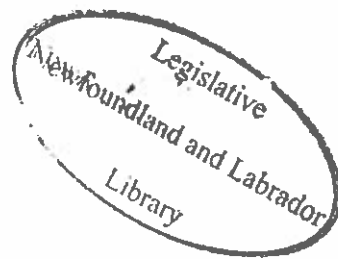


**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**ACTIVITY PLAN**

**FISCAL YEAR  
2007/08**



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## COMMITTEE MESSAGE

The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) was established in June 2001. Its main purpose is to be a strong voice for the youth of Newfoundland and Labrador and to be an avenue through which concerns are presented to government. Additionally, the YAC is frequently consulted by government departments on pertinent youth programs and policies.


Each year the YAC: highlights its priorities; determines the degree to which these priorities are met through government programs and services; devotes time to obtaining information; meets with groups and formulates recommendations which are annually presented to the responsible Minister, to other appropriate government departments, to the legislature and to the public.

Through regular meetings held six times a year, through ongoing consultations, guest speakers and working groups, the YAC sets its priorities and thus develops its activity plan. This plan is the responsibility of the 15 committee members, YAC mentors and the HRLE staff person(s) assigned this duty.

The Committee has input into and is mindful of government's strategic direction while maintaining its advocacy role for the province's youth.

This committee is considered a category 3 entity in compliance with the Transparency and Accountability Act.

Decisions of meetings are regularly recorded and an annual report is presented to officials as well as to the Minister responsible. HRLE has developed a process to ensure recommendations are known, actions are taken and feedback from each recommendation is provided by all relevant departments. Committee members and mentors are volunteers who freely give of their energy to promote the profile of the youth of our province. This diverse group is a dedicated and committed advocacy group. Their structure works remarkably well and all duties are completed in a timely fashion. The Committee appreciates the recognition it is given and the support that is provided by the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment. The work of the Committee, we hope, enhances the strategic plan of the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment and Government as a whole.

  
Committee Member

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## 1.0 OVERVIEW

The YAC was established in June 2001 to be a forum for the youth of the province to voice their views and concerns. It was intended to increase youth involvement in government's decision-making process. A key role for the YAC is to advise the government departments responsible for youth-related programs and policies.

Currently, the sponsoring department is Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE) and this department is responsible for informing other pertinent departments and for seeking their input and reactions to YAC recommendations and for encouraging departments to consult the YAC on youth policies.

The committee is comprised of 15 youth members aged 15-29 and 4 adult mentors over the age of 29. All members and mentors are appointed by the Minister of HRLE in consultation with staff responsible for committee operations. The selection criteria include gender, regional location, ethnic representation, educational levels and other areas.

### **Responsibilities of Youth Members:**

1. attend all meetings (where possible);
2. prepare for issues to be discussed;
3. serve as a member of a sub-committee;
4. participate as an equal member;
5. a member leaving the province for more than six (6) months per year must resign their position;
6. a one-time leave of absence may be granted for up to six (6) months by the Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment.

### **Responsibilities of Mentors:**

1. attend all meetings (where possible);
2. prepare for issues to be discussed;
3. serve as a member of a sub-committee;
4. advise and direct the discussions and recommendations of the Committee.

The finances of the YAC are administered by HRLE and each year the YAC budget is determined by the Board of Directors of the Student Investment Opportunity Corporation (SIOC). This budget is carefully monitored by the staff persons responsible for the YAC and by the Finance Branch of the Department. Expenditures include travelling expenses for members to attend meetings. All spending adheres to government's financial guidelines. Members and mentors volunteer their time and efforts. Further details can be provided by contacting David Brazil, Manager, Career, Employment and Youth Services.

The YAC has repeatedly given solid recommendations to government. Their dedicated commitment as volunteers has heightened awareness of government's obligation to the province's youth and the policies and programs by which they are governed. The YAC continues to provide a reliable avenue for the voice of youth to be heard.

