

**National Association of Friendship Centres
Aboriginal Youth Council**



**Evaluation and Membership Consultation
Final Draft Report
May 2007**

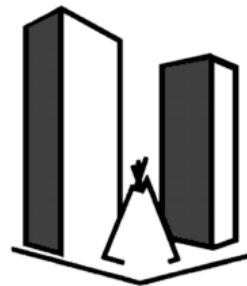


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM	PAGE NUMBER
SUMMARY	3
TERMINOLOGY	3
PROJECT HISTORY AND IMPLEMENTATION	3
PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS	4
EVALUATION FINDINGS	4
INSTITUTIONAL IMPACTS	5
NEXT STEPS	5
DETAILED FINDINGS	6
PARTNER TYPE	7
COMMUNICATION	
METHODS	8
CONTENT	8
VISIBILITY	9
EXTERNAL	9
RESPONSIBILITIES	10
PARTICIPATION	10
ACTION	11
OTHER COMMENTS	11

SUMMARY

Creating a youth survey that would allow youth members, outside of the national forum, to be consulted on AYC effectiveness, is the first step for AYC in creating an ongoing process that includes the participation of its members.

Surveys were sent out to all Friendship Centres and Provincial/Territorial Associations. The surveys were compiled and analyzed. After presentation and acceptance by the AYC, the report will be sent to partners at the local and regional level for information and feedback.

Key findings from the exercise have identified:

- The need to establish a national multi-media communication process
- Identify an ongoing communication avenue for local and regional youth

TERMINOLOGY

AYC – Aboriginal Youth Council
PAYC – Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council
PTA – Provincial/Territorial Association
NAFC – National Association of Friendship Centres
LFC – Local Friendship Centre

PROJECT HISTORY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Since 1994, the Aboriginal Youth Council (AYC) has worked on developing itself, its structure and its profile both externally and within the Friendship Centre movement. The members of the AYC recognized the need to evaluate the work they have done as well as consult the membership on what needs to be improved and implement the recommendations.

The AYC identified Capacity Development as one of six priorities to be identified within a five-year span. Capacity Development is what will enable the AYC to do more work on

behalf of its membership. A piece within the Capacity Development priority was to establish a mechanism by which the AYC could evaluate them by asking their membership. Accountability to membership is important and by creating a tool that can be used by the membership to ensure accountability, will only strengthen the AYC structure overall.

The Evaluation tool was created to assist the AYC in identifying the needs in training from the membership as well as areas for improvement. This evaluation tool also allows the membership to provide direction into the present and future structure of the AYC to make the AYC more effective and more responsive to membership.

The AYC acknowledges it does not work in isolation and that there are a number of people and organizations are involved and invested in the work of the AYC. It was not enough to just evaluate the AYC; they also needed to what it is and isn't doing and how to make things work better.

The following outlines the main reasons for this particular evaluation:

- Examine AYC effectiveness
- Identify strengths
- Identify areas for improvements
- Be accountable to membership
- Reinforce mandate and purpose.
- Make recommendations for change
- Identify needs and resources to improve

PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS

An evaluation form was created and was faxed, emailed and sent via regular mail to all local Friendship Centres and Provincial/Territorial Associations. Participants were asked to have the questionnaire's returned by June 9, 2006. The questionnaire was available on the NAFC website. Overall 62 written evaluations were completed.

It is acknowledged that there was more effort placed on soliciting responses from local youth and not as much emphasis placed in getting responses from the NAFC board or PTA technicians.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Evaluation process was a learning process in developing a useful tool to extract information necessary to make adjustments in order to improve the quality of representation and service to AYC membership.

Overall the exercise was fruitful and gave insight into how to improve communication, increase participation and measure action items.

Communication

Communication is a key issue for many youth members. According to the feedback it is imperative that the AYC in conjunction with the NAFC develop a communication strategy that involves many aspects, including: Communication Methods, Content, AYC Visibility, and Communication externally.

Participation

Participants in the survey were very interested in seeing more training opportunities and seeing the AYC at the local and regional level. They also wanted more visibility from AYC everywhere.

Action

Survey participants wanted the AYC to focus more on external lobbying for involvement and funding than focusing on the development of initiatives.

All feedback received will be useful as AYC continues to update and implement its strategic plan. Articles within the strategic plan will be amended accordingly and approved.

