

# YAC FAQs



## 1. What is the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)?

The YAC is made up of young people passionate about mental health and well-being.

The YAC hopes to:

1. Provide you with the opportunity to have input into the strategic direction of **headspace Dandenong** services, and local mental health services.
2. Allow a way for the voice of young people to be heard and acted upon.
3. Provide opportunities for skills and leadership development and provide experience in; media, marketing, communication and advocacy skills.
4. Support you to lead projects locally
5. Allow young people to direct youth mental health policy development
6. Demonstrate good practice by involving young people in the youth, welfare and health sector

## 2. What is involved in the role?

Young People on the **headspace** Dandenong YAC will have the opportunity to be involved in a number of ways including:

1. Media spokespeople and community engagement opportunities
2. Lead local projects
3. Marketing, promotion and community awareness activities
4. Involvement in mental health related focus groups and consultations (including the development of resources)
5. Evaluation and research
6. Policy and advocacy

By providing a variety of activities it is hoped that it will provide the opportunity to draw on people's strengths, abilities and capabilities, while also appealing to a broad range of interests.

## 3. What's the time commitment?

The appointment of YAC Members is 12 months. There will be monthly or fortnightly meetings organised at a time that suits the group. This will be discussed once the group has been formed.

In between meetings and events, contact will be maintained through Facebook, email, online forums and teleconferences. There will be an expectation that you participate regularly in these discussions. It will also be expected that you take part in focus groups and project work related to your areas of interest.

This is a volunteer role and although you may be provided with reimbursement for some of the events, it is expected that you will also volunteer your time for subcommittees, projects and other events.

## 4. Can you tell me more about the activities that I can be involved in?

### MEDIA SPOKESPEOPLE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**What is it?** Young people are supported to become active community advocates for youth mental health. The goal is to raise awareness of youth mental health, encourage young people to seek help early and to educate the broader community in youth mental health. Young people may be involved in community education activities, or as media spokespeople on the issue of youth mental health. Media spokespeople may be requested to speak at public functions or at local schools, mental health forums, conferences etc.

**What are the requirements?** Young people do not need to have previous experience at talking in public or to the media. The YAC will be supported and trained to become comfortable talking to the media and speaking at events.

### **headspace Local Projects**

**What is it?** With support from the **headspace** centre staff, members of the YAC will have the opportunity to lead specific projects. These projects may include, production of a **headspace** video, planning a fundraising event, a youth week activity, an art competition....the possibilities are endless.

### **INVOLVEMENT IN FOCUS GROUPS AND CONSULTATIONS**

**What is it?** From time to time focus groups are held around specific topics to help improve **headspace** services. The purpose is to assure that the interests and opinions of young people are represented in all aspects of **headspace** activity and that services and resources are youth friendly.

**When do they meet?** These groups are called as needed. Young people on the YAC will be notified and asked for expressions of interest through email. It is expected that the group members would be involved in several of these a year.

### **EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND POLICY ADVOCACY**

**What is it?** Young people on the YAC will have the opportunity to get involved in evaluation. Topics for evaluation will depend on the need at the time.

**When do they meet?** A subcommittee or working group will be established to work in these areas. Young People on the YAC will be notified and asked for expressions of interest through email. Communication will be mostly through Facebook and email.

### **5. What kind of support and training will I receive?**

Training will be given in a variety of areas; these may include:

- Leadership & communication
- Project management
- mental health
- mental illness
- drug and alcohol issues
- talking to the media
- Public speaking

