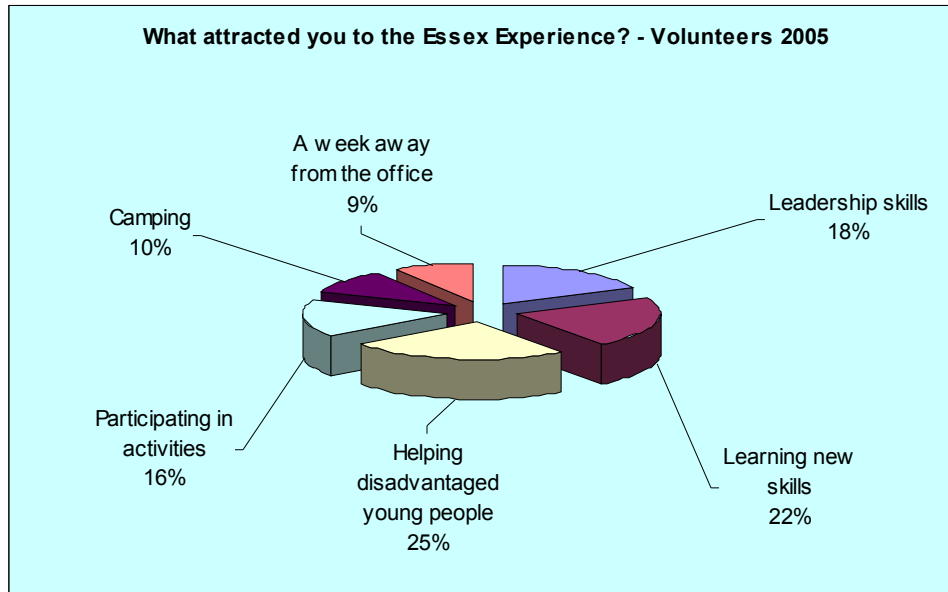


ESSEX EXPERIENCE 2005

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION

Returns 68% (21/31)

1. Which of the following attracted you to volunteer for the Essex Experience?



Other:

- Change my mind about people.
- Part of career development.
- Opportunity to gain experience dealing with challenging behaviour.

2. How good was the content of the pre-course information?

Good 91% Adequate 9%

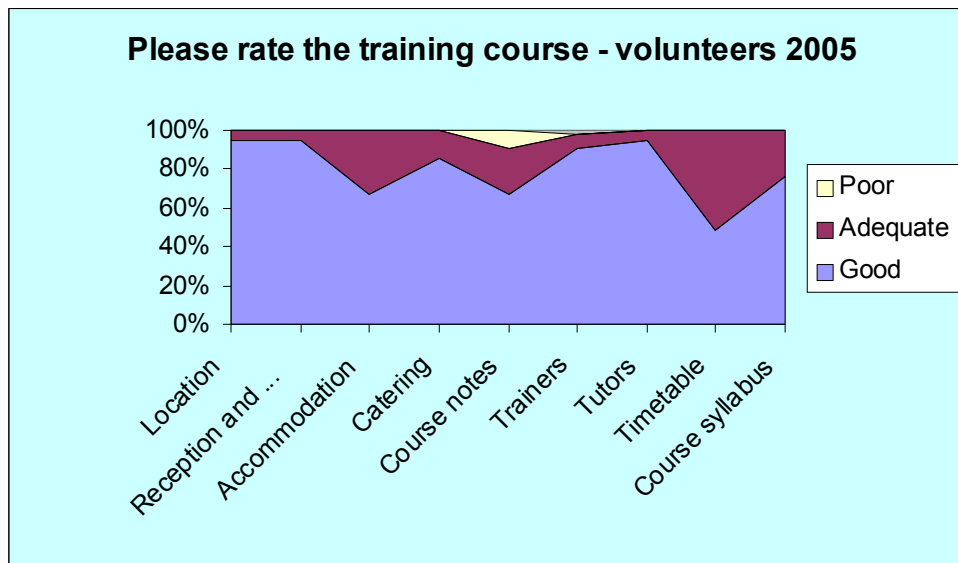
Did you receive all the information you required?

