

The Ministry is gearing up for one of the biggest events of the year – Youth Parliament 2010



BE HEARD!

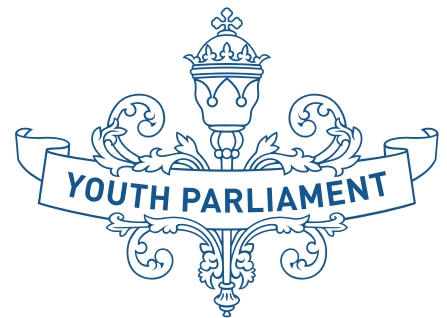
YOUTH PARLIAMENT

6 & 7 July 2010

Get your voice to the decision-makers and represent young New Zealanders in Parliament.

Contact your local Member of Parliament or email beheard@youthparliament.govt.nz check out www.youthparliament.govt.nz call free 0508 FOR MYD (367 693)


MINISTRY OF
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIOHI
Administered by the Ministry of Social Development



The dates for this year's Youth Parliament 2010 have been announced by the Speaker of the House of Representatives as 6 and 7 July 2010.

The Minister of Youth Affairs formally launched the nationwide selection process for Youth MPs on 1 February 2010 and consultation has started on what topics could be discussed.

"Youth Parliament 2010 will be a significant opportunity for young people to have their say about issues facing New Zealand and to let decision-makers know what young New Zealanders' hopes and aspirations are," says Carl Crafar, General Manager, Ministry of Youth Development.

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FROM OUR Aotearoa Youth Voices Toolkit resource...

"If you want to get the opinions of young people about how to make the downtown area better, go down there and ask young people who hang out there."

**YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP
MEMBER, 17 YEARS**

FOR YOUR COPY OF AOTEAROA
YOUTH VOICES TOOLKIT,
EMAIL MYDINFO@MYD.GOV.TZ



Minister of Youth Affairs



Welcome to the start of what's going to be a very exciting year for young people in New Zealand.

I had a lovely break over Christmas and New Year, but it seems like so long ago now.

I've been very busy for the first month of 2010.

A highlight has definitely been the Prime Minister's Youth Programme at the end of January.

The Ministry of Youth Development developed this programme and I would personally like to say how inspiring it was to meet some of the young people who took part.

I got the opportunity to sit down and have afternoon tea with these young people and talk about the role I play and how much young people's opinions matter to this Government.

It was so great to celebrate the success of the young people on this programme and to be able to showcase the positive things they are doing.

More about the Prime Minister's Youth Programme is included in this newsletter.

I really want to see more opportunities for us to celebrate the role young people

play in making New Zealand the fantastic place it is.

We want to hear what matters for you and what we can do for young people to help encourage the positive things that they are doing.

The Ministry of Youth Development has some great tools and advice to help get young people's voices heard, so please look at their website and take advantage of the work they do.

One opportunity I would encourage young people to look at is Youth Parliament 2010 held in Wellington in July.

I need someone to represent me and the West Auckland community at Youth Parliament 2010. If you are keen, please get in touch with me.

More details about how you can get involved in Youth Parliament 2010 are included in this newsletter.

Good luck for the coming year. I hope it's a good one for you.

Paula Bennett

Minister of Youth Affairs
Minister for Social Development
and Employment

12to24 Survey

We recently sent out a survey about 12to24 online.

Thank you all for your feedback. We are collating all the information you gave us and will be making some decisions soon about the future of 12to24.

We always welcome your input, so feel free to let us know your thoughts.



Action at Youth Parliament 2007.

BE HEARD AT YOUTH PARLIAMENT 2010

Youth Parliament 2010 will bring 122 Youth Members of Parliament (Youth MPs) and 10 Youth Press Gallery members to Parliament to discuss the key issues for them and their peers. Applications to be a Youth MP will close at the end of March, and the Minister of Youth Affairs will be announcing the Youth MPs, the topic for the Youth Parliament 2010 Bill and the focus for the 12 select committees of inquiry during April 2010.

Young people wanting to become a Youth MP should contact their local MP directly to find out what selection process they are using. You can find a list of all Members of Parliament and the areas they are selecting from on the Youth Parliament website www.youthparliament.govt.nz.

