

youthaffairs
COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

active action + diversity + collaboration + human rights
participation + flexibility + collaboration + human rights

2001 2002

ANNUAL REPORT

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youthaffairs

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chairperson's report

The Chairperson's report must begin with a truly sincere thankyou to Jamie Crosby for his work at the Executive / Board level, over the past five years. In January this year Jamie moved on to new challenges in Canberra and I took over the role of Chair.



Ably supported by Deputy Chair Rowena Allen, an enthusiastic and capable Board has enjoyed a most productive year. Our work however, was made much easier due to the hard work that had already been done under the professional leadership of Jamie.

This year professional training was provided to the Board along with an orientation day held for our two newly appointed advisory bodies, the Youth Reference Group and the Policy Advisory Group. Having created a new constitution and undergone this training, the organisation was poised to continue its excellent work on behalf of young people and those who work with young people in Victoria.

The establishment of the Youth Reference Group has attracted a vibrant and enthusiastic group of young people who are clearly committed to making a difference. This was evident at their workshop on Youth Participation at the Shepparton *Reversing The Drift* conference in May. Congratulations to all who participated in this dynamic workshop that was a real highlight of the conference.

It is tremendous to have so many people dedicated to attending the meetings of the Policy Advisory Group, above and beyond their normal work hours. Both advisory groups have provided thoughtful comments and guidance to the Board, enabling us to work in a manner that reflects the membership as much as possible. Thank you to the hard work and commitment of both these groups.

We welcome our new Minister for Youth Affairs, Monica Gould and thank Minister Justin Madden for his support and work towards improving the lives of young Victorians. We wish him well with the enormous task of organizing the Commonwealth Games.

A matter that affects many of our members is the Youth Service Grants. As most of you will know administration and management of these grants has been transferred to the Office For Youth (OFY) and are shortly up for renewal. The OFY has been consultative, within punishingly short time frames, in their establishment of new guidelines for these grants, seeking input from a number of organisations including YACVic. We are very keen for the grants to

be lengthened to a period of three years as well as funding amounts increased to reflect real costs to deliver these projects, having regard especially to the additional costs of delivering services in the non-metropolitan areas. We certainly look forward to continuing to work with the Minister and her Department to ensure that this occurs.

In our regular meetings with the Minister we have raised issues of concern to our membership, to both Minister Madden and more recently Minister Gould and her staff who have made themselves available and in most cases were very supportive. But we haven't stopped with the government in our advocacy for young people and have met on several occasions with key opposition, minor party and independent members of parliament and their advisors.

On a personal note, the highlight of my year was the *Reversing the Drift* conference in May this year. In particular, the pleasure of working with young people and hearing a variety of opinions on life in rural and regional areas. The success of the conference was due to a number of factors, not the least was the above and beyond the call of duty displayed by all members of the Secretariat. Coupled with this was an overwhelming response from workers and young people attending the conference. The participation was fantastic and a comforting reminder that there is a great deal of hard work going on out there in our community amongst young people. We do know that much of this work is done with low or in some cases no financial reward and we are working towards increasing support for workers and young people.

A number of forums have been held over the past year on a variety of topics. These have been attended well, however, we welcome further suggestions from our membership as to their needs and how YACVic can best support them.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the work done by the Board and look forward to further progress and most importantly action in order to support our membership and continue to improve the lives of young people in Victoria.

Finally, I would like to let you know what a tremendously high calibre of staff we are privileged to have within the Secretariat. It has been a pleasure to work with all of them and I have been continually impressed by the professionalism and commitment shown by both Janet and her staff. Thankyou.

I am certainly looking forward to another stimulating year being part of an organisation that is providing an effective medium for keeping youth issues 'up there' and succeeding in an area that has historically been a challenge to any government. We encourage members to continue to support us, particularly those who work outside the mainstream youth field. This organisation is interested in hearing from anyone whose work affects the lives of young people.

Felicity Sloman
Chairperson

executive officer's report

The Dalai Lama said once that "If you think that you are too small to make a difference try sleeping with a mosquito!"

I think that anyone who has watched YACVic do its work this year would have to agree that although size (and more resources) makes the process a little bit less nail biting and a whole lot more secure, a professional, committed group of paid and unpaid people can make a positive difference for the benefit of young people in Victoria.

It is with an enormous sense of pride in our achievement that we present to you the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's 2001/02 Annual Report - a year that has been filled with success but also characterised by consolidation.

The year began with significant change in our organisational structures. The YACVic membership voted unanimously to adopt a new constitution that reorganised our governance structures to reflect our commitment to relevance and responsiveness for young people. This new structure saw the establishment of a Policy Advisory Group (PAG) and Youth Reference Group (YRG), two committees charged with the responsibility to advise the seven member Board on policy positions and priorities for the organisation. I'd like to acknowledge the incredibly important contribution that both of these committees have made to our work. I'd also like to thank the members of the Board for their untiring and professional work. The fact that both PAG and YRG were oversubscribed and there were many expressions of interest in the one Board vacancy that arose during the year reflects how vibrant we are as a force for change. Congratulations to you all. The new constitution also formalised the Young Media Spokesperson role, a position created to ensure that YACVic not only talks *about* young people but supports and enables them to speak for themselves. Lise Dalla Torre who has faultlessly performed this role should be specifically acknowledged for her energy and wisdom.

While I'm thanking people, I'd like to acknowledge and pay tribute to Jamie Crosby who handed over the role of YACVic Chair to Felicity Sloman in May this year. We look forward to his advice on how to navigate the geographical and political maze of culdesacs and ring roads of Canberra.

The report that you have in your hands shows just how hard we have been working this year on issues that range from juvenile justice, employment, housing, discrimination, drug and alcohol use, media representation and human rights. Unlike the Dalai Lama's mosquito, however, YACVic hasn't limited itself to the role of the nuisance maker or spoiler. We have made our presence felt by contributing to youth policy debate in an intelligent and well-researched manner. This is reflected through our continuing research partnership with Victoria Police and RMIT University into the carriage of knives and bladed weapons amongst young people in Victoria and our partnership with Latrobe University's Media Studies Program to undertake a scoping study into the media

representation of young people and drugs. At our Reversing the Drift Solutions Summit in Shepparton, we also launched a major paper in partnership with the Centre for Adolescent Health that explored the different and special issues faced by young people and those who work with them in Rural and Regional Victoria. All this was on top of our contributions to government inquiries that ranged from unemployment to volatile substance use amongst young people; and the many discussions with the Office for Youth over the future of the Youth Service Grants and the development of the much-anticipated Youth Strategy.

Promoting the rights of young people in Victoria was also a major theme of our work. We continued to speak in the media and at forums and conferences about how and why we need to involve young people more fully in our organisations, institutions and decision-making processes. We have also been working hard to promote a broad based debate about our model for a Children and Young People's Commission. This discussion has been taking place in an environment where much community debate has tended to view young people as nothing more than a resource for the future - a resource that needs to be nurtured so that it can breed and provide wealth that will keep the older generations comfortable in their retirement. I think that this view is shamefully short sighted and insulting to young people who have much to offer now - not just when they grow up!

Communication is central to our work and this has taken place at a very high standard on every level. I'd like to thank you all for your contributions that have made our efforts to share good ideas, events and to hold statewide debates so successful. I'd also like to thank all those who have provided feedback to us by ringing, writing, emailing or attending meetings. Your input is not only welcome but essential if we are to produce high quality work that reflects your experiences and expertise.

Finally, I want to thank the superhuman efforts of our secretariat staff team - our communications officer Alex Markham, Paula Grogan policy officer, Sally Goldner finance officer, and Dalal Samaan administration officer. I'd also like to acknowledge Anna Wood who resigned as admin officer to return to study social work in February. Thankyou for all the times you have worked beyond the call of duty and for approaching our many ambitious projects with a professionalism and energy that is inspiring.

It's with sense of vision, purpose and passion that we welcome the challenges ahead as we look forward to what promises to be another action packed election year.

I commend this annual report to you.

Janet Jukes
Executive Officer



about yacvic

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. (YACVic) is the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria. Our vision is for a Victorian community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

At YACVic we:

- Listen to the needs of young people, workers with young people and organisations that provide direct services to young people.
- Provide advice to the government and other institutions about these needs.
- Analyse and develop policy through consultation with our members.
- Provide our members with information through our regular printed newsletter *YIKES!* our email announcement list and our website.