Yes 95%

What suggestions could you give to enhance the pre-course information?

- I feel the pre-course information gave me a detailed account of what would occur each day. I found it informative and I don't think it needs to be enhanced.
- None I can think of.
- None.
- Only to talk to someone who was a volunteer the year before.
- Just more information with regards to extra items to take with you, e.g. plugs in rooms, camera can be taken but not used around young people, etc.

3. Please rate the particulars of the training course?



Improvements

- Folders to be given out at the start of the week then notes can be added as week progresses. Also, notes to be produced for every suitable session ahead of time.
- Could do some training outside, not inside all the time.
- The course notes were very basic and also we were handed our folders very late through the week.
- Stay on camp an extra night.
- Spend more time in the groups for the weekend.
- I remember the last day before the children turned up was a very long day. My only suggestion would be to maybe try and put one of the lessons on the day before. This will give us time to prepare newsletters and set up their camp the way they want it without it being a huge rush.
- Showers facilities could have been better – supply of hot water limited and insufficient showers for the numbers attending.

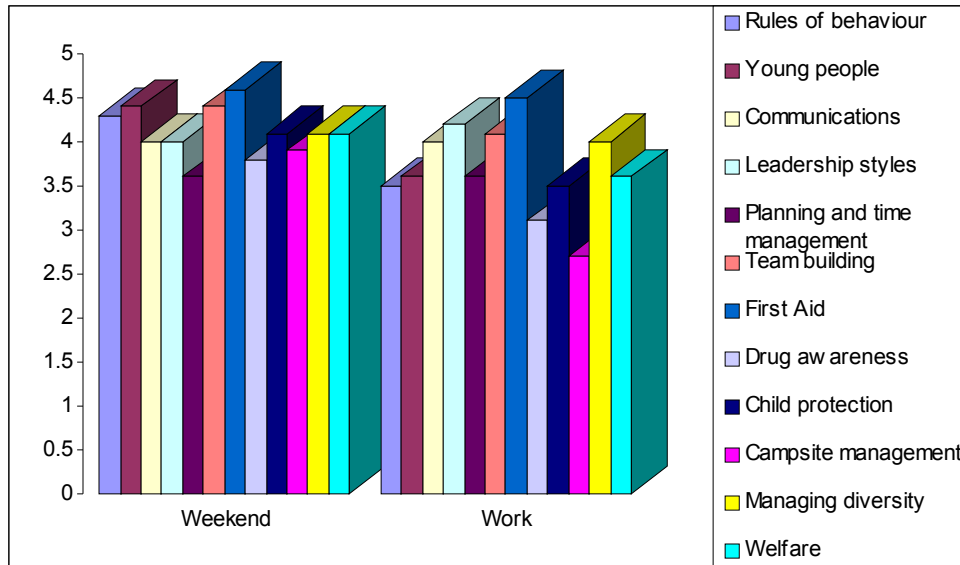
4. How did you rate the “First Help Pocket Book” (small white booklet)?

Good 63% [compared with 84% in 2004]

Can you suggest any improvements that could be made to it?

- Can't remember it.
- Didn't really have any time to read it.
- Did not receive it.
- Would have liked it earlier in the course.

