

RILA
ROTARY
YOUTH
LEADERSHIP
AWARDS



Rotary International®

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1 INTRODUCTION TO ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS (RYLA)

WHAT ARE ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS?

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) are intensive training programs for youth ages 14 to 30. Talented young people attend a seminar, camp, or workshop, generally three to ten days in length, organized by Rotarians at the club, multiclub, district, or multidistrict level. Often all expenses are paid by participating Rotary clubs.

Officially adopted by Rotary International (RI) in 1971, the RYLA program enables young people to debate issues of professional responsibility and human relations, improve leadership and communication skills, learn about businesses or institutions, and meet Rotarians, while having fun and making friends. For members of the New Generations, RYLA provides the opportunity to refine skills and explore pertinent topics with their peers and elders; for Rotarians, RYLA offers the chance to help develop leaders, share valuable expertise, and bridge the gap between generations.

GOALS

All RYLA programs share the following objectives:

- To demonstrate further Rotary respect and concern for youth
- To encourage and assist selected youth leaders and potential leaders in responsible and effective voluntary youth leadership by providing them with a training experience
- To encourage continued and stronger leadership of youth by youth
- To publicly recognize the high qualities of many young people who are rendering service to their communities as youth leaders

WHY ORGANIZE A RYLA?

RYLA was created because Rotarians believe in the potential of youth and the importance of developing and investing in youth leadership. The recognition of young peoples'



potential plays a central role in improving a Rotary club's image in the community and facilitating relationships between young people and adults.

RYLA gives awardees an opportunity to:

- Develop leadership skills
- Increase self-confidence
- Gain exposure to a variety of issues and people
- Make new friends
- Obtain career information and skills
- Meet community leaders and mentors

RYLA participants are also exposed to values that Rotarians deem essential for those who hold leadership roles: ethical behavior, integrity of character, and a commitment to community service.

Some of the same strengths that give Rotary its distinct image also make RYLA unique among programs oriented toward youth:

- Rotary's strong emphasis on ethics and commitment to the community is an integral part of any RYLA event.
- Rotary is an international organization with a worldwide perspective.

The RYLA program in **District 9790 (Australia)** is a seven-day residential conference focused on leadership skills for participants 18 to 30 years old. The seminar offers experiential learning, individual and group activities, modern adult learning techniques, expert training teams, and special guest speakers. Youth have an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills, as both individuals and team players, to ultimately achieve their personal and professional goals. Local Rotarians function as marketers, secretaries, treasurers, bus conductors, logistics coordinators, and group presenters. Each year, the local Rotary club moves its weekly meeting to the RYLA site on the Tuesday evening of the program.

- Rotary's commitment to youth does not end with RYLA. Interact, Rotaract, Youth Exchange, Ambassadorial Scholarships, and Group Study Exchange can continue the development of young leaders who have been through a RYLA program.
- Rotarians represent an immense pool of talent. Individual club members will have organizational expertise to arrange RYLA events, recruiting skills to select the appropriate participants, and the ability to connect with young people.
- As community leaders, Rotarians have valuable contacts and can call upon the expertise of non-Rotarians who can serve as speakers, facilitators, and staff at RYLA events. Rotarians also have access to resources, such as funding and facilities, which might otherwise be unavailable to a youth program.

Organizing a RYLA event is one of the most gratifying activities that a club or district can undertake in its community. The RYLA program gives Rotarians the opportunity to mentor promising young men and women interested in serving their own communities as well as the global community. Rotarians also act as a resource for awardees who are on the path to becoming professionals and community leaders. In turn, a RYLA program can bring new energy to a Rotary district, inspire ideas for service, increase support of community service projects, and help develop future Rotarians.

2 BEFORE THE RYLA EVENT

The organization of a RYLA program is a complex undertaking. A successful program requires advanced planning and collaboration among many people who perform various important functions. After developing a RYLA team to lead the effort, consider timing, site selection, funding, participant selection, and public relations.

- Establish a committee with an enthusiastic chair and motivated members. Working on a RYLA program involves a great deal of interaction with young people, so it is important that those who participate have a strong desire to work with youth.
- If you have not organized a RYLA event before, visit one organized by another club or district. Even if you already have a RYLA program, visiting other RYLA events is a good opportunity to learn ways to improve your program. If visiting another RYLA is not feasible, establish contact with a neighboring district RYLA chair to gather ideas and recommendations.
- Determine whether your RYLA will be conducted at the club, multiclub, district, or multidistrict level.

DEVELOP A TEAM

The **RYLA committee** consists of Rotarians with an interest in developing youth leaders. The committee handles the preparation, publicity, and arrangements. While the recruitment for a district-level RYLA is typically done by various Rotary clubs, the committee for a club-level RYLA may decide to recruit and select the awardees itself.

Key players in organization and administration

The support of the district governor is crucial. He/she must be kept informed and involved in decision-making. The district governor (or club president if the program is organized at the club level) determines if there is adequate interest in the program, appoints the district RYLA committee, promotes participation, and approves the budget and site selection.

Rotary clubs make RYLA happen. Clubs are responsible for selecting the RYLA awardees and funding their participation. All clubs involved in a RYLA program are also charged with acquainting awardees with Rotary ideals.

