school staff handbook
for cyber leaders

Acknowledgements

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Contents

" The help from teachers assisted us in our role as Cyber Leaders as they allowed us the time to meet with the groups to organise activities, helped to set up technological equipment, provided advice when we needed it and also encouraged students to listen at our assembly presentations. "

Supporting Effective Student Leadership

Welcome to the support guide for developing student cyber leaders in your school. This guide is designed to assist you as you establish your student leadership program. If your school has been working with student leaders for some time the **pre-planning** module may not be required. It contains information about **genuine leadership for young people and other ideas on encouraging and supporting students** as they work towards accomplishing their goals.

Below is the planning cycle you may wish to use to guide your students through their leadership journey. The **student leadership guide provides detailed information** on each of these steps in the planning cycle and is designed to be a practical tool to support their endeavours. Information has been provided below regarding the topics in the student leadership guide.

This leadership guide has been designed to be used in conjunction with the Cyber Strong Schools website (*www.friendlyschools.com.au/cyberstrong*). Throughout the resource you will see links to sections of this website.

Pre-Planning
Establishing Effective Student Leadership

Step One
Selecting your Team

Step Two
Preparing for Action

Step Three
Topics and Activities

Step Four
Support Strategies

There are a number of issues that may require discussion with a team of staff from your school before establishing a student leadership group. Laying the foundation for effective student leadership will enhance the success of the activities implemented by your students.

Build your knowledge

Technology is moving so quickly it is challenging for even the most avid user to keep updated with the latest device, fad or popular website. You may have decided to introduce cyber leadership as a preventative measure or in response to issues at your school; whatever the reason it will be valuable to have some understanding of young peoples' use of technology prior to working with your student leaders. There are two key areas to be addressed here:

1. Knowledge of what the students in your school are using and doing with technology
To gain a clearer picture of areas requiring attention at your school survey or ask the student leaders to **survey the students who your leaders are going to be working with** (i.e. whole school, middle school only etc…). This information can be used to help the leaders determine which issue(s) to focus on each term. If you are more interested in technology use only, the ACMA (*www.cybersmart.gov.au*) offers a survey instrument you may wish to consider.

2. Knowledge of different technology terms and how these are used by students
The website *http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Glossary.aspx* provides detailed information on all of the topics listed in this handbook. This information may assist you as you work towards identifying issues and activities to address these issues with your student leaders.

> " We are the technological generation. We are the ones who need to teach and learn from others about preventing and reducing cyberbullying. "
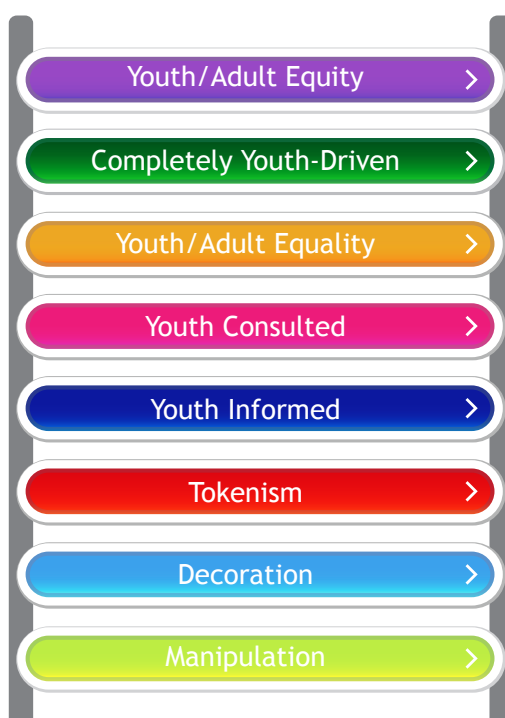
Offer genuine student leadership opportunities

When establishing a student leadership program in your school it is timely to also reflect on how student leadership groups operate in your school and how this role is similar or different. Your student leaders may want to know **what opportunities they have to genuinely impact** upon the culture of the school before they decide which activities they want to focus on. It is worthwhile thinking about this before establishing your leadership group.

