

Starting your Mayor's Youth Advisory Council

By Mayor Nancolas

It is *absolutely* imperative to develop relationships with the youth if you are going to instill trust in them. There is nothing more important than having the youth know who you are, what you believe in and what you stand for if you are going to encourage their participation in a youth advisory council. There are numerous ways to accomplish this, however, one of the most effective ways is simply spending time with them, at their activities, on their terms. Provided for you below is a list of ideas that have been very successful in developing relationships with the youth in the City of Caldwell.

- Send letters to all the schools within your city limits, making yourself available and requesting that they include you and notify you of their events.
- Attend sporting activities, recitals, plays, competitions or wherever members of your youth advisory council are involved.
- Teach the government classes at your junior and senior high schools.
- Ask to be invited to speak at assemblies
- Attend pep rallies prior to sporting events.
- Conduct and participate in spelling bees and geography bees.
- Volunteer to be a guest coach at any sporting activities..
- Volunteer to be a guest speaker at graduations, career days, or special events at the elementary, junior high or high schools.
- Show up at the schools randomly during lunchtimes and visit with students.
- Sponsor fundraising events such as Mayor's Old Guys basketball team vs. varsity teams.
- Attend youth summer activities such as baseball parades
- Volunteer to work with local sponsors of youth activities to throw out the first pitch, shoot the first basket etc.
- Volunteer reading to students on Dr. Seuss' birthday and during national reading week.
- Send cards to students who are recognized in the newspaper, congratulating them on their accomplishments and community service.

These are some samples of ideas that have worked well. I am sure that you will have many opportunities to develop relationships with the youth in your community. I can not over emphasize the importance of getting to know your youth on a first name basis and being involved with them whenever and wherever possible.

Sample Letter to Schools

August 27, 2001
Jonathan Cline, Principle
Wilson Elementary School
400 Linden
Caldwell, Idaho 83605

Dear Mr. Cline:

I firmly believe that a community is measured by how well it takes care of its younger citizens. I so much appreciate the wonderful work that you do on behalf of the youth of Caldwell and the surrounding community. These young individuals are truly our greatest assets and resources and the strength of our future.

I would like to make myself available to you and your students in any way that you feel that I could be of benefit. I would be willing to help with programs, or anything that you feel would be appropriate. I truly love every moment I have spent at our schools and would be honored to help in any way at all.

Thank you again for all that you do and I look forward to coming to your school and working with you and your teachers to provide a quality experience for the youth of Caldwell.

Sincerely,

Garret L. Nancolas, Mayor
City of Caldwell