

“RYANs provide valuable insight and perspective to Government in relation to policy for young people”

James Merlino, Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs

RYANs
REGIONAL YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORKS

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Getting youth issues to Government.

About the Networks

Regional Youth Affairs Networks (RYANs) bring together youth service providers, all levels of government, young people and community representatives with an interest in improving outcomes for young people in the region.

RYANs assist the Government to make informed decisions about policy, planning and service delivery issues that impact upon young people.

RYANs aim to:

1. Provide **strategic advice** to Government on key issues for young people in Victoria
2. Provide a key means for **communication and consultation** between the youth sector, young people and the Victorian Government;
3. Be an **advocate** for the needs of young people in local and regional strategy development, community strengthening activity and government policy;
4. **Engage** young people where appropriate, or consolidate information from youth engagement activity across the region; and
5. Promote **information sharing and collaboration** between youth service providers in the region.

How do RYANs work?

Providing Strategic Advice to Government

RYANs have ‘on the ground’ knowledge of the issues facing young people; they can provide invaluable advice to Government on regional youth issues. They provide insight into the implications of existing policy, highlight gaps and give examples of what’s working (or not working) for young people.

The areas of focus for RYANs are identified in *Future Directions*, the Government’s policy and action agenda for young Victorians. The focus is on increasing the number of young people who:

- Contribute more to their communities and want to make a difference;
- Make a successful transition from school to a job they like;
- Know how to access information, support and services they need;
- Lead healthy, active and culturally diverse lifestyles; and
- Live in a secure environment and choose safe behaviours.

RYANs discuss, identify and prioritise strategic issues to be presented to the State Government through the Youth Affairs Interdepartmental Committee and regional decision-making bodies.

Networks in Action

Membership of each RYAN is determined at the local level and participation is voluntary. Each network elects a Convenor, who is a key point of contact for the Department and network members.

RYANs are autonomous groups that welcome discussion with individuals, community groups or service providers who have identified an issue affecting young people in the region.

Networks meet as often as needed, according to the decision of the group. Members may also choose to spend time outside meetings to undertake consultation or research work that arises from meetings.

RYANs present their advice to the Victorian Government's Youth Affairs Interdepartmental Committee, as well as making presentations and submissions to other regional groups.

Working Together

The Director of the Office for Youth hosts quarterly network Convenor meetings for policy discussion and information sharing. The Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs attends these meetings twice each year.

The Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) based in each region supports the work of RYANs as an active partner in each network.

For more information

For more information on the RYANs please visit www.youth.vic.gov.au

Office for Youth

Telephone: (03) 9208 3200
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne VIC 3001

DPCD Barwon South West Region

Telephone: (03) 5215 6000

DPCD Eastern Metropolitan Region

Telephone: (03) 9090 4260

DPCD Gippsland Region

Telephone: (03) 5174 7308

DPCD Grampians Region

Telephone: (03) 5327 2830

DPCD Hume Region

Telephone: (03) 5722 7111

DPCD Loddon Mallee Region

Telephone: (03) 5410 5200

DPCD North Western Metropolitan Region

Telephone: (03) 9208 3124

DPCD Southern Metropolitan Region

Telephone: (03) 9208 3685