5. Please rate the course sessions according to usefulness for the weekend and at work.

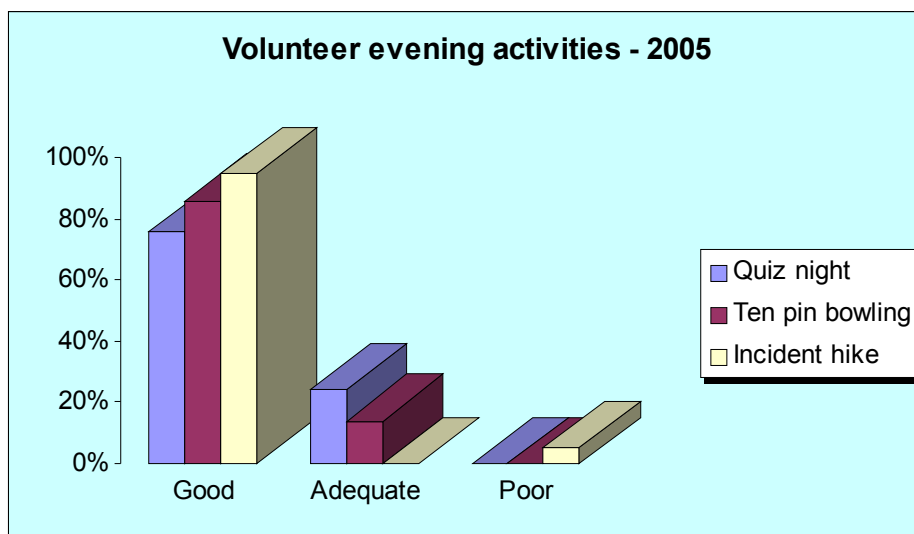


Was there anything else that was needed for the weekend or work?

- Dealing with situations that might arise, e.g. with incidences of bullying; how to deal with the immediate situation; things you would say to a bully/those being bullied. Maybe role-playing some of those situations. Not a lot of stuff on understanding **why** the young people behave as they do. Maybe it's just me, but I was expecting more theory-based sessions to give a foundation for practical activity.
- Being taught on how to deal with verbal & occasional abuse from the young people.
- Didn't have much time at camp before the weekend. Would have been good to have more instruction on building & managing campfires – didn't think outside skills were really covered.
- No I think the training given was great for the task we needed to perform.

Was there anything not needed for the weekend?

- The whole course was good for refresher training.
6. Please rate the course evening activities.



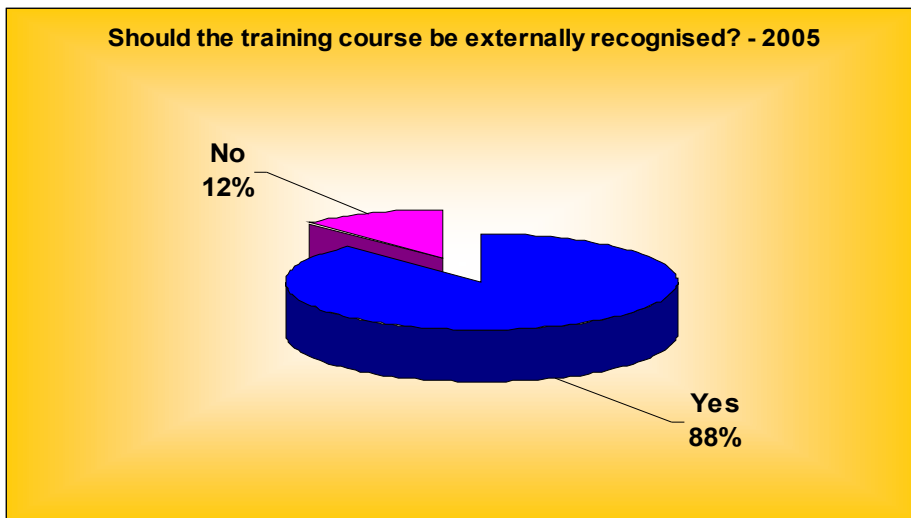
Yes 100%

Can you suggest other evening activities, which would encourage team building?