## 2.0 MANDATE

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The YAC received authority to operate on May 17, 2001. A press conference on June 13, 2001, announced that the YAC was established because government placed greater focus on youth and was looking for ways to allow youth a stronger voice. Initially, it was created within a new department (Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education) and was part of an effort to coordinate youth services and provide youth with a single contact point. While the responsible department may change, the purpose of the YAC does not. The YAC was created to provide a forum for the "open discussion of key issues affecting the young people of Newfoundland and Labrador" and to advise the departments responsible for youth services and education on government's youth-related policies and programs.

The YAC, through meetings, consultations, research and guest speakers, is fulfilling its mandate well and is respected as a voice for the youth of Newfoundland and Labrador.

## 3.0 VALUES

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The YAC developed its own set of values and behavioural statements in its initial meetings. The key values are respect for all and equal opportunity. From the beginning based on these values, the YAC determined that its organization structure would be flat and that the chairing of meetings, recording, preparation, summary and writing reports should be the responsibility and right of each member. The group collectively decides on who will handle each duty.

It was also agreed that the YAC did not represent any specific group or privileged individuals but would be considerate of and respectful of all youth regardless of "status". The behaviours of the YAC are constantly confident, dependable and competent and treat each other and any guest or groups consulted with respect and interest.

HRLE provides the administrative support that facilitates the Committee's actions in accordance with its Code of Conduct.

**Respect: Each person is given equal opportunity to voice his/her opinion in a supportive environment**

Each person resolves issues in a timely manner

Each person ensures key stakeholders are asked for their opinions

Each person considers the geographic differences of the region

Each person challenges decisions s/he doesn't agree with in an appropriate manner

Each person evaluates how his/her behaviour impacts others

Each person provides positive feedback and feedback that supports improvement

Each person provides and receives feedback in an appropriate manner

**Equal Opportunity:** Each person recognizes the right of all youth to avail equitably of the programs and services available from government and partnering programs.

## 4.0 PRIMARY CLIENTS

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The YAC advises government on the issues facing the youth of Newfoundland and Labrador. In this capacity, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is the chief primary client with our youth and those serving them being the primary stakeholders.

It is intended that our youth be served through the advice and guidance given to government on their behalf. When government is advised and acts on YAC recommendations, youth and those who serve them benefit.

## 5.0 VISION

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The vision of the YAC is that all youth in the province enjoy the highest level of safety and security, have a high standard of education and health and that they are engaged in the economic and social life of the province.

## 6.0 MISSION

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The mission of the Provincial Youth Advisory Committee represents two cycles of planning. It identifies the priority focus of the Committee and includes performance measures to facilitate the evaluation of the Committee's success. This area is where the Committee feels, if improved upon, will lead to a better understanding and acceptance by government of the recommendations put forth by the Committee.

**Mission:** By 2011, the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Advisory Committee will have improved the comprehensiveness of the recommendations it provides to the government.

**Measure:**  
Improved comprehensiveness of recommendations

**Indicators:**

- Enhanced consultations to improve the Committee's consideration of stakeholder points of view, interests and opinions
- Improved recruitment process to ensure a comprehensive perspective is reflective in the Committee's recommendations
- Improved communications with the interdepartmental liaison committee

## 7.0 ISSUES

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### **Issue 1: Consultations**

In the past there have been attempts at consultations with various groups to gather information to make better informed recommendations to government. It is felt that this process could be enhanced.

**Goal 1:** By 2008 the YAC would have enhanced its consultation process with various stakeholders.

**Measure:** More community roundtable consultations.

**Indicator:** Increased responses of youth in the roundtable process.

### **Issue 2: Improved Recruitment Process**

The Youth Advisory Committee has normally done a public call for interested individuals who may want to become a member of the Youth Advisory Committee. The process in the past may have been flawed to the point that not all potential candidates may have been aware of the call for members.

**Goal 2:** By 2008 will have developed an improved process for recruiting new members and presented same to the Minister.

**Measure:** Selection process completed for Department's review.

**Indicator:** Report presented to the Minister.

### **Issue 3: Website**

There have been numerous efforts made to create a website for the YAC. There is a need for a site which is easily accessible and has links to a broad range of programs and services.

**Goal 3:** By 2008 the development and maintenance of a YAC website which will be a focal point for youth programming will be completed.

**Measure:** Accessibility will be enhanced.

**Indicator:** The number of hits will be measured.