**Become a YAP Volunteer**

**What is OCD Youth?**

OCD Youth is a peer-led community of under 25s affected by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. It is run by OCD Action, the national charity for people affected by OCD in the UK.

This area of our work is youth-led, meaning that it is directed by a group of young OCD Youth volunteers. The group is known as the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP).

We run various activities in order to help increase access to support for young people with OCD, and to reduce stigma and raise awareness of the condition.

**What does OCD Youth do?**

**Activity Days**

Twice a year we run exciting outings for under 25s with OCD – from theme parks, to ten-pin bowling, to canoeing in the Lake District. These events are organised, promoted and delivered with the YAP. They provide an opportunity for young people with OCD to meet others with similar experiences, feel less isolated, and enjoy themselves in a safe and supportive environment.

“With a mixture of group support sessions and informal activities, the event was a great success and a testament to how valuable it can be just to share experiences with people who understand... Looking forward to the next one!”

**Online Hangouts**

These are monthly video conferences for under 25s with OCD. They provide an opportunity for members of OCD Youth to connect with each other, discuss events and topics of interest, and catch up with the Youth Advisory Panel. The sessions are organised by the YAP and overseen by OCD Action.

**Training & Awareness**

We deliver OCD awareness talks with staff and students in secondary schools, sixth form colleges, universities and other networks. These cover topics specific to OCD, as well as more general information about anxiety and other mental health difficulties, stigma, discrimination and bullying. They are delivered by qualified teacher volunteers and/or members of the YAP.

**OCDyouth.org**

“I've found it helpful to know I am not on my own. Seeing other people's posts and comments have helped me feel not so isolated. If you are having a bad day it’s nice to know you can get support - or even having a good day it’s great to share the news.”

OCDyouth.org is a mini-site for young people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The purpose of the site is to provide a platform for young people affected by OCD to get information, provide peer-support, and become part of the OCD Youth community.

**Social Media**

The Youth Advisory Panel have set up OCD Youth social media accounts to engage with other under 25s with OCD. Twitter and Facebook help us to widen our reach and promote our activities, so that more young people affected know where to find us. Follow us on Twitter ([@OCDyouth](file:///C:/Users/Trish/Desktop/twitter.com/ocdyouth)) and Facebook ([/ocdyouth](file:///C:/Users/Trish/Desktop/facebook.com/ocdyouth))

**What does the YAP do?**

The Youth Advisory Panel is at the heart of OCD Action’s work with children, adolescents and young adults. As this is a youth-led initiative, YAP volunteers really take the lead on activities, campaigns and events. After all, those most qualified to advise on what young people need...are young people!

YAP volunteers meet online every month to discuss, plan and deliver new initiatives and activities. These are defined by the volunteers themselves and range from lobbying MPs to running events.

**What Will Volunteering Involve?**

Volunteering roles can be as little as one hour per week, to as many as two days per week, depending on volunteers’ time commitments. Each YAP term is one year, and volunteers are allowed to extend their term for a second year if they wish.

Roles can generally be undertaken from home or from the OCD Action office in London. There are two roles however (Events and Training) that must be undertaken from the OCD Action office, so these volunteers should be within travelling distance of central London (expenses paid).

In addition, YAP volunteers are expected to attend two meetings per year: the YAP AGM and an annual workshop. The AGM is held as part of the [OCD Action National Conference](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk/conference), so please make sure you are free on **15th April 2015** and able to travel to Manchester (expenses paid).

