



Case study

independence

Tower Hamlets | How much independence does the YV have?

What?

The Tower Hamlets Youth Council created and delivered a borough wide 'Hidden hero' Event aimed at celebrating the achievements of individual young people. These are young people who have excelled or overcome personal hardships to achieve their dreams/goals in life, nominated by their peers and youth workers.

The youth council wanted to put on an event but wasn't sure of what it would be about. The group brainstormed, and the initial idea was inspired by the Mayor of Tower Hamlets celebration event for young people who had done well at their exams. The group felt that although this was a very worthwhile event, not enough was being done to celebrate those who may not necessarily have achieved great grades but had overcome personal barriers and hardships to achieve in their chosen area, e.g. those with a physical or mental disability and those who were young carers or had had a troubled background.

How?

The group thought it was great idea and voted to do it. They decided they had to follow a plan of action which meant:

- Putting together a nomination sheet and emailing it out to all local youth centres and schools for distribution to young people and the workers.
- Developing an order of play for the evening which involved catering, performers, music and awards etc.
- Contacting young performers to attend and perform and booking them for the night.
- Identifying some venues and visiting a selection of them, choosing the location and onsite catering facilities.
- Creating individual speeches for the award ceremony and collating all the nomination forms to shortlist the final winners/nominees.
- Sending out invites ensuring each young person was personally called and invited, as well as their chosen guests.
- Designing an award template and ordering these in time for the event.

How did it work?

We weren't expecting quite as many nominations as we received, as they all seemed to arrive in the week leading up to the event, and this created a manic week and a half before the award ceremony. Although there was a deadline, the group felt it would be wrong to exclude anyone whose nomination had arrived late. Earlier planning in the future and stricter deadlines will help avoid this happening again. We would start the planning process earlier and assign tasks to specific individuals or groups and get them to commit. This wasn't able to be done properly as different people were turning up each week so there weren't always the same people working on the same area.

Impact:

A newspaper double page spread in the East End Life newspaper and the AMP website highlighted the impact it had on the nominees and winners. We also gathered this information through word of mouth from the young people involved in the project. An evaluation was done the week after the event and that highlighted points which will be worked on for the next event.

Learning Points:

- Start the planning as early as you can
- Have an agreed action plan with clearly assigned tasks
- Have agreed deadlines and stick to them.