

# YUWKES!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUTH AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

## A voice for the Youth Accommodation Sector

by Paula Grogan, YACVic Policy Officer



In May I attended the National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH) Council meeting in Adelaide. As there is currently no Victorian delegate to NYCH, I was invited along as an observer and it was quite obvious that Victoria certainly lacked a presence in the youth housing policy debate at both a state and a national level. To go some way towards rectifying this, Adrian Pisarski (NYCH) convened a forum which was hosted by YACVic, to discuss this very issue: how does the Victorian Youth Accommodation Sector want to be represented?

### The background

The last Victorian representative at NYCH was the Youth Accommodation Coalition (YAC). YAC was established in 1979 and received government funding until 1995. When it was de-funded it could no longer facilitate the coming together of the youth housing sector in Victoria and the sector has lacked a distinct voice since that time.

The national homelessness peak is the Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (AFHO). The AFHO secretariat is based in Canberra and consists of a full time Executive Officer and two Policy Officers. AFHO is a federation of three members: Council for Homeless Persons Australia (CHPA), the Women's Services Network (WESNET)

and NYCH. Initially there were some tensions in bringing these groups under one peak as they represented three different sectors - generalist, youth and women. However, since AFHO was established over a year ago there a greater capacity to work together and recognition of the crossover between the different areas has developed.

At a state level, different models of representation are employed. For example, in South Australia there is a single homelessness peak, Homelessness SA, which is unfunded and brings together women, youth and generalist services. In Western Australia the state youth peak, YACWA, has a portfolio group which represents youth accommodation.

**Continued page 11**

## STOP PRESS! YOUTH STRATEGY UPDATE

We've just been informed that we will be receiving an advanced *draft* copy of the Victorian Youth Strategy on the 27th August and we have a two-week period in which to respond to this draft. This short time-frame means that we cannot conduct a widespread consultation. However, we will be holding a focus group at the YACVic office on the 3rd September from 11am - 2pm. This is to give you a chance to voice your views on the draft strategy. If you are interested in attending please call us on (03) 9612 8999 or email [info@yacvic.org.au](mailto:info@yacvic.org.au)

### YACVic Annual General Meeting

Will be held 4pm 28 September 2001 at the Melbourne Town Hall.

Our guest speaker will be Ms Christine Nixon, Chief Commissioner of Police for Victoria.

See page 11 for more info

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**youthaffairs**  
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## 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. YACVic's vision is for a Victorian Community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

The main function of YACVic is to make representations to government and serve as an advocate for the interests of young people, workers with young people and organisations that provide direct services to young people. YACVic's resources are primarily directed towards policy analysis and development through consultation with its constituency. YACVic also resources the information needs of its members through regular updates and by facilitating networking within and beyond the Victorian youth sector.

YACVic is governed by a volunteer Board and managed by a paid secretariat. The Council's core funding comes from the Victorian Government's Office for Youth.

## Vision statement

Our vision is for a Victorian Community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

YACVic actively works towards this vision as the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria.

## Yikes!

Is YACVic's regular newsletter. The views and opinions contained in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of YACVic. This publication is copyright, articles may be reproduced with permission from YACVic.

## Contributions

Contributions to Yikes! are welcome. Please note our copy deadlines on the back page.

## Inserts & Advertising

If you wish to include an insert or advert in Yikes please contact the YACVic Communications Officer on (03) 9612 8999.

# news in brief

## National Human Rights Register 2002

The Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace is seeking submissions to the National Human Rights Register for 16 May 2001 – 15 May 2002. If you have issues you would like to see receiving more attention from the media and government the Register is the ideal way to publicise them. The 2001 Register was launched on 7 June 2001 and has been quoted in a number of newspaper articles regarding human rights issues. For more information call (03) 9926 5710.

## Your rights at work infoline: 1300 666 610

Lately we've had a lot of enquiries at YACVic from young people about employment related issues. Here's some useful resources:

The Victorian Government youth website has a very useful "rights @ work" page, <http://www.youth.vic.gov.au> there's also a rights @ work hotline 1300 666 610.

Job Watch is a Victorian community legal centre specialising in employment and training law. See <http://www.job-watch.org.au>

## Suicide Helpline: 1300 651 251

A service jointly delivered by Lifeline Melbourne and Carering – Crisis Line. The suicide help line service focuses on providing help to manage crisis at the time of the call in ways that relieve distress, strengthen short-term coping and promote safety. Specialist trained professional counsellors service the help line 24-hours a day. For more information on this service see: <http://www.infoxchange.net.au/suicideline/>

Source: InfoXchange Community Update

## FReeZA Evaluation

An evaluation of FReeZA is now available. The aims of the evaluation included identifying and assessing the impact of FReeZA and recommending future development of the program. Overall, the report highlights the positive impact of FReeZA and recommends future funding. Watch out for a summary of this evaluation in the next edition of YIKES. In the meantime, a copy of the report can be found at <http://www.freeza.vic.gov.au>

## Your feedback wanted by Kirsten Hagon, Youth Representative on Australia's Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly

Australia is including a Youth Representative on the Australian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly. The General Assembly has passed several resolutions calling for young people to be more directly involved in the decision making processes of UN member states as well as the inclusion of active Youth Representatives on Member States' delegations.

Kirsten Hagon from Melbourne was selected by the United Nations Youth Association (UNYA) as the Youth Representative for 2001. She will spend 8 weeks at the General Assembly in New York where she will deliver the Australian statement on the biennial Youth Resolution and attend the Special Session on Children.

Giving Your Input! As this year's Youth representative, Kirsten is seeking input in determining the "youth position" on the key issues to be discussed, both at the General Assembly and in the Special Session on children. Please fill in the survey which has been posted on the UNYA website <http://www.unya.asn.au/>.

If you are interested in more in depth consultation or meeting with the Youth Representative, please send expressions of interest to [youthrep2001@unya.asn.au](mailto:youthrep2001@unya.asn.au). If you want to find out more about the role of the Youth Representative, the reason for a Youth Representative or action on youth issues by the United Nations, visit the UNYA website and follow the Youth Representative links. This information will be used by the Youth Representative to determine her priorities in lobbying within the delegation for key resolutions to be supported by the Australian Government. She will also be lobbying for greater commitment by governments to youth participation, as well as the inclusion of youth representatives on delegations to UN General Assembly and other international forums.

## National Youth Roundtable 2002, applications open!

Applications are now being sought from young people wishing to take part in the National Youth Round Table 2002. YACVic has copies of applications forms or you can call 1800 624 309 or visit the Federal Government's youth website, the source <http://www.thesource.gov.au>

## More calls for a national youth organisation

Appointment of a Federal Children's Commissioner, funding of the National Youth Council and lowering the voting age to 16 were all issues raised in a recent forum on children and young people in Sydney. The meeting, initiated by Federal Human Rights Commissioner Dr Sev Ozdowski was chaired by NSW Children's Commissioner Gillian Calvert and attended by peak children's and youth representatives

The Sydney meeting is part of a round of consultations on issues for children and young people, including child rights advocates and welfare workers. Dr Ozdowski will report to the Federal Government through the Prime Minister's representative at the Special Session on Children in the UN General Assembly (19 - 21 September 2001)

Source: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/media\\_releases/2001/01\\_45.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/media_releases/2001/01_45.html)

## World Conference Against Racism NGO Forum Declaration

The Non Government Forum of the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) that was held in Durban from 28 to 31 August has released: The NGO Forum Declaration: Working Draft for Durban and the NGO Program of Action for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance see <http://www.racism.org.za/> for more info.

