Essex and Suffolk Youth Enquiry Service

Community Garden Youth Worker (Voluntary)

About YES

At YES, we believe every young person deserves someone in their corner. Since 1988, we've been supporting young people aged 11 to 25 across Colchester and Tendring with practical help, emotional support and opportunities to build brighter futures.

We provide practical and emotional support through services including housing and homelessness prevention, pregnancy and parenting support, life skills and counselling. From our centres in Colchester and Holland-on-Sea, we work alongside young people to build confidence, develop resilience and take positive steps towards a brighter future.

Role Overview

Based at our Colchester office, this rewarding volunteer role helps young people improve their wellbeing through gardening and nature-based activities. You'll support the YES Community Garden, creating a welcoming space where young people can learn new skills, build confidence, make friends and enjoy being outdoors.

By helping to plan and run gardening activities, you'll encourage teamwork, resilience and a sense of achievement.

This role is ideal for someone who enjoys gardening, outdoor learning, community projects or working with young people, and wants to make a positive difference.

Ideally, volunteers will be able to offer around two hours each week, but we can be flexible and discuss a level of involvement that works for you.

Why Volunteer with YES?

Volunteers are a valued part of the YES team and make a real difference to local young people and families. Whether you're sharing skills, leading an activity or offering encouragement, your time can help young people grow in confidence, learn new skills and feel connected to their community.

We'll provide training, guidance and ongoing support to help you feel confident in your role. You'll have regular contact with a member of the team and be part of a friendly organisation that aims to provide safe, welcoming spaces for everyone.

In return, you'll gain valuable experience, develop new skills, meet new people and help shape our services. Most importantly, you'll play a part in making a lasting difference to the lives of local young people and families.

Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries

At YES, creating safe, supportive environments for young people and families is everyone's responsibility. As a volunteer, you'll help people feel welcome, respected and valued.

We'll give you safeguarding training, guidance and support throughout your volunteering. While volunteers aren't expected to deal with concerns themselves, if you have any concerns about a young person's wellbeing or safety, you must share them with a member of the YES team so the right support can be provided.

To keep everyone safe, volunteers are expected to maintain appropriate boundaries and follow YES policies and procedures at all times.

Please note: This role is subject to an Enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

Key Responsibilities

- Plan and support gardening and outdoor activities that are safe, engaging and accessible to young people with a range of interests and abilities.
- Encourage young people to build confidence, develop practical skills and experience the wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature.
- Create opportunities for positive social interaction, teamwork and peer support within the Community Garden.
- Help create a welcoming, inclusive and non-judgemental environment where young people feel valued and supported.
- Work within organisational policies, maintaining appropriate boundaries and helping to create a safe environment for all participants.

The Type of Person We're Looking For

We're looking for a friendly, patient and encouraging volunteer who enjoys working with young people and is passionate about the benefits of gardening, nature and outdoor learning. You'll be able to build positive relationships, help others feel included and support young people to develop confidence and practical skills at their own pace.

You will ideally have:

- An interest in gardening, horticulture, conservation, environmental projects or outdoor learning.
- Experience of working with or supporting young people, either professionally or in a voluntary capacity.
- An understanding of how outdoor activities can support wellbeing, confidence and personal development.
- The ability to engage, encourage and motivate young people in a positive, inclusive and non-judgemental way.