RYLA staff consists of those individuals who are present at the RYLA event, supervising living arrangements, facilitating the activities, and implementing the program. Staff could include Rotarians who may or may not be part of the RYLA committee, paid or unpaid non-Rotarians, and past RYLA participants.

Because of their familiarity with and enthusiasm for the program, **past RYLA participants** are a valuable resource. They can help your RYLA program in the following ways:

- Providing input to the organizers
- Educating Rotary clubs and the community about RYLA
- Establishing awardee acceptance criteria
- Recruiting and interviewing nominees

- Offering peer support to current RYLA participants
- Serving on the RYLA committee or working as RYLA staff

Tasks related to the implementation of a RYLA event can be delegated to various committee or staff members. Two essential roles are the program director and the program administrator.

- The **program director** should be a Rotarian who assists the district or club RYLA committee in preparing and implementing the program agenda. This may or may not be the same person as the RYLA committee chair.
- The **program administrator** is a Rotarian who supervises logistics and acts as a liaison with the district RYLA committee.

Depending on the size and scope of the event, other roles can include:

- **Counselor:** Assists the program director, assures the well-being of attendees, and leads small groups of awardees
- **Activities leader:** Conducts recreational, team-building, and social activities
- **Secretary:** Handles pre-event correspondence and on-site registration, and obtains educational supplies



- **Treasurer:** Develops budgets, tracks revenues and expenditures, and coordinates accounts payable and vendor management
- **Facilities manager:** Oversees accommodations and catering
- **Public relations/outreach contact:** Establishes connections with schools and youth groups, and publicizes the RYLA program to the local media

Productive collaboration

Effective work from a group of people requires motivation, commitment, and follow-through. Once people have volunteered their time and effort to RYLA, continuing to encourage them can yield successful results. Build an effective RYLA team by:

- Defining the mission of your RYLA program and how it will positively impact the community
- Inviting participation in setting common goals
- Ensuring that people know why they are doing what they do
- Giving people ownership of their responsibilities
- Being specific and abundant in praising successful efforts

Follow-through is essential for obtaining desired results. It helps build and maintain momentum. Ways to ensure volunteer follow-through include:

- Contacting RYLA committee or staff members by phone
- Sending reminder notes via e-mail
- Asking for periodic evaluations or progress reports of the event from volunteers

CREATE A BUDGET

Many organizers aim to make the RYLA events self-supporting; clubs pay the costs of the participants they sponsor, and no district funds are necessary. In some cases,

district funds are available for unexpected expenditures or to serve as seed money. Some organizers have been able to procure funding from other organizations and groups. For example, one RYLA chair obtained a US\$2,000 grant from a local energy company to bring 20 former RYLA awardees back for additional training.

A budget might include:

- Promotional and application materials
- Rental of program site and associated costs (e.g., heating, laundry)
- Equipment and supplies (e.g., speaker system, typewriter or computer, photocopier, telephone, fax machine, postage, Rotary and RYLA informational materials, recreational equipment)
- Meals or catering services
- Insurance
- Honorariums to guest speakers and entertainers
- Transportation for staff members and guest speakers

- Transportation of awardees
- Rotary/RYLA merchandise (e.g., certificates, flags, banners, pins, T-shirts, hats, bags)
- Incidental expenses (e.g., binders, pens, name tags)

Some of the goods and services necessary for the event are often donated. Among these are time, experience, expertise, management services, speakers, meals and snacks, truck rental, transportation, program materials, stationery, and accommodations and facilities. Finding sources for these and other items can help keep costs down.

Rotary and RYLA items created for the event that include any Rotary Marks should be purchased from an RI licensed vendor as described in the Appendix.

The budget and the cost per participant must be communicated to clubs early on in the planning process; they will need to include the amount in their budgets or raise the required funds.

Sample budget

RYLA Budget		
Income:	US\$120 participant fee x 100 people	\$12,000
<hr/>		
Expenses:	Logistics	
	Meeting facility	750
	Dormitory (\$3/student)	300
	Meals (\$10/meal/student) x 3 days	9,000
	Administration	
	Fax, telephone, e-mail	200
	Photocopying	0 (donated by Rotarian)
	Gifts for speakers	100
	T-shirts and pins for attendees (\$12/person)	1,200
	Contingency fund	450
	<hr/> Total Expenses	<hr/> \$12,000

District 1560 (Netherlands) stages a management game for students and young professionals, ages 18 to 26, over a three-day weekend. Coached by Rotarians, the management game offers an opportunity to work on social, negotiation, managerial, and public speaking skills. The awardees play the roles of newly appointed company directors who must confront a full mailbox and complete a variety of tasks upon return from a business trip. They receive instructions on the first day of the event, play the game on the second day, and spend the third day reviewing and evaluating their performances.

CONSIDER THE TIMING

Schedule your RYLA event as far in advance as possible. Remember to allow adequate time to select the site, develop the budget, create a program, and communicate information to the clubs, as they will need time to recruit and select participants and send funds to the committee. The suggested timeline, included on page 7, provides a general idea of the time needed to accomplish the various tasks.

RYLA events generally run between one day and one week. The length depends on what the committee wants to accomplish and the amount of time available to the committee, staff, and participants. Students tend to have long stretches of time during school holidays; young professionals usually have less time available away from work.

