

yaprap

youth issues & youth work

Young may not recognise domestic violence when they see it



by Eamon Waterford, YAPA Director of Policy & Advocacy

Young people don't have a very clear understanding of what domestic violence looks like, what intimate partner violence looks like, and so there's a real need to educate young people around what's appropriate and what's not when

you're in a relationship.

We are getting reports where an incident has happened which was clearly domestic violence. But the response from the partner, from the child, from the young person is: "Oh it's OK - we'll sort it out in our family" or "It's OK, I love them. We'll sort it out. There is no need to make a report." That's pretty concerning.

So why don't young people have a firm or a comprehensive grasp of what domestic violence

is? Young people, particularly in the early years, are still learning how to be a partner, how to be in a relationship and that's a really tricky process and you've got puberty, you've got all these hormones racing through and it's really confusing for young people. I think people are not getting clear, simple language instructions or suggestions on how they can be an appropriate partner and how they can have a healthy relationship and so all these strange things start sneaking in and we start seeing behaviours that are absolutely domestic violence or intimate partner violence.

We do know that 18- to 25-year-olds are far more likely to be victims and perpetrators of domestic violence than their older counterparts.

- Read/listen to more: www.abc.net.au/worldtoday 13/9/12
- Read report of NSW Parliamentary Committee into Domestic violence trends and issues in NSW at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

YAPA speaks

Young people unite to advance

reconciliation: A new survey has found 81% of young Australians have a strong desire to advance reconciliation - but less than half know how to go about it... [www.ayac.org.au 9/8/12] Listen to YAPA's Eamon Waterford: www.sbs.com.au/news/radio/ or click link at www.yapa.org.au/yapa/media.

Generation F' You: New research says parents spend more than \$22 billion on their adult kids each year, on things like house deposits, start up money for new businesses, living expenses and loads of other things. So if we have to have it tougher these days, do our folks have a responsibility to help us get financially set up? Listen to YAPA's Eamon Waterford on Triple J Hack: www.abc.net.au/triplej/hack 26/07/12

A message from the YAPA Board: As you may have noticed, YAPA has been operating with a vacancy in the position of Executive Officer since March 2012. While we value

the leadership this role provides to YAPA and intend to fill it in the future, for the next financial year we will be running with the joint leadership of our two Directors, Emily Jones, Director of Operations, and Eamon Waterford, Director of Policy acting as co-Executive Officers.

We hope that this will allow us to hire an Executive Officer in 2013 that is willing, able and prepared to do the exciting work that awaits. As a peak body, we want to ensure that we meet the present demands and needs of the sector so we will be taking this year to plan, brainstorm and ensure that the programs, policy and services we provide are appropriate, adequate and sustainable.

We thank you for your consideration as we embark on these changes and hope that you welcome Emily and Eamon as the leaders of YAPA for the coming year. We are excited and pleased to have them. - Grace Stubee, Co-Chairperson, YAPA Board of Governance

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News

Self-harm rates for women soar

Young women are being admitted to hospital after self-harming at more than twice the rate they were 10 years ago and experts are at a loss to explain why. Across NSW the rates of hospitalisation related to self-harm have doubled across all age groups and genders, although women aged 15 to 24 are far more likely to hurt themselves.

Chief executive of Headspace Chris Tanti said the problem was even bigger in the community, as the figures only covered people admitted to hospital. "The majority of self-harm is something that the young person manages and it's generally quite secret for a long period of time. It is a maladaptive way of dealing with ... distress." Mr Tanti said it could be that women had higher rates of self-harm in part because they were more likely to talk about their problems...

- Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/24/5/12>
- headspace fact sheet www.headspace.org.au

Health experts warn of rise of synthetic drugs

Police and drug counsellors are worried about the rise of synthetic imitations of illicit drugs, marketed as "legal" highs. That means some people who buy them assume that they're harmless. But health experts say the imitations are an unknown quantity, and that they are causing severe damage.

Drug counsellor Paul Dillon from the National Cannabis Information and Prevention Centre: "Anxiety's the number one, you know, for literally days after, weeks after they're very fearful of going and seeking help and really don't know where to turn and often when they talk about it with, particularly counsellors, school counsellors or people who you would think would be the appropriate places, often because these are new drugs that these health professionals don't know anything about, they don't know quite how to deal with them either."

Imitation and synthetic versions of cannabis, ecstasy and other drugs have been around for years. But Paul Dillon believes they've become far more common in the last 12 to 18 months. He says the so called legal status of these drugs is crucial to their appeal. "The fact they are perceived as legal means that there are a certain group of young people who are more attracted to them simply because of their legal status..."

Read/listen: www.abc.net.au/pm/ 13/10/12

Online chat offers new help for suicide prevention

A new service which uses online chat to prevent suicides is providing support to people in distress who are unwilling to use phone counselling services. Lifeline began trialling the service last year. An evaluation of the service, which connects people with trained workers via text-based, one-on-one online chat, found that while only 6% of the users of Lifeline's phone service were assessed as at high risk of suicide, 57% of users of the online service were assessed as at high risk. More than a third of users of the online service said they would not use a phone crisis service.

The online service had a much younger age profile, with 58% of its users being younger than 25, compared to only 8% of callers to the phone service. Acting chief executive of Lifeline Jane Hayden: "The service is very discreet. We've found people are more likely to reveal that they're having suicidal thoughts online. It's easier to type it than to say it."

The service operates 8pm - midnight seven days: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/Find-Help/Online-Services/crisis-chat>

Homework clubs

The Learning Beyond the Bell team develops resources to assist organisations and schools with the running of their homework clubs: Running a Homework Club, Research, Evaluation and Case Studies, Partnerships and Community Engagement, Student Support and Wellbeing, Finding Funding, Tutoring Resources and News, and Tutoring Training Resources.

<http://www.cmy.net.au/LBB>

New mental health fact sheets + stories

With the launch of the next generation ReachOut.com, there are new resources for young people that you can use in your practice. We've compiled the best resources for you on ReachOut Pro. Get information on issues such as: Mood disorders, Anxiety, Self-harm + Suicide, Relationships, Grief + Loss, and Skill building. Browse the full range of mental health resources at www.reachoutpro.com.au/mental-health-information.aspx

yaprap

YAPA's newsletter of youth issues and youthwork - 6 editions per year.

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Opinions are the authors' and not necessarily YAPA's

Editor: Nick Manning

Contributions welcome from youth workers and others.

Email info@yapa.org.au or phone YAPA.

Deadlines:

15 October, 3 December



Headlines

Australian students show their net worth to outclass global rivals in digital literacy: HIGH rates of computer use are helping Australian students outperform their international counterparts when it comes to using digital texts. Australia ranked second behind South Korea, and equal with New Zealand, in the first digital reading literacy assessment ... Read more: www.smh.com.au 4/6/12

Now hear this, binge listeners: turn the tunes down, or risk aural damage: A study of 1500 people aged 11 to 35 has found a significant incidence of tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, among people using mobile listening devices such as iPods, MP3s and smart phones. Some young Australians are heading for hearing loss as a consequence ... Read more: www.smh.com.au 5/6/12

PCYC call for innovative police action on at-risk kids: The Police and Citizens Youth Club organisation says a major survey supports more action to introduce police officers into the lives of at-risk kids. www.abc.net.au/7.30/nsw/ - click on 2012 August 10.

