



Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario
Provincial Youth Council
A Good Place To Be

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- THE PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL (PYC)
- THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL
- HOW TO MAKE YOUTH COUNCILS WORK
- BYLAWS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE
- FUNDRAISING
- PROMOTION
- YOUTH ON A BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS WHEN STARTING A YOUTH COUNCIL
- BENEFITS OF HAVING THE PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL
- PYC SAMPLE ATTACHMENTS



THE PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL

THE PAST:

- The PYC began back in 1992 when a few Boys and Girls Club staff who were valuable to the organization wanted to give youth a voice. The council started off small with the thoughts of growing as the movement continued.

THE PRESENT:

- Currently, the PYC has representation of approximately 19 clubs of the possible 24 in Ontario. The members of the council have the opportunity to share experiences from their clubs, network and make friends with other youth from other clubs as well as give youth a voice. The council is entirely run by youth for youth; they are supported by staff advisors from clubs around Ontario as well as the regional office and its board members. The PYC has a crucial role in planning many events such as provincial and National Youth conferences, MPP events as well as networking with other members and making sure their voices are heard. The council is enthusiastic and very ambitious; and it is always changing to meet the needs of its members!

THE FUTURE:

- The future of the council lies within the hands of the youth and support from the organization. One of the main goals is to have representation from all 24 Boys and Girls Clubs throughout Ontario on the council. PYC is also hoping to be heard on all levels of their respective clubs and within the organization as a whole. The council has many future goals that they would like to achieve in the up and coming years!

THE ROLE OF PYC

- The Provincial Youth Council is a governing youth body which represents the views and ideas of youth from clubs across the province of Ontario.
- The PYC is a group which meets 4-5 times per year to discuss issues that are pertaining to their local clubs as well as share ideas with other members of the council. Members have the opportunity to network and make friends as well as develop leadership skills that they will be able to use on a daily basis and in their future endeavors.
- The Council is available for youth to advocate to their clubs as well as their communities.
- Throughout meetings, workshops, events and projects, the PYC is able to work towards being positive role models who place a strong emphasis on peer mentoring as well as involvement within their clubs and communities.
- PYC members tend to act as advocates to their peers as well as good source of information about ideas regarding fundraising, special events, programs as well as social activities.
- The PYC is also the bridge to the region, all the other clubs in the province as well as thousands of youth across Ontario!

HOW TO MAKE YOUTH COUNCILS WORK

In order for a clubs youth council to work, there must be a number of things that are in place.

1. When establishing a council there must be key goals values and a realistic mission in place. It is up to the council how large or small the goals are.
2. It is important that all council members have an equal opportunity to contribute to discussions that occur within the group.
3. It is important to make sure that all members of the council have a clear understanding of what the goals are and why they are a necessity to the group. It is also important to make sure that all members have respect for each other and what the group stands for.
4. It is important for the youth to have ownership over the group and to have them create the guidelines in which they will follow. The staff will be there to guide the youth and support them, and not so much lead them through their discussions and events.
5. Youth will be required to select an "executive council", this group will be required to work effectively and responsibly in governing, operating and developing the council. It is important to make sure that youth select their peers in whom they feel will be competent enough to complete the tasks at hand.
6. There must a voting criterion that will require a certain number of voters to be present in order to reach a fair vote.

BYLAWS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- When creating a set of terms of reference it is important that they are created with help from the staff advisors from the club. It is also important to create the terms of reference within the confines of the organization and the mission statement.
- It is important to make them easy to understand as well as easy to enforce. It is important to make sure that there are no loopholes that could be questioned or misconceived.
- It is imperative that there are specific criteria and guidelines by which the council will follow. There should be specific descriptions which are outlines within the terms of reference which detail:
 - Member Roles
 - Staff Roles and Involvement
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Co-Chairs
 - Voting Procedures
 - General Member Expectations

Please see *PYC Attachments* for the Provincial Youth Councils set of Terms of Reference

