

young women and workplace violence

Paper presented to "Sorry's Not Okay" Young Women & Workplace Violence Conference, 27-28 November 2000 (Job Watch, URCOT, Vic. Women's Trust Initiative).

By Janet Jukes, YACVic Executive Officer

Fiona is a 19 year old young women. When I first met Fiona she worked in the canteen that provided food for the staff of a large Internationally recognised Human Rights Organisation.

Fiona had been working in the Canteen for just over 12 months. For the first 9 months everything had been wonderful. Her 1 month, and 3 month performance reviews were glowing. It was a pretty happy workplace, and everyone shared a bit of each other's lives, you know, they all knew when someone met or broke up with their boyfriend, or how their bosses son's first day at school went. Fiona was a hard worker, and the customers all liked her. Fiona got a loan and bought an old Cortina. She also saved up money for the bond and moved out of home.

What went wrong was that Fiona fell in love, and she made the mistake of telling her work mates. You see the problem was that Fiona fell in love with another women.

Firstly, rather than being happy for Fiona almost everyone was shocked. Then some workmates started to ignore her, leave her out in subtle ways and just basically exclude her from the team. Not everyone mind you, but no one stuck up for her. Fiona

began to dread going to work. When she tried to talk to her Manager, he said that he didn't see anything wrong and that she wasn't working hard enough - that the problem stemmed from the fact that she wasn't fitting in! Fiona felt that her Manager agreed with the treatment that she was getting, in fact she felt that he was encouraging it! Fiona's 12 month performance review was terrible. She was told that if she didn't lift her game then she would be sacked. Not long after her car was really badly scratched and the tyres were slashed. Then came the phone calls late at night. By this time Fiona was scared!

Fiona didn't feel like she had a whole lot of options. She had contacted the Equal Opportunity Commission but didn't feel that there was anything to gain by making a complaint. She knew that she would have to leave but was afraid that she wouldn't get another job without a reference from her manager. She felt trapped - she had a car loan and rent to pay and she couldn't ask her parents for help because she hadn't told them about her girlfriend.

Clearly this story is partly a story of homophobic discrimination - that escalated - which in it's self is completely unacceptable, but if we are going to fully understand her situation we need to look beyond the bigotry of her work place. Fiona's situation needs to be looked at in the context of changes to the labour market and the implications for young women.

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Last year the Australian Drug Foundation launched a website called Somazone. The site is aimed at the young people between 14 and 18. The website allows young people to anonymously ask health and legal questions of qualified health professionals and provides unbiased and non-judgemental information. The site also contains personal stories, interactive games and a support network. YIKES talks to Somazone Project Officer, Kylie McCardle to find out more.

YIKES!: How was Somazone conceived?

The idea for the Somazone website was conceived when QUIT, Legal Aid Victoria, Department of Human Services (DHS) and Cinemedia decided to expand on the successful Somazone CD ROM, which was an interactive exploration of young people's health and legal issues. The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) was asked to host the project and a group of young people were hired to create the website.

YIKES!: Who was in this group?

Kylie: The Somazone team consisted of seven young people aged 17-21 years, who had complete editorial and creative control of the website. The group worked for 2 hours per week over a period of six months, with support from a Project Coordinator and a Web Developer. The group members came from a diverse range of backgrounds and brought different skills and life experiences to the project.

YIKES!: What's your role with the website?

Kylie: The Somazone team finished working on the project over a year ago when the website was launched. The way the website was designed meant that it required regular updating, so one of the group members had to manage the site and that's what I do. I also have to present the website at conferences, promote the site at youth events, such as The Push, design competitions and ideas for interactive games and lots of other things.

YIKES!: What role has the Australian Drug Foundation played?

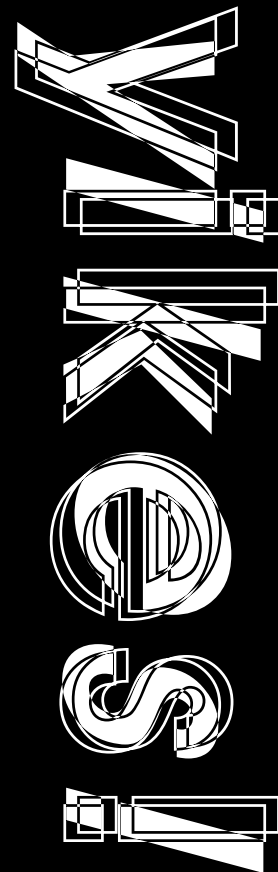
Kylie: The ADF hosted the project as they had previous experience of working with young people and a cutting-edge web-based strategy. The ADF made a commitment to continue running the Somazone project even after it was launched and has been successful in securing funding to make sure that the website keeps on running.

