

ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS

RYLA

District 7030

Full Programme — 2-Day Format

Leadership Development · Bullying & Cyberbullying · Childhood Obesity Prevention · Environment & Sustainable Development

1. Programme Overview

1.1 RYLA — Rotary Youth Leadership Awards

RYLA is Rotary International's flagship programme for youth leadership development. Designed for participants aged 14–18, it brings together young people from diverse schools and backgrounds in a structured, stimulating and supportive environment.

The central objective of RYLA is to develop committed leaders who are aware of their responsibilities towards their communities and capable of taking concrete action on the issues affecting their territory.

This 2-day programme reflects the vision of District 7030, which brings together Rotary clubs from the Caribbean and South America — territories that share common challenges: social cohesion, public health, environment and civic engagement among youth.

1.2 Pedagogical Vision

This programme is built on a core belief: participants are not passive recipients of knowledge. They are future leaders — the decision-makers, professionals, parents and citizens of their communities.

The pedagogical approach alternates expert talks, participatory workshops and personal reflection time. Each theme is treated not as an isolated lesson, but as a leadership exercise: understand a problem, take ownership of it, imagine a solution, commit to act.

1.3 The Four Themes

Leadership — the thread running through the entire weekend

Leadership runs through the entire programme. It is not treated as just another topic, but as the posture each young person is invited to adopt when facing every issue discussed. Being a leader means choosing to act where others wait.

Bullying & Cyberbullying

School bullying and cyberbullying are daily realities for many young people. This programme addresses both dimensions — in-person and digital — with particular focus on the role of the bystander as the primary lever for change.

Childhood Obesity Prevention

Young people's health is a societal issue. This theme addresses nutrition, physical activity and well-being in a positive and non-judgmental way, inviting participants to become awareness ambassadors among their peers and families.

Environment & Sustainable Development

Participants are the first generation to grow up with a sharp awareness of climate change. This programme invites them to root this global challenge in their local reality, identify concrete actions and position themselves as change-makers in their territory.

1.4 Format & Target Audience

Target audience	Young people aged 14 to 18, selected by District 7030 Rotary sponsor clubs
Duration	2 days — Saturday (full day) + Sunday (half day)
Recommended group size	20 to 40 participants, divided into groups of 5 to 6
Facilitation	Rotary facilitators, expert speakers, Rotaractors
Language	English — adaptable to all District 7030 countries
Post-RYLA follow-up	Progress review by sponsor clubs at M+3 and M+6

2. Programme — Saturday

Saturday is the core day of RYLA: five expert talks, four participatory workshops, a testimonial panel and a physical activity session at the end of the day. The schedule deliberately alternates knowledge input and immediate application.

Block 1 — Opening & Leadership Foundations

8:30 AM	Welcome & Registration ◦ Sign-in, distribution of RYLA kits (personal journal, programme, badge) ◦ Formation of groups of 5–6 participants — mix of schools and backgrounds ◦ Introduction of facilitators, ground rules and the weekend challenge: each group will produce a project to present Sunday morning ◦ Welcome coffee, first informal connections	Social
9:00 AM	Opening Talk — “What Is a Leader?” ◦ Speaker: inspiring local figure (District Rotarian, elected official, business leader, elite athlete) ◦ Content: defining leadership, leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, transformational, servant), leadership as service ◦ The Rotary 4-Way Test: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned? ◦ Flash activity (5 min): each participant writes in their journal the name of a leadership role model and three reasons ◦ Q&A — 15 min	Leadership

Block 2 — Bullying & Cyberbullying

10:15 AM	Talk — Bullying & Cyberbullying: Understanding to Act ◦ Speaker: school psychologist or Education Department anti-bullying officer ◦ PART 1 — School bullying (30 min): definitions, forms (physical, verbal, social, relational), local data and context ◦ The 3 roles: bully, victim, BYSTANDER. The bystander is the most powerful lever for change. ◦ Presentation of anti-bullying programmes and emergency helplines ◦ PART 2 — Cyberbullying (30 min): what makes it different — anonymity, virality, permanence, invasion of private space	Anti-Bullying
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	◦ 1 in 5 young people (aged 8–18) experience cyberbullying; forms include insults, rumours, non-consensual photos, group exclusion ◦ Shared thread: the active bystander role is the same online and offline — don't like, report, support the victim ◦ Key resources: national anti-bullying helplines, cyberbullying reporting platforms	
11:45 AM	Workshop — RETHINK: Think Before You Send ◦ RETHINK INTRODUCTION (15 min): programme created by Trisha Prabhu, aged 13, Google Science Fair finalist ◦ Principle: when about to post a hurtful message, RETHINK displays an alert — “Do you really want to send this?” ◦ Science behind it: the prefrontal cortex (decision-making, empathy) is not fully developed until age 25 — teens often act impulsively ◦ Result: 93% of young people tested chose NOT to send their message after the RETHINK alert ◦ WORKSHOP (30 min): each group analyses a fictional message thread representing a cyberbullying situation ◦ Guide questions: who is the victim? who is the bully? who is the bystander? What would RETHINK have changed? ◦ Group output: the “Digital Leader Charter” — 5 concrete commitments drafted collectively ◦ Practical resources: reporting tools, support platforms, helplines	Anti-Bullying

