

# Youth Development

Broadly, youth development occurs as young people grow and develop individually, in schools, in families and in community groups. Many different services provide youth development opportunities that are open to all young people. They focus on learning through experience, involve young people in decision making roles, and offer young people the opportunity to build social networks and make a contribution to their communities. Youth development activities also offer opportunities for practical skill development. The provision of these opportunities is essential for young people to reach their potential. Particularly for those who may experience challenges in their lives.

There are many different types of youth development programs and service providers including not for profit community organisations, volunteer organisations and government support programs. Many youth services in the ACT provide programs that have a youth development focus, and as a worker you may already be facilitating youth development opportunities.

In this section you will find:

- Information on young people and volunteering;
- Youth development services; and
- Resources including more services, information and a date for your diary.

The following sections also contain youth development resources: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Art and Recreation, Peak Body, Youth Centres, Youth Support and Youth Support in Secondary Schools.

## Ways of Working

### Young People and Volunteering

Many youth development programs rely on volunteers. Young people often volunteer for their own development to gain experience and new skills, meet new people, make a difference, experience new challenges and have fun. Below is information for services to consider when working with young volunteers.

#### Young volunteers can provide:

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- Energy and enthusiasm.
- Creative ideas and a new point of view.
- Access to information on issues affecting other young people, and an understanding of what is important to young people.
- New skills.

### **Ways to recruit young volunteers:**

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- Go to [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au), a free volunteer matching website that is visited by 14,000 young people each month.
- [www.volunteeract.com.au](http://www.volunteeract.com.au) provides an ACT volunteer matching service, and tips for organisations seeking volunteers in the ACT.

### **Ways to recognise and retain young volunteers:**

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- Make sure young people are treated with respect and as equals.
- Ensure there is open communication between the volunteers and other staff.
- Have flexible working conditions that suit your volunteers' needs.
- Listen and act on the suggestions of your young volunteers.
- Make sure you provide feedback and encouragement.
- Consider if it is possible for your organisation to provide reimbursements for travel expenses, or paid work.
- Treat your volunteers with respect. Don't just give them jobs you don't want, or don't have time to do.
- Regularly provide training opportunities for young volunteers.
- Don't over utilise your volunteers. Remember young people can often be trying to balance school, work, social and volunteering commitments all at once. A way to address this may be by providing shorter, project based, volunteering options.
- Remember International Volunteers Day is on December 5 and try to organise something special for your young volunteers to say 'thank you'.

### **Other issues to consider:**

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- Make sure your volunteers are aware of all of your organisational procedures, and who to speak to if they have any suggestions or complaints.
- Having volunteers can still be very resource intensive. Make sure you budget for training, travel, catering and other reimbursements. You also need to ensure you have enough time to dedicate to supporting your new volunteers.
- Ensure you adequately orientate young volunteers to your service and make them feel like part of the team.
- Always make sure you accommodate the personal needs of the young volunteers. Remember they have a life outside of your organisation.
- Everyone can make mistakes. Look at them as a learning opportunity.
- Make sure your volunteers are covered by appropriate insurance.

## Services

There are many youth development services and programs throughout the ACT community, and it's difficult to profile them all within this resource. The following are some examples of youth development services in the ACT.

### Australian Red Cross Youth and Education Services

Offers young people an opportunity to volunteer for different events and Red Cross services. The Youth Advisory Committee is a volunteer committee run by young people that coordinates Red Cross youth activities within the region, and expresses opinions and ideas to Red Cross staff members and the ACT Board.

Save-A-Mate (SAM) is a first-aid, peer education program focused on AOD abuse in young people. SAM Volunteers operate at major ACT events including Summernats and music festivals.

**Phone:** (02) 6206 6000

**Web:** [www.redcross.org.au/act/services\\_youth.htm](http://www.redcross.org.au/act/services_youth.htm)

### Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Australian Challenge, ACT Division

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a program of youth personal development for young people aged 14 – 25. It provides opportunities for leadership and recreation for young people. Participants may seek either a Bronze, Silver or Gold award. There are four components to the awards including service, skills, physical recreation and adventurous journey.

**Phone:** (02) 6291 1705

**Web:** [www.dukeofed.org.au](http://www.dukeofed.org.au)

### Girl Guides ACT Region – Girl Guides Associate of NSW

Girl Guides provides opportunities for personal development, leadership and recreation for young women from five years of age. Participants belong to a local unit, which is divided into smaller groups called patrols that are facilitated by an accredited trained adult volunteer. Through their patrol activities, they gain skills in communication, teamwork, decision making and leadership, which help to prepare them for life.