YIKES!: It looks like the site has had a pretty major overhaul since the last time I looked at it. What involvement did the Somazone team have with the redesign and content development?

Kylie: The Somazone team designed the entire contents of the website from scratch. Having looked at the Somazone CD-ROM and surveying other young people about what they wanted from a website we decided to create a site that had questions and answers, personal stories, interactive games

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.



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Deadline for next edition: 17 January, 2001. See over for YACVic contact details.

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s o m a z o n e

About YACVIC

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria is the peak body representing the youth sector. The Council provides a means through which workers with young people are able to voice their opinions and concerns in regard to issues and policies affecting young people.

The Council's main function is to make representations to government and service as an advocate for the interests of young people, workers with young people and organisations which provide direct services to young people. YACVic's resources are primarily directed towards meeting the information, education and training needs of its constituency. Associated functions include policy analysis/development, research and consultation.

The Victorian Youth Affairs Council is managed by a volunteer Committee of Management. The Council is funded by the Victorian Office for Youth.

YIKES!

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Contributions

Contributions to Yikes! are welcome. Please note the following deadlines:

Edition three, February

17 January, 2001

Edition four, March

14 February, 2001

Edition five, April

16 March, 2001

Edition six, May

16 April, 2001

Edition seven, June

18 May, 2001

Inserts

If you wish to include an insert in the YACVic newsletter please contact Communications Officer Alex Markham on (03) 9612 8917

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Over the coming months **YIKES!** will be profiling members of the YACVic Executive Committee. This month Executive Member Felicity Sloman talks about her role as the Kids Help Line State Manager. An initiative of Boys Town Family Care in Queensland the Kids Help Line is a twenty four hour national telephone counselling service. This confidential and anonymous service is for kids between the age of five to 18. Kids Help Line has been going since 1991 and went national in 1993.



YIKES!: What exactly does Kids Help Line do?

Felicity: Mostly what we do is counselling, listening, making sure that kids have someone who will actually stop in their busy lives and listen to them, and listen effectively. We have a large research unit, every call is logged in under a specific category and where possible we find out where people are ringing from so we are able to give organisations a good profile of what is worrying kids in that particular region. We get a lot of people requesting that data for submissions. We answer about 8-9,000 calls each week, but have a lot more attempts that we can't actually answer. The average length of a counselling call is 17 mins.

YIKES!: What kind of issues do young people ring up with?

Felicity: Anything and everything. The main reason young people ring up, way above anything else, is that they want to talk to us about relationships. Often family relationships, mum and dad, brothers and sisters. Then the next most common reason they ring is peer relationships. We get quite a number of calls from people who are in distress and maybe wanting to harm themselves, but mainly its about getting along with your friends and family. That's what worries young people.

So the core business of Kids Help Line is the telephone counselling service. We also have a significant database with about 8,000 services

listed nationally, if people want to have face to face counselling or visit a GP, we will refer them on and give them clear instructions of how to get there, what it might cost, that sort of thing. I make sure that the database is kept up to date and I find out about what new services are available in Victoria.

YIKES!: So could a new service contact Kids Help Line to be placed on the database?

Felicity: Yes definitely. That would make things a lot easier!

Another of my roles is to talk to young people about Kids Help Line. We find that when we do research over 90% of young people are aware of Kids Help Line and know where to find the number if necessary. We really encourage young people to ring when they have small problems and not to wait until their problems are huge and complex. We market ourselves as a prevention program but we also get the more serious end of the continuum in terms of phone calls.

YIKES! You also project manage the Kids Help Line peer skills program, can you tell us about that?

When Kids Help Line first started we had a lot of calls from young people who'd say, "look I'm one of those people in my class that everybody comes to with their problems, can I go onto your telephone counselling line?" And we would have to say thankyou very much, but we only have trained, paid counsellors, they are not volunteers, and they all have a degree in a relevant discipline, plus counselling experience.