Also consider the weather for the time of year in which you schedule the RYLA event. Conditions that are too cold or too hot can limit outdoor activities.



Sample timeline

Below is a timeline for a district-level RYLA event. It can be modified accordingly for a club-level, multiclub, district, or multidistrict event.

Time	District Governor	RYLA Committee	Rotary Club(s)
12 months prior to RYLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoints RYLA committee Publicizes the decision to hold a RYLA program Approves program site and date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicizes RYLA and encourages participation by Rotarians Selects program site and date; determines budget and cost per awardee Prepares publicity and application materials 	
6 months prior to RYLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approves budget Publicizes event at district conference and assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributes publicity and application materials Selects program staff and develops program agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicizes program in community and distributes applications to interested youth
3 months prior to RYLA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club or district RYLA committee interviews all applicants and selects awardees Pays fees for each awardee to RYLA committee
4 weeks prior to RYLA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes physical/logistical preparations for program site Verifies availability of transportation for RYLA participants 	
2 weeks prior to RYLA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarifies logistical issues such as transportation and other last-minute details with awardees
RYLA EVENT			
2 weeks after program		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews awardee evaluations of RYLA and prepares report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invites awardees to club meeting and presents certificates
4 weeks after program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights recently completed RYLA program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forwards report on outcome of RYLA program to district governor and Rotary International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages young people to join Interact or Rotaract clubs where available

CHOOSE A SITE

An appropriate site for a RYLA event often includes these features:

- A central location and easy accessibility
- Privacy — A school or university available during vacation periods or a recreational site in a rural setting are good options
- Adequate accommodations for both male and female awardees and program staff
- Kitchen facilities and a dining area
- Areas for small group activities and an auditorium for plenary sessions
- Facilities for indoor and/or outdoor recreational activities

SELECT PARTICIPANTS

Using RI's basic guidelines for RYLA events, Rotarians tailor programs to fit the unique

needs of the participants in their own club or district. Several variables — including length of event, age groups served, venue, activities, goals, and whether the event is held at the club or district level — shape the RYLA program and make each event distinct.

It is recommended that a RYLA event be planned for youth within a focused age range. Individuals between ages 14 to 18 require a different approach than those 19 to 24 or 25 to 30. For example, youth from ages 14 to 18 are still in the process of becoming adults, while participants from ages 19 to 30 will probably be much more career-oriented in their thinking. It is the responsibility of RYLA organizers to determine the ages of youth who will participate in the event, assess their needs, and make age-appropriate programming choices.

All awardees should meet these basic qualifications:

- Leadership experience or potential
- Cooperative nature and willingness to participate in a group
- Awareness of current events
- Strong communication skills
- Good performance in school or work
- Enthusiasm for sharing new-found skills with others

Consider inviting Interact and Rotaract club members to apply for your RYLA. As participants in a RYLA event, Interactors and Rotaractors receive further exposure to Rotary ideals while also improving their own leadership skills, which ultimately benefit their service club. They can relate their positive impressions of Rotary to awardees who are being exposed to the organization for the first time. You may also choose to involve Interactors and Rotaractors in the organization of your event. Exposure to the preparation and execution of an event can serve as good educational experience for those who will go on to organize other community service efforts.



The RI Board encourages clubs and districts to consider inviting socially and economically disadvantaged youth who have leadership potential to participate in a RYLA event. These youth may require an additional investment of time and effort, but the potential for impact is all the greater. Also, invite RYLA participants who may not have easy access to leadership development opportunities.

You can attract young people to your program by contacting:

- Schools
- Employers
- Community groups
- Interact and Rotaract clubs
- Youth Exchange students
- Past awardees

A sample application form is included in the Appendix.

Multidistrict events

Consider inviting youth from other districts to attend your RYLA event. If the event is jointly organized by more than one district, each of the district governors needs to obtain the approval of two-thirds of the clubs in his/her district and write a letter indicating his/her approval to the RI general secretary.

The organizing committee also needs to forward the following documentation to the general secretary: a brief description of the RYLA event (including dates); a statement indicating that the event will be carried out under the RI Board of Director's policy regarding multidistrict service activities and projects; a list of multidistrict committee members organizing the event(s); and signatures of the governors of the districts concerned.

However, if a district is organizing the RYLA itself and merely wants to invite others, no authorization is required. As a matter of courtesy, it should inform the other district's governor and offer a general description of the event.

REACH THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations plays a significant role in establishing a RYLA program. Direct your message to encourage Rotarians, young people, and the community at large to support your efforts. Rotarians can work with your program and help recruit young people. Young people are participants, but they can also help to recruit or to staff an event. The community can be a source of potential award-ees, counselors, speakers, staff, or resources, such as venues or funding.

Promoting RYLA to Rotary clubs

Involvement of Rotarians is essential to the success of your RYLA program. Rotarians can serve as event staff members or counselors, speakers, and participant recruiters. Suggested ways to reach Rotarians:

- Showcase RYLA participants and their achievements at club meetings and events.
- Keep the district governor apprised so that the information can be passed on in the monthly newsletter and during club visits.
- Feature your program at the district conference or other district meetings.
- Make a presentation at the district assembly.