SNAPSHOT	
TOPIC	TOP ANSWERS
PARTNER TYPE	85% of respondents were from the local level
AYC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	AYC needs to identify clearer and more measurable goals and objectives
COMMUNICATION METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone Call • Email/Listserv • Website
COMMUNICATION CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job opportunities • Local/Provincial initiatives • Training Opportunities
COMMUNICATIONS VISIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility at the local level • Email/Listserv • Online Board
COMMUNICATIONS EXTERNAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Aboriginal Organizations • Federal/Provincial Governments • National Non-Profits
RESPONSIBILITIES AYC ONLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending out opportunities for youth to local and regional levels • Providing content for a national newsletter • Finding funding for local and provincial initiatives
PARTICIPATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training opportunities • More advertisement about AYC • More information on AYC positions
ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying for Youth Involvement and youth funding • Provision of Youth Leadership Development training • More advertising of AYC initiatives.

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACTS

It is apparent from the feedback from participants that the NAFC and AYC need to establish a clear form of ongoing communication to the membership. It is necessary that this ongoing communication involves a wide number of media in order to ensure the information gets to all membership.

In Person communication

It was mentioned on more than one occasion that a highly effective tool in communicating with local and regional youth, was to establish a system so that youth council representatives are actually present.

Online communication

The Internet is still one of the most effective tools available to communicate with local and regional youth representatives. However, the resources lack to keep information flowing constantly and with frequent updates.

According to participants, the AYC must be concentrating their efforts more on ensuring the participation of Aboriginal youth in processes where the outcome affects Aboriginal youth, in addition to advocating for this participation, the youth participants requested the advocacy for the capacity to sustain efforts that are currently in place to assist Aboriginal youth. This for the most part speaks directly to the need for funding, as the structural capacity already exists.

At a regular face-to-face meeting, the Aboriginal Youth Council identified the need to develop a regular evaluation process. The recommendation was to repeat the evaluation process at least once for every three years.

NEXT STEPS

Create capacity for an ongoing communication with local and regional youth participants keeping in mind the use of Internet, faxes, mail-outs and in-person.

AYC will review its strategic plan to ensure that methods of communication and

resources required to communicate are incorporated into the implementation of priorities.

The next AYC evaluation will actively recruit the input of Senate members, NAFC board members and PTA technicians.

Identify capacity requirements for implementing training opportunities for AYC and regional/local youth related to a variety of skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Next Evaluation get more partners, including PTA representatives, Senate Members, NAFC board members, PAYC members and AYC members to participate.

For future evaluations, get an independent evaluator or someone with experience in completing evaluations to complete the process.

Identify and implement concrete communication systems including a wide variety of media including internet, cell phone technology, regular mail, email, and podcasts.

Identify and implement training opportunities for AYC and regional/local youth related to a variety of skills.

The Aboriginal Youth Council to complete a review and update of goals and objectives to ensure a strong focus and mission.

DETAILED FINDINGS

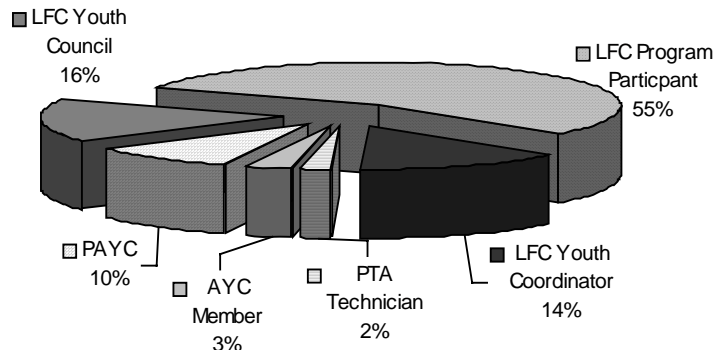
PARTNER TYPE

PREAMBLE

Participants were asked to only check one answer under the “ARE YOU?” section. Should a participant be affiliated with more than one partner type, they were asked to fill out a questionnaire for each position held.

FINDINGS

Eighty-five percent of the participants were from the local level. This included local youth council members, local youth program participants as well as local youth program coordinators. The other 15% of participants were from the PAYC’s, PTA Technicians and the AYC. Due to the low response rate from those other than local participants, adequate assessment in terms of the variations between the responses of the partner types is extremely difficult.