- Particularly the incident hike and the quiz.
- Maybe some sort of evening challenges for the larger sub-camps.
- Wide games.
- Didn't have much time at camp before the weekend. Would have been good to have more instruction on building & managing campfires – don't think outside skills were really covered.
- Disc before the weekend, dancing competition. Boys versus girls or tutors versus volunteers.
- I feel the bowling, quiz and incident hike were all excellent and really helped with team building among the volunteers. The activities provided were adequate and enjoyable so I do not think this needs to be changed.
- I think more of the same would be good. Bowling was fun but the incident hike was by far the best. Gave us a real opportunity to work and bond as a team. More chance to do some of the actual activities the young people do at the weekend in our teams during the week would have been good.

8. Do you think it is necessary for the training courses to be recognised by an external organisation?

Yes 90%



Why - yes?

- To keep the standards high.
- Young people don't recognise the project therefore there is no prejudgements, e.g. if it were run by Essex Police.
- Because we all worked hard for long hours; it deserves recognition! Also it is a worthwhile cause, which should be externally recognised and appreciated.
- You may have a situation to deal with that you have never dealt with before, so next time you know how to deal with it.
- It is a very challenging and rewarding experience. If it was fully recognised more people would apply to have an experience of a lifetime.
- Because they can see how well we worked and improve the organisation.
- As it is in depth and worthy of being accredited.

- It would add evermore to the week and would enable some of the volunteers to take forward official recognition to help them in their personal development.
- To encourage volunteers and sponsors.
- Not necessary – the experience in itself is worthwhile, but it would be useful to have external recognition, especially for professional development.
- I think depending on relevance to the job your going for it would favour candidates to have the experience and proof that they have undertaken such work.
- Because the training to us could be replicated all over the country if funding was available. It's so important for people to be able to understand young people especially at the moment when they are increasingly stereotyped and judged.

Why –no?

- Not sure which external organisation would be relevant. It's important for the course to be relevant to the needs of the Essex Experience rather than be recognised by an external body.

9. Do you think projects like the Essex Experience have a positive influence on the lives of the young people who attend?

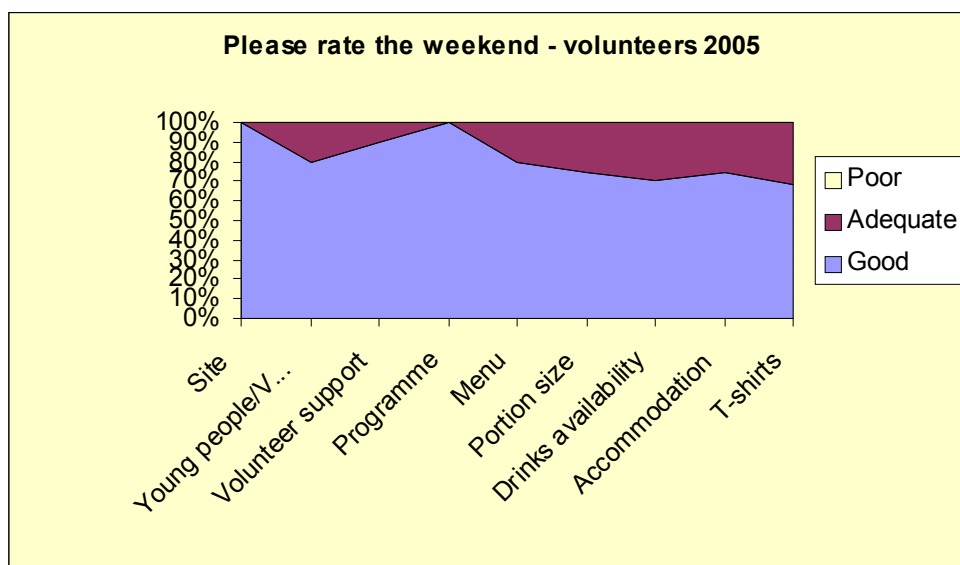
Yes 93%

Why?

