

Generate 2008

Youth InterACT Conference



**4 April 2008
Ainslie Arts Centre**

Generate 2008 Youth InterACT Conference

Youth InterACT is administered by the
Department of Disability, Housing and Community Support.
The Youth InterACT initiative is made up of the following components:

Youth Advisory Council

An Annual Youth Conference

Youth InterACT website

Grants and Scholarships

Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards

Topical Youth Forums and

A Youth Consultation Register

For further information on Youth InterACT or the Conference, please contact:

Office for Children, Youth and Family Support

ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Phone: 6205 0632

Email: youthinteract@act.gov.au

www.youth.act.gov.au

Contents

Background	4
Summary of Forums	5
Youth Debt Forum	5
Drug & Alcohol Awareness Forum	8
Elimination of Discrimination Forum	10
Health & Wellbeing Forum	12
Housing Affordability Forum	16
Recreation Workshops	18
Resilience Workshops	18
Lunchtime Activities	20

Generate 2008 Youth InterACT Conference

Background

The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services along with the Youth Advisory Council put together the “Generate 2008” Conference for young people aged between 12 – 25 years. This was the 6th Annual Youth InterACT Conference.

The conference is the largest ACT Government Youth Initiative and each year kicks off National Youth Week in the ACT. This year’s theme “Generate 2008” was a concept thought of by those involved with a view to generating more youth ideas, more youth participation and involvement and more youth activity in the ACT. This year the conference was attended by 240 young people, which was a tremendous response and again exceeded last year’s attendance, showing the recognition and response by young people to this annual event.

This year’s event was held at the Heritage Listed Ainslie Arts Centre, formerly the Ainslie Public School, which was a wonderful venue and suited the needs of the conference.

The conference has a number of aims:

- Have the young people involved in educational forums to provide feedback and outcomes to the ACT Government;
- Activity based workshops to allow the young people to learn new skills;
- Educational workshops on youth issues such as drugs and alcohol, depression and drama; and
- Most importantly to network with other young people and have fun.

The day began at 8.45 am on Friday 4 April 2008 with registration and breakfast for all the young people. The Council Co-chairs Reece Colman and Kristy Pope were Masters of Ceremonies for the launch of National Youth Week which coincided with the opening of the Conference. Aunty Agnes Shae provided the Welcome to Country on behalf of the Ngunnawal elders and the Minister for Children and Young People, Ms Katy Gallagher MLA, officially launched the Conference and National Youth Week.

After the official launch, two Council members Kelly Lokan and Matilda Dickman asked the young people to write on toilet paper provided - “what youth participation is not”. This caused a stir in the crowd and commenced what was a great youth buzz in the room. The young people were then asked to throw the toilet paper away. Ms Dickman and Ms Lokan asked the young people to pick up a balloon and texta, which were under their seats, blow up the balloon and write on it - “what youth participation is”. We had several young people run to the stage with their balloons and share their comments on what youth participation is “having your say”, “getting involved”, “listening to others” and “being apart of your community”. There were a plethora of ideas on the balloons and they filled the room, the significance of the toilet paper and the balloons, was the non participation of young people can be thrown away, that youth participation can be interactive and fun, just like the balloons and is worth having. It was a great start to the day.

The Youth Advisory Council and the Office used the outcomes from last years Youth InterACT Conference 'Take Off' to generate this year's forums as well as areas we have identified as important to young people. The five educational forums in this year's conference were:

1. Youth Debt
2. Drug and Alcohol Awareness
3. Elimination of Discrimination
4. Health and Wellbeing
5. Housing Affordability

Each of these forums was co facilitated by an expert in that field and with the assistance of up to three Youth Advisory Council members. All Council members met with their assigned Co facilitator at least once and in some forums up to four times to discuss the direction and to ensure outcomes were achieved for the forums. This Report is provided to the Minister for Children and Young People, Ms Katy Gallagher, MLA.

All forums were well attended with the Elimination of Discrimination and Drugs and Alcohol awareness forums being the most successful and popular at the conference.