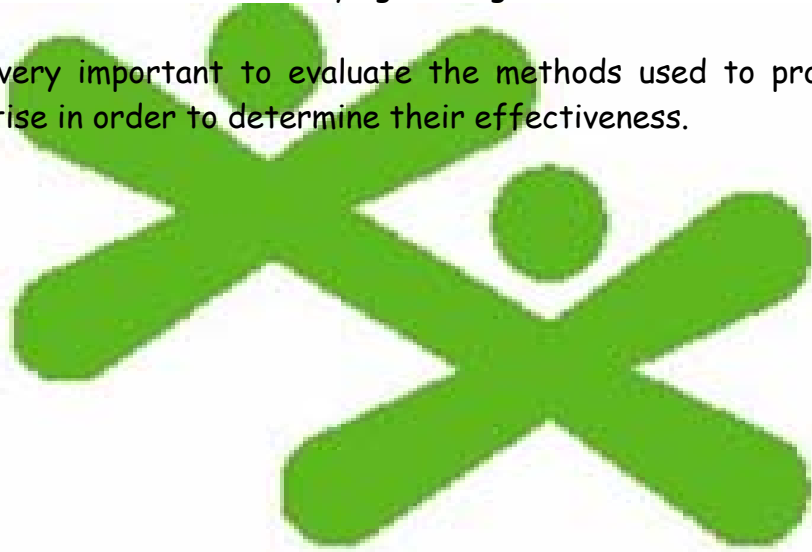
FUNDRAISING

- When beginning a Youth Council it is imperative to create a realistic, yet optimistic calendar of possible fundraising ventures that the council could try to organize. It is important to ensure that the expectations of the profits set by the council are realistic.
- It is important to look at ventures that could possibly create a long term relationship between the council and the sponsor or community.
- It is important to brainstorm all fundraising ideas properly and make sure that they are researched in order to determine whether or not the target group will be receptive to the product or service that the council is trying to sell.



PROMOTION

- As a council it is important to understand and account for adequate promotion and advertising costs within the budget that was set out within the council and the staff advisor(s)
- Make sure to take advantage of any promotional or advertising resources that the council may have.
- Make sure that the methods used to attract a sponsor appeal to the market that the council is trying to target.
- It is very important to evaluate the methods used to promote and advertise in order to determine their effectiveness.



YOUTH ON A BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HOW TO BECOME A YOUTH ON A BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- In order to elect an individual from the council to the Board of Directors, a staff advisor would need to facilitate and support the process.
- The council executive committee will need to decide and find out what criteria would be necessary to becoming a Youth Board Representative. If the criteria has not been established the Youth council, staff advisor as well as the Executive Director should create these criteria together.
- The council will need to establish a meeting during the year, which nominations can be made and followed by a closed ballot election.

TIPS FOR THE BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:

- It is important to realize that by creating a position for a youth representative, their voice is valid and significant to the decisions being made.
- It is important to understand the structure and the policies of the Board of Directors, as they are different than those created by the individuals Youth Council.
- It is vital to ensure participation on sub-committees as often as possible, so that the members on the Board see the importance and the capacity of the youth's voice and opinions.

BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS WHEN STARTING A YOUTH COUNCIL

NOT ENOUGH YOUTH:

In order to attract youth, try advertising within schools and at the club. It is important to let them know what leadership opportunities are coming up. Allow for the youth to see the benefits of joining the council

- Resume building
- Volunteer Hours
- Organizational Skills
- Networking

NOT ENOUGH EXPERIENCE:

When first beginning there may be a lack of youth who have solid knowledge on how to create and run a youth council effectively; usually a youth council is comprised of two senior positions Co-Chairs (who run and mediate the meetings), a secretary (who takes minutes of the meeting), a treasurer (who works alongside the staff advisor to keep track of financial aspects of the council) and finally a core group who discuss events, issues as well as other business with the rest of the council.

FUNDING:

Money can be seen as an issue when first beginning a youth council. It is important to demonstrate to club management that the council will eventually generate revenue and create new programs which will benefit both the club and its members.

