



**ROTARY YOUTH
LEADERSHIP AWARDS**





The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program seeks to provide young adults, ages 14-30, with an opportunity to develop their skills and character while exposing them to Rotary's values of service, high ethical standards, and peace.

RYLAs can be conducted at the club, district, or multidistrict level and usually run from 3 to 10 days. While they can take many different shapes, most RYLAs follow a seminar or leadership camp format.

Through RYLA, you can help develop the qualities of leadership, citizenship, and personal development among young people in your community.

Isn't it time for you to

- Reach out to a community in need?
- Work with youth in another country to develop a service project?
- Learn about the customs and culture of a faraway place?
- Serve your local community?

The information in this publication is based on the Rotary Code of Policies. Please refer to that document for exact RI policies. Any changes made by the RI Board of Directors take precedence over information in this publication.

This handbook is produced by the Programs Division of Rotary International. If you have questions or comments, please submit them to:

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Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

CONTENTS

1	What Is RYLA?	2
2	Program Structure	3
	Organization	3
	Participants	3
	Length and Timing	4
3	Effective Planning	5
	Committee	5
	Budget and Funding	5
	Logistics	6
	Promotion	6
4	Program Development	7
	Participant Selection	7
	Counselor Selection and Training	7
	Curriculum Content and Design	8
5	Event Management	11
	Youth Protection	11
	Risk Management	11
6	Best Practices	13
	Collecting Feedback	13
	Following Up and Reporting	13
	Staying Connected after RYLA	14
	Sharing Your Success	14
7	Resources	15
	Rotary International Staff	15
	RI Publications	15
	RYLA 20-Minute Presentation	15
	RI Forms and Guidelines	15

The *RYLA Handbook* was developed to guide Rotarians through the process of starting a new RYLA or improving an existing RYLA at the district or club level. This handbook will

- Provide information on what RYLA is and why it is important to Rotary
- Outline the necessary steps to starting a successful RYLA
- Identify best practices and areas of improvement for existing RYLAs
- Highlight resources available for guidance and advanced RYLA support

1 WHAT IS RYLA?

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is an intensive training program that brings together youth and young adults, ages 14-30, to further develop character and leadership skills and learn about Rotary. RYLAs often take the form of a seminar, camp, or workshop, generally 3-10 days in length, organized by Rotarians at the club, district, or multidistrict level.

Participants are nominated by local Rotary clubs, which often cover all expenses. For these young adults, this recognition offers the opportunity to build self-confidence, gain exposure to a variety of issues and people, meet active community leaders, and learn valuable information and career skills.

“RYLA was the most amazing experience! It taught me to be proud of who I am and helped me figure out what I want to do with my life. There are no limits for me now.” — 2009 RYLA participant

RYLA gives Rotarians the opportunity to mentor promising young leaders serving their own communities and beyond. Rotarians serve as resources for participants on the path to becoming professional and community leaders. In turn, RYLA can bring new energy to a Rotary district, inspire ideas for service, increase support of community service projects, and develop future Rotarians.

Originating in 1959 in Queensland, Australia, RYLA was created as a festival highlighting local youth organized in honor of a royal visit by Princess Victoria. Through Rotarians’ constant belief in the potential of youth, RYLA has since become an opportunity to help the next generation of leaders define themselves and expand their skills. Officially adopted by Rotary International (RI) in 1971, this exciting program engages Rotary clubs and districts around the world.

Each RYLA shares the following program objectives:

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



2 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Organizing a RYLA is a complex undertaking that requires advanced planning and effective teamwork among all Rotarians involved. Several variables — whether the event is held at the club or district level, the age groups served, and the length of the event— shape the RYLA and make each program distinct.

ORGANIZATION

The first step toward starting a RYLA in your area is determining the organization of the program. RYLA can be run at the club, district, or multidistrict level, though most occur at the district level:

Club-level. If the RYLA is organized at the club-level, the club president will appoint a RYLA committee to carry out the event, promoting event participation and recommending the budget and site selection.

District-level. The district governor is responsible for all programs within the district, including RYLA. The governor appoints a district RYLA chair to communicate and promote RYLA to the clubs and to oversee a district committee that organizes district-level RYLA.