Summary of Forums

Youth Debt Forum

This forum was chaired by Mr David Tenant, Solicitor with Credit and Debt Counselling Service who assists people in debt, due to mortgages, phone accounts, car loans, insurance issues and many other matters. Mr Tenant advised he had seen the number of clients to his service triple in recent times due to the increase in interest rates and the availability of phone contracts and credit to young people.

Mr Tenant was assisted in the forum by the Council co-chair Ms Kristy Pope, departmental staff member Ms Rebecca Demetrius and Mr Michael Galluzzo, National Indigenous Representative for National Youth Week.

The Council wished to include this forum in the conference as it appears more and more young people are getting themselves into debt before reaching the legal age of 18. We believe we need to establish why this is happening and whether we can reach any outcomes as to what can be done to alleviate this issue. There were 44 young people who attended this forum.

During the course of the forum three areas were identified and they were educational debt, mobile phone debt and housing affordability.

Housing Affordability

In regard to housing affordability there needs to be extra support for young renters, such as more government information which they proposed be web-based.

Other suggestions in regards to housing affordability were:

1. Additional support, mentoring and advocacy for young people entering the rental market; and
2. More information and education at school level on budgeting and basic financial skills. The participants thought there should be a better connection with subjects like maths to real life situations.

Mobile Phone Debt

There seems to be a serious problem with access to phones and incurring debt within the teenage population. The participants of this group suggested the following to curb mobile phone debt:

1. Make the use of pre-paid phones a better option for young people;
2. More information in the mobile phone market for lower plans and pre-paid plans;
3. Phone companies should be made to have student plans (like the banks do) to enable them to still have access to a phone and not have to incur as much debt; and
4. Phone companies should be compelled to advise customers when they are near their cap plan limit, so young people do not overspend.

Educational Debt

This topic seemed to encourage the most debate and interest and many of the 44 participants were looking at moving on to University or TAFE for further education after their high school years. Many of the young participants were concerned about how their educational debt would impact on them later in life. Some of the suggestions to curb educational debt included:

1. Subsidised university fees for some courses;
2. Increasing youth allowance so young people do not get credit card or student loans to live at university;
3. More financial help from the Government with housing or moving to a new area for university;
4. The ability to start paying HECS back later in life when you are more financially secure;
5. More education and advice in high school about the costs of university (accommodation, text books etc);
6. Flat fee for all university courses; and
7. No interest to accrue on HECS debt.

Outcomes:

This group was very passionate about a number of issues raised at this forum and especially in the area of educational debt. All of the participants stated that they intended to study further but were concerned about the costs of university and TAFE.

The greatest outcomes were:

- **Government** - Increase Youth Allowance so University and TAFE students do not get themselves into debt just to live.
- No interest to be charged on HECS.

Generate 2008 Youth InterACT Conference

- Flat course fees for all university and TAFE courses or a subsidised fee for certain courses where there is a skills shortage.
- Better education in high school about the costs of University and TAFE.

Drug & Alcohol Awareness Forum

This forum was chaired by Mr Paul Dillon, who is the National Communications Manager for the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC) and a Professor at the University of New South Wales. Mr Dillon has appeared on such programs as Sunrise, Today and JTV (an initiative of Triple J Radio) to highlight drug and alcohol issues in our community.

Mr Dillon was assisted in this forum by council members Sharon Tran, Josie Mitchell and Dale Lovatt. A total of 64 young people attended this forum, making it by far the most successful forum.

One of the outcomes from the previous conference was that there was little practical education around the issue of alcohol and drugs in schools. The main goals of this forum was to look at the current drug and alcohol problems in young people, the effectiveness of current techniques used to increase awareness of these problems and any additional strategies, targeting young people, which could be implemented to deal with these problems.

To kick off this forum, the young people were asked to rank five commonly used drugs. The list provided was:

- Alcohol;
- Cannabis;
- Nicotine;
- Heroin; and
- Ecstasy.

The participants believed these to be the most dangerous, commonly used, most likely to cause death, and with the highest media attention. A discussion was then held with all groups about the differences in rankings and reasons why young people ranked a certain drug above another.

The young people were broken into groups to discuss what they thought to be the biggest drug problem that faces young people. All groups were then brought together and it was found that the three drugs that the young people believed to be causing the most problems are alcohol, nicotine and ecstasy. In small groups, the young people were then asked to pick one of these three drugs and create a 'mind map' about any problems it may lead to, as demonstrated by Mr Dillon.