So we decided to develop what we now call the Kids Help Line peer skills program, which is a two day workshop based on the fact that young people often turn to their friends first when they have a difficulty. Yeah sure they'll go and see their school counsellor sometimes or another health professional, but often they'll turn to their friends first. Kids are already helping each other out in times of difficulty, so we wanted to make sure that the skills they are using are the best that they can be.

Things like listening, learning when to refer things on to a trusted adult and knowing how to look after yourself if someone loads you up with a fairly significant problem, so we concentrate a lot on their self care. Also what does a GP do? What can you go and see a community health nurse about? If you are having difficulties at school, who could you go and talk to about it. The most important thing is problem solving. It's very important for kids to understand that they are not there to solve their friends problems, what they

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are there to do is assist them to come to the best decision or solution for themselves. Only the individual knows their whole world and the whole picture.

“To be told that you’re not necessary any more and that you won’t be funded anymore and now here we are revving up again. Its really exciting to be part of an organisation that is described as a phoenix rising.”

There’s a very good framework we use called the “Pooch model” it’s a clear solid, concrete framework that young people can use to mentally go through a problem when they are having a chat with someone. The peer skills program is run nationally, there’s been about 4,000 kids trained throughout Australia, we’re always looking for more facilitators and funding to run the program.

YIKES!: As a relative newcomer to the YACVic Executive Committee what are your first impressions?

Felicity: My first impressions were that the State Council and Executive Committee looks very multidisciplinary. My previous knowledge of YACVic was I thought it was very much youth

work oriented. And now I see educationalists, health workers, youth workers, basically anyone working with young people.

One of my concerns is when you have a metropolitan based peak body is that you can be lacking in rural representation. We are all conscious of that which is a good start. I’m really enjoying being part of a multidisciplinary committee, which is a healthy thing. I see a lot of enthusiasm, but this is tempered by the fact that we know there’s been some difficulties in past. To be told that you’re not necessary any more and that you won’t be funded anymore and now here we are revving up again. Its really exciting to be part of an organisation that described as a phoenix rising. I’m enjoying that.

YIKES!: Why do you think organisations and individuals who work with young people should join YACVic?

There’s a lot of smaller organisations that could really benefit from being linked into a larger network. I see YACVic having a role to play there. YACVic needs to keep us up to date with what is happening out there, particularly on a political level. One of the key things is to know where the current thinking lies in terms of the policies of the particular government that is in at the time. I also think that YACVic can create a pathway for a

voice for young people, who as we know don’t have a vote, and who are often not heard. One of YACVic’s clear roles is to assist young people to deliver comments about current policies or issues for young people.

YIKES!: You’ve offered support to Executive Committee members Miriam Silberman and Meredith Gawler (YACVic’s Young Media spokesperson). What support do you think you can provide them?

Felicity: I’m delighted help Meredith and Miriam in their roles. I and other people in the organisation have had some experience with the media, and an understanding of how it works, how it can be of great benefit and how we need to be a cautious of how to approach it. I think it’s a fantastic opportunity for anyone who has the time and motivation to mentor, I enjoy sharing knowledge in a non patronising way. It’s a mutually beneficial relationship. I’m delighted to see the skill and exuberance and ability of young people, who are so often represented in our papers and media generally as being troublesome and the cause of all our ills, which those that work in the area know that its most often not the case. With support young people can do incredible things. ■

KIDS HELP LINE Phone: 1800 551 800

YACVic policy update

YACVic has been busy over the last couple of weeks, preparing a response to the State Government’s proposed changes to the *Children and Young Person’s Act Discussion Paper*.

The Discussion Paper was prepared jointly by the Department of Justice and the Department of Human Services to facilitate debate and generate feedback with a view to determining the need for, and form of, any amendments to the Children and Young Person’s Act.

Following this initial consultation, an amendment bill will be developed and released for broad consultation and comment as an exposure draft. It is anticipated that amendments to the Act will be considered in the Parliament in 2001.

In response to the Discussion Paper, YACVic convened a targeted Focus Group among interested members and key stakeholders in the legal and youth sectors.

In broad terms YACVic supported changes to the Children and Young

Person’s Act which elevates the status of the Children’s Court to reflect the important and specialist nature of responding to the needs of children and young people who come into contact with the criminal justice and protective systems.

