

CASE STUDY

IWTH PEN

Penygroes, Wales

Iwth Pen is a youth club that opens its doors on Friday evenings to give young people somewhere to go and something positive to do. Up to 100 young people from the local community can turn up to a session to take part in activities such as football, badminton, hockey and basketball. Volunteer, Ben Gregory, explains the secret to the club's success.

"Our role is just to be there for the young people. We don't do any formal coaching. We offer a limited range of sports, but we give them the choice - we ask them what they want to do and they make the decisions.

We put a lot of emphasis on giving young people the space to talk to us and developing conversations with them. But we'll also point out when necessary, what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable, with a focus on changing their behaviour, not them as a person.

Young people can mistrust authority figures because they feel disengaged and are being pre-judged. We've worked really hard to get some of the young people here through the door. Though they've been coming here for a couple of years now, it's only recently that they've felt confident enough to have a conversation with us. It's a long process. They know if we start talking to them, it's not because we're going to reprimand them, rather we want to listen what they have to say."



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