

YOUTH ETHICS FRAMEWORK^{FOR} TASMANIA



ynot
youth network of Tasmania



How to use the Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania case studies

The *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania* [Code of Ethics](#) poster and the accompanying [Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania](#) booklet provide a voluntary guide for individual youth sector workers and organisations to support ethical practice when engaging with young people (12-25 years) in Tasmania. It provides the youth sector with a tool that promotes consistency in the practice of youth work across the sector and creates a platform for discussions of ethical youth work practice.

Since the release of the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania* in 2012, it has been used by organisations within the youth sector in a number of ways. To support the ongoing implementation of the Framework, the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), has collected a number of case studies from organisations and individuals who are already making use of the Framework within their daily practice.

The Framework can be used by individual workers, volunteers and organisations who work with young people in areas such as :

- local government services
- youth support or community agencies
- volunteer groups
- youth-led organisations
- training organisations
- sports clubs
- not-for-profit organisations

The following case studies provide practical examples of how different organisations are using the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania*. They demonstrate that the Framework can be incorporated into everyday practice within the youth sector and assist organisations and workers in promoting best practice, while negotiating ethical issues with their clients.

If you or your organisation would like more information about how to become involved with the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania*, or if you would like to contribute a case study of how your organisation is currently using the Framework, please contact YNOT by calling 03 6223 5511 or emailing ceo@ynot.org.au



Practical ways to use the Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania

These practical examples of how to use the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania* are taken from the individual case studies. They are designed to assist youth sector workers to incorporate the Framework into their practice as they seek to ethically support the young people they work with.

1. Incorporate the Framework into the practice guidelines and client charter of your organisation. This shows that the young person remains the primary focus and allows people to know what to expect when they access your services.
2. Display the poster within your organisation for clients, workers and other service visitors to see, to show your commitment to professional integrity and helping young people within a context of respect and dignity.
3. Link the Framework into your organisational policies around professional responsibilities such as duty of care, boundaries and transparency.
4. Use the Framework as an induction and orientation tool for new staff, volunteers and with students on professional placements.
5. Build the Framework into professional development sessions by including it in team meetings and training, as a way of keeping workers grounded in the core principles of their practice. The case examples within the booklet can be used as a basis for group discussions or as role play scenarios. The Framework can also be used within professional supervision, as a way of instigating critical reflection and discussions around practice.
6. Refer to the Framework for guidance and as a sounding board when faced with difficult ethical questions or when supporting ethical behaviour or challenging unethical behaviour.
7. Make reference to the Framework during employee recruitment processes, such as in key selection criteria, e.g. "A demonstrated commitment to working ethically with young people, as defined by the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania*".
8. Add to a memorandum of understanding when working in collaboration with other organisations or businesses to provide a common framework for practice.
9. Refer to the Framework when writing submissions, grant applications and consultation responses to demonstrate how your organisation operates with professional consistency and awareness.
10. Use it as a reference to discuss with people who are interested in working in the youth sector.

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Matt Hill is the Youth and Community Participation Officer at the **Derwent Valley Council**. He leads the Tree2Sea, an educational kayak and boat building project based in New Norfolk, is part of running the 'Energizer Youth' Youth Centre and oversees the Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team (D'FAT), who advise Council on youth issues and activities.



DERWENT VALLEY COUNCIL

How does Council use the Ethics Framework?

- The Ethics Framework has been endorsed by the Derwent Valley Council as a clear practice guideline for all Council activities involving young people. It has provided an excellent addition to Council's Youth Participation Policy, by outlining an ethical approach to youth work and it has been incorporated into significant council documents such as the *Social Tourism and Economic Plan*.
- The Ethics Framework has been embedded in the Tree2Sea project plan as a guide for all volunteers who work with young people.
- It has been tabled at Real Action...Forward Thinking (RAFT), a youth networking group of service providers and stakeholders who work with young people and NGO's, as a standard of practice for youth work.
- The Ethics Framework supports the Youth Advisory Group in their role with Council.

What does the Ethics Framework add to your practice?

- The Ethics Framework is an essential document to refer to when planning any project.
- It explains common sense practice in plain English and makes communicating the expectations of how to interact and work with young people incredibly straight forward.
- It helps bring a professionalism and baseline standard to youth work.
- It is useful as a method of self-checking when facing difficult situations.
- It complements the working with vulnerable people check by reinforcing the responsibility for duty of care.