Problems found to be caused by drugs include short-term health problems, long-term health problems, death, financial difficulties, addiction and the loss of friends, illusion, and addiction.

Once the mind maps were completed, Mr Dillon brought all the groups back together to talk to everyone about different strategies the Federal Government is currently using to deal with drug use in young people. These strategies include warnings on cigarettes packages, raising the drinking age, and shock campaigns. Josie, Dale and Sharon then proceeded to lead a discussion with the

young people about which strategies they believe to be working, and any additional strategies they think may help.

Outcomes:

A number of strategies were suggested by the participants to decrease drug and alcohol problems among young people. The best strategies suggested were:

Less media promotion – more restrictions, such as advertising times and how long advertisements can be displayed, consider who the target audience is and decrease the frequency in all drug and alcohol advertising. To put less of a positive image (for example, drinking or smoking being fashionable or “cool”) of drugs and alcohol in movies, but perhaps more movies discouraging the use of drugs by showing the negative effects would also be helpful in raising awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Increased/earlier education – increased education in both parents and children about the negative effects of the use of drugs can be effective in decreasing problems that occur. Suggested methods of education are clinics for parents, information packages and more drug and alcohol education implemented at school. Earlier education on drugs and alcohol will also benefit children by developing a negative image from a younger age.

Address the source – where do the drugs and alcohol come from?

Random Police raids – random Police raids in areas prone to and often exhibiting drug and alcohol use can assist in the decrease of problems caused by illegal drug use and drug dealing, particularly during holiday seasons.

Random drug tests - more of them.

Increase of punishment – an increase of punishment for the use and dealing of illegal drugs and for underage drinking will ‘scare’ young people away from the temptation of drugs and alcohol thus, decrease drug and alcohol problems in young people.

Increase in retail price – an increase in the cost of alcohol.

Monitoring of legal drugs – monitoring the consumption of legal drugs, such as those used in medications, which will also decrease illegal drug use by limiting the amount of drugs purchased. A good example of this is the recent monitoring introduced for the drug *pseudoephedrine*, used as a decongestant for the relief of symptoms caused by cold/flu and allergies. *Pseudoephedrine* can also be used to make party drugs such as ‘speed’, and the new system monitoring the *pseudoephedrine* sold in pharmacies has decreased the production of these illegal drugs.

Elimination of Discrimination Forum

Luke Myers from Community Connections was assisted in this forum by council members Matilda Dickman and Rosie Southwood. Council member Ben Harris had been involved in the planning of this forum but was unable to attend on the day due to illness. There were 44 young people involved in this forum, making it one of the more popular forums.

Matilda and Rosie were led by Luke to facilitate the discussions, which focussed on the meanings of the words elimination and discrimination, with small focus groups on sexism; racism and cultural ignorance; and a mixed bag of homophobia and bullying. The two issues that evoked the most response from young people were sexism and racism.

The large group was asked to brainstorm the meanings of elimination and discrimination. The group voiced questions and ideas such as:

- What did they do?
- Why am I so special?
- Sense of power
- Singling out, separation
- Pigeon holing
- Isolation
- Treating people differently
- Bullying
- Prejudice
- Unwanted
- Rejected
- Confused
- Powerless

The group knew elimination to mean:

- Getting rid of something or someone
- Removing or extinguishing
- Obliterating
- Eliminating in terms of mathematics

Racism and Cultural Ignorance Group Work

The group came to some common understanding of the meanings of racism:

- Name calling
- Stereotyping
- Treating people differently
- Patriotism gone wrong, e.g. the Cronulla Riots
- Not accepting difference
- Judging people on the basis of visible and physical difference.

The groups thought about why racism exists:

- Due to family opinions and upbringing ('people aren't born racist');
- It is perpetuated by a small number who desire to secure their superior status;
- Ongoing feelings of white supremacy; and
- Xenophobia (a fear of people from other races).

What would young people like to see instead?

- Celebration of difference such as the multicultural festival;
- Recognition of what we have in common as human beings: for example, a love of children;
- Leadership in non-racist behaviour;
- More education/awareness-raising about cultural difference;
- People living like they are blind; and
- Realisation of your own bias.

