



Youth Support Volunteer Information & Application Pack

The Zone

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Who are we?

The Zone (formerly YES) is a free, confidential service offering information and support to young people between the ages of 13-25 primarily.

We provide advice and support around sexual health, counselling, advocacy, accommodation, mental health, and personal development programmes. We see on average 5,000 individual young people a year.

We are a registered charity and one of the largest voluntary agencies in the country to offer information, advice and support to young people. We have been the proud recipient of national awards for good practice and innovation.

What is a Youth Support Volunteer?

A Youth Support Volunteer is a volunteer who has completed our Youth Support Volunteer Training and is expected to volunteer with young people in The Zone on a weekday for at least half a day in the afternoon.

There is not one type of person who is a Youth Support Volunteer. We have people who are Youth Support Volunteers who want to gain experience working with young people; who are returning to work after having children; who have overcome challenges in their lives; who are thinking about changing their jobs; who fall into it, and many more reasons.

The most important thing for a Youth Support Volunteer to know is it can be a very rewarding job but it can also be very hard and emotionally demanding, especially when the help you can offer a young person is limited. It is not a volunteering position to consider for a person who is emotionally vulnerable and who thinks it will make them feel better to help others as sometimes that is not possible, or the young people choose not to accept the help.

Comments from Youth Support Volunteers:

"I began my volunteer training at YES [The Zone] during the first year of my Youth and Community course... I left YES [The Zone] after two years equipped with the appropriate skills knowledge and attitude to tackle almost anything young people could throw at me."

"I found the work so rewarding and interesting, and when difficult situations arose there is a good support network in YES [The Zone]."

"How has YES [The Zone] helped me?"

First it changed my perspective of the world around me. I now look through more enlightened eyes and hear through more discerning ears.

I have gained knowledge, experience and understanding that I did not arrive with. Also my enthusiasm has not dwindled as I might have expected, it has grown - to the extent that I do not want to leave.

My confidence level has grown much more than I first realised, as my working life outside YES (The Zone) has improved immeasurably since starting work here. Now I work with differing groups of people outside with ease, not trepidation."

Volunteer Tasks

- To provide support and information on a drop-in basis to young people in accordance with The Zone policies and procedures.
- To ensure that all records are written up accurately and maintained in accordance with The Zone policies.
- To assist The Zone in providing a welcoming and safe environment for young people, volunteers and staff.

Youth Support Volunteer – Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive to the needs of others • Non-judgemental • Able to use own initiative • Reliable/Punctual • Aware of own strengths and areas of weakness or limitation • Willing to address areas in need of personal development • Wants to work with young people • Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of humour • Patience
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication • Able to keep/maintain accurate written records • Able to problem solve • To ask for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone skills • Communication skills • Experience of communicating with professionals both in writing and verbally
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of current issues affecting young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of issues such as: Welfare Benefits Accommodation Drugs/Alcohol Mental Health Sexual Health Children’s Rights
Experience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous work with young people • Previous advice / support work • Worked in an equal opportunities environment

How to become a Youth Support Volunteer

Complete an application form - and return it to us at The Zone, 14-16 Union Street, Plymouth, PL1 2SR - All candidates must be over 18 and must not have used The Zone services in the past 6 months.

- Attend Selection Day
- Attend informal interview
- Complete enhanced CRB check
- Attend classroom Training – (initially 1 week (Mon - Fri) – **you must be able to attend the full weeks training.**
- Complete buddying/mentoring sessions with existing Youth Support Work Team.
- Demonstrate, through a variety of methods, on going acquisition of knowledge and required level of competence.
- Attend ad hoc training as and when required.

There are only a limited number of spaces on the training. Successful candidates will be offered a training course place; all other candidates are offered feedback on why they were not successful.

References and CRB check

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 therefore all staff and volunteers working at The Zone have to undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records check. Having a criminal record will not necessarily exclude you from becoming a Youth Support Volunteer. If you are unsure or have questions about this please ask us before you hand in your form. All enquiries will be dealt with in strict confidence. If you have attended treatment or a rehabilitation centre for substance misuse, one reference must be from that centre or probation worker. This must confirm you have completed treatment and ceased 'using' substances for at least 24 months prior to the application being made.

Following the classroom training, there will be practical work with young people where you will buddy with an experienced youth support volunteer. You will not be expected to work on your own until you are competent and confident and your CRB check meets our requirements.

Completion of training does not guarantee that we will invite volunteers to work as Youth Support Volunteers.

Volunteering at The Zone

What we offer:

- Regular Supervision
- Out of pocket expenses
- A supportive team of colleagues
- Knowledge, experience, increased self esteem and confidence

What we ask of you:

- A commitment to supporting young people at The Zone.
- A commitment to your own personal development.
- Consistent attendance of the training offered.
- To meet minimum attendance requirements for the project (includes supervision and project meetings).
- After the training is completed, to attend The Zone at least one **afternoon** shift each week

If you are interested in the volunteering opportunities offered by us, or if you would like more information, please contact:

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