Matt Durose is vice-chair of the YNOT Board. He has broad experience across both community and government sectors and is currently a Community Development Project Officer with Mission Australia Housing, based in Clarence Plains, on the outskirts of Hobart.

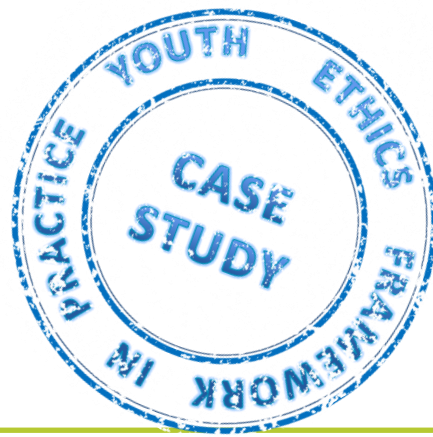
Three reasons for using the Ethics Framework

1. **The increasing professionalisation of the youth sector:** More emphasis is being placed on compliance and regulation within the youth sector. The Ethics Framework is an excellent tool to ensure that your organisation can fulfil obligations such as duty of care, client confidentiality and staff-care.
2. **Framework for staff behaviour:** The Ethics Framework provides a valuable on-the-job training tool to ensure staff are aware of and comply with the professional expectations of their roles. Behavioural competencies are often difficult to articulate, particularly in cases of under-performance. The Ethics Framework is ready-made for use with staff from induction to training days to ongoing performance management.
3. **Excellence in client service:** Most importantly, the Ethics Framework guides staff in their treatment of clients. The Ethics Framework helps to ensure that staff understand how to consistently treat clients with dignity, equity and respect. It is a valuable asset that can assist your client service delivery to go from good to excellent.

Seven easy ways to use the Ethics Framework

1. **Staff Recruitment:** "Willingness to comply with the *Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania*" can be added to the selection criteria for any job descriptions. The case studies are easily adapted as interview or recruitment questions.
2. **New Staff inductions:** A useful tool around which to focus staff inductions.
3. **Staff Performance:** As a basis for supervision discussions and staff reviews.
4. **Team Meetings and Training:** Topics can be added to team meetings and used to strategically address any emerging issues within the team. The case studies also provide a valuable resource for staff training and lend themselves well to group discussions around understanding ethical responsibilities.
5. **Policy Platform:** The Framework is easily added in to organisational policies.
6. **Client Charters:** Incorporate the Framework into information outlining what a client can expect when receiving services from your organisation.
7. **Grant Writing:** Adherence to the Ethics Framework will assist to strengthen grant and tender applications when describing your organisation's strengths and its human resource practices.

YOUTH ETHICS FRAMEWORK TASMANIA



Lisa Amerikanos is Project Coordinator with **National Joblink** (NJL). NJL, a premier registered training organisation, has operated in Tasmania for 25 years. Operating as a specialist Youth Services provider for more than 15 years, NJL piloted the original Pathways Program, now known as Youth Connections.



How do you use the Ethics Framework?

"I refer to the Ethics Framework when challenged with an ethical question, when I am updating or establishing procedures and also when training new youth workers. The framework is also used within team meetings where an area of the framework is selected and discussed. When the point is being discussed we talk about how to apply this specific area of the framework to real-life situations."

How does the Ethics Framework add to your practice?

- It serves to create an 'ethical culture' to reinforce to staff the values of the organisation. The Ethics Framework creates an overall approach for youth workers to adopt towards their clients, allowing them to feel more secure in their work.
- It reinforces the professional approach that is expected both as an employer of youth workers and for youth workers themselves.
- The Framework brings an endorsement to decision making processes and highlights what needs to be considered.
- The Framework provides guidelines or reference points for staff to refer to when working out the right path in a decision they need to take for specific situations.
- We place the Framework on display in several of our youth service offices and the way we discuss elements of our responsibilities are in line with the approach of the Framework."

YOUTH ETHICS FRAMEWORK FOR TASMANIA



Pulse Youth Health South provides health information and support for young people aged 12-24 in Southern Tasmania. Pulse Youth Health work with young people both individually and in groups to give health information and build on skills, knowledge and confidence to make healthy choices.



