

MENTORS' & CHAPLAINS' POLICY

Policy Statement

Mentors and Chaplains have an essential role in accompanying young adults in reflecting on their daily life and being proactive in taking action at the personal level and collectively to improve their situation. Through active listening, reflection and using the see, judge and act methodology, young adults are empowered to take action on the situations they face in their daily lives and through this deepen their personal beliefs and values. The process of accompaniment is in turn an important part of the personal journey of the mentor and has its own transformative effect on the mentor.

The Australian YCW (AYCW) values the important role Mentors and Chaplains (hereafter referred to as Mentors) provide in volunteering their time and expertise to the AYCW.

This document outlines how Mentors participate in the work of the movement and how they are supported – in accordance with best practice as detailed in the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-For-Profit Organisations (Volunteering Australia, 2015)

The AYCW is committed that all Mentors will be treated with fairness, and respect, and endorses the Seven Principles for the Recognition of Volunteers (NSW Govt. 2013).

All Mentors are appointed by and carry out their role at the discretion of the AYCW. Chaplains are elected by the AYCW and appointed by their respective Diocesan Church or religious congregation.

Background

The YCW is a movement that educates, advocates and provides services for young adults (age 17-29 yrs). It is autonomously run by, for and with young adults themselves. The YCW seeks to organise, educate and empower young people to be leaders of positive change within their own lives, community and in particular their places of work and study. The YCW believes that both personal and collective action is the starting point for building justice, dignity and harmony into the fabric of society.

The YCW operates out of specific goals and beliefs:

- that each young person should be able to live and work in dignified conditions,
- that each young person should be able to find value and meaning in work,
- that each young person should be empowered to assume responsibility for finding solutions to their situation at the local, national, and international levels, in order to create a better world for all.

The YCW is made up of young adults employed and unemployed, fulltime and part time tertiary students, casual workers and the underemployed.

The YCW is a lay organization of the Catholic church and is inspired by gospel values to create a more just and humane world. Young leaders are formed through the see-judge-act process to deepen their own spirituality and with a sense of mission to reach out and engage with the most vulnerable in our society.

The AYCW encourages and invites the participation of Mentors to mentor young adults at the local, diocesan and national levels. From time to time, Mentors may also contribute professional expertise important to a specific activity, or to the long term sustainability of the movement (for example regarding finances, or administration).

Purpose

This Policy provides guidance on the involvement and management of Mentors in the AYCW. This policy applies to all Mentors and also to all staff and leaders who work with Mentors.

In setting out the parameters of the Mentors involvement in the AYCW we aim to:

- Communicate the AYCW's commitment to Mentors and clarify the roles and responsibilities of Mentors in the AYCW.
- Affirm the importance of the critical work Mentors undertake within the AYCW.
- Define and promote best practice in working with Mentors and establish parameters for their appointment, induction, training and supervision.

Definitions

Mentor: A Mentor acts as a trusted and experienced advisor to the young leader or group.

Chaplain: The Chaplain is also a mentor who undertakes a pastoral role as an ordained minister of religion.

Leader: A YCW Leader is a young person who takes action in their own lives as part of the YCW, advancing the see-judge-act method among others in their sphere of influence. A Leader advocates for young people at different levels of the YCW movement.

Member: A YCW Member is a young person who participates on a regular basis in a YCW review group, event, activity, or action.

Participant: A Participant is a young person who participates in the events, activities, actions, or groups of the YCW in person or online.

Contact: A Contact is someone who has expressed interest in learning more about the YCW or its events, activities, actions or groups. They can also be a person who has been involved in the YCW in person or online on an occasional basis.

Volunteer: Volunteers are those who perform unpaid work for the YCW on various events, projects, actions and activities, according to a specific role.

Staff: A paid employee of the YCW.

1. MENTORS IN AYCW

Mentors in AYCW are appointed according to the organisational needs identified by the National Plan or by the national, diocesan and local leadership teams.