Multidistrict. RYLA can also be a multidistrict event, where the program is jointly organized by more than one district. In this case, each district governor involved must obtain advance approval of two-thirds of the clubs in the district and write a letter indicating this to the RI general secretary. Please contact RI staff for information about the approval process.



RYLA SNAPSHOT

Districts 6040, 6060, and 6080 in Missouri, USA, organize a multidistrict RYLA open to participants statewide. The program is run by a governing board of 12 members — four Rotarians from each district.

While small-, medium-, and large-scale RYLA events can all be of high quality, programs organized at the district or multidistrict level often have a greater pool of resources, volunteers, and participants from which to draw.

The Role of Clubs

The support and interest of individual clubs is a critical element in planning a successful RYLA at any level. *Rotary clubs make RYLA happen.* Clubs are often responsible for selecting participants and funding their attendance. Those clubs and districts involved in running the RYLA are also charged with introducing participants to Rotary ideals and values. In general, clubs are the primary contact point for most youth participants throughout their RYLA experience.

PARTICIPANTS

Each RYLA should be planned for youth within a focused age range and relative maturity level. For example, youth ages 14-18 are often still in the process of figuring out who they are, while participants ages 19-30 may be more settled and focused on achieving their life and career goals. Districts that hold more than one RYLA may consider targeting more than one age range. In such cases, there is generally a progression of leadership concepts and curriculum across those programs targeted to the 14-18 age group and those targeted to older participants. In general, RYLA organizers should determine the ages of youth who will participate in the event, assess their needs, and make age-appropriate programming choices.

LENGTH AND TIMING

The duration of RYLAs varies, with most running between one day and one week. Consider what you want the RYLA to accomplish and the amount of time available to the organizers, counselors, and participants when determining the length of the event.

If you are planning to focus on a more narrow age range, such as ages 16-18, you will have to take the local school schedule into consideration when planning longer events. Similarly, if you are planning an event catered to individuals ages 19-30, keep in mind that young professionals usually have less time available away from work and consider holding your RYLA on a weekend.

Additionally, when scheduling your RYLA, be aware of the average weather conditions for the time of year in which you schedule the RYLA, and be sure to communicate these to participants so that they arrive well-prepared. Conditions that are too cold or too hot can limit outdoor activities.



3 EFFECTIVE PLANNING

COMMITTEE

Working on a RYLA involves a great deal of interaction with young adults, so it is important that those who participate have a strong desire to work with youth. The RYLA committee should include an enthusiastic chair and motivated members who are responsible for

- Program development
- Publicity and promotion
- Logistics
- Activities
- Selection of RYLA organizers and counselors. *Some committees designate a program director and program administrator to oversee specific aspects of the program, such as program delivery or logistical arrangements.*
- Selection of participants. *Rotary clubs typically interview and nominate outstanding candidates from their area.*

Additional tasks may include:

- Preparing pre-event correspondence and on-site registration
- Developing the budget, tracking revenues and expenditures, coordinating accounts payable, and managing vendor relationships
- Overseeing accommodations and meals
- Establishing connections with schools and youth groups
- Publicizing the RYLA to the local media
- Assuring the well-being of attendees during the program
- Leading small groups of participants during the program
- Conducting recreational, team-building, and social activities

GOOD TO KNOW If you haven't organized a RYLA before, consider visiting one organized by another club or district. This is an excellent way to establish contact with a neighboring district RYLA chair and gather ideas and recommendations.

BUDGET AND FUNDING

In most instances, RYLA is self-supporting; clubs pay the costs of the participants they sponsor, and no additional district funds are necessary. In some cases, district funds may be made available for unexpected expenditures or to serve as seed money. Present the RYLA budget to your district governor or district treasurer and consult to determine whether any funds may be available for your program.



RYLA SNAPSHOT

Participant registration fees for the **District 1040** RYLA in Yorkshire, England, are covered entirely by their sponsoring clubs, but this doesn't mean they get a free ride. To challenge the participants to give back to their community, they are asked to raise funds to be donated to a local charity.