YACVic is governed by a volunteer board and managed by a paid secretariat. We are a not-for-profit, membership driven organisation and our core funding comes from the Victorian Government's Office for Youth.

Both individual people and organisations are able to join YACVic. Our membership base consists of organisations that work with young people such as local council youth services, schools and community organisations; government agencies; academics and young people themselves.

Our structure

As a membership driven organisation we rely heavily on the involvement of our members in the governance and advisory structures of the organisation.

The direct involvement of the membership is an important and valued aspect of the organisation, which adds weight to the policy positions and public stances that YACVic articulates.

There are a number of formal avenues for members to become involved. They are:

- Board of Governance
- Policy Advisory Group
- Youth Reference Group
- Young Media Spokesperson

Members may also be involved in our many activities and consultations throughout the year including our policy forums and information sessions. They are also encouraged to write articles for *YIKES*, our regular newsletter, or to provide information for our email announce list.

Board of Governance

The Board of Governance is the ultimate authority for the successful operation of YACVic. The Board is comprised of four officers and three ordinary members. The four officers are the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer and the Young Media Spokesperson.

Members of the Board are elected by the YACVic membership at the Annual General meeting (AGM). At the first Board meeting following the AGM the new Board decides on the officers for the coming year - with the exception of the Young Media Spokesperson who is directly elected at the AGM.

The Board operates under a governance framework which means that they are concerned with the overall strategy and direction of the organisation. Management and day-to-day decisions are left up to the Executive Officer who is accountable to the Board in respect to these operational matters.

The Board takes advice from both the Policy Advisory Group as well as the Youth Reference Group, but ultimately decisions regarding the governance of YACVic are made by the Board.

Policy Advisory Group

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) provides a forum for members who wish to be involved in the ongoing policy development and policy setting processes of the organisation. The PAG provides a structured avenue for members to actively shape the policy setting of the organisation.

It is comprised of between 6-15 members and, following an open call for nominations each year, is appointed by a selection committee determined by the Board.

Youth Reference Group

The Youth Reference Group (YRG) is a practical demonstration of YACVic's commitment to the participation of young people in the structures, processes, debates and environments which shape their lives.

It exists to provide a forum for young people to develop proposals, campaigns and projects in relation to YACVic's overall policy. This group also provides advice to the Board about YACVic's youth participation and consultation processes.

The Youth Reference Group is comprised of between 6-15 members and, following an open call for nominations, is appointed by a selection committee determined by the Board.

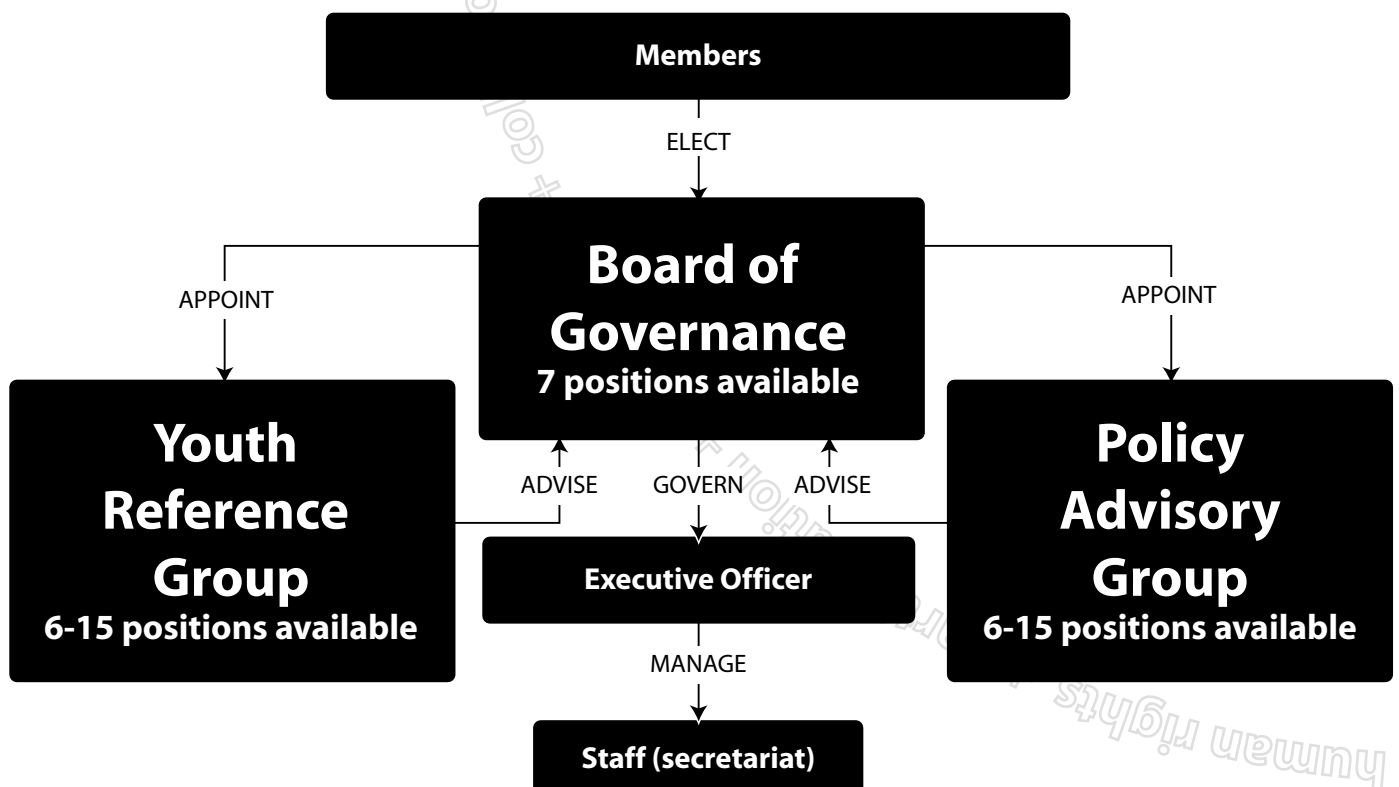
Young Media Spokesperson

One of the official spokespeople of YACVic, the Young Media Spokesperson is directly elected by YACVic members at the AGM.

The Young Media Spokesperson is a member of both the Board and Youth Reference Group.

Note: An exemption to the Equal Opportunity Act (1995) granted by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has allowed for membership of the Youth Reference Group and position of the Young Media Spokesperson to be restricted to people 12-25 years of age (inclusive).

YACVic's structure



policy principles

At YACVic we apply the following principles to all of our work...

1. Human rights

Young women and young men have a right to share resources, to learn, grow and make mistakes in an environment that is safe and healthy, to express and contribute in their society, and to receive the respect of their community. They must be viewed in a context that includes families, friends, and their wider community and cultural heritage, not as an isolated entity requiring distinct and separate attention.

2. Participation

If improved services for young people are to be achieved, processes must be established to encourage and allow them to contribute to their communities, and to the political processes that define the structure of their lives and opportunities. Involving young people at planning and individual decision making levels and in setting priorities is essential.

3. Flexibility

A broad range of services and resources are necessary in order to acknowledge, address and celebrate the diversity and individual variability of young women and young men, the backgrounds they come from and the potential they hold for the future.



Liz Davies



Anna Wood



Patty Etcell

4. Collaboration

Cooperative working relationships are required between government at all levels, non-government organisations, the private sector, and across disciplinary boundaries to develop effective and equitable use of resources. An integrated approach to planning which crosses sector boundaries is essential to the achievement of goals. YACVic supports focus on outcomes and on recognising and working towards the future of young people in our communities rather than band-aiding or damage control responses.

5. Early intervention

Public policy and service provision should be based on prevention and education for young women and young men, rather than response to escalating crises. Provision of real options and choices are vital to a young persons transition to adulthood. The school system, both through curriculum and student support staff, offers an ideal forum for providing early intervention and prevention strategies.

6. Resourcing

Level of resources accessible to young people and to the youth serving sectors should be reflective of the number of young people in the community and the level of need presented. Improved access to services and resources, both physically and in terms of the knowledge about available services, is integral.

7. Affirmative action

Proactive strategies based on affirmative action are required in order to adequately address the issues facing young women and young men as they move into the 21st century, and to redress the inequities faced by those confronted by additional disadvantage.

8. Diversity

All young people irrespective of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, gender identity or ability should be able to access services and programs. Service delivery must be developed on the premise that young people are not a homogenous group.