Have a look at the ladder below and consider the level of **genuine** engagement you offer student leaders at your school. You may wish to consider the following questions:

- Do you have students who are leaders merely to represent the school? *Decoration*
- Do you listen to students but rarely take action on their ideas? *Tokenistic*
- Do you seek students out and ask them for their opinion before making changes?
  Youth informed / consulted
- Do you act on ideas raised by students, encouraging them to write what they feel are appropriate policies and procedures for your school to consider? *Youth driven equity*

Ladder of Youth Voice

| Youth/Adult Equity |
| Completely Youth-Driven |
| Youth/Adult Equality |
| Youth Consulted |
| Youth Informed |
| Tokenism |
| Decoration |
| Manipulation |

Adapted by Adam Fletcher (2011) from work by Roger Hart, et al. (1994)

Rewarding student leaders

Students in our previous research have suggested a variety of rewards that helped them to feel the work they were doing was supported and appreciated by their school, some of these included:

a. Badges
b. Awards at Assembly
c. Official Title
d. Being mentioned at Assembly by staff members
e. Officially promoting the work of the leaders through set communication channels
f. Creating opportunities for the work of the leaders to be effectively showcased

Clear, consistent, support

The most effective student leaders in our previous research were those who had regular interaction and support meetings with **staff members** and where support was readily available. In these schools the staff member did not 'do' the activity but instead offered regular suggestions and encouragement. **Being available to offer ideas and suggestions was found to be more beneficial than attending every student leader meeting.**

Networking opportunities with other student leaders

Having the opportunity to **share ideas and strategies and be part of other student leader groups in the school** provided another support group for cyber leader action. Working with a neighbouring school or if this is not possible, establishing networks with other leaders through Skype or other online communication will also provide fresh ideas and allow for the sharing of resources.

Blocked sites

Many student cyber leaders were **frustrated with sites such as YouTube being blocked in their school**. It may be worthwhile allowing one student from the group to access these sites during meeting times so they can research clips they might like to use to support their presentations.

Provide opportunities for students

Student cyber leaders expressed a desire to **be included like other leaders in school events**, such as Orientation days, Assemblies and Open Days. Engaging students in these major school events allows students to feel their work is supported and valued.

Young people understand there are some challenges when using technology. They also recognise there is a need to educate their peers, especially younger students, about how to engage with technology safely. The good news is **they usually want to be involved in this process**.

Forming a group of students tasked with the role of leading your school community in the safe use of technology is a great way to educate others and encourage positive online travels.

Select student leaders well BEFORE you want leadership activities to begin

The most effective student leadership teams were those that either had the opportunity to be coached by or had a comprehensive **handover by student leaders from the previous year** and (ideally) were **selected well in advance of their official start date**. For example, if the activities are to begin in Term 1, appoint your leaders halfway through Term 3 of the previous year and provide opportunities for them to meet and exchange ideas before the term ends. This allows students time to think about their role and activities before having to develop and implement these. Previous research shows that in many cases, the holiday break allowed students to meet outside of school to plan and further develop their activities.

Form a group of between 4-8 students

Schools with the most successful programs selected 4 students to form their leadership team. While other schools had success with larger groups, up to 8 most found the distribution of responsibility over more leaders increased the workload of school staff.

Encourage socially credible students to become your leaders

Taking on a position of leadership in this area can be challenging for some students and many of their peers and friends consider themselves experts regarding technology use (in particular the use of social media). The most effective schools selected or encouraged students to nominate **students with charisma and high social credibility** to become their cyber leaders. Some schools achieved this by:

1. Encouraging socially credible peers to nominate for leadership positions.
2. Allowing the student cohort to vote for those they felt would make good student leaders.

Preparing students for their role as leaders

Activities have been provided for students, in the online Student Leadership Guide to assist them as they undertake their role. You can access this guide from the 'Student CyberLeaders' module at *www.friendlyschools.com.au/cyberstrong*. A brief explanation of each section of the Guide and the activities it addresses for cyber leaders is provided below.

a. Understanding yourself as a leader
These activities encourage students to think about what they value, as their values tend to dictate either consciously or unconsciously the types of actions they focus on (for example, actions to support families or friends). Also in this section, an activity is provided to assist students to identify their strengths and interests.

b. Selecting actions for your school and making them happen
A comprehensive list of action ideas are provided and organised according to their target group, i.e.: whether they address the school, family or community. Students are given examples of how to plan a selection of the activities identified by previous student leaders.

c. Building knowledge
Information has been provided for students addressing key technology issues and social networking. This basic information may assist students as they plan their school based activities.

d. Team building games
Many of the activities selected by past cyber leaders required them to present to other students in the school community. Leaders were often challenged to identify ideas they could use to engage the other students. This section of the online student Guide provides a number of team building games students can use to assist them when working with members of the school community.

e. Links to useful clips
YouTube is a useful resource to help students prepare presentations and to personally learn more about cyber safety. This section of the Guide contains links to a number of informative yet popular clips relating to various online challenges. New clips are being created all the time, the related clips section on YouTube is worth looking at for updated clips on similar topics.

f. Supporting fellow students
Previous student leaders have indicated their peers and younger students have sought them out to ask for assistance with personal cyber issues once they have become leaders in this area. This section lists a series of support agencies students may utilise in their work with their school. The section also provides them with a framework to help them to encourage students to access support from an adult.