Overall RYLA costs can vary depending on the size and length of the event. Most program budgets include:

- Printing and distribution of promotional and application materials
- Rental of program venue and any associated costs (e.g., heating, laundry)
- Equipment and supplies (e.g., speaker system, LCD projector, microphone, 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 organizers and guest speakers

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

Securing support or funds from individuals, businesses, foundations, or even nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations can help keep expenses down without passing the cost on to the participants or their sponsoring Rotary clubs. Local businesses may be able to offer monetary contributions or in-kind donations of labor, supplies, or equipment. Customize your message to each business you approach, highlighting the benefits of sponsorship, especially opportunities for positive publicity in the community.

GOOD TO KNOW Rotary and RYLA items created for the event that include any Rotary Marks or logos should be purchased from an RI official licensee as described on the inside back cover.

LOGISTICS

It is common practice to schedule your RYLA about one year in advance to allow adequate time for site selection, program development, and promotion. Communicate with clubs, allowing adequate time for them to include registration funds in their annual budgets and plan for recruiting and selecting participants. Consider the items below as part of **site selection**:

- Location and accessibility
- Privacy on venue grounds (e.g., a school or university campus during a vacation period), which may better accommodate youth protection and security concerns
- Adequate sleeping accommodations for both male and female participants as well as program counselors and speakers
- Kitchen facilities and dining areas
- Areas for small group activities and an auditorium for plenary sessions
- Facilities for indoor or outdoor recreational activities

The planning process should include a few key milestones. For a sample timeline outlining these tasks, please visit the RYLA section of the RI Web site at www.rotary.org/ryla.

PROMOTION

Target your message to encourage Rotarians, young people, and the community at large to support your program. Rotarians can serve as event organizers or counselors, speakers, and participant recruiters. Suggested ways to reach Rotarians include:

- Showcasing RYLA participants and their achievements at club meetings and events
- Sending a letter to local Rotary clubs calling for nominations
- Keeping the district governor and club presidents up-to-date
- Including program information in newsletters and announcements at club visits
- Featuring your program at the district conference or other district meetings
- Making a presentation on your program at the district assembly
- Presenting on RYLA at local Rotary club meetings

Cross-promotion

Rotary has a history of reputable youth programs and dedication to youth worldwide. Review Rotary involvement with youth in your community and leverage this relationship through cross-promotion of RYLA and Rotary's other youth programs. Depending on the age range of your RYLA, you might explore some of the following options:

- Visit the local Rotaract or Interact club to talk about your RYLA.
- Contact your district's Youth Exchange committee to invite Youth Exchange students.
- Encourage past RYLA participants to visit clubs and talk about RYLA to their peers.

Community

Promote your RYLA to young people not already involved with Rotary in your community. Build energy around your program and reach out to school groups, school counselors or faculty, and other non-Rotary youth and community programs to spark an interest among potential participants. To gain maximum exposure to the community, consider sending out news or media releases before the event to attract potential participants. Consult your district public relations chair or visit the RI Web site at www.rotary.org for more information on how to craft a news release.

4 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Carefully consider your overall goals, and design a program that will meet the needs of your participants in a creative and thought-provoking way. Using RI's basic guidelines for RYLA, tailor your program to fit the unique needs of your participants.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

In general, all young adults nominated to attend a RYLA should have demonstrated leadership potential within their communities. While different RYLAs use different eligibility requirements, most successful candidates for RYLA meet some or all of the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated leadership experience or potential
- A cooperative nature and willingness to participate in a group
- An awareness of current events and international issues
- Strong communication skills
- Good performance in school or work
- Enthusiasm for sharing newfound skills with others
- Proven dedication to community service

Create a participant application based on your specific selection criteria. RYLA applications may vary from brief questionnaires to more comprehensive forms with short-answer or essay questions. Organizers of RYLAs that invite minors may also include a letter to parents or guardians in their application materials, providing information on the program and what it involves. Most applications collect basic information about the participant, which may include:

- Name, age, contact information
- Academic/work history
- Community service experience
- Emergency contact person
- Statement of insurance/hold-harmless waiver

GOOD TO KNOW If your RYLA targets young professionals ages 20-30, consider drafting a letter to employers to assist participants in securing time off of work, as needed.