Source: Bob Brown, Director: Kwame Ture Work-Study Institute and Library email [paroots02@yahoo.com](mailto:paroots02@yahoo.com)

## Youth Forum Online (YFO)

Is an online community for young people, researchers, practitioners and policy makers interested in the learning and work circumstances of young Australians moderated by YACVic.

The current discussion topic is about student poverty. To join in the discussion go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yfo>

## New research: hardship intensifies from rise in social security penalties

Research conducted by the National Welfare Rights Network and Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) using data obtained by Freedom of Information, has found that the most vulnerable Australians are experiencing intense hardship as a result of rising social security penalties. A full copy of the ACOSS and National Welfare Rights Network report on social security penalties is available at <http://www.acoss.org.au/info/2001/305x.htm>

ACOSS President Michael Raper said "This new data shows an estimated total of 349,100 penalties imposed on unemployed people in the 2000-01 year - a rise of 189% over the past three years."

"At the same time, the impact of these penalties on unemployed people has worsened. New rules mean unemployed people now receive penalties of between \$678 and \$1431 for 'failure to attend an interview' and this is the most common reason for receiving a penalty."

Source: ACOSS INFO 305

## National Youth Declaration: your input wanted!

The Centenary of Federation National Conference of Young People, to be held in Perth from 21 to 23 September, is part of the key national celebratory events happening around Australia this year. 350 delegates (aged 18-25 years) from around the nation will come to Perth to 'Imagine their Australia' and write the first ever National Youth Declaration along with recommendations for all levels of government on how to achieve this vision. The conference will lead into a week of Arts, Music, Film, Science & Technology, Environment and Sports festivals with events and activities throughout Perth and regional WA.

The Australian Multicultural Foundation has eight grants of \$500 each available for assistance with travel and accommodation to the Conference. For info on these grants contact Libby Winchcombe on (08) 9228 0808 or email [conference@westrek.com.au](mailto:conference@westrek.com.au)

If you can't make it to the conference you can still contribute to the development of the National Youth Declaration by filling in the survey on the conference website <http://www.imagineoz.com.au>

## What's new in the YACVic youth policy resource centre?

For anyone interested in youth policy in Victoria the Youth Policy Resource Centre (YPRC) is a valuable tool. This centre is available to all members of YACVic and holds material on the diverse range of issues affecting young people. If you would like to visit the centre please give the office a call (03) 9612 8999 to arrange a time.

We hold a wide variety of material including journals, government reports, books, videos, tapes, kits and statistics. To give an idea of the titles that we hold here is a list of some of the material that we have received in the past few weeks:

- Victorian Government Directory 2001/2002
- Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee. Inquiry into Public Drunkenness. Final Report.

Government of Victoria, June 2001-08-16

- Seen and heard: priority for children in the legal process. Australian Law Reform Commission 1997
- The feasibility of providing a recovery service for young people post-overdose: 4/00
- Country matters – social atlas of rural and regional Australia, 2000
- Centrelink information: A guide to payment and services 2001-2002
- Working towards a national homelessness strategy

## Substance Inhalation Inquiry

The Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee is seeking submissions to an inquiry into the issues of inhalation of volatile substances for the purpose of intoxication, more commonly known as chroming. Submissions will form the basis of an initial discussion paper. This is an opportunity for you to raise any issues you would like to see covered this paper. Submissions close August 31. For more information contact the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee (03) 9651 3546, or visit <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/dcpc>.

## Sentencing Review

The Attorney-General, the Hon Rob Hulls MP, has released an independent review of Victorian sentencing laws. The Review reports on a range of sentencing issues relating to the offence of child stealing, sentencing for drug offences and drug-related offences, sentencing options in general and mechanisms to inform the sentencing process. You can make a submission to this Review and submissions close on the October 12, 2001. For more information contact Sentencing Review, Legal Policy, Department of Justice, GPO Box 435600, Melbourne 3001, email or visit <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au>.

# Paving the way at the Victorian Statewide Student Conference

Ballarat, July 11-13, 2001

Coming together with 200 high school students for three days of fantastic discussions, new friendships, fun activities and motivational workshops was a great way to spend the last week of our school holidays. There was such an electric buzz in the air for the duration of the conference, which not only demonstrated what inspirational and dedicated young people we have in our schools, but also saw the formation of the new VSSN (Victorian Secondary Student Network).

These students, from across Victoria, attended the Paving the Way conference in Ballarat from July 11 to 13, 2001. The conference was run by students, for students.

The conference Steering Committee had a dream, in which students from across Victoria get together and work together on the bigger issues - issues that an individual or a single SRC can't handle alone. We had a vision of a body that was independent, and in which all aspects of its organisation were decided by the students. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Education Trust Victoria Ltd and to the support of the Victorian Office for Youth (who both made Paving the Way possible), we achieved our dream when all the students present formed the VSSN.

The conference involved long debates on issues from the operation of SRCs, to curriculum topics such as driver education, to the proposal for a statewide network of students. We had some amazingly inspirational students at our conference and the energy surrounding us for the whole three days was nothing short of amazing.

On day three it was with great joy that, after elections for members to represent each region, the Conference Steering Committee 'handed the baton on' to the new representatives who now form the VSSN. They will iron out the proposal and make the VSSN a huge success.

Paving the Way was the beginning of a new era for students of Victoria. We now have a voice!

## Planning the Conference

A hard working team, composed mainly of students, took months and months of planning

and organising to get this event underway. Two existing groups worked together to make the Conference a reality.

Since December 2000, the Victorian Student Leadership Council Executive had been trying to plan a conference to recreate and continue the one that started them off in October 1999 (see Connect 120, December 1999). The group recognised that as they were getting older and many of their members had moved on to University or other commitments, they needed new blood to continue these initiatives.

At the same time, another group in Victoria, called the Victorian Student Representative Council were doing the same sort of thing (see Connect 119, October 1999 and Connect 123, June 2000). Operating without formal Departmental support, this group of students had held discussions and conferences about possible structures and processes for a Statewide SRC.

In early 2001 these two groups teamed together to form the Steering Committee that brought together the Paving the Way conference.

Over the first six months of the year, the Steering Committee met about once a month to organise the conference. Our first challenge was to decide exactly what we wanted from the conference, then to plan how it would be run and what we would be doing there. The Steering Committee saw that this task was not as simple as it may have sounded, but we were dedicated and enthused. We decided on venues, times, agendas, guest speakers and even argued endlessly about conference T-shirts. We were both the Planning Committee and the Conference facilitators.