Receiving input from more PTA technicians, the NAFC Board of Directors or the Senate was not emphasized during this process. However, future processes, more response from these partners will be solicited.

AYC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

PREAMBLE

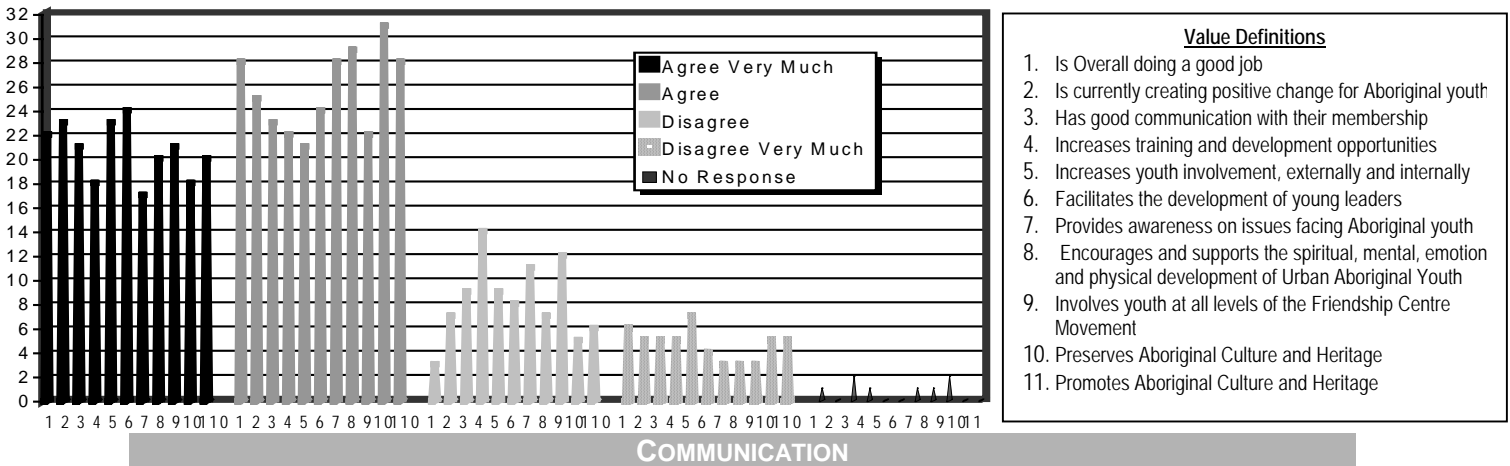
Participants were asked to Agree Very Much, Agree, Disagree or Disagree Very Much, the AYC goals and objectives and mission statement.

FINDINGS

A majority of the participants placed their responses in the “Agree Very Much” or “Agree”. In developing the questionnaire, the original intent was to determine which AYC goals and objectives were being achieved and which needed more attention. However, once analysis was complete, it was clear the original intent of the questions did not translate into the ability to decipher areas of success and areas of improvement.

The difficulty in assessing the responses is that there was an apparent sense from reviewing the individual questionnaires that there was not a great awareness of the work that AYC completes on an ongoing basis. In addition, there was no place within the questionnaire for participants to provide a “Don’t Know/Not Sure” response.

The following chart outlines the highest ranked priorities with the 'agree' and 'disagree' statements. Although deciphering areas of success and improvement are difficult, the chart provides a visual of the initial thoughts of the participants in regards to the AYC goals and objectives. It can be determined that AYC needs clearer and more measurable goals and objectives.



PREAMBLE

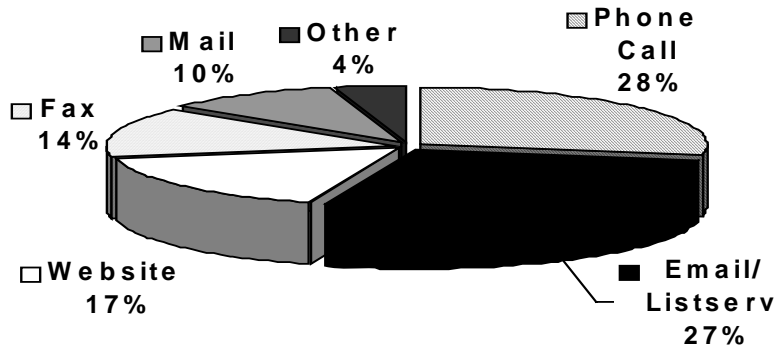
Participants were asked to identify the best way for AYC to communicate with its membership and prioritize their answers.

