

Takeover Day - a local democracy event

This idea looks to reduce duplication and instead uses high profile national events as piggy-backing opportunities to raise the profile of existing youth council activities.

Currently, there are a plethora of events that, on the face of it, appear to be designed to do the same thing - using a high profile event with national branding to be delivered locally. These events all face heavy competition and increase the expectations and pressure on those that support youth councils.

Takeover Day is designed for young people to be provided with opportunities to play a real part in decision making - from being the head teacher in their school, running a youth project or a Children's Services department for the day.

Opportunities can be broken down into 3 levels.

1. **Job shadowing:** participants observe an adult decision maker first hand, as they go about their work.
2. Where the adult decision maker **shares a challenge** that they are facing, outlining the issues involved and asking participants to think about what they would do if they were in their position.
3. Young people '**change one thing in one day**' or put recommendations into action.

When setting up a Takeover Day, you need to consider a number of things:

Step 1 - Identify and invite young people (if the project is wider than just the youth council).

Step 2 - Decide what level you want the young people to 'takeover'.

How fully young people 'takeover' is up to those participating in the day but whatever the size or capabilities of your organisation, you can enable young people to participate in making a contribution to it.

If the day is carefully planned and managed, their ideas, creativity and enthusiasm may bring a fresh perspective to your organisation!

The three recommended levels for the Takeover Day are described in more detail below:

Takeover Day - Level 1

This is a one day shadowing opportunity where young people observe frontline staff and managers first hand, as they go about their work. For it to be a success, it is important for the person who is being shadowed to give a good account of what their role is as well as a

comprehensive overview of their organisation and its goals.

Participants should be given an opportunity to ask questions and as a result of their observations, should have a thorough understanding of what the adult's role involves, along with their specific area of work.

Tip: Taking the time out to explain what a job involves and why it's important to your work will ensure that young people understand the wider context of what they're doing, contributing to a richer experience all round.

Takeover Day - Level 2

This is where council staff (frontline or managers) share a challenge that they're facing, outlining the issues involved and ask participants to think about what they would do if they were doing the job for real.

Encourage them to ask questions, do some research and prepare a recommendation to help you make a decision.

Example: Young people who are looked after receive below the national average for pocket money. Armed with this information, participants could present research stating the local and corresponding national amount and the impact this has on the young people concerned.

Participants could then make proposals based on these facts.

Tip: To ensure that young people make valuable recommendations, they will need time to discuss the issue, ask questions, do some research and think creatively to come up with solutions. It may be helpful to give them some pointers to get them started such as signposting them to consultations previously done with the wider youth population.

Takeover Day - Level 3

For this level, young people 'change one thing in one day' or put recommendations into action, giving the youth council an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of an important campaign- to make and implement a recommendation.

Tip: Ideally, this would be the culmination of a campaign or specific idea that is decided in advance, with key adults briefed on the issue. It is really important that an idea is sustainable and it would be good to provide young people with guidance, to ensure that it has longevity.

Step 3 - Planning and managing the day.

Advance preparation will help ensure that everyone gets the most out of Takeover Day and in particular, child protection guidelines should be in

place to ensure that the day is a positive and safe experience

- Make sure that parents/guardians and/or their teachers have given their permission, provided emergency contact details, and respective transport is organised.
- Tell young people in advance who they should ask for when they arrive and nominate someone from your organisation who can act as their guardian.
- Plan out each hour with the young people so that you have an agreed schedule of what they're doing, where they should be and who they are meeting.
- An introduction to the team, service, or organisation and a clear explanation also sets the tone for a positive experience.

This project is based on the 11 Million Takeover Day format, and uses adapted resources from their Takeover Day guidance.

For more information

about BYC training:

www.byc.org.uk/training

or to download further resources:

www.byc.org.uk/resources

British Youth Council

We empower young people across the UK to have a say and be heard.

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