Block 3 — Health & Childhood Obesity Prevention

1:00 PM	Lunch — Transition to Health Theme ◦ Group meal co-facilitated by a dietitian: friendly 10-minute intro to balanced eating (not a lecture) ◦ Fun activity: each group identifies ultra-processed vs natural foods on the table	Social
2:00 PM	Talk — Childhood Obesity Prevention ◦ Speaker: physician or public health professional ◦ Epidemiological data and local health context ◦ Overlapping causes: ultra-processed foods, sedentary lifestyles, socio-economic factors, access to healthy foods ◦ The peer influence role: how a young person can positively influence their family and friends ◦ Practical exercise (15 min): reading a nutritional label — spotting hidden sugars and food marketing tricks ◦ Practical takeaways: cooking local, moving daily, acting collectively within your school	Health

Block 4 — Environment & Sustainable Development

3:00 PM	Talk — Environment & Sustainable Development ◦ Speaker: local expert (university researcher, environmental NGO or institutional body) ◦ Environmental overview of the territory: key local issues (biodiversity, water, waste, energy, air quality) ◦ UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): which are most urgent locally? ◦ Inspiring local initiatives: youth associations, school projects, green economy entrepreneurs ◦ Core message: you are the first generation to grow up with a full awareness of climate change. You will also be the first to have to act at the scale of your own decisions. ◦ Q&A — 15 min	Environment
4:00 PM	Workshop — “What Would You Do?” · Design Thinking & Engagement ◦ Each group freely chooses their theme from the 4 topics of the weekend ◦ OPENING NARRATIVE (5 min): “All day you have listened to experts. Now it’s your turn. In a few years you will be the main actors driving your territory’s development. What would you do starting tomorrow?” ◦ Phase 1 — Empathise (15 min): “Who in my community is directly affected by this problem?” — anchoring in real lived experience ◦ Phase 2 — Define (10 min): frame the problem in one sentence: [Who] needs [what] because [real obstacle] ◦ Phase 3 — Ideate (15 min): brainstorm — minimum 10 ideas without censorship, then vote on the idea to develop ◦ Phase 4 — Prototype (25 min): sketch on A3 sheet — project name, problem, solution, 3 first actions, 1 success indicator ◦ Prepare a 4-minute oral presentation for Sunday morning	Environment

Block 5 — Testimonials, Action & Energy to Close the Day

5:45 PM	Panel Discussion — “From Spectator to Actor” ◦ 3 speakers: Rotaractor, social entrepreneur, locally engaged young person ◦ Format: 8-min testimony × 3 speakers, then Q&A led by participants themselves ◦ Thread: what was the turning point? How did I find my community? What do I wish I’d known at your age? ◦ Closing message: you don’t become an actor “someday” — you already are, right here, this weekend	Leadership
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7:00 PM	Workshop — Moving Bodies, Leading Minds ◦ Led by a certified sports educator — 40 min of collective, non-competitive physical activity ◦ Cooperative games: succeed together, not against each other ◦ Debrief (20 min): links between physical activity, self-esteem, stress management and leadership ◦ Each group designs a “30-day collective health challenge” for their school ◦ Placed at the end of the day intentionally: releases built-up energy and closes the day on a positive, physical high	Health
8:30 PM	Dinner & Free Evening ◦ Relaxed group meal, informal atmosphere ◦ Facilitators circulate to support groups preparing their Sunday presentation ◦ No formal content — time to breathe and connect	Social

3. Programme — Sunday (Half-Day: Social & Closing)

Sunday is the time for consolidation, human connection and commitment. The goal is not to add new content, but to transform what was experienced into concrete acts and lasting connections. Participants leave with signed commitments, a real network and an official certificate.

8:30 AM	Active Wake-Up & Breakfast - Gentle group activity: yoga, stretches or a collective walk - Each participant re-reads their journal and notes their key takeaway from the weekend	Social
9:15 AM	Group Project Presentations - Each group presents the project from the Saturday design thinking workshop — 4 to 5 minutes per group - Projects may cover any of the 4 weekend themes (free choice) - Supportive jury: 2 Rotarians + 1 Saturday speaker — constructive feedback, no ranking - All projects are celebrated — the goal is commitment, not competition - The most developed projects may receive concrete support from Rotary sponsor clubs (funding, mentoring, networking)	Leadership
10:30 AM	Workshop — My Leadership Declaration & Commitments - OPENING NARRATIVE: “You have seen, heard and felt. You have built something. In a few years you will be teachers, doctors, elected officials, parents, entrepreneurs — the architects of the world you will live in. This moment is your first act.” - Each participant completes 3 commitments in their journal: → 1 action in my school or educational community (e.g. speak up against bullying, start a health club, launch an eco-initiative) → 1 action in my local community (e.g. join an association, organise a collective event, raise awareness in my family) → 1 personal challenge (e.g. reduce social media time, exercise regularly, read about a weekend theme) - One-to-one exchange with a Rotary mentor: one Rotarian for every 2–3 participants - Formal follow-up: sponsor clubs commit to a check-in at M+3 and M+6 - These commitments are not an exercise — they are the starting point of real change	Leadership
11:30 AM	RYLA Talent Market - Each participant introduces themselves in 1 minute with their “RYLA business card” built during the weekend - Standing, dynamic format — no tables, free circulation	Social