Ideally, your participant group should include both youth who have already been involved with Rotary as well as those who are new to Rotary. As participants, Interactors, Rotaractors, or Youth Exchange students will be able to receive further exposure to Rotary ideals while also improving their own leadership skills. They can also relate their positive impressions of Rotary to other participants who are being exposed to the organization for the first time, thus expanding the family of Rotary in your community.

The RI Board encourages clubs and districts to consider inviting socially and economically disadvantaged youth who have leadership potential to participate in a RYLA. These youth may not have easy access to leadership development opportunities in their own communities, so the potential for impact is all the greater.

COUNSELOR SELECTION AND TRAINING

Selecting counselors is critical to the success of your RYLA. Enthusiastic counselors who are well-trained in the art of facilitating discussion will help foster the safe yet challenging environment in which all participants can push boundaries and develop skills.

When selecting RYLA counselors, look for individuals with

- Experience working with youth and young adults
- Strong abilities in leadership and motivational techniques
- Demonstrated ability and understanding of the role of a counselor
- Fluency in the language assigned for the event
- Knowledge of Rotary and its values
- Physical health, stamina, and mental well-being
- Commitment to the Rotary and the development of young people

There is no standard method for selecting counselors. Some programs choose to draft a counselor application form and interview prospective counselors while others might simply ask that individuals interested in serving as counselors contact the committee chair. Your committee should discuss the right approach for your program and publicize the process, so that applicants fully understand what might be asked of them.

Poorly trained counselors who are more interested in participating in activities than facilitating the group experience can create tense and uncomfortable environments. So once you have selected your counselors, it is essential that you provide them with adequate training to enable them to successfully lead their groups throughout the RYLA. Training should include the following:

- Getting to know your group/creating rapport
- Techniques to encourage participation
- Methods of facilitating discussion
- Managing small-group dynamics
- Benefits of debriefing and reflection
- Detailed program curriculum
- Information on counselor roles and responsibilities

GOOD TO KNOW A morning briefing for all counselors helps ensure that any potential difficulties are shared or brought to the directors' attention. It also provides volunteers with information on weather, program changes, or other administrative matters.

Ideally, RYLA committees should schedule their counselor training well in advance of the actual event. If this is not possible, then training on-site, immediately before participants arrive, should be undertaken. It is good practice for all counselors to do a run-through of the entire RYLA, so that your counselors are well-prepared for logistical challenges that can arise. Depending on the expertise level of your counselor group, try to utilize the talents and skills of the group throughout training — give them ample opportunity to share their own success stories and ideas. This not only fosters greater group camaraderie but also provides an excellent venue for knowledge sharing between the counselors.

CURRICULUM CONTENT AND DESIGN

Developing your RYLA curriculum and setting the agenda is often a collaborative process that occurs over the months leading up to the event. Some RYLA organizers may choose to customize packaged curriculum received from local leadership or outdoor education organizations. Others may develop their own curriculum, using feedback from neighboring clubs or districts active in RYLA.

Topics

The RI Board recommends a core curriculum for all RYLAs that covers the following general topics:

- 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

While each RYLA has three core areas of focus — **leadership, citizenship, and personal development** — consider including topics that will

- Build on the leadership potential of the participants
- Provide the opportunity to sharpen skills and put them into practice
- Focus on our collective responsibility to our communities and to the world
- Reflect issues of local relevance that are presented in a manner consistent with local customs
- Incorporate input from past participants on what interests their peers

Program delivery

Use different program delivery techniques, such as presentations, group work, activities, and other informal learning methods. *A balance of interactive and engaging program elements is the most effective tool to facilitate team building.* Put yourself in the participants' perspective, and consider the balance of physical activity, listening, and talking that they will perform to ensure their attention throughout the program.