Nurture indigenous stars, but don't fail the rest – minister: Independent schools that give scholarships to Aboriginal students risk disadvantaging their communities by cherry-picking the best talent, the Education Minister, Adrian Piccoli, says. Several independent schools give full scholarships to Aboriginal students, including St Joseph's College in Hunters Hill, where the Wallabies star Kurtley Beale was one recipient... Read more: www.smh.com.au 4/6/12

WorkOut: Online mental fitness app for young men

Give young guys the tools to get confident, get focused and tackle mental health challenges head on before they become a problem. WorkOut is a new online program developed by the Inspire Foundation in collaboration with the Brain and Mind Research Institute. Targeting aspects of their thinking, such as confidence, practicality, control, and ability to handle pressure, WorkOut sets a personalised exercise routine based on personal 'missions' that are easy to understand and proven to work. Visit WorkOut and help young guys get mentally fit! <http://au.reachout.com/Apps-and-Tools/WorkOut>

Building a Youth Service 'From The Ground Up'



...is my series of web logs documenting the process of creating a youth service from scratch, in NSW, Australia. My name is Dean Williamson, and I really enjoy working with people to make positive change for themselves or others. My mission is to see people, communities and organisations doing the support and development of children and young people really well! I am an accredited coach with extensive theoretical and practical experience in youth work, supervision, training, community/ human services management and leadership, community development projects, policy development and research, and group training and facilitation.

I started Primitive from the idea that today's society has lost touch with some of the effortless, vibrant and truly meaningful things in life. People are born, they grow and learn, they need certain things along the way, and they should turn out happy and successful. How hard can it be? We seem to have made it all very complicated...

- weblog www.youtube.com/user/DeanPrimitive
- website www.primitivecommunities.com.au

Brainstorming Reloaded: Why brainstorming is ineffective and how to fix it

Brainstorming certainly looks like a great way of dealing with some of the problems associated with decision-making and creativity in groups, such as groupthink and people's failure to share information effectively. By suspending evaluation, encouraging a relaxed atmosphere and quantity over quality, the brainstorming session is supposed to foster creativity.

But now we know that brainstorming doesn't actually work that well. Experiment after experiment has shown that people in brainstorming sessions produce fewer and lower quality ideas than those working alone. Here's why... www.spring.org.uk/2009/08/brainstorming-reloaded.php

More news

Lots more news and links to full stories at yapa.org.au/youthwork/news.php

A young person approaches you and says they have nowhere to stay

How should you respond?

Some Tips:

- Show your calmness and empathy to the young person
- Show respect when asking the young person for information about themselves
- Make sure the young person has enough time and space to ask questions
- Be as helpful as you can: even if your service cannot help the young person at that time, attempt to give numbers and information for other services
- Ask the young person if they have the means to call the services provided (eg. if they have enough phone credit), and if not, ensure they are able to get the means (e.g. use of your service's phone or phone credit OR a place they can go to use the phone or obtain phone credit).
- Wherever possible, help the young person to find accommodation.
- Avoid using acronyms or long/big words that might confuse young people
- Make sure you don't rush the young person to get to the point or get the information
- Explain to the young person why you are asking questions
- If making a report to the Helpline, explain why you are doing it (ie. if you are a mandatory reporter)
- Avoid telling the young person you're too busy to help them

Contact points

Yconnect Line (Youth Housing and Support)

Provides a referral, information and outreach service across NSW to young people aged 12-24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Contact Yconnect to speak to a member of staff on weekdays between 9am and 4:30pm.

Alternatively, you can access the recorded message of vacancies in crisis services in the Sydney Metro area outside of work hours or the Yfoundations website (below) for vacancies in all of NSW.

Sydney: (02) 9318 1531

Elsewhere in NSW: 1800 424 830

www.yfoundations.org.au

The Yfoundations website provides an up to date list of current vacancies in specialist youth accommodation within NSW and information about available support services. Information can be found under the 'Need Help?' tab on the homepage.

At risk?

If the young person is under 18 years old and you believe they are at risk: Community Services Child Protection Helpline Operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Phone: 132 111

Homeless Persons Information Centre (HPIC)

Telephone information and referral service for people aged 18+. Operates 7 days a week between 9am to 10pm (closed each day between 1pm - 2pm).

Sydney: 02 9265 9087

Elsewhere in NSW: 1800 234 566

Aboriginal Homeless Persons Helpline

24-hour helpline for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are homeless.

(02) 9799 8446

News from the policy desk

YAPA has recently completed work on a number of policy papers identified as issues for young people and youth workers through our Policy Priorities Survey in early 2012. Over the next 6 months, we hope to complete papers on the 15 issues identified, when we will launch our policy platform to guide our work for the next 3 years.

Recent additions include:

Effective Engagement: proposed Student Participation Grants Program

A policy that YAPA has supported for years, we have updated our policy on the role a small grants program could play in supporting further engagement in schools by students. The ability for students to be empowered to run programs in their local schools would lead to increased engagement and resilience in education for young people at risk of disengaging from education at large.

Proposed Supportive Schools and Communities Partnership Program

Strong connections between schools and community organisations are known to improve educational outcomes, particularly for young people at risk of disengagement. Partnership brokers and grants, along with a regional and state-based support structure, is needed to take this idea to the next level.

Youth Homelessness

It probably comes as no surprise to you that **youth homelessness** is one of the biggest issues facing young people who approach youth services these days (the other massive one is **mental health**). Two pieces of research YAPA has conducted have developed a sound basis for advocacy, including a literature review of existing programs and research and a position paper on how the youth sector can best be supported to engage young people experiencing homelessness.

Educational Transitions

The transitional times where young people move from one educational space to another (such as leaving primary school for high school) or from education to employment are known to be significant stress points for young people to disengage from education/employment. More understanding and support for young people in these stages is needed, including specific changes such as proposed *Generic Skills Passports*.

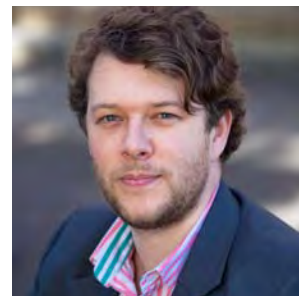
Upcoming papers:

In the next month or so, check the YAPA website (or contact me directly) to see papers on the following topics, which will be completed shortly:

1. School suspension
2. Mental health
3. Domestic violence/intimate partner violence
4. Rural YDOs
5. Mobile phone issues for young people
6. Skills and apprenticeships in Australia
7. Sexual health for young people

Future papers that we're currently working on include:

- Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Alcohol-fueled violence
- Newstart and Youth Allowance
- Graffiti
- Youth Budgetting
- E-Learning
- Aftercare Provision and Support
- Youth participation in Youth-Led organizations
- Public Transport
- Young people experience of the child protection and youth sectors
- Rural and remote young drivers



by Eamon Waterford
YAPA Director of Policy & Advocacy

YAPA Policy Advisory Groups – we want you!

Are you interested in getting involved in YAPA's policy work? We are setting up Policy Advisory Groups with a great selection of young people, youth workers and other interested members of our community – and we want you to be part of it.

The Policy Advisory Groups get the opportunity to input into YAPA's position papers and advocacy campaigns, guiding the work that we do and ensuring that YAPA is representing its members effectively.

For example, the policy advisory group on homelessness had the opportunity to examine YAPA's homelessness papers and offer feedback and advice on how to ensure it reflected the lived experience across NSW.

Of course there is no obligation to have input so if you just want to keep in touch with developments, that's fine too.

There are 8 groups, covering the breadth of issues related to young people – they are:

- youth health
- public transport & driving
- housing & homelessness
- education & training
- work & employment
- income & poverty
- young people and the law
- child protection.

Go to <https://yapa.wufoo.com/forms/yapa-policy-advisory-groups/> or just click the link on our homepage www.yapa.org.au.

