

# The YAC

A publication of the  
**Youth and Community  
Combined Action  
(YACCA)**

October 1998

## *AYPAC...A young persons' perspective*

It is no secret that young people in today's society are confronted with many challenges. Finding one's place in the world and deciding what values are important are not easy tasks. This is made even more difficult due to the fact that we live in a society in which ageist values and beliefs are deeply ingrained. The opinions of young people are often not listened to, our thinking isn't trusted or is deemed unimportant. The Federal Government's recent decision to cease their funding of The Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition is appalling. It seems that the Australian government still believes that young people should be seen but not heard. There is no better example than the defunding of AYPAC to illustrate that we still have a long way to go before young people are valued as citizens who have a right to their say. AYPAC as a non-government organisation was able to ensure that young people's issues were not pushed aside as they so often are, ensuring that there is public debate on issues which directly impact the lives of young people.

For more than 20 years now there has been a national youth peak body with the ability to analyse government policies and legislation. The fact that AYPAC is an advocate for young people, has sometimes meant that what they say does not go hand-in-hand with the government's policy. As a non-government organisation, AYPAC has been an independent body able to act solely in the best interests of young people, no matter what the political climate. That there will no longer be a

national independent body able to stand up to political forces when there is a need is to me of grave concern, as I feel this should be a fundamental right of all people in any democratic society. The fact that young people under the age of 18 do not even have the most basic right — the right to vote — means that AYPAC's role has been vital in ensuring young people's voices and issues are heard.

In place of AYPAC, the Federal Government has stated that a youth "round table" consisting of 50 young people will be held twice yearly. While I am all for any initiative that gives young people a direct voice to government, I do not feel that two forums a year can take the place of an organisation that has the continual support and involvement of many of the key players in the youth sector.

- Young people lead very transient lives. AYPAC plays a crucial role as an organisation that is

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### **Contents...**

<b>Letters to the Editor</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Coordinating Committee Update .....	2
YANQ gets online! .....	3
Pride youth events .....	3
<b>Bits &amp; Pieces</b> .....	<b>3</b>
NESB Youth Issues Network update .....	4
Funding for community legal centres — update! .....	4
Have your say .....	5
<b>Who's acting up</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Working party updates .....	6
Networking takes off on the Gold Coast .....	6
<b>Best practice</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Publications/resources</b> .....	<b>7</b>

# Letters to the Editor

...continued from previous page

many of the key players in the youth sector.

- Young people lead very transient lives. AYPAC plays a crucial role as an organisation that is ongoing, stable and continuous. Within AYPAC, the relationships between young people and youth sector workers have been maintained over the long-term, something I do not believe will be achieved by the youth round table.
- I also fear that a youth round table will be tokenistic, as the government is under no obligation to listen to what the young people say. To me, the idea that young people's issues deserve no continual support is patronizing.

If only it were true and there was no need for organisations such as AYPAC and YANQ to advocate for the needs and rights of young people. If the voting age was lowered, if young people's thinking was trusted and valued, if young people were not stereotyped and put into boxes, then perhaps there would be no need for AYPAC. It is for this reason that I urge you all to continue to put your support behind AYPAC, whether it is as a young person, community worker, public servant, politician, journalist or a broader community member. I, as a young person and as an individual who cares deeply about social justice, urge you to make sure that the Federal Government is aware of the anger and outrage resulting from their irresponsible action.

Aisha Damali....

## Coordinating Committee Update

February-March 1996

The past few months have been a busy time for YANQ, with the organisational review, possible relocation, and the change of government being key issues on our agenda.

The organisational review, conducted by Michael Massingham and Mick Devlin, is presently under way. Focus groups are being held throughout the state with members and key stakeholders, in regional areas and with issue-based groups. Interviews are also being conducted with various members.

Over the past few months, YANQ, YSTC and SEQYAC have been considering the possibility of relocation. With the expansion of all three organisations, space at 36 Baxter Street has become limited, and we need to now consider alternative, more spacious accommodation. With the recent change of government, however, plans to relocate have been put on hold until it is clear what our position will be after 30 June 1996.

Staff have also been busy working on organisational matters including the development of the new strategic plan, review of YANQ's Industrial Agreement, preparation for the 1996 state youth affairs conference, and work on the policy direction of the organisation.