Promoting RYLA to young people

- Encourage past RYLA participants to visit clubs and talk about RYLA to their peers.
- Involve Interactors and Rotaractors in spreading the word.

Promoting RYLA to the community

To gain maximum exposure to the community, consider sending out news releases before the event to attract potential participants. Following is a suggested release:

Sample RYLA news release before the event

Contact: *(your name, telephone number, and e-mail address)*

Photo Opportunity: *(date, time, place): (describe a team-building activity that will occur during RYLA)*

Rotary Seeks Participants in Youth Awards Program

(City, state, and date) Young people between ages _____ and _____ interested in developing their leadership skills, and having a great time doing so, are invited to fill out an application for the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program. RYLA is a leadership training and education program for youth.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of _____, those chosen to participate in RYLA will spend _____ days at *(name of site)* where they will hear informative presentations and take part in fun group activities with other young people sponsored by other Rotary clubs throughout the area.

RYLA participants receive training from successful professionals, with special emphasis on the importance of ethics and community service. They often become leaders in their schools and communities and in their professional pursuits.

Speakers and topics will include: *(list speakers and their topics)*

Those interested in applying should contact *(name)* at *(number)* for more information and an application form.

The Rotary Club of _____ is part of Rotary International's global network of more than 31,000 clubs in 166 countries. Rotary International consists of 1.2 million professionals who volunteer to improve the quality of life in their home and world communities. Through service efforts, Rotary club members help promote understanding and peace throughout the world. Rotary clubs support programs that address today's most critical issues, including hunger, health care, the environment, illiteracy, and youth development.



The Internet (e-mail and a Web site) can also be used to promote your program. Establish a RYLA section on your club or district Web site. In addition, look for opportunities to speak about RYLA to other community groups or set up a display at a community event.

For more information on promoting a RYLA event, consult the RI publication *Effective Public Relations: A Guide for Rotary Clubs* (257-EN) and visit the Public Relations Tools section located in the Club Support area of the RI Web site at www.rotary.org.

3 DURING RYLA

Weeks of planning and collaboration culminate in the delivery of an exciting educational experience for the awardees. Carefully consider your goals and design a program that will meet the needs of your participants in a creative and thought-provoking way. Also consider aspects of participant safety and care as you manage liability and risks that may occur during your event.

DELIVER THE PROGRAM

A RYLA event focuses on leadership, citizenship, and personal development; therefore, its programming should be designed to:

- Build on the leadership potential of the awardees, providing them with the opportunity to sharpen their leadership skills and put them into practice.
- Encourage participants to further develop their own talents and abilities.
- Remind the awardees that they have a responsibility to their communities and to the world.

While each RYLA event is tailored to the age and interests of the participants, the RI Board recommends a *core curriculum* that covers the following:

- Fundamentals of leadership
- Ethics of positive leadership
- Importance of communication skills in effective leadership
- Problem-solving and conflict management
- What Rotary is and what it does for the community

- Building self-confidence and self-esteem
- Elements of community and global citizenship

The core curriculum should reflect issues of local relevance and be presented in a manner consistent with local customs. Consult past awardees for ideas about how to make the topics and presentations interesting. Young people can provide you with the best input on what interests other young people.

RYLA programs are mainly comprised of presentations and activities. These two components are supplemented by group work, which can be used to enhance the effectiveness of presentations or to facilitate team building.



Presentations

Provide informative sessions in which a professional or specialist addresses the participants on some issue of interest to them. Speakers should be able to relate to young people and emphasize dialogue rather than just delivering a lecture. Preparation for a presentation includes identifying an appropriate speaker and procuring the necessary equipment (public-address system, visual aids, etc.). Good sources for speakers are Rotarians and their contacts.

Possible topics include:

- Public speaking
- Interviewing
- Time management
- Community and global leadership
- Peace and conflict resolution
- Ecology and the environment
- Ethics and decision making

To encourage speakers to be inspired by and relate better to RYLA, ask them to spend some time at the event, observing and talking to the young people. Speakers convinced of the relevance and importance of RYLA may offer to work free of charge.



Activities

A good way to convey ideas to young people is through action. Experiential learning, or learning through experience and reflection, will complement the efforts of informative speakers and can also serve as icebreakers for a group of strangers who need to become acquainted in a short period of time. Experiential activities are followed by a short debriefing session. The discussion should focus on what the participants learned from the exercise about leadership, citizenship, or personal development.

To find out more about the benefits of experiential learning and variety of experiential activities, search the Internet, your local library, education journals, or other youth development resources. Some common cooperative and team-building activities are included on pages 12-14.

Successful programs also include times for informal socializing. Consider scheduling a morning warm-up such as yoga or hiking; staging a quiz show, talent night, or skits; playing “RYLA Olympics”; or serving a theme dinner to allow participants to get to know one another.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Some common cooperative, problem-solving, and team-building activities:

Name Game

Theme: Learn names of other participants

Equipment: Requires a tennis ball

1. Request participants to stand or sit in a circle.
2. Explain that the purpose of the exercise is to learn everyone’s name and that the exercise ends when everyone can name everyone else.
3. Start by going around the circle with everyone saying his/her name.
4. Get things going by tossing the ball to somebody in the circle and saying “Hello (insert name).” The person catching the ball says “Thank you (insert name).” This goes on until everyone has

had a chance to greet everyone else at least once or until someone feels confident they can name everyone else.

