

## Recruiting/Hiring Guidelines

Recruiting youth to participate in a group to create positive social change can be both motivating for prospective youth and challenging for Adult Allies. On one hand, inspired youth will be very excited by the opportunity to create a positive change. On the other hand, finding youth who are motivated and creative enough to make the project worthwhile can be challenging. It's important to justify the purpose and goals of the internship in the beginning and paint a picture for prospective applicants. For many youth this may be the first time they are working with a group outside of the classroom or sport team, and Adult Allies should prepare that they may be hesitant to join if they are not sure what to expect. Although the direction of any youth empowerment program will heavily depend on the involvement of youth, it will be the responsibility of the Adult Ally to provide examples of attainable goals, such as starting a garden in their community or talking to the their school districts administration to change their cafeteria menu. Additionally, it is the role of the Adult Ally to make the group look and feel professional so that interested youth will feel confident that they will be supported enough to accomplish these goals. This can be challenging for an Adult Ally because of the time and money that may be required to have professional looking forms, reserving time to conducting interviews, and organizing an incentive for youth who participate in the group.

At Project EAT, we use two different methods to recruit youth to our programs. The first method is a monetary incentive. We offer an honorarium with all our internships. The second is through word of mouth. Alumni from our internships outreach to other youth they feel might be interested or benefit from the program. All interested youth must go through an application process, which includes a teacher recommendation and going through an interview, in order to participate in any of the internships or Get Healthy, Stay Fresh Classes. This helps us insure that the group is diverse while also making sure the youth joining are there to learn and educate others, and not just receive a stipend. This process can be time consuming and exhausting, but if done intentionally, will greatly increase the productivity of your group. To help you navigate this process, here are some guidelines to use while forming your own youth empowerment program:

- Edit the application from previous year to reflect the correct dates of the current program, make many copies (at least 80), and place them in the main office (if you are on a school campus). Include a checklist on the application to assist students in turning in a complete and tidy application.
- Print out the announcement and place it in the announcement folder with the days it should be announced.
- Email an electronic version of the application with description of the internship out to teachers so that they can share it with any interested students. Additionally, ask teachers if they would like to Fresh Crew alumni to come into their classrooms to outreach for the internship - this can be a quick 5 minute announcement at the beginning or end of class.
- Set up interview schedule - lunchtime and after school work well. The interview will take about 7 minutes per student. Encourage your leadership interns to take part in the

interview process. They could give you feedback about what they expect from a Fresh Crew intern.

- Select the students you will interview - you can interview some or all, depending on the number of applicants - interviewing at most, twice the number of applicants as needed. More than that is overwhelming. It is always an option to conduct group interviews, or to interview students by phone. With limited time, group interviews, which include an activity, can be a great time-saver and show you how students interact in a group setting.
- Invite students to their interview by sending a note to them during class. Be sure to include a way for them to reschedule if that time does not work. Be sure to write down the interview date and time on the top of each application- this will help you remember who is coming and when. Print out interview questions (choose a mix of questions to include general, knowledge specific, scenario, and goals) and have them ready. Staple the interview questions to the corresponding students' application.
- Hire 12-16 students, depending on your feeling of what is manageable. Choose a diverse group of students with a few clear leaders.
- Send hire/not-hire letters home. This follow-up is important so that students feel their time was respected and have a formal communication regarding their acceptance into the program.