

Volunteer Recruitment & Succession planning Case Studies



The Issue?

Our elfin leader Maria after many years of running a group with the support of a few parent helpers decided she wanted to step back and take on new challenges.

What was done?

The parents were asked if they would like to form a cooperative or if they wanted the group to close. All the parents were in agreement to continue the group as a parent led co-op.

The parents met to discuss how the group would be led, details about the programme and worked out a rota. They discussed topics like how they were going to 'manage behaviour'. Some of these discussions proved challenging. However once the parents started with a rota, it worked reasonable well.

The parents were reliable – they turned up when they said they would. They devised a very innovative programme with a lot of crafts and nature activities. The parents learnt on the job and got better at judging the level of engagement and skills needed for each activity. Most of the children especially the older ones- thrived.

What was the outcome?

Initially quite a few families dropped out before the co-operative approached started which was disappointing. However the group was able to continue and we managed to maintain a presence in the local area. Nervous parents eventually became competent and transitioned in to leaders. The children enjoyed the new activities and many of the adults found it to be an interesting experience.

Recommendations?

The younger children may struggle with the continuous change of leaders and find it hard to create attachments. To ensure continuity the co-op should have a smaller number of adults.

Mentoring from an experienced leader is really important to help parents settle in and feel supported to offer a Woodcraft Folk programme that covers our aims and principles.

Having a clear programme structure so there are not too many isolated sessions.

Parents should be encouraged to attend new leader training when possible.

Resources Used? **New Leader Training weekends.** Available throughout the year at our outdoor centres. All training sessions are advertised at www.woodcraft.org.uk/calendar. Information on parent led meetings can be found on our website www.woodcraft.org.uk/resources/open-meeting-parents-plan.