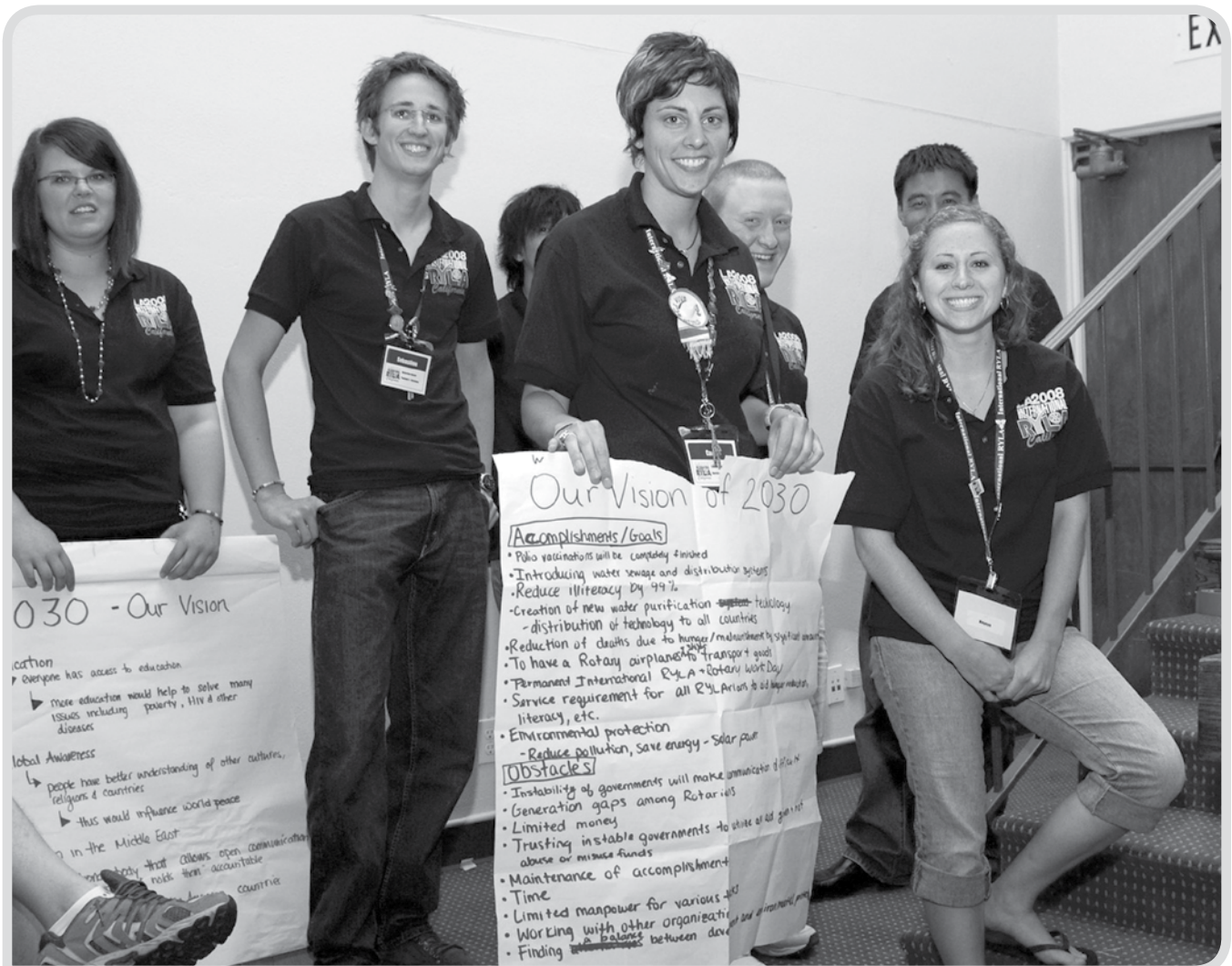
RYLA SNAPSHOT

At the **District 9790** RYLA in Victoria, Australia, participants run the show. Different groups are assigned with tasks throughout the program such as greeting and announcing speakers, presenting on a topic, or leading activities.

