Report Subject: Top Tips for NGB Staff on how to Support Young Players to Become Volunteer and Qualified Coaches in Your Clubs

Title: Introduction to the volunteering pathway for young volunteers

Introduction
Doorstep sport projects have a proven track record for introducing young people who live in disadvantaged areas to volunteering in sport. Many doorstep sport projects develop their own volunteers – from ‘participant’ to ‘volunteer’ to ‘qualified sports coach’ – supporting their own doorstep sport sessions. NGB clubs and coaches can also benefit from working with their young players in the same way.

Top Tip 1 – There are lots of benefits for your clubs if they support young players to become volunteers

- Your clubs will get strong ownership and involvement from young volunteers who have also played for them.
- They can become role models for the other players and give your clubs ‘credibility’ with young people and their local community.
- Young volunteers from the local community can be the best way to advertise the club and increase the number of players.
- They are likely to be loyal and committed to the club.
- Their skills and way of working can be shaped to suit your clubs.
- They will already know the other young people attending the session and will understand the local community.
- They will be an extra set of ‘hands’ for your coaches.
- They could provide your clubs with ‘home grown’ coaches for the future OR/ they could eventually help your clubs in other ways like doing admin work, publicity, keeping the budget.
- For some of the young players, volunteering might be a life changing experience especially if they have had difficulties at home or at school – it might help them to have some really positive experiences and lead them onto a new pathway.
“By having a volunteer as well as a paid coach, the quality of sessions has improved.”

“I was playing sport here. I started coming here as a volunteer when I was 16 and I have been here for two years.”

“Volunteering has given Ashley a focus that he needs to ensure he stays on the right path.”

**Top Tip 2 – There are lots of reasons why young players at your clubs might want to become volunteers**

- Some will want to be like the coaches running the teams – they are their role models!
- Some will see it as just a part of coming to the club – playing and ‘helping out’ go together for them and make them feel as though they ‘belong’.
- Some of the older ones might see it as a way of continuing to get involved in the club as they get older.
- Some of the older ones might want to do it for the good of the younger children in their community – so that the younger ones can benefit from coming to the club just like they themselves have done.
- Some see it as good for their CV and want to go on coach qualification courses, improve their skills and get experience for applying for a job later on.
- Some of them might want to develop a career in sport and become a voluntary coach at the club when they are older.

“All of my qualifications come from volunteering in sport and I’m now doing a job I really enjoy.”

“I like coaching – the older ones listen, they want to learn. I look forward to it.”

**Top Tip 3 – Clubs need to develop a pathway from player to helper, and from helper to qualified coach for their young people**

**KEY PRINCIPLE:** Volunteering should be integrated so that club coaches and young volunteers are all treated in the same way – receiving training, giving feedback and ideas, rewards etc.

Many young volunteers at clubs will follow a typical ‘volunteer’ pathway starting at being a player and developing into a fully qualified voluntary sports coach.

Your club may need to put an informal pathway in place for young volunteers and this may need to include a small ‘support package’ especially if the club is based in a disadvantaged area. However, the most important aspect will be the role of the club coach as a mentor to the young volunteer.

The following table shows a typical volunteer pathway and the role of the coach mentor in supporting that young person.
**Background Facts for Doorstep Sport**

**ROLE OF THE MENTOR COACH IN SUPPORTING THE VOLUNTEERING PATHWAY**

1) **STARTING OUT AS THE PLAYER**
   Coming to the club on a regular basis and enjoying it

   Coach’s mentoring role:
   - Get to know the young person when they join the club and make them feel valued.

2) **BECOMING THE HELPER**
   Starting to help a little bit e.g. setting out equipment

   Coach’s mentoring role:
   - Encourage willing players to help out just a little bit to begin with e.g. putting out/away equipment.

3) **STARTING TO PROGRESS AS A VOLUNTEER**
   Doing a few more things e.g. help with warm-ups, involved in making decisions

   Coach’s mentoring role:
   - Spend time with the young person finding out how they would like to help.
   - Match the skills of the young person with simple tasks but make sure they’re still involved in the playing aspects of the session.
   - Give them guidelines on their new role incl. dress code, use of language, timekeeping etc which supports both their new role as a volunteer and as a role model for other players.
   - Give them small rewards – certificates, T-Shirt, etc.
   - Start to get them involved in planning for the training sessions.