	◦ Each participant distributes 3 cards to the people they want to stay in touch with ◦ Creation of the District 7030 RYLA alumni network — shared communication group ◦ Participants sign each other's journals — symbolic closing ritual	
12:00 PM	Closing Ceremony & RYLA Certificate Presentation ◦ Official RYLA certificates signed by the District 7030 Governor or representative ◦ Closing remarks from the President of the organising club ◦ Introduction of Rotaract: the natural next step for participants aged 18 and over ◦ Invitation to return as a Junior Counselor next year — pass on what you received ◦ Official group photo ◦ Closing words: “This weekend, you moved from young people to leaders. The rest belongs to what you do tomorrow morning.”	Leadership
12:30 PM	Closing Lunch & Departure ◦ Final convivial meal, free exchanges, last photos ◦ Pre/post evaluation questionnaire (perceived skills, knowledge gained, intent to act) ◦ Sponsor clubs organise participants' return journeys	Social

4. Recommended Speaker Profiles

The success of RYLA depends largely on the quality and diversity of its speakers. Each profile must combine thematic expertise with the ability to engage a young audience in an accessible and compelling way.

1

Opening Talk — Leadership

District Rotarian, local official, business leader or high-level athlete. Ability to simplify and create an emotional connection with a young audience.

2

Bullying & Cyberbullying Talk

School psychologist, Education Department anti-bullying officer or specialist organisation professional. Up-to-date knowledge of data and reporting mechanisms.

3

Health & Obesity Talk

General practitioner, paediatrician or nutritionist. Positive, non-judgmental approach rooted in local socio-economic realities.

4

Environment & Sustainable Development Talk

University researcher, local environmental NGO or institutional body. Deep knowledge of local territorial issues, ability to connect global and local.

5

Dietitian — Saturday Lunch

Nutrition professional able to engage informally during the group meal, without a formal lecture.

6

Sports Educator — Wellness Workshop

Certified sports facilitator, experienced with young groups. Expertise in cooperative games and pedagogical debriefs.

7

Panel — 3 Testimonial Speakers

A Rotaractor, a social entrepreneur, a locally engaged young person. Authenticity and closeness in age to participants are essential.

5. Post-RYLA Follow-Up & Lasting Impact

5.1 Sponsor Club Commitments

RYLA does not end at the certificate ceremony. Post-programme follow-up is the responsibility of Rotary sponsor clubs.

- M+3 individual check-in: Rotary mentor contacts each participant to assess progress on the 3 commitments
- M+6 group review: meeting or group exchange to measure programme impact on behaviours and projects
- Support for design thinking projects: funding, mentoring and networking as needed
- Invitation to Rotary events: RYLA alumni are welcomed into the life of their local clubs

5.2 Impact Indicators

Quantitative and qualitative evaluation using a pre/post questionnaire administered at the start and end of the weekend.

- Change in self-confidence and ability to speak up in a group
- Knowledge gained on each of the 4 themes (bullying, cyberbullying, obesity, environment)
- Intent to act: proportion of participants who have defined at least one concrete commitment
- Commitment completion rate measured at M+3 and M+6
- Number of design thinking projects continued after the weekend

5.3 District 7030 Alumni Network

Participants are invited to join a District 7030 alumni network, connecting young leaders across all member countries.

- Shared communication group created at the end of the programme
- Biannual newsletter on alumni achievements
- Option to return as Junior Counselor the following year

6. Resources & Pedagogical References

Bullying & Cyberbullying

- National anti-bullying helplines (varies by country)
- National cyberbullying & online violence helplines
- Safer Internet Day resources — saferinternetday.org
- RETHINK programme — Trisha Prabhu: rethinkwords.com
- Internet Matters — internetmatters.org
- Cyberbullying Research Center — cyberbullying.org

Health & Obesity Prevention

- WHO — Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO)
- PAHO — Pan American Health Organization: paho.org
- National nutrition and physical activity guidelines (varies by country)

Environment & Sustainable Development

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — sdgs.un.org
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP) — unep.org
- Paris Agreement on Climate Change — 2030 targets
- IPCC Reports — ipcc.ch

Leadership & Rotary

- Rotary International — Official RYLA Programme: rotary.org/ryla
- The Rotary 4-Way Test
- Rotaract Club — youth network for ages 18–30

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from young people to leaders.
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District 7030 — Rotary International
RYLA — Rotary Youth Leadership Award