FINDINGS

The top three ways the participants prefer the AYC to communicate are: via phone call, via email/listserv and via website.

“Other” consisted of a variety of suggestions that AYC members come in person to address the youth in the local communities.

Considering today’s technology and how youth access information, it makes sense that they would prefer to have web-based methods. The main preferred method for communication is via a phone call. This may be difficult considering long distance charges and time factors in regards to calling hundreds of Aboriginal Youth. However, the spirit and intent of this request may be respected via various forms of technology, including cell phone text messaging, ‘Pod-casts’ and regional representatives calling various youth program coordinators regularly.



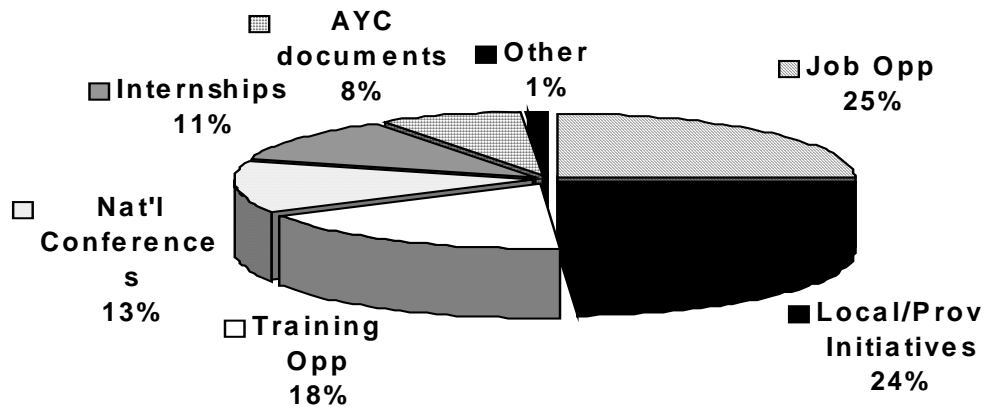
PREAMBLE

The AYC asked the participants to identify what information they would like to receive from the AYC. The intent of the question was to ascertain the type of information that would be most useful and wanted by the youth membership.

FINDINGS

The participants stated that the top three items of information they would like to receive are: Job Opportunities, Local/Provincial Initiatives and Training Opportunities.

Other included getting AYC meeting minutes and "letting local friendship centres know who they are."



It seems that when youth are accessing Friendship Centre services, one of the main resources they are looking for is employment opportunities. This may be an opportunity for AYC to link to a number of employment sites as well as post employment opportunities from the Friendship Centre movement

The second most popular response was Local/Provincial initiatives. Not only are youth looking for employment opportunities, but also for personal growth opportunities. This could be by following through on the information sent on these local and provincial initiatives and attending training, conferences, or workshops (which could also be reflected in the participants third priority). Receiving the information could very well translate into future partnerships or the generation of ideas for their own communities.

AYC documents was the option chosen the fewest number of times, besides "other". The rationale behind that may reflect on earlier comments that it was apparent from the responses received that the participants may not have a sense of what the AYC documents are and how they are relevant and could be utilized by local and regional bodies. It may be apparent from this response that AYC documents should not just be available to the membership, but also how the information can be used it shared with the AYC membership. Another assumption that could be drawn is the possibility that the relevancy to the local and regional levels should be paramount to the future work of the AYC.

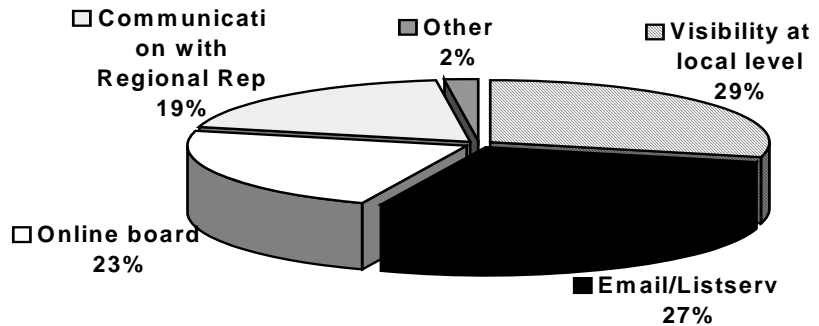
COMMUNICATION – METHODS

PREAMBLE

The AYC asked the participants to identify what would make it easier for them to communicate directly with the AYC.