**Phone:** (02) 6282 5328

**Web:** [www.guidesnsw.org.au](http://www.guidesnsw.org.au)

### Scouts Association ACT Region

Scouts aims to develop young people physically, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and socially. Children are accepted into scouting from six years of age, and can continue through different sections until they reach the age of 26. Young people involved in Scouts are given the opportunity to work in small, supervised groups in order to develop leadership skills. Scouting emphasises nature, adventure, citizenship and leadership.

**Phone:** (02) 6282 5211

**Web:** [www.act.scouts.asn.au](http://www.act.scouts.asn.au)

## Resources

### More Services

#### **Australian Defence Force Cadets**

Community based youth development organisation comprising of three cadet organisations including Navy, Army and Air Force Cadets.

**Web:** [www.cadetnet.gov.au](http://www.cadetnet.gov.au)

#### **Boys Brigade**

Weekly groups are run to promote the physical and creative advancement of males aged 5 - 18 with an emphasis on Christian values.

**Phone:** (02) 6281 0957

**Email:** [bbact@brigadeaustralia.org](mailto:bbact@brigadeaustralia.org)

**Web:** [www.boys.brigadeaustralia.org](http://www.boys.brigadeaustralia.org)

#### **Canberra Rotaract**

A Rotary-sponsored service club for young men and women ages 18 - 30. Aims to provide an opportunity for young men and women to enhance the knowledge and skills that will assist them in personal development, to address the physical and social needs of their communities, and to promote better relations between all people worldwide through a framework of friendship and service.

**Phone:** (02) 6293 2830

**Email:** [canberrarotaract@gmail.com](mailto:canberrarotaract@gmail.com)

#### **Girls Brigade**

Weekly groups are run to promote the physical and creative advancement of females aged 5 - 18 with an emphasis on Christian values.

**Phone:** (02) 6241 2361

**Email:** [HollandsFamily@bigpond.com](mailto:HollandsFamily@bigpond.com)

**Web:** [www.girls.brigadeaustralia.org](http://www.girls.brigadeaustralia.org)

#### **Green Corps**

Youth development and environmental training program for young people aged 17 – 20 years.

**Web:** [www.greencorps.gov.au](http://www.greencorps.gov.au)

#### **Outward Bound**

Provides outdoor development courses and activities for people aged 13 years and up.

**Phone:** (02) 6235 5700

**Email:** [info@outwardbound.com.au](mailto:info@outwardbound.com.au)

**Web:** [www.outwardbound.com.au](http://www.outwardbound.com.au)

#### **Vinnies Youth**

Provides a number of programs run by volunteers aged between 16 – 30, including kids' camps, fundraising, visiting the elderly and retreats.

**Phone:** (02) 6122 9727

**Email:** [therese.haywood@stvincanb.com.au](mailto:therese.haywood@stvincanb.com.au)

**Web:** [www.vinnies.org.au/youth.cfm](http://www.vinnies.org.au/youth.cfm)

#### **Young Achievement Australia**

The Big Red Book: A Handbook and Directory for People who Work with Young People in the ACT  
Youth Coalition of the ACT

Version 5, 2009

[www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net)

Business enterprise program for young people.

**Phone:** (02) 6205 0762

**Email:** [act@yaa.org.au](mailto:act@yaa.org.au)

**Web:** [www.yaa.org.au](http://www.yaa.org.au)

## More Information

### **Ausyouth**

Government funded service aimed at promoting, coordinating and facilitating youth development as an approach and practice across Australia. Provides research publications, forums and newsletter on youth development issues.

**Web:** [www.thesource.gov.au/ausyouth/default.htm](http://www.thesource.gov.au/ausyouth/default.htm)

### **Go Volunteer**

Initiative of Volunteering Australia providing internet volunteer matching services.

**Web:** [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)

### **Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV)**

Volunteer matching service for Indigenous Australians promoting skills transfer, mutual learning and cultural exchange.

**Web:** [www.icv.com.au](http://www.icv.com.au)

### **Volunteering ACT**

Peak body for volunteering in the ACT representing the interests of all community volunteers, and those who work with volunteers. Various programs are provided for membership organisations.

**Web:** [www.volunteeract.com.au](http://www.volunteeract.com.au)

## Date For Your Diary

### **5 December**

### **International Volunteer Day**

International volunteer day has been designated as a day for the recognition of volunteer involvement, and a day in which organisations can thank their volunteer staff.

**Web:** [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)