

C Virtual volunteering case study: Drama School (Young People's Theatre)



Program overview:

- Recruited high school-aged volunteers for their Summer and Fall Drama School program
- Drama School had a lot of interested youth volunteers – some were past students who have built strong relationships with YPT
- Each drama class had one volunteer that was responsible for supporting the teacher in:
 - Leading activities and drama games
 - Working with a small group of students in breakout sessions

Virtual volunteering challenges:

- **Technical glitches**
 - Early WiFi issues were solved by staff who were available to solve technical problems and answer questions during class
- **Unsure how well existing activities would translate online**
 - YPT practiced the activities with volunteers beforehand on Zoom to ensure they were well-prepared for class
 - They have since received great feedback from both students and parents

Virtual volunteering benefits:

- **Able to reach out to volunteers across the city**
 - YPT has four in-person locations across Toronto for drama classes,
 - In the past, some volunteers and students lived too far to attend specific drama classes
 - Now, volunteers and students can attend any of YPT's classes
- **Able to hone creativity**
 - Virtual classes offer volunteers an added opportunity to be creative with their activities

Lessons learned:

- Especially with youth volunteers and virtual volunteering, ***“let yourself try it, let yourself fail a little and/or succeed a little – it’s ok and just keep learning from it.”***
- ***“It’s not always going to be easy and some programs may need a lot of modification to make them work, and some will be more straightforward.”***
- ***“Be honest with your youth – they can handle way more than we think and can understand mature and complex topics better than we think.”***

For more information about volunteering, contact:
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