Speakers

If you use speakers, it is important that they are able to relate to young people. Emphasize interactive dialogue rather than standard lectures or lengthy presentations. Rotarians and their contacts are good sources for speakers. Possible topics include:

- Professional development skills, such as public speaking, interviewing, and time management
- Elements of successful service projects and other project management skills
- Personal development stories designed to inspire and motivate
- Issues pertinent to leadership in a global society, such as poverty, human rights, peace and conflict resolution, ecology and the environment, and ethics and decision making



Group work

Group work is the cornerstone of any RYLA. 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 only providing guidance and support when needed.

Experiential learning

Another good way to convey ideas to younger participants is through action. Experiential learning, or learning by direct experience rather than through instruction alone, can complement the messages of informative speakers while also serving as icebreakers for a group of strangers who need to become acquainted in a short period of time. By including activities such as group tasks or role-playing scenarios, participants can also practice the skills they have learned in a supportive environment. 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.

Experiential activities are most effective when followed by a short debriefing session that focuses on what the participants learned from the exercise about leadership, citizenship, or personal development. Make sure to factor in time for groups to share their thoughts following an activity.

Debriefing activities

Consider the following discussion questions:

1. What challenges 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?

Socializing and networking

Most successful programs include time for informal socializing and networking. Schedule time for activities that allow participants to interact in different settings: a morning warm-up, such as yoga or hiking; a quiz show, talent night, or skits; "RYLA Olympics"; or even a theme dinner. If you are planning any high-risk activities, such as a ropes course or rock-climbing wall, seek legal or risk management advice in advance.



5 EVENT MANAGEMENT

Clear youth protection measures, comprehensive risk management, and effective program delivery are the best investments you can make toward ensuring a successful event.

YOUTH PROTECTION

The protection of all young persons involved in Rotary-sponsored activities is a necessary component of a successful RYLA. To ensure that your entire committee and counselors are well informed of Rotary's youth protection policies, all committee members and volunteers (Rotarian and non-Rotarian) must attend a youth protection training seminar in advance of the RYLA. Consider contacting your district governor, district youth protection officer, or the Rotarian in charge of training in your district to lead the session.

When planning your RYLA, review local laws and policies related to volunteer and youth organizations in your area in order to determine the steps you must take to protect your youth participants. Work with the district youth protection officer or other district program chair, such as the district Youth Exchange chair, to develop policies and procedures for adequate volunteer screening, the selection and training of volunteers, determining an appropriate ratio of adults to minors, crisis management during the RYLA (including medical emergencies and procedures for contacting parents and guardians), and guidelines for reporting on any incidents consistent with RI policy. It is also recommended to require all volunteers working with your RYLA to pass a criminal background check or similar security measure.

If your RYLA invites youth from *outside* of your local community, program organizers must follow these steps:

1. Obtain written permission from the parents or guardians of all participating minors in advance of the RYLA.
2. Provide parents and legal guardians with specific details about the program, location of the venue, travel itineraries, sleeping accommodations, and contact information for program organizers before departure.

3. Require the parents or legal guardians of all minors to provide travel insurance for the minor when traveling more than 150 miles from participants' local communities.

GOOD TO KNOW If your district doesn't have a youth protection officer, contact your district governor or download the *Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leaders' Guide* (775-EN) at www.rotary.org.

RISK MANAGEMENT

In advance of any RYLA, regardless of the scale of the event or participation of minors or children, efforts must be taken to minimize risks. Risk management involves identifying future events or situations that may cause harm to a person or damage a person's property, and implementing solutions to minimize or reduce these risks. Elements of a risk management plan that can prevent or lessen the impact of losses include, but are not limited to:

- Instructing participants about safe behaviors for team activities
- Inspecting premises before, during, and after events, and documenting the inspection
- Ensuring that all transportation providers maintain adequate automobile/transportation liability coverage and name all involved clubs, districts, and the event as additional insureds
- Developing a disaster and emergency plan, and practicing it at least once during the program
- Purchasing adequate liability insurance coverage for the RYLA, if appropriate for your geographical area

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.

Consult the legal counsel for your club or district before signing any agreement or contract with any organization, contractor, or service provider. Such agreements may contain liability waivers or 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. Also, be aware that Rotary International is not liable for any illness or injury to persons, including participants and organizers, or for damage to any property.