Facilitator tip: Add a twist to the game for participants to learn more about each other.

1. Request participants to stand or sit in a circle.
2. Tell the first person to say his/her name and an action that represents them. For example, "My name is Sam and I like to play piano." Sam then goes through the motion of playing a piano.
3. The next person introduces himself/herself and then repeats what Sam said.
4. Encourage participants to continue to go around the circle, challenging the last person to repeat all of the names and actions.

Have You Ever...?

Theme: Getting acquainted

Equipment: None required

1. Instruct participants to sit in a circle.
2. Ask participants to ask questions starting with the phrase, "Have you ever..." that can be answered yes or no. Questions might include: Have you ever walked into a glass door you didn't see? Have you ever fallen asleep in class? Have you ever known anyone who won the lottery?
3. Tell the group that if their answer to the given question is yes, they should move quickly to a different topic. Soon the group begins to get a feel for how common or uncommon their experiences are.

Group Juggling

Theme: Problem-solving

Equipment: Requires a tennis ball

1. Instruct participants to stand in a circle.
2. Tell participants to start by tossing a ball to someone else in the circle (except the person standing next to them) until each person has touched the ball once.
3. Explain to the participants: following the same pattern the first ball took,

District 3860 (Philippines) organizes a four-day RYLA to promote environmental consciousness and leadership for youth ages 14 to 18. Funded by local Rotarians and private companies, the event includes presentations on ecology, waste management, group leadership, ethics, communication skills, event planning, and Rotary's involvement with youth. Group activities are jointly led by the host club and The Eagles, a local group of young volunteers.

they must toss multiple balls and try to figure out a way to keep the balls moving without any of them dropping or colliding in mid-air.

Blind Polygon

Theme: Communication, problem-solving

Equipment: None required

1. Request all participants to link arms (or hold hands) and close their eyes.
2. Instruct group to form a shape with arms linked (i.e., square, circle, or triangle).

Facilitator tips: It is up to the participants to come up with an effective strategy that helps them accurately reproduce the shape. Depending on the number of participants, you may choose to divide them into smaller groups.

Human Knot

Theme: Communication, problem-solving

Equipment: None required

1. Instruct participants to stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder.
2. Instruct each participant to grab two other people's hands. They are not allowed to grab the hand of the person to their immediate right or left.
3. Tell the group to untangle themselves (without letting go of each other's hands), so that they end up shoulder to shoulder with those people whose hands they hold, making one complete circle.

Birth Date Order

Theme: Communication, problem-solving
Equipment: None required

Tell the group to line up by birth date order — not by year, just birth date — from 1 January to 31 December. Explain that there is a catch: they cannot talk to each other or you while they are trying to accomplish this task.

Facilitator tips: Urge the group to be flexible and creative. There are many ways, besides speaking, we can communicate. Anything goes — sign language, showing driver's licenses, writing, and so on — as long as they do not talk. Tell them, "If one technique doesn't work, try something else. Be creative." But do not give them any ideas about alternative methods of communication. Depending on the number of participants, you may choose to divide them into smaller groups.

Merge

Theme: Communication and problem-solving
Equipment: Requires four circles of various sizes made from rope or nylon webbing

Set up: The facilitator should lay out the four circles on the floor

1. Instruct the group to stand in one of the four circles. (There should be just enough room in all the circles.)
2. Request participants to step out of the circles and remove the smallest one. There are now just three circles on the floor.
3. Say "merge," and the participants must all get back into the circles.

Facilitator tip: This process is repeated until the largest circle is the only one left and the group must work together to figure out how to fit within it. The only requirement is that the awardees' feet must be within the circle.

Willow in the Wind

Theme: Group trust
Equipment: None required

1. Stand shoulder to shoulder in a small circle.
2. One person, "the "willow" or "faller," stands still and trusting in the center

with arms crossed across his/her chest. Remaining rigid, the faller falls slowly in any direction. Before the person falls too far, the group should redirect him/her to another part of the circle (with the flat part of their hands). This "fall-catch-push" sequence should continue until the faller feels relaxed, and the team feels they are working together.

3. Take turns until all participants have had a chance to be a "willow."

For debriefing, consider the following discussion questions:

1. What problems did you encounter in trying to solve this problem?
2. What feelings and thoughts did you have while trying to solve these problems? Fear? Frustration? "It is impossible!" Excitement? Wanted to give up? What did you do with those feelings and thoughts?
3. Why is it important to listen carefully to directions?
4. How many ways did you find to communicate with one another as a group?
5. Did any one person come up with all the solutions? If not, what does that tell you about the benefits of seeking help and cooperating when you have a problem to overcome?

Group Work

Working in groups encourages young people to voice their opinions, take initiative, and put their leadership skills into practice.

One way to implement group work is through discussions after a presentation, responding to a challenge set by the speaker. For example, if a speaker discusses community service, small groups of participants may then develop their own ideas for service projects for when they return home. After a speaker discusses business strategy, groups can work together to develop a business plan. Consider a final debriefing session with all participants to share key ideas produced from small group discussions.

Group work can also be effective in running the event itself. Specific groups can be

assigned various tasks, such as introducing speakers, organizing the talent night, producing a daily newsletter, taking photographs, or welcoming participants as they enter the dining area before each meal. This teaches responsibility and creates shared experiences. In fact, some district events are almost entirely run by the young people themselves, with Rotarians providing guidance.

MANAGE RISK

Risk management involves identifying future events or situations that may cause harm to a person or damage property, and implementing solutions to minimize or reduce these risks. Recognizing the importance of protecting any young person involved in a Rotary-sponsored activity, the RI Board has adopted the following Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth:

Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact through Rotary.

A risk-management program can provide a basis for understanding what risks are possible in your program, so that participants may make good choices in dealing with these risks. Injury, illness, abuse, and other risks are inherent in many aspects of our society. While a risk-management program cannot guarantee elimination of all risks, it can reduce the number and effect of negative occurrences.

Frequently asked questions about risk management

Q: Is it necessary to establish a code of behavior for participants?

A: The RYLA committee and/or staff do need to establish rules for the partici-

“Leadership for Social Development” is the theme for the **District 4280 (Colombia)** RYLA event held in Envigado, Antioquia. The participants, including local youth leaders, Interact and Rotaract club members, teachers, school officials, and Rotarians, focus on assertiveness, direct communication approaches, personal dignity and integrity, social development, and The Four-Way Test. During workshop sessions, participants debate current issues surrounding human and social development.

pants to follow during their stay at the program site. These rules should reflect standards of the culture, district or club, and institution at which they are guests. The code of behavior should ensure that future Rotary-sponsored programs will be welcomed at that location.

Q: What are some insurance and risk-management issues involved in sponsoring a RYLA event?

A: Some examples of issues that could occur include:

- A participant is injured while participating in a team activity.
- A participant alleges sexual misconduct on the part of a volunteer or other participant.
- A fire starts in the cooking facilities, damaging the accommodations.
- A vehicle used to transport awardees to a Rotary club meeting is involved in an accident.
- A natural disaster strikes during the program.

Q: How can Rotary clubs minimize potential losses?

A: Ways to prevent or lessen the impact of losses include, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing adequate liability insurance coverage if appropriate for your geographical region

District 6900 (Georgia, USA) organizes a three-day RYLA on a local college campus for awardees ages 14 to 17 chosen by 36 Rotary clubs. Past themes have included "Know Yourself" and "Use Your Talents Effectively." Activities include a ropes course, seminars on personality and communication style, and roundtable discussions about career development and goals.

- Ensuring that all transportation providers maintain adequate automobile/transportation liability coverage and name all involved clubs, districts, and the RYLA event as additional insureds
- Developing a disaster emergency plan and practicing it at least once during the program
- Inspecting premises before events to determine if risks exist and documenting the inspection
- Instructing participants about safe behaviors when participating in a team activity

Clubs and districts are urged to contact their insurance administrators, brokers, or agents to determine whether their insurance policies provide adequate coverage for their RYLA program. Insurance becomes a more complex issue when multiple districts or clubs sponsor a program, because each organization may have different levels of coverage.

Q: What types of coverage should participants purchase?

A: All participants (awardees and organizers) are urged to verify that their health and life insurance provide adequate coverage for them while attending the program. This takes on greater significance when a participant is traveling away from home, because many health insurance policies provide only limited coverage outside of one's home area. Participants may wish to consider obtaining the following types of coverage:

- Medical expense reimbursement
- Repatriation of remains
- Emergency evacuation
- Accidental death and dismemberment

These types of coverage are typically found in a travel medical and accident insurance policy. Contact your local insurance broker or agent for more information.

It is recommended that you consult your club's or district's legal counsel before signing any agreement or contract with any organization, contractor, or service provider. Such agreements may contain waivers, hold-harmless, or indemnification agreements that may attempt to release a party from liability and transfer the risk to your club or district. Should a questionable situation arise, you are encouraged to contact local authorities for consultation or assistance. Finally, be aware that Rotary International is not liable for any illness or injury to persons, including awardees and organizers, or for damage to any property.

OBTAIN FEEDBACK

The best way to assess the effectiveness of your RYLA event is to ask the awardees. Provide participants with an evaluation form at the end of the program or the end of each presentation or activity, before the awardees have forgotten the details of their experiences. Feedback on the various speakers and messages they delivered will help in selecting speakers for future RYLA events. You can modify the sample evaluation form included in the Appendix.

4 AFTER RYLA

RYLA leaders should assure that the energy created during RYLA does not end with the conclusion of the event itself. There are many ways to foster the spirit of leadership in the participants, share success stories, and make international connections after RYLA.

STAY CONNECTED

To maximize the benefit of the awardee's leadership development experience, consider ways to stay in touch with awardees, maintain your role as mentor, and invite the awardees to take on leadership roles. Many districts establish long-lasting ties by maintaining a network that fosters interaction among participants and organizers. Consider creating a Web group, electronic mailing list, interactive Web site, or newsletter to promote communication among participants and help keep them informed about ongoing Rotary activities in the area. Coordinating follow-up events for past awardees, such as a one-day workshop, allows Rotarians to track the development of the participants' leadership skills and offer further guidance.

Past awardees may also make excellent participants in other Rotary programs for young people, such as Interact and Rotaract, or serve as future RYLA event leaders. These activities give awardees an opportunity to extend their Rotary experience and continue achieving leadership roles in their professional lives.

SHARE RYLA SUCCESS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Just as public relations efforts leading up to a RYLA event are vital for establishing the program in your community, following through with local media after the event will continue to promote positive community relations and future support for RYLA and Rotary. A sample news release suitable for after the event is on page 18. Including action photos from the event may increase interest in the information.



Sample RYLA news release after the event

Contact: *(your name, telephone number, and e-mail address)*

Rotary Program Introduces Youth to Concepts of Leadership

(City, state, and date) More than _____ young people ages _____ to _____ learned _____, _____, and _____ during a _____-long Rotary-sponsored event for youth. Known as Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), the program provides education and training for young people with outstanding leadership potential.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of _____, those chosen to participate in RYLA heard informative presentations and participated in such activities as _____ and _____. Many took part in fun group activities with other young people sponsored by other Rotary clubs throughout the area.

RYLA participants receive training from successful professionals, with special emphasis on the importance of ethics and community service. They often become leaders in their schools, communities, and career paths.

The Rotary Club of _____ is part of Rotary International's global network of more than 31,000 clubs in 166 countries. Rotary International consists of 1.2 million professionals who volunteer to improve the quality of life in their home and world communities. Through service efforts, Rotary club members help promote understanding and peace throughout the world. Rotary clubs support programs that address today's most critical issues, including hunger, the environment, illiteracy, and youth development.

LEARN FROM OTHER ROTARIANS

Taking advantage of the network of Rotary clubs and districts involved with RYLA programming is a wonderful way to share best practices with one another. Consider posting

information about your RYLA event on club or district Web sites, including the key training materials used at the event. Include RYLA information in district assembly, district conference, and Rotary zone institute programs. Furthermore, the RI Board of Directors encourages experienced RYLA organizers to develop multidistrict, regional, or zone-level RYLA planning workshops to discuss successful RYLA programs among district RYLA chairs, district RYLA committee members, and other Rotarians interested in RYLA.



RYLA AND ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Guiding policies for the RYLA program come from the RI Board of Directors. At the discretion of the RI president, an international committee is appointed to serve in an advisory capacity to the RI Board. Rotarians who wish to make proposals to the Board regarding the RYLA program should work through the RI RYLA Committee.

District 1090 (United Kingdom) holds a special-needs RYLA each year, alternating between physically disabled and mentally disabled youth. Some clubs, including the Rotary club of Boca Raton (**District 6930**), **Florida, USA**, have sent at-risk students to the RYLA events. In all cases, the same rules for selection apply: the young people chosen demonstrate leadership potential.

RI Secretariat and RYLA

RI World Headquarters staff is committed to providing excellent service for the RYLA program by offering guidance, providing support, and promoting communication between RYLA leaders in clubs and districts worldwide. Good communication between RI and RYLA organizers is key to the growth and improvement of RYLA. Rotarians should make a special effort to keep RI informed of their activities. A RYLA Report Form is included in the Appendix. Based on the information received about RYLA worldwide, RI RYLA staff sends program updates, details on new publications, and announcements about special activities to district RYLA chairs for dissemination in the district.

Contact RI RYLA staff at One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, IL 60201-3698, USA. Telephone: (847) 866-3436, Fax: (847) 866-6116, E-mail: ryla@rotaryintl.org.

Special events

International RYLA Meeting

The International RYLA Meeting, sponsored by RI, brings together Rotarians and awardees who have been outstanding participants at district RYLA events worldwide. This meeting, usually held in June, immediately precedes the RI Convention. The program focuses on developing advanced leadership skills while taking advantage of the internationality of the participants.

RI Convention

Participants are invited and encouraged to participate in the four-day annual RI Convention that follows the International RYLA Meeting. Awardees can take part in special forums, workshops, the projects exhibition, and plenary sessions. Participation in the RI Convention gives youth a broader understanding of Rotary, its internationality and service to the world, and how RYLA fits into the Rotary family.

New Generations Month

September is designated as Rotary's New Generations Month to focus on all Rotary activities that support the development of young people up to the age of 30. Clubs and districts are encouraged to use the slogan "Every Rotarian an Example to Youth" in club and district bulletins and publicity materials during New Generations Month.



RYLE Resource List

The following Rotary publications and materials may be helpful in organizing a RYLE event. You can order these items via the RI *Catalog*, from the RI international office serving your area, or the RI Web site at www.rotary.org.

Note: Publication codes are given in parentheses. W indicates a printed publication also available for download at the RI Web site.

RYLE Handbook (694-EN) (W)

This comprehensive publication explains how to organize a RYLE.

RYLE Brochure (636-EN) (W)

This promotional brochure informs potential RYLE organizers and participants about the goals and activities of a RYLE event.

RYLE Poster (635-EN)

This colorful poster promotes the RYLE program.

RYLE Certificate (695-EN)

These certificates can be presented by clubs and districts to RYLE participants upon completion of the event.

Rotary's Commitment to Youth (596-MU)

This dynamic four-minute video depicts Rotaract, Interact, RYLE, and Youth Exchange worldwide. Ideal for generating interest among Rotarians and program participants alike.

5 APPENDIX: RI FORMS AND GUIDELINES

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AUTHORIZED USE OF THE RYLA EMBLEM

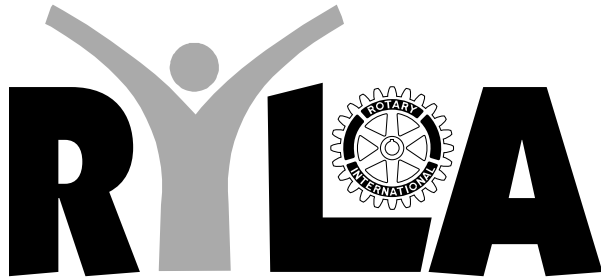
The RYLA logo is a trademark owned by Rotary International. Clubs and districts are welcome to use the RYLA logo with proper identifiers, subject to the guidelines for the use of Rotary Marks as set forth by the RI Board of Directors.

Firms licensed by RI to produce the RYLA emblem on merchandise for sale are listed in the *Official Directory* and online in the Administrative Services section. If you discover an individual or firm selling emblem merchandise not listed in these sources, please contact the international office for your area or RI's Licensing Section at World Headquarters at rlicensingservices@rotaryintl.org.

Specifications for RYLA Emblem

The RYLA logo can be produced as 1- or 3-color. For the 1-color version, the R, L, A and RI wheel appear as 100% CVY PMS color and the Y as 50% screen PMS color. If produced in a single color, the RYLA logo can be any color.

If the RYLA logo is produced in three colors, it should be in green, blue, and gold. For the 3-color version (with the wheel in the official blue and yellow), the R, L and A appear as 100% PMS and the Y as 50% PMS. The RI wheel is in two colors, royal blue and gold. The gold can be represented as a metallic color or as a yellow. The following specific PMS colors should be used: PMS 5535 (green), PMS 286 Blue, and PMS 871 Metallic Gold or PMS 129 Gold (yellow).



Sample RYLA Application

RYLA Application



(Please print or type.)

Name _____

Address _____

Date of birth _____

Telephone: Business _____ Home _____ Mobile _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Occupation or course of study _____

Employer or school:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

In case of emergency, contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Describe briefly your reasons for applying for this RYLA workshop.

Please include a brief résumé with this application.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Signature indicates agreement to abide by guidelines and rules established by the RYLA organizers.)

Sample Evaluation Form

RYLA Feedback



Please give us your honest opinion of this RYLA event. Your input is important to us.

1. Rate the activities on a scale of 5 (highest) to 1 (lowest):

- Morning warm-up _____
- Business simulation _____
- Evening discussion group _____
- Volleyball tournament _____
- Talent show _____

2. Rate the presentations on a scale of 5 (highest) to 1 (lowest):

- “Teamwork and Leadership” _____
- “Public Speaking” _____
- “Business Ethics and Leadership” _____
- “Leaders as Followers” _____
- Closing Remarks _____

3. Rate your counselor:

Counselor’s name: _____

Check one:

Outstanding; should be invited back _____

Acceptable; a replacement should be considered _____

Unacceptable; should definitely not be invited back (explain below) _____

Remarks: _____

4. Rate the RYLA program overall:

Check one:

Outstanding _____

Average _____

Needs improvement (explain below) _____

Remarks: _____

RYLA REPORT FORM



The information you provide will be used to assist incoming district RYLA chairs to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas. It will also enable RI to promote RYLA more effectively. We appreciate your assistance and value your input.

Please provide the information requested below by 15 July via e-mail to ryla@rotaryintl.org. Alternatively, you can mail the information, using this form, as well as any photographs, to Community Programs Section (PD210), Rotary International, One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, IL 60201-3698, USA; or fax it to (847) 866-6116.

Name: _____ District: _____ Country: _____

I am a: District RYLA chair Rotary club RYLA organizer Other: _____

1. Does your RYLA event have a Web site? No Yes If yes, list URL: _____

2. Please list the dates of your RYLA event: _____

3. Location of RYLA event(s): _____

4. Number of awardees who participated: _____

Of these, how many were from

Interact? _____ Rotaract? _____ Youth Exchange? _____ Other? _____

Age range of youth: _____

Cost per youth: _____

5. Number of Rotarians who volunteered: _____

6. Number of non-Rotarians who volunteered: _____

In what capacity? _____

7. What are your method(s) of recruiting RYLA awardees? _____

8. How was your RYLA financed? _____

9. How did you organize your facilities, staff, and staff training? _____

10. What were the major themes of your RYLA program(s)? _____

11. How did your club/district recruit speakers or choose speaker topics? _____

12. Publicity for RYLA in your community included: _____

13. List the names of external organizations involved with RYLA: _____

14. What changes have you made over the years to any part of your RYLA to make it more productive?

15. What advice would you give to incoming district RYLA chairs? _____

Additional comments: _____

16. Please include a copy of your RYLA program and/or brochure with this report.

Share your RYLA photos! The best photos are high resolution (at least 300 dots per inch), show action, showcase the Rotary or RYLA emblem, or display the event's name prominently (e.g., awardees wearing RYLA hats or T-shirts, or holding up a banner).



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