This article is an edited version of a report from the Paving the Way Conference which originally appeared in Connect Issue 130, August 2001. For more info on Connect, a magazine supporting student participation, contact Connect, 12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 (Subscriptions are \$30 pa - for 6 issues - for organisations; \$20 pa for individuals; \$10 pa for student organisations)

Through many discussions and increasingly frequent meetings, over e-mail and in person, the conference came to be. And it was all students who put it together. But in saying this, we must also acknowledge several important adults who helped us along the way: Roger Holdsworth, Steve Metcalfe, Cathey Dragasia and David Mould.

The Steering Committee had a dream and we achieved it through a lot of hard work that really paid off and was worth the effort.

## Ice-Breaker Activities

Before every discussion session at the conference all participants were involved in 'ice breaker' activities which were run by the student facilitators.

The aim of these games was to give participants an opportunity to 'let loose'. Even though most of us thought they were crazy, they gave us a chance to meet new people, to relax and, most importantly, to have fun.

## Opening of Conference

From the warm-ups, we went to the main theatre where students were welcomed by Veggie Cari on behalf of the Steering Committee, and the Paving the Way conference was officially opened by the Minister for Youth Affairs, Justin Madden. The Minister (on a video hook-up) was introduced by Karen Overington, the local Member of Parliament. This started the conference on a high.

Ben Quick and Zack Pretlove from the Conference Steering Committee also talked about their hopes and expectations for the Conference, and got audience members sharing and participating in these aims.

## Homegroups

After this, it was right into it. A group of 20 students worked as facilitators to the conference, which involved early mornings, late nights and being nice to everyone all the time. Each facilitator had their own 'colour animal' groups to work with and befriend, and it was their job to explain the issues, start conversations and encourage people to voice their opinions.

## School and Student Council Issues

The first set of workshops was on school and SRC issues that students had identified.

## Conference Dinner

A conference dinner was held on the Wednesday night to round off the first day, and we all dressed up for the occasion. We heard speeches from our sponsors - Sujatha Pannell from the Education Trust and Jennifer Fraser from the Office for Youth. We also had an inspirational interview with Jason Smith from the Titans.

## Day 2 (Thursday 12th July)

Day 2 started with further discussions around the possibility of a State Student Council. An open mike encouraged all participants to put forward their ideas from day 1. Then a panel of students and others provided some information about the history of student networking in Victoria and the current situation interstate.

This felt like when the real work started. We discussed the history of previous attempts to achieve a state organisation and, through that, we incorporated and formed our own ideas on how this new network would run.

## Home and Regional Groups

We also broke off into our colour animal groups and then into regional groups to discuss what this network would do for the state and also each region. Here small groups developed recommendations and amendments to the main proposal being put forward by the Steering Committee.

## Issues Workshops

In the afternoon, we formed small issue groups, where we discussed what kind of role our organisation may be able to play in education organisations all around the state.

## FreeZA Gig

After a long day we all had a chance to relax with a FreeZA gig provided by the City of Ballarat.

## Day 3

Day 3 (Friday 13th July) started with warm-up activities and discussions in the colour-animal groups, and the ideas and proposals generated here were brought together in a main plenary session.

## Decision-Making Session

This session, chaired by Beth Atkinson, saw all the hard work pay off. By the end of the session the conference had officially formed the VSSN (Victorian Secondary Student Network).

As Beth said, the proposal was now set in 'wet concrete', ready to be shaped by an in-coming State Council of students.

## Regional/Area Groups

The last order for the day was to organise each of the nine regions in Victoria to elect two representatives who would be a part of the VSSN Council or executive team.

Victoria is divided into nine 'education regions': Western Metro, Northern Metro, Eastern Metro, Southern Metro, Barwon South-Western, Central Highlands-Wimmera, Loddon Campaspe Mallee, Goulburn North-Eastern and Gippsland. Due to the size of some of these regions, some would form into "natural cluster groups", which is a group of schools within a region. Thus one region could have two or more natural cluster groups, while some wouldn't have any.

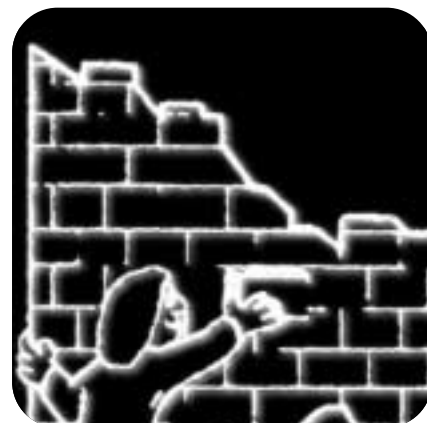
During the conference, we had regional meetings of the Conference participants and made decisions on many things such as deciding on cluster groups, meeting dates, and state VSSN representatives. We decided to hold meetings in each region, and these which will be left up to the regional representatives to organise. Anyone is invited to these meetings; to know more about plans, just log onto the VSSN website:

<http://www.studentsvictoria.org>

The two regional representatives will come together to form the VSSN State Council or Executive Committee, and discuss relevant topics.

The following students were elected as Regional members to the VSSN State Council:

Ana-Maria Maghiar (Southern Metro)  
Dale Mills (Southern Metro)  
Ben Reynolds (Eastern Metro)  
Kathy Franklin (Eastern Metro)  
Natasha Whitelaw (Northern Metro)  
Paul Tresidder (Northern Metro)  
Leigh Hetherton (Western Metro)  
Natasha Ljuba (Western Metro)  
Natalie Hawthorn (Barwon SW)  
Nicole Mentha (Barwon SW)  
Edward Freeland (Central Highlands Wimmera)  
Sara-Jane McIntyre (Central Highlands Wimmera)  
Holly Pietsch (Loddon Campaspe Mallee)  
Marji Kennedy (Loddon Campaspe Mallee)  
Ashley Kline (Goulburn NE)  
Melissa Walker (Goulburn NE)  
Angela Mawbey (Gippsland)  
Leigh Clifford (Gippsland)





The continuation of the VSSN will depend on the students of Victoria. Right now, we are trying to get all the regions up and running to get this thing off the ground, but without strong foundations, this never would have happened.

### Closing Session

With all that done and many t-shirts signed, the Conference closed on the Friday afternoon with an address by Peter Wilkinson (Office for Youth), thanks to the Steering Committee, and congratulations and challenges to the incoming student committee.

And the final message was, as Zack Pretlove said at the end: "Never give up!"