4) **TAKING FIRST STEPS INTO LEADERSHIP TRAINING**
   Doing a JS LA/ CSLA/ young leader’s NGB course...

   Coach’s mentoring role:
   - Sit down with the young person and think about a simple development plan.
   - Recommend a course to help them take their first step into sports leadership/ coaching and give them details about the venue, dates, times etc.
   - Be aware of any difficulties that might stop them from doing the training and help to find solutions with them e.g. transport, cost of the course, confidence.
   - Support them when they put their new leadership skills into practice at the sessions – build confidence, constructive feedback, involvement in planning and decision making.

5) **STARTING TO SUPPORT SESSIONS**
   Using their new leadership skills, taking on a bigger role at the session, joining committees, planning events
Top Tip 4 – Your clubs need to support young people on their pathway to becoming volunteers

It takes time and resources to help young people to become well trained and experienced volunteers. You will need to support your clubs in the following ways:

Help your clubs to get the right policies and procedures in place to support the development and management of young volunteers.

- Make sure that coaches and young volunteers are aware of the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ for them when they help out at sessions and how this will change as they receive more training and qualifications and get older.
- Be clear about when it is necessary for young volunteers to be CRB checked, attend safeguarding training and other training required for working at the project as a volunteer.
- Help clubs to identify experienced coaches with the right skills, attributes, knowledge and values to act as mentors to young volunteers.
- Support them to attend training courses to become coach mentors if appropriate.
- Make sure that they are aware of their role as a mentor in the club so that they know how they need to support their young volunteers – ensure that this includes technical coaching support.

Coach’s mentoring role:

- Let the young person shadow you, watch what you do.
- Give the young person the chance to take on more responsibility at the session.
- Give positive and constructive feedback. Give them the chance to talk things through with you e.g. how to introduce a new skill, why something went wrong and what to do next time, how to be a leader at a session where their mates are players.
- Encourage them to develop wider youth leadership skills at the club through setting up and joining the club’s committees, planning events etc.

6) TAKING FORMAL COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

Starting to do external training such as NGB coaching qualifications

Coach’s mentoring role:

- Signpost them to the right qualification courses and other formal training that they will need to become a coach.
- Support them whilst they are attending the course - some courses can be tough especially if there are written assessments/ tests.
- Help them build on the knowledge and skills gained from their qualifications training.

7) TAKING ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY AND BEING A COMMITTED VOLUNTEER

Leading parts of the training sessions, having a more defined role

Coach’s mentoring role:

- When appropriate, give the young person the chance to become an assistant voluntary coach with your team and to eventually progress to looking after his/her own team.

NOW ON THE WAY TO BEING A VOLUNTARY COACH...
Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

"I watch what he does. He’s an excellent coach, one of the best coaches I know. Better than those at college…. I get advice from him on tweaking skills. He always tells me how to improve, how to get better, if things go wrong, how to do it better."

Help your clubs’ coaches to help their young volunteers to get the right training.

• Make sure that the club’s coaches understand the training pathway. Ensure that they know where to get up to date information on training courses.
• Ensure they are aware of the resource package for supporting young volunteers.
• Try to deliver leadership and generic courses close to the club if possible.
• Have an open door for club coaches in their mentoring role - be a listening ear and give advice etc if they need it.

Help your local clubs to consider putting a resource package together for your young volunteers

• Access to appropriate training etc so that they are seen as a valued volunteer at the club.
• Some financial support towards the cost of training courses, travel expenses etc in return for volunteering at the club afterwards.
• Reward package as a ‘thank you’ for volunteering at the project – including club kit, recognition at club presentation evenings, thank you letters, certificates.

Top Tip 5 – Your clubs need to support their own coaches in their role as a mentor to young volunteers

Club coaches who are acting as mentors to young volunteers will need to understand their role. You could help clubs to incorporate the checklist below into their volunteer job descriptions or volunteer policies and procedures.