FINDINGS

Visibility at the local level was the number one way that the participants could communicate with the AYC, followed closely by email/listserv and an online bulletin board.



“Other” included: Bilingualism and more funding.

Visibility at the local level was the top choice by participants. The findings showcase the importance of the membership being able to relate to the Aboriginal Youth Council and knowing their representatives. Once again, the participants chose technology as a key method for communication.

Although, communication with regional representative is the lowest of the top four, it is expected that increased communication and contact with a regional representative would support increased visibility at the local level. This may also provide the youth at the local level the mechanism in which to share the initiatives occurring at the local level, which would also lead to increased information for an online board and newsletter.

Bilingualism is a key factor to remember in the AYC being able to communicate with its membership. Although a small number of participants identified it as a key factor, it's a large issue that is continually being brought up in various forums.

More funding was another method provided by a participant, which could possibly identify the need for resources and structure as a barrier to communication. Although many forms of communication are available for no or little charge, the ability to communicate on a larger scale truly is contingent upon the proper resources.

The online board and email/listserv, is a good way to keep the youth membership in constant communication, as well as providing a forum for youth to provide information, feedback and input into the ongoing initiatives of the AYC.

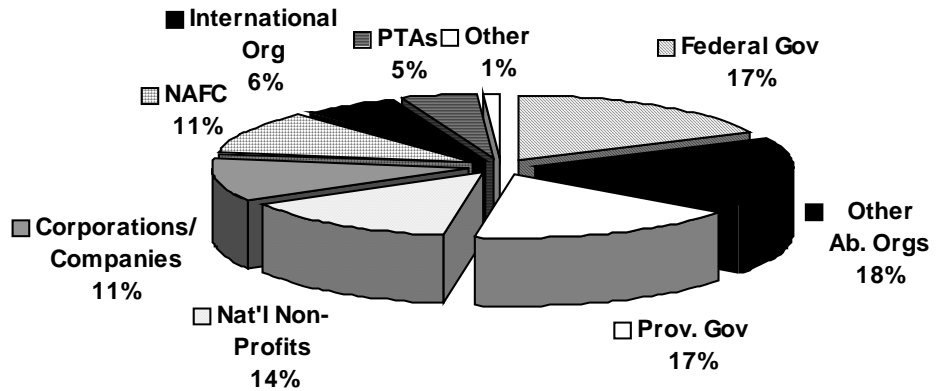
PREAMBLE

Participants were asked to whom the AYC should be communicating. The AYC was hoping to identify key partners to target for future initiatives.

FINDINGS

Above all other possible partners, participants identified Other Aboriginal Organizations. Closely following both Federal and Provincial governments.

“Other” included: the community, ‘anyone/everyone’, and media.



The two governments combined make up the largest percentage to whom the AYC should be lobbying. Currently, the AYC has not been lobbying the government, provincial or federal.

The participants also identified, the NAFC, PTA’s and International organizations low on the external communications list. The conclusion could be drawn that it is these structures from where the information comes from and that the it’s important that the information sent out be provided to other Aboriginal organizations in order to share the work that is currently being completed and possibly link to similar work that is being done in a number of areas.

One of the participants identified ‘media’ as a key external communication must. Perhaps, the development of external communication tools could be utilized in a number of ways to a number of different audiences.

ACTION

PREAMBLE

The AYC asked participants to identify whom they would like to take the lead responsibility in a number of areas. The AYC was looking to determine what is expected of them and in what capacity when it came to these responsibilities and who to look to as possible partners and even possibly lobby within each of the responsibilities.

FINDINGS

According to the feedback from the participants, the following could be determined:

Local Friendship Centres should be most responsible for ‘Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth’ and ‘Identifying and Providing training’ and least responsible for ‘Finding money for local youth initiatives’.

The Aboriginal Youth Council should be most responsible for ‘Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth’ and ‘Providing Content for a national newsletter that would be sent to all Friendship Centres’ and least responsible for ‘Identifying and Providing Training’.

Provincial Aboriginal Youth Councils should be most responsible for 'Finding money for local youth initiatives' and 'Providing Content for a national newsletter that would be sent to all Friendship Centres' and least responsible for 'Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth'.

Provincial/Territorial Association (PTA) should be most responsible for 'Developing programs and projects that can be implemented at the provincial and local level' and 'Providing Content for a national newsletter that would be sent to all Friendship Centres' and least responsible for 'Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth'.

Finally, the National Association of Friendship Centres should be most responsible for 'Providing Content for a national newsletter that would be sent to all Friendship Centres' and 'Finding money for local youth initiatives' and least responsible for 'Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth' and 'Identifying and Providing training'.

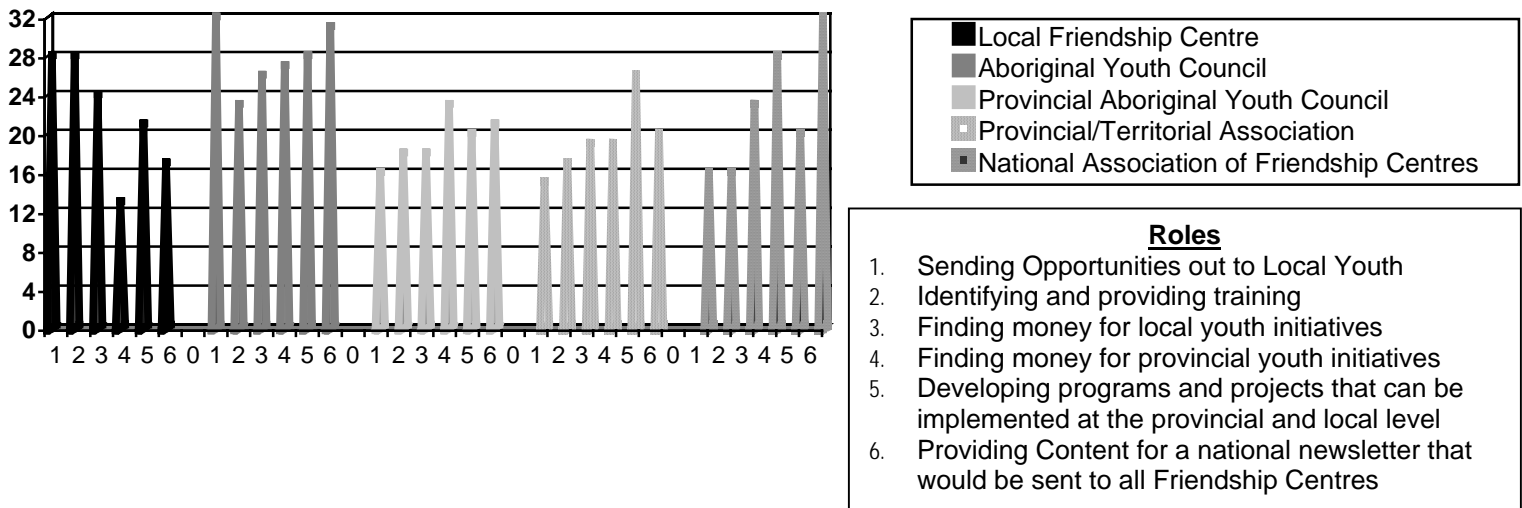
This information must be taken into context within various situations and what each one of these structures does on an ongoing basis.

Also according to the feedback provided by the participants, the AYC is the structure that should be completing a majority of the work.

According to the amount of votes each 'Role' received the top Roles were:

1. Providing Content for a national newsletter that would be sent to all Friendship Centres
2. Developing programs and projects that can be implemented at the provincial and local level
3. Finding money for local youth initiatives, Finding money for provincial youth initiatives (tie)
4. Sending Opportunities out to Local Youth
5. Identifying and providing training

The fact that providing content for a national newsletter was the top 'role' could be due to the need or want for more communication from the national level that outlines current affairs and ongoing initiatives.