### Regional plans:

Full details of plans are available on the web site, but it is worth noting that the South Metro Region has met already and divided the Region into four sub-regional areas, each with an organising team of students. Contact: Dale Mills at mil0006@berwicksc.vic.edu.au

The Western Metro Region is working on a meeting of schools that will be going ahead soon. Any questions, ideas, comments, criticisms: contact Leigh Hetheron at raptors\_nest\_69r@hotmail.com, or 0410 748 222

### What did participants think?

"The memories for us: Living on campus at university when you haven't even finished puberty yet; meeting 200 people with similar ideas and goals from right across Victoria in just three days; attending a nice sit down dinner where teenage boys wore shirts and ties... without being forced to; meeting an Australian Olympian; seeing all of your hard work and effort pay off before your eyes; implementing a student-run and student-designed project that will see students' voices heard and supported as one all across the state. Ever thought all this was possible? Well, it is and it happened. Paving the Way was a student conference designed by students, for the future of students. It combined all of this and more. With financial help from our sponsors, The Education Trust, Delphin

Limited and the Office for Youth, we had three fantastic days of experiences I know that none of us will forget, and saw a student network set up which will be imperative for the future of power and students' voices." Kate Buchan and Siri Sao

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"For me the conference was a great chance to meet and work with some of the most amazing people. But, more importantly, it was the beginning of something great, of a new era for students in Victoria. It was a dream that became a reality." Beth Atkinson

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"I attended the conference in the belief that I would just meet and interact with people from all over the state. Little did I know that I could actually make a difference! Every single one of us was a small link in a large chain of thoughts, ideas and discussions. I went away from the Conference feeling satisfied that I provided sufficient input towards the VSSN. Not only did this Conference enable me to interact with students statewide, I also gained self-confidence and the ability to stand up and say what I believe. I am not the only one that has benefited from me attending this Conference, for my school community and our SRC representatives have also received parts of my knowledge from the conference. I just hope that we, the younger generation, can work together to keep this network operating." Natalie Wallace

"For me, Paving The Way was everything, and a whole lot more. It was the end of one era, and the beginning of another. Although there were a few moments of doubt, and not to mention conflict, we were all reaching for the same goal. And we made it. Being a part of the conference, seeing how it all came together and knowing that the months of hard work had paid off was something I will never forget. The Steering Committee really did 'pave the way' towards a statewide student network, and I am sure that the VSSN can keep our dream alive." Lyndall Nulty

"To me, Paving the Way was a chance to find within the conference participants an inspirational motivation to make a difference, which I had long ago lost within myself." Kate Buchan

"I think that the conference is a turning point in youth action, and that with this new network we will be able to be heard on important youth issues. This new network will prove to be an invaluable resource in the future." Dale Mills

"I participated in workshops on a variety of topics. I attended a session about Student Action Teams/Victorian Youth Development Program. We talked about whether we should have leadership courses other than SRCs. I also attended a session with YACVic discussing whether or not we should have a Children's and Young Persons' Commission. Finally the last session was with the VCAA (Board of Studies); we talked about the VCE and other year levels with a representative from the VCAA. Overall I had heaps of fun, made new friends and learnt valuable information."

### Support:

Paving the Way was supported by the Education Trust Victoria Ltd, Delphin Limited, the Office for Youth, Connect, the Youth Research Centre, Raise Your Voice and Second Strike Productions.

To ensure the future of the VSSN, support will hopefully continue to come from these and other groups; in particular the support of the Office for Youth, through its state office and also via regional liaison people, will enable us to function with government support and involvement and maintain links with government officials.

*This report was written by Elizabeth Atkinson, Leigh Hetheron, Cara Robb, Steve Phillips, Lyndall Nulty, James O'Malley, Paul Tresidder, Dale Mills, Kate Buchan, Siriwann Sao; edited by Roger Holdsworth.*

### Website links

■ VSSN <http://www.studentsvictoria.org>

presented by

youthaffairs  
COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

centre for multicultural youth issues  
cmyi

# COMBATING RACISM and DISCRIMINATION

With  
Di Sisely

Chief Executive, Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria  
on challenging racism using the law, how Religious  
and Racial Tolerance Legislation affects you

Gavin Brown

Director, Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Co-op  
on young people's experiences of racism in sport

A Youth Affairs Council of Victoria  
policy forum for young people and  
people working with young people.

## SEPTEMBER 18 2001

9.45am - 2.30pm Kensington Community Centre,  
Kensington Rd (Corner Altona Street), Kensington.  
(Bus #402 or 5 minutes walk from Kensington or South Kensington train stations)  
COST: \$15, free to young people. A light lunch will be provided

## REGISTRATION

or for more info contact Anna  
at YACVic Ph (03) 9612 8999  
email: [info@yacvic.org.au](mailto:info@yacvic.org.au)

PARLIAMENTS  
PEAK BODIES  
STATEWIDE NETWORKS

Victorian Community Sector  
and Victorian Government

# Statement of Commitment

by Dimity Fifer, VCOSS

**E**arlier this year the bi-monthly Peak Bodies / Statewide Networks meeting, convened by VCOSS, delegated to a small writing sub group the task of drafting the “Victorian Community Sector and Victorian Government Statement of Commitment”.

This group consisted of Margaret Box - Palliative Care Victoria, Gerard Mansour - Kindergarten Victoria, Jan Oliaro - St Vincent DePaul, Coleen Clare - CWAV, Barbara Romeril - Community Child Care, Anne Tuohey - Catholic Social Services, Miriam Suss - ECCV, Bernadette Hamilton-Greer - Volunteering Victoria and Dimity Fifer -VCOSS.

For the last eighteen months discussions within our sector and with the government have been continuing on the need for, and nature of, a compact style document. Such a statement would describe the set of expectations underpinning our relationship, and more importantly spell out the role of the Victorian community sector in the life and history of Victoria. Previous moves to initiate a process whereby the government and the sector jointly wrote such a statement have had different levels of success.

The draft statement developed by the working group, has synthesised all the work in the many available forums and papers developed in Victoria and around Australia. Very clearly the statement needs to send out the message that the Victorian community sector does not just mean human service organisations with a relationship to DHS.

This draft (included as an insert in this edition of YIKES!) was endorsed to be sent out for wider sector consultation at the Bi-Monthly Peak Bodies / Statewide Network meeting at VCOSS on Tuesday 31 July. Before we present the draft to government to begin negotiating on the style, range of themes and final wording, it is imperative we as a sector are comfortable with the words, values and commitments. Please do take time to read and provide feedback to the seven questions, or on anything else you believe is pertinent to this work. Please email [dfifer@vcoss.org.au](mailto:dfifer@vcoss.org.au) or fax your thoughts to Dimity Fifer at VCOSS on 03 9654 5749.

We are asking all peaks and agencies to spread the statement far and wide for comment amongst everyone’s constituencies. Remember it is a statement which relates to all areas of voluntary and community activity, not just community services. A special meeting on the statement was held on Tuesday August 28 at VCOSS. This meeting aimed to finalise the next draft with the feedback we received from the sector. If you were unable to contribute your comments to this meeting it’s not too late! The Peak Body/Statewide Network meeting on September 25 will finalise and endorse a final draft, which will be promoted at the VCOSS Social Policy Congress in mid October. It is hoped the statement will be handed over to the government at this time or soon after to begin the vital round of discussion and negotiation with the government.

The Premier has asked Minister Pike, Minister assisting the Premier on Community Building to oversee this process from the government’s side. Of course this Statement relates to all Cabinet Ministers and we are seeking whole of government endorsement of the final negotiated Statement of Commitment.

A copy of the statement can be found on the YACVic website <http://www.yacvic.org.au>

[www.yacvic.org.au](http://www.yacvic.org.au) newsletter of the youth affairs council of victoria inc.

YIKES!)))

# YACVic profile... Row Allen

**R**owena Allen is a member of the YACVic Executive Committee and is the CEO of Cutting Edge Youth Services-UnitingCare, an agency she established in the Goulburn Valley to work with disadvantaged and rurally isolated young people.

Rowena has held positions in the area of community development and direct youth services with rural and metropolitan local governments including the City of Greater Shepparton, City of Stonington and Waverley.

