

Warwickshire Youth Justice Service



# **Volunteer with us!**



## **Information Pack**

## Hello! - Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Warwickshire Youth Justice Service.

**Our aim** is to prevent children and young people from offending whilst safeguarding their welfare, protecting the public and helping repair the harm caused to the victims and communities by youth crime.

**We work restoratively** with young people, we consider the views of those harmed to help shape our work and we look for creative ways to rebuild relationships in a meaningful and positive way.



Volunteers help young people to see their community is investing in them. They provide a safe environment to reflect and consider future goals and support young people to make a positive contribution to their community.

Volunteering can have many rewards but just to name two benefits. It can:

- Have a positive impact on wellbeing; physically mentally and emotionally.
- Develop skills and knowledge.

This leaflet provides information and answers to some questions you may have. If we haven't covered something, please get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# What is it like to volunteer with Warwickshire Youth Justice Service?

*"I volunteer to make a difference to someone's life"*

*"It's fascinating and enjoyable knowing you are helping someone"*

*"I love how Referral Orders help get young people back on the right track"*

*"I volunteer because I want to empower young people to make informed choices"*

*"I learn so much from everyone I volunteer with"*

*"I enjoy giving something back, and it also helps to keep my brain working!"*

*"The restorative training is excellent and useful in all aspects of life"*

*"It can be frustrating at times, but when you see a young person turn their life around, it's all worthwhile"*



# What do YOT Volunteers do?

**Panel Members** facilitate court Referral Order contracts whilst engaging the young person's individual needs and the voice of the victim. They meet with the young person and their families. Restoratively and inclusively, they put together a support package, review progress and sign off contracts when referral orders are complete.

**Referral Order Panels** are unique because they involve local people who facilitate and listen to all those present.

## Will I have time?

Initial training consists of 4 days.

Panel Members will be expected to commit to Panels for a minimum of 12 months at a negotiated level. Panel Meetings will take place at different times during the weekday and evenings. Panel Members will be asked to identify their availability. Each Panel meeting will last approximately 2 hours.

Panel Members will also be expected to attend regular supervision and training sessions with the YJS.

## What support is there?

Working with young people and their families during difficult periods in their lives can be challenging. We encourage all our staff and volunteers to reflect on their experiences and talk openly with us about anything that has affected them personally or professionally.

**Volunteer wellbeing is our highest priority**, so we are committed to making sure that we provide ongoing, high quality supervision, support and training to ensure that volunteers are confident and enjoy their role.

Panel members will not be paid, however, travel costs incurred whilst acting as a Panel Member will be reimbursed.

# Could you be a YOT volunteer?

## How old do you have to be?

You must be at least 18 years old.

## What if I have a criminal record?

Having criminal convictions will not automatically stop you from volunteering with us. You will be asked to disclose all convictions when you apply, including any convictions that are considered 'spent'. Please talk to us if you are unsure.

If you are accepted as a volunteer, you will be required to undergo an Enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).