Dalal Samaan



Paul Van Holsteyn



Sally Goldner

who's who at YACVic

To members of the YACVic Board of Governance, Youth Reference Group and Policy Advisory Group who have donated their time, energy, ideas and enthusiasm to maintaining YACVic as Victoria's leading policy advocate on young people's issues, thank you.

Board of Governance

Mary Aldred
 Rowena Allen
 Matthew Bubb (Treasurer and Public Officer)
 Jamie Crosby (Chairperson until May)
 Lise Dalla Torre (Young Media Spokesperson)
 Peter Newling
 Joanne Scott
 Felicity Sloman (Chairperson from May)

Youth Reference Group

Michelle Blanchard
 Lise Dalla Torre
 Patty Etccl
 Michael Feller
 Emma Fry
 Heather Hutchinson
 Sarah Meredith
 Emily Morrison
 Jade Nolan
 Funda Ogretir
 Zack Pretlove
 Bek Saltmarsh
 Chrissy Singh
 Nawel Taha
 Paul Van Holsteyn
 Kia Virtanan
 Natasha Whitelaw

Policy Advisory Group

Michael Beresford-Smith
 Julian Bondy
 Sherri Bruinhout
 Liz Davies
 Anita Doyle
 Ken Ferdinands
 Denise Francisco
 Carmel Guerra
 Christine Harrison
 Roger Holdsworth
 Sheree Limbrick
 Craig Marshall
 Peter Newling
 Lee Smallwood
 Heather Stewart

Secretariat

Executive Officer
 Janet Jukes

Policy Officer
 Paula Grogan

Communications Officer
 Alex Markham

Administration Officer
 Dalal Samaan (from April)
 Anna Wood (until Feb)

Finance Officer
 Sally Goldner

Jamie Crosby



Michael Feller



Roger Holdsworth



Michelle Blanchard



Rowena Allen

Matt Bubb

Lise Dalla Torre

Felicity Sloman

Joanne Scott

Peter Newling

Mary Aldred



Board of Governance

year in brief

Events and consultations run by YACVic

- 18/9/01: *I'm not racist but... Combating racism and discrimination* forum, in conjunction with Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (CMYI)
- 30/1/02 Consultation for YACVic's submission to the Volatile Substance Inhalation Inquiry
- 7/2/02: *Bringing in the Bacon*, a philanthropy and funding forum
- 14/2/02: *Give and Take*. Income support forum
- 12/4/02: *Wanna whinge?* Complaints forum
- 28/6/02: Youth Development Round Table
- 9-10/5/02: *Reversing the Drift*, a solutions summit for young people and workers with young people in rural and regional Victoria
- 10/5/02 *Bringing in the Bacon 2* (rural focus)

Submissions, reports and discussion papers

- June 2002: *Young People And Public Internet Access: A Qualitative Analysis Of Barriers, Opportunities And Advantages*
- May 2002: *Rural life of us: A report on young people and workers with young people in Country Victoria* (in conjunction with the Centre for Adolescent Health)
- April 2002: *Wanna Whinge* forum report
- March 2002: *Give and Take* forum report
- February 2002: Submission to the Volatile Substance Inhalation Inquiry
- January 2002: *At what cost? The impact of funding cuts to the FReeZA program 2002*
- October 2001: Submission to Knowledge, Innovation, Skills and Creativity. Achieving the Goals and Targets for Victoria's Education System
- September 2002: *I'm not racist but...* forum report
- August 2001: Proposal for a Youth Policy Advisory Council
- August 2001: Submission to the Draft Proposal for a Peaceful Assemblies Bill

YACVic representation on committees and working groups

- Australian Drug Foundation, DrugInfo Clearing House Reference Group
- Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) the new national youth peak
- Attorney Generals Advisory Committee on Gay Lesbian and Transgender Issues
- Centrelink Student Services Partnerships Group
- Crime Prevention Victoria, Reducing Youth Offending Working Group
- Inner City Regional Youth Committee
- Juvenile Justice Round Table (Minister Pike)
- Knives and Bladed Weapons research project Reference Group
- Local Government Statewide Youth Services Network
- Melbourne Gateway Reconnect Advisory Committee
- National Youth Week Reference Group
- Northern Metro Regional Youth Committee
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Regional Network
- Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) Juvenile Justice Working Group
- VCOSS Welfare Reform Working Group
- VCOSS Education Working Group
- VCOSS Peaks Forum
- VicHealth Ssafe In Schools Network (Same Sex Attracted Friendly Environments)
- Victoria Police External Reference Group on Youth
- Western Metro Regional Youth Committee
- Youth Accommodation Working Group
- YouthLaw - young people's legal rights service, Committee of Management
- Youth Round Table Reference Groups (various)



Attendance at presentations, events, forums and conferences

- Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) congress
- AYAC inaugural AGM (Canberra)
- Centenary of Federation Youth Forum
- Centre for Adolescent Health Conference
- Centre for Public Policy (Melbourne University)
- Chroming Public Hearing
- CMYI Youth Roundtable
- Crime Prevention Victoria Strategy Launch
- Children's Welfare Association (CWA) policy forums (various)
- Defence for Children International - Australia AGM
- Diversity Conference (Geelong)
- Enabling State Forum (Youth Research Centre)
- Generating Community Engagement in Policy Development Conference (Canberra)
- Jobwatch launch of Hairdressers Handbook
- Gippsland Leadership
- Key Directions in Women's Safety Launch
- Living Standards Forum
- Local Government Youth Services Conference
- Various Youth Roundtables
- Pride and Prejudice launch
- Push On 2002 launch
- Right to Party Safely launch (Centre Against Sexual Assault)
- Speak Out rural conference (Albury/Wodonga)
- VCOSS Annual General Meeting
- VCOSS Better futures juvenile justice forum
- VCOSS Social Policy Congress
- VCOSS State budget debrief
- VicHealth Annual General Meeting
- VicHealth Thinking Well Symposium
- Victorian Secondary Students Network Conference (Ballarat)
- View from the Street launch (Open Family)
- Werribee Legal Service, Youth law forum
- Western Young Peoples Independent Network (WYPIN) Harmony Day
- Youth Parliament (Southern RYC)
- YouthLaw launch

Meetings and networking

We couldn't possibly list all of the people and organisations that YACVic has met with over the past year, but the following list provides an overview of the key organisations, government departments or politicians we have consulted with.

Key consultative and advocacy meetings with government and politicians

- Centrelink
- Industrial Relations Victoria
- Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs)
 - Capital City LLEN
 - Frankston/Mornington Peninsula LLEN
 - Gateway LLEN
- Local Learning and Employment Skills Commission (at *Reversing the Drift*)
- Minister for Community Services, Bronwyn Pike
- Office of Dr Denis Napthine, Leader of the Opposition
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Office of Women's Policy
- Parliamentary Secretary to Cabinet, Gavin Jennings
- Quarterly meetings with Minister for Youth Affairs Monica Gould (current) and Justin Madden (former)
- Regional Youth Committees (RYCs)
 - Barwon South Western RYC
 - Central Highlands RYC
 - Goulburn RYC
 - South West RYC
- Regional Youth Committee Chairs Meetings
- Regular meetings with the Office for Youth Director and senior policy staff
- RMIT Youth Affairs Course Advisory Committee
- Shadow Minister for Community Services, Lorraine Elliot (State)
- Shadow Minister for Youth Affairs, Nicola Roxon (Federal)
- State budget lockup
- Victoria Police

Key consultative and advocacy meetings with non-government organisations

- Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
- Australian Drug Foundation
- Australian Research Centre for Health Sex and Society (ARCSHS)
- Ausyouth
- Boroondara Youth Services Network
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Community Childcare Victoria
- Council for Homeless Persons
- CMYI
- Diversity Victoria Coalition
- Education Foundation
- Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria (EOCV)
- Foundation for Young Australians
- Frontyard Youth Services
- Kingston Youth Network
- Melbourne City Mission
- Moonee Valley Youth Services
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- National Youth Housing Coalition (NYCH)
- Northern Region Youth Network
- Open Family
- President of Children's Court, Judge Jennifer Coate
- Reconnect
- Reichstein Foundation
- SYN FM
- VicHealth
- VCOSS
- Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)
- Western Young Peoples Independent Network (WYPIN)
- Whitelion
- Women's Health in the South East (WHISE)
- Youth Link gathering
- Youth Performing Arts Australia (YPAA)
- Youth Research Centre (Melbourne University)

policy report

Each week I find myself thinking 'next week has to quieter'. But it never is. There are more submissions to write, more meetings to attend and more newspaper headlines to respond to! There has rarely been a quiet moment which has meant a challenging but very exciting year and one in which we've seen a lot of our hard work pay off. As always, it's impossible to document everything we've been involved with throughout the last year but following are a few of the main highlights.