YAPA says goodbye to MYAN NSW and the State Coordinator

The time has come for YAPA to say goodbye to the MYAN NSW Project and the MYAN NSW State Coordinator. YAPA has had a long history of supporting multicultural youth issues and the MYAN NSW and is sad to see both the MYAN NSW Project and the State Coordinator move on.

Bye from Anne-Marie!



It was the opportunity to get involved in advocating for multicultural youth issues in NSW that first attracted me to the job advert for the YAPA MYAN NSW

State Coordinator when sitting in an internet café in Ghana, West Africa in February 2010. One successful Skype interview with YAPA in Delhi, India then led me back to Sydney to start my new position as State Coordinator of what was then called the Multicultural Youth Issues Network NSW (MYINN) and now called the Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) NSW. When I first started the role my experience had mainly come from working in the multicultural sector with bits and pieces of working with young people. Starting at YAPA then gave me an immediate crash course in youth participation, youth issues and youth affairs across NSW as I got to know the YAPA team and also got to organise SHIFT THIS 2010 as a casual conference project person.

Standing in front of 100 happy young people as they spoke from their hearts about what was important to them, in front of then Minister for Youth Hon. Peter Thomas Primrose was one of the highlights at my time at YAPA. So was getting to run the Western Sydney Research Project where I got to interview amazing young people from Western Sydney who were passionate about where they live or where they came from.

Of all the things at YAPA I have enjoyed, being State Coordinator of the MYAN NSW has been the highlight of my career. Not only have I got to meet and get to know many young people through the role who have had challenging life experiences and yet are so resilient, but I have met young people who have inspired me to want to make sure that multicultural youth issues get heard in NSW and beyond.

If you asked me what the key achievements

of the MYAN NSW was over the last few years I would say that the 2011 Election Platform for NSW was a bit of a landmark, the Sector Development Forums were also a great success and the Multicultural Youth Rep Program is just finding its feet but ultimately I think that having someone who can coordinate and represent multicultural youth affairs in NSW is ultimately really important.

I would like to thank all the young people I have met through my time at YAPA, as well as the awesome YAPA team who have supported and taught me a truckload about youth issues and I would also like to recognise the hard work of the youth sector and the workers that have participated in the MYAN NSW, your passion and energy has been wonderful to be around and have taught me a lot. Thanks everyone for making my time at YAPA a special and memorable experience.

- Anne-Marie Taylor

MYAN NSW – changes & growth

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to Anne-Marie, who has done an amazing job expanding and growing the MYAN over the past few years. Her skills, passion and analytical mind have put multicultural issues on the agenda in a way that didn't seem possible three years ago.

Just in the past few months she has done wonderful work engaging with young people in the inner west for work we are doing with the Sydney Alliance, completed a number of policy resources, including papers on Educational needs of Refugee Young People and Intergenerational Family Conflict.

At this stage, the MYAN NSW has received expanded funding, so it will be moving to a full-time position, but not at YAPA. It was determined by the Federal Government that the project should have an expanded focus on the settlement sector, so we're excited to work with Settlement Services International, who will be hosting the project as of now.

YAPA remains, of course, committed to the issues facing young people from multicultural backgrounds and will continue to advocate on their behalf, both through the MYAN and through our own work.

- Eamon Waterford, YAPA Director of Policy & Advocacy

NSW Association for Youth Health

Welcome to the first of what will be a regular column from the NSW Association for Youth Health (NAYH). In each edition of *yaprap* we will be discussing current issues affecting the health and wellbeing of young people in NSW and the youth health sector.

NAYH is the peak body in NSW committed to working on behalf of the youth health sector to promote and advocate for the health and well-being needs of marginalised young people aged 12 to 25 years. NAYH aims to assist the youth health sector to strengthen and maintain its ability to provide relevant and evidence based health services to young people in NSW. NAYH's core business is to provide the youth health sector with support and training, government liaison and lobbying, policy and resource development, and community sector networking.

Now, I know that sounds impressive, but what does it mean in real terms? Like any peak body, the work of NAYH is broad and diverse and changes depending on the needs of the sector at any given time. We have a seat at government decision-making tables, providing input and advocating for the best outcomes possible for the youth health sector and young people. If your service has anything to do with youth health, we are your voice. We collaborate with other peak bodies and service providers, in addition to conducting research, drafting submissions and producing position papers and policy platforms. Depending on need and resources, we provide training and capacity building for the sector. For example, NAYH provides two small grants programs to our members each year, one to support projects which encourage help seeking behaviours and positive health care by marginalised young people, and

another to support our members to attend training workshops, conferences and other professional development opportunities relevant to their work.

Our key advocacy focus at the moment is the funding reforms currently occurring within the NSW Ministry of Health. Services funded under the Ministry's NGO Program will have received advice that their current funding agreements have been rolled over until June 30th 2013 while the NSW Government finalises the implementation of their new funding framework, the Grants Management Improvement Program (GMIP). At this stage we do not know what the GMIP will look like, and NAYH is working alongside other peak bodies to advocate for the best outcomes possible for the health and wellbeing of marginalised young people. NCOSS regularly updates their website about this issue - see: www.ncoss.org.au/content/view/5404/111.

Similar to other peak bodies, NAYH is a membership based organisation. We rely on our members to provide us with input on our policy and advocacy work and to alert us to current issues they are facing across NSW. The more members we have, the stronger our voice. As we know, real change needs collective action – if as a sector we do not stand together, our voice will not be heard loudly. If you are interested in becoming a part of NAYH, you will find membership details on our website; or feel free to give me a call to have a conversation about your service and your region.

Throughout this article I have used the term "we" a lot. This is because when I think of NAYH I think of our members, our management committee, our partners, supporters and volunteers as a collective. However, context is important, and NAYH is staffed by an Executive Officer for four days per week with casual admin support. Therefore, my team is you. If you have a keen interest in youth health, no matter your physical location within NSW, I encourage you to contact me about how you can contribute to NAYH and how we can support each other. Together we can work towards a society where marginalised young people in NSW have access to quality, youth friendly health services, that address their health needs and support their well-being.



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Girls have been hungry for this revolutionary heroine



by Dannielle Miller

If sales of the books and early movie tickets for the new teen fiction series *The Hunger Games* are anything to go by, it seems teen girls are starved for a heroine with real fire. Author Suzanne Collins quite literally dishes up spark with her character Katniss Everdeen; a reluctant leader of a revolution who becomes popularly known as "the girl on fire".

Comparisons to the wildly successful *Twilight* trilogy are inevitable, because the heroines in both find themselves torn between two lovers.

But this is where the comparisons should end. Bella and Katniss would have little to talk about. While *Twilight's* Bella is the quintessential damsel in distress, Ms Everdeen is far more likely to protect, rather than need protecting.

Katniss kicks butt. Frequently.

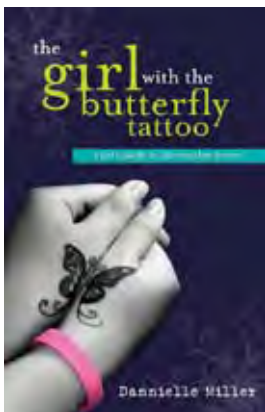
After reading the trilogy, I admit I didn't quite understand the extent of the fervour. When yearning for a female rebel, I prefer the home-grown heroine of the *Tomorrow, When The War Began* series, Ellie Linton, to the rather emotionally limited Katniss. And while interesting enough, the premise is not particularly original. The series is set in a post-apocalyptic North America where children are made to compete in a brutal, televised fight

to the death. The world depicted is incredibly corrupt, the adults all seem absent or deeply flawed.