- Provides opportunities for young people to experience themselves differently in a supportive environment.
- It takes them out of situations that may be triggering their behaviour and shows them that there are many people out there willing to give them time and help to develop themselves and listen to them. Also shows them they are not the only one.
- Absolutely, you could see changes within the group over the weekend and that was really nice to see. For example Christian (name change) his confidence grew so much over the weekend. He overcame his two biggest fears: heights and scaffolding, because his Dad had fallen off some scaffolding. It took me a while but I helped him get over that, to take part in abseiling and he loved it. I feel that this was his biggest accomplishment.
- Yes, if they're confident people and make new friends easily, or a leader takes time with them.
- I think that although some of the young people moan and say it's boring and they want to go home, they do actually enjoy themselves. The young people in my camp all seemed to have a good time and it also encourages them to make new friends with young people from different backgrounds/cultures.
- Get them involved with other young people and they see the other side. Build their self-esteem and help them build friendships. Should make sure people that come alone want to be there, so they get experience out of it.
- As it provides them with memorable experiences and exposure to adults who are more of a friend to them as opposed to an authority figure like a parent or a teacher. I believe that this provides them with a feeling of empowerment.
- They meet new friends and have time away.
- Because for 2 days they feel like they make the rules and they are treated like adults and they respond to it.
- Because it allows them to do things they may never get a chance to do, and it allows them to meet new friends, etc.
- Yes, because they can be themselves and let loose and have fun!
- They have a chance to do activities they would not usually have a chance to try. They also get to meet other young people in similar situations and learn to get on with each other as team members. There was a visible improvement in many of them as far as confidence and communication is concerned.

- Boosts confidence, creates new friendships, they have fun, realise that the world is not against them!
- Gives them an opportunity to experience new things. Also friendships they could make with other young people or volunteers could have a very positive influence on them in the long term.
- They are able to integrate with other young people and adults who are not figures of authority.
- It teaches young people to communicate with others and gives them the opportunity to do things they have never tried before.
- Young people from a variety of backgrounds were able to come together and make new friends and try new experiences including camping and the range of activities.
- It allows them access to activities and experiences that they might never encounter in their own environment and allows them to see that there are different ways of achieving their goals and different ways of living.
- In just a few days they were there it was amazing to see how some of the attitudes of the young people changed. Although I don't think this change was permanent I think they valued the time they spent there and will reflect on it in the future and possibly act on it.
- Because they are able to spend a weekend away from negative influences, be it with their families or peers, they get to spend the weekend doing activities they may never have done before and they get time to spend with people who are there in the role of older sibling rather than a parent.

10. Please rate the particulars of the Essex Experience weekend.

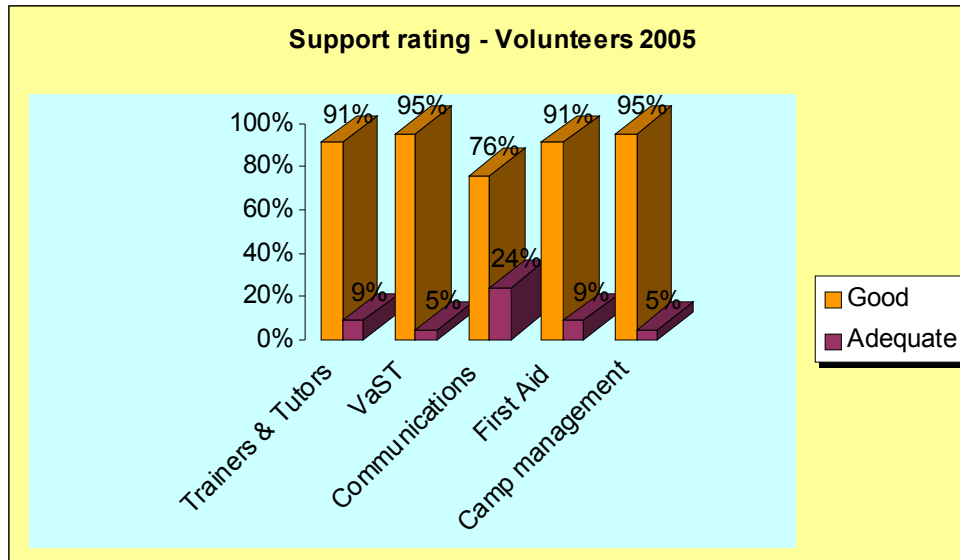


Improvements:

- Did not get a T-shirt and different than the young people so they can spot us around camp and see and go to. No one was wearing T-shirts.
- I think cold drinks are needed for the young people a lot more.

