

## ~ Case Study ~

# Sounds Positive Project

### **When was the post created?**

The post of Sounds Positive Project Officer was created in October 2009.

### **Why was the post created?**

The Sounds Positive Project was created as a partnership between UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) and the Regional Youth Work Unit (RYWU) at Learning South West. Sounds Positive will work to tackle the negative image of young people in the media.

### **How was it created?**

The 60 Members of Youth Parliament in the South West identified the need for this project as they were frustrated by the constant references to young people in the media as 'yobs' and 'hoodies'. At their regional residential weekend in March 2008 they developed a regional manifesto highlighting issues for young people such as affordable transport, the environment etc. They voted that the need to work on a positive image for young people in the media would be their regional priority. The project grew out of their concerns, with a joint bid to Young People's Fund 2 from the Regional Youth Work Unit and UK Youth Parliament. Young people from UK Youth Parliament in the South West have been involved in launching the project and recruiting the Sounds Positive Project Officer, and will be members of the project Steering Group. They will also be involved in developing our training pack, to train local young 'Media Champions' in working with their local press, TV and radio.

### **Who does the post holder report to?**

The Sounds Positive Project Officer reports to the Regional Youth Democracy Worker whose remit is to support and promote the voice of young people in decision making. She is also the regional contract holder for Participation Works in the South West providing advice and training on best practice in participation and also supporting a local network for participation workers. Professional press and publicity support will be provided from UKYP. UKYP have completed the Hear By Right self assessment and young people's voice and influence are embedded throughout the organization.

## **What are the main activities of the job?**

The Sounds Positive Project Officer works to promote a more positive media image of young people in the South West. A media training pack will be created in conjunction with the UKYP aimed at 11-18 year olds. This will enable 200 young people to receive training in public speaking and working with the media in order to promote a voice for young people. I regularly communicate and liaise with journalists and media contacts across the region resulting in 20 media organizations involving young people in their editorial process by the end of the project. I will train and support young people to act as media champions who will then work with the 16 local authorities as a spokespeople on issues that affect young people. I regularly write news articles and support other young people to write articles on positive activities and events as well as sourcing and responding to media opportunities, e.g. radio interviews.



## **What has the post been able to do that maybe wasn't possible before?**

There has always been some local media undertaken by young people but my post supports them and encourages new young people to become involved and promote a powerful regional body of work.

## **What have been the main achievements?**

The Western Daily Press has been very keen to get involved and have agreed to regular communication with an aim to publish a large number of articles written by young people.

The Western Morning News has agreed to publish one 800 word column per month written by a Member of Youth Parliament.

Children and Young People Now Magazine have requested an article every month on the progress of the Sounds Positive Project detailing how to get involved.

The Sounds Positive Project Officer was able to act as support for Members of Youth Parliament attending the House of Commons event in October 2009. This event resulted in a vast number of positive articles on young people.