

YOUTH REFERENCE GROUP

Member Position Description

Position	Youth Reference Group Member
Classification	Volunteer
Reports to	Community Engagement Worker
Term	Up to 2 years
Commitment	Monthly meetings and participation in events, consultations and activities as required
Location	headspace Emerald

Organisation overview

headspace Emerald provides early intervention mental health, physical health, alcohol and other drug, and work and study services to young people aged 12 to 25 years.

The Youth Reference Group (YRG) provides young people with an opportunity to actively contribute to the planning, delivery, evaluation and continuous improvement of headspace Emerald services and activities. Young people involved in the YRG help ensure services remain youth-friendly, accessible and responsive to the needs of local young people.

Purpose of the role

To contribute young people's ideas, experiences and perspectives so headspace Emerald services, activities and community engagement are relevant, inclusive and youth-friendly.

About the Youth Reference Group

The Youth Reference Group is made up of young people aged 12 to 25 years who are passionate about improving the wellbeing of young people in their community.

Members contribute their ideas, experiences and perspectives to:

- Improve headspace Emerald services
- Co-design programs, events and activities
- Promote positive mental health and help-seeking
- Advocate for the needs of young people
- Strengthen youth participation across the Central Highlands region

Eligibility requirements

Applicants should:

- Be aged between 12 and 25 years
- Have an interest in youth mental health and wellbeing
- Be willing to participate in group discussions and activities
- Be able to work respectfully with other young people and staff
- Maintain a balance between YRG commitments, school, work, family and personal wellbeing
- Have access to the internet and a mobile phone for communication
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing participation

Inclusive participation

headspace Emerald welcomes interest from young people with diverse identities, backgrounds, locations and life experiences, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, culturally and linguistically diverse young people, LGBTQIA+ young people, young people with lived experience of mental health challenges, and young people from rural and remote communities.

Roles and responsibilities

- Attend and actively participate in monthly YRG meetings
- Contribute ideas and feedback about headspace services
- Participate in surveys, focus groups and consultations
- Support youth participation activities and community events
- Engage respectfully with other YRG members, staff and community stakeholders
- Participate in induction and relevant training opportunities
- Promote positive mental health and help-seeking within the community
- Maintain confidentiality where required
- Complete a wellness plan and actively look after personal health and wellbeing

Additional opportunities

Depending on interest, availability, training and the nature of the activity, YRG members may have opportunities to:

- Participate in local, state and national headspace consultations
- Assist with recruitment panels and service improvement projects
- Co-design resources, campaigns and events
- Deliver presentations to schools and community groups
- Attend conferences, workshops and training programs
- Represent headspace Emerald at community meetings and events

Training and development

Training may be offered in the following areas:

- Understanding headspace services
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Alcohol and other drugs awareness
- Public speaking and presentation skills
- Media engagement
- Youth participation and advocacy
- Leadership and teamwork

Benefits of participation

- Develop leadership, communication, teamwork and advocacy skills
- Gain experience in co-design, health promotion and community engagement
- Increase confidence and public speaking abilities
- Build friendships and professional networks
- Strengthen understanding of mental health and wellbeing
- Make a meaningful contribution to local youth services
- Build experience that may support future education and employment opportunities

Time commitment and communication

- Participate in monthly YRG meetings
- Maintain contact between meetings through agreed communication channels
- Participate in focus groups, consultations, events or activities where available
- Advise the Community Engagement Worker if unable to attend or if support is required

Support

The Community Engagement Worker will provide:

- Orientation and induction
- Ongoing support and regular check-ins
- Wellbeing support and guidance about safe participation
- Information about training, consultation and event opportunities
- Assistance with transport requirements where appropriate

Position reviews

Regular review and feedback discussions will support the member to:

- Discuss whether the role remains positive and beneficial
- Identify learning and development opportunities
- Raise questions, concerns or support needs
- Review participation, availability and future goals
- Celebrate achievements and contributions

Transport

If a YRG member requires assistance with transport to and from meetings or events, arrangements will be discussed with headspace Emerald before the activity.

Other requirements

- Parent or guardian consent is required for members under 18 years of age
- A headspace Emerald staff member will attend YRG meetings
- Participation is voluntary
- YRG members are expected to follow relevant headspace Emerald volunteer, safety, privacy and conduct requirements provided during induction

Wellbeing and choice

A young person can discuss their participation, take a break from activities, or request support from the Community Engagement Worker at any time.

Contact

For more information about the Youth Reference Group:

Community Engagement Worker: 0428 278 207

headspace Emerald: 1800 950 722