

YOUTH ACTION ALLIANCES SCOPE OF SERVICE

The focus of the Youth Action Alliances is to involve youth of middle and high school age in tobacco control activities that promote the participants' understanding of how, through collective action, they can positively affect change in their community. The Ontario Tobacco Strategy is expanding its youth tobacco use prevention strategy to change social norms that support youth tobacco use and counter tobacco industry marketing practices.

The activities described are for youth of all economic, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. They aim to engage youth in action-oriented activities and teach leadership skills needed to work on policy-related tobacco control issues in order to improve the health status of their community.

Youth Action Alliances will:

- Build authentic youth leadership opportunities within their programs
- Help young people deepen historical and cultural understanding of their experience and community issues;
- Build skills and capacities of young people to be decision makers and problem solvers, engaging youth in community projects;
- Engage young people in policy-oriented education and awareness, building skills in power analysis and action around issues of importance to young people;
- Help young people build a collective identity as social change agents;
- Engage youth in advocacy and negotiation;
- Build a membership base;
- Involve youth as part of core staff and a governing body; and
- Engage youth in alliances and coalitions.

In addition, Youth Action Alliances will be organized as employment and training programs for the youth that are employed by the program. Programs are required to develop skill-building initiatives, maintain regular schedules and records appropriate to employment, and hire orient, train and evaluate paid Peer Leaders. In these skill-building, peer leadership programs youth will learn to conduct community attitude and behavior surveys; map tobacco marketing and distribution practices; provide public education, especially exposing deceptive industry practices; enforce laws that limit youth access to tobacco products; develop media advocacy projects; and link youth and parents that smoke to treatment.

These YAAs will be the foundation for Area Youth Coalitions (AYCs). They will employ a core group of youth and engage other youth in a combination of voluntary and paid activities (e.g., conducting compliance checks to prevent the illegal sale of tobacco products to underage youth). AYC's will map onto the areas of the six Lead Public Health Departments. AYC meetings will be held in the six areas and youth advisory committees will be organized to plan joint activities(e.g., point of sale advertising study, smoke-free homes campaigns, subsequent area meetings, and the Annual Youth

Conference). The first AYC meeting may be organized as a public relations event to attract and train volunteers. At the six area meetings, two youth representatives will be elected from each AYC (for a total of 12 representatives) to form the basis of an advisory group to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. An additional 6 to 8 members may be added to the Minister's youth advisory group at the discretion of the Ministry.

Advisory meetings will occur with the Minister as required (likely three times a year) via face-to-face and/or with telephone or video conferencing. Meetings will occur after school hours and be video taped. Youth within a 55 kilometre radius will be transported to a meeting location. These events may be an opportunity for local press coverage. Advisory meetings may be organized as a public relations event by the Communications and Information Branch at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (or its youth contractor) in consultation with a youth development specialist responsible for programmatic content. Participating youth and their Advisors will be involved in the planning of the events to facilitate a two-way conversation with the Minister.

An Annual Youth Conference will be held. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care may open this event. The Minister's Youth Advisory Committee will meet with the Minister and Ministry officials at this event. They will also nominate two members to be elected as President and Vice President to represent youth in other venues, for example, an Ontario Tobacco Strategy Steering Committee (OTSSC) meeting.

Ontario will utilize an approach that involves "true participation" as defined by Roger Hart in the top five rungs of his ladder of participation, as follows:

- *Assigned but informed* is where youth are given a specific role, then informed on how and why they are being involved.
- *Consulted and informed* is when youth provide advice on projects/programs designed and run by adults; however, decisions are made by the adults.
- *An adult-initiated shared decision with youth* is when adults initiate projects or programs but the decision-making is shared with the youth.
- *Youth-initiated and directed* is when youth initiate and direct projects while adults are involved only as supports.
- *Youth-initiated, shared decision with adults* is where youth initiate projects/programs and decision-making is shared among youth and adults.

This approach will help participating youth so that local youth understand their involvement at the Provincial and local levels. For example, youth may be involved at the local level with the actual creation of ads, but not routinely at the Provincial level.

The Ministry will fund separately a Youth Advocacy Training Institute (YATI) to provide training to Youth Advisors and Peer Leaders. Participation in this training program will be mandatory. The Youth Advocacy Training Institute will assess the skills of Youth Advisors and Peer Leaders and design training programs that will better enable programs to carry out the full range of activities. The YATI will also organize meetings in the six areas and an annual Province-wide conference. The Communications and

Information Branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will work with the YATI to support and coordinate local area and Provincial events.

It should be noted that this training program is not intended to replace the need of the applicant Public Health Department to provide orientation and supervision. The Public Health Department is responsible for assuring that Youth Advisors are able to carry out their jobs and guide the youth employed or volunteering to participate in their program. It is important for the applicant Public Health Department to demonstrate a commitment to youth leadership programs, social action, and tobacco control by fully supporting the Youth Advisors and Peer Leaders.

Other Requirements:

1. Programs will hire one Youth Advisor and maintain 7 to 10 paid Peer Leaders per cluster. A cluster is defined in terms of funding, that is \$110,000 for the first cluster and \$95,000 per each subsequent cluster.
2. The Youth Advisor will attend monthly network planning meetings facilitated by the Lead Public Health Department in their geographic area and coordinate local activities with the Tobacco Control Area Youth Specialist. Participation in strategic planning activities and engaging in program collaboration are required activities. Infrastructure to facilitate strategic planning, communication and program collaboration is critical to the success of the Ontario Tobacco Strategy. Programs will be evaluated on their level of participation and cooperation as well as their effort to coordinate with other OTS initiatives and programs
3. Programs will participate in province-wide projects as required by MOHLTC.
4. Programs will attend required training and events.
5. Programs will submit an annual workplan in a format to be specified by the MOHLTC.
6. Programs will coordinate with the province-wide mass media campaign.
7. Programs will use the “Smoke-Free Ontario *Identity Guidelines*” on all media, public relations, and public education products funded under this contract unless otherwise specified by the MOHLTC.
8. Programs will submit all media plans, planned public relations activities, and public education material to the Lead Public Health Department in their OTS Area for review and submission to the MOHLTC for approval before incurring any costs under this contract.
9. Programs will maintain a cost centre for this OTS project initiative, separate from any other OTS grants received from MOHLTC. Programs will submit expenditure reports in a format specified by MOHLTC.

10. Programs will submit data and reports as required by the MOHLTC.
11. Public Health Departments and their MOHLTC-funded tobacco control programs operating at other sites will maintain 100% smoke-free worksite.
12. Public Health Departments and MOHLTC-funded tobacco control programs will not accept money or products from the tobacco industry or those acting on behalf of the industry: This applies to all contractors providing services under this grant.