

## SPRING EDITION 2012

THE  LUNG ASSOCIATION™

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## Youth Leadership Program

Thirteen youth from across Ontario took part in YATI's first YLP

The Youth Leadership Program was designed to engage youth in YATI programming, to establish leadership skills and become part of YATI's volunteer program. The program was a two part program. The first part of the program was created to empower and support youth from all over Ontario through a weekend retreat that took place in February 2012. The retreat featured leadership, teambuilding and communication workshops as well as teaching skills on advocacy and health promotion. On the final day participants were introduced to YATI projects that they could continue to volunteer with in part 2 of the leadership program.

The leadership program recruited 13 Ontario youth from 16 to 20 years old. This recruitment process sought to recruit youth who had fewer opportunities to be engaged in the past or who came from communities associated with higher rates

of tobacco use. The program received over 40 youth applicants from across Ontario. The 13 youth participants were chosen by the two youth engagement support staff from various locations, ages, and gender. In order to create a youth friendly environment, a youth and adult focus group was consulted on the design and content of the leadership retreat.

The retreat took place at Barrie's Kempenfelt Retreat Centre for three days and two nights. Four YATI staff members facilitated and supervised the youth participants. On the final day of the retreat, YATI had two facilitators from UNITY Charity facilitate a spoken word workshop to show how the arts can be used as an advocacy tool

to promote social change. After the retreat, the youth participants were given certificates of completion and 23 hours of volunteer service. The second part of the program involved the two youth



The 2012 Youth Leadership Program Group

*"The weekend of February 24 to the 26th was one of the most rewarding weekends I have had the pleasure of experiencing all thanks to the YATI trainers and the YATI workshops...I'm forever in awe of YATI's workshops and the weekend retreat of a lifetime."*

- YLP participant

engagement support staff keeping contact with the 13 youth participants to support them in the YATI projects of their choice.

## Tobacco-Wise Aboriginal Youth Project

3rd annual partnership project with C.C.O.'s Aboriginal Tobacco Program

YATI worked in partnership with the Aboriginal Tobacco Program (ATP) at Cancer Care Ontario for our third annual Tobacco-Wise Aboriginal Youth Project. We expanded the scope of our project this year, and included Sioux Lookout's Northern First Nations Hockey Tournament, as well as the Little Native Hockey League Tournament (LNHL) that takes place in Sudbury. In total, we engaged 12 youth who participated in a two-day training the weekend before their respective tournament, and implemented a Tobacco-Wise campaign during the first two days of the event.

The structure of the project was

the same in both Sudbury and Sioux Lookout. The youth met with one YATI facilitator and one ATP Project Lead who facilitated training on *Creating Effective Health Promotion Campaigns*, *Tobacco 101*, *Tobacco Industry Denormalization*, and differences between Commercial and Traditional Tobacco. However the Sioux Lookout met with their YATI facilitator in the first virtual workshop. The training provided youth with the necessary tools, skills, and knowledge to implement the campaign, while fostering team building and community.

During the tournament, the youth acted as Tobacco-Wise Ambassadors, raising aware-

ness and educating thousands of attendees about the impact of commercial tobacco by distributing swag with Tobacco-wise messaging. These interactions were used as an opportunity to engage in educational and social norm discussions around the negative aspects of commercial tobacco use, while honouring traditional or sacred tobacco use.

The feedback from the youth was very positive, and they unanimously shared the desire to be involved in future Tobacco-Wise programming. One youth involved decided to quit smoking after the first day of training, and another set a quit date after the tournament.



Youth Participants at the 2012 Lil NHL Tournament in Sudbury



## Knowledge Exchange

**Over 40 adults from across Ontario came together to discuss next steps in Youth Engagement and Development**

YATI hosted a 2-day Knowledge Exchange Session on February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 at the Kingsbridge Conference Centre. Over 40 Public Health Youth Engagement staff were invited for the 2-day event.

Day one of the conference was dedicated to Youth Engagement. YATI hosted introductory workshops in the morning. 3 Key note speakers from different public health units across the province spoke about how they integrate youth engagement principles into their everyday practice. This was also an opportunity to pilot a portion of our Youth Social Identities curriculum. Networking activities were offered at the end of the first evening.

The second day of the conference was dedicated to evaluation. Planned and implemented in coordination with the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit, Drs. Robert Schwartz and Maritt Kirst gave

key note presentations on evaluation practice. Additional workshops were held on best practices tools and methods in evaluation.

At the Knowledge Exchange, YATI unveiled the development of a Youth Engagement Specialists Portal. The Web Portal is a dedicated site where youth engagement public health staff can communicate with each other and share resources and information. Public Health staff were consulted in the planning, development, and implementation of the portal. Ongoing feedback systems have been created to allow for the continued improvement and adaptation of the portal to best meet the needs for this online Community of Practice.

## From learning to leading: my experience with YATI

By Sarah Sinclair



As a young high-school student, I had always been interested in health and community involvement.

So, when I had the opportunity to attend a youth training conference that YATI was delivering I jumped at the chance. At this point, I had become very involved in tobacco control and exposing the tobacco industry for who they really were with my local health unit, so the training was to revolve around tobacco. At this first YATI training, I can still remember learning the details of policy and how to create policy change in my community. The trainings offered a fun outlet to learn – for example, by practicing talking to policy officials through role play – and it was a memorable experience that left me passionate to make changes.

I continued to be involved in YATI, and my experiences at their trainings were very helpful when I was working on tobacco industry denormalization with my health

unit. I had gained better communication skills, a solid understanding of policy development, and how to create campaigns that would breed excitement in youth. I used these skills to plan and implement tobacco education events across my community, and to write to policy-makers about issues I was interested in.

