TALKING PARTICIPATION *TAKING ACTION*

A Local Government Guide to Youth Participation

Tasmania

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FOREWORD

Foreword by the Premier

I am pleased to be associated with the development of Talking Participation – *Taking Action*: A Local Government Guide to Youth Participation. This guide is aimed at assisting Local Government to foster young people's engagement and participation in decision-making that affects their future.

The Tasmanian Government recognises that young people need to have a real stake in decision-making that affects their lives and be encouraged and supported to take an active role in their community. Young people have unique insight and perspective into topics and issues relevant to them and these opinions and contributions need to be sought and valued within the community. Supporting young people to define and articulate their views or concerns, and ensuring that there are mechanisms which enable young people to participate in decision-making processes, fosters a more balanced, representative and democratic community.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to ensuring that young people's participation in decision-making processes enables them to have a voice. This commitment is targeted through Tasmania Together Goals which are dedicated to assisting young people to achieve higher levels of participation in local government. To promote the development of youth participation models in councils the Tasmanian Government, through the Office of Children and Youth Affairs, provides funding through the Local Government Seed Funding Program.

This guide has been designed to assist councils to construct and/or review youth participation models in their municipal areas that will support young people's engagement and participation in government decision making processes. The guide outlines a range of user friendly participation mechanisms and options which value the diversity of young people and that best meet local circumstances and needs.

I would like to thank the Steering Committee which consisted of representatives from the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Local Government, the Youth Network of Tasmania, and the Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee, and all those who have assisted with the preparation of this guide for their valuable input.

I invite and encourage Local Government to take the opportunity to use this guide to continue to support and refine young people's active participation in decision-making.

PA Lennon

Paul Lennon
Premier

Letter of support by President of Local Government Association of Tasmania

It is with great pleasure that I join the Minister responsible for Children and Youth Affairs in commending this Guide to Youth Participation to Councils.

It is critical that young people are encouraged and enabled to be involved in their communities. Valuing the skills, views and ideas of young people is an important responsibility that Local Government, as the closest level of government to the community, is uniquely placed to fulfil.

Already, many Tasmanian Councils are working with the young people in their communities, providing them with opportunities to take an active role in the decision-making processes affecting their lives.

This Guide, recognising that each municipal area is unique, provides Councils with a range of approaches and tools to develop appropriate and effective youth participation processes.

On behalf of the Association, I would like to thank all those involved in the production of this excellent resource and the State Government for its support of the project.

Lynn Mason
President
Local Government Association of Tasmania

PREFACE

This Guide has been developed to assist councils to actively involve the young people in their areas, in the planning and decision-making affecting young people themselves and their communities – this is referred to as youth participation.

Whilst the approach for each council is likely to be different, there are a number of well tested options that councils can choose from to create a youth participation model that best meets their local circumstances and needs.

The aim of this document is to provide information regarding the principles and practice of youth participation. The Guide has three parts –

Part 1 – provides information describing youth participation, principles of effective youth participation and key success factors

Part 2 – provides examples of working models currently in place around Tasmania as well as a list of other useful resources nationally.

Part 3 – provides a range of tools that can assist in identifying what action can be taken to commence or refine an effective youth participation model.

TALKING PARTICIPATION *TAKING ACTION*

PART ONE *Approaches to Youth Participation*

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1. Youth – who are they?

The definition of youth in Australia is broadly taken to be young people aged between 12 and 25 years. Many federal, state, and local government services and programs, for example, use this definition.

Nonetheless, some councils use a broader age range, including people as young as 10 years in some processes or activities, and at times, people up to 30 years. Such an inclusive approach can work in particular circumstances, for example, consulting on a recreation facility such as a skate park. However, it is also important to distinguish between the often different sociological, psychological and physiological needs of teenagers (12 to 19 years) and those of young adults (20 to 25 years). Therefore, decisions to include sub-teens with teenagers; slightly older adults with young adults; or combinations across age ranges, should be carefully considered.

In practice, some youth participation processes will be suited to engaging a wide age range of young people from the local council area, whereas others will be targeted at a specific segment of young people. For example, some processes may be aimed at young people facing a particular issue like unemployment – and this will dictate the age range, where others might target issues like homelessness or arts and culture, which may be less age prescriptive.

The decision, therefore, about which young people council talks with will depend on practical considerations about the topic and the context, as much as it will depend on age.

2. Why invest in youth participation?

Youth participation assists councils to understand the needs and aspirations of a young people within their community. However, the benefits of youth participation go well beyond a simple audit of age-related needs. Council, young people themselves, other organisations providing services to young people and the general community all benefit from an environment where young people are valued and engaged in decision making.

Some of the benefits to each of these stakeholder groups are detailed on page 2.

For council effective participation may mean:

- being 'in tune' with young people's needs and expectations
- investing in future community leadership and capacity building
- creating a positive impression about council and how council does business
- demonstrating council cares about the future
- creating a more accurate profile of young people in the community
- responding to young people across all aspects of council business
- developing stronger networks of council, service providers and young people
- developing clearer priorities for resource allocation
- discovering opportunities to recognise and celebrate the positive achievements of both council and young people.

For a young person effective participation may mean:

- developing a sense of belonging to their local community
- achieving greater access to resources for young people
- understanding the systems that drive and support their community
- seeing real needs and issues that are important to them addressed
- gaining increased confidence and self esteem
- feeling that young people are taken seriously
- increasing enthusiasm and willingness to contribute
- developing enterprising skills that improve employment opportunities
- developing friendships, networks and support systems
- receiving recognition and acknowledgement
- developing leadership and other personal and social skills
- contributing to their curriculum requirements (if studying)
- gaining credibility, respect and trust in the community

For other organisations working with young people effective participation may mean:

- attracting increased resources to support young people
- developing partnerships that may create more effective results for young people
- developing increased credibility with the public and funding agencies
- demonstrating compliance with current funding agreements
- raising the profile of young people which can result in more effective advocacy to support them.

For the broader community effective participation may mean:

- developing a greater understanding of the needs and issues of young people
- recognising the value, contribution and positive potential of young people
- developing confidence in the future leadership of the community
- building a stronger community that people can feel comfortable and take pride in
- reducing unwarranted concern about the 'problems' of young people
- potentially retaining young people in the local area.

3. *Making youth participation work*

3.1 *Approaches to youth participation*

Developing effective youth participation within local councils is about creating ways in which meaningful dialogue between young people and council can occur. This means that:

- young people are supported and encouraged to be active members of the community and encouraged to initiate contact with council regarding issues and needs; and
- council actively consults young people to identify needs, obtain views on issues that may effect them and their communities and making informed decisions.

Genuine involvement with young people requires a commitment to listening and acting on what is revealed. A Model of Participation developed in 2001 by H. Sheir describes a more desirable range of engagement with young people. The table below illustrates how the attitudes, action and accountability of council need to be tested and refined in order to support an increasing level of effective participation.

Model of Participation: Derived from H. Sheir (2001)

	ATTITUDE *Are staff in your Council committed to youth participation, and do they...*	**ACTION** *and does your Council have a range of strategies and processes that...*	**ACCOUNTABILITY** *and does your Council policy...*
LEVEL 1 LISTENING	listen to what young people have to say	enable it to listen to young people's views	require processes for young people to be heard
LEVEL 2 FACILITATING	ensure young people are able to have their say	provide opportunities for, and assist young people in, having their say	require that young people be given assistance so they can be heard
LEVEL 3 CONSIDERATION	seriously consider what young people have to say	ensure young people's views are seriously considered	require that young people's views be seriously considered
LEVEL 4 INVOLVEMENT	encourage young people to have a real role in decision-making	provide young people with a real role in decision-making processes	require that young people have a role in decision-making processes and receive feedback

Note. There are, of course, a number of Models of Participation. Examples of some of those used by Tasmanian councils are provided in this Guide, and further information is provided in the Section – Other Resources and Links.

An ideal youth participation model will find council with systems and processes operating at all of these levels – with the most meaningful participation occurring at Levels 3 and 4.

3.2 Choosing the best fit

There is no single model of youth participation that will suit every council. Things like the population, the economy, the location, the social history, local politics and many other factors will determine what might work best.

The 'Sheir' Model above suggests that *Attitude* and *Accountability* are largely internal to council. (The Participation-Ready Assessment Tool in Part 3 is designed to help consider these aspects.) Nonetheless, council's youth participation model will reflect the most practical and mutually beneficial way for council and young people to work together.
Some of these things may be loosely structured one-off events or activities; others may be more regular or formal. Young people themselves will make it clear once discussions commence with them, what they consider relevant and useful; and what they will be prepared to take on.

Council's views and those of young people will change over time and so will the youth participation model. The development of an effective participation model will depend on what will work best at the time.

It is important, however, to take a strategic approach to developing a youth participation model. Aim to develop a model that supports the most meaningful levels of participation. If this is not immediately achievable, get council to 'sign off' on a model that can be successfully promoted and use this as the basis for further development.

Using a multi-pronged approach will increase the likelihood of appealing to both council and young people in different ways. Part Three of this resource includes a 'Participation Ingredients Tool' that provides ideas about the sorts of activities that might be tried.

3.3 Principles of youth participation

The strategies and processes used by council to involve young people (referred to as *Action* in the 'Sheir' Model) need to appeal to young people. This means taking into account the factors that might influence young people's participation. The following principles attempt to reflect these factors in a practical way.