Role and Tasks of the Mentor

The role of the Mentor-Local Leader is to mentor the young adult in her/his leadership responsibilities or YCW employment. The mentor guides individuals in the search for meaning in their lives through reflection and action grounded in their faith tradition.

The role of the Mentor-Local Group is to support young adults meeting and taking action together in the spirit and within the formation framework of the YCW movement. The Mentor-Local Group role will vary according to the life cycle stage of the group.

The role of the Mentors' Team Co-ordinator is to coordinate the regular meetings of Mentors, in order to peer review their work and to facilitate ongoing formation opportunities.

The role of the Mentor- Leader's Team /National Team is to support the Leader's Team and office bearers in their deliberations and actions for the development and growth of the local /national YCW.

The Chaplain, in addition to the role of mentor, reviews the life and action of young leaders with a particular focus on spiritual formation. The Chaplain is also a tangible witness of the Church actively engaged and committed to fulfilling the mission of the YCW with young people.

Each role has a detailed position description.

Essential Skills and Personal Attributes

The Mentor is an adult engaged in a collaborative ministry. They have good listening skills and are open to the diverse opinions and beliefs of young adults today. They are people whom young adults can trust and can turn to for advice, assistance or support.

They have an understanding of their faith which is expressed in their actions and daily lives. They are not perfect but are good role models who respectfully challenge and question. Above all, they are team members who learn from young adults and facilitate their formation in a collaborative way. They work closely with all members of the team to empower them to discover their mission by facilitating personal reflection and action.

2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Limitations

All Mentors must carry out their role in a manner consistent with the vision, mission and values of the YCW.

Code of Conduct

All Mentors, as well as members and staff, must comply with the AYCW's Code of Conduct. This Code outlines the values and behaviours expected of all those associated with the AYCW.

These values and behaviours are fundamental:

- to the AYCW's mission
- to building a vibrant and strong YCW moment
- to creating a supporting environment for all staff, members, mentors and volunteers.

Right Relationships & Duty of care

The Mentor working with young people is in a position of power and trust as an agent of the AYCW. Trusting relationships can and should develop between Mentors and the young people they mentor and guide. However, every care must be taken by the Mentor to ensure such relationships never breach boundaries and so lead to inappropriate relationships or to abuse of the position entrusted to them.

It is the responsibility of the Mentor to seek guidance and external advice in any circumstance that represents a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the young people or individual being mentored. This includes any mental health, family violence or other personal matter affecting young adults.

Any concerns or reasonable suspicion for the safety, welfare and wellbeing of young people in our care must be reported. We are mandated to report any disclosure of abuse made by a young person under the age of 18, and to report any abuse that may have happened to young adults when they were children, that is disclosed to us.

While the Mentor is sensitive to the needs of the individuals in these matters, organisational accountability is to the National Executive through the National Mentor.

Confidentiality

In carrying out the role, contacts, members and leaders may share information with the Mentor which is private and confidential. The Mentor accepts and respects the confidentiality of that information. However if information shared includes an intent to hurt them self or another, Mentors are legally obliged to report the matter to the relevant body i.e. emergency services, or mental health crisis team and also to the Mentors' Team. Co-ordinator.

Confidential information will also be shared if required by a court of law.

Grievances

If the Mentor is experiencing conflict or has a grievance regarding their role, they should try to resolve the matter informally in the first instance. If this is not possible, it should be reported and discussed with the Mentors' Team-Coordinator. Mentees are to raise any grievances regarding their mentor to the Mentor-Leaders Team. Refer to the AYCW Grievance Policy for more information.

Time Commitment

The local group mentor is expected to attend all group meetings, to be available to attend occasional events and to plan regularly with the group president. This can be expected to require 2-3 hours per fortnight. The personal mentor is expected to maintain regular contact with the young worker. Face-to-face meetings should be held every 4-6 weeks or more often as agreed. Mentors are encouraged to meet monthly for peer review, peer support and ongoing formation.

3. SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

The AYCW adopts transparent and planned processes for the recruitment of Mentors in order to attract Mentors with the relevant interest, knowledge, skills and attributes. Recruitment and selection processes must be consistent and non-discriminatory, according to best practice and equal opportunity requirements.