The YACVic response to the proposed changes to the Act was based upon four philosophical principles concerning the needs of children and young people in the Children’s Court. These were:

- Diversion
- Responses that reflect the special and diverse needs of children and young people
- Children and Young People’s basic human rights
- Education and Training.

Key issues to emerge from the YACVic Focus Group were:

- Support for the proposed change to increase the jurisdiction of the Criminal Division of the Court from 17 to 18 years of age.
- Support for widespread consultation and debate regarding the establishment of a

Commissioner for children and young people in Victoria.

- Support for providing an appropriate range of sentencing dispositions for young people between 17-18 years of age.

YACVic Policy Priority Areas

- At the State Council Meeting on Friday 15th December, members nominated the following three priority policy areas for YACVic to target in the first half of 2001:
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Training

YACVic members can expect further consultation on these policy issues as well as quarterly issues papers over the course of the next six months.

Federal Government Welfare Reform

- YACVic will be participating in a forum facilitated by VCOSS to promote discussion and formulate a response to the Federal Government’s recent statement on mutual obligation and welfare reform.

Call for Submissions

- The Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) is reviewing the Job Placement, Employment and Training (JPET) programme.

Submissions addressing the Terms of Reference are sought from interested individuals, organisations and stakeholders.

JPET targets young people between the ages of 15 and 21 who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, ex-offenders, refugees or wards of the state who face multiple barriers to education, employment and training.

The evaluators – Consulting Insights – are keen to receive your submissions between now and 16th March 2001.

For further information and to obtain the Terms of Reference visit:
<http://jpet2000.detya.gov.au>

If you would like further information on any of these issues please contact Brigid Henley, Policy Officer with YACVic email: bhenley@yacvic.org.au or phone 9612 8919. ■

young women and workplace violence

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Women and work: Setting the Context

Australia has one of the most gender segregated labour markets in the developed world. Traditionally men have been concentrated in manufacturing and construction and women have been concentrated in the community, retail and service sectors.

In the past 20 years things have started to change, and more women are moving into industries where there was previously low representation of women, however we have a long way to go. This has implications for access to support structures such as unions and trainee and apprenticeship programs.

Women overall earn less money than men. The industries that men are traditionally employed in are much more unionised. This has implications for the bargaining power of women and therefore pay rates and working conditions. There are also significant gender differences in young people's participation rates in the labour force and in the pattern of their employment.

More young women find part-time employment while they remain in full-time education both in secondary and tertiary studies. Many young women start working while they are still at school. However they remain overwhelmingly represented in traditional 'female-dominated' industries.

Changes to the labour market and implications for young people:

In a post-industrial society, there is a distinct trend towards underemployment and precarious part-time or casual employment. This shift challenges most of the existing array of contemporary institutions, policy and cultural practices and assumptions.

The shift to a "post-industrial society" challenges traditional expectations and identities, and affects not only the experience of being young, but also the practices around the category of "youth", like prolonged education, increased dependence on "the family" and so on.

Earning money is not easy for most of us, particularly when we are young. Wage rates are lower for young people and earning enough to live on can be difficult. The disadvantage which young people experience in the labour market can undoubtedly be explained by many causes:

- changes in the structure of industry
- changes in the structure of occupations

Industries which used to employ unskilled labour have shed many jobs, and industries which have recorded the highest growth in employment – eg. financial institutions, community services and public administration – are also those that have become most professionalised.

These changes in the labour market have not occurred unexpectedly, the trends have been evident for some decades. Given all this, one may have expected governments would have taken appropriate steps to prevent such an undesirable situation. Certain policies have been initiated, but most of these have been aimed at "improving the employability" of young people, rather than actively addressing the problems that were clearly emanating from the structural changes in the labour market.

For young people a major issue in this economic sphere is *under-employment*. Between 1986-1991, the proportion of Australian young people (15-25 years) in full-time employment decreased by 11%. It was estimated by the Department of Employment, Education and Training that by the year 2001 only 13% of young people will be employed in full-time work.

For young people who do manage to acquire full-time work it is often under poor working conditions with insecure tenure. Because competition is fierce, many young people are forced into difficult work environments for low pay. Very few have contact with unions while they are employed, and, like Fiona, they often endure harassment and exploitation for fear of losing their position.

Young people and workplace violence:

Over recent years there has been a growing concern about the increased number of reports about violence in the workplace. Some of the most shocking reports have involved young apprentices. Young people clearly have unequal bargaining power, and their negotiating status is abused regularly.