BENEFITS OF HAVING A PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- Being part of the Provincial Youth Council (PYC) offers a variety of benefits to each club as well as to the individuals involved..
- The Provincial Youth Council gives each club a voice and allows other clubs to see issues or problems that may be existent in other clubs. When the PYC comes together, they tackle issues as a group, and find solutions as a group.
- The PYC provides the perfect opportunity to be able to share ideas and program suggestions from other clubs across the province.
- Developing leadership, social, public speaking and advocacy skills are all benefits a PYC member could receive as an individual, all while getting to meet and interact with other youth across the province.
- In essence, the PYC is a definite asset to the Boys and Girls Clubs movement; it is something that will help all clubs who are involved across the province.

PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCILS

SAMPLE ATTACHMENTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE REVISED FEBRUARY 2000

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Provincial Youth Council of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario advocates to the regional board and youth serving agencies on issues pertaining to children/youth in the province of Ontario.

ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND ITS MEMBERS:

1. To gather and research youth issues at member Clubs which are of importance for provincial action and response.
2. To bring issues, identified by the PYC, to the regional council and board, and to actively participate in deciding how these issues will be addressed.
3. To educate youth, adults, agencies and the community that youth are an important part of the change, growth and organisational structure of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario.
4. To give youth the opportunity to take part in the decision making at the Provincial Youth Council, regional council and regional board levels of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario.
5. To relay information between the youth of member Clubs and the various regional levels.
6. To take information from regional council/board/provincial youth council levels back through the formal youth structure at the member Clubs for dissemination, comment and feedback. This can be done via written, verbal or newsletter reports to update all youth members at the member Clubs.

7. To provide a representative and an alternate representation to sit as the PYC representative on the National Youth Council.
8. To provide two representatives (minimum one to be 18 years of age or older) to sit on the Regional Board and represent the PYC at the table.

VALUE STATEMENTS:

1. We strongly believe that a provincial youth council is needed and makes good sense. Youth are the future. If decisions are to be made about the future it only makes sense that youth be part of that decision-making process.
2. A youth council provides credibility to the commitment and direction to work with and for youth in the Boys and Girls Club movement because the Provincial Youth Council provides an excellent opportunity to gather information that will greatly assist with decision making. Youth are closer to many of the issues that affect them and hence can present an aspect of the issue that may not be readily available from a staff or non-youth view-point.
3. It is essential that all youth and staff involved with the Provincial Youth Council be committed and prepared to do the work necessary to guarantee success.
4. The opportunity to have equal representation with issue identification and decision making is an important resource that has yet to be fully tapped.

REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT:

1. Two representatives from the PYC may be nominated to the regional board - 1 member strongly recommended to be a minimum of 18 years (for voting and legal purposes). The other member can be any age between 13 through 24. If the member is 18 or over, they also will have voting rights on the board. If the individual is under 18, they will be appointed to board in an advisory position with the capacity to actively participate in all discussions but without a vote. These representatives

will be nominated and voted upon within the PYC, and these positions will be for a two year rotating term (one new appointee per year).

2. The region will provide administrative support to this committee.
3. All PYC members will also be members of the regional council, which advises the board on issues of importance to the movement.

PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL PARTICULARS:

Youth who take a seat at the PYC must understand that they represent the youth from their Club. Hence, it is essential that some structure exist at the home Club so that information can be shared at the Club and direction given to the representing youth when going to PYC meetings.

GENERAL CRITERIA:

1. One youth per facility/unit or service area.
2. Age between 13 to 24.
3. A suggested criteria for PYC membership is:
 - a) Leadership Qualities
 - b) Communication Skills
 - c) Positive Role Model
 - d) Demonstrated Responsibility
4. Each Club will use the suggested criteria to nominate a youth to represent the views of youth from that Club. The criteria outlines a model by which this member Club nomination process can take place.
5. Seats will be open at the discretion of the PYC executive, to allow for youth from other youth serving agencies to be invited to participate as a guest at meetings (i.e. if meeting in Toronto, perhaps a youth from Parks and Recreation could be invited thus keeping our youth council open to what other youth servicing agencies are doing as resources permit.)
6. Four meetings per year should be scheduled, with additional training sessions and socials.