Role Specification

A detailed role description will be available for each Mentor position, including clear expectations of the role and responsibilities.

Identification of Potential YCW Mentors

YCW Mentors will be adults who can act as role models for leaders in development.

Selection criteria include:

- Genuine interest in young adults
- Commitment to taking action that builds community

- Strong commitment to the principles of the YCW
- Openness and patience
- Effective listening and support
- Excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills
- Capacity to mentor according to the philosophy of the YCW.
- Recognition that the movement belongs to and is directed by the young adults themselves.
- Leadership experience in the YCS/ YCW is desirable but not essential.

Recruitment and selection

Mentors will be recruited using a variety of methods including personal contact, social media, churches, schools, and universities.

Mentors would normally be over the age of 30 years.

All applicants should complete an Expression of Interest outlining their motivation and how they meet the selection criteria for the position.

Group Mentors

The recruitment process for a group mentor is led by the YCW Group President and, where relevant, the outgoing Mentor. By invitation, a potential recruit will be asked to consider the role outlined in information provided. The interested parties should meet to discuss the role and the group context.

Personal Mentors

In the recruitment of a personal mentor, potential Mentors will be identified by the leadership team, other Mentors or by the individual to be mentored. From this field the leader should meet with one or more prospects to establish a comfortable rapport. The invitation to be a personal mentor should come from the leader to be mentored.

Expert Mentors

From time to time Mentors with specific professional skills may be required. The leadership team will identify possible Mentors for these positions (eg financial, legal). The interested parties should meet to discuss the role and the Mentor appointed with the agreement of the Leadership Team.

Identification, References and Background Checks

Mentors will be asked to provide proof of identity, such as a driver's license, passport, or utility bill showing the Mentor's full name, current address and date of birth.

As part of the EOI process all Mentors will provide two professional references. Appointment as a Mentor is contingent upon the AYCW receiving a satisfactory reference.

To ensure a safe environment for all those involved in the AYCW, background checks including National Criminal History Check and Working with Children checks will be required.

Probation Period

A probation period may be required as part of the Mentor's appointment. A probation period allows a specified time for the Mentor and mentee to assess if the arrangement is working satisfactorily for both parties and, if not, the mentoring arrangements may be ceased.

Agreement

The Mentor will be asked to confirm that they are willing to accept the voluntary position by signing a standard agreement prepared by the AYCW, and lodged with the AYCW National Office.

4. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Orientation and Induction

Mentors will receive an orientation to their role by the Mentor's Team, lead by the Mentors' Team Coordinator, plus copies of relevant materials and the Mentor's and Chaplain's Handbook.

Ongoing Formation

Mentors will meet on a regular basis for peer review and support, normally monthly (or every two months). Ongoing formation resources will be available from the AYCW. Local and national training sessions and/or retreats will also be offered on an annual basis and coordinated by the Mentors' Team Coordinator.

All Mentors are encouraged to undertake ongoing professional development and commit to best practice in their mentoring role.

5. MANAGEMENT OF MENTORS

The AYCW commits to effective leadership and support for Mentors, including adequate resourcing, so that Mentors may work effectively in their role and also maximize the Mentor's personal fulfillment in the role.

Any issues arising should be brought to the attention of the Mentors' Team Coordinator.

Supervision and Review

Regular review and debriefing at the monthly/ two monthly Mentors' meetings is important to manage workload, raise any issues, provide feedback or request training assistance.

It is expected that the Mentor will participate in these regular meetings for peer review and supervision.

A meeting to formally review the Mentors work will be scheduled annually by the Mentors' Team Coordinator. This review will include the mentee and a representative from the Leaders Team. The review is an important opportunity to discuss how the Mentor is functioning in their role and the experience of the leader or group being mentored.

The Mentor's immediate contact point and support is from the Mentors' Team Coordinator. Any issues, challenges or opportunities in the role should be discussed with the Coordinator in the first instance.