PRINCIPLE	WHAT THIS MEANS…
1. Choice Of Involvement	Provide a range of different ways young people can participate. Young people are best able to contribute to youth participation process when there are fewer restrictions on who can participate. Also when young people have been offered a choice about how and when they have been involved. Even if a young person is involved in an ongoing mechanism (such as a Taskforce), they may not be passionate about every project. In this case look for ways for them to withdraw from some projects if necessary. For example, if a topic is being discussed at a meeting where a person has no interest, the group may be happy for them to take a short break and miss that discussion. This approach may keep their involvement fresher.
2. Meaningful Engagement	Undertake projects and activities that are real to young people – that result in something that makes a difference to them or their community. Actively seek the views of young people prior to making decisions on major plans or topics. Listen, consult and involve. Start early in project planning and involve young people in the design phase.
3. Age - Appropriate Activities	Make sure events and activities are tailored to the age of participants. The range of ages that define 'youth' are very broad, the interests of some young people will be quite different and so will various to engage specific age groups. If participation activities incorporate young people between 12 and 30 years, this large span may make the dynamics quite challenging. Consider having two or more groups, say 12 to 17 years and 18 to 21 years, 22 to 30 years.
4. Adequate Resources	Allocate sufficient resources to give the participation model the best chance of success. This is always a dilemma – determining the balance between what is adequate and what is affordable. Resources to consider include staffing, training and development, administrative support and funds for things like food or transport. Council may also support young people to fundraise or apply for funding and sponsorship from external sources.

PRINCIPLE	WHAT THIS MEANS…
5. Fun	Incorporate fun into participation activities. Avoid having expectations that young people will behave like serious adults all the time. Look for more fun activities and avoid long, dull events; aim to bring some light moments to meetings. The more young people are in control of things like meetings and organising activities, the more likely it is that these processes will appeal to them and meet their needs.
6. Active Recruitment and Training	Encourage participation by young people who can add skills and balance to any group activities. Leadership training is important to manage the growth of individuals and the performance of the group. It may be necessary consider the training needs for both those who are dominant, and those who are very quiet. Avoid developing cliques (tight groups of people with similar views) they can intimidate and exclude others.
7. Acknowledgement and Recognition	Find ways to acknowledge the important contribution made by young people. Celebrations, media coverage and displays will increase the positive image of young people in the community. It is also a good news story for council. Many young people are about to seek employment, so providing participation certificates may provide them with evidence of community involvement that may support a job application.
8. Mutual Respect and Trust	Create an environment where young people feel welcome and trusted. This means young people walking into the council buildings feel comfortable and accepted. In the same way, councillors and senior council staff should be encouraged to attend youth activities; express their appreciation of young people's involvement; and be made welcome themselves.
9. Review and Reflection	Build in ways for checking whether the participation activities are working or not. Whether it is a one-off activity like a round-table, or ongoing activity like a Youth Council, it is important to know what has worked well and what has not.

These principles can be applied in both developing and continuing to build on, a successful model of youth participation and in the implementation of specific events and activities included within it.

4. Getting Started and Keeping Going

Youth participation provides a huge opportunity to create an environment where young people can, not only experience a sense of belonging, ownership, security and pride, but also develop the skills and commitment to civic engagement that will go with them throughout their lives.

Young people have many attributes, skills, energy and potential contributions to make. Youth participation creates opportunities for this potential to be realised. Unfortunately, youth participation processes can often be prompted by a reactive need to 'solve youth problems' – usually regarded or portrayed in the broader community, as antisocial behavior in some way. Regarding young people as a fundamental asset to the community is a more positive and useful starting point.

Some of the best outcomes from youth participation have occurred where council has encouraged young people to take a lead role in making decisions about the process and allowed them to literally hold the microphone and share the stage. This is because the more the process is driven by young people; the more they are likely to become committed to it. This degree of delegation may feel to some councils like a significant risk – a potential loss of control. However, if young people's involvement is too closely controlled, their voices may become stifled – and the process may drift back to tokenism.

4.1 Bringing young people along

The following ideas, derived from consultation with young people and with councils, are intended to help 'kick start' youth participation strategies and can be applied whatever events or activities are involved:

- **Start small** – councils that have not had structured youth participation processes in place, have often started with a small activity or event (commonly in conjunction with National Youth Week). The activity has been designed to create the launching pad for bigger and better things. Success generates success – councils develop the confidence to invest in young people and young people start to develop the confidence that council is prepared to listen. Meetings are not necessarily the best way to start talking with young people, focus on building a relationship first.
- **Get wide support from council** – if councillors/aldermen and senior management back the commitment to youth participation and expect that all council staff will too, its credibility is increased. The capacity of the youth development staff to do the best possible job is also improved.
- **Look for the needs and seek the passion** – motivation is not something that can be demanded. Youth participation mechanisms may make great sense to council but young people may not necessarily want to get involved. Use a multi-pronged approach and look for things that young people are interested in. For example, the local 'battle of the bands' can create a great opportunity to engage young people, without requiring people to attend more formal forums or meetings.

- **Encourage diversity** – involve young people who reflect the make-up of your community. This might mean including young people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and other groups within the youth population. Consideration should be given to overcoming barriers some groups may experience understanding and accessing the processes and activities that council uses.
- **Mind your language** – generally young people don't like being called 'kids' or 'youths'. Be careful and avoid acronyms and abbreviations. Writing in plain-English demonstrates respect (as long as it is not patronising) and take the time to explain terms that are not used in everyday conversation.
- **Food and drink** – food is about more than satisfying hunger – food is also an important social tool – bringing people together to eat and share. Providing food will therefore often draw people along to different events. Nonetheless, some young people may have limited access to food and making a snack or meal a normal feature of your activities can support them. Where possible, model healthy and nutritious food consumption – possibly even involving young people in the preparation of the food to develop their skills and understanding. Food is also a good way of demonstrating appreciation and is a must at celebrations.

- **Provide consultation feedback** – young people often have their views sought but in many instances, never hear where that information has gone and what happened as a result. Seek this commitment from people consulting young people, and where a decision is made by council; make sure those consulted are told.
- **Keep your promises** – youth participation is an opportunity to give young people confidence in the system of local government. Be straightforward, provide realistic timeframes, explain the processes and why things may take time. For example, do not tell young people that the skate park should be approved in the next two months, when you know planning processes may mean it is more like twelve months or even longer.

4.2 Bringing along other stakeholders

- Tap into other networks and participation processes – there are a number of other opportunities to promote and support positive outcomes for young people. These include membership of and/or input into the Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee (TYCC).

  TYCC is a statewide youth participation and consultation group, funded by the Office of Youth Affairs and managed by the non-government youth peak body Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT). TYCC aims to draw its membership from local and regional youth participation groups. Every two years it organises the Develop, Empower, Network, Inspire and Motivate (DENIM) conference to bring young people from all these groups together to share information and work together on common issues.

Consider formalising partnerships with similar groups and develop networks.

- Integrate with whole community consultation – in addition to participation processes solely involving young people, it is important to keep thinking about other broader community participation and consultation processes where effort can be made to include, and actively seek input from young people. For example, how are the thoughts and needs of young people being incorporated into an integrated transport plan or community safety forum?

- Work closely with schools, Colleges, TAFE and other educational bodies. These are potentially a major partners in youth participation from the recruitment and support perspective and when it comes to monitoring outcomes. Being clear about the young people's role and what is in it for young people can obtain the support from schools.

  Keeping schools informed re-assures them that the activities and participation are not only legitimate but may also have a direct relevance to their students' studies. Some young people may also be undertaking activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh, or the Queens Guides and Scouts program, and participation (like being a member of the Youth Council), can assist in meeting the requirements of these award schemes.

- Internal marketing – the likelihood of making a real difference with and for young people is increased if everyone shares the vision. In other words, a great youth participation model may be limited if internal marketing within council is not undertaken to include all the staff and councillors. All council staff, whatever their role within council, need to be aware of the overall agenda of engaging, supporting and developing young people and where possible support this agenda.

- Media – TV, local and regional newspapers, radio, council newsletters, publications, annual reports and inserts into the rates notices, can be effective ways of showcasing achievements and contributing to the positive image of young people in their community.

- Creative communication – reporting to meetings and providing written advice work most of the time but we also need to be thinking about alternatives for young people. This might include communicating young people's ideas through art displays in public places, council-sponsored graffiti walls, whiteboards in shopping areas and at the skate park, street signs, and so on.

4.3 Working with youth participation structures

Youth participation models can often include structures such as Youth Committees and Youth Councils. It is important to make it as easy as possible for young people to participate in structures of this kind. This means:

- assisting participants to develop confidence and skills, particularly in dealing with people in authority

- providing information about important factors that might affect them
- being mindful of demanding study and/or work commitments
- reassuring them that their involvement can make a difference
- ensuring they feel that their involvement is valued
- overcoming any barriers to participation – increasing access for all young people
- developing and running stimulating events and meetings
- assisting with resources, such as access to transport.

Specific areas for attention when developing youth participation structures include:

4.3.1 Working out who to include

- **Membership** – How many people do you want involved? Are there age, geographical, skill, gender, education/employment, socio-economic or other profiles that you are seeking in the group? Are members there in their own right, or are they representatives of their school, organisation or other clusters of young people, like 'the skateboarders? Can people self nominate or is there an application process?
  Do you need people to generate ideas – that may require some personal invitations? Is there a core group and others who are more involved with specific interests or activities/events? Do you want to target a specific group for participation on a certain project or issue? How will you recruit and acknowledge the diversity of young people in your area? How will you gauge and generate the interest required to start and maintain an effective group?

  These are just prompting questions – the answers to these questions will depend on local circumstances and the extent to you can define and resource the outcomes you are trying to achieve.

- **Succession planning** – involvement in participation processes tends to go in cycles. On an individual level people typically come in, stay and contribute for a period and then leave. Nonetheless, consider limiting appointments to a specified time. This avoids people feeling trapped on committees by allowing them to re-nominate or move on if they wish. Events such as planning weekends or end of year celebrations, can punctuate this annual process, and provide the opportunity to say farewell and thank-you to those moving on.

  The recruitment and leadership development of new members and potential leaders requires specific attention if the group is to stay strong into the future.