The groups were asked about their experiences of racism in the ACT:

- There is some flippancy and ignorance around the use of words such as 'wog' and 'nigger;' and
- There is a fine line where racist jokes become more malignant.

Outcomes:

The young people who attended were from diverse cultural backgrounds. All groups reported that there was no great issue of racism in the ACT, other than the two points listed above. Schools seemed to play a very large role in setting standards with regard to racism and its treatment.

Many of the young people had marked the Apology to the Stolen Generations at their schools. There seemed to be a growing awareness of cultural ignorance around Indigenous Australians and many young people reported that they were now educating their parents about their ingrained racism against Indigenous Australians.

Sexism Group Work

The young participants believed that sexism was affecting people who are in their early 20's. However, they all acknowledged that sexism still happens between youth and we can all do something to help minimise sexism.

Ways to help improve sexism between youth:

- People to be more accepting of the role reversal. E.g. women doing heavy work;
- Inform young people about sexism and how it is not acceptable. What it is? How it affects people, what its effects are, how to avoid it, at what point does it become sexist and give more knowledge of sexism;
- The subjects at one gender school e.g. There are no textiles classes at boy's schools and no woodwork classes at girl's schools;
- Hold more awareness forums on sexism;
- Put posters on public display about sexism;
- Knowing the difference between politeness and sexism;

- Do not use your body to get you what you want.
- Have equal rights at work school and at sporting events;
- Do not have double standards / equality; and
- Have more age restrictions at events.

Try and eliminate the stereo typical view of men and women How?

Be more accepting, try and show more sports on TV that have women involved. All jobs can be done by either sex and we should encourage that.

Where is sexism most prominent?

In religious groups, same sex schools, sports physical capabilities, gay & lesbian group and segregation of sexes (the practice of keeping ethnic, racial, religious, or gender groups separate, usually discriminating against a minority group)

Language used that is offensive and classed as sexist to youth

“You ‘play’ like a girl”, “you run like a girl” etc

“You homo“

Anything that is demeaning to man/womanhood and offensive name calling.

What can the youth do on their own to help stop sexism?

Speak out when you hear or see sexist actions;

Stop making any of the comments yourself;

Stop you friends/ family if you hear or see them being sexist; and

Set an example yourself.

Outcomes:

The young participants believe that there are a number of ways to improve sexist attitudes including through:

Government: Education programs, more publicity on sexism e.g. posters or advertisements.

Youth: Setting examples, to stop it when you see it and be more aware of it happening so you know what to do and how to help the situation.

Schools: Having all subjects available and not having a set opinion on what girls and boys must do or learn.

Communities: Help educate people and equal play, rights and opportunity in action for everyone.

Health & Wellbeing Forum

This forum was chaired by Ms Lisa Kelly, the Manager of Professional Development at Lifeline.

Ms Kelly is a trained Counsellor and deals with young people on a daily basis. Ms Kelly is currently working in youth support programs to better educate young people on mental health and wellbeing issues.

Ms Kelly was supported in this forum by Council co-chair Reece Coleman and Council member Kelly Lokan. A total of 37 young people participated in this forum.

The forum started with a brainstorm on what the barriers were to young people seeking help when it came to health and wellbeing issues. The group identified a number of factors including:

Brainstorm on what the barriers were

- Embarrassment;
- Low self esteem;
- Fear (of being judged);
- Anxious;
- Anger;
- If you feel you kind of deserve the problem so you don't want to tell anyone;
- You might get in trouble for it;
- Might feel vulnerable;
- Insecurity;
- Worried that people will think differently of you;
- Weakness;
- Don't think you need help;
- Feeling alone;
- Scared how the person might react;
- Don't think you should talk to people about the issue;
- Worried how it might affect other people;
- Ashamed;
- No-one will understand you;
- Don't feel like you can trust people;
- Status (don't want to ruin your rep);
- Lazy;
- Feel threatened;
- Might underestimate the issue; and
- People might think you are lying about it (attention seeker).