Consequences:

The consequences of workplace violence for young people can be particularly severe. In the early stages of making the transition from a dependent to an independent adult, the experience of systemic violence can fundamentally undermine the transition process and have significant social and psychological implications.

Self-confidence, willingness to co-operate, and the capacity to take responsibility, for example, can all be undermined in an environment in which people are subject to harassment.

Media reporting of workplace violence:

Due to lack of rigorous research on the subject of young people and workplace violence, media reporting to date has focused on individual incidents of extreme workplace violence. There is even less research regarding young women and workplace violence. The nature and extent of the violence in cases highlighted in the media to date makes them shocking stories and so provides good copy.

A major difficulty with the current media approach is that it ignores the structural or systemic nature of workplace violence. Its main focus is on the individual, usually the victim, exploring the family, the details of the events, the nature of the injury, the extent of remorse – in short, the superficial psychology of the violence.

Because media reports focus on the most physically violent and extreme cases, there is a neglect of other forms of violence in the workplace that can be extremely damaging like psychological violence and lower level sexual harassment.

"For young people who do manage to acquire full-time work it is often under poor working conditions with insecure tenure. Because competition is fierce, many young people are forced into difficult work environments for low pay."

Young women and Workplace violence:

Because the expression of violence is intrinsically bound to the distribution of power and status, young women and young men's experience of violence is quite different. In general terms, young women are more likely to experience:

- sexual violence
- domestic violence
- violence from people they know inc. partners, family members

Although there has been little research on the subject of young women and workplace violence, among service providers there have been parallels drawn with young women's experiences of domestic violence. Similarities pointed to are:

- both forms of violence are recognised as being under-reported
- it is a form of violence that is privatised – occurs in private places, not in public
- victims/survivors are told that it is a civil not criminal matter
- police/authorities often not involved – so often not seen as "crime".

A further qualification needs to be made regarding the term "young women". Young women are not a homogenous group in our community, but are extremely diverse, and as such their experiences of violence are vastly different. Experiences of violence and discrimination associated with an identifiable difference affect young women in the way they affect the rest of the population. Some of these differences are:

- ethnicity
- disability
- lesbian young women
- pregnancy/parental status

Issues Facing Young Lesbian Women in the Workplace:

There has been minimal research done toward understanding the experiences of young gay men and lesbians in Australian workplaces, however, what little research does exist gives us cause for concern.

Not a Day Goes By from Gay Men and Lesbians Against Discrimination (GLAD) (1994) reported on heterosexism and homophobia in Victorian workplaces.

... 45 per cent of lesbians and 45 per cent of the gay men reported they had experienced some form of workplace discrimination or harassment, including job loss, because of their sexuality. (GLAD) 1994, p. 5

According to the report, younger gays, from the ages of 20-39 years, were more likely to experience discrimination at work, where one in six respondents felt they had lost or been *forced out of a job because of their sexuality*

Enough is Enough, a report by the Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby this year (2000) pointed to the concern that lesbian and bisexual women

were not always clear as to whether the discrimination was the result of the disclosure of their sexuality, or because they were women.

Redress options for young women who experience workplace violence:

Generally low rates of union membership in Victoria today raises questions regarding the degree to which people are informed of their rights and access to redress. This is particularly true amongst young workers where union membership is even lower than the general population.

Some concluding statements:

Without the presence of rigorous research on the issue of young women and workplace violence it is difficult to ascertain precise incidence levels.

However, based on our knowledge of young women's position in today's labour force and their victimisation rates in the broader community, it is likely that young women experience high levels of workplace violence.

There is a strong need for extensive research to be undertaken in this area. Such a project would need to address a range of mitigating factors, including:

- recent changes to the labour market and associated implications for young people
- the status of young women at the community level

- young women's experience of violence and its difference to young men's experiences
- the status of women in the paid workforce
- impediments to reporting workplace violence including, the low rate of union representation among young people, and a traditional non-union culture in industries where the majority of workers are women
- general increase in reported incidences of workplace violence
- the range of forms of workplace violence including intimidation, bullying, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, stalking and psychological violence (eg. threats)
- the diversity of young women in the community

Back to Fiona

I recently ran into Fiona again in the street and she told me that yes she did quit her job. She had to move out of her flat but some friends let her sleep on the floor for a couple of months. After a very brief period of uncertainty, Fiona's gamble paid off. She didn't go back to catering but started to apply for jobs that built upon other skills that she had been developing. You see, Fiona had been volunteering for the Victorian Aids Council in the reception for almost 2 years, she applied for and got a job working for a doctors surgery with a large patient base who have HIV/AIDS.