Row is currently the chairperson of the Goulburn Regional Youth Committee, a State Council member of the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria as well as a member of Minister Thwaites Advisory Committee on Gay and Lesbian Health.

Active in the Uniting Church, Row has worked for the Social Justice Questions Committee and Victorian Council of Churches on environment and unemployment projects. She has also represented them nationally and internationally through the Christian Conference (Network) of Asia.

From July 7 – 14 Rowena attended a forum in Launceston called “Developing Tomorrows Leaders” which was hosted by The Foundation for Young Australians. One of the Foundation’s primary objectives is the development of leadership potential in young Australians. This forum sought to offer young adults a broader understanding of Australia, and to highlight the diversity of potential and achievement present among Australia’s young people.

## Here’s Row’s reflections on the Forum for the Development of Australian Leaders...

I’ve been telling people it was like a “Big Brother” experiment. Take 100 young leaders from all around Australia, who have never met, place them in Launceston and ask them to design Australian in 2050. How it will look, how will we get there - and then ask them to look at what roles they will play in its formation?

I arrived very nervously; extremely drained as in true form I had tried to do two weeks work in the one-week prior to leaving. The program was tiring, emotionally draining and incredibly stimulating. I love to network and used every opportunity to meet people during breaks, in food queues, toilet queues, walks to session rooms and everything in-between. As a result I know I have made great work contacts and life long friends. So fabulous to spend time with people from different professions, my ten-person syndicate had a geologist, economics, market researchers, air force engineers and a wine maker to name just a few.

## What have I learnt from the experience?

I learnt the real meaning of trust, vulnerability, grace and compassion. As a participant and not the facilitator I had to give over my whole week and agenda, which was extremely powerful. Amongst a diversely different community I had little time to gauge opinions and points of view before I placed mine.

I have learnt to listen. I know that sounds strange from someone in the welfare game, however, I have re-learnt the art of listening to the full concept before comment without my next statement ready to go before they have finished.

I was surprised at my reaction to the presentations; leaders definitely come in different forms and in unexpected packages. Politicians were present to talk non-party political, with the prominent questions being how do you manage life, family and the media. I know a lot more about globalisation, the economy, our regional role in the Pacific, technology and brushed up on my knowledge of reconciliation and the environment.

I was also the only person in 100 who seemed to have any direct counseling experience, limited as it is. As a result I was called upon to dust off some debriefing and supporting skills to help a few participants after the presentation of people’s personal stories of depression, sexual assault, substance abuse and homelessness during the social issue day.

I know I have met future senators, local members and shire councilors, human rights activists and change agents. The most prominent life lesson is my realisation that my life is a vocation and not just a career. This has changed the way I fundamentally look at where I am heading and where I thought I wanted to go.

There is no Row story without a drama, (I know you were wondering where it was) so not to disappoint, here it is. Wednesday night I was first on the scene to remove a male intruder from a woman’s room opposite mine when I woke to hear her scream. I don’t know if it was me removing him or the purple flannel PJs that scared him off (well that’s what I told security when they finally arrived, anyway!)

I know that my work, in the area of social justice is my primary goal, however, a change of medium is not out of the question. I am aware now my passions go way outside advocating for young people’s issues.

## Website links

- Foundation for Young Australians <http://www.youngaustralians.org/>
- Uniting Care Australia <http://unitingcare.org.au>



Issues facing young people in rural communities have been the subject of much recent research and comment. A National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) report on education and employment opportunities is just out and YACVic is about to report on its consultation on rural youth service needs. Negative indicators like suicide or unemployment are high, and over a third of young people are leaving rural areas for study, work and entertainment. Local government has the potential to make a difference. The Rural Council Youth Project has been established to support Councils in realising that potential.

# Rural Council Youth Project:

## Best Practice Service Development in Rural and Regional Local Government Youth Services

by Richard Hill

Rural shires know their local communities. They are not locked into those silos our governments created and now condemn. In fact, they have the ability to take local preventative, coordinating and planning roles which enhance young people's participation in their communities. While such statements make sense to most YIKES! readers, they are hard to understand, resource and achieve in small rural shires which often lack clear models or motivation to work specifically with young people.

The Rural Council Youth Project offers assistance in designing and improving Councils' policy, planning and services for youth. Best practice models and strategies will be offered and shared. Quality improvement standards and processes will be designed. Resource information of various other kinds will be shared and developed.

The nature of these models and strategies will be the product of the action research process which will be undertaken with Councils over the coming months. The project's agenda is to find strategies with ongoing potential to Councils' roles and produce real outcomes for their young people and communities.

The National Office of Local Government has funded RMIT to conduct the project over the next year. This means employing me half time for a year as project worker. A tall order to work on such large goals! However I believe the project has potential to use its limited time and resources well because:

- The Municipal Association of Victoria have provided an office and support in gaining response at all levels in local government.
- Many rural council youth workers and services backed our submission and are keen to participate.
- RMIT brings the considerable expertise we have acquired from the Youth Service Quality Improvement Program - a program developed with and for local government youth services.

The practicalities of the project involve some steep learning curves:

- I am now well into the initial process of meeting and learning from the "players".
- Specific proposals are already being explored to design a simple quality improvement system for workers, and to work on youth strategy/plans with some individual councils.

- A search conference on Friday November 2nd 2001 will provide youth services staff and management a chance to explore policy, service and quality issues. I hope it will generate improvement strategies. Publicity about this conference will be distributed soon.
- Regional or special interest working groups are planned to follow up the outcomes of the conference and earlier consultation.
- From there in I expect to be flat out supporting the design and implementation of improvement initiatives.
- The current plan ends with a conference in the middle of next year to share and review what has been learnt. We will plan the continuing development and use of successful initiatives.

Success depends on how people from Rural Councils participate in and use this project. The shape of the above will adjust to your responses. I am very keen to hear from any who are interested and discuss how the project might assist them.

For more info contact Richard Hill  
Ph 9667-5514, email rhill@mav.asn.au

## A voice for the Youth Accommodation Sector

continued from page 1

### So does the sector in Victoria need a representative?

YES!!! was the overwhelming response to this question. Participants at the forum agreed that youth homelessness needs to be on the political agenda and there has been a lack of coordination and energy in the sector since the demise of YAC. The meeting indicated that there is a commitment to facilitate greater representation of the youth accommodation sector in Victoria and to provide a delegate to NYCH meetings in the future.

### What does a NYCH delegate do?

Delegates need to have a good working knowledge of the housing sector and understand what is happening at a state and commonwealth level. A delegate needs to have an interest in policy and may also manage or work for a housing support service. Most importantly, the delegate needs to have the time and commitment to attend meetings and to provide feedback to the sector.

NYCH meets twice a year in May and November and at least one of these meetings is held in Canberra.

NYCH provides funding for flights, accommodation, meals and transport. There is a fair amount of reading involved in the preparation for meetings and delegates are also expected to consult with the sector so that they are able to provide a state report.