Negotiate parameters up front

It may be useful to **negotiate action parameters that you feel are workable** when the group is first selected. Some staff found students were very keen initially to undertake activities, but, as students became busy, this enthusiasm waned and resulted in the staff member picking up the pieces. The most successful schools selected one activity per term and worked conscientiously toward the effective implementation and sustainability of this activity.

Establish group roles

Some groups of leaders are able to identify their cyber leader group roles without staff support, while others needed support from the staff member to allocate roles, tasks, and ensure the action ideas became a reality. The online Student Leadership Guide also provides activities to help students discover their **strengths and interests and in turn their role**.

Regular meeting times

Cyber leader groups that **met fortnightly** were able to accomplish their goals more readily than those who met more or less often. Student leaders also worked best when they had a regular, predetermined place to meet (e.g. classroom booked) and reminders sent to attend meetings. It appeared to make little difference if a staff member was present at the meeting or not, the most important factor was bringing the students to gather together regularly and giving them support to achieve their goals.

> " It taught us how to build a relationship with others and the skills for building activities and leadership. "

Trust students' judgment

Our research suggests that technology related issues that are reported to the school staff may represent a very small portion of the many issues being experienced by young people online. Some students in previous research expressed frustration when staff members tried to change the focus of their actions according to what the staff perceived were the most pertinent challenges faced by students at their school. **Students who had ownership and the autonomy to decide on the areas of focus with some support from teachers were the most effective at implementing activities**.

Select an issue for action each term
(maximum of 4 issues/year)

The most successful student leaders had clear ideas about what they wanted to achieve in their school community. Many groups selected more than one issue per term and a number of actions, however those that settled on **one issue to address per term and one action to support this per term were the most successful**.

Below is a list of issues your group may consider addressing at your school. More information on some of these issues can be found in the 'Developing Personal Knowledge' module on *http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/cyberstrong* and other related/linked websites.

- Connecting Online
- Social Networking
- Facebook Tips
- Cyberbullying
- Warranties
- Passwords
- Bluetooth
- Geotagging
- Support Numbers
- Helpful Websites
- Saving Evidence
- Texting and Emailing
- Copyright
- YouTube
- Trolling
- Thinking Time
- Laptops and Back Injury
- WiFi Connecting
- Sexting

A diagram outlining types of social networking, with "Social Networking" at the centre surrounded by: Blog, Micro-blog, Online Journal, Social Bookmarking, Photo Sharing, Video Hosting, Virtual World, Location Based Networks, Meeting Strangers Networks, Online Dating Sites, Music Sharing, Learning Community, Online Games.

Should students select social networking as their focus they may need assistance to focus on more specific issues related to social networking sites such as a particular type of social networking. Above is a diagram outlining some types of social networking.

Social Networks

Social networking sites like Facebook allow existing friendships to be made and in some cases provide opportunities for new friendships. These sites allow people to share their opinions, and be creative. Think of practical tips you can share with your school community to assist in the positive use of social networks.

Blog

A website made up of entries, also known as 'posts'. Blog entries are typically made by an individual user and are often in the form of a commentary which is text based but may include videos, graphics, and pictures. Blogs are commonly used as an online diary or to comment on areas of interest. The entries are displayed in reverse-chronological order.

Microblog

Micro-blogging sites allow users to post short updates to be viewed by their listed friends or public to anyone as defined by the user. The updates may be in the form of typed text, pictures, videos, photos, or links. The term micro is used to differentiate this form of blogging, which uses a limited amount of text for each update compared to a blog, which may have an unlimited amount of space for a post. Micro-blogs function as a social networking site by allowing users to make a post and read posting by others. A popular micro-blogging site is Twitter.

Online Journal / Diary

Online diary sites are similar to blogs, they allow users to share their daily experiences, links, photos, clips and other information that inspires them or they are interested in. In most of these sites you can follow users if you find their diary of particular interest.

Social Bookmarking

Social bookmarking sites allow users to add, edit, share and change web documents or bookmarks. These sites are different in that they do not house the resource but merely the link to the resource. Users can organise bookmarks into categories. Education institutions are beginning to use bookmarking as an effective learning tool.

Photo Sharing

Photo sharing sites allow users to share images of interest to them with other users. Most sites allow for user profiles to be developed or for interest groups to develop. Likes, comments and tagging are popular features of most of these sites.

