



Letter of Invitation to Nominate a Young Person to SACYHN's Child & Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC)

Dear Nominator:

We are pleased to tell you about the Child and Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC) for the Southern Alberta Child and Youth Health Network (SACYHN). SACYHN is the name we use to describe our network of partners who together plan and provide programs and services for children and youth. SACYHN is committed to providing opportunities for young people to be involved in significant ways in planning and providing feedback on services that support their health and well being. Young people have a unique perspective to offer on their own experience of health and health care, and they can help administrators, planners, and staff to make sure that services and surroundings are as responsive as possible to their needs.

The Council is open to young people aged 12 to 19 from across southern Alberta (including and south of David Thompson Health Region) who have had a variety of experiences with health or services that support health in both urban and rural settings. Our intent is to involve a diverse group that will meet five or six times per year via videoconference or in person and commit to an 18 month term. This core group of young people will then support opportunities for younger children and other youth to participate in the work of the council.

In general, the Council provides:

- Feedback and proposed changes to current programs and services directed at children and youth by SACYHN
- Advice on the development of new programs and services directed at child and youth health and wellness across child serving systems
- Advice on ways to improve the experience of care for children and youth in any child serving system
- Input from their perspective regarding projects and strategic planning being led by SACYHN partners
- Assistance in determining what artistic, recreational, and other activities might enhance service delivery facilities and sites across a variety of systems
- Advice on the best ways to involve youth in SACYHN on an ongoing basis

Examples of early priorities for the Council were to:

- Offer input on existing health and health care related services for regions served by the Network
- Respond to government consultations on issues affecting youth (e.g. the Provincial Round Table on Family Violence and Bullying 2004)
- Speak to a number of adult audiences regarding the value of youth engagement in service planning
- Help with planning for the Southern Alberta Family & Community Resource Centre
- Provide input to the planning for the new Alberta Children's Hospital

The Council and its development are supported by an ongoing steering committee made up of SACYHN representatives from across the regions in southern Alberta. Support for young people to participate is provided on a regional basis. More information about SACYHN, the Council, and things for nominators and young people to consider, is available on the website at www.sacyhn.ca under the "Our Initiatives" section.

The Council has been up and running since September 2003. Due to the age range of our members, turnover is inevitable; therefore, we are always pleased to accept nominations for potential new members. You are invited to nominate young people with knowledge of your system from your region to join SACYHN's CAYAC. Simply complete the nomination form and forward it as outlined. Please note that part of the nomination process is making sure that you have consulted with both the young person being recommended and his/her parent/guardian. The handouts contained in this package or on the website may assist you in providing them with additional information. Note that young people and/or their parents can also complete the nomination form on their own behalf.

Nominations are accepted at any time. Once a nomination has been received by the appropriate regional contact person, the nominee can expect a phone call from the contact person. This will give the youth an opportunity to learn more about the Council and be sure it is something that interests them. If so, the nominee will be invited to attend the next scheduled SACYHN CAYAC meeting or event.

Yours Sincerely,

Janice Popp, Director
Southern Alberta Child & Youth Health *Network*
janice.popp@calgaryhealthregion.ca (403) 955 7537