise be remanded into custody or local authority accommodation.

The scheme is used when the Court believes that there may be a risk that a young person may;

- fail to appear at Court
- commit an offence on bail
- interfere with witnesses
- obstruct the course of justice.

The Youth Offending Service will assess if Bail Supervision is suitable on an individual basis. They do this by talking to the young person and their family as well as any other professionals. They will then talk to the court and tell them how Bail Supervision can help.

Bail Supervision is designed to help young people to stay out of trouble whilst on bail and comply with the Court process

This is done by:

- Meeting with you at least three times each week. This can be at your home or at the YOS office or elsewhere in the community.
- Supporting young people with any problems with school attendance.
- Supporting young people to find employment.
- Supporting young people with any problems they may have at home or helping them to find somewhere new to live.
- Supporting them to find new things to do with your free time.
- Providing support with mental health and substance misuse issues if required.