Suggest a topic

During Youth Parliament 2010, the Youth MPs will participate in question time, legislative debate, general debate and sit on select committees.

We are looking for suggestions for what the focus of the Youth Parliament 2010 Bill (to be debated during the legislative debate) and the 10 select committees of inquiry could be.

If you've got a suggestion, email your idea to beheard@youthparliament.govt.nz before Friday 26 February 2010.

The final topics will be announced by the Minister of Youth Affairs in April 2010.



MPs and participants of Youth Parliament 2007.



In the debating chamber during Youth Parliament 2007.

2010 YOUTH IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

The Porirua City Council is hosting the 2010 Youth in Local Government Conference at Porirua's Te Rauparaha Arena from 7–9 April.



**“Total Expression:
Expressing yourself
to youth, community,
council and beyond.”**

The theme for the conference is “Total Expression: Expressing yourself to youth, community, council and beyond”.

The conference will showcase innovation and best practice in youth development, with diverse and expert panels and interactive sessions on exciting work from around New Zealand.

Workshops proposed include expressing community through GrafArt, youth work and its role in local government, young people and public space, youth voting and realising young people's potential.

The conference provides an opportunity for those working in local government, youth sector organisations working closely with territorial authorities and youth councils to meet, build networks and discuss issues related to youth development in local government.

The Ministry of Youth Development is supporting the conference and will run a National Youth Council Forum on the first day of the conference. The forum will bring together the

diverse range of youth councils and their co-ordinators from across the country for interactive and creative workshops, forums and networking opportunities to support them in their role.

A small grants fund established by the Ministry will be open soon to provide youth councils with support to attend the conference. Information will be posted at www.myd.govt.nz. If you would like to be notified about when this is open, email mydinfo@myd.govt.nz.

The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs is another key supporter of the conference and is providing workshops and a key speaker on youth development and employment during the conference.

Registration details and a programme for the event will be on the Porirua City Council website www.pcc.govt.nz soon.

Councils that have undertaken significant youth projects in their communities will also be recognised through the Youth in Local Government Awards, which are to be presented at the conference. Applications for the 2010 awards will be opening soon.

The Ministry of Youth Development has three new publications that you may be interested in

You can order printed copies of these publications by emailing mydinfo@myd.govt.nz with your address details or call 0508 FOR MYD (367 693). These are also available for download via our website www.myd.govt.nz.



AOTEAROA YOUTH VOICES

The Aotearoa Youth Voices toolkit is a practical guide filled with tools and ideas on how young people can participate in decision-making.

The Aotearoa Youth Voices toolkit can help you:

- get your voice to decision-makers
- work with others
- get your opinion out there
- organise a group
- understand how Parliament and the Government works.

The Aotearoa Youth Voices toolkit contains information about making it happen, influencing decision-makers and working with the media.

The toolkit is designed so you can use the information that applies to you to help you identify what you want to achieve depending on where you are at with your project.



YOUTH PARTICIPATION BENEFITS FOR YOUR ORGANISATION (2009)

A flyer outlining the benefits of youth participation in decision-making.

This information sheet is for government and non-government organisations interested in progressing youth participation in their organisations.

KEEPIN' IT REAL

A guide to developing youth participation in policy development, services and programmes.

Keepin' It Real describes how adults can contribute to the positive development of young people by creating opportunities for them to influence, inform, shape, design and contribute to an activity or project.

PRIME MINISTER'S YOUTH PROGRAMME

The Prime Minister's Youth Programme is designed to foster and celebrate achievement for young people aged 14 to 17 years who have overcome adversity and made a sustained attempt to make positive life changes. For example, young people who have moved away from low levels of offending, truancy or poor academic performance.

One hundred young people were given the opportunity to learn from high achieving New Zealanders in one of four structured week-long programmes.

Each programme involved a theme of either sports or performance art/music and ran in South and West Auckland during the final week of the secondary school holidays (25–29 January 2010).

The providers contracted to deliver the Prime Minister's Youth Programme were:

- Village Community Services Trust, sport themed programme, West Auckland
- Youth Performance Trust, performance art/music themed programme, West Auckland
- SENZ Charitable Trust, sport themed programme, South Auckland
- Mangere East Family Service Centre, performance art/music themed programme, South Auckland.