Club coaches who are mentoring young volunteers will need to:

• Build a positive relationship with the young volunteer.
• Give guidance and support - helping the young volunteer to progress throughout their journey, helping them to reflect, giving encouragement and confidence for the next step.
Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

• Support them to be a good role model – demonstrating what a good coach should do and how they should conduct themselves
• Help them to build on training and qualification courses – help the young volunteer to put into practice what they have learnt on formal training courses, develop their technical skills and give constructive feedback on their progress.
• Help them develop their personal skills – build confidence, listening and talking, develop good relationships with the participants especially if they are peers.

Top Tip 6 – How you can help your clubs to give young volunteers the training and qualifications that they will need

Young volunteers need to have a solid base of training and nationally recognised qualifications if they want to progress. It will be important to help the club’s coaches understand the NGB coach qualification pathway so that they are able to signpost their young volunteers to the right training courses at the right time.

THE FIRST STEP: The foundation to becoming a sports coach is to develop leadership skills – e.g. JSLA/CSLA/NGB YOUNG LEADERS course e.g. JFO. Help clubs to find out about leadership courses and if possible, arrange for any NGB leadership courses to be held at or near their club. Encourage your clubs to support their young volunteers to do their volunteering hours at their own clubs.

THE NEXT STEPS: The progression from being a leader to becoming a coach should include sport specific and generic training courses e.g. NGB qualification courses and generic courses such as child protection, FUNdamentals, 1st Aid, managing challenging behaviour, conflict resolution etc. Make sure your club coaches know how to find this information on the NGB’s website.

The club’s coaches will then need to support this training – giving the young volunteers the opportunity to use their new skills, giving them feedback, developing their confidence and starting to give them more responsibility and a larger role in the sessions when they are ready for it. Review your NGB’s guidance to clubs on volunteer management and see if this approach needs to be included specifically for working with young volunteers.

Top Tip 7 – How can your clubs keep their young volunteers involved?

Keeping volunteers involved is important. Do you know what makes them tick?

Recent research carried out by StreetGames has shown that it is all about F.A.B.S! Fun, Altruism, Belonging and Self-Development. If you can make sure that your club coaches can give the F.A.B.S. experience to their young volunteers, then they have a really good chance of keeping them involved.
Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

F.A.B.S

**Fun** – enjoyment pure and simple, smiles and laughter, feeling good in ‘doing good’.

**Altruism** – giving / paying back to the community, feeling valued by the community.

**Belonging** – being a member of a group, team or club, increasing friendship networks, having a place in the community, having people around you whom you can trust and who will support you when times turn tough.

**Self-Development** – maturing and developing through life as an individual, increasing your ‘life-skills’ – confidence, resilience, listening, empathy and fellow-feeling, growth in aspirations and ‘self-improvement’, extending and challenging yourself, increasing ‘technical’ skills e.g. sports, leadership, gaining experience and qualifications.

“It’s a good laugh ... I’ve made new friends ... It’s given me confidence and it’s good for your CV and it’s a different experience.”

Top Tip 8 – Resources to help your coaches support young volunteers

StreetGames has produced a guide for sports coaches called ‘TOP TIPS FOR COACHES ON HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN VOLUNTEERS’ which gives lots of practical ideas. This can be downloaded from the StreetGames website. StreetGames has also produced other resources such as the Volunteering resource pack, mentoring training for coaches and generic staff training for projects.

There are also a number of organisations that will be able to help you support your clubs’ coaches whilst they develop their young volunteers into great sports coaches:-

StreetGames – www.streetgames.org.uk
Sports Leaders UK – www.sportleaders.org
Sports Coach UK - www.sportcoachuk.org
Your local County Sports Partnership – www.cspnetwork.org
The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation – www.mandbf.org.uk

StreetGames

StreetGames is the only national charity dedicated to developing sport with disadvantaged communities. It works across the country to try and reverse this long-standing trend and make sport accessible to all regardless of their social circumstances.

A national partner of Sport England, StreetGames is creating networks at national and local levels to strengthen the commitment to doorstep sport, as well as seeking significant funding to make the StreetGames projects sustainable. StreetGames’ ambition is to link new doorstep sport with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport programmes, local authority services, and primary care trust projects.

Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames Legacy Leaders is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.

Streetgames briefing paper - ngb staff vol 2/12/10 12:02 pm Page 7