4.3.2 Building the group

- **Build in training and skill development –** work with young people to identify the areas where skills may be required. Ongoing training and skill development for young people who are current participants and potential participants in participatory groups should be considered a regular feature of the group's plan.
- **Develop group rules –** support young people themselves to define, document, agree and manage the line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, including what is said, how people are spoken to, listening, manners and so on.
- **Use effective group facilitation –** meeting procedures and managing group discussions is an important skill developed through youth participation processes. In the early stages, these skills may still be developing. Adults can assist, without taking over. This may involve a councillor, worker, or community person mentoring young people to take on the role. Facilitation needs to occur objectively – without any vested interests – particularly by adults and staff.

- **Encourage councillor involvement –** many successful Youth Councils and Youth Task Forces include direct involvement by councillors/ aldermen. This relies on involving the 'right person', that is, those with a strong commitment to the youth participation agenda, who can relate well with the group, facilitate meaningful consultation and act as an effective link back to council. Mutual respect is a key ingredient – little things like the councillor representative apologising if they are unable to attend a regular meeting, treats the youth group respectfully and models appropriate behaviour.
- **Treat participants as individuals** – some young people who are members of a consultation committee or participation process, may have personal and social needs/issues that require support. Try to create a supportive environment where people feel comfortable enough to ask for information, assistance and/or referral to access any support services they might need.
- **Promote partnerships** – there may be a number of opportunities to develop partnerships and model cooperation. This may relate to specific projects where, promoting contact between young people from other organisations and similar groups enhances youth consultation and the participation process. For example, create a link between a local member of the Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee (TYCC) and the council group.
- **Assist young people to manage their time and workload** – it is easy to over-use people by continuing to ask of their time, skills, networks and information. Some young people may also feel uncomfortable saying 'no'. Many of the young people involved may still be studying,

playing sport or working, and have limited funds for transport, and have other commitments which compete with the requests you are making of them.

Work out ways to fit in with their schedules, (like avoiding Wednesday nights when some of them deliver the papers). Similarly, streamline requests for input to create efficiencies, and assist groups to determine the importance of requests, so they can maximise their contributions to critical opportunities and at the same time feel okay about declining some other less important requests.

- **Raise the profile** – encourage young people to think about tools such as logos, name badges, folders, branded merchandise that promotes the vision of the group and the role within council. Supporting the development of a strong 'brand' can be used very effectively to build the profile of young people and the council. It can also strengthen the feeling of belonging and feeling valued

- **Recognise and celebrate** – there are many ways to value and recognise the contribution and achievements of young people. One of the major contributions made by young people is their time. Celebrations might include: a birthday cake at a meeting; a meal or video night recognising a television interview or an afternoon tea before the council meeting to acknowledge and recognise the completion of a significant project.

4.3.3 Getting clear about the group's job

- **Set goals –** developing a shared vision and setting goals is a major way to encourage synergy, focus and energy into a group. Some councils have a weekend camp or retreat to put together a plan for the group. This might include an annual operational plan, which guides the activities of the group throughout the year. This plan is often put to council for endorsement and incorporation into the council's annual plan.
- **Establish good reporting processes** – establish clear, two-way processes of communication between young people, youth structures and council. This can include simple reporting expectations, and identified lines of communication regarding meeting times, agendas and policy protocols. This may also include details such as who is authorised to talk to the media, or send out media releases.
- **Define the budget** – put in place an approved budget for the group, including both funds from council and other funding sources. The budget should include resources used to assist in transport and other expenses. Every effort should be made to create a sustainable budget to cover the core operational costs. Project funding can be used to supplement this.

- **Spread the load** – sub-committees can be used to increase young people's commitment to a group by narrowing their job and creating greater focus. Some committees only conduct business on their meeting nights but may use a number of break-out or sub-groups within the meeting time, so that they do not need to commit additional time.

4.3.4 Supporting the youth participation staff

Youth participation is generally coordinated by staff working in roles such as Youth Programs Coordinator, Youth Project Worker, Youth Services Coordinator, Youth Health Worker, Youth Participation Officer, and a number of others. In larger councils these roles may be full-time. In smaller councils, they may be part-time or be included amongst other responsibilities.

This coordination task can be challenging, particularly given the evolving nature of the processes. There is a range of ways that councils can support their youth development staff.

- **Networking** – providing staff with opportunities to meet with others using or developing youth participation models is a valuable way of assisting them to share ideas and gain peer support, for example, attendance at regional and state forums coordinated by the Office of Youth Affairs.
- **Creating clear duty statements** – that describe priorities for youth development staff can assist in setting direction and creating manageable parameters. In this case the duty statement may prescribe a minimum number of hours committed to youth participation. This allocation of hours needs to be matched by a realistic expectation of what can be achieved in that amount of time.
- **Providing access to professional debriefing** – youth participation staff are required to gain the confidence and trust of young people involved in youth participation, particularly those involved in ongoing processes. Because of this relationship some young people may confide in staff regarding complex personal issues. This can place considerable pressure on the staff concerned and it is important that they are guided by clear policies and procedures in how to deal with such situations. Access to debriefing provided by an independent professional, is a way of ensuring support is timely and effective.

5. Next Steps

Developing a model of youth participation that works for the local area, involves assessing the environment that it will operate in and engaging council and young people in a dynamic process that will evolve over time.

Part Two of this Guide uses case studies that are intended to provide clues about how others have tackled this challenge and gone on to create genuine youth participation strategies. They provide inspiration, methodology and importantly, contact details.

Part Three provides some tools intended to aid in the assessment and design process – assisting people working within local councils to think through their particular circumstances and gain insight and ideas about how they might take steps towards a youth participation model.

TALKING PARTICIPATION *TAKING ACTION*

PART TWO *Case Studies and Resources*

PART TWO *Case Studies and Resources*

1. Introduction

The purpose of Part Two of this Guide is to provide examples of working models currently in place around Tasmania, as well as provide a list of other useful resources nationally.

As stated in Part One, there is no single model of youth participation that will suit every council. Things like the population, the economy, the location, the social history, local politics and many other factors will determine what might work best.

The case studies are therefore intended to illustrate how the approaches and principles described in Part One of the Guide can be practically applied in different circumstances.

The different circumstances are described so that users of the Guide can identify characteristics they have in common with the case study councils. It is hoped that this will assist users to identify approaches that may work for them and identify others who have faced or are facing similar challenges.

A map overleaf provides the location of councils around Tasmania.

Many contacts for local government officers working in youth participation in Tasmania appear in the case studies that follow. These contact details may change, however, contacts for individual councils are available through council websites or through www.lgat.tas.gov.au/tasmaniancouncils/links.

Burnie Youth Council

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
Burnie City Council	Regional (612 Sq kms)	18% (1,187 people) (12 to 25 years, 2001 Census data)	Burnie, Ridgely, Cooee

Project Title	Burnie Youth Council
Established	• May 2000
Membership	• Two representatives from all primary, secondary and senior secondary schools Public and Private (15 schools) • Representatives are chosen by the schools • Members are aged from 10 to 18 years • Youth councillors can remain on Council for two terms i.e. two years.
Structure	• Special Committee of Council with formal operating procedures. • Minutes of meetings are kept and forwarded to senior Council staff for information (minutes are taken by Council staff) • All councillors are given an induction to Youth Council and how it operates. A whole day is usually set aside early in the year for them to attend a camp to develop their leadership skills and for team building. • Senior Aldermen are invited to all Youth Council meetings and events.
Work Plan	• Meetings usually held three times each school term (nine per year) • Planning for the year ahead is usually done at the day camp but often it occurs as issues arise e.g. skate park redevelopment. • Youth Council gets involved in National Youth Week, usually setting up a small sub committee to work on an event. • Youth Council established an annual Art Competition and this has become a major focus for the group as it provides numerous challenges for the group from selecting a theme, promoting the event to schools, arranging the exhibition and judging of entries.
Resources	• Council allocated a budget of $2,000 in 2005 • Use of Council Chambers provided for meetings – free of charge • Three Council staff normally attend meetings of Youth Council • Access is provided to administrative resources and support • Morning tea is provided as the meetings are held at Council Offices from 9-15pm to 11pm during normal school time. • Students make their own way to and from the meetings usually with the assistance of school support staff or parents.
Profile	• Funding has just been received from Office of Youth Affairs to assist with the development of Youth Council promotional material. • Plans are underway to develop a website with links to other relevant sites. • Every opportunity is used to liaise with the local media and promote Youth Council as often as possible. • Senior Youth Council members are often recruited for Youth Making Changes Around Burnie (YMCAB) • Past members have gone on to be members of the Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee.
Contact	Kim Strachan, Youth Development Officer Phone: 03 6430 5788 E-mail: kstrachan@burnie.net

Burnie Youth Council – Youth Making Changes Around Burnie

Senior aldermen at Burnie City Council wanted to create a mechanism for consultation with young people on a range of Council issues, and to provide young people the opportunity to gain awareness and understanding of civic and local government roles and functions.

The Burnie Youth Council was established as a Special Committee of Council in 2000, with the aim of 'giving all young people a voice on community issues and access to civics education'.

Since the Council was established five years ago, approximately 150 young people have experienced first hand how Council works and what can be achieved by working together. Young people, along with Senior Alderman, have been involved in a number of projects, including the recreation report, the skate park re-development, events, road safety issues and many others.

The Burnie Youth Council is a student group consisting of 30 young people aged between 10 and 18 years – with two representatives being nominated from each of the 15 primary, secondary and senior secondary schools in the municipality. The membership base and representation being limited to students is currently under review – with a desire to increase representation, particularly from the bigger schools and colleges.

Another challenge which faces the group is the large age range – with the needs, experience and capacity of many 10-year-old young people being quite different to those of 18 or 25 year olds. This issue is also under review, with options to maximise the involvement of people on both ends of the age range currently being considered.

Some of the keys to the success of the Burnie Youth Council include: the support of senior Council staff and the local schools; being recognised as a 'Special Committee of Council'; and allocating a budget to assist resource the group; having clear expectations and goals; being flexible; demonstrating to young people they are valued; and treating young people with respect.

