

CODA YAC



WHAT IS CODA?

Incorporated in 1969, The Council on Drug Abuse (CODA) is a charitable, non-profit organization that delivers preventive drug abuse education programs.

CODA's mission is to prevent and reduce drug abuse through education impacting children and youth.

CODA offers supportive education programs for teachers, parents and other adults impacting youth.

WHAT IS YAC?

YAC stands for the Youth Advisory Council. The YAC is a group of high school students from all over Canada that have a shared passion to reduce and prevent substance abuse in their schools, communities and among their friends.

Composed of school and regional youth representatives from each and every administrative region across Canada, the YAC will see the gathering of 104 Canadian youth leaders interacting and

engaging with each other to prevent youth substance abuse in Canada. The YAC also helps bridge the gap between youth and adults by twinning a regional CODA Educator with each of the regional YACs.

In November of 2009 CODA will launch its ONTARIO YAC. There will be 16 regional YACs, one for every region in Ontario. All students entering Grades 9, 10, 11 or 12 in September of 2009 are invited to apply for this experience of a lifetime.

Beyond making a difference...Being the difference!

WHAT IS THE ANNUAL YAC CONFERENCE?

YAC members will be invited to attend the annual YAC conference to be hosted during National Addiction Awareness Week (third week of November). The first annual YAC conference will take place in November 2009 in Toronto. This one day event provides a forum for participants to address issues of youth drug abuse, explore best practices in community outreach and awareness raising techniques, and assess the relevancy of CODA programming. All of this is in addition to providing training workshops on event planning, fundraising and social skills building. Through a full day of networking, interactive and engaging workshops and seminars, participating YAC representatives will compile their learning in a communication paper about best practices for preventing youth drug abuse and will make recommendations about educational drug abuse prevention programming. Participating YAC members will also identify their annual awareness raising campaign and set the strategic and annual activity plans for the YAC's upcoming year.



WHAT'S IN IT FOR OUR STUDENTS/YOUTH?

CODA YAC is not only a great learning experience for youth, but in itself models the principles of youth engagement to provide for a healthy and active lifestyle. In addition to the inherent benefits of involvement in this national project, students will gain important life skills and experiences.

Among many other skills and experiences, participating youth will develop and gain:

- Volunteer Hour Accumulation
- Leadership skills
- Communication skills
- Organization skills
- Networking skills
- Knowledge of drug abuse prevention
- Working on national campaigns & initiatives
- Fundraising
- Event planning
- Presentation skills
- Representation skills
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Greater capacity to make an impact in their communities & schools
- Time management skills
- Mentoring skills

HOW WILL MY STUDENT / YOUTH BE INVOLVED?

Students can apply for one of two positions:

- **AMBASSADOR of School Youth Advisory Council**
 - ◇ 1 per participating school in Ontario
- **YAC MEMBER**
 - ◇ Unlimited number of positions available (generally 3-6 per school)

AMBASSADOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Coordinate the successful and smooth functioning of their School YAC**
- **Automatic enrollment in their Regional Youth Advisory Council**
- **Participate in monthly meetings of Regional YAC (web based or in person)**
- **Oversee the implementation of CODA YAC activities in their respective school and region**
- **Act as a CODA YAC spokesperson in their respective school and region**
- **Write a monthly newsletter article on the activities and initiatives of their School YAC**
- **Contribute to YAC website material**
- **Act as the primary point of contact between CODA and their School YAC Members**
- **Act as primary point of contact between their School YAC Members and CODA**
- **Attend the Annual YAC Conference (1 day conference hosted in Toronto. Attendance is subsidized and may require overnight stay)**
- **HAVE FUN!**

MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Represent their school and community on their School YAC**
- **Actively participate in CODA YAC activities in their school and region (including fundraising events, campaigns and initiatives)**
- **Attend monthly YAC meetings (web-based or physical)**
- **Invitation to attend the Annual YAC Conference (1 day conference hosted in Toronto. Depending on youth's home location, attendance may require overnight stay. Attendance is voluntary and *may* be subsidized)**
- **Advise CODA on issues of drug abuse prevention as they relate to their school and region**
- **Act as a source of verification to ensure the relevancy of CODA programs in their school / region**
- **HAVE FUN!**

HOW TO APPLY

We invite parents and school staff to encourage their youth to apply to the CODA Youth Advisory Council. Interested youth must send in a complete application package with each of the following:

- CODA YAC Application form
- One reference letter (teacher, sports coach, school principal, guidance councilor, etc.)
- Parental Consent form (for youth under 18 years of age)

For more information on the Council on Drug Abuse and the Youth Advisory Council, please contact our offices at 416-763-1491 x 230 or by emailing the YAC Coordinator at YAC@drugabuse.ca



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