

# YAC FAQs



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

The YAC is made up of 6 young people passionate about mental health and wellbeing.

The YAC hopes to:

1. Provide you with the opportunity to have input into the strategic direction of **headspace** 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** 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
5. Evaluation and research
6. Policy and advocacy

In addition to this the YAC will provide a variety of positions tailored to each young person. 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 meetings where attendance is necessary.

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 your position with the YAC

This is a volunteer role and although you will be paid for some of your time, outside expected roles, 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 SPOKES PEOPLE 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.

## **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 ensure 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. 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.

### **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
- drug and alcohol issues
- talking to the media
- Public speaking

The YAC is expected to attend the Youth Advocates Program at the start of their time within the YAC, This program will run over 3 weekends, and help YAC members to understand **headspace**, and their roles more clearly.