Brainstorm on how to break the barriers to seeking help

- Increase awareness;
- Make hassles or problems less like the bad things out there and more a part of what's a part of growing up;
- Understanding of the issues;
- Decrease stereotypes (emo=cutting yourself etc) don't stereotype people into problems; and
- Make people feel comfortable.

How well does your school equip you to help your friends?

- Not very well! (Majority of the room said this);
- There are places that you can go in schools for major issues;
- Issue is the school tells parents when students are self-harming;
- Policy of telling students parents if they are hurting themselves should be taken away because it prevents student's going to get help;
- Schools need to review policies;
- Friends would be able to help more if they were more educated about issues;
- Don't get the education to help others at school;
- A lot of people don't go to school counsellors about their problems because they know their parents will be informed about it (maybe go to youth worker instead); and
- Gender issues (like female student wants to speak to a female counsellor instead of a male counsellor etc).

A survey was then conducted of the group about what issues they were currently dealing with or what they were helping their friends deal with. The results show that young people generally turn to a friend when they have a problem/issue and the problem/issue can be as wide-ranging as below.

The Council members attending this forum also completed the survey.

ISSUE (in friends)	Young people are currently involved with this issue
Gay Friend	20 people
Stress Issues	20 people
Bullying	20 people
Relationship Break-ups	40 people
Body Image	10 people
Self Harm	1 Person
Drug Taking	6 people
Suicidal Notions	4 people
Emotional Problems	20 people

WHAT SKILLS DO YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE INFO TO FRIENDS?

- Courage - to be able to express what you have been through (one-on-one info sharing);
- Support - you don't know how bad it is or the extent, so if you show you are always there it will help;
- Respect - you need to respect their feelings and what they are going through;
- Open minded - look at the situation from other peoples point of view, not just theirs;
- Compassion - willing to help;
- Stable and strong - you need to be up to helping them.
- Don't get emotionally involved; and
- Confidence - if you aren't confident within yourself you can't help anyone else.

Outcomes:

The group identified three different groups that could assist young people in acknowledging and asking for help with any problems.

Adults - Adults can help young people build confidence and self-esteem and teach them about situations where problems could arise. These can be parents, youth workers, teachers and friends. The group said it would be helpful if they kept an open mind and did not put problems down to being “young” or “inexperienced”.

Peer Support - The group suggested a continued approach to peer support programs in school, especially in the years 7-10 age groups. Most of the participants had been through this program and learned about resilience and bouncing back from situations. “Breaking Free” program in schools teaches young people how to deal with depression and suicide and most participants believed this to be a valuable program. The group felt that they were capable of helping out friends with problems and issues but would appreciate support and educational programs that were helping and not hindering.

Government

- Helplines should be there more to listen than provide advice and participants said there was too much pressure to tell them the problem;
- Better advertising and awareness of youth services in Canberra;
- Privacy issues in schools;
- Money to provide more youth services and education in the ACT; and
- More educational programs that are school-based rather than at youth centres or in Civic. More accessible at school than other places and especially if counsellors do not have to advise parents of issues.

Housing Affordability Forum

This forum was chaired by Mr David Matthews, Director of Housing ACT.

Mr Matthews was assisted in this forum by Council members Daniel Higginbottom, Diana Ni. Simone Mooketsi, the National Youth Week Young Member was involved in the forum planning, however, Ms Mooketsi were unable to attend the forum on the day due to illness. There were 41 participants in this forum.

This forum was aimed at young people renting, buying or seeking to enter the housing market. It recognised that young people are in a uniquely vulnerable position and that there exist substantial and widespread barriers to finding accommodation that meets the needs of young people within the ACT.

In particular, young people are vulnerable because they lack information about services and options available, lack information about what is required of them as either home owners or tenants and are more susceptible to market fluctuations and are often recent arrivals to the ACT.

The participants discussed that many of the problems of affordability and availability of housing stems from the fact that housing development within the ACT is rarely targeted at young people's needs. In the ACT housing tends to be aimed at older buyers with families who need large expensive houses on large blocks of land. Youth friendly public planning would go a long way to addressing housing affordability by offering an alternative to young people who are currently struggling to compete in this two-tier housing market. Specifically, young people are interested in flexible, simple, central and affordable housing options such as inner city rental, share accommodation, communal living developments, high density housing and development with improved access to public transportation. The provision of a wider variety of these accommodation options through sensible development would remove pressure from the rest of the housing market as young people would no longer be competing for houses well outside of their needs and safe economic range.

