

YEG YOUTH ACCESS GUIDELINES

A Guideline on Agency Bans

Developed by:
Action Alliance for Youth Inclusion

To access the full YEG YAG:
<http://bit.ly/YEGYAGDoc>

Action Alliance for Youth Inclusion (AAYI)

We are a collaboration of youth serving agencies and community partners working as allies for youth in high-risk situations



NEIGHBOURHOOD
Empowerment Team

A partnership of the City of Edmonton,
the Edmonton Police Service,
The Family Centre of Northern Alberta,
and United Way of the Alberta Capital Region

Definitions

Full definitions and resources available in
the YEG YAG:

<http://bit.ly/YEGYAGDoc>

Harm Reduction: the use of policies, programs, and practices that aim to minimize harm

Trauma Informed Approach: acknowledges the existence and significance that trauma plays in the actions and behaviours of individuals

Restorative Justice: an approach focused on repairing harm when wrongdoings occurs in a community

What is a ban?

The term **ban**, or bar, is used to reflect the language used by youth when referring to bans, suspensions, or any other restriction placed on accessing or frequenting a space



WHY ARE WE HERE?

“Sitting in food court after buying Tim Hortons, and the mall security guard asked me to leave. I stated that I had at least an hour by law as I had just bought something. The police were walking through the mall, and the mall security called them over. I was banned by the mall security for 2 years for refusing to leave, and the police banned me for life. I was not loitering.”

- **16-year-old male youth**

WHY ARE WE HERE?

“After you get banned from more than one place, you just accept that you’re “that person” – just a hood rat. You’re more than a hood rat, you’re a burden on society and you don’t really give a fuck. You just accept that, yeah, that’s who I am. Especially if you don’t have anything going for you.”

- **22-year-old genderfluid youth**

AAYI spoke with 39 youth aged 14-25:

- 20 identified as Indigenous, 7 as white, 6 as multi-racial, 3 as African, 2 as European, and 1 as Caribbean
- 26 identified as male, 12 as female, & 1 as genderfluid

AAYI defines youth as anyone between the ages of 15 - 25

AAYI spoke with:

- 15 service providers

YEG YAG and Training Outcomes

1. Consistency in bans
2. Clear communication with youth
3. Physical documentation of bans
4. Providing youth with additional resources
5. Reducing barriers for youth

YAG Values

INCLUSION

CONSISTENCY

FAIRNESS

SAFETY

EQUITABILITY

“I was just chilling and [the security guards] were like you’ve been here every day for the last week. I was like oh! I didn’t know that was a crime. I see school kids here every day. Why can’t I just chill and use the wi-fi? Maybe it’s because I’m brown. I find that racial profiling is a big thing from being banned from places. Most of my people are banned from places because they are homeless so they get profiled. It’s like you are trying to eradicate a certain race from an area. It’s like oppression. Just cause I’m chilling, doesn’t mean I’m passed out. I’m just chilling using wi-fi in a public place.”

- 24-year-old male youth

How to Use Youth Access Guidelines

YAG should be used to
inform or replace policy;
however, ensure changes
align with the agency



Expectations for Behaviour

Guidelines outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for **both** the youth and staff

“Not to say I didn’t deserve [the ban for stealing], but it could have been handled a bit differently. I remember being very scared.”

- **21-year-old female youth**

Acceptable Behaviours

YOUNG PERSON	RESPECT OTHERS	RESPECT THE SPACE
<p>What are acceptable behaviours for a young person in an agency or facility</p>	<p>Take care to behave in a way that helps maintain the emotional and physical safety of other youth, staff, volunteers, and community members.</p>	<p>Behave in a way that protects the facility, space and property of others.</p>

Unacceptable Behaviours

YOUNG PERSON	RESPECT OTHERS	RESPECT THE SPACE
<p>What are unacceptable behaviours for a young person in an agency or facility</p>	<p>Behaviours that prevent others from safely accessing space or services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Physical aggression● Intimidation or threatening language● Selling drugs or bullying	<p>Behave in a way that protects the facility, space and property of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coming back when you've been asked to leave• Theft from facility• Property damage, or tagging/ graffiti

Acceptable Staff Response

STAFF	RESPECT YOUTH	RESPECT THE PROCESS
<p>When dealing with unacceptable behaviours from an individual,</p>	<p>STAFF WILL: Speak and behave in a calm manner that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respectful• Inclusive• Culturally aware• Reflects trauma informed principles	<p>Include in ban documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific reason for ban• Length of ban• Information of contact person for questions or appeal process• The parameters of agency access throughout ban

Unacceptable Staff Response

STAFF	RESPECT YOUTH	RESPECT THE PROCESS
<p>To minimize escalating youth behaviour AND when dealing with unacceptable behaviour from youth,</p>	<p>STAFF WILL NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speak negatively about a youth to influence other staff• Gossip or break confidentiality• Use sarcasm, belittle, make fun of someone, or put down dreams or goals• Enter into power struggles• Take things personally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement unfair, inconsistent, or subjective bans• Fail to provide ban documentation• Infringe on human rights (based on gender, race, spoken language, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, nationality or social origin)• Practice favoritism

YAG Approach to Bans

1ST

Ensure staff and youth are informed of behaviour expectations. Depending on severity, give a reminder or cues to address inappropriate behaviour before asking to leave or banning.

