**Become a YAP Volunteer**

**What is OCD Youth?**

OCD Youth is a peer-led project supporting under 25s affected by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. It is facilitated by OCD Action, the national charity for people affected by OCD in the UK, and is run by a group of young volunteers known as the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP).

### What does OCD Youth do?

#### YAP

The Youth Advisory Panel is a volunteering programme at the heart of OCD Youth. As this is a youth-led initiative, YAP volunteers meet up every month (online) and twice a year (in person) to collaborate on OCD Youth activities.

#### Activity Days

We run exciting outings for under 25s with OCD – from theme parks, to bowling, to canoeing in the Lake District. 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!”

#### 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 website for young people with OCD. Its purpose is to provide a platform for young people affected by OCD to get information, peer-support, and be part of the community.

#### e-Helpline

The OCD Youth e-Helpline is our newest service. It is a virtual (instant messaging and email) helpline, providing a listening and information support service to young people under 25 who have OCD (or think they might have).

#### 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](twitter.com/ocdyouth)) and Facebook ([/ocdyouth](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.

Roles can generally be undertaken from home or from the OCD Action office in London. There are three roles (Events, Training and Support) for which it is advantageous for volunteering to be undertaken from the OCD Action office. Those who are within travelling distance of central London and wish to volunteer from the OCD Action office will have their lunch and travel expenses paid for.

In addition, YAP volunteers are expected to attend two meetings per year: the YAP AGM and an annual workshop. The AGM is usually held as part of the annual OCD Action National Conference, and the workshop tends to coincide with one of the bi-annual OCD Youth activity days.

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

* Chair: *group spokesperson, facilitates YAP meetings, builds relationships with stakeholders*
* Diversity & Equalities Advisor: *outreach to underrepresented groups in the YAP & wider network*
* Events Advisor: *works with OCD Action to organise, deliver & promote OCD Youth outings*
* Media & Comms Advisor: *oversees social media, writes web content, creates marketing material*
* Research & Campaigns Advisor: *researches & campaigns on key issues in OCD/young people*
* Secretary: *writes minutes at meetings & compiles reports, oversees OCD Youth inbox*
* Support Advisor*: provides support on forum & e-Helpline, oversees the Youth e-Helpline rota*
* Training Advisor*: arranging & delivering talks in schools, youth groups and other organisations*
* Web & Digital Advisor: *oversees the OCD Youth site & other digital/development project*

Applications to be emailed to trish@ocdaction.org.uk by 11:59pm on **Monday 5th December**

Interviews will be held in person at our London office, or online via Skype, on **Friday 9th December**.

**Why join?**

Joining the YAP is a great way to gain experience in communication, organisation, leadership and team-work. These are highly valued skills in schools, universities 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 between the ages of 13 and 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 over 18.

We would particularly like to hear from people who are from a Black, Asian or other UK minority community background to help us improve understanding of OCD within these communities and encourage people to seek support.

**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 (optional – for us to invite you to a private YAP group) |  |
| Skype username (optional – for us to conduct your YAP interview online) |  |
| A bit about you & why you’d like to join |  |
| Preferred roles | 1st choice: |  |
| Reasons & what you’d bring to the role |  |
| 2nd choice: |  |
| Reasons & what you’d bring to the role |  |
| 3rd choice: |  |
| Reasons & what you’d bring to the role |  |
| How you heard of us |  |

**YAP Monitoring & Consent Form**

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 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? |  |
| How would you describe your dis/ability status? |  |
| How would you describe your religious beliefs or faith? |  |

*OCD Action is committed to promoting equal opportunities and wants equal chances for everyone to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimisation.*

[ ]  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:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |