

Partnering for Youth Development

The Government has proposed a new direction for youth development to increase the opportunities available to young people through partnering with the business and philanthropic sectors.

It believes that young people benefit from the chance to develop skills such as leadership, volunteering and mentoring, going on to lead more successful lives as adults.

The new focus is based on:

- increasing the number of youth development opportunities available for young people aged 12-24 (such as leadership, mentoring and volunteering)
- a larger proportion of the budget to go to youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (from 18% to 30%)
- partnership with business and philanthropic sectors as central to the approach, to improve the number and quality of opportunities available
- an initiative that will officially recognise a young person's community participation
- a change in the way funding is distributed, centred on a partnership fund managed by a new board or charitable trust with representation from business and philanthropic organisations.

MYD will stay within MSD, with a clearer set of functions to deliver on the new focus. Around \$1 million would be freed up from organisational and funding changes to start the new partnership fund, with the aim of doubling that with money from the private sector.

Why we need youth development

The main difference for youth development from most other social services is that it is strengths based and focused on helping young people become confident, self sufficient adults through opportunities such as leadership, mentoring and volunteering.

Numerous research shows that increasing positive activity, such as community engagement through volunteering can have a significant influence on young people's health and wellbeing.^{1 2}

A number of studies have found also that involvement in youth mentoring programmes is associated with more positive attitudes toward school and situations involving drugs, greater well-being, and improved personal relationships.

¹ *The World Health Report 2002: Reducing Risks, Promoting Healthy Life*, World Health Organisation, 2002.

² Alberts, Chase, Naudeau, Phelps, & Lerner, 2006; Bandy & Moore, 2009; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Blum, 2010; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Pittman, Irby, & Ferber, 2001; Pittman, 1999; Lerner, Lerner and Benson 2011.

The Ministry of Youth Development

MYD was established on 1 October 2003 and placed under the administration of MSD. The youth development function had previously been the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, which operated as a stand-alone ministry.

MYD's purpose is to increase the ability of young people aged 12 to 24 years old to use their knowledge, skills and experience to participate confidently in their communities.

MYD's functions have evolved over time. They include:

- coordinating youth participation in government and local government decision making
- input to youth policy
- Ministerial services
- delivery of some youth services
- workforce development, including professional training and advice
- initiatives to grow the size of the youth sector
- funding and contracting with youth and with providers of youth services
- managing major youth events such as the Youth Parliament and the youth week awards
- providing information on issues relevant to youth.

MYD currently has 25 full-time positions in four regional teams and at the national office in Wellington.

MYD has an annual operating budget of \$2.932m in 2015-16 and currently administers core funding of about \$6 million to provide youth development opportunities for around 50,000 young New Zealanders.

Increasing the number of opportunities available

The Government's goal is that every young person aged 12-24 has an opportunity for youth development. Not all these opportunities need to be funded by government, but MYD plays an important role in enabling them, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

MYD currently provides around 50,000 of New Zealand's 820,000 young people aged 12-24 with opportunities each year. The aim is to grow this from 50,000 to 70,000 a year over the next two years, with a longer term aim of at least 100,000 a year.

New funding approach centred on a partnership fund

The major funding change proposed is to establish a joint partnership fund with philanthropic and other organisations. The partnership fund will become MYD's main focus.

Around \$1 million a year can be freed up from existing MYD funding to put towards the new partnership fund. Input into how the fund will be spent could come from young people, the business and philanthropic sectors, the youth and community sector, and

from government. The fund will be managed by a board or charitable trust, details of which are being finalised.

The rest of the youth development budget will go towards the overall objective of increasing quality opportunities available for young people, and especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The table below illustrates how the funding will be targeted.

\$million	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Partnership Fund	-	1.500	2.000
Other Government funding	6.133	5.933	5.933
Total available for opportunities	6.133	7.433	7.933
Proportion of funding tightly targeted at disadvantaged youth	18%	24%	30%
Number of opportunities	50,000	60,000	70,000
Unit cost per opportunity	\$123	\$124	\$113

A 'social record' to recognise youth community participation

As part of this new focus, a 'social record' will be set up to recognise young people's community participation in the same way as academic and other educational achievements are. Providing a social record could have a number of benefits:

- raise the awareness of a young person's participation in youth development (to individuals and to employers)
- provide a picture of what opportunities young people are accessing and what more could be offered
- potentially provide a platform to link young people with opportunities.

Clearer set of organisational functions

To achieve the new direction MYD would focus more on functions that support the business and philanthropic sectors in providing quality opportunities for all young people.

These functions would be:

Core functions	Supporting functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and maintaining partnerships with the business and philanthropic sectors to grow the total number of quality youth development opportunities, with a larger proportion than currently tightly targeted at youth from disadvantaged backgrounds • Funding and contracting using evidence based approaches to provide youth development opportunities based on results • Developing opportunities that are driven by youth • Providing for a social record of youth participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing mechanisms to connect youth to the opportunities available • Facilitating co-design with the sector • Contracting for the delivery of Youth Parliament and other large scale events, and direct delivery of smaller scale events • Ministerial servicing

MYD will focus on building strong networks with the business and philanthropic sectors and those organisation's existing relationships with the youth sector.

Some of MYD's current functions may be better led by others, including:

- Programme delivery
- Workforce development
- Direct delivery of some youth events
- Maintaining networks.

Key MYD events such as the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and Youth Parliament could be delivered by a separate organisation.

Changes needed in MYD's capacity and capability

To deliver its new functions, MYD will need to make substantial changes in its capacity and capability.

Currently there are 25 positions in MYD. It is anticipated the new structure will have around 15 positions.

The business and philanthropic sectors have indicated that they want new ways to enable greater partnership on youth initiatives. Such partnerships would mean more of an equal footing in developing programmes and what is spent where, while still responsibly managing the government's investment.