Forums

Our policy forums are designed to inform young people and workers with young people about key policy and sector issues. The topics reflect issues that have been raised in our consultations with members and that link into policy debates happening in the wider community. Bringing together key stakeholders, workers and young people allows us to have in-depth discussions about issues, problems and solutions. A report is produced following each forum which outlines the key themes discussed and we incorporate this information into our ongoing policy work. Here's a brief outline of each forum.

I'm not racist but...

We hosted *I'm not racist, but - combating racism and discrimination* in conjunction with the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (CMYI) in September 2001 at the Kensington Community Centre. The forum attracted young people and workers who wanted to discuss how racism impacts on young people and more importantly, how communities can work together to combat discrimination. This forum was timely given the issues surrounding September 11 and the introduction of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Legislation in January 2002. Speakers at this forum included Di Sisely, Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria; Gavin Brown, Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Co-op; and Kavitha Chandra and Ervina Lay, Western Young People's Independent Network.

Give and Take

In February we held *Give and Take: the social security system and young people* at Brunswick Town Hall. The forum provided an opportunity to hear about recent changes to social security policy and to consider how this policy translates into practice. A representative from the Department of Family and Community Services presented the *Australian's Working Together* social security package and three young people spoke about their experiences with the social security system. As well as workers and young people, several representatives from the Commonwealth Government and Centrelink attended the forum which allowed for a constructive exchange of information.

Wanna Whinge

The *Wanna Whinge? Supporting young people to use complaint systems* forum provided an opportunity to hear from a range of complaint-handling bodies. We know that young people rarely make complaints but when they do, they often seek assistance from adults. This forum was designed to inform workers with young people about how complaint processes work and how they can support young people to make complaints. This was held in April at the Richmond Town Hall and included representatives from the Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria, the Office of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, the Welfare Rights Unit, Ombudsman Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service.

Bringing in the Bacon

Bringing in the Bacon aimed to provide the youth sector with information about some of the major philanthropic bodies in Victoria and their funding processes. Representatives from the Lance Reichstein Charitable Fund, Myer Foundation The Foundation for Young Australians and the Jack Brockhoff Foundation presented at this forum. This was an overwhelming success with around 150 people attending. We also held a *Bringing in the Bacon 2* at our *Reversing the Drift* summit and this focused more specifically on funding for rural and regional organisations.

FReeZA

The ongoing funding of Freeza, a program to assist young people and local communities to organise drug and alcohol free events, had been an issue of concern throughout 2001. In November FReeZA providers were notified of a funding cut to the program and many members expressed concern about the future viability of the program. To understand the impact of the funding cuts, we conducted a phone survey of FReeZA providers which highlighted the importance of the program, particularly in rural and regional Victoria. We published a report, *At what cost? the impact of funding cuts to the FReeZA program 2002* and we used this research to lobby the government for more sustainable funding levels. We were very pleased when the Government committed \$8 million over 4 years to the program as part of this year's state budget. This commitment not only secured the future of FReeZA but also showed the Government was listening to voices of young people.

Volatile substance inhalation

Young people and substance use has been an ongoing issue. In 2001, parliament initiated an inquiry into volatile substance inhalation, commonly known as chroming. In January we organised a consultation to assist us in developing a response to this inquiry. Thanks to the level of interest within the community about 'chroming', largely generated by a Herald Sun article on the topic, this consultation attracted a large number of people and we were able to develop a comprehensive response. We also gave a verbal submission to the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee during the public hearings. Since then, we've voiced concern about a private members bill which considers banning the sale of spray paint to minors and we've welcomed the introduction of a 'responsible sale of solvents' kit for retailers. As I write this, the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee has not yet handed down its final report but we look forward to reading the recommendations arising from this inquiry and monitoring the development of this issue.

Rural Life of Us

As part of its re-establishment process, YACVic made a commitment to meet with workers in rural and regional Victoria to discuss the unique issues faced by people working with young people in the country. At the same time the Centre for Adolescent Health (CAH) began to explore how it could better support and resource rural and remote young people and workers with young people. As a result, CAH and YACVic decided to work together to undertake a state-wide consultation with regional and rural workers. This was achieved with the assistance of the Regional Youth Committees. This consultation not only highlighted the unique issues facing young people in rural Victoria but also helped us to develop stronger networks throughout the state. The

outcomes of this consultation were published in a report *Rural life of us: young people and workers with young people in country Victoria* and this research provided the foundation for our *Reversing the Drift* summit.

Accessing technology

This research was undertaken in response to concerns that some young people are becoming further disadvantaged by their inability to access computing technologies. It is often assumed that young people regularly access computers. However, we are aware that many young people do not use the public terminals available in schools and libraries because these environments aren't appropriate for them. The aim of the research was to examine young people's use of computers and the internet and to consider how public internet access sites might be better tailored to suit the needs of young people. The study was undertaken by Aleena Chia a third Year student in the Department of Political Science, Melbourne University, while on placement at YACVic and I would like to thank her for all her hard work.

This report only provides a snapshot of what we've done this year. I haven't even mentioned our work around homelessness, graffiti, juvenile justice, unemployment. . .

My work would not have been possible without the support of the rest of the YACVic team, the Board, the Policy Advisory Group and the Youth Reference Group. Thanks also to all our members who have taken the time to provide me with invaluable information and advice. Policy development hinges on broad consultation and we work hard to hear from as many people as possible notwithstanding the often limited resources and time available to do this. Networking with the sector and developing strong partnerships with workers and young people has been a highlight of the year and I look forward to working with you all over the coming months.

Paula Grogan
Policy Officer

communications report

Being a communications officer at YACVic involves more than putting a spit and polish on our information products. Over the year my role has ranged from events coordination, media liaison and graphic design to sector development and support work for our youth reference group.



Media

Over the last two years YACVic has established itself as a key information source for the media on issues affecting young people. This year we have enjoyed an excellent media profile, particularly in rural areas, primarily due to the success of *Reversing the Drift*. VicHealth, one of the sponsors of the summit, were brilliant in their assistance with media coverage and monitoring. I'd particularly like to thank Melissa Corkum and Jackie Van Vugt from VicHealth for their support.

At YACVic we firmly believe that young people's voices should be present in mainstream media debate and one of the ways we do this is to support the role of a young media spokesperson. Over the past year Lise Dalla Torre has fulfilled this role in a committed and professional way, commenting on issues ranging from FReeZA funding cuts to chroming. I congratulate Lise on her fantastic work in dealing with a difficult role and hope that her energies will contribute to encouraging mainstream media to take young people more seriously.

YiKES!

YiKES! is our print newsletter which is sent out to all YACVic members. This year *YiKES!* went bi-monthly and we increased the number of pages. A typical edition features a news in brief section, YACVic policy updates, articles on best practice and sector development, plus a calendar of events. Apart from articles on specific issues such as racism and income support, this year *YiKES!* has covered organisations and initiatives such as student and youth radio SYN FM, Streetwise Communications, the Clockwork Youth Health Program and the Victorian Secondary Student Network. *YiKES!* is one of the main ways we communicate with our membership. We're always looking for articles so if you'd like to let other people in the state know what you're up to then you should contribute to *YiKES!*

YACVic website

The YACVic website continues to grow with new resources being added regularly. Our website provides a range of information on the youth sector in Victoria such as where to study youth work and resources on youth participation, and has links to young people's organisations. It also serves a partly archival function, all YACVic publications, policy submissions and media releases are accessible from the website.

One of our most popular resources has been the *Debt Sux* financial information sheets which are available to be downloaded and distributed from the website. *Debt Sux* also appears in our print newsletter *YiKES!* Many thanks to financial counsellor Jenny Lawton for her continuing support in writing *Debt Sux*.

Email list

The YACVic announcement email list has grown from 200 subscribers at the start of the year to over 500 and provides an instant, cheap and effective means of providing information to our members. We are constantly surprised by the immediate and often overwhelming response that we have from information posted on the list about YACVic events or research.

