

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

Submission No:	352
Submitted by:	Goodna & Districts Gymnastics Club Inc
Publication:	Making the submission and your name public
Attachments:	See attachment
Submitter Comments:	



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Submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry into Volunteering

My name is Janice Elliot, I have been volunteering for the above club since 1984. I attended a meeting to support my daughter, first mistake, and it grew exponentially to coaching, officiating and over 40 years of involvement with the club.

The time has been rewarding, and I have learnt a lot especially about government agencies, community groups, grants, and especially about children and families. My husband and I have reared 9 children, but in the community, there is no template for one type of family.

I have observed that the things that draw persons to volunteer are:

- A desire to help especially their child
- Passion for the project
- Time to spend
- Community involvement

From my experience working at the club, I have found that the following has cut volunteers:

- The need for both parents to work- home, rent, cost of living
- Grandparents are now busy minding children
- Covid when parents could not come in and spectate
- People are now too busy and time poor

I support the enquiry as conversation and submissions from all walks of life may help to Make volunteering more valued. All community agencies that I speak to have lost volunteers in the last 5 years.

Maybe the government could depict volunteering as a rewarding occupation:

- On any forms that I fill in, there is a question that asks for occupation. There is no tick box for "volunteer". However, there is one for "retired". So many skills wasted.
- Maybe, there could be a small increase in pension for volunteers.
- State government could give a small discount on an account- electricity, or Council - Rates?
- Maybe, any ads should be in other languages as well. Our club has many families that do not speak English as a main language.

Whatever is decided, the result should be good for the community. Let us make our volunteers feel more valued. Volunteering is such a rewarding job. A volunteer is a rare and precious gem.