In addition to the Burnie Youth Council, Council have also established 'Youth Making Changes Around Burnie' (YMCAB). This is an informal group of young people who self-nominate and work on events and entertainment for young people. YMCAB also have an operating budget, keep minutes of meetings and are accountable directly to the Burnie Council. The strength of YMCAB is the fact that it has greater flexibility than a more formal structure and can respond to issues, such as putting on events, in a more timely manner. It also provides an avenue for young people who are no longer at school, to be a part of the Council's youth team. The senior members of Youth Council are often also members of YMCAB and can bring their friends along as required.

Meetings are held at Council offices, usually after school hours and in a much more relaxed style. The focus of the group is solely to facilitate events and entertainment opportunities for young people. Of course the young people themselves also develop their community participation skills, team building, event management and civics education along the way.

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Consult, consult, consult.
2. Be very clear about what you want.
3. But be flexible.
4. Gain the full support of senior Council staff and local schools.
5. Value your young people and treat them with respect – they are treasures!!

Creating a FEWCHA for young people in Dorset

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
Dorset	Rural (3,223 Sq kms)	16.98% (1,187 people) (12 to 25 years 2001 Census data)	Scottsdale, Ringarooma, Branxholm, Bridport, Winnaleah, Derby

Project Title	FEWCHA
Established	• 2001
Membership	• Criteria for membership is Grade six to 18 years • Members are aged from 11 to 18 years • Membership application is considered and agreed to by group members • Members include both individual and representative roles • There is an induction process for new members
Structure	• Formally established as a Special Committee of Council with Terms of Reference • FEWCHA annual plan presented to and adopted by Council. • Minutes of FEWCHA meetings to Council each month. • A Liaison Councillor is appointed by Council who attends every meeting • Participants attend Council Meetings on rotational basis
Work Plan	• Work based on annual plan – reviewed at planning camp each year • Meet every three weeks (do not meet in school holidays) • Meetings rotate between Scottsdale, Bridport and Winnaleah. • Involved in National Youth Week activities
Resources	• Full-time Youth Health Officer includes responsibility for coordinating FEWCHA (position funded by Regional Health Services - Australian Government) • Some volunteer adult support is used • $2,000 provide by Council in 2005 – for leadership development • Council also allows use of facilities and equipment at no charge • FEWCHA fundraises and seeks other grants eg $150,000 Foundation for Young Australians for Outreach Programme • Food and transport provided by council
Profile	• Promote themselves in the community as a 'brand' • Maintain a website, **www.fewcha.org.au** • Use a logo on website and other material • Have T-Shirts to promote group • Use media regularly - average every fortnight • Involved with other groups within the area • Involved with other groups outside the area - eg annual planning camp with similar groups from around the state • Have members on Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee
Contact	Jen Barron, Youth Health Officer Phone: 03 63 52 6500 E-mail: jbarron@dorset.tas.gov.au

Creating a FEWCHA for young people in Dorset

During National Youth Week in 2001, a survey was conducted. Young people who indicated they would like to become part of a group were invited to attend a camp with the idea of letting young people tell council how they wanted to get involved in council decisions that affect them and their communities. The young people attending responded positively and FEWCHA was born – their vision:

' to represent the needs of and develop ideas for the young people of Dorset.'

Now they are established, FEWCHA prepares a 12 month Operational Plan, at an annual planning camp. This is presented to council for adoption and forms the basis for ongoing reporting to council. FEWCHA provides council with a group they can call on for advice regarding particular issues. FEWCHA also consults more broadly with the community and can take issues that it has identified to council. They also co-ordinate events for young people in the Municipality and are involved in the organization of events for the whole of community.

Council have appointed a councillor as the liaison person between council and FEWCHA. The Councillor has a keen interest in the group and has developed strong relationships through active involvement (including the regular provision of home made treats at the meetings!) The group would like all other councillors to attend their meetings on a rotational basis – this request is currently be prepared for council consideration.

FEWCHA is currently made up of 22 young people aged between 11 and 18 years, and meets regularly outside of school holidays. Meetings are rotated between the major population centres. Transport to and from meetings involves school buses, parents and a council vehicle driven by the Youth Health Worker. Young people also use The Wheel Deal – an innovative transport project that the group is involved in.

Council provides significant support to FEWCHA with venues, facilities and equipment at no charge and employs a Youth Health Officer – part of whose role is to coordinate FEWCHA. Funding for the youth health officer come from the Australian Government under the Regional Health Services Programme. In 2005 Council allocated $2,000 for the first time to FEWCHA to be spent by the group on training and leadership development.

FEWCHA have also been successful, with the assistance of council, in applying for grants to undertake specific projects. One such example is a current grant of $150,000 from the Foundation for Young Australians to employ an outreach worker responsible for youth outreach in the area.

Some initiatives of FEWCHA include

- significant use of text messaging to communicate between members and the Youth Health Officer. This method suits the young people, and proves effective across the large geographical area.
- a focus on developing the FEWCHA 'brand'. A project was undertaken using a graffiti artist to create a logo and the group maintains a web-site: www.fewcha.org. Regular and positive media coverage is also used to promote FEWCHA's profile in the community

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Ask the young people what they want
2. Make sure you feed them and make it fun!
3. In the beginning it may seem to be a self-absorbed process – give the young people time to want to be part of the community!
4. There must be a designated worker to support the process.
5. Youth participation is a process – start somewhere and see where it takes you!
6. And just for fun…take a risk!!!!!!

Hobart Futures Youth Advisory Committee

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
Hobart City Council	Metropolitan 47,319 Sq kms	23% (10,663 people) (12 to 25 years, 2001 Census data)	Hobart, Battery Point, Sandy Bay, Dynnyrne, South Hobart, West Hobart, North Hobart, Mt Stuart, Mount Nelson and Fern Tree

Project Title	Hobart Youth Futures Advisory Committee
Established	• March 2004
Membership	• Age is focused on 12 to 25 year old young people • Maximum of fifteen Committee members • The group meet fortnightly (weekly closer to major events) • Reporting to Youth Programs Council staff occurs fortnightly, with written reports as required.
Structure	• Prospective members fill in an expression of interest form that is evaluated in a Future's meeting. Members decide on consensus whether to endorse the membership. • Every two years Futures reviews its terms of reference, updating the changing nature of the committee. • Futures is supported by a Youth Programs Youth Worker, Youth Programs Coordinator and Youth Centre Manager • Reporting to Council's Youth Programs staff occurs fortnightly, with written reports required
Work Plan	• Members participate in a team building day to plan the forthcoming years events and activities • Futures has a strong National Youth Week involvement, principally organising large music and talent events for young people. • Members advise staff on events and activities as required and regularly volunteer their time to assist in program delivery. • Key consultative mechanism with young people for Hobart City Council – commenting on Council activities and strategies
Resources	• Council allocated a budget of $5,000 in 2005 • Use of Council Chambers is provided for meetings, and some venues for events are provided free of charge • Food is provided to every meeting. • Transport is not provided.
Profile	• The Youth Advisory Committee promotes themselves through Hobart City Council's Capital City News paper and schools,
Contact	Simon Duffy Youth Centre Manager Phone: 03 6238 2839 E-mail: duffys@hobartcity.com.au

Hobart Futures Youth Advisory Committee

In 2002, 700 young people, from a diverse range of backgrounds, were consulted as part of the process of developing the Hobart City Council Youth Strategy. The Strategy was reviewed in 2004, with a further 400 young people being consulted. As a result of the engagement of young people through the consultation process, and the direction provided in the Youth Strategy, Hobart City Council established Futures as its Youth Advisory Committee in March 2004.

Council's motivation in establishing Futures was '*to acknowledge that young people have a right to access information and will ensure that young people have the opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect them and their community.'*

Some of the keys to the success of Futures include:

- ongoing funding and Council support;
- engaging young people through issues-based forums;
- the committee being driven by young people (Council staff provide a supporting role); and
- finding ways to sustain the young people's participation levels.

Any outside requests to Hobart City Council to involve young people in consultation, forums or events, are generally offered to Futures first. This recognises their skills, value and the commitment they have shown to Hobart City Council.

Council is currently looking at participation through a range of age groups and recruitment processes that engage a broader base of young people. Length of membership is also under review.

Some of the projects and activities Futures have been involved with have included: National Youth Week activities, Youth Forums, school consultations, conferences, annual planning days, an extensive tour of Youth Services in Victoria and involvement in the Labor Youth Round Table conducted in 2005.

Futures coordinated *Futurama* for National Youth Week in 2004 and 2005 - with the 2005 event attracting some 2000 participants.

Members have also participated in Hobart's Christmas Pageant, organised and participated in an underage dance party and have facilitated groups of young people at a forum to discuss the Council's youth strategy.

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Undertake consultation with your community.
2. Ensure you have adequate resources, (including staff) for ongoing management of the youth participation process.
3. Only commit to things that are achievable.
4. Ensure the process of establishing the youth participation model is in line with the strategic direction of Council
5. Maintain consistency with the young people involved.