The participants of this forum also discussed that disadvantaged young people such as young mothers deserve safe, secure housing options. Ensuring this element of independence will greatly improve the chances of economic and social improvement for at risk young people. It was thought among the group that current public housing is struggling to meet these needs.

Issues facing young people who seek to enter the housing market:

- Young people are vulnerable in the market;
- Highest unaffordability rates are among households headed by under 26 year olds;
- More likely to rent, more vulnerable to market fluctuations;
- Recent arrivals for university or work need housing immediately but do not necessarily know how to go about getting it;
- Difficulties for young people entering the housing market; and
- Lack of information about housing options, availability and what young people renting need to do to make themselves attractive as tenants.

Problems with the types of accommodation available:

- Tends to be aimed at older buyers;
- Two tier market, young people vs. wealthy public servants;
- Luxurious properties on large blocks aimed at families, not young people;
- Need to tailor housing options to young people's needs - Youth friendly public planning;
- Share accommodation and communal living options - lack of advertisement;
- Apartments, high density, close to city/employment is expensive;
- Limited public transport access for people who live in suburbs;
- Lack of flexible low cost housing;
- Generally youth are disadvantaged in housing/renting market; and
- Young parents and other disadvantaged youth need safe, secure housing options to provide the independence which is going to break the cycle of dependence.

Outcomes

1. Fund universities more so that they can fulfil their requirement of providing accommodation for out-of-state students, removes burden from other parts of the housing market.
2. Increase the supply of housing and tailor certain developments to the needs of young people.
3. Increase our understanding of what young people are looking for.
4. Improve public transport so that it is affordable to live outside of the city including more park and ride options.
5. The ACT Government should have an interest in providing a single multi platform information centre with the purpose of facilitating young people's entry to the housing market. This centre could be largely web-based and feature (but not be limited to) information about government housing options and support services, what young people's rights are and what they can expect in the housing market, tips for buying and renting, tips for living on ones own and explicit advice on what young people can do to maximise their chances of successfully buying or renting.

Recreation Workshops

The forums were followed by a series of practical workshops and included:

- **Drumming** - this workshop was run by Northside Community Service (Majura Youth Centre).
- **Circus Skills 1** - Warehouse Circus is a dynamic, energetic and talented group of young people aged 8 to 25 and is recognised around Canberra as a fantastic group of talented young people with the ability to do some incredible things while fulfilling a necessary role in the Canberra community.
The Circus contributes greatly to the ACT community. It provides fun, healthy, active and exciting programs for young people, which support them physically and mentally - it is a Healthpact Health Promoting Organisation. Its core trainers are specially trained in Social Circus skills to support these programs, having attended the National Institute of Circus Arts Social Circus Training Program.
These shows promote a positive image of young people to the community and encourage the idea that our young people are valuable members of the community and that their input is important too.
- **D.J Mix Master** - Police Citizen Youth Club (PCYC) ran the music workshop 'Mixmaster' that aims to introduce and inform young people about recreational possibilities and the positive use of leisure time. PCYC is an Incorporated Company supported by the Australian Federal Police, Department of Housing, Disability and Community Support, Sport and Recreation ACT and other local businesses and sponsors.
- **Urban Art the Basics** - Communities@Work Youth Services provided a diverse range of the recreation activities including graffiti art, stencilling workshops, skate clinic and a temporary tattoo tent.

Resilience Workshops

Following the recreation workshops, the young people were offered a series of Resilience Workshops which included:

- **Save-A-Mate** - This was conducted by the Australian Red Cross and was featured at last years conference. Due to the overwhelming response we had to this workshop, we decided to hold it again. Save-a-Mate (SAM) is an education program run by the Australian Red Cross. The SAM program offers a highly effective and relevant training course to young people on how to prevent, recognise and respond to an emergency resulting from alcohol and other drug use, for example overdose, unconsciousness and convulsions. This is a unique course that combines drug and alcohol information with first aid training. The course can carry a CPR accreditation

and examines how these emergencies occur, how they can be prevented and what to do if they occur.

