

NEWS RELEASE



The Hon. Graham West MP
Minister for Juvenile Justice
Minister for Youth
Minister for Volunteering
Member for Campbelltown

Thursday 1 October 2008

MINISTER CONGRATULATES YOUTH WORKERS

The Minister for Youth, Graham West today paid tribute to the many youth services and youth workers across the state for their vital support of young people, at the annual NSW Youth Action and Policy Association (YAPA) Youth Conference.

"Youth Services and youth workers play such an important role in championing the aspirations of young people, many of whom are negotiating a particularly challenging time in life," said Mr West.

Referring to the theme of the conference - *Participation into Action* – Mr West commented on the importance of young people being valued for the immense contribution that they make to the community.

"Young people are our future, and genuine youth participation is an important aspect of a representative and democratic society," he said.

"That's why the Government has established a NSW Youth Advisory Council, which provides a direct avenue of communication between the young people of NSW and the NSW Government.

"The Council ensures that young people participate in the development of Government policies and programs which concern them."

Mr West said the NSW Government is also responsible for Youth Week in NSW.

"This year, there were more than 900 local events around NSW during the week with more than 220,000 young people participating in them.

"And just as important, around 4,000 young people were directly involved in planning, organising and managing Youth Week Events."

In his address, Mr West also congratulated YAPA as the peak non government organisation in NSW for its commitment to advocating on behalf of young people and youth services.

"In recognition of the important role that YAPA performs, the Government provides funding for several YAPA operations through the NSW Department of Community Services, including a small grants program for projects designed and led by young people."

The Minister allocated \$5000 to this year's YAPA conference, which involved a number of workshops for young people on advocacy and lobbying, fundraising, how to run an event and working with local councils.

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