Fiona's story is based on a true story however her name and that of the organisations have been changed)



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and a support network. We then spent 6 months working together and with a web developer to create the entire site. Over the last 12 months the website has grown rapidly. We started out with 50 questions and 3 stories and now we have nearly 600 questions and over 42 personal stories.

Levi Strauss and the Rotary Club of Balwyn are currently funding the project. This has meant that we are able to do a whole lot more to the website. This includes a competition that we are running at the moment for a young person to design a logo for the website and the addition of 3 new interactive games that will appear on the site next year.

YIKES!: What sort of feedback have you had about Somazone?

Kylie: All of the feedback has been incredibly positive! This is what some people have said:

"This website is a great idea. It's highly interesting and is really helpful to me and also to my friends. Thanks heaps."

"Cool website. The best I've seen in terms of what it offers and how it approaches teenage issues."

"I think Somazone is one of the best sites I have ever been to. Reading other people's stories really helped me a lot as some related to me and my situation. Thank you for all your support."

"Thanks heaps for having your site. It's very interesting and shows that we aren't the only ones who think we have problems. You guys are great."

Soon we will be adding a proper feedback form to the website so it will be easier for people to tell us what they think about the site.

YIKES!: What's your favourite part of the website?

Kylie: The Q&A facility is my favourite part of the website. It is a place for young people to anonymously ask questions on any health or legal issue. The questions sent in are sent to qualified health professionals to answer. The health professionals provide their service voluntarily and usually take about one week to answer the questions. Upon receipt of the answers, the questions are posted on the website, usually each Wednesday, with a link to the answer.

The Q&A facility is not an on line counselling service, but it offers young people a unique

opportunity to seek information for themselves and to read about the concerns of their peers, creating a sense of understanding and normalcy.

YIKES!: What advice would you give to a young person about to embark on a website project like Somazone?

My advice would be:

- Conflicts and personal issues are bound to occur at some stage, so be open-minded and appreciate the different skills that each member brings to the project.
- When things get tough make sure that you speak to someone.
- Make sure that you are acknowledged for your contribution, it will make you feel valued and proud of your achievements.
- You'll be surprised how much you improve your skills and knowledge.
- Good luck and have fun!

See details of the Somazone Logo Competition on page 6.

10 January 2001

International Year of the Volunteer small grants program funding round closes

The Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services is offering small grants to assist organisations to celebrate the Year of the Volunteer in 2001. Funding round 1 closes on 10 January 2001. Round 2 closes on 10 April 2001. See www.facs.gov.au for more info.

25 January 2001

Submissions close for Somazone logo competition

If you are between 12 and 25, we want you to design a logo that includes the Somazone web address (www.somazone.com.au). The design can be in any form that you like (sketch or design, by hand or computer), but it must be a minimum of A4 and a maximum of A3 in size. The deadline for submissions is Thursday 25 January 2001.

The Somazone website deals with health and legal issues and was developed by young people for young people. Somazone, in collaboration with Levi Strauss are holding a national advertising campaign in 2001 to advertise the Somazone website in magazines across Australia.

The winning logo will incorporate the Somazone web address and will be placed on advertising material that will appear in national magazines, on the Somazone website and on other promotional material. The winning entrant will be flown to Melbourne to spend a day working in the Levi Strauss office and will also take part in the Somazone Youth Summit in April 2001.

All entries will appear on the Somazone website and will be judged by users of the website. The judging period will start on 1 February 2001 and the last day to vote will be 7 February 2001. The entry with the most votes will be the winning logo.

The Somazone website is an Australian Drug Foundation initiative. Entry forms can be downloaded from www.somazone.com.au or phone (03) 9278 8100

31 January 2001

United Nations Youth Representative applications close

Applications are open for one young Australian to become part of next year's Australian Delegation to the United Nations as Australia's Youth Representative.

