



Youth Reference Group

FAQs

1. What is the Youth Reference Group (YRG)?

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

The YRG 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** YRG will have the opportunity to be involved in a number of ways including:

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

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 YRG members is for a period of 12 months
- There will be monthly meetings organised at a time that suits you at either the Gosford or Lake Haven headspace sites – these will run for about 2 hours a month
- 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. It is expected that you will also volunteer your time for subcommittees, projects and other events as fit with your schedule, and in return we will provide you with training, support and lots of opportunities to get involved!

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. Selected YRG members 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 YRG will have the opportunity to lead specific projects. These projects may include, production of a **headspace** video, planning a community 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 those services and resources are youth friendly.

When do they meet? These groups are created as needed. Young people on the YRG 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 YRG 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 YRG will be notified and asked for expressions of interest through email. Communication will be mostly through Facebook and email.

5. What costs are involved?

- It is free to be part of the headspace Gosford and Lake Haven YRG
- You will not be paid as this is a voluntary role
- There may be a capacity to reimburse some costs to travel to events

6. What kind of support and training will I receive?

Training and/or support 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

7. Who else will be on the YRG?

- The YRG will have an approximate membership of 15 young people between the ages of 16-25 years from a variety of diverse backgrounds
- You may or may not know any other members; however you will have opportunities to work alongside other young people to get the mental health message out across the Coast!