

Money Talks Volunteering Rocks

To work or not to work? Let's face it most young people enter the wacky world of work for the money but for some the experience is payment enough.

Hurray for volunteering!

Whether doing voluntary or paid work there are highs and lows to hard graft. Personally, I am starting my second part-time job, and it may sound corny but I can't wait. Instead of lying around all summer doing nothing I will be out working and yes I will be earning money - yippee!



Also when I get paid I intend saving some and getting it out of the bank as I need it. I love MONEY and earning it is a brilliant way to avoid nagging your parents for it. Even if you aren't earning money just being out of the house and doing some voluntary work should cut down on the nagging too! The good thing about young people getting jobs is that it can help them wise up in so many ways.

They will have to be independent and responsible someday and I think it is better for them to get started early so they are used to it. To everything there is a downside, however. A job can take up most of your time and then you might not have much time to relax and hang out with friends. During exam-time especially the pressure is on for young people in part-time work .

Let's say you have a job that you go to after school and on Saturdays. If you go straight from school to work and work for a couple of hours you are too tired to concentrate on homework or revision. Then the next morning you might do the same thing over again. This can be mentally and physically tiring.

I went around Derry city and asked some young people what they thought. Conor (18) said: "I work in a nightclub. I hate my job because it's late at night and I have to serve rude people drink and I don't get paid a while lot. I am probably treated differently because of my age." Michael (15): "I don't have a job but I am looking for one in the future. I think it's a good idea for young people to get one because it gives them something to do and can help the economy."

Laura (16): " I do have a job and I like it. It's great because I meet new people and get paid. Yes, I think more young people should stop being lazy and get jobs." Catherine(16): " I used to have a job. It was a Christmas job. I think it's good for a young person to have a job because they have their own independence, a little bit of income and it helps their parents and they have a bit of money. But it can be hard too because employers wont take on young people because they are so young and don't have all the qualifications yet."

In Headliners two of our members are volunteers. Yes it's true they work for free in Oxfam. As they clock up their hours Fearghal and Jack will eventually become CVS volunteers. Already they are halfway there to being Millennium Volunteers which requires 200 hours work. Their involvement in Headliners with also secure them these hours. I spoke to Fearghal and Jack:

Fearghal: "I'm 16 and am hoping to get back in sixth year. I have been working in Oxfam for four weeks, every Saturday for fours hours. I work with clothes putting them out in the shop but I really like working the till.

"I don't get paid but I don't mind, because it is a good experience and I meet new people. I feel more responsible, confident and independent. My social skills have improved. I like working in a charity shop because I am working for the greater good."

Jack's enthusiasm was just as infectious. He said: "I'm 16 and have been working in Oxfam for three months. When I am working I mostly like to work at the till. I'm good at maths I like to count things up in my head.

"Since I started working in Oxfam I am more aware of charities and customer care. When you are working in a charity shop you also see a lot of interesting things, the clothes in charity shops are good quality and all types of people shop in them, that includes young people as well!

"When you go for interviews for a paid job it looks good on your CV that you did unpaid work. So I would encourage everyone to do volunteer work in some point in their life."

One thing Fearghal and Jack have certainly earned is the respect of their Manager, Ann. Calling them 'superb' she adds: " I couldn't fault any of the young people that have worked here. The fact that they get out of their beds to come and work shows that they are not lazy and that they care about developing countries and their own community.

"When they are here you can tell that they love it. They gain many skills. They learn how to operate the till, price stock and handle cash donations. I treat them like workers. I tell them this isn't school or your bedroom. If something is lying on the floor they know they are expected to pick it up.

"They enjoy working as part of a team and get a really rounded experience."

So to work or not to work? - to get paid or not to get paid? These are the questions. The decision is yours! Be warned though there is one type of work that no other work should get in the way of and that's HOMEWORK!

About this article

This story was written By Headliners Foyle member Marie-Therese (15)

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