King Island Youth Action Group

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
King Island Council	Rural and Remote 1,687 Sq kms	16.2% (273 people) (12 to 25 years, 2001 Census data)	Currie (contains half the population) Grassy

Project Title	King Island Youth Action Group
Established	• 2001
Membership	• Age is focused on 12 to 25 year old young people • Current membership is around 10 young people all between 12 and 17 years • Meetings are very flexible and arranged in response to activities or projects – there is not a set and regular meeting day
Structure	• Council employ a Youth Development Officer with funding obtained from Commonwealth and State Governments • Part of the Youth Development Officer's role is to mentor the King Island Youth Action Group (KIYAG) and provide a secretariat role with the Youth Steering Committee. • The Youth Steering Committee guides the Youth Development Officers work and is made up of a young person representing KIYAG, two Council representatives (one councillor) and other community leaders, such as the School Principal, King Island Hospital and Health Centre Health Promotion/Community Development Officer, local clergy, Police, and an Industry representative.
Work Plan	• KIYAG's energy is spent on projects such as National Youth Week activities and recreation and leisure activities, such as discos, movies, fundraising for equipment and facilities at the Skate Park (eg tabletop ramp, netball ring). • Activity often decreases during school holidays, when many members are out of town, away from the Island or engaged in paid work. • Reports are provided to funding bodies and the Youth Steering Committee by the Youth Development Officer on a regular basis. • Young people are kept informed through a Youth Access page in the bimonthly community newsletter 'Infoline' which is delivered to every household. A Youth Access website also provides this information and is regularly updated.
Resources	• Council allocated approximately $500 for projects in 2005 • The Youth Action Group raises funds for youth needs (eg Tabletop ramp). • Council provides administrative support, insurance for the Youth Access Program and venues for meetings and events, free of charge. • Project funds are applied for each year through State and Local Government grants. Some very limited project/brokerage funding is also available through a partnership with Rural Remote Reconnect Tasmania (through Anglicare NW).
Profile	• The KIYAG, the Youth Steering Committee and the Youth Development Officer have all become well recognised in the community for their work and as legitimate groups to represent young people's views.
Contact	Karen Coombs, Youth Development Officer Phone: 03 6462 1065 or 0419 732 655 E-mail: youthaccess@kingisland.net.au

King Island Youth Action Group

Council established a Youth Reference Group/Steering Committee in 2000. Funding from the State Government was successfully obtained in 2001 to employ a part time youth worker and the King Island Youth Action Group (KIYAG) was formed.

In February 2002, following consultation with the community, King Island Council adopted a Youth Policy with the primary goal being *'the development and use of collaborative community response mechanisms to validate the role and value of young people in community life.'*

Over the next couple of years, funding was obtained from the Commonwealth (through recurrent Regional Health Service funds and some specific project funds that were allocated to the Cradle Coast) as well as from the State Government. These funds are used through a local partnership between the Council and King Island District High School to employ a full time Youth Development Officer. The position is divided equally between a Regional Health Service funded Youth Access Program position based at Council and a Pathway Planning Officer position based at King Island District High School. This arrangement arose directly from the relationships developed with key stakeholders through membership of the Youth Steering Committee. It is a working example of a collaborative, locally initiated response to young people's participation in an isolated and remote community, with limited human, financial and structural resources.

Some of the keys to this success of KIYAG are its grassroots nature and bottom up approach. Young people can access a youth dedicated worker in a number of different roles and settings and have flexibility to deciding how to focus their energy. The group's relationship with the community based Youth Steering Committee provides additional support.

KIYAG have been actively involved in National Youth Week activities every year since 2001. This has included raft races, triathlons, rock concerts, skate competitions, music workshops and multimedia workshops. KIYAG members have also been involved in running movies, discos and other activities and participated regularly in the King Island Agricultural Show. Two KIYAG members have been King Island Young Citizens of the Year in the past thee years.

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Engage young people as a representative sample across the age groups and determine the processes they want and are willing to engage in.
2. Link activities and processes to food and ensure being involved results in having fun while achieving outcomes.
3. Be realistic about what can be expected to be achieved within the available resources.
4. Recognise and accept the developmental nature of your commitment to young people and youth participation – and don't be too disappointed if there is no silver bullet to a quick fix or major changes overnight.
5. Learn from the experience of others and avoid re-inventing wheels – then develop a model responsive to the needs of your community.
6. Consider the development of two separate participation groups and/or processes – one for the 12 to 16 age group and another for 17 to 25 year olds.
7. Develop strong local partnerships to work collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for young people.

Launceston Youth Advisory Group

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
Launceston City Council	Metropolitan and Rural (1,410 Sq kms)	21% (12,774 people) (12 to 25 years, 2001 Census data)	Launceston, Lilydale

Project Title	Launceston Youth Advisory Group
Established	• After Youth Spaces Report in 1997
Membership	• Membership is made up of young people from 12 – 25 drawn from the community, with two representatives from each of the schools in Launceston • Launceston City Council Youth Coordinator • two aldermen
Structure	• Meets monthly with special meetings and sub-committees in between • No meetings during school holidays – with the group going into recess over the Christmas break • Two Aldermen attend meetings. They act as a link between the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) and Launceston City Council reporting to both groups about issues and activities • Minutes of meetings are taken and distributed amongst the group. • An induction process of new members occurs during February and March. This process is decided on by the existing members of the group in January. • A celebration meeting is held in November with an informal evaluation.
Work Plan	• A Planning meeting is held in January where existing members scope out the key activities for the year. At this meeting the group decides on the frequency, venue and structure of the meetings for the year. • YAG are involved in the planning and staging of events and activities during National Youth Week. • YAG is currently involved in an Exchange Program with a youth group from Blackburn Scotland. Six YAG members will be traveling to Scotland in August 2006 and hosting the Scottish group in 2007.
Resources	• Council allocates a budget of $3,000. • Use of Council Chambers for meetings, and some event venues provided free. • Access provided to administrative resources and support, and assistance from other Council Departments • Facilitation of the group by the Youth and Community Officer
Profile	YAG are striving to increase it profile in the community by; • A monthly article in the Examiner promoting positive youth stories and up coming events for young people. • Media releases through the Council's Marketing Department on YAG events • Annual publication 'Through our eyes' a selection of creative works which are free to the community. • Participation in community events such as National Youth Week, Underage band nights and the Kite Festival. • Representative of YAG on Tasmanian Youth Consultative Committee.
Contact	Janelle Middleton, Youth and Community Officer Phone: 03 6323 3385 E-mail: Janelle.Middleton@launceston.tas.gov.au

Launceston Youth Advisory Group

The Launceston Youth Advisory Group (YAG) was established following a Youth Spaces consultation in 1997, with the mission of 'providing an effective communicative and consultative link between Launceston City Council and young people within the Launceston municipality. This involves providing a means by which Launceston young people can directly participate in building a shared vision for their community and in doing so both create an effective youth voice and raise the profile of young people within the community.'

In October 2004 YAG was put into recess and a review of membership and recruitment undertaken. In 2005 schools were targeted, seeking two representatives from each school. Once the students are identified they are invited to attend a YAG meeting where they were introduced to existing members and the concept of a Youth Advisor Group. It was then up to each individual whether they wished to join the group and how much involvement they would have in each of the activities. Removing the majority of the barriers needed to join the group has proven to be successful. Recruiting through the schools gives YAG a core group as well as a link to a larger pool of young people. It is hoped to create a communication link between young people, schools, YAG and Launceston City Council with information, issues and concerns going both ways. It is important to note that YAG is always open to having any young person from our community join the group.

In April 2005, YAG was re-established with a group of 22 young people. With time it is hoped that a broader cross section of young people including a larger representation of the 18 to 25 will also be part of the group.

Some of the projects that YAG have recently been involved with have included:

DRAMARAMA – An annual drama day where schools participate in a competition performing short works around a theme. The theme in 2005 was "Be Me and See"

THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE UGLY – YAG members were asked to take photos of what was good, bad and ugly about living in Launceston. They also participated in a survey of young people in the Brisbane Street Mall. The photos and comments were included in an exhibition in October.

THROUGH OUR EYES – An annual publication of images and thoughts of young people. In 2005 the images and comments from The Good The Bad and The Ugly were included as well as poetry from a workshop held during National Youth Week.

ROC THE STEAD – an underage band night at Newstead College in November. Ten local young bands performed with the money raised going towards the Scottish Exchange.

SCOTTISH EXCHANGE – YAG have been working towards an exchange with a Scottish youth group for some time now. The exchange will take place in August 2006 with six YAG members participating. The Scottish group will then travel to Tasmania in 2007.

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Don't make it too hard for young people to join the group.
2. When you first get your group together, ask them to come up with ideas on how the group will work, meeting times, venues, type of meetings and so on – this will give them ownership .
3. Listen to the young people and create short-term achievable projects around their interests and issues as well as long term goals.
4. Celebrate – achievements, birthdays, anything that builds the spirit and confidence of the group.
5. Thank and acknowledge young people for their assistance and participation.

Southern Midlands Youth Structure

Council	Characteristics	Youth Presence	Main Population Centres
Southern Midlands Council	Rural and Remote 2,561 Sq kms	25% (0-14 years) 10% (15 to 25 years, 2001 Census data)	Bagdad, Campania, Kempton, Melton Mowbray, Colebrook, Oatlands, Tunnack, Parratah, York Plains

Project Title	Southern Midlands Youth Committee of Council and Youth In Southern Midlands Action Committees
Established	October 2000
Membership	• The initial membership was focused on the 12 to 17 age bracket, however the ages have been expanded to six to 17 to meet identified need.
Structure	• Southern Midlands Youth Committee of Council (SMYCC)– representatives of both young people and adults from each Youth In Southern Midlands Action Committees (YISMAC), along with Councillor and Council Youth Development Officer
Work Plan	• Local activities determined by YISMACs in each area • Municipal approach developed through SMYCC • Council's Youth Officer is responsible for coordinating Youth Week activities, • Which are planned and undertaken in conjunction with the individual YISMAC Branches.
Resources	• Members of YISMAC's pay an annual membership fee of $5.00 • The membership fee is paid to Council, and then granted back to the YISMAC less Goods and Services Tax • The SMYCC and YISMACs also raise additional funds • Use of Council venues provided for meetings and events free of charge • Administrative support is provided by Council at no charge • Council employ the Youth Development Officer for 17 hours per week. • Each YISMAC is supported by a group of local adults on an unpaid basis • There are examples where a YISMAC, under the sponsorship or auspice of Council, have applied for grants for specific projects and activities • SMYCC and YISMACs are eligible to apply for Project funding under the Council's Community Grants Program
Profile	• YISMACs have a reasonably high profile in their local town, as they are very locally based • Some YISMACs and aspects of the Youth Structure is detailed on the Council website
Contact	Sharyn Rawnsley, Youth Development Officer Phone: 03 6254 5000 E-mail: srawnsley@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au

Southern Midlands Youth Committee of Council

In May 2001, the Southern Midlands Council adopted a Youth Structure, and appointed the Southern Midlands Youth Consultative Committee (SMYCC) as a Special Committee of Council.