The main function of the list is to distribute our *email bits* electronic newsletter which contains information about events and resources for young people and workers with young people in Victoria. Given the number of youth focussed email discussion lists such as Yarn, youth.comm and youthgas in Australia, we

have made a conscious decision to limit and moderate postings on the YACVic email list so that we do not double up on information or flood peoples inboxes with emails. Whilst almost all YACVic members have access to email (see graph above) we recognise that many people do have limited access to electronic communication. As such YACVic ensures that all of our publications are also available in print.

Over all this year has been a diverse, interesting and wild ride. I'm not sure if I can be convinced to organise another major conference ever again (i.e. *Reversing the Drift*), but we'll have to see. Thanks to all of the amazing people who have contributed to the organisation over the year, it's the vibrancy of our active membership that really makes this organisation a pleasure to work for.

Alex Markham
Communications Officer



Electronic communication

young media spokesperson

It's been a big year in the news. The inhalation of volatile substances, FReeZA funding and even the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria's *Reversing the Drift* summit have found their way onto the radio, plastered themselves on your television screen and made headlines in the local and daily newspapers.

I was elected to the position of Young Media Spokesperson at last September's Annual General Meeting. Since then, I've had the opportunity to shoot YACVic's name into the media stratosphere, by means of both scary talkback radio and local stations throughout the state, major daily and community newspapers, conference presentations and even television via the ABC's Consumer Dimensions program, in a forum discussing the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Reversing the Drift was a remarkable achievement for YACVic and I am glad that my tenure as Young Media Spokesperson coincided with it. My role as Young Media spokesperson has also allowed me to be a contributor to the Board of Governance, and an active member in the Youth Reference Group, undertaking such projects as the production of a SYNFM radio show.

I would like to thank the Secretariat and the Board of Governance for the support I received from them in my position and I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to fill the position of Young Media Spokesperson for 2001-2002.



Lise Dalla Torre
Young Media Spokesperson

YACVic media overview

Media releases

- 18/09/01: Young people's forum condemns racism in Victoria
- 09/01/02: Yet another blow to young people in country Victoria
- 23/01/02: Meaningful debate needed on chroming issue
- 03/04/02 Young people meet to reverse the drift
- 20/04/02 How do you keep country kids in schools?
- 20/04/02 Confronting unemployment in the bush
- 20/04/02 Top guest speakers address the alarming issues facing young people in rural Victoria at the 'Reversing the Drift' summit
- 20/04/02 Living in a rural setting can affect your mental health.
- 07/05/02 State budget: the Government has listened to young people
- 09/05/02 Rural young people drifting away, warns new report
- 11/06/02 A welcome first step in tackling the issue of solvent misuse by young people

Media coverage

Over the year YACVic has averaged around two interviews with the media a week including commercial, community and ethnic radio stations or print media. Rather than listing all of YACVic's media contacts over the year we have provided a snapshot of the overwhelming media contact generated around *Reversing the Drift*, YACVic's solutions summit for young people and workers with young people in country Victoria, which was held in Shepparton on May 4 and 5, 2002.

Coverage ranged from standard radio and print media news stories, to in-depth interviews with summit presenters and vox pops of summit participants. ABC even made a short digital video documentary (available on the ABC website) on the summit!

The following list provides an overview of the range of media agencies that covered *Reversing the Drift*

- Sunraysia Daily, Mildura (2 articles)
- Herald Sun (2 articles)
- Hamilton Spectator
- Shepparton News
- Shepparton Advertiser
- ABC North West Radio WA, Karratha News
- ABC Tasmania Country Hour
- ABC 666, Canberra
- ABC 774 3LO
- Bush Telegraph, Radio National
- ABC Co-FM (Albury)
- WIN TV News
- ABC South Western Country Hour, Warrnambool
- ABC Gippsland, Sale (2 articles)
- ABC Rural Report, Horsham
- 5CK, Port Pirie SA (2 articles)
- Morning Show ABC Riverina, Wagga Wagga
- ABC Co-FM, Albury
- 3CS, Colac (2 articles)
- ABC South East, Mount Gambier

youth reference group report

The Youth Reference Group is a practical demonstration of YACVic's commitment to involve young people as participants in the structures, processes, debate and environment, which affect their lives.



The Youth Reference Group (YRG) consists of 15 young people between the ages of 12 and 25, including Lise Dalla Torre, YACVic's Young Media Spokesperson. The YRG has the role of providing advice to the YACVic Board and Secretariat on policy issues, assisting in the development of policy and other initiatives and facilitate the exchange of information between young people, youth organisations and YACVic.

2002 has primarily been a year of formation and development for the Youth Reference Group as the group has defined their role and embarked on a number of practical projects.

Reversing the Drift

Lise Dalla Torre, Paul Van Holsteyn and Michelle Blanchard represented the Youth Reference Group at YACVic's Reversing the Drift Solutions Summit in Shepparton on the 9th and 10th May 2002. The three members of the YRG ran an hour and a half long workshop entitled *Enhancing Youth Participation in Rural and Regional Victoria*. The workshop attracted approximately 60 people, which was well over the maximum of 50. The workshop took the form of an interactive discussion where participants had the opportunity to identify barriers to meaningfully involving young people in their organisations, as well as discussing possible solutions to these barriers.

From this workshop it was acknowledged that no one individual or organisation has all the answers, but that there was an awful lot that could be learnt by sitting down and discussing these issues as a group. Both the Youth Reference Group and the workshop

participants have noted that they learnt a lot from this experience at *Reversing the Drift* and that many individuals have been able to pass this knowledge on to others.

Yikes... on SYN fm

During June as part of SYN fm's test broadcast, Michelle Blanchard, Paul Van Holsteyn and Lise Dalla Torre, again represented the Youth Reference Group, this time producing a weekly youth current affairs programme on 90.7 SYN fm. For four weeks, the trio took to the airwaves to look at the issues facing young people in Victoria and how these issues were being addressed. Their first show looked at coping with exam stress and featured an interview with Joe Elias from reachout.com.au, as well as interviews with a number of young people who shared their hints for dealing with the stress of exams. Week two of Yikes, focussed on young people's involvement in the creative arts and featured interviews with Freeza providers, members of local bands and one of the organisers of the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge. Our third programme explored why 'Debt Sux', where the Youth Reference Group took the financial info sheets, which appear in the *YIKES!* newsletter to the airwaves, looking at issues affecting young people when it comes to credit cards and mobile phones.

The fourth and final show of Yikes, featured an interview with the Hon. Monica Gould, Minister for Education Services and Youth Affairs, Janet Jukes, the Executive Officer of YACVic, Carmel Guerra, from the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues and Arron Wood, who was the winner of the Young Australian of the Year Award in the Environment category, who each took the opportunity to share their vision for young people in Victoria.

Being part of the SYN fm test broadcast allowed us to become creators, not consumers of media. The four-week series was a great success and as a result the programme was nominated in the Radio category of the National Youth Media Awards.

Future prospects

The YRG have identified media representation of young people as a particular issue that they wish to address. As a result a number of members of the YRG have established a working group to investigate this issue further.

The Youth Reference Group is also hoping to participate in some skill development workshops, such as public speaking towards the end of 2002.

In conclusion, 2002 has been an important year for the Youth Reference Group, as it has established its priorities as well as participated in a number of projects which have looked at issues affecting young people in Victoria.

See page 7 for information on members of this year's Youth Reference Group.

policy advisory group report

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) is a group that provides policy advice to the YACVic Board and is representative of a broad range of services and key stakeholders in the youth sector.

The PAG has a broad knowledge of youth affairs and each member has specific knowledge about particular issues impacting on young people throughout Victoria. The PAG has met four times in 2002 and has contributed to several policy discussions throughout the year at meetings and through electronic communication.

A PAG meeting incorporates a comprehensive YACVic update from the Secretariat; immediate responses to policy issues raised by the Secretariat and the PAG; and ongoing policy discussions which relate to policy and service gaps, emerging issues and policy concerns.

At the beginning of 2002 the PAG identified a number of policy and service gaps. These included YACVic's lack of a clear policy statement in the drug and alcohol area and no current position on drug courts, safe injection houses/sites and harm minimisation. A working group was set up to develop broad policy principles on alcohol and other substance abuse. The sub-committee has developed a policy statement on the issue. It articulates the continuum of understandings of harm minimisation, and the continuum of young people who workers may need to address. The final document will look like a fact sheet with a list of resources that workers could refer to for more information.

It was also identified that YACVic's policy principles document did not include a reference to sexual orientation/gender identity. This document has since been amended to include this.

The PAG reviewed and commented on draft policy fact sheets. The content will form YACVic's policy platform and the FACT sheets will be used as resources for the sector.

