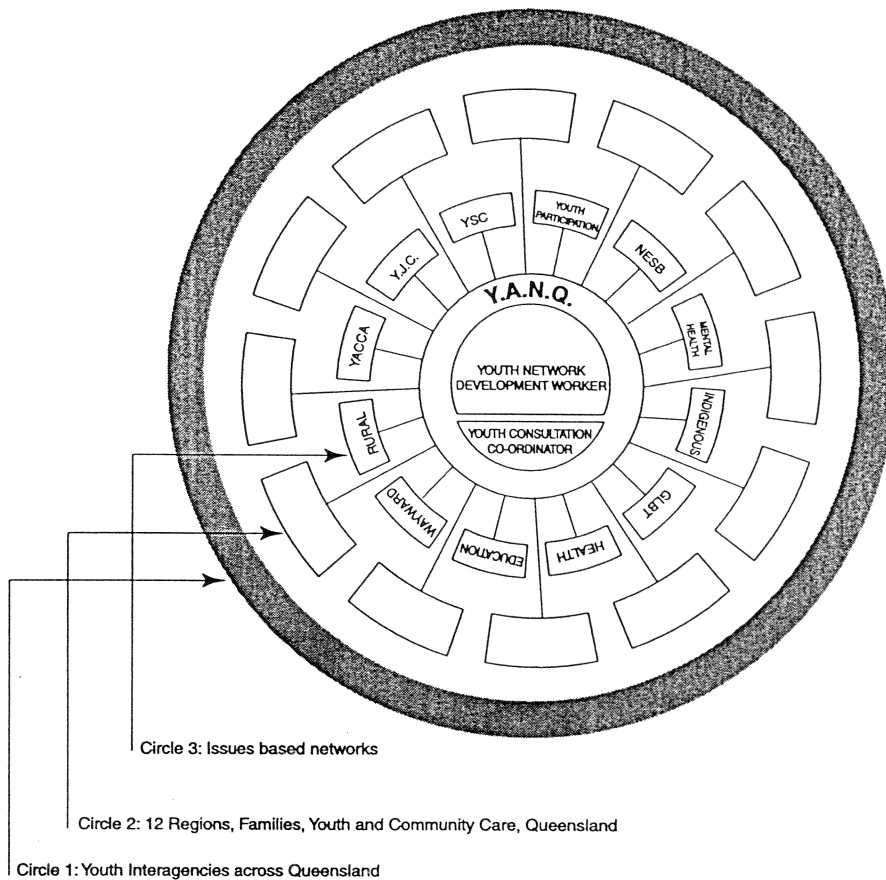


**Constructive social change happens most effectively when people work together rather than in isolation. By bringing the full breadth of youth organisations and workers under one umbrella and giving young people a voice, we seek to increase the chances of achieving social change toward a common goal.**



## **YOUTH CONSULTATIVE NETWORK (YCN)**

There are a whole array of barriers that can inhibit young people's participation. These may include language, procedures, unwritten rules, unspoken codes of appropriate behaviour, experiences and knowledge. These barriers can inhibit and minimise effective participation by depowering and alienating young people.

Also, it is often those young people who are more confident and articulate who are better able to participate. Barriers also exist in relation to the fact that young people are not a homogeneous group.

For effective consultation the special needs of groups such as young women, young people with disabilities, young people from NESB, young Aborigines, young gay and lesbian must be taken into account. Young people in regional and rural areas also have special needs. Barriers that inhibit these groups obviously relate to their special needs as population groups.

YANQ has developed a model for networking and consultation which recognises both the diversity of young people and the environments which they live in. YANQ proposes an ongoing structure for networking which recognises that a small group of young people (round table) elected or appointed to a position of representation is often tokenistic.

YANQ is of the view that we must first establish a structure with clear processes and protocols for networking and consultation before we can undertake any effective state-wide consultation with young people.

The YCN model proposed by YANQ is not a gathering of persons or members such as Youth Parliament, but rather a gathering of the basic people's networks, committees, services, projects and schools.

The YCN model provides a mechanism for a wide cross section of young people across the state to be networking. With clear protocols and processes as well as training the structure can be utilised for consultation in regards to specific questions with more weight given to the major stakeholders effected by each question.

The YCN aims to positively promote the image of young people and their skills.

### **BENEFITS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:**

- Ongoing support for young people
- Opportunities for young people to have their ideas, opinions and needs heard by decision makers
- Development of leadership, communication, and organisational skills
- Access to information, skills and experience that will assist in personal growth and development
- Support and maintenance of local activities through state-wide coordination, supervision, and links to government.

### **BENEFITS FOR GOVERNMENT:**

- Opportunity for more informed decision making and planning about issues affecting young people through direct input from young people
- Widespread, appropriate, affordable distribution of government information to young people's groups and individuals across the state
- Non-partisan
- Consistent information exchange between consultations through the YCN.