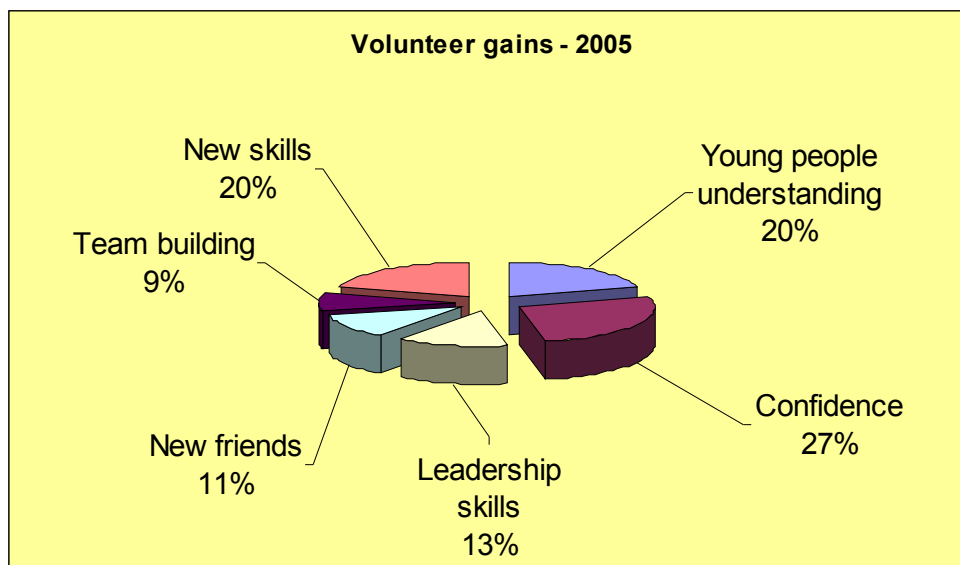
11. Please rate the support you received during the weekend?

Improvements:



None mentioned.

12. What do you think you gained from the Essex Experience?



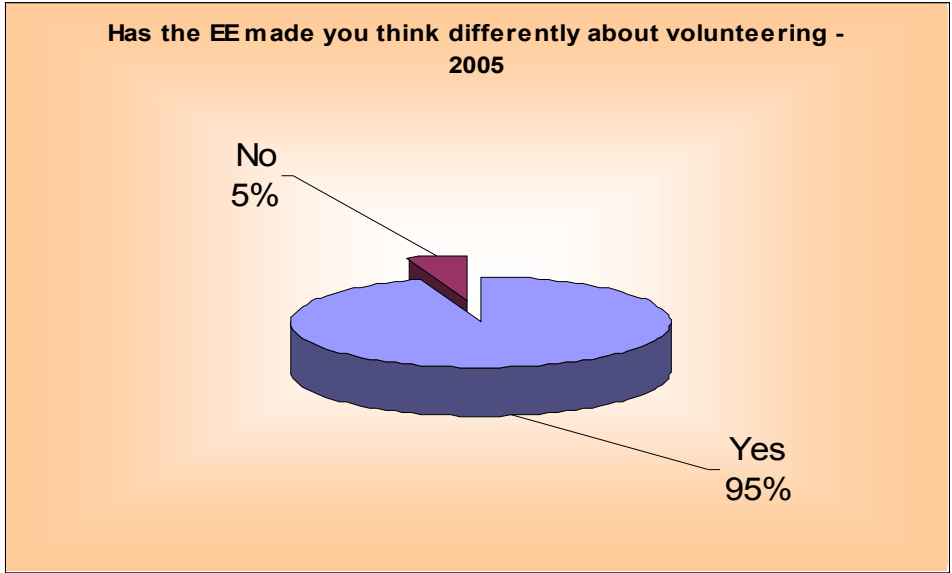
- As a consequence of the training, what are you doing now that you wouldn't have done before?*
- Try to maintain a positive attitude, particularly when times are tough or maybe people around are tired or weary.
 - Taking a bit more time with people and supporting them where I can. I think in general looking at the bigger picture in situations.
 - I have shown an interest in carrying out more volunteer work especially with young people and have found it easier communicating with the young people in town, which I struggled with before.
 - I'm communicating a lot better. It gave me the ability to converse really well with people from all walks of life regardless of race, age, gender, etc.
 - Doing more voluntary work involving youth.
 - Trying not to make judgements on people when first meeting them. I try to get to know a person first and try to be more positive.

