

YOUNG LEADERS

YOUTH SERVICES

Safety, Rights and Conduct Charter

Your Right to Feel Safe at Young Leaders Youth Services

At Young Leaders Youth Services (YLYS), every child and young person has the right to feel safe, respected, included, supported and heard.

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the centre of everything we do. We are committed to providing environments where young people are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, bullying and inappropriate behaviour.

This Code of Conduct explains what you can expect from YLYS employees, mentors, support workers, volunteers and representatives, what behaviour is not acceptable, and what you can do if something does not feel right.

YOUR RIGHTS

When receiving support from Young Leaders Youth Services, you have the right to:

- Feel physically and emotionally safe.
- Be treated with dignity, kindness and respect.
- Be listened to and have your views taken seriously.
- Ask questions and receive information in a way you can understand.
- Be included in decisions that affect you, wherever possible.
- Say no or speak up if something makes you uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Be treated fairly regardless of your culture, background, disability, gender, identity, beliefs or personal circumstances.
- Have your privacy and personal information respected.
- Make a complaint or raise a concern without being threatened, punished or treated unfairly.
- Ask for help from a YLYS team member, parent, carer, teacher, caseworker, support coordinator, trusted adult or another appropriate support service.
- Receive support that respects your individual needs, choices, goals and circumstances.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE YLYS TEAM

All Young Leaders Youth Services employees, mentors, support workers, volunteers and representatives are expected to:

- Treat you with kindness, dignity and respect.
- Listen to your views, concerns and experiences.
- Communicate using respectful and appropriate language.
- Provide support in a professional, safe and appropriate manner.
- Create activities and environments that are safe, inclusive and suitable for your needs.
- Respect your culture, background, identity, disability, beliefs and individual circumstances.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Explain activities, decisions and expectations in a way you can understand.
- Respect your privacy and handle your personal information appropriately.
- Encourage you to participate in decisions about your supports.
- Help you access additional support when it is needed and within our professional responsibilities.
- Take concerns about your safety or wellbeing seriously.
- Follow YLYS policies, procedures and child-safe practices.
- Report and respond appropriately when there are concerns that a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm.

BEHAVIOUR THAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

It is never acceptable for a YLYS employee, mentor, support worker, volunteer, contractor or other adult connected with our services to:

- Make you feel unsafe, intimidated, embarrassed, humiliated, ashamed or frightened.
- Bully, threaten, manipulate, pressure, exploit or deliberately humiliate you.
- Use racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory, sexual, abusive, degrading or violent language.
- Discriminate against you because of your culture, background, disability, gender, identity, beliefs, family circumstances or other personal characteristics.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact or touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable or is not appropriate to the support being provided.
- Engage in sexual behaviour, sexual conversations or inappropriate relationships with you.
- Ask you to keep inappropriate secrets from your family, carers, YLYS or other professionals.
- Contact you through unauthorised personal social media accounts, private messaging platforms or personal communication channels outside approved YLYS practices.
- Give or receive inappropriate gifts, money, loans, favours or other personal benefits.
- Arrange unauthorised meetings with you outside approved YLYS activities or supports.
- Take you to an unauthorised location without appropriate approval.
- Deliberately place you in a hidden, isolated or inappropriate environment contrary to YLYS safeguarding procedures.
- Take, store, publish or share photographs, videos or recordings of you without the appropriate consent and authorisation.
- Share your private or personal information without a legitimate reason, except where information must be shared to protect you or another person from harm or where required by law.
- Ignore, dismiss or discourage you when you raise a concern or say something is

wrong.

- Punish, threaten or treat you differently because you have made a complaint or raised a safety concern.

IF ANOTHER YOUNG PERSON MAKES YOU FEEL UNSAFE

Your right to feel safe also applies when you are around other young people.

You should speak to someone you trust if another young person:

- Bullies, intimidates or threatens you.
- Pressures you to do something you do not want to do.
- Physically hurts you or attempts to hurt you.
- Touches you in a way you do not want or that makes you uncomfortable.
- Makes inappropriate sexual comments or behaves sexually towards you.
- Shares your personal information, photographs, videos or private messages without permission.
- Uses racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory, abusive or threatening language towards you.
- Pressures you to use alcohol, drugs or participate in illegal or unsafe activities.
- Threatens you online, through social media or in person.
- Makes you feel frightened, uncomfortable or unsafe for any reason.