### YANQ is on the move!

After six years in Baxter Street, Fortitude Valley, YANQ is moving out. Our new home will be on level 5, 325 George Street, Brisbane in the new YMCA building. We expect to be in our new premises and open for business by 3 March 1997.

We have negotiated premises in the YMCA building in George Street for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the potential for our organisations to collaborate on certain issues and projects. In terms of facilities, the building boasts a number of and conference rooms the latest mod-cons.

Access is through the Commonwealth Bank, located on several

George Street premises are close to the Roma Street Train Station and the City Circle Bus Route. We do recognise, however, that parking may be an issue for some members. During the next few weeks we will be identifying all the bargain car parks and meters in the area and getting this info to you.

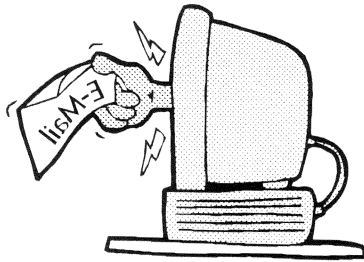


meeting  
fitted out with all

main door next to the  
with disabled toilets  
floors. In addition, the

### YANQ gets online!

YANQ has finally come of age and posted its first home pages to the world-wide web. At this stage, the pages provide basic information about YANQ, our publications, membership info and contact details.



Over the next 12 months, these pages will be developed and improved. We hope to include current news info, policy platforms, and some interactive stuff ... and we'd love your input. Come and have a browse at:

★ <http://www.thehub.com.au/~yanq/> ★

and e-mail, phone or fax through any feedback that you have, or comments about what you would like to see on these pages.

*Our e-mail address is  
[yanq@thehub.com.au](mailto:yanq@thehub.com.au)*

*Judith Wootton  
Publications and Information Coordinator*

## Pride youth events

**Young people are invited to join in youth events being held as part of June's Pride Festival, Brisbane's annual gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender festival.**

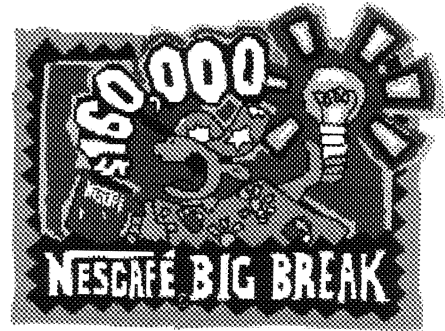
Three youth events are being staged by the Diverse Students Safe School in conjunction with the Pride Festival. Young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, and those who support them, are invited to get together, share stories, and celebrate.

*Workshop: 14 June, 12.30-5.30,  
Rainbow Centre, 719a Stanley St,  
Woolloongabba*

Topics will include Young people and sexuality; Coming out; Being safe. An opportunity for young people to tell their own story and hear others (including experiences of school), to share information and resources.

Celebrate, meet people, learn circus tricks, play games, eat yummy food. *FREE.*

*Pink light disco: 26 June,  
Basement, 4ZZZ*



This year another \$160,000 will be awarded to young Australians aged between 16 and 21 (as at 31 December 1997), to help turn their dream into reality.

Every year, Nescafé hands out eight grants of \$20,000 to young Australians to give them a 'kick-start down the road to success'.

From April 21 you can get more information and a copy of the entry kit by calling Toll Free 1800 630 630 or by visiting Nescafé's web site at [www.cafe43.com.au](http://www.cafe43.com.au).

**More info on what it's all about and past winners is available on the web at <http://www.eycon.net.au/nescafe/bigbreak/what/>**

### All events DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE

Diverse Students Safe School is a community group concerned about homophobia in schools. We aim to enable schools to create an environment which is safe, supportive and affirming of sexual diversity within the whole school community.

Young people, teachers, parents, youth workers and other concerned people meet the third Monday of the month, 6-8 pm, Rainbow Centre, 719a Stanley St, Woolloongabba.

# NESB Youth Issues Network update

The NESB Youth Issues Network continues to be well attended, signifying that there is steady interest in the field about NESB young people's issues.

Some of NESBYIN's main projects are:

### *Professional development and support project*

About five groups of workers from the NESB and youth sector have applied to be involved in this project. The project provides an opportunity for youth and NESB community workers to meet for joint supervision each month. The idea of the project came through the Network as workers were feeling isolated in their work with little time or money to seek help with difficult situations. The project aims to decrease this isolation, draw expertise from workers to share with others and enhance local networks. Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) have tendered to facilitate the group discussions. QPASTT are skilled at facilitating discussions such as these and have extensive experience in cross-cultural counselling.