Each programme provider was contracted to deliver a programme that involved a number of activities and workshops with high achieving New Zealanders. Those who gave their time during the week included:

- Vodafone Warriors (training run with programme participants)
- Graham Henry (All Blacks coach)
- Oscar Kightley (comedian, *Sione's Wedding, bro' Town*)
- Teuila Blakely (actress, *Sione's Wedding*, TV presenter)
- Taungaroa Emile (actor, *Once Were Warriors, No. 2, Shortland Street*)
- Auckland Blues (training run with programme participants).

This event was a celebration of the achievements of participants, so a



Prime Minister John Key shakes hands with Joshua Peri.

number of exciting activities were also included such as:

- skiing/snow boarding lessons at Snow Planet
- trip to Wellington to visit Te Papa, Westpac Stadium, City Gallery Wellington and Parliament
- V8 Supercar hot laps
- sailing around Auckland Harbour on Emirates Team NZ yacht
- afternoon at Waiwera Pools.

On Friday 29 January 2010, the final day event, which included a BBQ and fun activities and performances, was held on a beautiful Auckland day at Trusts Stadium in Waitakere.

Waitakere Mayor Bob Harvey welcomed everyone to the event and spoke about how important it is to recognise the positive things our young people do. He then handed over to Teuila Blakely and Taungaroa Emile who were the guest MCs for the afternoon with DJ Jaymz Levi providing some great sounds to entertain all.

The Prime Minister John Key and Papakura MP Judith Collins also attended and spent time talking to the participants and their families about their experiences during the week.

The Prime Minister and Minister Collins presented each participant with a certificate and Kia Kaha bag for their successful participation in the programme. Two participants from each group who were identified as young leaders were awarded a Nike sport bag and mobile phone pack courtesy of Vodafone.

There was a noticeable improvement in the participant's self-confidence, self-esteem and social and communication skills as a result of this programme

MYD has allocated funding to assist these young people with on-going support.

Thanks to everyone who supported the programme – without assistance from a number of organisations and individuals, the week would not have been as much fun or as successful for all those involved.

Participants on the programme also got to spend time with other well known New Zealanders like:

- **DAVID TUA**
- **THE MAD BUTCHER**
- **CATHERINE LATU AND LARISSA WILCOX (LG MYSTICS PLAYERS)**
- **RUBEN WIKI**
- **VODAFONE WARRIORS.**

CHE FU also arrived for a special performance on the main stage and entertained the crowd with some of his well known hit singles. Local dance crew Unison who recently returned from coming third at the Melbourne Battlegrounds competition, also performed. Houston Noema and Joshua Peri, two of the crew's members, were participants on the West Auckland programme with Youth Performance Trust and had the following comments to make about their experiences during the week:

“I’VE LEARNT TO BE MORE OPEN TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE AND THEIR EXPERIENCES.”

“I REALLY ENJOYED THE TRIPS WE WENT ON AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE PRIME MINISTER.”

“THIS YEAR, I’M GOING TO TRY EVEN HARDER TO ACHIEVE AS MUCH AS I CAN AT SCHOOL.”



Action from the final day of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme.



Ngawai Matthews

Ngawai Matthews has been a member of the Stratford Youth Council in Taranaki since 2005. She talks with us about being a youth councillor. Ngawai wants to encourage other young people to take up the opportunity to join their local youth councils in 2010.



“It can be very overwhelming, but with a great team behind me, it is very rewarding.”

Why did you join?

I was at a Stratford District Youth Council (SDYC) forum and liked some of the stuff the youth council did. I always wanted to do something for the community. My grandfather, who hugely inspires me, has a pretty high respected status in Stratford and I wanted to follow his footsteps. So I got a form to apply, created a CV and the rest is memorable history.

What have you got from it?

A lot of life experiences, a lot of fun, a lot of achievements and goals met, close relationships with lifetime friends and over the years, developed a life passion for everything that involves youth.

What have been some of the highs and lows of being part of the youth council?

Challenge is what makes the youth council tick. Without them, I don't think we would have the same success we do now, locally and nationally.

The SDYC has had many highs. Some of mine is meeting the different youth councils from around the country and realising that overall we all share the same passion. That's an awesome feeling.

We were announced as one of the top three youth councils in the country by the previous Minister of Youth Affairs. That was a high. We still rave on about it.