Eventually, my continuous passion for creating positive change in my community led me from attending YATI trainings to facilitating the trainings myself! Now, as a facilitator with YATI I travel across Ontario to deliver information to youth and to assist other youth in developing the same skills I have through these trainings. Being able to educate other youth on tobacco control, creating health education campaigns, and influencing policy has been such a rewarding opportunity. I have been through it myself, so I know from my own experiences being trained by YATI that the work I do does make a difference in communities across Ontario.

## Y.D.C. Program Pilot

**Successful pilots in Kingston and London**

In January YATI launched the first offering of the Youth Development Certificate Program in Kingston. The first training was hosted at Queen's University and took place over two weekends at the end of January 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> and January 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>. This training had 12 adult participants and was offered as an opportunity to pilot the curricula with a smaller group.

The second course took place in London February 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> with 25 participants. Through the partnership with Queen's University participants are provided with credentials for this program. Queen's is also assisted in developing and implementing evaluative tools, while OLA's YATI will own and provide this training across Ontario.

The training introduces participants to the fundamentals of youth development theory, application of youth engagement principles, partnership and

integration, as well as evaluation. An accompanying handbook and toolkit was created. Each training was co-facilitated with a YATI youth facilitator.

The third installment of the YDC program is being offered in Toronto from June 25-29, 2012.

*"Amazingly facilitated! Would not change anything about the style or techniques!"*

-YDC Participant

*"After attending I want to re-design the programming that we deliver and use the knowledge I have learned to strengthen the work we do"*

- YDC Participant



The 2012 Youth Leadership Program





# LGBTQ Youth Tobacco Prevention Strategy

## Partnership Project with Toronto TCAN and other community partners

As of November 2011, YATI has been a part of a Toronto TCAN initiative to tackle LGBTQ youth smoking rates in the GTA. YATI partnered with Toronto Public Health (TPH) and LGBTQ community partners to develop a Youth Tobacco Prevention Strategy that targets LGBTQ youth. The project began with action planning sessions, facilitated by YATI, with a panel of adults from TPH, Rainbow Health Ontario, Canadian Cancer Society, 519 Community Centre, and the Griffin Centre.

The first phase of the project involved the recruitment of 18 youth from two LGBTQ community centres in Toronto, trained by YATI, 519 and Griffin Centre for three consecutive week-

ends. Trainings were customized and created in collaboration with other partners. Trainings on *Diversity, Tobacco and LGBTQ Youth, and Research & Action Planning* were each offered.

In spring of 2012, the youth will meet with TPH bi-weekly to plan and develop 10 focus groups to be held across the GTA with other LGBTQ youth who are non-tobacco users, tobacco users and former tobacco users. The focus groups are intended to determine why tobacco use is an issue in the LGBTQ community, what tobacco means to LGBTQ youth and their reasons for using. It will also explore the types of health promotion or education campaigns that would grab the

attention of LGBTQ youth and how information regarding the dangers of tobacco should be disseminated to this particular demographic of youth.

The second phase of the project will involve the planning and developing of a youth-led campaign or advocacy project to raise awareness amongst LGBTQ youth of the dangers of tobacco and the manipulative tactics of the tobacco industry. As it is currently planned, this project is set to continue into 2013.



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## Youth Speakers Bureau

### YATI's new youth program

At YATI we believe in providing youth with the opportunity to share and express their experiences with other youth and adults. Youth appreciate hearing from their peers—the message is stronger and more relatable. With this philosophy in mind we created YSB.

The Youth Speakers Bureau program was created to provide volunteer youth speakers with the opportunity to motivate, inform and engage other youth on two separate topics: the *Global Impact of the Tobacco Industry* and *Air Quality*. Each speaking engagement is an hour in length and delivered in an interactive presentation format by

a volunteer youth speaker. Each speaker is asked to include a personal element to the presentation addressing why they care about the issue.

The goal of this program was to create exciting speaking engagements for youth to connect and educate other youth. The two presentation topics and content was researched and created by a youth volunteer with the help of YATI and Ontario Lung Association staff members.

To date, YATI has delivered 3 speaking engagements and is currently recruiting more volunteer youth speakers from across Ontario for the program.

## Being a YATI Youth Trainer

By Ben Boey



Being a YATI trainer is intrinsically rewarding because it gives me an opportunity to facilitate learning to youth

across Ontario. So far, this has been a meaningful experience because it gives me a sense of accomplishment as an individual. One of my favourite parts of being a YATI trainer is when the participants ask stimulating questions. From this, it shows that the participants are taking a genuine interest in the topic that you are facilitating.

The trainings are setup in a fashion where it starts with the basic knowledge about a topic and then builds on the previous concepts learnt. I feel that this is a great way to facilitate learning because it can make a difficult concept easy to understand. By far, this is the best experience because it helps build my own confidence and it motivates and increases self-efficacy of youth to create positive change in their community.



## Looking for YATI Volunteers!

As a YATI volunteer, you'll receive emails about upcoming volunteer and work opportunities within YATI and the other organizations we work with. Sounds good right?

We are constantly looking for youth to get involved in projects we're working on (e.g. Smoke-Free Movies youth movie critics, Youth Speakers Bureau and many more!). This means that we'll be contacting you when we need help.

Email Adelaida Ortega today at:  
[aortega@on.lung.ca](mailto:aortega@on.lung.ca) if you're interested in becoming a YATI Volunteer.

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