Emerging issues and policy concerns identified at the beginning of 2002 focussed around: the Victorian Youth Strategy; whole of government processes; YACVic's focus to include all young people; Regional Youth Committees; YACVic's relationship with the government; and the definition of youth development.

Policy discussions throughout the year addressed the following issues:

- Victorian Youth Strategy and Office for Youth directions
- Relationship between Regional Youth Committees and other Sub-Regional Structures
- YACVic's submission to the Inquiry into the Inhalation of Volatile Substances (Chroming)

- Policy development within an election cycle
- Australian Council for Children and Youth Organisations - Draft Standards and Self Assessment Reports
- Changes to the RMIT Youth Work Course
- Youth Services Grants
- Labor's proposal for a National Children and Young People's Commission
- Truants to be tracked on the Internet
- The widening of police search powers
- The placing of young people in remand
- Police checks for employment in the youth sector
- Paedophile register

Another working group was established to develop a media protocol similar to the existing protocol on the reporting of suicide. It is envisaged that this working group will contribute to the Media Representation Inquiry.

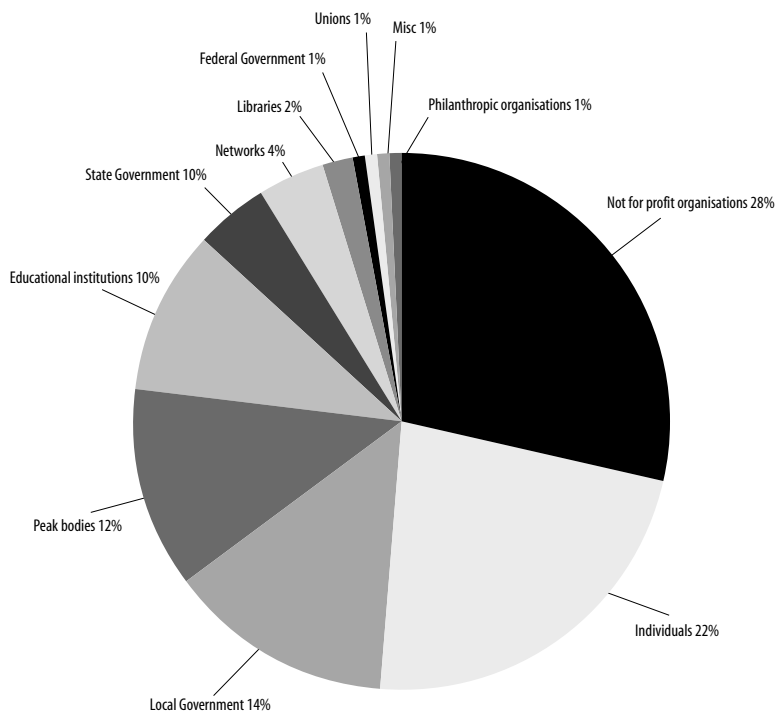
Other issues identified under Policy and Service Gaps are: young people and public space; transport across the state; young people leaving care and protection; alternative school settings; juvenile justice reforms; and the TAFE and training sectors' lack of involvement and inclusion of young people. Further discussions have not taken place addressing these issues but they remain on the agenda for future policy planning and debate. In the meantime the PAG will focus on its priorities and respond to key issues as they arise.

Denise Francisco
Convenor

See page 7 for information on members of this year's Policy Advisory Group.

membership report

Throughout the year YACVic members have consistently shown a high level of interest and commitment to the organisation. This is demonstrated by the excellent attendances at our forums and great response rate we have from information sent out via our communication networks.



Membership profile

What kinds of organisations and people are members of YACVic?

To ensure that the needs of young people are met across all sectors of the community YACVic encourages the membership of organisations and individuals that might not see themselves as part of the "youth sector" but who work with young people in some way. Whilst the mainstay of our membership are generally direct service agencies that specialise in youth services our membership also covers neighbourhood centres, community legal and health centres, and research and policy agencies.

Individual members of YACVic are typically young people or students, plus long-time supporters of YACVic who have worked within the youth field in a variety of capacities and have carried their YACVic membership with them through a range of organisations.

YACVic continues to have excellent links with local government youth services who make up 14% of our membership. Over the year YACVic's support for this part of our membership has been typified by our involvement in the establishment of a state-wide local government youth services network.

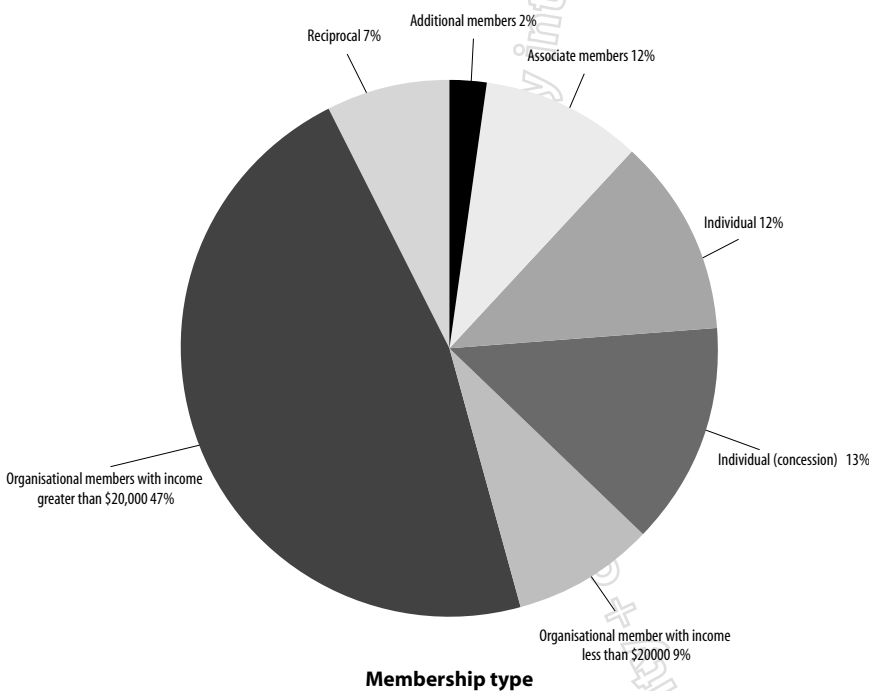
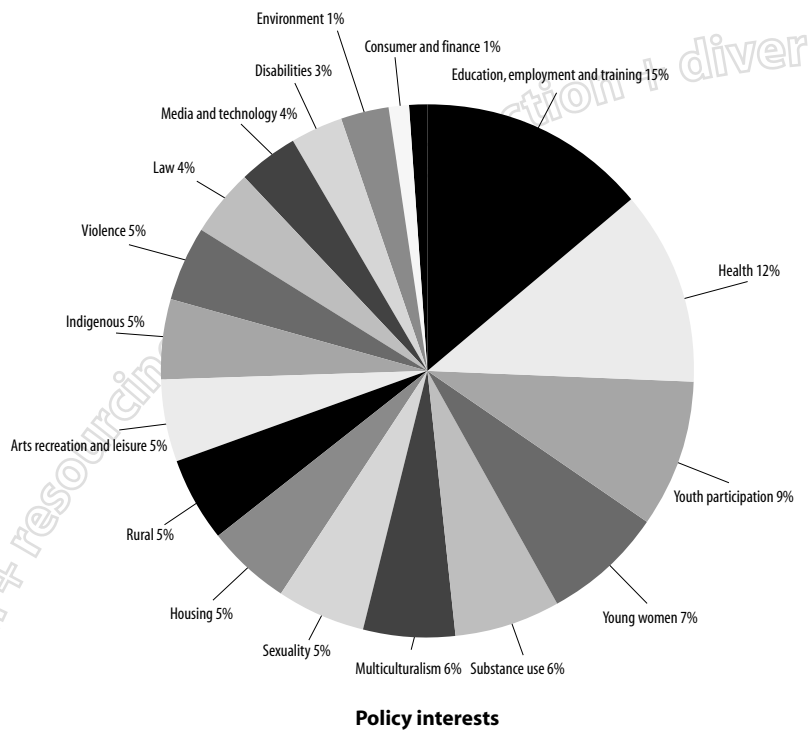
Peak bodies are the next largest membership group, providing YACVic with key links across a variety of sectors such as housing or health. To enhance these links YACVic regularly participates in a number of cross-sector forums including the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) peaks forum.