### The process from here

As the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) is a generalist homelessness peak, there has been some pressure for YACVic to assume the role of a state youth housing peak. However, as YACVic has no mandate to perform this role, we are not in a position to do this. We are aware of the need for a specialist body to represent the youth housing sector but we're not able to assume such a specific role as our aim is to represent the broad spectrum of issues within the youth sector. YACVic will continue to lobby the Government on issues around homelessness and we will support a group to establish itself as a voice for the youth housing sector.

There is a commitment to establish a group that will work towards providing a NYCH delegate. As the next NYCH meeting is at the end of November, it is hoped that there can be a Victorian representative by then. The participants of the

recent forum have formed an initial working group to steer this process. However, membership of this group is not closed and it would be great if more people from both the THM and SAAP sectors were able to attend the next meeting to discuss these issues further.

### The terms of reference of this group are:

- To establish a representative process for NYCH and AFHO.
- To discuss a process to strengthen the youth voice in a Victorian homelessness policy debate.
- To explore opportunities to resource that process.

The next meeting of this group will be held at the YACVic office on the 13th September 2001. It will be convened by Katrina O' Sullivan of Wombat Lanigiro Housing and Support Services.

Please contact Paula Grogan  
email: [pgrogan@yacvic.org.au](mailto:pgrogan@yacvic.org.au)  
at YACVic for more information.

# YACVIC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Date:** 4pm, Friday 28 September 2001

**Venue:** Portico Room, Melbourne Town Hall  
corner Collins and Swanston Sts, Melbourne

### Keynote speaker:

Christine Nixon, Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police

## NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR:

> YACVIC BOARD > YOUTH REFERENCE GROUP > YOUNG MEDIA  
SPOKESPERSON > POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

**For more info or to RSVP contact YACVic on (03) 9612 8999  
or check out our website [www.yacvic.org.au](http://www.yacvic.org.au)**

# SYN-FM is next on air with a ripper seven week broadcast from September 3 to October 21.

**S**YN-FM is a student and youth radio station based in Melbourne which broadcasts as an aspirant community radio station on 94.9 FM. As an aspirant broadcaster, we are in the process of applying for a full-time license, and we share the frequency with three other aspirants. It is a station run by youth for youth, over half our presenters are under 18 and our last three-week broadcast had between 300-400 presenters. It's a place to get your voice and opinions on air.

# 94.9 SYN FM

## Look around, get interested and get involved in the raddest student and youth station around.

As the airwaves in Melbourne become increasingly crowded, it is quite clear that there is a need for independent radio run by young people for young people. There is a healthy and diverse range of live music and culture in Melbourne - and our brief is to reflect that diversity. While some "community" stations are quickly becoming crass and commercial, we see our role in providing fresh innovative radio becoming even more crucial. Melbourne needs good, representative, independent community radio and if SYN-FM gets a full-time license that's exactly what Melbourne will get.

SYN-FM is focused on obtaining a full-time broadcasting licence. Our exec team and members (whether they're on air or not) work very hard to bring the best radio possible to you the listener. The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) called for applications in November last year and is in the process of deciding which of the aspirant broadcasters in Melbourne is worthy of a full-time broadcasting license. The process is expected to be decided by the end of the year with a public hearing happening as this article goes to print. For updates check the SYN-FM website, <http://www.syn.org.au>.

As an aspirant broadcaster SYN-FM has successfully produced and transmitted three broadcasts of quality radio. This has not only provided a unique source of new music for Melbourne's youth - it has helped give hundreds of students experience all aspects of radio. We feel that if we were given a full-time license, we would be able to provide fantastic radio for all young people in Melbourne.

### What Can I Do to Help?

We're glad you asked! The best way to show your support is to get involved! The easiest way to do that is to simply listen. We will next be on air September 3 - October 21 and by listening and telling your friends how ace we are, you will be helping to spread the good word about SYN-FM. You can also find the grid on our website.

You can become a member - it's only \$5 for students and \$10 for others. This gives you the opportunity to get free on-air training and production workshops as well as the ability to find out all about other parts of the station, but more importantly becoming a member allows you to apply to have a show on SYN-FM.

### Write a letter of support for SYN-FM

Even whilst the decision process are going on letters of support are still crucial. The letter of support is to be addressed to the ABA and include why you think SYN-FM should get a full-time licence representing Melbourne's student and youth community. These can be sent directly to the ABA, addressed to:

The Manager  
Licensing Section  
Australian Broadcasting Authority  
PO Box Q500  
Queen Victoria Building NSW 1230

### To find out more contact the station:

Phone - (03) 9925 2414  
On air requests - (03) 9925 3711  
Location: Level 4, Building 12 360 Swanston St.  
RMIT City 3000.

### Website links

- SYN FM <http://www.syn.org.au>
- Australian Broadcasting Authority <http://www.aba.gov.au>

**YACVic will be running a weekly "youth affairs" show on SYN FM so if you're a young person interested in developing your radio skills, or just wanna come along and play some music contact Alex on (03) 9612 8917.**

**O**n June 30, minus18, Australia's first underage queer dance party, celebrated its third birthday. The celebration was a hallmark, and an enormous relief to all the people who devote hours of their time in order to keep the social event alive. Behind the carefree, sociable face, minus18 has been a troubled baby.

# minus18

Modest beginnings saw an idea born in the minds of youth that was adopted and acted upon by PFLAG member, Colin Billing, who took the concept to the ALSO Foundation and PFLAG for assistance. ALSO provided a generous grant, and the latter adopted minus18 as part of its very own fold.

The first ever event was attended by 68 teenagers, a number well sufficient for organisers to feel their efforts had not been in vain. However, expectations continued to be exceeded as minus18 grew and matured, seeing the 2000th patron join the party at the third birthday event.

minus18 is a well supervised, drug and alcohol free event, at which gay and lesbian youth aged 14 to 18 can go to enjoy themselves and meet like minded teens. They are supervised by the young adults on the minus18 committee, PFLAG representatives, and Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer, Senior Constable Melinda Edwards. Youth workers are also present at the dance parties to talk to anyone in need of counselling or advice.

However, all has not been well for minus18's third year. After receiving a hard-earned and greatly needed grant of \$25,000 from FreeZa, minus18 received some terrible news. The grant had enabled the group to hold Saturday afternoon events in addition to their usual night time ones, which in turn opened up availability to outer suburbs and country kids.

However FreeZa, a Victorian Government Office for Youth initiative, is itself in doubt having its own funding slashed drastically in the last state budget. This has definite repercussions on the funding of minus18 and our future is unclear.

Beyond funding concerns, even greater changes have taken place within the minus18 committee itself. Members were greatly saddened when they heard the news that after 3 years and involvement in producing 20 events, minus18 founder and its first convenor, Colin Billing has announced his

retirement from the minus18 committee. Colin was a tireless individual who devoted his life to the operation of minus18, and his support will be sadly missed, by committee and patrons alike.

His legacy will be continued by Jarrod Hassell, one of the first young people to join the minus18 committee three years ago. He has now nobly shouldered the substantial workload that Colin previously undertook. The committee is now working to distribute tasks between members, rather than expecting one individual to achieve it all. A system is currently being devised in which one committee member takes on a role such as treasurer or secretary, and takes responsibility for this task for a short period of time, at which point they pass the job along to another committee member. This ensures that all committee members are experienced in all fields, standing them in good stead for their future lives.