But it wasn't written for me, so I've asked girls why it resonates with them. *The New York Times* attributes some of the buzz to the clever use of social media by the film's marketers. But that alone does not explain it. The answer is more simple - girls are looking for an alternative to the limiting stereotypes our culture keeps dishing them up. And on this point, I hear them loud and clear.

Emily Maguire, feminist and author of the book for teen girls *Your Skirt's too Short*, makes this striking observation about how we culturally treat young women.

"About five years ago, I found myself increasingly annoyed by the overwhelmingly negative, often completely, stupidly wrong media coverage of young people, particularly young women. As I'm sure many of you have noticed, almost everything written or screened on TV about teenage girls presents them as either sex-mad airheads or sweet, delicate flowers. Either out-of-control tarts ruining society or innocent angels being ruined by society ... No wonder so many girls feel misunderstood. The version of their lives presented as news is a salacious cartoon;



The Girl With The Butterfly Tattoo (2012)

by Dannielle Miller.

Hard copy and e-book.

According to the publishers:

Empowering, inspiring and straight-talking, this is the book that is every teenage girl's best friend. The butterfly is a symbol of transformation. It reminds us that we are all able to change. We can make choices and we are in control. We can choose to replace the messages that shout 'You are not enough' - not hot enough, thin enough, talented enough, popular enough - every time we open a magazine, watch a music video or go into a clothes store. *The Girl with the Butterfly Tattoo* encourages girls to question the limiting messages advertisers, the media and our culture keep pushing: that a girl's greatest worth is her looks, and beauty comes in only one size and shape. It inspires and empowers girls to find their strength and be true to their own hearts and minds. This book is for you if:

- You're tired of having days when everything just seems to make you feel 'less' - less beautiful, less powerful, less happy, less in control.
- You've ever been frozen out by a friend and it has wrecked your whole day.
- You, or a friend, are trying to deal with something major - binge-drinking, drugs, anorexia or bulimia, self-harm, depression.
- You'd prefer to have your own style, not dress head-to-toe in the same labels as everyone else.
- You have piles of homework and want to find the best way to study that suits you.
- You'd like some tips on creating the future you want after school

'Finally a book for teenage girls that does not patronise or attempt to police them! *The Girl with the Butterfly Tattoo* empowers teen girls to make their own choices.' - Nina Funnell, writer and women's rights advocate

www.randomhouse.com.au/authors/dannielle-miller.aspx

the characters meant to represent them are sexually loose magnets for trouble, not necessarily because they're bad, but because they're morally retarded and culturally illiterate."

If the times we live in are toxic for girls - think of the huge pressures on them to be not only thin and hot but to be smart and successful; to be everything, all at once - then equally toxic is how the media and society choose to engage with young women. We lecture and lament, police and patronise. Rarely do we acknowledge that we struggle with many of the same issues our girls struggle with and many ordinary girls are doing extraordinary things and making sensible, admirable choices.

Katniss is too busy surviving to send provocative messages of herself via text, too committed to leading the revolution to engage in mean-girl gossip. If she goes hungry, it is because she cannot find food rather than because she is dieting. And she is ultimately determined to take down her society rather than let it take her down.

Girls no longer wish to be dished up sugar, spice and all things nice. Nor do they want to be offered faux empowerment via raunch culture.

So what if I found parts of the series laboured and pessimistic? These books have tapped into the real need teen girls have to be viewed as multi-dimensional and fierce and have got them thinking and talking, about leadership and loyalty.

And that's a win.

more

Dannielle Miller is author of *The Butterfly Effect – A positive new approach to raising happy, confident teen girls*, and *The Girl With The Butterfly Tattoo* (both by Random House). She is CEO of Enlighten Education, Australia's leading provider of in-school workshops for teenage girls www.enlightenededucation.com and is an avid blogger at The Butterfly Effect at <http://enlightenededucation.edublogs.org>.

Woven into its community

Weave Youth Family Community has begun the next chapter in its long community history in a new super-green building, located in Waterloo in the inner city of Sydney. I must admit I was blown away when I first walked into the building and saw the beautiful internal courtyard. I thought to myself, is this really where Weave is based? The warm welcome I received reassured me. I had stepped inside a very modern but warm community organisation.

Formerly known as South Sydney Youth Services, Weave has gone through many changes in recent years. I had the privilege of meeting with Shane Brown, the Director of Weave, who has worked with the organisation for over 30 years. He is known locally as a bit of a social justice crusader. After meeting with him it's evident that his belief in social justice has heavily influenced the culture of Weave. He has kept Weave's focus on helping those in need despite the rapid gentrification that appears to be happening right on Weave's doorstep - the new building is located very close to the Green Square high-density

development that is said to be one of Australia's first low-carbon communities!

Weave is a non-profit organisation that was created at a grassroots level in 1976 when a group of local parents in the old South Sydney local government area were worried about the welfare of local children on the street at night. It is one of the longest running youth services in NSW. As it continued to grow it has evolved into a family service with the target audience for its programs widened to include babies as well as older people. It now also works across a much larger area consisting of the inner city, Maroubra, La Perouse and the Inner West regions of Sydney.

As Weave began to grow a new building was desperately needed. Getting money for community projects is no easy task and finding grants for community infrastructure projects is often put in the too hard basket. So, what steps were involved in getting the new building? At the beginning a lot of talking was done to community leaders and council

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by Isabel Seidel
YAPA Feature Writer

Woven into its community

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to put the idea of a new building out there. A formal proposal was then submitted to the City of Sydney Council and Lord Mayor Clover Moore was lobbied to secure Council's financial support. A partnership was then created between the Federal Government and Council. The Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Local Government, Anthony Albanese supported the project through the Community Infrastructure Program. The process took some years but Shane said that having both the Federal Government and the City of Sydney supporting the building project was instrumental in getting it off the ground.

The new green building is very impressive. It's hard to believe that it was once a former public toilet block. It has 3 counselling spaces, a large meeting room and 3 work areas. It's environmentally sensitive with low-energy lighting, natural ventilation and tanks to collect and re-use rainwater. Many of the materials used in the building were recycled such as old railway sleepers, which were transformed into timber pavers for the internal courtyard. The building itself is very eye catching with a steel canopy shade structure that will eventually be covered with vines. A real asset to the building is the rooftop garden, which will be used as another counselling space.

Not all of Weave's 36 staff are located at the new building. The growth in the number of programs Weave delivers has meant that the agency now runs from five sites. The wide range of programs include:

Education programs

- Waratah Links to Learning for Indigenous students at risk of disengaging from school
- Step Up Links to Learning - a vocational education program for early school leavers
- Tutoring program provides young people at risk of leaving school with a volunteer tutor for 2 hours a week.

Mental Health and Drug Use Programs

- Speak Out Dual Diagnosis Program works with young people aged 12-28 who experience co-existing mental health and substance use issues
- Weave is a Headspace site and provides counselling to young people who are experiencing mental health issues
- Amphetamines Project trained staff around how to manage people who are intoxicated by this drug.

Streetbeat Safety and Crime Prevention Program

- Streetbeat Bus Service is available to pick up young people from the streets late at night and take them home
- Streetbeat Casework and Counselling service assists Aboriginal young people to access services they would otherwise have difficulty accessing.

Other programs

Juvenile Justice Program, Kool Kids Club, Weave (The Shop) Women and Children's

Centre, Koori Access Point Redfern and La Perouse and the Capacity Building Program.

Referrals for the programs come from many different networks such as schools, Juvenile Justice, Centrelink, health services and other community organisations. However a high proportion of referrals still come from parents and young people, family, friends and community members.