7. A chair, co-chair and secretary will be selected annually by PYC members. The term of these positions will be one year in length and should an individual be nominated in his/her first year as a PYC member, he/she may be nominated in the next year for a second and final year. The chair, co-chair, secretary, the National Youth Council representative and two regional board appointments will comprise the Executive Committee of the PYC. Additionally a sub committee structure could best deal with presenting issues and the work of the PYC and, where appropriate the PYC may wish to recruit non-PYC youth members to assist with sub committee work.
8. PYC has the option to close its meetings on certain issues. This is to ensure that open and honest discussions can take place.
9. Power is to be equally distributed - 1 representative equals 1 vote.
10. In accordance with a goal oriented approach each member would hold a 2 year term which may be reinstated following a member's term, (if they are nominated by their Club). PYC members having left the PYC at the duration of their term may continue their work on sub committees until that work is complete. Should a youth for whatever reason resign from the PYC, a new nominee can be presented from the home Club.

STAFF:

1. There will be up to three staff advisors to the PYC.
2. The staff role is one of advisor and/or resource person (e.g. information, etc). Youth will chair meetings, develop agendas, bring information forward and communicate with regional council and board members and other partner agencies.
3. The PYC will accept nominations for staff for these positions and will make the decision of which staff are to take these roles. The PYC may lobby for staff that they feel would most benefit PYC needs. (It may be to the advantage of the PYC to have one front line staff and one upper management staff. This combination would offer good insight to more

aspects of Club life and perhaps the PYC could extend more influence within the Boys and Girls Club movement itself.)

The PYC will develop a staff recruitment process. To reinforce the commitment required to support the PYC, the staff should be committed to involvement for a minimum of two years. A rotation process will have, for the first year, one PYC staff will be sought to fulfil a two year term, one a one year term, and one either a two or one year term. From there on in, PYC staff will be recruited annually on this basis. These terms will allow for a gradual turn over process in staff advisors and always leave PYC with one advisor having at least one year's PYC experience.

4. Staff will be evaluated annually by the PYC to determine if they are fulfilling their role as a staff advisor to the PYC.
5. Staff will hold no vote at PYC meetings.
6. Staff involved with sub committee work may continue their involvement on that committee until said work is completed. Extended staff participation on the PYC will be a maximum of three years (which includes their one or two year as an advisor to the PYC).
7. The Region will provide a staff as ex officio to the PYC.

OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER:

The meetings held in conjunction with the Regional Council and annual general meetings of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Ontario will be held in Toronto and the other two in other Club locations to facilitate a provincial perspective. For these other meetings, Clubs which do not have active PYC representation will be sought as the meeting locations, with Club reps encouraged to attend the PYC weekend.

Training sessions, which are identified as needed by the PYC and are planned by the staff advisors, are to be developed and implemented to assist with the development and better understanding of committees, boards, etc.

Socials, which are planned by the PYC members and held at diversified locations, are to provide the opportunity to develop inter-Club relationships and visit other Boys and Girls Club to develop a better understanding of Boys and Girls Club at a provincial level.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF ONTARIO PROVINCIAL YOUTH COUNCIL

THE ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PYC MEMBERS ARE RECOMMENDED TO BE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) **Decision Making** - The representatives will be required to make decisions around the PYC table and bring these to the Regional Council/Board table for response and action. Representatives will be expected to vote on issues at meetings with each PYC representative having one vote per member.
- 2) **Education** - The Representatives will be responsible for educating their Clubs, their community and the Regional Council/Board on issues affecting youth which require response and action.
- 3) **Information** - Representatives will be required to gather information from youth members from their Club, in advance of PYC meetings, and bring this information to the PYC table. Likewise, they will take information from the PYC and Regional Council/Board tables back to the youth at their Club for response and action.
- 4) **Attendance** at PYC meetings (anticipated five per year). When a PYC member is in attendance at PYC meetings, it is expected that they are there on PYC business and as a representative of their Club. Expectations regarding participation in Club activities shall be observed.
- 5) **Commitment** to sit for a two year term on the PYC. April shall be considered the time at which the two year term starts and finishes. Should election to the PYC fall at some time before or after this time, the PYC member shall identify when their term will be held to (i.e. less than a two year term or more than a two year term).