Another high would be the closeness some of us share, not only with each other but with the senior council and the community. Our support and closeness with the senior council is overwhelming. We are hugely lucky to have their support because other youth councils out there don't, which is really sad.

The ultimate low is definitely the loss of our Mayor, John Edwards, while he was in office. That was really hard for all of us. He was a great influence and support. He was amazing.

What impact has your involvement had on your life and for the future?

Youth council work has, for the past four terms, played a huge role in my life. In other words, I eat, breathe and even sleep youth council work. It can be very overwhelming, but with a great team behind me, it is very rewarding. The impact youth council has had on my life has been a rewarding and inspiring factor in my life. It's made me who I am.

Where to now for you?

This is my last term in youth council I really don't want to leave, but sometimes you have to move on and let others step up. I have just graduated from my Certificate in social work level 4 and Wellcare National Certificate for older person caring and just picked up papers for child psychology. In the future, I am hoping to do child counselling or senior citizen mental health/counselling. Maybe I could do both... who knows?

“The SDYC has had many highs. Some of mine is meeting the different youth councils from around the country and realising that overall we all share the same passion. That's an awesome feeling.”

SOCIAL NETWORKING

As the popularity of electronic social networking is increasing, social science researchers have begun to investigate what impact this might have on society.

Trends and research

Despite New Zealand's slower take-up of broadband, Youth '07 – The health and wellbeing of secondary school students in New Zealand – showed today's teenagers are spending much more time online (more than half surveyed spent more than an hour online each day) and about a third spent at least three hours texting each day.

Research on digital media and technology shows that young people move between online and offline worlds with ease. However, young people may well have hit a ceiling in terms of the portion of their day they can afford to devote to media, so are increasingly becoming 'media multitaskers', instant messaging while doing homework and watching TV.

Why is electronic social networking so popular among young people?

The reasons for the popularity of social networking amongst young people are not hard to see. With a combination of laws and parental restrictions hindering and limiting their area of social interaction at school and in the community, young people have turned to online networks that allow them to communicate with not only their circle of friends but others with similar interests.¹

... examples include one person who has three cellphones and sends 260 texts a day...

Negative impacts

For teens, a mobile phone is their primary tool to arrange their social life – using it to text message, go online, post updates on Twitter and check their Facebook page. However, the sheer amount of time spent texting has raised concerns about sleep deprivation ('zombie kids') and its impact on school grades. Some teens have admitted to being 'textaholics' – examples include one person who has three cellphones and sends 260 texts a day and another who churns through her 2,000 monthly messages mostly "with just random conversations, not really about anything interesting".²

Some teens feel that texting "is an easy way out of tricky chats," while others have become 'textaholics', feeling they can't cope when separated from their mobiles, a syndrome dubbed 'NoMo phobia'. Adolescent psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg notes that at "no other time in your life is the desire to socialise and be with your age mates as strong as in adolescence. The reason why they have to socialise is they're trying to figure out who they are – a process which is vital to their development and self-definition".³



1 Boyd, Dannah (2007). *Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites* – MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Learning, MIT Press – in Wikipedia.

2 *Growing Up Kiwi*, Dominion Post 17/12/08 and *Tuned In, Plugged In*, Dominion Post 12/12/09.

3 *What teens fear most: Nomophobia*. Article on www.stuff.co.nz, 13/8/2009.

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The high levels of social networking by young people in New Zealand combined with developmental issues (cognitive ability and maturity) raise a range of issues – including harassment and bullying (such as text bullying), the threat of sexual predators, privacy concerns, gaming addiction, ‘flashmobs’ and young people crashing parties, time spent online and harmful material (such as hate sites, sexual content).⁴ ‘Sexting’, for example – the sharing of explicit photos, videos and chat by cellphone or online – is fairly commonplace.

Often there’s an ‘invincibility factor’ that young people feel and they don’t think of the consequences (such as impact on individuals or photos ending up with potential employers or see such actions as a joke or flirting. Research has found that it is not until the early 20s that the brain’s frontal cortex – where reasoning connects with emotion, enabling people to weigh consequences – has finished forming.