These hardworking individuals, aided by their vast support network, will devote hours of their time in order to see that minus18 emerges from these trials stronger and better than before. It is their firm aim that minus18's fourth year will be the best they have seen, and their events will continue to pave a path of acceptance and enjoyment for others to follow.

#### Website links

- minus18 <http://www.also.org.au/minus18/>
- FreeZa <http://www.freeza.vic.gov.au/freeza/>
- Office for Youth <http://www.youth.vic.gov.au>



# GETTING STUFF:

Prepared by Jenny Lawton, Financial Counsellor

## lay-by vs credit cards

### Credit cards and store cards

Credit cards can be a handy way of getting stuff, especially if your card gives you an interest-free period and you pay the amount you owe before any interest kicks in. Credit cards can also be useful for snapping up goods on sale. However, if you can't afford to pay your credit card account in full before the interest starts, the bargain price you paid for your stuff can be pretty steep once the interest starts piling up.

Interest on credit cards varies widely. At the lower end of the scale, you might be able to get a credit card with one month interest-free for around 15%, though there are some cards with rates over 29%. Some credit cards also charge an annual account fee and this can vary from around \$20 to \$80. Many credit cards also charge extra fees if you are late with your repayments.

Interest costs on a credit card mount up pretty quickly. You might find a fantastic deal on a stereo for \$999 that you put on your credit card. But if you only made the minimum payment on a typical credit card account each month, you will still be paying for your stereo 3 to 4 years later. This is because the minimum monthly payment is often only 3% of the outstanding account balance, so the second month's payment would be around \$30 (and include over \$13 interest). At this rate of payment, the stereo would end up costing around \$1400. Some bargain!

Store cards work much the same way as credit cards, though the interest rate for store cards is usually higher. The main problem with store cards is that they lock you into one or a few stores, so you may not get as a good a price on stuff as you would if you had shopped around.

### Alternatives to getting stuff on credit card

You could save up the money you need to buy the stuff you want, but you could miss out on a fantastic deal by the time you get the money together. However, there is a simple way of hanging onto the bargain you've found and avoiding the risk of ending up with a spiraling interest bill or a credit card debt you can't pay

### Lay-by

Many stores will put goods aside for you while you pay them off. This is known as lay-by and it can be a great way of picking up stuff on sale. You will usually need to pay a deposit and then make minimum payments at regular intervals to pay off the goods by a certain date. lay-by is totally interest-free. It is against the law for a seller to charge extra money for agreeing to lay-by goods.

If a lay-by agreement is cancelled because you breached the agreement, you will lose the amount of money which the agreement explains you will lose and the seller must refund any extra amount you have paid.

## Getting Help

Don't rely on the general information in this article. It is best to get advice specific to your situation.

For referral to a financial counsellor:  
Financial and Consumer Rights Council  
(03) 9614 5433

Credit Helpline (03) 9602 3800

For assistance with a complaint about a seller or a credit card company:

Consumer and Business  
Affairs (03) 9627 6000

## TIPS: when using lay-by to buy stuff

- Work out your budget carefully to ensure you can make all the lay-by payments by the due dates.
- Check out the store's lay-by terms so you are fully aware of what will happen if you cancel the deal or miss any payments.
- Make sure the lay-by agreement is clear about what you have bought, how much the total cost will be and the payment arrangements and don't leave the store without a copy of the agreement, signed by you and the seller.
- If you break the agreement by missing a payment, talk to the store as quickly as possible to see whether they might be willing to let you continue with the lay-by.
- Watch out for dodgy retailers. If the seller goes out of business, you may have trouble getting your money back - so stick to sellers that you are confident will still be around when you finalise your lay-by.

## TIPS: for using a credit card to buy stuff:

- Interest and fees vary widely on credit cards, and only some cards offer interest-free periods, so shop around carefully.
- Make sure you understand the terms of the credit card contract, especially any fees that may be charged if you are late with payments. If you don't understand the contract get independent advice before you sign.
- Before using a credit card, work out your budget carefully to ensure you can afford to repay your purchases and check whether the purchase will be a good deal after the cost of any interest is added into the price.
- Keep a close watch of any credit card spending as it happens. Waiting for a statement to come could be too late to avoid a deep financial hole.
- Check each statement carefully for errors and try to pay the whole balance of the account each month, to avoid interest mounting up.
- Sellers are often charged a fee by your credit card company (between 2% and 4%). To save this money, some sellers will give a discount for cash. If you have the cash, it won't hurt to ask for a discount.
- If your credit card debt is out of control, put the card in the freezer so you don't use it until you get some advice from a financial counsellor about what to do.
- If you lose your job or there is some reason why you are having trouble making payments on your card, get advice from a financial counsellor quickly.

### WOULD YOU LIKE A HEFTY INTEREST BILL WITH THAT?

Given she was on a low-income, Shari was surprised to get a credit card offer from her bank- but they gave her a credit card anyway with a \$1000 limit. Shari promised herself she wouldn't use all this credit, seeing as her Youth Allowance plus part time job only paid her \$1100 per month.

At first, Shari was careful about when she used the card and always paid off the account in full with each statement, but in March it seemed to be raining bills. There was the mobile phone account, plus the car insurance, and then her re-enrolment and book costs for Uni. In that one month, Shari managed to clock up over \$900 on her card. By June, Shari found herself facing a rising interest bill, with little hope of bringing her debt down.

Each time Shari tried to pay something towards the card, she left herself short of money for expenses and needed to use the card again. Eventually Shari begged her Mum to hang onto the card until the debt was under control. It took Shari over a year- but she finally paid it off. Unfortunately, it took yet another year for Shari to catch up the Uni subjects she been forced to drop so she could earn more by working extra hours in her fast food outlet job.

# get youth issues on the agenda!

## become a member of YACVic...

When you become a member of YACVic 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, policy issues papers, campaign updates and other materials. YACVic members are also encouraged to become involved in our policy development process.

### Membership form tax invoice

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

Title  First Name  Surname  Position

Organisation Name  Approx No of members in organisation

Address

Suburb/Town  State  Postcode

Phone Number  Fax Number  Mobile

Email  Website address   please tick if you DO NOT want a link to your organisations website included on the YACVic website

I/We agree to the purpose and objectives listed and hereby  **renew**  **apply** for membership to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Inc.

Signature  Date

#### Fees (all prices are GST inclusive)

##### Organisational

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| <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** \$

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

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

#### Vision statement

Our vision is for a Victorian Community that values and provides opportunity, participation, justice and equity for all young people.

YACVic actively works towards this vision as the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people's issues in Victoria.

#### 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:
  - assist groups of young people working on issues of concern to them;
  - assist service providers to increase their effectiveness;
  - inform the community about issues affecting young people.

#### Membership

Membership is renewable on 1st July on a yearly basis

#### Associate members

Entitled to all printed material dispatched from YACVic. Associate members have no voting rights

#### Individual and organisational members

Organisational and individual members are entitled to all printed material dispatched from YACVic.