- Listen and think before I act.
- I'm applying for a Scout Leader warrant, applying for jobs working with young people.
- Mostly bragging that I can make a kite out of a bin bag! I think I am a bit more confident at being assertive. Thinking about the wider picture of a situation was something I developed too – taking a step back.
- I am now more aware of risks with regard to health and safety and I am confident in myself when it comes to the risk of someone injuring himself or herself and/or having an epileptic fit.
- I am considering more volunteer work with young people.
- I had not realised how privileged I am. I think I have a better understanding of the young people I work with and I am less intolerant of their differences.
- I am taking part in a mentoring scheme for young people whereby I am able to use some of the training I received during the week.
- Talking to a lot more people and offering to help others if I see them struggling with something.
- Considering doing more volunteering.

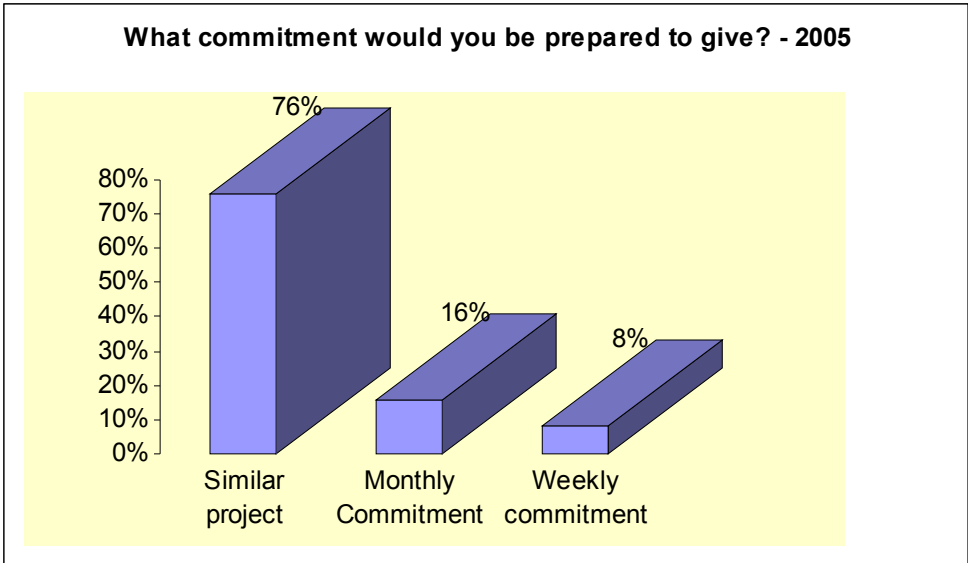
How do you think your employer/future employer has benefited from your involvement?