Secondary schools, university departments and student representative bodies make up the category of education institutions. Over the year YACVic has collaborated with a number of educational institutions on research projects including RMIT and LaTrobe University. State government membership includes the Office for Youth, and the networks category refers to Local Learning & Employment Networks (LLENs), Regional Youth Committees (RYCs) and School Focussed Youth Services. YACVic sits on a number of Regional Youth Committees and this year we had a particularly successful collaboration with both LLENs and RYCs around our *Reversing the Drift* summit.

Overall anyone and everyone is welcome to become a YACVic member, so long as you have a commitment to promoting the rights, interests and well-being of young people in Victoria and are willing to contribute to a vibrant and dynamic community organisation.

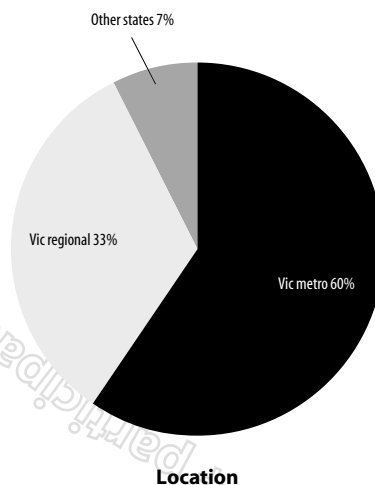
What are YACVic members interested in?

When you become a member of YACVic we collect information about what areas of policy you are interested in. This assists us in focusing our work and also enables us to draw on the expertise of our members around particular issues, such as substance abuse or homelessness. As you can see from the graph the spread of interests are quite even with health issues and employment, education and training standing out as two of the major areas our membership are interested in.



Location of YACVic membership

Victorian regional/rural membership has increased by 17% from last financial year. This can be partly attributed to the success of the *Reversing the Drift* rural summit.



Types of YACVic membership

YACVic has five main membership categories: organisational members, associate members, additional members, individual members and reciprocal members. All members are entitled to all printed materials despatched from YACVic. Government departments (not including Local Government Youth Services) are entitled to become associate members only. Additional members are affiliates of a larger umbrella organisation which is an organisational members of YACVic. Reciprocal members are organisations which exchange periodicals with YACVic.

reversing the drift

This year YACVic held a solutions summit in Shepparton called Reversing the Drift on May 9 and 10. Around 350 young people and workers with young people attended over the two days.

We chose the name, Reversing the Drift, because our state-wide consultations last year impressed upon us that many young people are leaving country Victoria in search of greater opportunities in the major cities and that this is having a devastating effect on local communities. Many feel socially isolated and say they are forced to leave because of the lack of employment and recreational opportunities and because they feel that there is simply no place for them in their communities. In many communities young people have no other choice than to leave.

Too often young people are seen as the problem rather than part of the solution. So rather than focussing on the problems, the aim of Reversing the Drift was to highlight the myriad of innovative solutions already put in place out on the ground across the state. The summit showcased over 50 projects and services throughout Victoria that are working to develop community identity, celebrate diversity, enhance social connectedness, promote community capacity building and foster rural renewal. We had a overwhelmingly positive response from the summit with one of the main gripes being that there were too many choices for presentations and workshops at one time!

This summit comes at a time in which workers with young people in country Victoria are increasingly operating in isolation, in an environment where resources are often limited and funding insufficient, short term or uncertain. A lack of a coordinated approach to resource distribution by state and federal government and the lack of consideration of local needs seriously hampers the ability of service agencies to adequately address the needs of young people in rural and regional Victoria. The Rural Life of Us, a report published by YACVic and the Centre for Adolescent Health which was launched at Reversing the Drift, looks at these kinds of issues in more detail.

By bringing together young people, workers with young people, local community leaders and government representatives, we hope that this summit provided an important step in addressing some of the issues facing young people in country Victoria.

No gathering of this size takes place in a vacuum and we would like to thank the efforts of the summit reference committee: Liz Davies; Rowena Allen; Bek Saltmarsh; Richard Hill; Paula Grogan; Jennifer Hippisley; Samira Mohamed; Christine Harrison and Alex

Markham. The amazing commitment of Michelle Blanchard, Paul Van Holsteyn and Lise Dalla Torre from the YACVic Youth Reference Group rates a special mention as do the many young people who assisted in facilitating workshop sessions.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank our generous sponsors without whom YACVic would not have been able to provide all of the free registrations for young people or the low registration fees and concessions for the rest of us. In particular thank you to VicHealth, Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network and the Goulburn Regional Youth Committee. Special thanks also go to Rotary clubs and Regional Youth Committees across Victoria for sponsoring young people to attend this event.

Finally we'd like to acknowledge the commitment of the young people and workers who came and presented their solutions to the summit. The range and diversity of presentations was a key factor in the success of the summit.

Themes of the summit

Theme 1: Claiming a place for young people in rural & regional Victoria

We all know what it's like to stand outside that exclusive shop window, wishing we could go inside and try that special item on, but at the same time knowing that if we did the assistant might not take us seriously affirming our fears that we don't 'belong'.

Unfortunately this is the way that many young people in rural and regional Victoria feel every day of their lives. They don't feel they belong in the areas where they've grown up, not because they don't like it there, but simply because there doesn't seem to be a space for them – somewhere where they are valued, where their voices are listened to and where they are given choices and opportunities.

Too often, we see representations of young people as problems not as positive contributors or we only value their contribution in a token way. We must challenge the policies, structures and procedures that reinforce these stereotypes and work towards the active and meaningful participation of young people.

Too often we do not provide young people with appropriate spaces where they can develop their own identity and ideas and where they are given opportunities to be leaders and change-makers within their own communities. Spaces where they feel safe and supported, free from discrimination and violence and where their diversity is celebrated. We need to think about how we can better support young people so that they do feel valued and so that they are given an opportunity to claim their unique place in our communities.

Theme 2: Social connection - strategies to combat isolation

We hear a lot about the value of community building, capacity building and community connection but what do those words mean and how does it happen?

At a basic level, we all need someone to talk to, someone we can depend on and someone who understands us. This is particularly important for young people. The transitions from childhood to adolescence and adulthood can be difficult as young people look to increase their independence and find their place in society. It's a time when we need to reassure them that they have a full and useful role to play in our communities.

But too often we hear of young people who feel they are not connected to the community. They often say that there are too few opportunities available to them to get involved and too few people to turn to if they need support and assistance. These issues are further compounded for young people in rural areas, where resources, technologies, and people are not so easily accessible and where the tyranny of distance just adds to feelings of isolation.

If we expect young people to make a successful transition to independence, we need to assist them to access networks and resources that provide them with opportunities to develop connections to both their local community and to their communities of interest – that is networks of people who share similar cultural, artistic, sporting, social and recreational interests.

We also need to provide stable and supportive environments and relationships – be it on the sports field, in the classroom, the workplace or in the home.

Most importantly, to overcome feelings of isolation, young people must be given an opportunity to help shape the community they're a part of. When we seek to assist young people, we often lock them out of this process. Yet they may be best placed to identify the issues and determine the solutions. We must recognise that young people can often show us the way when we're making decisions about issues which affect them.

It is through creating opportunities and involving young people that we help to develop individual capacities and in turn strengthen a sense of community.

Theme 3: Sustainability, creating long-term opportunities, long term solutions

How are we - young people, workers, parents and bureaucrats – going to sustain the energy and enthusiasm we have experienced over the last two days? Will we go back to our communities and review our policies, practices and structures to ensure positive and sustainable changes for young people?

So how do we achieve sustainability?

We must think beyond strict economic terms because sustainability is not just about securing adequate and ongoing funding. We need to consider social and environmental sustainability as well as the financial.

Firstly, we need to think about how we sustain our social capital – our people and our communities. This involves providing caring and safe communities where young people are free from discrimination and violence and where diversity is celebrated. Communities that provide greater opportunities and choices for young people to give them a sense of optimism about their future.



Second, we need to recognise the importance of the environment. Environmental sustainability is vital to achieve economic and social growth. To ensure healthy and diverse environments we need to re-think our planning and conservation processes. This is particularly true in rural and regional Victoria where the natural environment typically provides the backbone of the community.

Finally, we need to work towards economic sustainability. This involves linking communities, reducing inequalities and providing equitable access to resources. At an individual level, we must ensure young people can access education, employment, income and housing to sustain a reasonable standard of health and well-being and to allow them to actively participate in their communities.