The Youth Structure consists of a Youth Policy and Planning Group, (an internal Council staff working group); SMYCC; and town based Branches, known as YISMAC's – or Youth In Southern Midlands Action Committees. YISMAC's have been established in Bagdad, Kempton, Campania, Colebrook, Oatlands and Woodsdale. YISMAC's coordinate and operate groups, activities and events at a local community level.

The roles, functions and responsibilities of SMYCC are: 'to act as an advisory and consultation body to Council and YISMACs; to facilitate the establishment and operations of YISMACs; and to assist young people and YISMACs access information, support and resources.'

SMYCC membership is made up of two young people and one adult from each YISMAC; the Youth Development Officer; and one Councillor (who is the chairperson). Members are appointed for a one year term, and all members nominate a proxy. The proxies for the Councillor are the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

SMYCC have developed YISMAC Guidelines which include sections on Council Contact; Council Recognition; Volunteer Youth Workers; Meetings; and many other operational aspects.

A key feature of the Youth Structure is that individual local communities identify the needs and issues of young people and work with young people to respond. Each YISMAC is able to incorporate the ages of young people in that district, for example, Kempton are younger than Oatlands and Woodsdale is a mix of all age groups. Councillor involvement is provided when requested or invited. Access to information is available about some aspects of the Youth Structure through the Council website – www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au.

SMYCC and YISMACs have coordinated National Youth Week activities, such as a three day program known as the Youth Action Days at Kempton, Oatlands and Woodsdale. They have also coordinated a range of local events and trips to Hobart for activities.

SMYCC has increased the participation rate of youth in community based programs and the involvement of parents in these events. The collective groups played an integral part in the establishment of a community based radio station and a grant of $1,500 was obtained to enable training of volunteers to participate in the running of this station (MID-FM).

Some tips for getting started and keeping going…

1. Develop the policies and structure, in consultation with young people and the community, prior to getting too far down the track.
2. Council need to provide the necessary direction, leadership and resources.
3. The structure needs to be flexible to meet the needs and availability of both young people and the unpaid adult youth workers – who may work or have other commitments
4. Look for opportunities for structured group activities out of the district to reduce the sense of isolation and limited access to entertainment, information, resources and support.

Clarence City Council Youth Network Advisory Group

Clarence City Council is a metropolitan Council with a population of 50,257. According to the Census data of 2001, approximately 11,090 of these were young people between 12 and 25 years of age.

The Clarence City Council Youth Network Advisory Group (YNAG) was formed in April 2000, to consult with Council on a range of issues, needs and concerns identified by the young people in the city. This forum involves young people in decision making, provides opportunities to participate in the planning, organising and running of activities, events, forums and projects in Clarence. YNAG also provides opportunities for young people to participate in regional and state forums. The group meets fortnightly and is supported by Council employed youth workers. It also has access/use of Council meeting rooms, recreation facilities, equipment and the youth centre. Also, administration support and assistance from other Council staff is available as required.

The Youth Participation Model in Clarence has resulted in young people having a direct link to Council and other stakeholders, with a voice on local issues, ideas and concerns. Also, YNAG provides opportunities for the development of skills that focus on citizenship, personal growth and increases young people's understanding of local government processes. A participation framework was developed in consultation with young people to reflex the principles, definitions and objectives of the group. Youth workers also facilitate clear, practical meetings and provide effective feedback, to ensure young people are involved in all aspects of youth participation. Other members of the community, businesses and service providers are also invited on a regular basis.

Tips: Invite and encourage youth representation from a broad cross-section of the community and provide a youth forum that enables young people to be involved in decision making processes that increases their participation.

Contact	Angela Goldsmith, Youth Participation Officer Phone: 03 6245 8600 Email: cpyc@netspace.net.au

Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team

Derwent Valley Council is a rural Council with approximately 1,644 of the 9,001 residents being aged between 12 and 25 years according to the 2001 Census data.

Derwent Valley Council established a Youth Advisory Group in 2002. The Group was named Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team (D'FAT) and restructured as a Special Committee of Council in 2004 - at the same time the Derwent Valley Youth Participation Policy was adopted by Council. The vision of D'FAT is 'to empower young people to become respected and engaged members of the community.'

D'FAT's mission statement is: (a) to increase awareness of and address youth issues and concerns, (b) to provide opportunities for community involvement, (c) to facilitate and promote consultation between young people and community groups and all levels of government, (d) to represent the views of young people, (e) to develop young leaders, (f) to promote a positive image of young people, and (g) to support and co-ordinate activities and projects for young people.

D'FAT is supported by the Youth Participation Officer, employed by Council, and a budget allocation. The framework under which the group operates is defined in a set of Guidelines available from their website www.dfat.com.au - along with other information about the Group.

Tips: Fully involve young people in planning and developing the youth participation framework, along with policies and procedures, through face-to-face focus groups and engagement - and use language and communication methods that young people can relate to and understand.

Contact	Matthew Hill, Youth Participation Officer Phone: 03 6261 8511 Email: projectofficer@dvc.tas.gov.au>

George Town Youth Advisory Group

George Town is a rural Council, with approximately 1,200 of the municipality's population (according to the 2001 Census data), being aged between 12 and 25 years of age.

The George Town Youth Advisory Group was established to (a) give advice and provide input into local youth programs; (b) write a six weekly newsletter for young people; (c) organise and deliver National Youth Week events; and (d) plan other activities and events for young people in the George Town area. The main age range of young people is 11 to 16 years, with a couple of members being between 17 to 22 years old. Membership includes representatives from the three schools in the municipality. The group meets every 3 to 6 weeks, depending on need, with details of the group's activities being included in the Community Services Report to Council. The main activities of the group are project or issue focused.

The group is now a source of youth representatives for a number of other community and business groups and committees in the municipality. The group is also asked to provide input into other projects and strategic planning, and was consulted in the development of the Council's Youth Policy. Council employs a Youth Development Officer, provides a meeting venue, transport, administration and catering for meetings. The Youth Advisory Group raises additional funds to support its activities and operations.

Tips: Ensure that meetings are informal and relaxed; create the opportunity for young people to be actively involved; develop formal links to Council and councillors; elect Office Bearer positions; develop a Strategic Plan; provide food for meetings; let young people grow into leaders at their own pace and let them guide the direction of the group; in the first instance look for activities that produce quick results to maintain motivation and enthusiasm; look for resources to support group members to attend leadership training and camp type activities.

Contact	Yvette Dawe, Youth Worker Phone: 03 6382 8800 Email: yvetted@georgetown.tas.gov.au

Latrobe Youth Group – VOICE

Latrobe Council is a rural council with approximately 1,634 of its 8,518 residents being aged between 10-25 years (according to the 2001 Census data).

Latrobe Council established a Youth Advisory group named VOICE (young people in Latrobe hoo give a hoot!) in 2004.

When Latrobe Council set out on this journey of building a Youth Advisory Group, it was committed to being at the forefront of what young people wanted for the Latrobe municipality. Through the Youth Policy Latrobe Council recognises and values young people as members of the Latrobe community, Council is committed to addressing the needs of young people through communication, consultation and inclusion of young people in planning and decision-making processes. Youth participation is at the core of the development of a youth advisory group. To work closely with young people means that both the development stage and the implementation stage must involve young people. This recognises that the process itself is concerned with youth development – as well as the resulting initiative.

Tips: Young people, come from different backgrounds, families and cultures. They lead varying lifestyles. Have varying values and varying needs, however, they all deserve a VOICE.

Contact	Adelle Rist, Youth Development Officer Phone:03 6421 4650 Email: adeller@latrobe.tas.gov.au

Northern Midlands Council Youth Task Force

Northern Midlands Council is a large rural council with approximately 4,000 of the 12,035 the municipality (according to the 2001 Census) being young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years.

The Northern Midlands Youth Task Force was established in 1999, as a Special Committee of Council and currently operates as two sub-sections: the Northern Area Group and the Southern Area Group.

Membership of the Northern Area Group (NAG), based at Longford, currently consists of young people (at this time all between 12 and 18 years), Council's Youth Development Officer, one councillor and the Rural Co-Pilots mentoring project Coordinator. Membership of the Southern Area Group (SAG), based at Campbell Town, currently consists of young people, Council's Youth Development Officer and the Social Worker from Campbell Town Health and Community Services.

The Southern Area Group now has no fixed meeting timetable, but meets on an 'as-needed' basis - in conjunction with the YouthSpace Activities Program at Campbell Town. The Northern Area Group meets monthly in conjunction with the after-school youth activity program at Longford.

Young people and other Group members are involved in planning, organising and running various activities and events within the Group and in the community, for example, bus outings to Hobart from Campbell Town, and National Youth Week events. Council employs a full-time Youth Development Officer and allocates a budget of $1,000 for each Area Group.

Tips: Be flexible in your approach and link in with other activities. (This has been found to work better in this region, rather than the separate, more formal meetings of the past. It was developed after trialling other approaches, and after learning from others what worked in their areas.)

Contact	Peter Mackenzie, Youth Development Officer Phone 03 6397 7303 Email: peter.mackenzie@northernmidlands.tas.gov.au

Waratah Wynyard Youth Team

Waratah Wynyard Council is predominantly a rural council, with part of the municipality joining the regional centre of Burnie. The municipality has a population of 14,000 (according to the 2001 Census) of which approximately 4,340 are young people aged between 12 and 25 years old.

A Youth Team was established in 2005, to work towards Council's objective of 'higher participation of young people to encourage positive involvement and inclusion within our community.'

The Youth Team consists of 15 young people aged between 11 and 15 years old, who represent the State Schools in the municipality. Council also sponsors the 'Community Door Program', provided by Lead On Inc, to support young people to participate in the management of community groups.

