

# Incentives and Rewards for Young People Policy and Guidelines

## Introduction

Connexions Nottinghamshire believes in recognising the value of young peoples contributions to the design, development, delivery and evaluation of our service. This is reflected in the incentives and rewards we offer young people for their work.

## Who decides what a young person should get for their contribution?

As far as possible staff should consult young people on the types of incentive and reward they would prefer for a particular piece of work. Staff should work within the guidelines outlined within this policy when doing so.

In some areas of work, where a range of young people are involved on a regular basis in a specific process/function ( i.e. Staff Recruitment, Local Management Committees etc) to ensure consistency and fairness, the amount and method of the reward should be agreed within the department/ team responsible and applied across the area of work. This should be reviewed annually and reflect the guidelines in this policy.

## Expenses

Out of pocket expenses should be paid as a minimum. This includes :

- *Travel*
- *Overnight accommodation*
- *Subsistence*
- *Childcare*
- *Loss of earnings*

## Incentives ( something that encourages effort or action)

There are a wide range of incentives that staff can use to encourage young people to become involved in Connexions. These include :

- *Learning new skills and ideas (through activities or training)*
- *Building confidence*
- *Making new friends, and meeting other groups of young people*
- *Having fun !*
- *Attending residentials*
- *Having their voices heard*
- *Having a real impact on services for young people*
- *Having appropriate training/ development opportunities provided and paid for ( i.e. First aid, meeting skills etc)*

- *Personal achievement – a valuable addition to Records of Achievement/ CVs/Progress Files*
- *References*

Staff should talk to young people about what they might gain from becoming involved in Connexions – often the above incentives are enough !!

### **Rewards (something given in return for a service)**

Rewards may include :

- *Vouchers*
- *Cash payments*
- *Certificates*
- *Accreditation*
- *Going out for a meal*
- *Having a meal or buffet as part of a working session/day*
- *Subsidising the groups next trip/activity*
- *Gifts/prizes*

Rewards should always be fair and equitable for all young people involved in a particular piece of work regardless of age. Rewards should reflect effort and contribution and time committed.

A central budget for Involving Young People is held by the Lead manager for this area of work. You may access this by contacting the Lead Manager by e mail or phone. Teams may also have their own budget allocated to this area of work.

Connexions Nottinghamshire also funds the City and County Youth Engagement Teams ( City and County Youth Services) and within this is an allocation of money to provide Incentives and Rewards for young people who they are supporting.

### **Cash Payments**

Cash payments are very popular with most young people and are often the preferred option. Please make sure you alert them to their responsibilities when receiving cash ( see below). If they are receiving benefits or in paid employment ( even part time) it may be easier to give them a voucher to avoid them having to pay tax.

1. Cash payments may be made from petty cash with agreement from your line Manager. Larger amounts should be requested in advance directly from the Finance Manager.
2. All cash payments must be signed for by the young person and records retained by the Team Manager, and copied to the Finance Manager, using the standard cash payment documentation.
3. All cash payments must be approved by the relevant Senior Manager.

4. If they are 16 years or older, young people may be liable for tax or NI on cash payments and may have to declare their earnings to the Inland Revenue. Tax is payable on total weekly earnings over £89 or £385 a month.
5. If young people are on benefits they should consult the Job Centre Plus for advice and guidance.
6. Managers may agree a fixed sum cash payment for a piece of work over an agreed period of time ( i.e. a fixed term project). This should be agreed with the young people at the start of the project. Where possible payments of this sort should be made by company cheque. Please speak to the Finance Manager to arrange this. Where young people do not have current or savings accounts, cash payments can be made with the prior agreement of the Finance Manager.

Recommended amount – If you decide to use cash payments, the company guideline is up to £10 for half a day and £15 for a full day ( It is assumed lunch is also provided on a full day). Please work within these guidelines to ensure we are making equitable payments across the company. Any exceptions must be agreed by your Senior Manager. ( i.e. Relevant Operations Manager or Director).

### **Vouchers**

1. Vouchers may be bought by Team Managers from petty cash or requested from the Finance Manager.
2. All vouchers should be signed for by young people and records retained by the Team Manager and copied to the Finance Manager.
3. Vouchers must be appropriate ( i.e. music, high street vouchers etc)

The Finance Team will audit the use of cash and vouchers annually as part of the company audit procedures.

Recommended amount - If you decide to use vouchers, the company guideline is up to £10 for half a day and £15 for a full day. It is important we retain consistency across the company so please work within this guideline.

### **Certificates**

You may draw up your own certificates to use for specific pieces of work. Examples are available to help you.

The Operations Directors also have professionally produced certificates for all young people who have been involved in Connexions. These are distributed to young people through out the year informally or at presentation events. Names of all young people who have contributed to our work will be requested by email from staff at regular intervals by the lead Manager for Involving Young People. These will be centrally collated and certificates issued via presentations, celebration events or informally.

## **Subsidising trips, meals out etc**

A meal out, or group activity is often a great way to reward a group of young people, as is a meal as part of a working session/day. Any such arrangements should be agreed with your Line Manager.

Costs of meals or activities should not exceed £15 per head and alcohol should not be provided under any circumstances ( regardless of age).

For all activities appropriate company policies must be followed ( i.e. Health and Safety Guidelines ) and appropriate paperwork completed ( i.e. Risk Assessments, Consent Forms etc).

## **Accreditation**

Millennium Volunteers – Voluntary involvement in Connexions can count towards the MV Award Scheme. Recognition takes the form of an Award for 100 hours of voluntary activity and an Award of Excellence for 200 hours of volunteering. Participation must be voluntary and there must be no financial rewards, other than out of pocket expenses. MV contact details for Nottinghamshire are : Beverley (County) 0115848 4363 Danny Marshall (City) 0115 915 3754.

Youth Achievement Awards/ Youth Activities Awards/Duke of Edinburgh Awards – All based on evidence of participation. These are nationally recognised awards which take into account young peoples skills and learning. For further details contact Ray Kinsey from the County Councils Young Peoples Division – 0115 977 4367 ( County) or Justine Darke in the City Youth Service - 0115 915 5841.

## **Recognition ( To notice, show appreciation)**

SAY THANK YOU !!!

It is important that we always thank young people for their work – either verbally or in writing ( i.e. letter, text, e mail)

Recognise the value of young people's involvement and of volunteering. Help them to understand the value of giving something back to their community, developing skills, the sense of achievement and the 'feel good' factor.

## **Feedback**

Young people want to know what difference their contribution has made. Has what they have done led to any action or change?

It is important that when you are doing a piece of work with young people you agree with them at the outset how you will feedback to them. Agree methods, timescales etc.

## **Summary**

This policy has been written to provide clear and consistent guidelines in the use of Incentives and Rewards, and to encourage good practice across the company. Our aim is to recognise, value and reward young people's involvement in our company.

If you have any questions or concerns you should contact Jo Baker, Operations Director (County) .

## **Future Developments**

1 Connexions is committed to working closely with our partners across Nottinghamshire. With the development of Children's Trusts we hope to develop one approach to Incentives and Rewards – including a joint policy which all partners are signed up to.

2 We recognise that young people are asking us to consider how we might offer employment opportunities for them to progress into. We are working with our partners to look at ways forward with this.

Jo Baker May19th 2004.

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