Sustainability can be achieved if we develop collaborative partnerships that are built on trust and common purpose. Ultimately, if we continue to work together to achieve our vision, we will build a better future for young Victorians.

financial report

YACVic has recorded an operating surplus of \$2,262.12 for the year ended 30 June 2002, after making provision for an increase in member services of \$19,820.00 in the coming financial year.

This excellent result was almost entirely due to the success of the *Reversing the Drift* conference held in May this year that attracted almost 100 registrations above the budgeted predictions. Our congratulations must go to the hardworking organisers, volunteers and the Secretariat staff, without whom this outcome would not have been achieved.

After reviewing the operating results of YACVic for the year ended 30 June 2002, the Board has taken the view that the surplus belongs to the members of YACVic. The Board has therefore decided to allocate the majority of these surplus funds to provide increased services to members, principally by way of increasing the contracted hours of the Secretariat staff in the coming 12 months. Not only will this allow YACVic to undertake further policy and communications work for and with the sector, it will also allow YACVic the opportunity to identify strategic projects which will attract non-core funding from alternative sources. The Board sees this as a priority for the organisation in the coming 12 months.

After consultation with our auditor, the Board has also decided to reverse its decision taken last year to make provision for severance pay. YACVic is in the middle of a 3 year core funding agreement with the State Government, and it is the Board's view that if this core funding agreement was not renewed, YACVic would have sufficient advance notice to make alternative arrangements to ensure that any liability for severance pay could be met. This reversal has had no net effect on the financial position of YACVic.



Matthew Bubb



Special thanks go to
Sally Goldner, YACVic
finance officer

Given the relatively static nature of our core funding, the challenge for the Board in the coming year will be to further strengthen the financial position of YACVic by broadening our funding sources, in particular by identifying additional strategic projects which attract non-core funding.

This has been the first year of operation under the new governance structure, and the Board has worked diligently with the Executive Officer and the secretariat to ensure that appropriate financial policies, budgets and reporting systems are in place to ensure that YACVic's aims are supported by the appropriate use of the organisation's assets. This will be an ongoing process.

It would be remiss of me not to pay tribute to the work of Janet Jukes and the Secretariat staff, who, within the confines of a restrictive budget position, have done a wonderful job representing the interests of young people in Victoria.

Matthew Bubb
Treasurer

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc Statement by Board of Governance

The Board has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and therefore, there is no requirement to apply Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in the preparation of these financial statements. The Board have determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the accounts.

In the opinion of the Board the financial report:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2002 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



Felicity Sloman
(Chairperson)



Matt Bubb
(Treasurer)

Dated this 21st day of August 2002.

financial report

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2002

	Note	2002	2001
		\$	\$
Current Assets			
Cash		123,907	63,195
Receivables		27,595	8,036
Prepayments		2,638	250
Total Current Assets		154,139	71,480
Non Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment		30,670	34,232
Total Assets		184,810	105,712
Current Liabilities			
Payables		24,514	34,152
Provisions		27,844	27,325
Grants in advance		68,750	5,000
Other		1,410	2,836
Total Current Liabilities		122,518	69,313
Net Assets		62,292	36,399
Members Funds			
Cash based Reserves		31,622	2,167
Fixed asset based reserves		30,670	34,232
		62,292	36,399

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30 June 2002

	Note	2002	2001
		\$	\$
Revenue from ordinary activities		340,548	319,795
Employee expenses		(193,153)	(169,771)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(11,213)	(5,836)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(133,920)	(117,744)
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities		2,262	26,444
Increase/(decrease) in reserves from prior year adjustments		20,892	
		23,154	26,444

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

financial report

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2002

	Note	2002	2001
		\$	\$
Cash Flow from Operating Activities			
Receipts			
Receipts from members		14,682	8,619
Operating grants		325,883	307,458
Interest Earned		1,059	1,942
Other receipts		44,575	5,362
Payments			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(317,836)	(234,089)
Cash Flow from Operating Activities		68,363	89,292
Cash Flow from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(7,651)	(28,446)
Cash Flow from Investing Activities		(7,651)	(28,446)
Cash Flow from Financing Activities			
Payment to AMF re: loan account and EYIN share of reserves			(39,623)
Cash Flow from Financing Activities			(39,623)
Net increase/ (decrease) in cash held		60,712	21,223
Cash at the beginning of the year		63,195	41,973
Cash at the end of the year		123,907	63,195

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report

Notes to and forming part of the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2002

Note 1: Statement of Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 [Vic]. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

As a prescribed company the financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 [Vic] and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AAS 1	Statement of Financial Performance
AAS 4	Depreciation
AAS 5	Materiality
AAS 6	Accounting policies
AAS 8	Events occurring after reporting date
AAS 28	Statement of Cash Flows
AAS 36	Statement of Financial Position

No other Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are included at cost, and are depreciated over their estimated useful lives, commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for payments to employees for their pro rata entitlement to annual leave.

Funding Grants

General operating support grants, from the Department of Education, Employment and Training are made on an annual basis and are fully brought to account during the financial year.

Specific project grants, generally made on a non profit or loss basis, are brought to account over the duration of the project, on the basis of actual costs incurred. Unexpended grants at year end, are carried forward in the balance sheet, as a liability to be matched against expenses in future periods.

Where the project period extends beyond year end, an assessment is made at year end as to the financial progress of projects by comparing actual year to date costs against budgeted year to date costs. Where a significant cost overrun has been incurred, a provision for overrun is raised in the accounts to ensure that any significant losses are recognised in the period to which they relate.

financial report

Notes to and forming part of the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2002

Note 2: Revenue	2002	2001
	\$	\$
Operating activities		
Government grants	262,133	302,458
Membership subscriptions	13,272	10,033
Interest received	1,059	1,942
Publications	5,105	-
Forums and training	1,089	-
Other income	57,891	5,362
Total revenue	340,548	319,795

Note 3: Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	2002	2001
	\$	\$
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities has been determined after		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	11,213	5,836
Remuneration of auditor		
- audit services	3,327	2,800
- other services	-	1,175
Total remuneration	3,327	3,975

Note 4: Income tax

The Association is specifically exempt from tax under s(50)10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, and in accordance with the restrictions imposed by exempt status, no asset or income of the Association may be transferred to any member of the Association.

Note 5: Property, plant and equipment	2002	2001
	\$	\$
Furniture and fittings - at cost	4,149	4,149
Less Accumulated depreciation	(711)	(297)
	3,438	3,852
Leasehold improvements	6,028	6,028
Less Accumulated depreciation	(927)	(323)
	5,101	5,705
Office equipment	38,651	31,000
Less Accumulated depreciation	(16,521)	(6,325)
	22,131	24,675
	30,670	34,232

Notes to and forming part of the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2002

Note 6: Grants received in advance	2002	2001
	\$	\$
Youth forums online (Dussledorp Skills forum)		5,000
DEET funding	68,750	
	68,750	5,000

Note 7: Cash flow information	2002	2001
	\$	\$
A) Reconciliation of cash		
Cash at the period's end as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:		
Cash	123,907	63,195
	123,907	63,195

B) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus

Operating surplus	2,262	26,444
Non cash flows in operating surplus		
Depreciation	11,213	(4,564)
Provisions	519	27,325
Other non cash flows		
Movement in reserves	20,892	-
Changes in assets & liabilities		
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(9,736)	12,708
Increase/(decrease) in other liabilities	-	34,113
Increase/(decrease) in grants received in advance	63,750	-
Increase/(decrease) in membership received in advance	1,410	-
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(2,388)	(4,250)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(19,559)	(2,486)

	68,363	89,292
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financial report

J. L. COLLYER & PARTNERS
ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS

1st FLOOR, 63 KINGSWAY, GLEN WAVERLEY, VICTORIA
PO BOX 340 GLEN WAVERLEY, VIC. 3150
PHONE 03 9560 0211 FAX 03 9561 5497
EMAIL jccol@jccol.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

Scope

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of **Youth Affairs Council Victoria Inc.** for the year ended 30th June 2002. The Committee is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

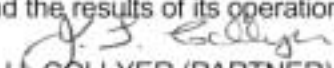
The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included an examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Association's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion the financial report presents fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements the financial position of **Youth Affairs Council Of Victoria Inc.** as at 30th June 2002 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.


J.L. COLLYER (PARTNER)
J.L. COLLYER & PARTNERS
14th August 2002

DIRECTORS
JANE L. COLLYER FCPA · LIONEL R. ARNOLD CA · ANTHONY E.G. FIEDLER CA