

quick summary

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Young disabled people have the right to access volunteering opportunities on an equal basis with other people. Volunteering is an important opportunity for young disabled people to give something back, get involved in their communities and to gain skills and experience for a CV.

Disabled people are often being discriminated against as volunteers. Scope's research, 'Time to get Equal – Tackling Disablism in Volunteering' has shown that once a disabled person has been turned down for a voluntary work because of their impairment, they are unlikely to apply again.

Discrimination can stem from:

- Lack of understanding of disability
- Lack of resources

To ensure that young disabled people are able to take part in volunteering, organisations should:

- Think about how to make volunteering attractive to a wide range of people, including young disabled people
- Look at their organisational policies to make sure that they support inclusive volunteering
- Look at the physical accessibility of their premises
- Provide Disability Equality Training for staff
- Include costs of making adaptations in funding bids
- Call on the government to tackle disablism in volunteering and set up an 'Access to Volunteering' fund

10 top tips from young disabled volunteers

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- 1.** Concentrate on **ability** rather than **disability**
- 2.** Listen to the volunteer (they understand their impairment best)
- 3.** Remember what the volunteer can do for you, not what you can do for them
- 4.** Be clear and consistent about the role and the volunteers responsibility to the organisation
- 5.** Be prepared to have some flexibility around role descriptions
- 6.** Think outside the box
- 7.** Check communication requirements
- 8.** Address negative attitudes towards disability (eg. of staff, other volunteers, clients)
- 9.** Prepare to challenge and to be challenged
- 10.** Make sure that young disabled volunteers feel part of the team

CAN DO!