### *Discussion paper*

Last year, NESBYIN held a planning day. One of the outcomes was that Susan would prepare a discussion paper about NESBYIN's structure. Francine Seeto (the convenor of the Network) is currently working on this paper

with Susan. NESBYIN has continued to grow and develop and it is timely to have some clear ideas about how we can work together more effectively.

### *Regional NESB network project*

Last year, the Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition (AYPAC) granted YANQ funding to resource NESB networks in other regions of the state. Three workers were employed in Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa, through the Migrant Resource Centres and through Centacare in Mount Isa. Each worker did an extremely good job with very limited resources. Many young people were consulted about their needs and issues through focus groups, surveys and youth forums. YANQ has applied for joint funding with each organisation involved in this project to try to continue the work. A comprehensive report about this project will be printed in the next *Network Noise*.

### *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*

A working party from NESBYIN is meeting to give a response to the United Nations about the implementation of this convention in Queensland.

### *Conclusion*

NESBYIN continues to roll along with many different projects and people. If you are interested in finding out more about our work, please call Susan at YANQ. The next meeting will be held at YANQ, 18 June from 3-5pm. Hope to see you there!

## Funding for community legal centres — update!

**Decisions on future funding for community legal centres have yet to be made, and there has been little news since the last *Network Noise*.**

In the next few weeks the key factors influencing the decision will be:

- funding allocated within the federal budget (coming down in early May),
- the appointment of the new Legal Aid Board, likely to be appointed by mid-May, and
- the assessment by the new Board of the worth of continuing to fund community legal centres (the budget is likely to influence their decisions in regard to this).

Word has it that the recent review of Queensland's community legal centres found them to be cost-efficient and gave a glowing report of their effectiveness. We'll keep you updated on any further information!

Penny Carr  
Policy & Research  
Co-ordinator

# Who's acting up

## Have your say

Members are being given a chance to have their say as YANQ holds regional forums to develop YANQ policy, and circulates a Policy Platform document for comment.

### *Policy development forums*

From April to June, YANQ is visiting six regions throughout Queensland, holding forums to begin developing YANQ policy in areas in which we have not previously done significant work.

Each forum will hear from speakers presenting specialist information. Participants will then discuss value and action statements YANQ should embed into a policy statement on that issue. The day's outcomes will form the basis for a draft statement which will later be circulated to all members for comment.

Date	Topic	Location
7 April	Disability	Beenleigh
7 May	Training for young people	Gympie
14 May	Racism	Townsville
3 June	Aboriginal Reconciliation	Roma
16 June	Suicide prevention	Mt Isa
18 June	Prevention and early intervention	Cairns

### *Policy Platform*

The regional forums are part of a strategy to develop a YANQ Policy Platform, which will document YANQ's position on a range of issues. The Policy Platform will guide YANQ's activities in particular areas and will be reflected in the organisation's everyday work. It is expected to become more detailed and cover a greater range of issues over time.

Four draft statements planned for inclusion in the Policy Platform will go out for final member comment in the near future. Six more draft policies will soon be completed and circulated for comment.

Contact: Penny Carr

**picture of  
two boys  
beside  
graffiti**

Launch of youthspeak 98. Neil and Matthew

Hi!

My name is  
Priscilla Sutton.

I am extremely  
interested in

gaining

employment in

the youth sector.

Previous experience includes  
the DFYCC youth advisory  
forum, with participation in  
all levels since 1994, including  
the 1996 state reference  
team.

Also in 1995 I was a  
sponsored participant of the  
Queensland Rural Women's  
Network Annual Conference in  
Longreach. From this, I was  
selected to co-produce a  
video and to write the rural  
youth report for Youth Week  
'95.

I have also been involved in  
a number of youth projects at  
a group level.

I am currently studying  
my BA (externally/part-  
time), majoring in  
Anthropology & Sociology and  
Communication.

So if you hear of anything in  
the Brisbane metro region,  
please don't hesitate to  
contact me on (07) 3268  
7851 or 041 972 3368.



# Best practice

## Working party updates

### Education ...

The Education Working Party is continuing its work in three areas: alternative programs, suspensions and exclusions, and school-based interagencies.

