

FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG WORKERS

Summary Report

1. Conference Aim and Objectives

To bring young workers from all over the country together, so that they can share their experiences and hear how the Federal Government's Industrial Relations legislation is impacting on young people.

To provide examples of young people who are making a positive contribution to their workplace, school and community through campaigning. +

- Provide participants with practical skills in campaigning, communication and leadership
- Provide participants to develop plans around the conference theme that can be implemented on their return to their school, workplace and communities
- Establish a network of young union activists across the country, to increase participants access to resources and support
- Provide participants with an understanding of the key issues impacting on young people in the areas of OHS, IR laws, work education
- Participants to gain an understanding of the principles and strategies to create change

2. Participants

The target groups for the conference were high school students, union delegates and officials and community activists:

- 85 Registrations received
- 30 Students from 7 Public High Schools
- Delegates and Officials from 16 unions . ASU, ETU, QPSU, AEU, TWU, AMWU, AMIEU, SDA, CPSU (SPSF), NUW, IEU, LHMU, CPSU, MEAA, CFMEU FFPD, FSU, Unions WA, Queensland CTU, ACTU
- Delegates from WA, QLD, NSW, VIC, Tas and SA.
- Representatives from legal centres and community organisations

3. Sponsorship

- The Minister for Youth and the Office for Youth, State Government of South Australia
- Passport to Safety Australia
- The Your Rights at Work Campaign
- ACTU Member Connect
- Inck Merchandise
- Members Equity Bank

4. Partners

- The Youth Affairs Council of South Australia
- Young Christian Workers Adelaide
- YWCA Adelaide

5. Plenary Sessions

The conference program was modelled on Anger – Hope - Action

Plenary sessions focussed on story telling, youth participation and campaigning to create change.

The first plenary session was called **Stories of Anger** and included presentations from:

- Olivia Guarna, Co-ordinator, Young Workers Legal Service. Olivia gave an overview of client demographics and the key issues clients are presenting with. Olivia also outlined how the service has had to adapt to the federal industrial laws.
- A young worker who gave her perspective on what it is like to work for one of the largest Telco's in Australia.
- Andrea Madeley . Andrea gave a moving presentation about her 18 year old son Daniel, who was killed in an industrial accident 2 years ago.

The second plenary was called **Stories of Hope**. The aim of this session was to demonstrate ways in which young people work together collectively and campaign on other issues that are important to them. It included presentations from:

- Students from the Unley High School Environment group
- The Adelaide YWCA on their No Diet Day+campaign and the use of Digital Storytelling
- Tom Buckley, Unite Union New Zealand on the Supersizemypay campaign

6. Workshops

There were six skill development . based workshops over the two days with the following themes:

- Youth participation (Youth Affairs Council of SA)
- Involving young workers in the YRAW campaign (ACTU ECC)
- Living to work or working to live (Young Christian Workers Adelaide)
- Listening Post . Strategic Questioning (ACTU ECC)
- Campaigning and the Media (Adelaide University)
- Building Power for Change (Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance)

7. Recommendations

- That a National Conference for Young Workers be held every year, rotated between the State Labour Councils. Conference participants from Victoria indicated a willingness to stage a conference in Melbourne next year.
- That the host Labour Council's union youth network or committee develop and implement the conference in consultation with other Labour Council youth representatives via the National Youth representative network.
- That there continues to be a strong focus on skill development in the areas of leadership, campaigning and organising.
- That there is a focus on highlighting and celebrating young people who are making a positive contribution to their workplace, school and communities
- That the host Labour Council involves other local youth organisations e.g state/territory youth peak's, Young Christian Workers, to broaden the appeal of the conference and bring a range of perspectives and opinions to conference participants
- That high school students are a target group for the conference and that their attendance (and subsequent school work post-conference) results in the students receiving points towards their high school certificate