Frequently asked questions

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

A: The district RYLA committee or counselors should establish a set of expectations or code of conduct for all participants, regardless of age, during their stay at the program site. This code should reflect standards of the culture, district or club, and institution at which they are guests and should ensure that future Rotary-sponsored programs will be welcomed at that location.

Q: *What are some insurance and risk-management issues that might occur while sponsoring a RYLA?*

A: Examples 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.
- A vehicle used to transport participants to a Rotary club meeting is involved in a crash.
- A natural disaster strikes.

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. Note: Insurance becomes a more complex issue when multiple districts or clubs sponsor a program, because each organization may carry different levels of coverage.

Q: *Do participants need to purchase additional types of insurance coverage?*

A: All participants (participants and organizers) are urged to verify that their health and life insurance policies 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. To participate in these programs outside of their coverage zone, participants may wish to consider obtaining additional travel, medical, and accident insurance that include provisions for the following:

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

If you have questions or concerns about the level of insurance coverage appropriate for your event, contact your local insurance broker or agent for more information.



6 BEST PRACTICES

Ensure that the energy created during RYLA does not end with 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.

COLLECTING FEEDBACK

The best way to assess the effectiveness of your RYLA is to ask participants and counselors for their perspective. Provide participants with an evaluation form — at the end of the program and possibly at the end of each presentation or activity — so they can offer feedback while the details of their experiences are still fresh in their minds. Some RYLA organizers may also choose to hold individual debriefing conversations with counselors and participants, time permitting.

Evaluation forms may ask participants for input on

- Quality of the exercises or activities
- Value of the presentations
- Skills of individual presenters
- Favorite/least favorite part of the program and any specific suggestions for improvement
- Timing and quality of the information they received before the event
- Group experiences
- Counselors' abilities and skills
- Additional comments or remarks
- Venue and accommodations

Feedback on the various speakers and messages they delivered will help in selecting speakers for the next RYLA, while participants' opinions on program topics and activities can be invaluable in planning future RYLAs.

Additionally, you may also choose to survey participants a few weeks or months after the event. While the response rate for evaluations requested after a RYLA concludes may not be as high as those requested on-site, they offer the organizers a valuable look into the long-lasting impact of the RYLA on participants' daily lives.

FOLLOWING UP AND REPORTING

After the successful conclusion of your RYLA, scheduling a follow-up meeting with committee members and counselors might seem the furthest thing from your mind. However, this is the ideal time to discuss program outcomes, review participant feedback, and brainstorm about improvements for future programs. Many programs ask their organizers, volunteers, and counselors to stay at the event site for an extra hour or two after participants have departed to hold such discussions while the information is fresh in their minds.

Use this time to confirm a date for the first planning meeting of the next RYLA. Even if some committee members or volunteers are unsure whether they will be able to devote the time and resources to the program in the coming year, asking them to stay involved — even in an advisory capacity — allows the program to retain their skills and expertise for future years.

Also be sure to draft a brief program report soon after your event and submit it to RI headquarters at ryla@rotary.org, so that the Secretariat can stay apprised of your success. Annual report forms are available at www.rotary.org/ryla.

STAYING CONNECTED AFTER RYLA

To maximize the benefit of the participants' experiences, consider ways to stay in touch with participants, maintain your role as mentor, and invite the participants to take on new leadership roles.

Because of their familiarity with and enthusiasm for the program, past RYLA alumni can act as RYLA ambassadors in their communities, recruit and interview nominees, work as "junior counselors," serve on the district RYLA committee, or offer peer support to current RYLA participants. Many districts establish long-lasting ties by maintaining a network that fosters interaction among participants and organizers.



RYLA SNAPSHOT

To keep participants in touch, **District 6450** (Chicago, Illinois, USA) follows its three-day RYLA with various "fourth day" reunion activities throughout the year, such as:

- Museum outings
- Barbeques
- Attending a parade downtown

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 participants, such as a one-day workshop, allows Rotarians to track the development of the participants' leadership skills and offer further guidance.

