

YOUTH AT RISK POLICY

SECTION 1 DEFINITION

The term "At Risk" in Youth At Risk can be defined as: at Risk of turning to crime, have low self-esteem and confidence, poor social skills, poor problem-solving and alienation.

SECTION 2 RATIONALE

This policy document is designed to give an understanding of the term 'Youth At Risk' and the people the term applies to. To assist in creating relationships with Youth At Risk, it will explain communication barriers.

SECTION 3 IDENTIFYING YOUTH AT RISK

Attributes of a Youth at Risk may include:

- (1) Criminal history
- (2) Social isolation
- (3) Anti-Social Behaviour
- (4) Substance Abuse
- (5) Low Self-esteem
- (6) Depression

People who can be consulted with as to the qualification of a youth as an 'at- risk' person include:

- (1) Social workers
- (2) School teachers
- (3) Parents
- (4) Friends of the person in question
- (5) Self-referral

SECTION 4 COMMUNICATION ISSUES

When communicating with a Youth At Risk, care must be taken with the use of:

- (1) sexist comments.
- (2) language of a degrading nature.
- (3) insults.
- (4) the term 'youth at risk' when referring to that person.
- (5) talk of distressing issues such as suicide and death.

SECTION 5 EVENTS FOR YOUTH AT RISK

When hosting events for Youth At Risk, the following guides must be adhered to:

- (1) NO illegal drugs are to be allowed.
- (2) Alcohol, if an event allows it, must not be supplied and/or consumed to/by anyone under 18 years of age, and must require the permission of the event co-ordinator.

- (3) Smoking, if an event allows it, must not be supplied and/or consumed to/by anyone under 18 years of age, and must require the permission of the event co-ordinator.
- (4) Communication issues in section 4 must be adhered to.
- (5) A social/community worker, experienced in liaising with Youth At Risk, must be present at all events involving Youth At Risk, along with the event co-ordinator.
- (6) On Youth At Risk camps, there must be at least one member of staff, or volunteer, who is experienced in first-aid and/or holds a current first-aid certificate.

SECTION 6 VOLUNTEERS AT YOUTH AT RISK EVENTS

As Youth At Risk groups require exceptional attention and specific needs, care must be taken when selecting volunteers for any Youth At Risk event.

- (1) Volunteers making their debut at Youth At Risk event must be briefed beforehand by a social worker as to prevent unnecessary situations.
- (2) All volunteers, regardless of age, gender and social/worker status, are “volunteers” for the duration of the event and therefore must answer to the event co-ordinator.
- (3) At least one volunteer at each event must:
 - (a) be experienced in first aid and/or hold a current first-aid certificate, and/or;
 - (b) be a professional social worker, and/or;
 - (c) have experience with Youth At Risk.
- (4) For events involving Youth At Risk under the age of 18, the event co-ordinator reserves the right to screen a possible volunteer through police records.