Funding for Weave comes primarily from the NSW and Federal governments. More recently, United Way Sydney and the Clovelly Community Bank (Bendigo Bank) have come on board with financial assistance for programs.

In the years 2009 and 2010 Weave assisted 1200 people and 74% of those were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The outcomes from some of the programs include providing school and holiday programs for 120 Aboriginal children, providing support and counselling to 225 young people and their families on managing mental illness, drug use, grief and loss, and assisting 300 women to enhance their life skills including parenting and child development skills.

Given the expansion of Weave's programs how has the organisation managed to maintain its grassroots connection to the community? Shane said the Board has a high level of trust with the Aboriginal elders in the community and this has helped the organisation to respond to local needs. A number of strategies have been put in place to

help maintain its connection to the community, including:

- A youth reference group that provides an opportunity for young people participating in programs to provide their feedback. The young people have developed leadership skills from this experience and have gone on to speak at youth events.
- The inaugural service user awards ceremony brings together clients and service users from across all the programs. This is a great opportunity to celebrate achievements as a whole service community.
- The move to involve volunteers in the organisation has provided more opportunities for connection with community members

Many of the programs at Weave provide opportunities for building relationships with community members. Weave is open for drop-in at the Waterloo site from 3pm to 5pm each day. Community members can use the computers as well as chat with staff. The Kool Kids Club is a prevention and early intervention program that works with children and young people aged 7-13 years who live in the La Perouse and surrounding areas. Parents are informed about activities that the kids are involved in and they are dropped home after the program, which often provides an opportunity for very personal contact with community members. I spoke to one community member about the program and

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Shane Brown

they raved about it saying it was great for the kids to have something to do after school.

The growth of Weave has overall been very positive with the organisation being able to help many more people in need and receive the funding to achieve this. It appears that co-locating youth services with family services means problems are not isolated and workers get to see the bigger picture. One staff member I spoke to said that many of the people who are working at Weave have been there a long time and are committed to working in a community based organisation. However, staff communication between sites and managing programs run from five sites can be a challenge. The organisation received funding for the capacity building program to explore better service delivery and invest in staff training opportunities. Shane said one of the challenges with having such a large target group is managing young people as well as

adults with different needs. Weave has to constantly think about new ways of working.

As I left the Weave building and wandered out to the skate park directly opposite, I got chatting with a local parent. He was at the skate park with his 7-year-old son. He knew all about Weave and was sorry he missed the recent community launch of the new building. I continued to walk around the suburb and saw lots of kids, babies and families. I got a sense that the move to focus not just on young people but families is responding to a local community need. There are not many opportunities in communities for young and old people to mix. Weave may have a fancy new super-green building but from what I can see it has held onto its social justice values tightly and will continue to work on the ground making connections with the community and working towards achieving justice for people who are most in need.

Kool Kids Club

I am pleased to bring to the attention of the House the excellent work of Weave Kool Kids Club, operating in La Perouse and surrounding suburbs in Sydney's south-east. Weave Kool Kids Club was launched in 2001 as a free community initiative aimed at targeting the limited leisure and resource availability for children aged between 7 and 13 years in the La Perouse area and surrounding suburbs of Chifley, Little Bay, Phillip Bay and Matraville. The program works with approximately 200 disadvantaged children each year. Over the past 11 years Weave Kool Kids Club has made a significant impact on the lives and wellbeing of the children who have been involved in the program's activities. The program has seen a significant improvement in the behaviours and attitudes of the children and an increase in school retention rates of those involved in the program. The activities offered to children involved in the program are designed to enrich their sense of community spirit and develop their interpersonal relationships.

Although most of the children involved in the program identify as Aboriginal, the program caters to children of all cultures and nationalities. Some of the activities offered by the program include Indigenous surfing lessons, dancing, short film production workshops, music, sports, arts and Indigenous cooking. Activities such as these not only seek to test and strengthen life skills and potential but also form a vital link between the children involved and their community. In delivering this link, the Weave Kool Kids Club provides a developmental program for the children of south-east Sydney and an early intervention and prevention outreach program for troubled youth needing improved self-esteem and reliance. By providing this much-needed assistance to children who face a troubling personal outlook, the Weave Kool Kids Club program allows children within the program to develop a more confident and secure sense of self and benefits the community by providing a haven for young people to engage with stimulating and positive resources and services.

This breeds a culture of respect and diligence amongst the children in the area and has resulted in many valued interactions with their community. The introduction of a leadership program in 2011 enabled participating children of high school age to mentor and encourage younger children to become actively involved with the program and within the community. I acknowledge and commend these mentors: Beau Foster, Trei Stewart, Kobie Duncan, Peyton Draskovic, Victoria Davidson, Maddie Ella-Duncan, Karla Brown and Carol-Lee Brown. The efforts of these role models and mentors have been exemplary...

- The Hon. Marie Ficarra, Parliamentary Secretary.

more: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au > Legislative Council > Hansard 23/8/12

Tightrope walking in the twilight zone

Ethics in youth work: A regular column

New dilemma: Safe sex strategy?

At your youth service, the safe sex strategy consists of providing containers of condoms in the bathrooms for young people to take if they wish. The younger boys tend to use them as water bombs. How could the service improve its safe sex strategy, given your community, with its mix of ethnic and religious groups?

Read what other people think, and post your own reply (anonymously or not) - go to <http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com> and click on *Safe sex strategy?* Selected blog comments will be published in a future *yaprap*.

Previous dilemma: Touch sensitive?

This dilemma is about physical contact between youth workers and young people, in a variety of situations:

- *After a bowling outing, one of the girls hugs all her friends goodbye, then she rushes over to hug you ... what do you do?*
- When a young person is in an emotional state, would a genuine hug or soothing rub of the back be an OK option to help the young person through the situation?
- *A refuge resident with generally poor hygiene excitedly says to you: "I washed my hair! Feel how clean it is!" ...*
- Should workers set their own boundaries for physical contact, or should it be an agency policy? What does your internal policy or code of conduct say?
- Are there male/female differences in what is acceptable here?
- Has a manager ever criticised you for hugging a young person?

Refuge worker said:

I work at a youth refuge where a manager (when changing over shifts from day to sleepover shift) encouraged me to offer one of our clients a hug when we said goodnight. This is because of the client's unique issues (up until coming to the refuge we don't think they were ever touched affectionately and non-threateningly which has had a big impact on their emotional health) and they had recently been looking for excuses to be touched which we thought was a healthy sign. The client and I had established a positive relationship which the manager also thought made me the candidate for trying out a hug.

I said "you want a goodnight hug?" in a casual way during our goodnight conversation (where we usually establish when they need to be woken up, ask them if they had a good day, that kind of thing) and they reached out - I put my arms around them quickly, we both said goodnight, and they went off to bed.

I think this is an example of where workers made a decision that it would be okay to try a quick hug with the client as part of supporting the development of their emotional health and emotional intelligence (something else the client really suffers from - really struggles to make friends or any kind of connection with others, especially re giving and receiving affection of any kind). In this case, I guess, a quick hug was thought of as another resource

we could provide for this young person in their unique context.

I'm not sure if touching the hair of the young person in the other story above would work the same way: it could definitely work in rewarding their attention to their physical health and responding positively to a socially healthy invitation from them (if that makes sense!), but I'd probably want to know more about the relationship between worker and client (as much as my manager did in the story I just shared).

In my story - we're both of the same gender, female, which I think definitely makes a difference in terms of cultural constructions of what is appropriate between two women.

I'm not sure that, say, a blanket ban on physical contact is able to accommodate the range of practices that help young people in our work with them. We also risk making things like touch and hugging into "the problem" - when the problem we're trying to avoid in making such a policy is about power imbalances and misuse of power... isn't it?