The 2001 Youth Representative will be based in the Australian Mission to the UN from early September to late October. Their work will include drafting and delivering a statement on behalf of

Australian youth to the Third Committee of the General Assembly and providing youth opinion on other resolutions. The Youth Representative will also work with fellow Youth Representatives from other Member States to advance the youth agenda and meet with numerous UN staff to formulate new projects for young people around the world. Next year's Youth Representative will also be able to make an input into the follow-up of the UN Special Session on Children and play an important role in debate of the biennial youth resolution.

This year's Youth Representative, 22 year old Carrie McDougall of Hobart, has recently returned from New York City where she spent two months based in the Australian Mission. "It was absolutely amazing," she said, "I sat in the General Assembly with world leaders during the Millennium Summit, I listened to role models like Nelson Mandela in the Security Council, I met people from all over the world and, most importantly, I was able to spend two months working on issues that really matter to me and feel like I made a difference."

The United Nations Youth Association of Australia (UNYA) is responsible for selecting the successful candidate who will be supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Peace Child Australia. UNYA is looking in particular for applicants with knowledge of international issues, strong leadership skills and experience in representing youth opinion.

Full details of the position may be found on the national UNYA website at www.unya.asn.au. Applications close on the 31st January 2001.

Rebecca Jenkin
National President
UN Youth Association of Australia

23 February 2001

'Through Our Eyes II' contributions deadline

As a part of National Youth Week 2001, the Launceston Youth Advisory Group are producing a publication of youth writing. The book is to be titled, "Through Our Eyes II" and will include short stories, prose and poetry. It aims to give a voice to the hopes, concerns and feelings of young people, (aged 12-25 years) and offers a creative means of raising issues of priority and importance to youth. Approximately 500 books will be published, with the launch occurring during National Youth Week.

Submissions are being called from young people interested in having their works published in this exciting new book. It is preferred that submissions are either e-mailed or sent in on 3.5 inch floppy disk. Neat handwritten submissions will be

accepted. Young people may send in as many submissions as they like, though it is possible that no more than 3 works from any one author will be published.

All contributors to the book will receive a complimentary copy. Please send submissions to: Mhairi Revie Youth Development Officer
Launceston City Council PO Box 396 Launceston
TAS 7250 Or e-mail to:
mhairi.revie@launceston.tas.gov.au

Submissions close on February 23rd 2001. For more information or to receive free colour posters which call for submissions, please phone Mhairi on: (03) 6323 3327

2-24 February 2001

Helping Families Change, Melbourne

5-28 February 2001

Strengthening Families and Youth, South Carolina, USA

19-21 February 2001

4th Australian women's health conference: politics, action and renewal, Adelaide

21-23 February 2001

International school-based police officers conference: Early intervention 'Does it Work?', Fremantle, Western Australia.

4-5 May 2001

National Youth Affairs Network (NYAN)

Notice of Meeting

See back page for more details

October 2001

International Youth Conference, Nepal

An International Youth Conference is to be held in Tigertops, Chitwan, Nepal in October 2001. The theme is Challenges and Opportunities of Youth in the 21st Century. For more information contact Chauyen Lai Shrestha, Secretary-General
International Youth Coordination Council-Nepal,
PO BOX-3969, Kathmandu Nepal Ph-
00977.1.352281 Fax-00977.1.331964 E-mail-
chauyen@col.com.np and
chauyenlai@hotmail.com

Many of the events in this calendar are reproduced with the kind permission of the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies. For more info visit www.acys.utas.edu.au

get youth issues on the agenda! become a member of YACVic...

FORM MEMBERSHIP

When you become a member of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. you gain invaluable access to a **state wide network** of organisations and individuals who work with young people. Being a member of YACVic means that you will receive a regular newsletter, quarterly policy issues paper, campaign updates and other materials. YACVic members are also encouraged to become involved in our policy development process.

Having an active youth peak in Victoria with a strong membership base means that your issues will get heard. Join now!

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc. Membership form TAX INVOICE
July 2000 – June 2001 ABN: 39 774 045 170

I/We _____
Title Name Position

Organisation _____

Address _____

Suburb/Town Postcode

Phone Number Fax Number

Email _____

agree to the purpose and objectives (listed below) and hereby

renew apply

for membership to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc.