Members of the Youth Team are also provided with training in areas such as first aid and event management. Training is an important feature in the Youth Team approach as it provides the opportunity for members to get to know each other and to work together. It has assisted with maintaining group dynamics and cohesion as the membership changes over time.

Tips: The structure does not need to replicate the 'Senior' Council. Have activities and events organised for the initial meetings. Be prepared to allocate and dedicate staff to support the process.

Contact	Richard Muir-Wilson, Community Development Officer Phone:03 6443 8363 Email: rmuirwilson@warwyn.tas.gov.au

Glenorchy City Council Youth Task Forces

The Glenorchy City Council Youth Participation Model has been detailed in a publication called *Face the Challenge, Take the Risk, Enjoy the Ride: A Local Government Guide to Youth Participation – based on the experience of the Glenorchy City Council.'*

Copies are available at the Glenorchy City Council or the Tasmanian Office of Youth Affairs

The Glenorchy Local Government area is the fourth largest in Tasmania with a total population of 42,518, and has a mix of rural, urban, residential, industrial and commercial development.

Approximately 14,000 of the people in the municipality being aged between 12 and 25, according to the 2001 Census data.

The primary youth participation mechanism in the City of Glenorchy is a Task Force Model, incorporating the Glenorchy Youth Task Force and Precinct Youth Task Forces.

The Glenorchy Youth Task Force was established in March 1994 as a Special Committee of Council and is one of the most established youth participation processes in Tasmania.

The Glenorchy Youth Task Force has the following Terms of Reference:

(a) to consult with young people, and determine the needs and issues relating to them in the Glenorchy municipality

(b) to represent the identified needs, issues and views of young people to the Glenorchy City Council

(c) to work with the Glenorchy City Council to identify strategies to respond to the needs, and issues related to young people in the municipality

(d) to work with the Glenorchy City Council to facilitate and develop opportunities for young people in the municipality to participate in the Community and in Council consultation and decision making processes

(e) to contribute to the development of a positive profile and image of young people in the Community

(f) to provide personal development and leadership development opportunities for the Task Force members

(g) to represent young people in other forums outside Council and outside the Glenorchy municipality

(h) to provide information and advice to Council, and act as a reference and consultation point for Council Programs and activities where appropriate

(i) to provide information and advice to other communities developing processes of youth participation

The Glenorchy Youth Task Force has documented Guidelines which detail:

- the purpose of the Task Force
- membership
- the relationship with Council
- operational requirements; reporting requirements
- the role of the Youth Participation Officer
- youth participation models, and
- definitions.

There is provision for non-voting Associate members, of which there are three alderman, and currently a Liaison Officer from Tasmania Police (Glenorchy).

Some examples of the activities in which the Glenorchy Youth Task Force have been involved include:

- Leadership and Personal Development Workshops and Camps
- Community Education – presentations to agencies and the broader community, such as, Police Cadets, business groups, pensioners, the Metro, and security guards
- The Safer Communities Committee – membership and participation on working groups
- Skate park facility consultation at Glenorchy, Claremont, Moonah and Lutana
- Identification and development of the 'Pulse' Youth Health Centre and 'Chance on Main' early intervention program
- Youth Policy and Strategy consultations
- Development of youth entertainment activities as part of the Works Festival
- Cultural awareness raising activities and programs
- Development and delivery of the Stay on Track Youth Depression Prevention Program.

The Glenorchy City Council has also utilised a precinct model as part of their Community Plan processes. The model divides the city into nine Precincts – with a community based committee for each one. Each Precinct Committee is constituted as a 'Special Committee of Council'.

Three of the Precinct Committees have established sub-committees known as Precinct Youth Task Force Committees. Each Precinct Youth Task Force Committee is quite unique with different group dynamics and needs and aspirations that reflect the suburbs or areas in which they are based.

The activities of the Precinct Youth Task Forces include a mix of social and entertainment, community involvement, fundraising, and broader consultation with young people.

Each Precinct Youth Task Force has developed Operational Guidelines, which are used to induct new members and guide the operation of the group. The Guidelines include sections such as:

- a history of the Task force
- purpose
- operational guidelines including meeting details and membership
- role and function
- relationships to be developed and maintained
- an annual activity action planning process, and
- reporting expectations.

Contact	Angela Pate, Youth Participation Officer Phone: 03 6216 6347 Email: apate@gcc.tas.gov.au

RESOURCES

The following are websites and publications, not referred to elsewhere in this Guide, that provide information on youth participation approaches in Tasmania and elsewhere in Australia. Sites include other resources on how to involve young people in decision making processes.

In Tasmania

Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT)
(http://www.lgat.asn.au/)

Tasmanian Youth Policy Framework for Local Government, Government of Tasmania, Office of Youth Affairs (1999)
(http://www.youthaffairs.tas.gov.au)

Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT)
(http://www.ynot.org.au)

Interstate

AYPAC (Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition)
(www.aypac.org.au)

Booklets: Sharing the Stage, Conferences and Events and Why and how participation is important.

Brisbane City Council Youth Strategy 2003-2006 Brisbane City Council
(http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/)

City of Casey Youth Strategy 2001-2011 City of Casey
(http://www.casey.vic.gov.au/policiesstrategies/article.asp?Item=1635)

Connecting Young People in Local Communities: A Guide for the Development of a Local Government Youth Charter Municipal Association of Victoria, Melbourne 2004 http://www.mav.asn.au/CA256C320013CB4B/Lookup/YouthCharterGuide/$file/YouthCharter.pdf

Darwin City Council Youth Strategy 2003-2006
(http://www.darwin.nt.gov.au)

Engaging with Young People: Local Government In Action
Municipal Association of Victoria, Melbourne 2004
(http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/web21/ofy/dvcofy.nsf/headingpagesdisplay/publications+and+researchpublicationslocal+government+youth+charter)

Foundation for Young Australians: http://www.youngaustralians.org
Bikes, Bands and Strategic Plans: Including Young People in the Business of Local Government LGA Queensland (1997)
(http://www.lgaq.asn.au)

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)
(http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/aboutmc.htm)

Moreland City Council Youth Strategy 2004-2009 Moreland City Council
(http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/)

National Youth Affairs Research Scheme – Publication: "Alive and Motivated":
Young People, Participation and Local Government
(www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsintrnet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/youth-nyars.htm)

NSW Commission For Children And Young People (2001)
(http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/publications/taking.html)

TAKING PARTicipation Seriously

Taking Young People Seriously Handbooks:

- Consulting young people about their ideas and opinions: A handbook for organisations working with young people
- Young people on boards and committees: A handbook for organisations working with young people
- Creating Change in your community: A handbook for young people

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and Department of Victorian Communities, 2004
(http://www.yacvic.org.au)

The Source
(http://www.thesource.gov.au/)

The Time of Your Life – Youth Policy Adelaide City Council 2004
(www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/council/publications/Policies/Youth_Policy.pdf)

Youth Interagency Youth Strategy Action Plan 2004 City of Sydney draft
(http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/)

Youth Participation – A New Approach to Local Government Youth Services
Onkaparinga City Council 2000
(www.onkaparinga.sa.gov.au)

Youth Participation Handbook – A guide for organisations seeking to involve young people on boards and committees.
Government of South Australia, Office of Employment and Youth (2000)
(http://www.maze.sa.gov.au/program.asp)

Youth Portal
(http://www.youth.gov.au/)

Youth Social Plan 2003 Canterbury City Council
(http://www.canterbury.nsw.gov.au/)

TALKING PARTICIPATION *TAKING ACTION*

PART THREE *Youth Participation Tools*

PART THREE Youth Participation Tools

What are the Youth Participation Tools?

These youth participation tools are intended to help people working within local councils to think through their particular circumstances and gain insight and ideas about how they might take steps towards a youth participation model. The three tools included are:

Participation Readiness Tool	This tool is designed to help you consider how ready your council is to take on youth participation. It will enable you to: • assess your council's youth participation focus and the extent of 'participation-readiness' • consider where to focus your attention in developing youth participation
Participation Ingredients Tool	This tool is designed to help you consider and select participation activities to suit the particular circumstances of your council. These are the activities that you wish to take on and that are most likely to succeed. They will become the ingredients of your youth participation model.
Participation Planning Tool	This tool will assist you to develop a plan to express the youth participation activities you have selected. It helps you to record your approach and means that you can share and discuss your ideas with other people and seek management endorsement.

Each tool may be used by an individual or in a small group, perhaps including young people themselves as a steering committee or project planning group. In the latter case you might consider using a facilitator. You may also choose to add your own questions or ideas as you work with the tools.

PARTICIPATION READINESS TOOL

(Adapted from Auer J, Repin Y, Roe, M (1993) Just Change: The Cost Conscious Manager's Toolkit, South Australian Health Commission, Adelaide

How do I use the tool?

The tool asks you to consider each question in turn and decide on a rating (0-10) for each. A rating of 0 would indicate that factor is completely non-existent in your council. A rating of 10 would indicate that there is no need for improvement for that factor. The order of the questions does not imply any particular weighting as the assessment is derived from the overall result.

If you cannot answer these questions then, before you move on, note any ideas and spend some time thinking and talking with your colleagues about the values of the council in which you work, its attitude and practice towards participation in general and youth participation in particular.

QUESTIONS	SCORE	NOTES
1. Does your council have a stated policy that includes youth participation?		
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 low medium high		
2. Does your council have regular processes for listening to young people's views?		
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 low medium high		
3. Does your council have appropriate management structures to support youth participation?		
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 low medium high		

QUESTIONS | SCORE | NOTES

4. Do staff in your council facilitate the participation of young people in policy development and decision-making?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

5. Does your council provide resources and support to assist young people in having their say?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

6. Are young people currently involved in other ways in your council?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

7. Does your council provide awareness, attitude and skill development for management and staff to better implement youth participation?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

8. Does your council provide enough consultation time to ensure young people's views are seriously considered?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

QUESTIONS | SCORE | NOTES

9. Does your council use measures that monitor whether young people's views are considered?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

10. Does your council provide skill development for youth representatives?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

11. Does council provide young people with a real role in policy development and implement decisions made by young people?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

low medium high

What does your score mean?

