



Planning an event for parents, carers and friends



Holding scheduled events for the parents, carers and friends of LGBT+ young people can prove to be a very rewarding experience for all involved. Parent, carers and friends are able to ask questions and demystify what LGBT+ youth provisions offer and do, and LGBT+ young people feel better supported and often empowered from the events.

So from our experience here are some things we would like to share should you plan on holding an event for the parents, carers and friends of LGBT+ young people.

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TIME

Take time to plan this; Three months lead in time is ideal (12 weeks); Ensure invites go out 4 weeks before the event to intended participants. Involve the young people throughout. Have an idea as to why you are doing it (aim)- what you need to get from it (outcome).

INFORMATION

Gather questions and concerns from the young people in the group(s) regarding what parents/carers/friends might like answers to, at the event. Do this ideally around 12 weeks prior to the event to enable you to prepare the event.

Work with the young people in your group(s) to answer the questions e.g. at 6 weeks in advance of the event. You can then incorporate these into, for example, a display for the event, young person-led presentations or a film for the event.

PROMOTION

Ensure you have a plan for promoting the event.

For example, use facebook or texting or phone calls to remind the young people about it (as soon as you know the date, and every 10 days after this).

Tweet the event to inform the public (e.g. eight weeks before the event and every three days thereafter).

Send paper invitations home with young people to bring their parents/carers/friends (e.g. four weeks before the event).

TIMETABLE



People feel secure having a written schedule so produce a programme for the events.

Produce a small info pack to give out on the day, comprising of, for example a welcome note, perhaps a badge or name badge, a pen to keep and take notes, youth group info sheet.

Showcase your work in as many formats as you can at the event, such as young people's stories, short films, poems, displays of at work, photographs.

THINGS TO CONSIDER



Make it a mixture of done too and done with, i.e. work with some of the young people from across the group(s) to give an input on: What the organisation is, what they do, what young people get from it, what they give back; as well as opportunity for parents/carers/ friends to chat together (ideally in a facilitated way to ensure it happens), and an opportunity for parents/carers / friends to give presentation back or ask questions from the floor. If you have willing parents, carers and friends of LGBT+ young people then ask them if they would like to help to plan and lead the event with you.

CATERING



Food is about welfare and celebration, so ensure the catering is organised in advance, (ideally four weeks ahead of the event), and make sure it is available for a range of dietary needs. Pick up food such as canopies, pizza bits, small sandwiches to make the event look posher and a bit more memorable. Have drinks and biscuits/fruit on arrival, and drinks available throughout.

EVALUATION



Try to capture a sense of the usefulness of the event from the participants. Make this as interesting as possible, for example write a luggage label of what you are taking away with you; put a marble in the jar that best sums up how you feel about the event (e.g. three jars 1. Informed and assured, 2. Unsure, 3. Not informed and not assured).

LEAVING



Ensure to thank each person as they leave, young people can help with this role but a senior member of staff needs to be visible in this task. Follow up with a thank you email the same day or the following day and inform them that another event will take place. If you have a mailing list or facebook group they can join, then ask permission and if they accept, add them.

ORDER OF THE TASKS



TIME	TASK	NOTES TO KNOW
12 weeks before the event	<p>Establish date of the event</p> <p>Check venue available and cost</p> <p>Book venue</p> <p>Promote date on Facebook and Twitter</p> <p>Ascertain what staff are available to work that day</p>	
12 weeks before the event	<p>Gather questions via staff leads working with the group(s) that parents/carers/friends need answers to</p>	Do this for 4 weeks
8 weeks before the event	<p>Staff leads to work with young people in the group(s) to answer question gathering and produce into a display</p> <p>Design and produce invitations on paper</p> <p>Tweet, Tweet, Tweet</p> <p>Facebook, Facebook, Facebook</p>	<p>You could have two groups e.g. one to make a film and another to create a zine to address the questions</p> <p>Keeping Tweeting every 3 days, Facebooking every 10 days</p>
4 weeks before the event	<p>Source and sort the catering</p> <p>Ensure biscuits/fruit, to start, drinks throughout, a buffet?</p> <p>Establish staff delivery team for the day</p> <p>Send paper based invitations home with young people</p>	<p>Keeping Tweeting every 3 days, Facebooking every 10 days</p>

<p>2 weeks before the event</p>	<p>Start to prep young people to give presentation Formalise the programme Make up packs to give out Produce final display work Finalise evaluation method</p> <p>Prep staff to facilitate parents/carers/ Friends discussions Tell staff roles for the day and time to be there to set up (reception/welcome, drinks, evaluation, AV set-up, dress room etc)</p>	<p>Keeping tweeting every 3 days, Facebooking every 10 days</p> <p>Produce a crib sheet for the facilitators</p>
<p>1 weeks before the event</p>	<p>Check catering Remind staff of their role on the day Check all Audio and Visual equipment (AV) Make/print a register template for the day for adults and young people Establish date of the next event (to share after this event)</p>	
<p>On the day</p>	<p>Dress the space. Sort seating and style e.g. theatre style AV equipment in place Set up welcome areas and assign worker to it, register everyone in Put a donation bucket out? Senior staff to thank everyone who came as they leave Staff and young people tidy the space</p>	
<p>Next day</p>	<p>Send thank you email and advice on follow up event</p>	