Thanks for a thought-provoking blog post :-)

Out of Home Care Worker replied to Refuge Worker:

I think it's great that your manager was supportive of this. I think all too often we
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compiled by Nick Manning
YAPA Communications
Manager

How to use YAPA ethical dilemmas

- post your own response to the blog (anonymously or not)
- debate the scenario at a team or network meeting
- use the scenario in staff training.

<http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com>

Tightrope walking in the twilight zone

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put aside the benefits of physical contact for fear of allegations. Having said that we are obviously all aware of the reasons for no-touch policies in different workplaces, so it is a difficult topic to come to a conclusion on.

I was recently speaking with a psychologist who expressed his extreme disappointment with our culture's tendency to restrict physical touch between workers and clients.

I dare say it has a lot to do with the fact it is a lot easier to use a blanket ban than to go through the task of creating a much longer policy to outline when you should or shouldn't use physical contact. Unfortunately (as I discussed with the psychologist) the harm being done by lack of physical contact could in itself be considered neglect in some circumstances, and there could be more damage being done by denying physical contact.

I work in an Out of Home Care (foster care) program where staff are encouraged to avoid physical contact, but not to push a young child away if they embrace you. However our foster carers are encouraged to hug and cuddle (as a parent would) which obviously means that the children we work with at least have someone significant in their lives that they are able to receive that important physical touch from.

Youth worker in Sydney posted:

"After a bowling outing, one of the girls hugs all her friends goodbye, then she rushes over to hug you ... what do you do?" Just some quick thoughts on this one:

- Firstly I definitely wouldn't hug the young person. I even avoid hugging colleagues! Except at the work Christmas party of course.
- As the young person approaches for the hug I would say something like, 'I don't do hugs', 'I'm not much of a hugger' or 'My boss doesn't let me hug'.
- It is crucial that your response doesn't ruin the atmosphere or embarrass the young person. Also, has to be consistent (eg. you can't hug some and not others).

As humans, I think we hug for a reason. We are trying to withdraw something from the transaction with that other person. As a youth worker, I can't control what the young person is trying to get out of the hug so I will not do it. I do not have a monopoly on 'good' or 'right' ideas.

Anonymous posted:

- After a bowling outing, ...? If it is initiated by the young person in a public space then this is fine.
- When a young person is in an emotional state ...? If in view of others and initiated by the young person or asked for by the young person then I believe a hug is appropriate.
- A refuge resident ... says to you: "I washed my hair! Feel how clean it is!" Your call, personal preference on this one.
- I believe that guidelines for ethical behaviour are important, but there needs to be some flexibility around situations, the youth worker must keep themselves safe at all times as well as ensure the safety of the young person. As the adult the youth worker should ensure that they are not put in a situation where their professional boundaries could be questioned. I think boundaries should be set by the individual worker but discussed and worked on as part of organisational training so that it is not assumed that we all have common sense when it comes to our roles as mentors. This is also where reflection through supervision could come in handy, and using guiding documents. We have a work code of conduct that states boundaries in the workplace but does not give specific examples when working with young people
- Are there male/female differences in what is acceptable here? Unfortunately yes, this is only due to stereotypes, current dominant culture and media around this and I feel that it is still seen as more appropriate for a young person to hug a female worker than a male.

Ultimate Youth Worker posted:

This is a great post. Really meaty issue. I have given clients hugs and I have refused to give clients hugs. I think that there needs to be clear organisational boundaries that provide the ability to touch when appropriate, but give staff the ability to use their practice wisdom within those boundaries.

- Girl at the bowling alley = public show of affection that is in front of other people - quick hug = ok.
- Emotional state = genuine hug ok if there is another staff/volunteer around. Back rub I personally would not do as it could be misinterpreted.
- Feel my hair = ok (just do not sniff it like the weirdo from Charlies Angels).

I remember being admonished by a manager for telling an emotionally unstable young woman that I would not allow a hug. After being admonished I allowed it the next time and the young woman complained to my manager that it was inappropriate. (The hug was given in front of one of my colleagues). This situation cemented in me the need for organisational policies to sit alongside staff practice wisdom.

Residential youth worker posted:

It appears to me that the above scenario represents an appropriate context for a hug - genuine, transparent, in company. Youth workers have to be extremely careful about touching young people.

I have worked for a residential youth service that initially had a "no touch" policy. This service catered for sixteen to twenty four year old young people. The service changed policy to hugs or touching being deemed ok in appropriate situations eg. comforting young people in genuine sadness. Still it can be tricky for a worker.

I now work for a service catering to twelve to eighteen year old young people referred by DoCS... sorry, FaCS (hard to keep up with agency jargon). Head rubs whilst reading bedtime stories and massage and hugs are encouraged by clinical supervisors. These kids are so damaged and have missed out on this genuine human interaction. Not all of them accept this and it depends on the worker's relationship with the young person.

Anonymous posted:

It's a real shame that before responding to these scenarios I **first** had to consider my own gender (regardless of the gender of the young person). The needs of the young person are secondary to the perceptions of others. When policies on such issues are drafted they may be designed to protect the young person and the worker, but essentially to protect the organisation. Such policies do not consider common courtesy or what the young person needs. There is a presumption of it **all** being 'inappropriate'. I was present when a 22 year old female said to a male worker (who had made a huge difference in her life), "Can I give you a hug?" He politely declined, and she has never forgotten that rebuke.

Accommodation worker posted:

I really do not think workers should be put in a position to make decisions based on

individual clients. Whilst I hear the arguments for positive touch I do not think a youth worker's role in a youth refuge is to do so. We are not the young person's family/friend/etc but a professional support person assisting them to transition into secure housing. I think some touch gestures are fine, pat on shoulder, handshake, one arm side hug etc, but do not think that full hugs should be encouraged. Not only does it set up a dynamic between resident and worker but it also leaves workers open for allegations.

Nette posted:

Having worked in a youth refuge for many years and then continuing to work in the field in areas such as out-of-home-care and now in a high school, I have come across situations like these many times. I'm grateful that I have been in a position to offer appropriate affection and instill the benefit of healthy relationships with the young people I have worked with. It's definitely important that we look after ourselves however I work in this field to provide a positive influence to young people who may not have experienced this before. I've had a lot of clients look me up many years later and thank me for making them feel that someone in the world cared about them at a time when they felt very alone. Wrong or right, this is why I do what I do.

Anonymous posted:

I think this issue is one of the trickiest ones that youth workers have to face and it does highlight how different, and more challenging, our work environment is compared to similar occupations eg. social work, welfare, psychology etc. Generally speaking the latter have often very clear boundaries but in some youth work jobs workers might often work with young people for a few years, getting to know them really well.

Of course this does not mean a relaxation of boundaries and ethics but it does often mean that workers have dealt with the young person in a very "real world" kind of way, helping and watching them develop along the way. In a very broad and general way, this less clinical, less "stand off-ish" approach means that the issues youth workers face are more challenging and difficult to navigate than other professions.

Another minefield is that whilst some of the examples mentioned in the comments might be deemed acceptable, there is also the

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Tightrope walking in the twilight zone

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issue of some other service noticing a hug and making a big deal of it in their networks. No wonder some youth workers are nervous wrecks. *lol*

Defiantly positive posted:

I don't think twice, I have nothing but positive regard and good intentions. I don't subscribe to the paranoia of allegations and would rather face down false allegations in court than let my behaviour be dictated by fear of some abstract possibility which would essentially be bullshit ...