- 6) **Variation** in PYC terms shall be considered only in relation to point 5 above or if the PYC member is selected to sit as a Regional Board member or a NYC member. In each case, the PYC member's term, if it should exceed the two year period, will be considered ended when the Regional Board or NYC commitment is finished.
- 7) New PYC members shall complete an information form, with contact and personal particulars. This form shall indicate the PYC member start date and finish date (to the nearest April).
- 8) Should a PYC member resign from the PYC, it will be his/her responsibility to:
 - a) Ensure a process for replacement takes place at his/her Club.
 - b) Bring the new PYC representative to his/her last meeting on the PYC.
 - c) Complete an orientation process prior to coming to this last meeting.
 - d) Provide the PYC with notice of resignation as soon as it is known and in advance of their last meeting. Where possible, the replacement PYC member should accompany the departing PYC member to his/her last meeting.

THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF THE PYC REPRESENTATIVE IS RECOMMENDED AS BEING:

- 1) A representative prepared to accept the roles and expectations as outlined above.
- 2) A registered Club member/volunteer or one who has graduated to the position of part-time staff, between the ages of 13 and 24, who has been a member/volunteer or part-time staff for at least six months (one representative per Club or unit/facility, area served.)

Additional preferred criteria for the selection of the PYC representatives is:

- a) Leadership Qualities
- b) Communication Skills
- c) Positive Role Model
- d) Demonstrated Responsibility

THE GUIDELINES FOR THE ELECTION OF PYC MEMBERS THROUGH THE MEMBERS CLUBS AND UNITS IS RECOMMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

1) FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ELECTION PROCESS

Such as through:

- Promotion at staff/board meetings
- Club assembly of members
- Club newsletter insert
- Advertising (posters) in Club and at schools members attend

2) CAMPAIGN PROCESS

April is to be the PYC election month. Candidates should register at their Club, noting their age and membership/volunteer time with the Club. The list of candidates should be posted at the Club, noting the actual voting times. A specific cut off date for candidate nominations should be in place, and a specified time for campaigning should be identified (i.e. the third week is campaign week). Campaigning should finish before the voting process takes place.

3) THE VOTING PROCESS

Voting members will be those members between the ages of 12 and 24. Clubs should have member lists and cross off names when the members vote. Staff/youth (who are not running for the PYC position) should count the votes. Clubs should determine their own means for the voting process (i.e. over one or a period of days, at one or more than one location, by secret ballot, etc.)

4) NOTIFICATION OF PYC REPRESENTATIVE

After the election is over, Club members should be notified of their PYC candidate in the way that the formal announcement of the election process was done. The Region should also be notified of the PYC representatives elected.

Example

PYC Meeting Agenda January 27th - 29th, 2006

8:00-9:00 am → Breakfast/ Wake Up

9:00-9:30 am → Ice Breakers/ Team Building (Amanda, Brittany and Jenna)

9:30-10:15 am → Club Reports (Brief)

10:15-10:30am → Break

10:30-10:45am → NYC and Board Reports

10:45-11:00am → Peter report on what PYC endorsed at the last meeting

11:00-11:05am → Break

11:05-12:30pm → Conference Wrap up

- Discussion - Open to the group
- Congratulations
- Evaluations—Amanda

12:30- 1:30pm → Lunch

1:30-2:30pm → Grant Information → Pam

2:30-2:40pm → Break

2:40-4:30pm → PYC Initiatives—Jenna, Brittany and Amanda

- Goals
- Timeline

4:30-5:30pm → Other Business

5:30-6:00pm → Break for Dinner and Social