Positive impacts

Despite the above concerns, a three-year study of youth media use⁵ has found some very positive aspects of social networking. The digital world is creating new opportunities for young people to grapple with social norms, explore interests, develop technical skills and experiment with new forms of self-expression. These activities have captured teens’ attention because they provide avenues for extending social worlds, self-directed learning and independence.

Major findings of the study:

- youth use online media to extend friendships – able to be ‘always on’, in constant contact with friends, through mobile phones, as well as in public via social networking sites. Online interest groups enable young people to find new peers outside their local community
- youth engage in peer-based, self-directed learning online – through trial and error, young people add new media skills to their repertoire, such as how to create a video or game or customise their MySpace page. Their efforts are largely self-directed, and the outcome emerges through exploration, in contrast to classroom learning that is orientated by set, predefined goals.

Youth use online media to extend friendships – able to be ‘always on’, in constant contact with friends, through mobile phones, as well as in public via social networking sites.

Other benefits of social networking:

- mobile phones can be a means for parents to increase communication with their teenager and to monitor their safety (texts are more discreet than phone calls, avoiding the ridicule of peers)
- social networking sites are being used as a communication tool between teachers and students.
- tertiary students are also using social networking to network with professionals for internship or job opportunities.

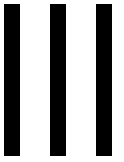
Electronic social networking – good or bad?

In summary, social networking provides young people with new opportunities for learning, personal development, friendship and leisure but has its dangers as well. Experts say parents should keep computers in public spaces, talk to their teens about the dangers of the internet, encourage them to look at information critically and discuss appropriate use. Regarding gaming, parents need to ensure the games are age-appropriate. Teens need to find a balance between computer use and other activities, while adults should embrace social networking to communicate with teenagers more.⁶

4 In the Youth 07 survey, one in five students received nasty or threatening messages by cellphone or internet and 13% were sent unwanted sexual material.

5 *Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project.* The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (2008).

6 For more information, see www.netsafe.org.nz.



Aotearoa Youth Voices
Ministry of Youth Development
PO Box 1556
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

AOTEAROA YOUTH VOICES NETWORK

Aotearoa Youth Voices is for young people aged between 12 and 24 years living in New Zealand. Being a member of Aotearoa Youth Voices offers you the opportunity to:

- get your views to government decision-makers
- network with other young people
- find out about youth opportunities (e.g. youth conferences, youth advisory groups and scholarships for young people)
- find out about youth workshops.

You can choose your level of involvement in Aotearoa Youth Voices.

AOTEAROA YOUTH VOICES NETWORK SIGN UP

TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AOTEAROA YOUTH VOICES NETWORK:

- complete the information and return using our freepost address or fax to Ministry of Youth Development on (04) 918 0091, or
- sign up on the Ministry of Youth Development website at **www.myd.govt.nz**.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any questions about Aotearoa Youth Voices, email **mydinfo@myd.govt.nz** or freephone 0508 FOR MYD (367 693).

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

GENDER (PLEASE TICK)

MALE FEMALE

ETHNICITY (PLEASE TICK THOSE THAT APPLY TO YOU)

New Zealand European Māori Samoan Cook Island Māori

Tongan Niuean Chinese Indian

Other such as Dutch, Japanese, Tokelauan (PLEASE STATE)

POSTAL ADDRESS

TOWN/CITY

PHONE

YOUR MOBILE PHONE

EMAIL

ALTERNATIVE EMAIL

DO YOU BELONG TO ANY GROUPS THAT ARE A VOICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE? (PLEASE TICK)

E.G. YOUTH COUNCIL, STUDENT COUNCIL, YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP, YOUTH REFERENCE GROUP

YES NO

IF YES, PLEASE NAME THE SPECIFIC GROUP YOU BELONG TO

I UNDERSTAND THAT JOINING AOTEAROA YOUTH VOICES MEANS:

- I will have access to training and resources to help me
- I will receive electronic newsletters via my email address
- My personal information will be stored confidentially by the Ministry of Youth Development
- Any statistics made public about Aotearoa Youth Voices will be anonymous.

SIGNED

DATE

YOUR PARENTS DO NOT HAVE TO SIGN THIS FORM, BUT IF YOU ARE **16 YEARS OF AGE OR UNDER**, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU TALK TO YOUR PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS BEFORE YOU SIGN.