Anonymous replied to Defiantly positive:

I think that's a pretty good approach on the whole. Society in general has gone risk management/ insurance/ litigation CRAZY and people do live under a constant cloud of "What if...". All this talk of empowerment and freedom but people end up living in mental chains. The only problem I find is sometimes the lone innocent individual does get stampeded (if not lynched) by a mob in a mass panic attack. So whilst I have faith in my intentions (and other's perceptions) 99% of the time, I do allow for a 1% awareness of the lunatics that sometimes surround me.

Residential youth worker posted:

Having worked in youth accommodation I think a team approach is good. Some workers (self included) do not feel comfortable hugging residents - although I have not reacted when given a spontaneous hug from a resident (but would not initiate it). Definitely agree that massages are out - had a (female) manager who was keen on this for relaxation but found that it could be misinterpreted by residents (and then much more difficult/ shaming to them to have to re-establish healthy boundaries after. I like the case management approach and team discussions on what is/isn't OK - rather than just a blanket child protection therefore no touch policy. In saying that there are other ways to show solidarity/support to a resident: sitting beside them, affirming statements - eg. "I can see how clean your hair is - well done!". Thanks for raising this topic for discussion!

Male youth worker posted:

It is hardly surprising some youth are so emotionally disconnected in today's society

when what is a normal human behaviour becomes an ethical problem. I struggle with this as a youth worker when young people have no emotional support at home let alone given a simple hug of reassurance. When I was a child to be congratulated or consoled was reassuring and comforting with a simple hug or pat on the back. As a male I would never hug a young female, yet so many females can't relate to male role models with a simple hug. The question I would ask is how are we as workers who have emotionally disconnected clients expect young people to be human and not robots in society. I find it interesting as adults we at times need a hug yet deny young people such simple human interaction. It is after all part of the human condition. I would never initiate a hug however if it is spontaneous from the young person and I reject it what message am I sending?

42 year old male youth worker posted:

I prefer to rely on my instincts rather than a pre-designed approach, all young people express themselves in different ways. As youth workers, we need to be aware of when and why the boundaries need to be set. You need to assess each individual separately and know that if you feel uncomfortable with something - don't do it. You usually feel uncomfortable for a reason. Effective communication should alleviate any stress or embarrassment caused so you should always be honest. In short we should practice what we preach in terms of risk management and behaviour control. I am male, 42 and a father of 6 and I have found ways of sharing affection verbally with young people, so if touch is inappropriate then emotion does not have to be removed from the relationship. Quite often an unhealthy need for physical attention is driven by a lack of emotional security - bear this in mind when you feel uncomfortable. Be honest with yourself and your client and discuss your feelings openly.

23 year old male worker posted:

To me, it is pretty simple - hugs are ok so long as:

1. They are done in public or with another worker (ideally of the opposite sex) present.
2. They are initiated by the young person, not the youth worker.

Hugging has never presented any issues for me.

Anonymous with a 5 point plan posted:

I think you hug if you can answer these questions with YES:

1. Is the client consenting (obviously must be yes)
2. Is it safe for me to do so? (Can I avoid accusation and do I feel comfortable to do so)
3. Is it safe for the client if I do so? (Am I confident that I am playing a positive role)
4. Is this hug to benefit the client and not me?
5. I am not disadvantaging any other client or worker by this action.

Anonymous replied to Anonymous with a 5 point plan:

This is difficult - I agree with the above post. I am female and was a parent of teens when I first started youth work - I understood the reasons why and I avoided unnecessary touch, I still do - I think there were a couple of times when young people hugged me and it felt weird, once was when I had taken a group of young people to an inter-youth centre sports challenge and our group won netball, one of the boys was jumping around hugging everyone, it just felt weird because this had not happened at work before, then the next time a young boy (who was larger than me) just stepped into my space and wrapped his arms around me to hug me and I was uncomfortable, it felt a bit like a power thing to me (I was a sole worker and there were about 6 other young people present), straight away I just broke his hold with a martial arts move and said I didn't give you permission to touch me. I think my reaction was instinctive and unexpected and if founded set some clear boundaries, he apologised and I have not had any other issues thus far. In saying that to challenge all the no touch policies - I have also been involved with a program called Youth Insearch - where a safe environment is set up with a large group of young people over a week-end program where they are shown what a safe hug is and encouraged to hug at appropriate times throughout the program - they are also de-briefed about randomly hugging people when they leave the program so they don't freak people out - some of the young people attending Youth Insearch have been denied affection throughout their lives or touch has been a negative experience - so for them to experience

a hug of support and care in a safe environment can be life changing. There have been a few nasty social experiments by groups who have denied children of affection throughout history with horrific results - and in our line of work if we have not seen the pain of rejection on the young faces we work with we have had our eyes shut. Live lightly.

Female youth worker posted:

Ironically, I faced this very issue today. I ran a workshop in a school for a class of females. At the end of the workshop one of the students was so upset about her own lack of self confidence that she began to cry. This same girl had also cried yesterday about the same issue. Yesterday it was just the two of us in a counselling setting, so I did not touch her at all. I just gave her a tissue and comforted her verbally. Today, however, we were standing next to each other in a classroom and there were other people present. So I reached out and gave her a quick hug. Was it the right thing to do? I can't say for certain, but it felt appropriate under the circumstances. Perhaps others would disagree. Personally, I think workers should have the freedom to decide if the situation is appropriate or not. Additionally, I have never hugged a male client, it just doesn't feel appropriate.

Veteran worker posted:

I come from a family culture that hugs and I find it hard in situations where there is great sadness not to hug. Having said that, I try to avoid hugs, and have only been hugged a couple of times in more than 20 years in community services. In every instance the young person has initiated the hug and it was either upon me before I realised it was coming, or it felt very uncaring and rude to pull away.

I hold back because I cannot read how the other person views the hug, and I do not want my actions to be misinterpreted. I am very cautious after two episodes early in my career where a client that barely knew me stalked me. Sometimes you don't have to hug people for them to get the wrong idea. I hate to think what might have happened in these situations if I had had physical contact with the clients. One in particular was vulnerable and had major mental health problems and a vindictive streak. It was quite upsetting for me.

I wish I could hug, but fear the consequences. I admire those who take the risk.

What do you think?

Post your own reply (anonymously or not) - go to <http://youthworkethics.blogspot.com> and click on *Touch sensitive*.

In a dilemma yourself???

Pose an ethical dilemma - a situation you have faced, or just something you wonder about.

Email info@yapa.org.au with the subject: **ETHICAL DILEMMA.**

Give plenty of detail. You don't have to identify yourself or your agency, and we will not identify you publicly.