PARTICIPATION

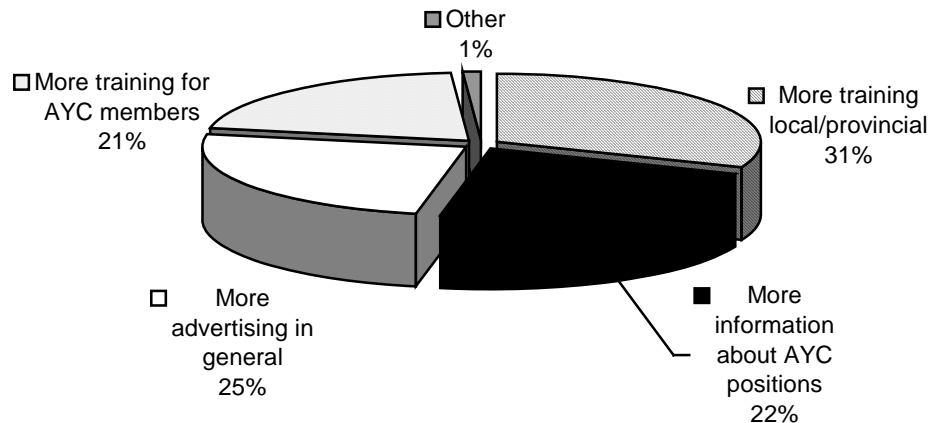
PREAMBLE

The AYC requested information on how to recruit the best possible members for the AYC. Once the AYC is more aware of how to recruit the best possible members, they will then be able to put in place the structure and process to institute the recruits.

FINDINGS

More training at the local and regional levels followed by more advertising in general about AYC were the top two answers.

Since, the top four answers are so close percentage-wise, it would be wise to review all of the answers as highly as the others.



Theoretically if the AYC was able to get more training for their own members, and provide that training at the regional and local levels, it would have a tremendous positive impact on the young leaders of the Friendship Centre Movement. Also, if there was more opportunity for more youth to hear about the AYC and more advertising about what the AYC is and what they do, this could possibly allow the opportunity for more young people to become interested and involved. Therefore, it would be easier for the youth of the Friendship Centre Movement to elect their leaders when there is a great pool from which to elect a young leader.

ACTION

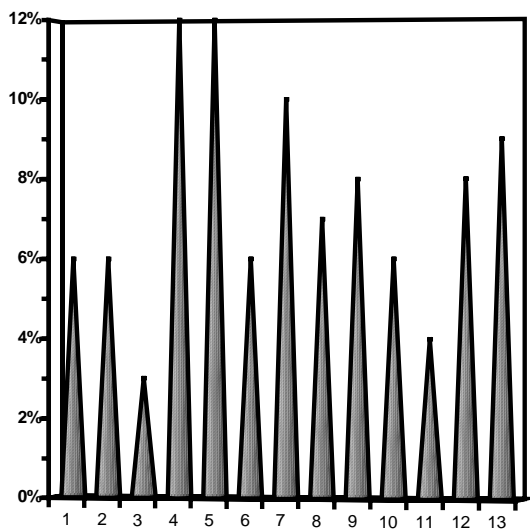
PREAMBLE

Participants were asked to identify the top three priorities that AYC should be working on out of a list of 13. The AYC was interested to learn about how

FINDINGS

Lobbying on behalf of their membership were the top two priorities the participants identified. This was both for youth involvement in matters that affect them and for youth specific funding.

Following closely behind is creating and implementing youth leadership development training, finding more ways to get the word out about Aboriginal youth issues and providing scholarships to Friendship Centre youth.



1. Program development
2. Special projects delivery
3. International representation
4. Lobbying for more youth involvement
5. Lobbying for more youth specific funding
6. Identifying and providing more scholarships for Aboriginal Youth
7. Creating and implementing youth leadership development training
8. Hosting or co-hosting annual healing gatherings
9. Bringing more awareness to issues facing Aboriginal Youth
10. Mentor Training
11. Finding more resources for local and provincial youth councils
12. Providing scholarships to Friendship Centre youth
13. Find more ways to get the word out about Aboriginal youth issues (TV, magazines)

OTHER COMMENTS

PREAMBLE

The last part of the section asked the participant to provide any other feedback that they chose.

FINDINGS

The feedback given was very different from survey to survey. There were no common themes.

- *My youth here are younger and we don't "qualify" for a lot of the activities that have been planned thus far. Not to worry - they will grow into programming at your level.*
- *Being with the past youth council I feel things can move smoothly if there were more communication with the other organizations and community projects. Also, rural areas and out of province members as well.*
- *The AYC should have a greater knowledge of the programs and be well informed of the gatherings on a more consistent basis. To Act is to become.*
- *You do really good work, I have come (to the national youth forum) several times and I wasn't able to stop myself from noticing the look of happiness/glee/content on people's faces.*
- *I find it is cool to come to the Friendship centre because there are always a lot of activities to do.*
- *I haven't really heard about anything the AYC did or is doing.*