- I have experience in working with young people, which most 18 year olds don't.
- I am more confident as a member of a team and would be happier to be a leader. I want to work with young people in my career and it has given me an insight of working with young people.
- I am only 20 years old but it has given me a great experience and I feel more wiser and able to lead teams, etc.
- Working and doing more voluntary work.
- They'll have a much more mature and well-rounded person as part of their team who has the confidence to deal with adverse situations.
- As part of my job I have to deal with young people on a daily basis and I now feel more equipped to deal with them and understand their needs a lot better so feel this will benefit my employer.
- First aid training. Increased confidence in working with young people I encounter on the job. Good publicity.
- Well I have been promoted to Team Leader, so I think (or hope) that speaks for itself.
- By putting various leadership styles into practice and seeing the different results.
- More open when teaching young people.
- Short-term; I felt invigorated at work (at least once I'd caught up on my sleep!). I think the time management skills I learned will continue to be a benefit to my employer.
- I thought I was a confident person and assertive before the course but now I am so much more but in a firm but fair way. As I work in a pub I am more confident in approaching young people when I think they are under 18 as I feel more able to communicate with them in a more effective way.
- I think that employers think very highly of volunteer work because it shows your dedication.
- I have gained experience with people, which include how to handle difficult situations and have received training on subjects such as communication, leadership skills and team building.
- They can see that I'm keen to volunteer to help out with anything and am up for a challenging role.
- I plan to go into teaching so the EE will help me understand young people better.

13. Has the project made you think more about volunteering?



What commitment would you be prepared to give?



Have you done any voluntary work since the Essex Experience?

Yes 39%

- Scouts
- Guiding (x2)
- Youth Council
- Respect Project
- Rainer
- Church (x2)

14. Would you recommend the Essex Experience to friends?

Yes 100%

Would you come back as part of the Security Team?

Yes 61%

Would you come back in another role, e.g. as part of the logistics team?

Yes 89%%

15. Have you looked at the Essex Experience photos on the Essex Scouts web-site?

Yes 80%

16. Did you take the opportunity to become a Millennium Volunteer?

Yes 28%

17. Do you have any other comments or suggestions for improving future Essex Experiences, not covered in the questions above?

- The training was good but there were a few things that were repeated and were quite simple; communications spring to mind. An entire week training did feel a bit much at times. Also it would have been great if we'd got more time to try some of the activities before the young people arrived; this could be part of a team building session. Once we were put into our sub-camp groups there wasn't much opportunity for team building within the wider group as we had done in our tutor groups. It wasn't a problem for us really as we gelled well but it could have been had we had different personalities involved. All in all it was a great experience – one I've recommended to lots of people. The only thing that would make me hesitate again for something like this is the length of training involved – but I'd probably still do it!
- My only real suggestion would be to get the two separate tutorial groups into sub-camps groups a little earlier. We only really had one team building task in the larger group and when the young people started to arrive we were still going through the "storming" phase. Other than that minor point the team behind the planning and running deserve a very big pat on the back. Well done and thank you for a great week.
- I think we had a fantastic group of volunteers who really got on very well together and I feel this was reflected in the behaviour of the young people over the weekend. My only suggestion would be for the volunteers to stay on the Sunday night as well. It was really strange feeling when the young people left and then we were packing to go as well. It would be nice to just take a minute to reflect on the whole week. Also I think it would be nice to be kept up to date with how the people from our sub-camp are getting along. I know that this would not be possible for the whole camp, but there were a few people that I got on really well with and I would like to know how they are getting on at school and what has become of them.
- I want to mention a few people who deserve high praise: the tutors were superb, as were the catering staff. The person heading the medical team was also very good in her role.
- I thought the Essex Experience is a brilliant project and well managed. My only suggestion is maybe looking at the length of some of the activities as at times the young people got bored and started to wander off or lose interest.
- I felt the training for the deaf children was inadequate and if they turned up I would have felt unprepared.
- Thanks for a brilliant time & thanks for the experience.
- No, just keep doing what you're doing. It was a brilliant week and weekend and thoroughly enjoyable. I've made so many friends who I'm still in contact with and just have great memories.