You will not get in trouble for speaking up about something that has made you or another person feel unsafe.

SPEAKING UP AND RAISING A CONCERN

We want young people to feel confident speaking up.

You can talk to us if:

- Something does not feel right.
- Someone makes you uncomfortable or unsafe.
- You are worried about yourself or another young person.
- Someone has hurt you or threatened you.
- Someone has contacted you in an inappropriate or unsafe way.
- You believe someone has behaved inappropriately.
- You are worried about something that happened during a YLYS service, program, activity or event.
- You want to make a complaint.
- You believe YLYS could do something differently or better.
- You have an idea about how we can make our services safer for young people.

WHO CAN I SPEAK TO?

You can speak with someone you trust, including:

- A Young Leaders Youth Services Mentor or Support Worker.

- A YLYS Team Leader, Coordinator, Program Manager, Manager or Director.
- Any other YLYS employee you feel comfortable speaking with.
- Your parent, carer or guardian.
- Your caseworker or support coordinator.
- A teacher, counsellor or other school staff member.
- A police officer.
- Another trusted adult.
- An independent support, advocacy or complaints service.

You do not need to speak directly to the person involved in your concern.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU SPEAK UP?

When you tell Young Leaders Youth Services about something that concerns you, we will:

1. Listen to you and give you an opportunity to explain what happened.
2. Take you seriously and treat your concerns respectfully.
3. Prioritise your immediate safety and wellbeing.
4. Explain what may happen next in a way you can understand.
5. Respect your privacy and only share information with people who need to know.
6. Take appropriate action in accordance with our safeguarding responsibilities, policies and legal obligations.
7. Support you throughout the process wherever reasonably possible.
8. Make appropriate reports or referrals when required to protect you or another person from harm.

There may be situations where we cannot keep information completely confidential. For example, if we believe you or another child or young person may be at risk of significant harm, we may have a responsibility to share information or make a report to an appropriate authority.

Where appropriate and safe to do so, we will explain this to you and support you through what happens next.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY

Young Leaders Youth Services is committed to creating environments where children and young people are safe, valued, respected and empowered to have a voice.

We do not tolerate child abuse, exploitation, neglect, grooming, discrimination, bullying or inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people.

Everyone involved with YLYS has a responsibility to contribute to a culture of safety.

We are committed to listening to young people, responding appropriately to concerns and continually improving our safeguarding practices.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

You do not have to deal with something that makes you feel unsafe on your own.

Your safety matters to us.

We will listen.

We will take you seriously.

We will treat you with respect.

We will take appropriate action.

We will support you.

Young Leaders Youth Services will continue working to ensure our programs, services, activities and environments are safe, inclusive and supportive for every child and young person.

NEED HELP OR SUPPORT?

If you need support outside Young Leaders Youth Services, there are services available across NSW and Australia.

Emergency Services — 000

Call 000 if you or another person is in immediate danger or requires urgent police, ambulance or fire assistance.

Kids Helpline — 1800 55 1800

Free, confidential counselling and support for children and young people aged 5–25.

Lifeline — 13 11 14

24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

NSW Mental Health Line — 1800 011 511

24-hour mental health support, advice and referral for people in NSW.

Child Protection Helpline — 13 21 11

For concerns that a child or young person in NSW may be at risk of significant harm.

NSW Domestic Violence Line — 1800 656 463

24-hour support, information and referrals relating to domestic and family violence.

1800RESPECT — 1800 737 732

National counselling, information and support for people affected by domestic, family or sexual violence.

Headspace

Mental health and wellbeing support for young people aged 12–25 through centres, phone and online services.

ReachOut Australia

Online mental health information and support designed for young people and their families.

Beyond Blue — 1300 22 4636

Mental health information and support.

QLife — 1800 184 527

Peer support and referral services for LGBTQ+ people.

13YARN — 13 92 76

Culturally appropriate crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Youth Law Australia

Free legal information and assistance for children and young people.

NSW Ombudsman

Provides information and receives certain complaints about NSW government agencies and community service providers.

NSW Police — 131 444

For non-emergency police assistance. Call 000 if there is an immediate danger or emergency.

Young Leaders Youth Services (YLYS)

Committed to creating safe, respectful and empowering environments for children and young people.

CONTACT US

Email: info@youngleadersyouthservices.com.au

If you are in immediate danger, call 000.