Term of Service

The position of Mentor is usually of two years duration unless otherwise specified in the Role Description. Following a review, the position may be renewed by mutual agreement.

Remuneration & Reimbursement of Expenses

The YCW Mentor position is a voluntary one unless specifically covered by a separate agreement.

Out of pocket expenses incurred directly as a result of undertaking their role will be reimbursed only if prior approval for the expenditure has been received from the Leader's Team, usually the Treasurer.

Mentors will be expected to contribute to the costs associated with participation in local and/or national formation and development meetings.

Changing Roles

From time to time the leaders of the YCW may want to change who is mentoring which leaders or groups, or may request mentors to take on other responsibilities within the movement. These changes will be proposed and discussed at Mentor Team meetings.

Performance Management

In the event that the work of the Mentor does not meet the expectations of the role, the supervisee supported by a member of the Leader's Team and the Mentor Team Coordinator will discuss the issues with the Mentor to clarify expectations of the role and how to best assist the Mentor in meeting those expectations. An ongoing inability by the Mentor to meet the expectations of the role, may result in the Mentor being released from the role.

Dismissal

The AYCW reserves the right to end the Mentor's appointment at any time for breaching the Code of Conduct. This can include: bullying, discrimination, theft, or inappropriate relationships or behaviours. It also includes the sustained inability by the Mentor to meet the role expectations.

6. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Work Health and Safety

The AYCW is committed to looking after the health, and safety of all Mentors as well as their members, contacts and employees. AYCW premises will be safe and adequate for the carrying out of the Mentor's role. The Mentor Team Coordinator or their delegate is responsible for briefing the Mentor on procedures in the event of a fire, an incident and

incident reporting. Volunteers are protected under Work Health and Safety Laws, according to the State where they are living.

Personal Safety

The personal safety of Mentors is paramount. Mentors must avoid situations if they have concerns about personal safety and raise any concerns with the Mentor Team Coordinator.

Insurance

All Mentors are covered under the AYCW's public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance and personal accident voluntary workers insurance, when undertaking their AYCW responsibilities. Copies of the insurances can be provided to Mentors on request. Mentors motor vehicles are not covered by the AYCW's vehicle insurance policy. Any fines or traffic infringements incurred when undertaking their role are the sole responsibility of the Mentor.

The Mentor's personal property is not covered by the AYCW insurance. Mentors are encouraged to appropriately secure or store any valuable items whilst carrying out their work.

Alcohol, Smoking and Other Drugs

Mentors are not permitted to be under the influence of, or smoke or take illegal drugs whilst they are carrying out their tasks. Any alcohol consumption should be in moderation and appropriate to the occasion.

7. COMMUNICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

Communication

Regular communication is key to Mentors being informed and up to date with the operations of the AYCW. Communication with Mentors will be by various forms particularly by email, social media and personal contact.

The AYCW commits to communicating with Mentors in a timely manner and encourages Mentors to respond in a timely way, enabling work to proceed smoothly.

Giving Feedback

Mentors are core in supporting the work of the movement. Their opinions and input are valued. Mentors are encouraged to contribute constructive feedback to their Mentor's Team Coordinator or local leadership team in order to improve operations.

Representation to Media

Mentors are requested not to speak on the AYCW's behalf on public or social media without the prior consent of the Leadership Team or Mentor Team-Coordinator or.

Personal Information

The YCW will not share a Mentor's personal information or use it in any way that is unauthorized. Any information will be kept in accordance with good practice and in line with local and federal laws relating to the storage and collection of data.

Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed by the AYCW every three years.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

The following documents directly relate to the selection, appointment and management of Mentors:

- Code of Conduct
- Expression of Interest Form
- Recruitment and Induction Checklist
- Annual Review Form
- Code of Conduct
- Mentors and Chaplain's Acknowledgement and Agreement Form
- Child and Youth Protection Policy
- Complaint's Policy
- Duty of Care/ Work Health and Safety
- Privacy Policy
- Reimbursement Policy.