

Young Quality Scot Awards

Case Studies

The Young Quality Scot Award (YQSA) is designed to recognise and reward young people who are involved in voluntary work across Scotland to improve the quality of life in their local communities.

The Award programme began in 1995 with previous winners actively involved in projects such as:

- Taking leadership roles in youth clubs
- Working with disadvantaged groups
- Volunteering with Voluntary Sector Organisations
- Producing a video on drug awareness
- Running peer educators and pupil mentors school support groups for pupils with problems



YQSA has been extremely successful over the years and has not only been beneficial to the lives of the young people involved, it has been rewarding for the organisations actively involved in making the programme a success. What's more, the programme is fun!

Each year the YQSA team offer a day of training on 'soft skills' such as communication; team working; presentation skills, plus many more. As well as learning valuable skills, the day is a good opportunity for the group to get to know one another and learn about how these skills fit in an organisation.

Last year, Scottish Water held a training day at their Dunfermline office as well as a trip to the Rosyth Waste Water plant. The day was enjoyed by all and was particularly successful for the group who went on to present at an Awards Ceremony.

This year's programme will begin in autumn and to help make it a success we are looking for organisations to get involved and volunteer support in hosting training days around the various regions of Scotland.

The two case studies below are examples of the lasting impact the Young Quality Scot Programme can have and the difference it has made to young peoples' lives throughout Scotland over the last 13 years.

What does YQSA and a Brick have in common?

When I was younger I joined a group called blueskate, which helped skaters get a purpose built skatepark in Peterhead. After a couple of years volunteering for the group doing bag packing, sponsored cycles etc I was nominated for a Young Quality Scot Award by my youth worker. I didn't think I deserved one, until I thought about all the time and effort I had put in to the group especially since I was a dad and went to college and had a small part time job.

When the Young Quality Scot Awards started I was so nervous I didn't have much confidence meeting people I didn't know or even met before and I didn't know what to expect but when everyone turned up I realised I wasn't the only one who was nervous. We did some Ice breakers so everyone could get to know each other, which was fun! We met the people who would help us in confidence building, teamwork and presentation skills! By the end of the day we were all friends.

We all met up one more time before we set off for the awards ceremony just to get everything sorted for our play; our play was all about the good and bad things about the buddy system in schools.

The award ceremony was held in Ayrshire. I was so nervous I had never been on stage before let alone act! But everything that the trainers taught us about confidence and presentation skills helped us all get through it, our play went very well and everyone loved it!

The whole experience of the awards helped me afterwards, I felt I had more confidence and a couple of weeks after I got a phone call asking if I would like to do some youth work a couple of hours a week, I jumped at the chance. I am now a youth development worker based in Peterhead and I love it, last year I went back to the YQSA with the Aberdeenshire Group and did a speech on the stage about how my life has changed since I received my award and I feel if it wasn't for the Young Quality Scot Awards I wouldn't be in this job or have the confidence I have now!



Ian Robertson, who was the Lead Officer in bringing Glasgow young people to the Young Quality Scot Awards. Here he tells about his meeting with Tanny, a Young Quality Scot and how the programme made a positive impact in his life.

I was out between Christmas and New Year buying myself a new mobile phone, I noticed that while I was talking to the salesman the shop manager, standing in the background, was staring at me. A couple of minutes later he came over and said "I know you - you used to run the Young Quality Scot programme" I acknowledged that it was me but confessed that I didn't recognise him, he reminded me that he had been a YQS some ten years before when the event was in Kilmarnock and that as a result of illness he had missed the event after attending all of the preparation. His name is Tanvir (Tanny).

That year I had used a brick as part of the icebreakers on the groups first meeting, the group took to the game and adopted the brick and named it Chuck the Brick. Chuck attended all of their meetings and came to Kilmarnock with them. After the event they all autographed the brick and gave it to me and it has sat on my desk ever since, as Tanny had missed the event he didn't get the chance to sign it. He asked me if I still had Chuck and could he sign it now. A couple of days ago I went along to the shop and in front of all his staff Tanny solemnly signed the brick and returned it to me.

This was Chuck's second outing from the office. About a year ago I got a call from one of that years group to tell me that one of the girls, LeeAnne, had been killed with her boyfriend in a car crash in Canada, a large number of the YQS group were going to the crematorium and asked if I could join them and, if so, could I bring Chuck. I attended the service and Chuck lay in the boot of my car, before we went in all of the YQSS took turns at finding their signature and then LeeAnne's.

The YQSA seeks to recognise the positive qualities of young people who are helping build a better Scotland. It is perhaps no coincidence that a simple 'building brick' is a symbol of this group who have remained in touch over the years.

For more information on how you can help, please contact Bob Ford on 0131 556 2333.