Why does Pulse use the Youth Ethics Framework?

- It provides support for the move to professionalise Youth Work practice.
- When working with young people who are vulnerable, we need to be explicit about the purpose of our actions. The Framework assists in keeping us youth focussed - with the young person as the primary client.
- The Framework is useful to articulate what underpins our practice in what can sometimes be a chaotic environment that is often fraught with ethical dilemmas.

How does Pulse use the Youth Ethics Framework?

- For orientation of new staff and for the numerous professional work placement students we host each year.
- It fits well within our Youth Health Services Framework and helps link the common approaches of different disciplines.
- It also provides a common framework for working collaboratively with partner organisations and is often included in written agreements when setting up working arrangements.
- The Framework is used as part of team development activities, such as having team members role play scenarios demonstrating each ethic and forms a useful starting point for discussions about professional and ethical practice.
- The Youth Ethics Framework poster is displayed in the services for clients, workers and other service visitors to see.
- It is a great resource to refer students to who are interested in working in the youth sector.

TasTAFE offers the Certificate IV in Youth Work (CHC40413). The theory and skills taught within this qualification reflect the role of workers who develop and facilitate programs for young people through a range of community-based programs. These programs are designed to address the social, behavioural, health, welfare, developmental and protection needs of young people.



TasTAFE teacher, Fiona Richardson, uses the Youth Ethics Framework for Tasmania with her students as a learning and guidance tool. Students from the Certificate IV in Youth Work, class of 2014, discussed how it has guided their early practice experiences. Here are their responses:

How have you found the Ethics Framework helpful?

"The Framework explains and reminds you of your role as a youth worker."

"It gives you the ability to walk beside clients and still have boundaries."

"It's an excellent tool to help with decision making in the workplace."

"The Framework provides a moral compass, a solid reference point and a foundation structure that I can always turn back to."

"I believe the Framework will give consistency to my service delivery and is transferable to any sector."

What are some potential uses of the Ethics Framework?

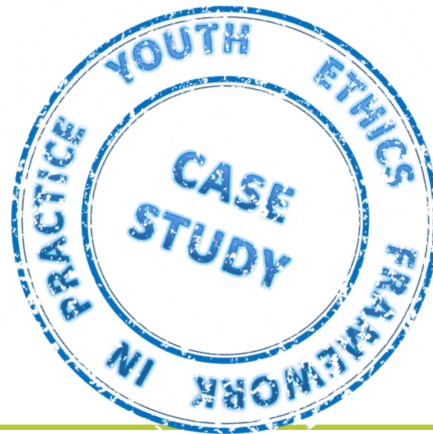
"It would be a great induction tool for new staff and very helpful as a guide for new graduates starting work."

"The Framework would be a useful way to establish standards of practice and agreement within the workplace."

"The case examples could be used with young people to give advice and seek feedback."

"By sharing the Framework with young people, it means they know what to expect from an organisation."

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The **Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT)** is the peak body for the non Government youth sector and young people in Tasmania. YNOT aims to improve the Tasmanian communities response to youth issues. Central to the work of YNOT is the youth participatory and consultative structure, the **Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF)** which represents the needs and interests of young people aged 12-25 years.

YNOT

youth network of Tasmania

TYF

Tasmanian youth forum

Why does YNOT use the Ethics Framework?

- The Ethics Framework provides a professional basis from which to work. The framework represents a professional approach to working with young people, which takes a person-centred perspective, ensuring that the young person's wellbeing is at the centre of all interactions, regardless of whether we are working at a policy level or directly with young people.
- Engaging with the Ethics Framework requires reflection of our practice and invites ongoing development and growth for staff, better enabling us to work with and represent young people.

How does YNOT use the Ethics Framework in practice?

- The Ethics Framework is incorporated into all of the work we do. It informs and underpins our policy platforms, submissions and consultation responses through the ethics and values we communicate. It shapes the way we run our forums and conferences and how we interact with interns, students and those working within the sector.
- The Ethics Framework is displayed around the office and young people we work with on a regular basis are aware of this. We also have the Ethics Framework accessible on our website, promote it within our newsletters and throughout our networks.