Through Rotary International and Rotary Foundation programs, participants can further develop their leadership skills, gain greater understanding of the world, and continue serving their community through Rotary well after their RYLA ends:

- Interact (interact@rotary.org)
- Rotaract (rotaract@rotary.org)
- Rotary Youth Exchange (youthexchange@rotary.org)
- Ambassadorial Scholarships (contact.center@rotary.org)
- Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution (contact.center@rotary.org)

International RYLA

The RI-sponsored International RYLA, held immediately before the RI Convention, focuses on developing advanced leadership skills while leveraging the internationality of the participants. International RYLA participants must be between the ages of 18 and 30 and be sponsored by their local Rotary club or district. Often, clubs or districts chose their delegate from those attending their local RYLA or other outstanding Rotary youth program participants. For more information, contact ryla@rotary.org.

SHARING YOUR SUCCESS

Just as public relations efforts leading up to a RYLA 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. Update your pre-event news release to include interesting stories and quotes to communicate the impact of RYLA. Include action photos from the event to increase interest.

Take advantage of the network of Rotary clubs and districts involved with RYLA and share best practices with one another. Consider posting information about your RYLA on club or district Web sites, including the key training materials and program agendas used at the event. Many RYLA discussion forums are available online, including at www.rotary.org (keyword search: discussion forums).

The RI Board of Directors encourages experienced RYLA organizers to develop multidistrict, regional, or zone-level RYLA planning workshops to discuss successful RYLAs among district RYLA chairs, district RYLA committee members, and other Rotarians interested in RYLA.



RYLA SNAPSHOT

Rotarians in Japan organize an annual All-Japan RYLA Institute to enhance and develop RYLA activities in their country. The institute regularly draws an audience of district governors, district governors-elect, and district RYLA chairs.

7 RESOURCES

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL STAFF

RI World Headquarters staff are committed to providing excellent service for RYLA by offering guidance and support, as well as promoting communication between RYLA leaders in clubs and districts worldwide. Rotarians should make a special effort to keep RI informed of their activities by submitting an annual report and reporting any changes in district RYLA chairs. This information is used to for program updates, new publications, and announcements about special activities shared with district RYLA chairs.

RI PUBLICATIONS

In addition to this handbook, the following resources are available to RYLA organizers and those who are interested in starting a RYLA program in their area.

Publication codes appear in parentheses. An asterisk () indicates a publication is also available for download at www.rotary.org.*

RYLA Brochure (636-EN)*

This promotional brochure provides information about RYLA's purpose and describes different RYLA programs. Clubs and districts can use this publication to promote RYLA to potential participants.

RYLA Certificate (695-EN)

This certificate allows you to print or fill in the names of participants for distribution at the completion of your RYLA program, with signature blocks for the club president or RYLA director and district governor.

RYLA Poster (635-MU)

Clubs and districts can use this poster to promote RYLA to potential participants in schools or throughout their communities.

Publications can be downloaded at www.rotary.org or ordered at <http://shop.rotary.org>, or requested by e-mailing shop.rotary@rotary.org or contacting your international office.

RYLA 20-MINUTE PRESENTATION

Rotarians can download a sample 20-minute presentation on RYLA at www.rotary.org to help them introduce RYLA to Rotary clubs in their area or to help promote the program to potential participants. This presentation describes the RYLA program and identifies valuable resources for RYLA organizers. The presentation can be downloaded and adjusted to suit the presenter and target audience.

RI FORMS AND GUIDELINES

The following Web-only resources are available for download at www.rotary.org.

- Sample RYLA Application (*optional*)
- Sample RYLA Evaluation (*optional*)
- RYLA Report Form (to be completed by the RYLA district chair or RYLA organizer)

RYLA EMBLEM USAGE GUIDELINES

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 Members section under General Information. 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 +1-847-866-4463.

Specifications for RYLA Emblem

The RYLA logo can be produced as one-color or three-color. For the one-color version, the letters R, L, and A and the Rotary emblem appear as 100% PMS color, and the Y appears as 50% 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 three-color version (with the wheel in the official blue and yellow), the letters R, L, and A appear as 100% PMS and Y as 50% PMS. The Rotary emblem 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).





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