



Darwin City Council Youth Advisory Group... what's the story??

what is the Youth Advisory Group (YAG)?

- A group made up of 8 - 15 young people, 2 youth workers, the Darwin City Council Youth Services Officer and an Alderman.
- Young people are aged between 12 and 20 years from different backgrounds and experiences and are from local high schools, community and youth agencies, education, training, employment and recreation groups.
- YAG advises Darwin City Council on a range of issues and makes recommendations on issues that affect young people in Darwin.
- It acts as a central point for *local* youth issues.
- YAG sometimes chooses to host and develop youth projects and events that are by youth for youth. As a group it meets every month or sometimes more regularly.

what's the purpose of a Youth Advisory Group?

Often decisions are made that affect young people but young people do not always have a say about these decisions. It is critical that young people have a genuine say in what is happening around them. The Youth Advisory Group has an important role to play in providing advice and recommendations to Council on youth needs and issues in Darwin.

how long can I be a member of the group?

The Youth Advisory Group is open to young people aged between 12 and 20 years. At the beginning of each year, membership for the Youth Advisory Group will be open for nominations for new members. People who have previously been involved in the group can renominate but can only be involved in the group for a maximum of three years in a row, or until they turn 21 years old.



what happens at the Group meetings?

The Darwin City Council Youth Advisory Group formed during March and April of 2000 and is still quite young itself. The group decides what, where and how the meetings will be run with support from the Youth Services Project Officer. The Youth Officer puts each agenda together with input from the group.

The Youth Advisory Group has been involved in the development and review of Darwin City Council's "Youth Strategy". This is a policy which helps direct Council in how it develops youth programs and projects and also gives young people opportunities to participate in government. The Youth Advisory Group helps to work on making the recommendations and activities in the strategy actually happen. The Youth Strategy includes things like recreation, entertainment, education, information, transport, events etc.

The Youth Advisory Group also has the opportunity to participate in fun and social activities as well. Details of these activities (what, where, when) are decided by the group.

do members need any special skills to be involved?

You don't need any special skills to be involved in this group, BUT you must have a genuine interest in youth issues and a willingness to commit to being a team player. You will be given an overview on how Council works and where the group fits within Council. From time to time there will be activities that will help the group to work as a team. There will also be activities that will help members develop skills in meeting procedures, working with the media, advertising, community consultation, public speaking, decision making and other areas.

Members of YAG do need to regularly attend group meetings so that responsibility within the group is genuinely shared. Members are required to be **active**, as their brief of representing Darwin youth is an important one.



what's the go with joining?

Members of the Youth Advisory Group are appointed to Council under the Local Government Act. As the demand for membership to the group is greater than the number of places available, the Youth Officer selects applicants considering the criteria below to try and make the process as fair as possible. It is also important that the group is as diverse as possible. YAG selection takes into consideration previous experience on other groups and committees as it is important that the opportunity for positions representing youth in a formal way are shared amongst the youth community.

how are people chosen to be in the group?

The path on the following page shows how young people come to be members of the group. The criteria taken into consideration by the Youth Officer when considering selection of potential YAG members is:

- Age range. Applicant must be aged between 12 and 20 years or turning 21 in their final year of membership.
- Applicants must live or go to school or go to work in Darwin LGA.
- Applicants must have a genuine interest in youth issues and in representing Darwin youth.
- Applicants must be prepared to be active members and be prepared to work as part of a team.
- The group aims to be representative of Darwin youth. The Youth Officer's knowledge of the existing group members will influence selection to ensure the group is adequately diverse in combination with the other selection criterion.
- The Youth Officer will interview each person who wants to be considered for membership and assesses their suitability to the group.
- Candidates need to be able to identify an area of skill development they would like to work on as being part of the group so that they are able to evaluate their personal progress as a team player.
- Young people interested in applying should write a letter to the Youth Officer or fill out the 'get active at DCC' form and post this to the Youth Officer.
- Following assessment, the Youth Officer will recommend to Council all appointments to the Youth Advisory Group and Council will make final decisions.



how's it work again?

Call for expressions of interest at the end or beginning of each year.

Advertisements in daily newspaper, school newsletters, GRIND and community bill boards or direct contact with Youth Officer or YAG member.



Information kit, terms of reference and Council information mailed to any interested persons.



Contact by young person to Youth Officer indicating level of interest.



Invitation for tour of Council and YoUth sPaCe.
Interview with Youth Officer and young person.
Completion of Application form.



Assessment by Youth Officer and Recommendation to Council
Explanation to applicant of outcome (this can sometimes be done quite quickly or make take a month!)



Waitlist for applicants maintained by Youth Officer should a vacancy become available throughout the year.