Since the last newsletter, the working party has been drafting a proforma to capture the stories of students who have been suspended, excluded or had their enrolments cancelled. These forms will be circulated through education working party members, interagency groups and other interested individuals. The forms will help us to monitor whether the new legislation is working in a fair and effective way. It will also help to identify any sections which are not working which we will then discuss with the Department of Education.

The forms have been developed so they can be filled in by students or workers. If you would like a copy of the form or you want any further information on the education working party, please contact Penny at YANQ on (07) 3236 5400 or 1800 177 899 or Kerry at the Gold Coast Youth Service on (07) 5572 0400.

### Rural and isolated ...

The Rural and Isolated Working Party presented a position paper to the Minister for Families, Youth and

Community Care in early April. The paper outlined a proposal for cross-departmental funding to enable access to resources for youth services for very small communities (those with populations of 200–5,000).

The paper suggests that a number of departments that have service delivery responsibilities should contribute to a pool of funds. These funds, administered through one department, would be available to small communities who have developed a community plan to identify needs and any current services which exist. When communities do not qualify for any current funding to address the key need identified, they could apply for funds through the cross-departmental funding program.

The idea recognises that the eligibility for funds often hinges on having a population base which could sustain a response to a certain issue. Very small communities are unable to compete for program-based funding and this idea has been developed to better meet the needs of those communities.

As the paper has been presented to the Minister, the working party is now focusing on letting workers across the state know about the proposal, and discussing it with regional youth affairs officers and local members of parliament. If you would like a copy of the paper contact Penny at YANQ.

**For more info on either of these working parties, or if you would like to get involved, contact Penny Carr at the Youth Affairs Network ( (07) 3236 5400 or 1800 177 899.**

## Networking takes off on the Gold Coast

**The Gold Coast Youth Network Forum (GCYNF) is setting some new and exciting directions this year after securing a one-off grant through Community Gaming Funds to employ a part-time Network Co-ordinator.**

GCYNF has been established since 1989 when it moved from a youth sub group of the local

welfare interagency, to a network in its own right. This proved to be extremely positive by providing a forum through which issues for young people can be identified, advocated and addressed on regional, state and commonwealth levels.

Currently 25 service providers (community and government) are members of GCYNF with another 25 on the mailing list. Over the last eight years, the

members of GCYNF have successfully developed and implemented many initiatives addressing issues including:

- youth suicide prevention
- young people's participation
- needs-based training
- youth justice
- cultural and linguistic diversities

**For more information about the Gold Coast Youth Network Forum and this project, contact Kerry Schonfisch at the Gold Coast Youth Service ( (07) 5572 0400.**

# do-it-yourself evaluation

The Australian Youth Foundation has published a do-it-yourself evaluation manual to assist workers and managers to make evaluation part of their day-to-day operations.

The manual will help agencies to determine • Is our project working? • Is it helping those it should? • Is it doing what we set out to do?

For community agencies, these basic questions may decide future funding and actions. The *START*

*do-it-yourself evaluation manual* will help you address these questions. It is suitable for those who have no previous experience with evaluation, through to the more experienced evaluator.

Available for \$39.95 (including postage) for non-profit community organisations. The full price is \$79.95 (including postage) from Australian Youth Foundation, Suite 302/134 William St, East Sydney, NSW, 2011  
☎ (02) 9357 2344 or fax (02) 9358 5635 e-mail: [ayouthf@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ayouthf@ozemail.com.au)



### Meet the challenge conference report

The *Meet the Challenge* conference report has been produced. All conference participants will be sent a copy in the next few weeks.

A limited number of additional copies are available to YANQ members for \$5 each.

If you would like a copy, give us a call on (07) 3852 1800 or 1800 177 899.

## Any which way you can

*youth livelihoods, community  
resources and crime*

*Any Which Way You Can* reports on how urban young people in poverty consider and confront their social problems. It reveals how deeply young people are affected by the marginalisation of unemployment.

Produced by the Australian Youth Foundation, the report is based on interviews with 550 young people in Melbourne suburbs that are undergoing rapid economic and social change. According to the interviews, the overall crime rates and 'shadow economy levels' are high among young people short of money and support. Dr Rob White, author of the report, said the report tells 'what it is like on the frontlines of economic recession'.

The report provides valuable information concerning the impact on young people of current economic and social conditions.

Available for \$30 from the Australian Youth Foundation, Suite 302/134 William St, East Sydney NSW 2010  
(02) 9357 2344