2ND

As per agency guidelines, banned for a specified amount of time related to the severity of the infraction.

3RD

Welcome to return when open to participating in restorative process, committing to expectations and defining needs.

IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 911 IMMEDIATELY

If there is escalation requiring authorities to become involved, preference is for a harm reduction and trauma informed focus and should be relationship-based when possible.

Before Banning

Try to use a verbal warning prior to banning: be factual, reminder of the rules, non-judgemental, relationship based, if possible provide options

“Hi Sean, are you okay? Can you wake up and look at me? Good, I’m glad you’re doing okay. I’m sorry, but our policy doesn’t allow sleeping here. If you can stay awake, then you are welcome to stay. If you can’t stay awake, then you can head out for a bit and come back later today or tomorrow when you can remain awake.”

Safety of Staff and Youth



Always assess the
safety of staff and
individuals in the area
prior to responding

Approach

Youth is coherent and capable of conversation

1. Specified staff, or most appropriate staff on shift
2. Private space to speak with youth
3. Proceed to implementation

Approach

Youth is not coherent or capable
of conversation

1. Youth is identified as incoherent and unable to have a conversation
2. The youth is asked to leave; appropriate resources are provided
3. Staff speak with the youth when they return and are able to have a conversation

Implementation of Ban

1. Discuss the cause
2. Explain the conditions
3. Provide documentation

Length of ban _____

Last day ban is effective _____

Programs/locations you are banned from for this time

- All
- _____

When the ban is over you can

- Start accessing immediately
- Book a time to talk about how you can return
 - To book advocacy please contact _____ at _____

Terms of ban

- Do not access property during ban
- Access these services by appointment only _____

Resources still available to you from agency

- Call youth worker _____ during business hours for updates or referrals at _____
- Questions about your ban or want to appeal? Email bans@agency.org
- SPACE FOR ADDITIONAL INFO AS NEEDED

BAN INFORMATION
AGENCY NAME

Implementation of Ban

4. Review alternative services

5. Safety plan

6. Leaving and *Warm Handoff*

AGENCY NAME

NAME:

DOB:

DATE:

DURATION:

STAFF:

STAFF 2:

SAFETY PLAN

GOAL:

I am safe.

PLAN:

1. What things/situations put me at risk?
2. The best way for me to deal with this is...
3. These are my placement options and supports I can call on...
4. Ways I will let staff know I am safe:

SIGNATURES:

YOUTH

STAFF or OTHER SUPPORT

Follow Up

1. Document ban internally
2. Debrief the situation
3. Remind youth of ban length



End of Ban

Negotiation Process



1. What happened and unmet expectations
2. Future behaviours and consequences
3. Supports for expectations

End of Ban

- Restorative Justice
- Rules and expectations
- Warm welcome back

Welcome back

Warm Hand Off And Resources

If your agency is the only place available to the youth, or there is no other way for the youth to receive services, consider the severity of the incident and if a ban is the absolute only option

Resources given to the youth should be relevant and should supplement the services your agency provides

“During that time I didn’t sleep at all. I would stay up so I didn’t have to stay outside. It’s pretty sad a lot of us take drugs to stay up... I freaking had nowhere to sleep basically. I was so tired I would sleep in stairwells. It was really shitty ‘cause that’s the one place I really have.”

- 20-year-old female youth banned from a shelter

Resources

What resources or agencies offer similar services to your agency?

Shelters:

- Nexus, Youth Empowerment and Support Services
- Hope Mission Youth Shelter

Food and Meals:

- Bread Run (Mill Woods United Church)
- Boyle Street

Drop In Centres:

- Old Strathcona Youth Society
- Youth Empowerment and Support Services

Online Resources:

- The Rainbow Pages
- Coordinated Youth Response

Resource Document

Consider using a small wallet-sized card with resources listed, or with a QR Code for extra resources



Resources

Shelters: Nexus Youth Empowerment
Support Services, Hope Mission

Food: Boyle Street, Bread Run (Mill
Woods United Church)



Thank You!

Any Questions?

Email us at yegyag@mapsab.ca

AAYI's research and the full YEG

Youth Access Guidelines:

bit.ly/AAYL_YEG