Positions within the Youth Advisory Panel each relate to specific areas of responsibility, which are:

* Chair (group spokesperson, facilitates online meet-ups, attends OCD Action board meetings)
* Secretary (writes minutes at meetings/progress reports, oversees OCD Youth inbox)
* Media & Communications Officer (public face, writes press releases, replies to media requests)
* *Events Officer (works with OCD Action to organise, deliver & promote OCD Youth outings)*
* Social Media Officer (schedules the Twitter/Facebook rota, oversees social media output)
* Web & Digital Officer (oversees the OCD Youth site, writes/sources/edits online content)
* Support Officer (provides support to forum users & YAP, help starting an OCD Youth e-helpline)
* Diversity Officer (outreach to underrepresented groups in the YAP & wider OCD Youth network)
* Marketing Officer (promotes OCD Youth and its activities, designs marketing materials)
* *Training Officer (arranging & delivering talks in schools, youth groups and other services)*

*(We are currently only recruiting for those roles shown in black. Those shown in grey are already filled. If you are interested in one of the filled positions, there may be opportunities for role-sharing, so please still indicate this in the application form under ‘preferred roles’.)*

**Why join?**

Joining the YAP is an excellent way for you to improve your skills. Volunteers gain experience in communication, organisation, leadership and team-work, which are highly valued in school, university and the workplace.

Volunteering is something that universities look for on UCAS forms as it shows that you are proactive, motivated and have gained relevant skills. It sets jobseekers apart from the rest too, as volunteering shows commitment, responsibility and gives you experience to refer to in an interview.

It is also an opportunity for you to test a possible future career path, meet new friends, and ensure that OCD Action is doing what’s best for you and other young people with OCD.

The YAP is free to join and is open to anyone under 25 with OCD, who is living in the UK. If you are under 18, you will need parental consent, as it means exchanging social media/contact details with other people, some of whom may be older than you.

**YAP Application Form**

(to be filled out by you, the young person)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name |  | |
| Date of birth |  | |
| Home address |  | |
| Contact email |  | |
| Contact telephone |  | |
| Facebook profile URL (to invite you to our private support group) |  | |
| A bit about you & why you’d like to join |  | |
| Equalities monitoring information  (all questions are *optional*) | How would you describe your ethnicity? |  |
| How would you describe your gender? |  |
| How would you describe your sexuality? |  |
| Preferred roles | 1st choice: | |
| 2nd choice: | |
| 3rd choice: | |
| Reasons for your three choices & what you’d bring to the roles |  | |
| How you heard of us |  | |

**YAP Consent Form**

(Filled out by you if you’re 18+ or by parent/carer if you’re under 18)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * *First emergency contact information (this must be a parent/carer for under 18s)* | | | | |
| Emergency contact name(s): |  | | | |
| Relationship to applicant: |  | | | |
| Contact address: |  | | | |
| Contact phone number: | Mobile: | Home: | | Work: |
| Contact email address: |  | | | |
| * *Second emergency contact information* | | | | |
| Emergency contact name(s) |  | | | |
| Relationship to applicant: |  | | | |
| Contact phone number: | Mobile: | Home: | | Work: |
| Contact email address: |  | | | |
| * *Medical information* | | | | |
| Name of doctor: |  | | | |
| Contact details: | Tel: | | Address: | |
| Please indicate any disabilities or medical conditions & treatment: |  | | | |
| Give details if you think you/your child needs additional support to volunteer: |  | | | |

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver, having read the information about the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) on pages 1 and 2, agree/give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to attend and participate in the YAP.

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver consent to information provided by me/my child as part of the YAP being used in both an internal and a public-facing capacity

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver consent to OCD Action collecting my/my child’s personal information, to enable participation in the YAP.

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver agree to other members of OCD Youth and the YAP accessing contact details for me/my child, to enable collaboration and peer-support

(NB. this will include being part of a private Facebook group wherein OCD Action will be unable restrict Facebook-friendship requests and private messaging between members).

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver agree to OCD Action taking and using photographs and/or videos of me/my child for use in online and print resources and publicity materials.

□ I, the applicant/primary caregiver agree that I/my child will not privately contact or meet with any other member of OCD Youth or the Youth Advisory Panel, where one or both of the parties is under 18, without the supervision of an OCD Action member of staff.

Signature: Print name: