

3. Regional Youth Health Forum Chairperson Guidelines

Purpose of Youth Health Forum



Youth Health Forum (YHF) is a series of community health education seminars which provide regular opportunities for hospital, community-based workers and education professionals, young people and their families:

- to meet,
- update knowledge and skills,
- exchange information
- and strengthen the youth health network

The ultimate aim is to provide the best possible support for young people in NSW.

To extend YHFs to the rural and remote areas, YHFs are now being video recorded so that it can be accessed and screened at as many locations as possible.

Why hold a Regional Youth Health Forum?

Holding a local screening session followed by discussion at the end of the session at a local level is important because:

1. People rarely view educational DVDs individually,
2. People learn more effectively when:
 - they are in groups
 - not in isolation
 - the learning process is interactive and participatory
3. There is no one-size fits all model of youth service delivery models. "The key issues in terms of models of youth service delivery was the lack of relevance and applicability of urban models to rural areas, and that there is no 'one size fits all' model for all rural areas." ¹

Attendee profile

The target group includes health professionals, youth workers, representatives from education, accommodation and welfare sectors.

Key information

Important things to know for the day include:

- **When and where**
- **Time**
- **Parking (if relevant)**

¹ Davies, L et al , Rural life of us: Young people and workers with young people in country Victoria, Centre for the Adolescent Health and Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, 2005.

Role of the Chairperson

Following are the roles of the Chairperson on the day.

- Welcome and introduction
- Open the floor for discussions
- Facilitate discussions
- Time keeping
- Making announcement eg reminding people to fill out and return the evaluation forms
- Thank attendees for their attendance

Forum format

The pre-recorded YHF /DVD will be used as a trigger for discussion regarding the particular youth health issue within the local context.

The program is structured to include regular group discussions though question and answer or participants' activity sections in between the viewing sessions. These need not be long, but will be crucial to breaking the information up into portions that participants can digest easily.²

The first speaker usually sets the scene for the topic on the day followed by speakers that give different perspectives, or showcase their services within the thematic context. The Regional YHF organiser will advise if all segments or a few selected segments will be shown for viewing on the day

Please see the attached program for forum format and details.

Timing

The viewing is scheduled for 30-35 minutes DVD viewing and a 10-minutes discussion after each viewing session.

Service deliverers, rural communities and policy makers alike would be pleased to be presented with a collection of favourite recipes for successful rural youth service models. However, production of a recipe book would be a simplistic solution to improving service access to rural young people. Effective service delivery in rural areas has been achieved in a number of communities. But to recommend that an effective service model in one rural community be transplanted to another would be as potentially disastrous as wholesale transplantation of urban models to rural communities³.

² The Melbourne Integrated System (Themis) University of Melbourne, Ensuring Learners' participation. <http://www.themis.unimelb.edu.au/training/resources/refs/Ensuring_participation.pdf> viewed July 27 2007

³ Quixley, S. (1992) Living, Learning and Working - The Experiences of Young People in rural and Remote Communities. National Youth Coalition of Housing: Canberra.

Standard Introduction to YHF

The chairperson should begin by welcoming all the attendees. There is also a pre-recorded welcome on the DVD.

If chairperson chooses to skip the welcome and acknowledgment section on the DVD, it is appropriate for the chairperson to acknowledge the YHF Organising Committee and any sponsors of the YHF at the beginning of the viewing session.

Please read the following to acknowledge the Country and all YHF organising committee members:

“First of all, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, the _____(appropriate group) people.

Welcome to the Youth Health Forum. Youth Health Forum is an educational and networking activity auspiced and administered by the NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health.

The Youth Health Forum Organising Committee includes representatives from a diverse group of organisations who bring different perspectives to the planning and implementation of each forum. We would like to acknowledge and thank these other organisations:

- ◆ Children’s Hospital School at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead
- ◆ Department of Adolescent Medicine at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead
- ◆ Department of Adolescent Medicine at Westmead Hospital
- ◆ High Street Youth Health Service
- ◆ NSW Association for Adolescent Health
- ◆ NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health
- ◆ Parramatta City Council
- ◆ Transcultural Mental Health Centre”

Evaluation

Please remind the attendees to fill them in and hand them back to the organiser before they leave. Please make this announcement **both in the beginning and at the end of the forum.**

The purpose of the evaluation is to identify what works and not and how we can further improve the content, process/organisation of the day.

Discussion

During the discussion session, audience are invited to make additional comments on the topic, raise questions/issues for discussion or share what other services they know about in the local area. If no comments and questions are raised, attendees can have a stretch (this is just a suggestion) and continue with the viewing. The chairperson is also required to play the time keeper’s role.

In the DVD, there is usually a panel discussion at the end of the YHF, joined by all speakers. This can be skipped if lack of relevance and applicability of urban issues to rural areas. (However, the youth panel is always highly recommended when available).

Instead it is suggested that a local panel or group discussion discuss explore the issues for the local context. 30 minutes has been allocated for a discussion session.

Some of the suggested discussion questions are:

- 1 What are some of the challenges related to this topic (eg. Access to health care) in the local area?
- 2 What is currently working well in the local area?
- 3 What are some of the points from the DVD that we can apply here? And not? Why?
- 4 What other points are relevant to the local area?
- 5 What useful information (eg. services), or relevant personal experiences would you like to share?
- 6 Where to from here?

Audience will also be invited to raise questions/issues for discussions. The chairperson can also ask hypothetical questions (this can be something developed before hand by the chairperson or something the chairperson picks up from the speakers on the day).

Recording of the Discussion

An announcement is required to be made that all the discussion is being recorded at the beginning of the day. Individuals in the audience who choose to participate or ask questions indicate they give their permission for their views to be recorded.

Final thank you

Please thank the attendees for their participation and acknowledge people who have helped to contribute towards the day.

Also give yourself a big pat on the back!

Enquiries

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