Signature Date

Areas of policy interest

So that we can actively involve you in our policy discussions please tick one or more boxes

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts recreation and leisure | <input type="checkbox"/> Media and technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer and finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiculturalism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education and training | <input type="checkbox"/> The law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Violence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Young women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance use |

If you are under 25 and would like to be involved in our youth consultation processes tick here

FEES (all prices are GST inclusive)

Organisational

Number of members in your organisation: _____

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member with annual income up to \$ 20,000 | \$45.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member - with annual income above \$ 20,000 | \$95.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Member - no voting rights | \$95.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Member | \$30.00 |

Individual

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member | \$45.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member - Concession | \$15.00 |

Cheques are payable to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc

TOTAL PAID \$ _____

Purpose

To influence the structures which affect young people towards a more equitable distribution of power and resources to young people, recognising that there are wide discrepancies between groups of young people in terms of their access to such power and resources.

Objectives

- To assist young people to participate meaningfully in the various processes which formulate and implement social policy in Victoria.
- To develop a framework which integrates youth affairs into social policy processes and to use that framework to advocate to government and other institutions on matters affecting young people.
- To provide a focus for organisations and individuals who support the purpose statement, to share perspectives on youth affairs issues.
- To provide an information and resource base which will:-
 - (a) assist groups of young people working on issues of concern to them;
 - (b) assist service providers to increase their effectiveness;
 - (c) inform the community about issues affecting young people.

newsletter of the youth affairs council of victoria inc.

((YIKES!

National Youth Affairs Network

Notice of Meeting 4-5 May 2001

Background

The Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition (AYPAC) was de-funded by the current federal government, and subsequently wound up by its members in 1999. At the last AYPAC meeting two interim groups were initiated:

The Australian Youth Affairs Network (AYAN) was formed to work on the development of a new national youth peak body; and The National Youth Affairs Coalition (NYAC) was formed to maintain communication between existing state peaks, and to ensure that a focus on national youth policy issues was retained.

A third group was proposed to develop an interim email communication mechanism across the sector, but was not successfully implemented.

AYAN met by teleconference and held a number of face to face meetings to explore issues (including funding issues) relating to the development of a new peak, and proposed two models, a funded and an unfunded model, for further discussion in the sector.

NYAC met regularly by teleconference and has successfully facilitated ongoing communication between the state peaks and a few national organisations.

In November 2000 the two groups, who to this stage had been operating in parallel, met in Canberra and agreed to combine their activities into one group. At this point AYAN and NYAC ceased to exist, and a new combined group, the National Youth Affairs Network (NYAN) was formed. The resolution that confirmed this change stated:

"That this meeting resolves to bring together the entities known as AYAN and NYAC into an entity called National Youth Affairs Network (NYAN). The purpose of NYAN is to further develop the move to reestablish an independent youth sector national youth peak body based on the founding principal of sector-wide inclusiveness, and to agree on priority youth policy issues to be addressed as ongoing agreements determine."

NYAN has decided that early May of 2001 is the best time to bring the youth sector together in order to resolve the many issues around the establishment of a new national youth peak.

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to finalise a sector-wide position on the role, functions, structure and processes for a new national youth sector peak body. The outcomes of the meeting will be agreement on a model, and a workplan to ensure its establishment.

Who Should Attend

All organisations in the community sector who are interested in the establishment of a new national youth peak are welcome to attend. Attendance is particularly sought from organisations who wish to be included in the new structure.

When: Friday 4 – Saturday 5 May, 2001

**Where: Cato Conference Centre.
YWCA, 489 Elizabeth St
Melbourne, VIC 3000.**

How: Organisations will need to fund their own participation.

For Further Information

For information about the background of NYAN, including the work of AYAN or NYAC contact either:

Bernice Smith, Executive Officer,
Youth Affairs Council of
Queensland (YANQ)
30 Thomas Street,
West End, Brisbane, Qld 4101
Phone: (07) 3236 5400,
Fax: (07) 3236 5411
Email: bernicest@thehub.com.au or;

Dave Ireson
Fusion Australia
Phone: (02) 6231 4448,
Fax: (02) 6282 5440
Email: dave_ireson@hotmail.com

For information about the venue and meeting arrangements contact:

Youth Affairs Council of
Victoria (YACVic)
Level 6/1 Elizabeth Street,
Melbourne, Vic 3000
Phone: (02) 9612 8999,
Fax: (03) 9620 4802
Email: info@yacvic.org.au
Website: www.yacvic.org.au