Developing youth participation is not necessarily a structured step-by-step process. For example, it is not a matter of undertaking a one-off activity (like a street survey) before you can go on to establish a small town committee. Nor is it about having a Youth Policy before you can conduct a street survey. It is more a process of understanding what is most likely to work 'now' that will encourage both young people and council to continue to develop a sound working relationship.

Your total score gives an indication only, of your council's capacity for enhancing youth participation. Your score on individual items provides a guide as to where you may need to concentrate your efforts.

Tally up the score you gave to each question. Your total provides the following clues:

Score	Indications	Strategies
Below 40	The council does not appear to be supportive of youth participation as it currently stands	Focus on organisational development efforts within council such as awareness-raising. Small steps in youth participation strategies may be more easily accepted. Include: • informing young people about things that might affect them
40 to 60	While there may be opportunities for initiating new youth participation strategies, there may still be some significant work to do in improving the capacity of the council to support and respond to the results of youth participation.	In addition to the above, youth participation strategies may include: • asking young people what they think about specific youth activities • asking young people for their feedback about services they receive
60 to 80	Your council will have some youth participation strategies in place. There is a willingness to do more and there are plenty of opportunities to do so.	In addition to the above, youth participation strategies may include: • asking young people what they think about broader population issues • Involving young people in developing solutions to issues that affect them
85 to 110	Your council is already well focused on youth participation and has an environment that is likely to support new or more advanced participation initiatives.	In addition to the above, youth participation strategies may include: • involving young people on an ongoing basis in influencing council policy and decision making

PARTICIPATION INGREDIENTS TOOL

How do I use the tool?

The tool asks you to:

1. Consider each activity
2. Describe how and why this may suit your council
3. Describe how and why this may NOT suit your council
4. Decide 'yes' or 'no' whether to adopt it. (A yes means you will include it in your Youth Participation Plan)

Remember circumstances will change over time, so the selection you are making is about the immediate planning context of one to three years.

The right choices will be those that fit best at the time. It is okay therefore, to start with small steps – If council currently has no Youth Plan or a Youth Participation Model, starting with smaller realistic and achievable goals is perfectly acceptable.

It is important, however, to take a strategic approach in the longer term. So get council to 'sign off' on the model you are able to successfully promote and use this as the basis for further development.

Use your small steps to build the foundations for a model that ultimately supports the most meaningful levels of participation.

SECTION 1 – ONE–OFF ACTIVITIES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
1a. Conduct 'Street Surveys'	Good and quick way to get a number of random responses and develop general view on issues Take care to ensure the profile of those surveyed is what you want – for example, prescribe the number of young people you want to survey in say three age groups – set targets for each group – and have a question asking participants their age range			
1b. Use competitions to engage young people	Use prizes and incentives to encourage participation Be careful that information is valid – it may be submitted just to win something			

SECTION 1 – ONE–OFF ACTIVITIES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
1c. Use a Suggestion Box	Not always a successful strategy by itself. However, can be used to support other activities, such as at a forum. May need to prompt and encourage input May get some questionable contributions			
1d. Provide a Graffiti Wall	Useful to access a range of people and allow them to contribute in a creative form, using a range of expression Can be a risk (for example inappropriate material in public areas) – but often worth taking. Getting clear messages may be difficult – but can provide leads Adult supervision may inhibit expression. Consider delegate to young people to manage – which helps you manage your risk			

SECTION 1 – ONE–OFF ACTIVITIES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
1e. Conduct a text message survey via mobile phone	Embraces technology readily used by young people Survey best suited to multiple choice questions			
1f. Run issues workshops – such as transport or health	May be young people on their own, or as part of whole community consultation May need to make special invitations and provide individual support for young people to participate Young people may be included in the planning and steering processes			
1g. Conduct or participate in events or functions – such as a visit and morning tea with a dignitary, (for example, the Governor)	Young people may be attend the function, assist with planning or may be part of a presentation Need to ensure young people are well briefed, and not a token inclusion			

SECTION 1 – ONE–OFF ACTIVITIES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
1h. Provide space for consultation activities at community festivals	Council can facilitate a number of effective participation processes by making venues and meeting places available at minimal or no charge			
1i. Conduct public meetings and forums	Special gatherings of groups for consultation and needs assessment processes Need to be careful to ensure adequate representation Duplication should be minimised so that young people are not constantly requested to attend meetings that are seeking similar information or input			
1j. Hold policy 'round-tables'– on issues such as employment	May relate to young people or whole community Need to be clear about the boundaries of the brief and manage expectations			

SECTION 1 – ONE–OFF ACTIVITIES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
1k. Include young people on other non-youth specific council and Community Project Advisory Councils	Great opportunity to add a new, energetic and committed person/people to the process Need to ensure young people are supported, given opportunities to be involved and heard			
1l. Include young people in service reviews and evaluations	Often young people will be the service users and can add a critical perspective on service performance In other cases they may have stakeholder role such as caring for a parent or sibling with a disability and can bring important insights			
Other one-off Ideas	Consider any other ideas or variations that you have identified For example, include young people on interview panels for youth workers			

SECTION 2 – REGULAR ACTIVITY

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
2a. Hold an Annual Youth Forum/Summit	Structured consultation and needs identification forum Ensuring adequate representation and a good cross-section of young people can be challenging			
2b. Conduct regular monthly, quarterly meetings with established youth groups and committees, such as Student Representative Councils at Schools	This process taps into other existing groups which can be very efficient Need to be careful to complement these processes with others that provided access to those who are not involved in these other groups			
2c. Invite young people to Annual Community Forum (broader community event)	Important to include young people in broader community consultations May need to provide some support to ensure young people are heard in this bigger context			

SECTION 2 – REGULAR ACTIVITY

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
2d. Incorporate consultation mechanisms into annual events such as a 'battle of the bands'	Can tap into activities which will draw a lot of young people – possible mingling and surveying young people at the event, or set up whiteboard or graffiti wall at the venue Need to ensure method of interaction is appropriate and courtesy is shown to the event organisers – keep them informed seek their permission			
2e. Run an annual Youth Leadership Development Program	Can create a positive contribution to young people by council Programs need to be high quality, credible and provide benefits to young people to get them along May be run in partnership with other councils or community agencies			
Other regular Ideas	Consider any other ideas or variations that you have identified			

SECTION 3 – ONGOING STRUCTURES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
3a. Establish a group to focus on responding to Council requests for input and comment on plans and decisions being considered (input and consultation role).	Committee is set up and easy for Council to seek views from the structured group of young people May need care that Committee does not feel underutilised if there are no issues or decisions requiring consultation			
3b. Establish a group to focus on identifying issues and needs of young people and bringing them to the attention of Council (community development role).	Young people likely to be able to relate to and represent issues Need to ensure that Committee is able to tap into issues of young people			
3c. Establish a group to identify develop and implement responses to the needs of young people (action role).	Very high level of engagement and likely to provide great opportunities for practical participation Relatively high levels of resourcing and support may be required			

SECTION 3 – ONGOING STRUCTURES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
3d. Establish a group with a combination of any elements of 3a, 3b and/or 3c.	Any combination could be used with quality results Consider making whatever group you choose Special Committees of Council Need to ensure that young people and all other players have clear and realistic expectations Transport may be a barrier to participation for a centralised group – particularly in rural areas			
3e. Establish 'small town' groups as committees or as sub-committees of the whole area group	In rural areas, there may be a number of communities (based around small towns), that can each support a youth committee Supporting these can prove challenging across a large geographical area. Adults may offer to be involved as unpaid supervisors			

SECTION 3 – ONGOING STRUCTURES

Participation Activity	Considerations	How and why does this suit your council?	How and why does this NOT suit your council?	Proceed? 'Yes' or 'No'
3f. Establish suburban committees	Same as small town committees – on a suburban basis in cities			
3g. Appoint youth development staff (or whatever title council uses for this role) – employed by council full-time or part-time	Great resource and potential to support participation model and young people Significant investment required			
3h. Promote (or join) a Youth Service Providers Network or Forum (or similar – may have a different name)	Great community development model, with good potential for council – allows access to information and support from a number of other relevant services May require a reasonable level of resourcing. Care needs to be taken to ensure organisations are represented at appropriate level in their structure			

Note: The kinds of ongoing groups referred to above should be given a name that best describes their aims. Examples used in some councils include: a Youth Reference Group; a Youth Advisory Committee; a Youth Task Force, a Youth Council and others

PARTICIPATION PLANNING TOOL

How do I use the tool?

1. From the Participation Ingredients Tool, write down the activities you have identified as most able to advance youth participation in your Council.
2. Next, identify any resource implications, for example, funds, staff or volunteers.
3. Finally decide what steps need to be taken, by whom and by when to bring the activities about. In a number of instances the action will include action another stakeholder may need to take.

   NB. This Plan may remain a separate document that you refer to over time or the same planning elements may simply be included in your council's Youth Policy or Strategy.

Activities	Resource Implications	Steps to be taken EXAMPLE ONLY	By whom	By when
Health Issues Forum	Estimate costs of venue and catering, promotion, staff coordination time,	• Seek management support and approval • Establish and meet with organising group including young people • Develop a program and budget for the day • Book speakers, facilitators, venue and catering • Design and circulate invitations • Visit schools and service providers to promote • Advertise, for example, in newspaper • Coordinate on the day, including media coverage • Record results of session • Evaluate and report on findings (including risk assessment • Act on findings and report progress to participants	Senior officer with delegation Group Convenor Senior officer with delegation	Meet 1 August 2006 Commence organising by 14 August Conduct Forum 8 Oct 2006 Report 22 Oct 2006

Activities	Resource Implications	Steps to be taken	By whom	By when