#### Voting Rights

- Government Departments are entitled to become associate members only
- Individual Members have only one vote at the YACVic AGM
- Organisational members have 5 votes at the YACVic AGM

YACVic welcomes your submissions to the calendar. Please email contributions to [info@yacvic.org.au](mailto:info@yacvic.org.au) or phone us on (03) 9612 8999. The calendar on the YACVic website is also updated regularly see <http://www.yacvic.org.au>

# events and resources

**Deadline for contributions to the next edition of yikes is 10:10:01**

## ■ Social Security Law and Welfare Rights Advocacy - Short Courses - 2001

**Date:** 27 August 2001 - 24 October 2001

The Welfare Rights Unit Inc present a series of training sessions which will be held on Mondays and repeated on Wednesdays each week. Parts of this course can be accredited to the Dip Financial Counselling

Topics include: An overview of Social Security payments, Centrelink appeals systems and advocacy, CD ROM guide to Social Security legislation, Unemployment payments and breaches, Disability and Carer payments, Family payments; General welfare rights, Overpayments and Prosecutions, Income and Assets (including rate calculators).

**Where:** Victoria Legal Aid

**For more info:** [wruvic@vicnet.net](mailto:wruvic@vicnet.net)

## ■ Volunteerism & Loss & Grief Support Services / Loss & Grief - Multicultural Perspectives

**Date:** 29 August 2001 - 30 August 2001

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Organisations have been invited to provide information about services available or programs to put on display.

**For more info:** ph: 03 9351 0358 fax: 03 9351 0802

**Email:** [info@nalagvic.org.au](mailto:info@nalagvic.org.au)

## ■ World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

**Date:** 31 August 2001 - 7 September 2001

**Where:** South Africa

**Web:** <http://www.un.org/rights/racism>

## ■ Call for Submissions: Eccentric Billionaire

**Date:** 1 September 2001

Eccentric Billionaire is a cross-media event, in development now, backed by Next Wave, to be launched in 2002. Lots of categories for funding of bizarre social experiments in subversion!?!

**Email:** [submissions@ebtv.org](mailto:submissions@ebtv.org)

**Web:** <http://www.ebtv.org>

## ■ Grief that does not end: continuing bonds and spirituality

**Date:** 3 September 2001 - 17 September 2001

The Centre for Grief Education presents Professor Dennis Klass, American author and clinician.

Presentations will be in Melbourne, Hobart, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane

**For more info:** 03 9545 6377 or 1800 642 066

**Email:** [info@grief.org.au](mailto:info@grief.org.au)

**Web:** [www.grief.org.au](http://www.grief.org.au)

## ■ Workshop for secondary students - explorations of MacBeth

conducted by MTC

**Date:** 5 September 2001

**Times:** 10am and 1pm

**Cost:** \$13.20

**Where:** Geelong Performing Arts Centre

**For more info:** Geelong Performing Arts Centre (03) 5225 1200

## ■ Yeperenye Federation Festival

**Date:** 8 September 2001 - 9 September 2001

1000 traditional performers, incl Yothu Yindi, Christine Anu, Slim Dusty, NoKTuRNL, Paul Kelly, Frank Yamma, Archie Roach, Troy Cassar-Daley, John Williamson, Warren Williams, Kev Carmody, Coloured Stone, The Mills Sisters and more . . .

**For more info:** 1800 113 211

**Web:** [www.yepfest.com](http://www.yepfest.com)

## ■ Stonnington Youth Services Network Reference Group Meeting

**Date:** 11 September 2001

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**For more info:** Stonnington Youth Services 9823 1185

## ■ Performance for primary students - the mighty how from terrapin & Polygot Puppet Theatres

**Date:** 14 September 2001

**Times:** 11am and 1.30pm

**Cost:** \$6.50

**Where:** Geelong Performing Arts Centre

**For more info:** Geelong Performing Arts Centre

## ■ Combating Racism and Discrimination

**Date:** 18 September 2001

A Youth Affairs Council of Victoria Policy Forum for young people and people working with young people.

See page 7 of YIKES! for more details.

**For more info:** 03 9612 8999

**Email:** [info@yacvic.org.au](mailto:info@yacvic.org.au)

## ■ National Conference of Young People Imagine Youth Australia

**Date:** 21 September 2001 - 23 September 2001

**For more info:** Ph (08) 9228 0808

**Web:** [www.imagineoz.com.au](http://www.imagineoz.com.au)

## ■ YACVic Annual General Meeting

**Date:** 28 September 2001

**Time:** 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Guest speaker: Chritine Nixon, Chief Commissioner, Victoria Police

**Where:** Melbourne Town Hall

**For more info:** Ph (03) 9612 8999

**Email:** [info@yacvic.org.au](mailto:info@yacvic.org.au)

**Web:** [www.yacvic.org.au](http://www.yacvic.org.au)

## ■ 3rd Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF)

**Date:** 30 September 2001 - 8 October 2001

All 54 commonwealth countries to be represented at this meeting in Queensland. The CYF provides an opportunity for young men & women (18-25) from

Commonwealth countries to come together to share their vision and concerns & develop capacity to contribute.

**Where:** Queensland

**For more info:** DEETYA, Suzi Hewlett ph (02) 6240 9232 or Kerrie Atkins ph (02) 6240 7323

**Email:** [youthforum@detya.gov.au](mailto:youthforum@detya.gov.au)

## ■ The Gathering

**Date:** 11 October 2001 - 14 October 2001

Plans for the first ever, Australian and NZ celebration of strengths-based practice to be held in Bendigo. An opportunity for collaborative learning for anyone with an interest in strengths-based work.

**Where:** Bendigo

**For more info:** Karen, Cristina or Terris ph (03) 5442 0500

**Email:** [stlukeir@stlukes.org.au](mailto:stlukeir@stlukes.org.au)

## ■ Working with volunteers

**Date:** 15 October 2001

**Time:** 9:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Running a volunteer program: recruitment, orientation, supervision, difficult volunteers and training.

**Where:** Melbourne University - Hawthorn Campus, 442 Auburn Road

**For more info:** ph (03) 9817 4094

## ■ Understanding Youth Pathways

**Date:** 15 October 2001 - 16 October 2001

The program has now been finalised and we are delighted to have secured international keynote speakers along with key, leading Australians in the various youth related professions.

To enhance the invited speaker presentations, all delegates are invited to submit an abstract for poster presentation which will form the highlight of the session breaks over the two main days.

**For more info:** Jennie Armato-Martin

Director, Meeting Innovation

P.O. Box 544 Williamstown Vic 3016

Tel: +61 3 9397-3975 Fax: +61 3 9397-3394

**Email:** [jennie@meetinginnovation.net.au](mailto:jennie@meetinginnovation.net.au)

**Web:** [www.acer.edu.au](http://www.acer.edu.au)

## ■ Exclusion Embrace

**Date:** 18 October 2001 - 21 October 2001

Exploring the themes of disability and spirituality. It reflects the growing interest in issues of faith, justice and meaning in the lived experience of disability. Issues to be considered and presented include: ethics, care inclusion, reconciliation, discrimination, love, sexuality, justice and liberation.

**Where:** YWCA, 489 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne

**Email:** [excemb@mcm.org.au](mailto:excemb@mcm.org.au)

**Web:** [www.exclusionandembrace.conf.au](http://www.exclusionandembrace.conf.au)