What's on for youth workers

10-11 October, Sydney

Understanding Disruptive Behaviour Disorders

Phil Nunn. Contact: CCWT on 9281 8822 or ccwt@acwa.asn.au.
www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt.html

11 October, Parramatta

Working with the potential for violence when working with young people

This full day workshop looks at a variety of practical, common sense principles for the prevention and diffusion of violence against youth workers in a variety of community based settings. This training is for youth workers, staff who work with adolescents in a variety of community settings and home-based services such as refugee workers, family support workers, school counsellors and teachers. Contact: (02) 8830 0747 or info@ifp.nsw.edu.au or www.ifp.nsw.edu.au

11 October, Newcastle 15 November, Sydney

Early Intervention and Dove BodyThink

The Butterfly Foundation. These two workshops are targeted to primary and secondary school teachers, youth workers and community professionals and all education, health and community professionals working with young people.

www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/

15-16 October, Coffs Harbour

Youth Case Work

Brian Tranter. Contact: CCWT on 9281 8822 or ccwt@acwa.asn.au.
www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt.html

16 October, Sydney

Young people & the law

This workshop will cover the functions of the Children's Court (criminal jurisdiction) including sentencing, diversionary options and move-on directions. Contact: (02) 9219 5879 or cle@legalaid.nsw.gov.au or www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/education

16 October, Parramatta

Managing the bull

Bullying is a serious problem for many children in our schools. Face to face bullying and cyber-bullying can have a detrimental effect on a young person's self-esteem, confidence and psychological well-being that can last for many years and even into adulthood. Ken Nathan

and Carol Musgrave, the creators of the award-winning anger management program for adolescents, RAGE (Re-navigating Anger and Guilty Emotions), and MAAD (Managing Angry Adolescents Differently), have got together again to create Managing the Bull. Managing the Bull is a 6 session strengths based, solution focussed course that is hands on, practical and fun. In this one day workshop learn how to facilitate this program and empower young people with the skills to manage bullies at school, including cyber bullying and texting. Ideal for anyone working with children and young people as a youth worker, group worker, teacher or school counsellor. Contact: info@ifp.nsw.edu.au or 02 8830 0755 or www.ifp.nsw.edu.au

15-17 October, Sydney 22-24 October, Newcastle

Rock & Water Program

The Rock and Water Program teaches:

- Practical anti-bullying strategies
- Alternatives to aggressive verbal and physical responses to fear and doubt
- Thinking and being in control, through grounding, centeredness and mental focus
- Self respect, self control and self confidence

www.newcastle.edu.au/rw

17-19 October, Sydney 22-24 October, Gosford

Drumbeat

Drumbeat is a flexible program that combines experiential learning with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and engages young people and adults who may be anxious or resistant to 'talk based' therapies. The Program explores relationship issues such as: Peer Pressure, Bullying, Dealing with Emotions, Identity, Social Responsibility and Teamwork.

www.newcastle.edu.au/drumbeat

18-19 October, Sydney

Response Ability Pathways (RAP)

Diana Boswell. Contact: CCWT on 9281 8822 or ccwt@acwa.asn.au.
www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt.html

24-25 October Canberra 13-14 November, Sydney

Social Media Bootcamps

Dialogue Consulting. Beginner-level 2 day workshops that introduce you to the most common social media platforms (Facebook & Twitter in detail), how to use them most

effectively, and the basics for developing social media strategy & policy for your organisation.

Contact: www.dialogueconsulting.com.au/training/

25-26 October, Wollongong

Working with the edge - Engaging young people in group work - Bigger, faster, stronger, sometimes grumpier... crash!

Fun, exhausting, inspiring and challenging - presented by Peter Slattery. This workshop explores the skills, attitudes, ways of thinking and practical strategies needed to run/facilitate groups with teenagers who at times can be challenging and difficult. It can also often be kind of tough facilitating groups that tackle awkward/sensitive topics in natural and inviting ways. So this workshop will explore and practice strategies and skills that are more likely to lead to respectful engagement and strong engagement with young people.
<http://groupworksolutions.com.au>

29-30 October, Surry Hills

Fighting Fair: Advanced Mediation (level 2)

This challenging and interactive course is aimed at those who already have an understanding and practical experience of the mediation process. The course will focus on advanced issues and aims to refine and update workers skills, practices and theoretical perspectives used to mediate in various areas of conflict.

www.fightingfair.com.au or 0425 837 756

31 October, Wollongong

Train the trainer - Tools for change doing creative team building

The 1-day workshop develops the necessary skills for group leaders to facilitate creative team building. The training covers the principles of using creative group work techniques and tools.

<http://groupworksolutions.com.au/Home.htm>

5 November, Sydney

Get Creative!

Phil Nunn. Contact: CCWT on (02) 9281 8822 or ccwt@acwa.asn.au.
www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt.html

7-8 November, Coolangatta

Illawarra & South Coast Region Youth Services Conference

Every year the Youth Service Conference provides an opportunity for workers to

come together and participate in a dynamic conference. In consultation with youth and community workers, guest speakers are sought who can provide the most relevant, up to date information, and who can inspire conversation & change. Workshops along with the opportunity to network, provide an ideal opportunity to learn, engage & interact with other industry professionals.

- Researcher and social justice advocate Celia Lashlie is the author of two best-selling books. Her first book *The Journey to Prison: Who goes and why* was published in 2002 and was followed in 2005 with the hugely successful *He'll be OK: Growing Gorgeous Boys into Good Men*
- Maggie Hamilton: Author and Speaker- *What's happening to our Girls?, Too much, Too soon, How Our Kids are Overstimulated, Oversold and Oversexed.*
- Vibrant mix of workshops include, *Boys & Young Men. Changes to legislation affecting young people, focussing on the areas of Mental Health, Income Support, Gambling, & Refugees.*

www.illawarrayouthservicesconference.org.au

13-14 November, Sydney

A Survival Guide for Youth Workers

YAPA two day training course for new youth workers and anyone who wants to update their skills.

www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/events/survival.php

14-15 November, Gold Coast

Australian Youth Mentoring Conference

This conference is for anyone with an interest in youth mentoring practice and theory; including mentoring program coordinators, managers, teachers, youth workers, social workers, academics, sociology researchers, policy writers, and volunteer mentors.

- Show and Tell sessions are designed to showcase and celebrate innovative models of mentoring programs.
- Professional Development sessions are designed to be learning experiences for practitioners, academics, teachers, social workers, youth workers, policy developers and mentors.

Contact: Becky Robertson, Australian Youth Mentoring Network,

becky@youthmentoring.org.au
02 9085 7172

www.youthmentoring.org.au

unleash



unleash – opinion and action for young people under 20.

In October-November 2012 *unleash*:

- *unleash*'s resident lawyer Pia is here to help with fines – it'll be fine
- Jason O'Neill tells us about the National Indigenous Youth Parliament
- Candice Cokinas went on a mission to make a difference
- The "It's Happening Team" want you to

know about human trafficking

- YAPA's Alex Long gets an insight into Amnesty International with Dan
- What Matters? Award Overall Winner Sheree Kuan listens to the voice of the whale
- Sophie Morton's photography takes flight plus news, opportunities and more!

Get *unleash* - www.yapa.org.au/unleash or contact YAPA.

A Survival Guide for Youth Workers

2 day training program

Sydney CBD: 13-14 November 2012

A two day training course for new youth workers and anyone who wants to update their skills. The course will provide an overview of:

- 'Youth Work 101' - exploring the purpose and practice of youth work
- Duty of care & ethics in youth work
- Engaging young people
- Understanding and responding to drug and alcohol issues for young people
- Understanding and responding to mental health issues for young people
- Managing challenging behaviours
- Self-care for youth workers

Survival Training is designed to give an overview of the major elements that make up current youth work. In covering the above topics, we also include elements of youth work philosophies and inclusive practice principles, and encourage participants to reflect on their own practice.

The program includes a mixture of group activities, discussion and presentations. Each session is run by a specialist in their area, who

has a youthwork background. Each participant receives an extensive resource folder.

There are also opportunities to meet and network with other youth workers from across NSW.

Bookings & subsidies

Cost (including GST):

- \$125 for YAPA members (conditions apply - see booking page)
- \$250 for non-members.

You can only book on the online form at www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/events/survival.php

Travel subsidies:

YAPA provides travel subsidies for rural YAPA Organisation Members (youth workers) to attend this event. Please read the subsidy information & application form at www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/events/subsidy.php.

Enquiries:

Joanne Bennett on ext. 3, (02) 8218 9801 or email info@yapa.org.au.

Contact YAPA



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Suite 403, 64-76 Kippax St SURRY HILLS NSW 2010. www.yapa.org.au