## Will I need to provide references?

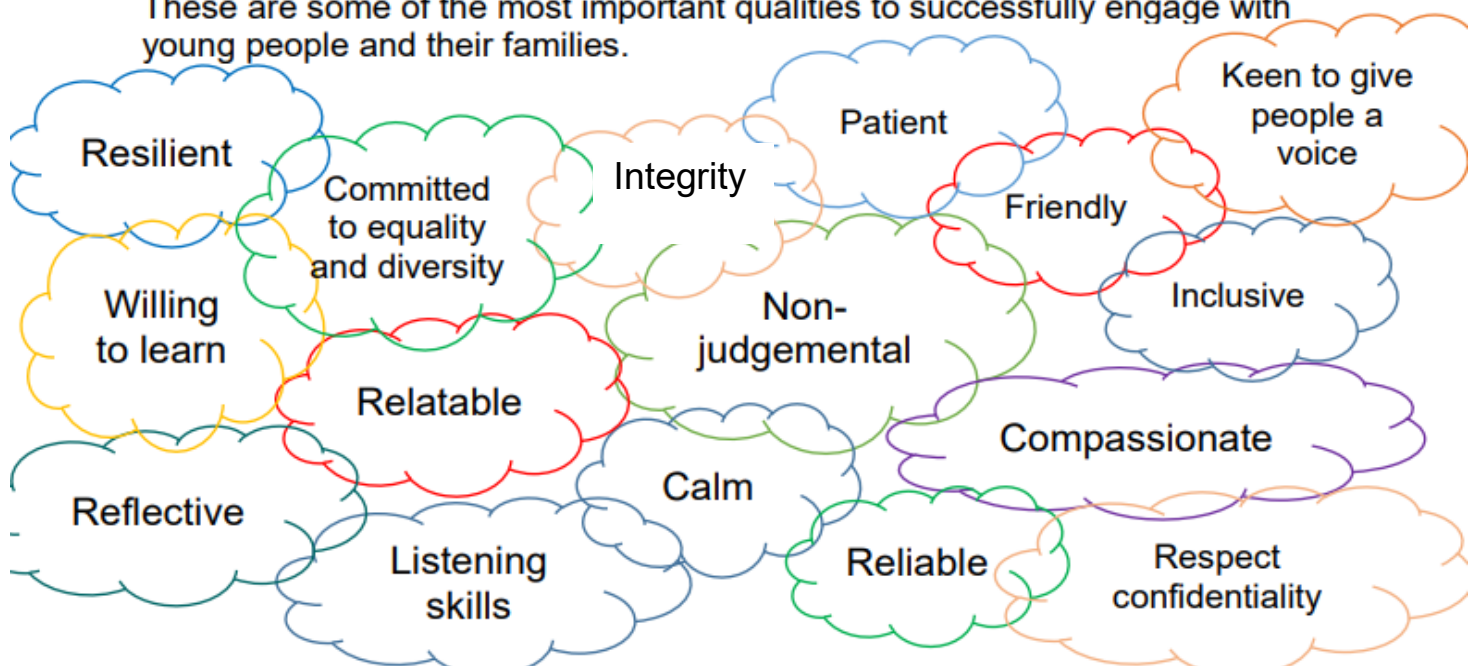
**Yes.** You will need to provide details of two individuals who would be willing to provide a character reference on your behalf. These could be individuals who know you well from work, study, previous volunteering or a neighbour.

## What skills, qualifications and experience do I need to have?

**There are no essential skills, qualifications or experience required to volunteer with us. We use volunteers as they are representatives of the local community.**

We recruit volunteers based on the personal qualities and your potential.

These are some of the most important qualities to successfully engage with young people and their families.





# What is Restorative Justice and how do we work restoratively?

**Restorative Justice in its simplest term is a ‘conversation.’**

**Working restoratively is an empowering process and it is about building, maintaining and repairing relationships.**



We achieve this in Warwickshire Youth Justice Service by being reflective, inclusive and provide everyone with an equal voice. We work together and look for creative ways to move forward in a positive way.

Warwickshire Youth Justice Service (including volunteers) facilitate Restorative Justice with open and honest dialogue. We work with people and communities who have experienced harm; to help shift the balance back from a negative to a positive. At the heart of our work we give victims and communities an opportunity to share what impact the offending has had upon them. This shapes our work with young people who are responsible for causing that harm and together we look for ways to repair and restore the relationship between them either through reparation or restoration.

When we talk about a relationship, for some there will have been a pre-existing relationship which may have been affected by the offence. For others they will not have known each other before, but they are now ‘connected’ by the offence.

Restorative Justice work will look very different in each case. We acknowledge this with our creative ways of approaching restorative options.

# Could I be a Panel Member?

Panel Members are representatives of the community who work with the Youth Justice Service and together we support young people who have been sentenced by the Court to a Referral Order.

You would meet young people and their families at panel meetings. Panel meetings are inclusive of the young person and take a restorative approach.



Before the meeting, Panel Members are provided with a report about the young person, the offence, and the impact on any known victims.

At the meeting, Panel Members help create an environment where the young person shares information, so the panel members can find out what happened, how the young person and their family have been affected by this offence. The panel member with the young person will consider how the harm might be repaired and how the risk of further offending could be reduced.

After hearing from everyone at the meeting, Panel Members agree a Referral Order contract with the young person.

The contract sets out what the young person wants to achieve during their Referral Order so that they can begin to repair harm, address any factors in their lives that may have led to their offending behaviour and identify other support to help the young person move forward in a positive way.

# I'm in! How do I apply?

**Step 1** Please complete and return the WYJS Volunteer Application Form. We accept applications throughout the year.

**Step 2** If your application is successful, you will be invited to interview. The interview process includes a Warner-style interview.

A Warner-style interview explores your personal values, and your motivations for working with young people, rather than just focusing on qualifications and experience.

**Step 3** If you are successful at interview, we will take up references and undertake an Enhanced DBS check.

If these are satisfactory, you will be invited to join the next available initial training programme.

We aim to keep waiting times as short as possible.

**We hope to hear from you soon.**  
**If you need any further information before applying, please do not hesitate to contact me.**

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