The SAM program is underpinned by the message 'look after your mates', and encourages young people to take responsibility for themselves, their friends and others around them. Peer Educators led students through sessions that covered understanding what a drug is, classifying drugs according to their effects, understanding the risks, and recognising an emergency and practical ways to reduce harm.

- **Shut Up & Listen!** - This program was conducted by Lifeline. Lifeline provided an interactive workshop that aims to strengthen and support the capacity of young people to support each other, expand opportunities for young people to develop skills, so they can participate fully in community life.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - How Big Is UR Foot Print?
The Youth Leadership for Sustainability Consumption workshop was an effective program to address young people's ambivalence and lack of clarity about how to make a positive change to the environment. The workshop created processes for overcoming barriers to more sustainable consumption whilst providing young people with leadership skills.
- **Reality-Check** – Mental Illness Education ACT educates the Canberra community about mental illness. The workshop was a presentation that aims to educate young people and the community about what it is like to live with mental illness. The presentations are always given by people who have a mental illness or who care/d for someone with a mental illness. Through their websites, theatre projects, community consultations, and art and digital media projects, MIEACT communicate stories and facts about mental illness to the wider community. This workshop also examined body image and pressures placed on young people in the media.
- **Human Rights & Discrimination** – The Human Rights Commissioner, Ms Linda Crebbin and her advisor Ms Roslyn Dundas provided this workshop focusing on what young people believed to be Human Rights and what they could do if they thought any of their human rights were being impinged including medical rights, child rights or discrimination issues.
- **Circus Skills 2** - A second round of circus skills was also arranged for our last workshop.

Lunchtime Activities

The young people were provided with a BBQ lunch and entertainment and activities including:

- . Three Youth Bands
- . DJ-David Scully
- . Tattoo Tent
- . Human Foosball
- . Horizontal bungee
- . Big twister

Of course, this could not be possible without the help of Youth InterACT staff, the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Support and the Youth Advisory Council. There were countless young volunteers who give of their time to make this event possible.

Austin Kenny
Christina Towns
Kathy Ross
Denise Bridges
Rebecca Demetrius
Jessica Gay
Janelle Wheatley
Adele Gillespie
Julie Makin
Emilija Balog
Leanne Rourke
Michelle Fisher

Organisations that assisted with the success of the Conference:

Volunteers from Northside Community Service
Ainslie Arts Centre
Music for Everyone
Community Connections
Lifeline
Housing ACT
Credit Debt Counselling Service
Commissioner for Children and Young People's Office
ACT Otherwise
Warehouse Circus
Mental Illness Educations ACT
Save-A-Mate Australian Red Cross

Communities@Work
Leos Club
Canberra Police Citizen and Youth Club
U-Turn Youth Services
Messengers
World Vision
Lip Magazine
Youth in the City
YWCA – Scope Program
Woden Youth Centre
High country Meats

We would also like to acknowledge all Youth Advisory Council members for their ideas, support and help throughout the planning, setting-up and packing-up phases. All Council members enjoyed the forums and workshops as youth of today.



Youth InterACT wishes to thank everyone who has made this event a success!

Katy Gallagher, MLA

Youth Engagement, Services & Policy Team
Youth Advisory Council
Agnes Shea

Ainslie Arts Centre
Music For Everyone

Northside Community Services
Communities@Work

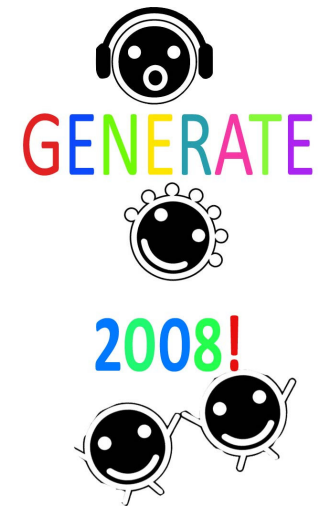
Lifeline Canberra
Canberra Police and Citizens Youth Club
SCOPE

U-Turn Youth Services Belconnen
CYCLOPS_{ACT}
Youth in the City

Messengers
Youth For Leadership in Sustainable Consumption ACT
World Vision

Mental Illness Education ACT
Save-A-Mate Australian Red Cross
Warehouse Circus
Lip Mag

Youth Volunteers



2008 Youth InterACT Conference

The ACT Launch of National Youth Week

Za Program!

8.45am to 3.00pm
Ainslie Art Centre
Elourea Street, Braddon ACT 2617

Program designed by Ben Harris, Youth Council Advisory member

Registration (8:45-9:25am)

- Big Breaky-Pancakes & Fruit, with funky overhead tunes for wake up call

Opening (9:25-10:00am)

- Youth Advisory Co-Chairs, Ms Kristy Pope and Mr Reece Coleman
- 'Welcome to Ngunnawal Country', Ms Agnes Shea
- Minister for Children and Young People, Ms Katy Gallagher, MLA, launching NYW and Conference
- Performance by Messengers: Crazy Professor
- National Youth Week Member, Ms Simone Mooketsi
- Ceremony closure by Council Co-Chairs, Kristy Pope and Reece Coleman

Forums (10:00-12:00am)

Forums will be facilitated by a professional in each field and co-facilitated by Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members. Participants engage in group discussions with their facilitator on topics relating to their forum, where they will jot down ideas on solutions to those problems. YAC members will then write a report summarising the outcomes, which will be distributed through the Youth InterACT Website, and given as advice to the Minister for Children and Young People, Ms Katy Gallagher, MLA.

FORUM TOPICS

This year's forum topics consist of:

- **Elimination of Discrimination Room 18**
Facilitator: Luke Myers (Community Connections)
Council Members: Rosie Southwood, Matilda Dickman and Ben Harris
- **Drug and Alcohol Education Room 1**
Facilitator: Paul Dillon, National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC), University of NSW
Council Members: Dale Lovatt, Josie Mitchell and Sharon Tran
- **Housing Affordability Room 2**
Facilitator: David Matthews (Housing ACT)
Council Members: Daniel Higginbottom, Diana Ni with National Youth Week Young Member Representative for the ACT, Simone Mooketsi
- **Health and Well-Being Room 4**
Facilitator: Lisa Kelly (Lifeline)
Council Members: Reece Coleman and Kelly Lokan
- **Youth Debt Room 5**
Facilitator: David Tenant CARE (Credit and Debt Counselling Service)
Council Members: Kristy Pope, Rebecca Demetrius and Michael Galluzzo, NYW Australian Government Indigenous Young Member Representative

Lunch: BBQ and Entertainment (12:00-1:00pm)

With the following taking place for your random pleasure:

- Music-Youth Bands ½ hour set 12.00-12.30
- Music – Chilled Beats (12:30 –1pm) *{that's frozen, not hot}*
- Drumming performance
- Big Twister, Bungee, Foosball
- Totem Tennis
- Channel Vision-Interviews
- Tattoo Tent

Workshops, Round 1: (1:00-2:00pm)

- Drumming – NCS – Room 18
- Drumming – Music For Everyone - Grass area
- Circus Skills – Warehouse Circus – Grass area
- DJ Mix-Master – PCYC – Grass area marquee
- Urban Art and the Basics/Stenciling – Communities @ Work – Room 3
- Skateboarding Workshop – Communities @ Work Check map
- Party Safe – Scope – Room 2

Workshops, Round 2: (2:00-3:00pm) Refer to the map

- Save-A-Mate (SAM) Room 18 – Australian Red Cross
- Shut Up & Listen! Room 2 – Lifeline
- Environmental Sustainability: How Big Is UR Foot Print? Room 1 – ACT Otherwise
- Reality-Check Room 4 – MIEACT
- Human Rights & Discrimination Room 5 – Humans Right Commission
- Circus Skills (round 2) – Warehouse Circus

A. Closing (3:10pm) (grass area outside)

- Kristy Pope and Reece Coleman, Co-Chairs of the ACT Youth Advisory Council

Following the Youth InterACT Conference, you are invited to the National Youth Week Expo in Garema Place, hosted by the Youth Coalition of the ACT – there will be bands, stalls and other fun shenanigans...

Thank you very much for attending – we hope you enjoyed your self and had a rewarding experience!