Video Hosting

Video hosting sites have boomed in popularity and are used now for both entertainment and education. Most video hosting sites have options for clips to be loaded via mobile phones and for profiles to be created where users can promote their business (for example Music Artists).

Professional Network

These sites have been established for users to promote themselves in a professional context. Many follow a similar format and allow users to create profiles according to their area of profession.

Virtual World

Virtual worlds are online worlds that in some or many ways copy the real world. You can create an avatar or online persona in an online world and meet other people, purchase items and attend lectures. Most things you can do in the real world have been simulated in virtual worlds.

Location based Social Network

These social networks have been established to share with others your whereabouts. They are based on mobile versions of a website and allow you to show others where you are or invite others to join you, for example, if you were at the beach. Sharing your location in an online environment may risk your personal safety.

Music Sharing

Some music sharing sites allow music to be purchased, others breach copyright regulations and allow you to download music for free. If you use the second option your downloads are logged in the history of your computer through your internet provider and could result in prosecution.

Learning Community

Learning communities bring people together who are like minded in many cases to have meaningful peer to peer conversations or to share knowledge towards achieving a learning outcome.

More information on social networking sites can be found by visiting the *Types of Social Networking Sites* page on *www.friendlyschools.com.au/cyberstrong*

Select an activity to support the issue you are addressing

The Student Leadership online Guide provides instructions for students describing how other student leaders delivered the following activities in their schools. These instructions have been included, as students during our research reported that not knowing how to begin planning their activities, was one of their greatest barriers to success. Some of the most popular actions from these young people are listed below. Your group may consider a combination of these ideas throughout the year.
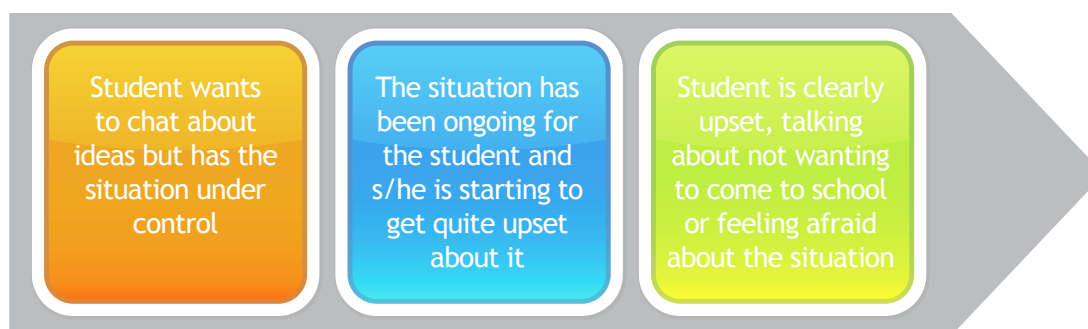
- Newsletter items
- Daily bulletin / portal ideas
- Media productions / mini movie / drama productions
- Assembly presentations
- Parent nights
- Presentation to staff
- Training younger students or peers
- Reporting strategies in your school

Some of these activities will require more support than others; you may want to offer students a list of activity ideas you are confident your school can support.

" Our Cyber Leaders had meetings with school executives to achieve approval for our major goal of creating awareness around cyberbullying and rewording the school policy to include cyber bullying. "

Discuss other students reporting online challenges to student cyber leaders and how you would like them to respond

When students lead strategies to support the safe use of technology, some leaders reported other students asked them for help with their online problems. Previous student leaders reported not knowing how to respond effectively or what to say when students approached them about their problems. It will be important to talk with student leaders about which problems they should or could assist other students with and when they should be handing the problem over to an adult to address. The diagram below may assist student leaders when thinking about which problems they should hand over to an adult.

Student wants to chat about ideas but has the situation under control	The situation has been ongoing for the student and s/he is starting to get quite upset about it	Student is clearly upset, talking about not wanting to come to school or feeling afraid about the situation

> Student Cyber Leaders often report the support of teachers in providing advice and being available when help is needed is an important factor for the success of their leadership role.

Encourage students to share support services with other students

One of the greatest challenges schools face when addressing cyber related issues is the lack of willingness to report these problems or access any form of support. Across Australia there are a variety of reporting strategies available to support young people who are experiencing problems or wanting information. A list of some of these services is below;

Phone support, email/online chat support

Lifeline: (*www.lifeline.org.au*) 13 11 14 (cost of a local call). Provides 24 hour counselling services over the phone and email as well as chat services from 8pm to midnight 7 days a week.

Kidshelpline: (*www.kidshelpline.com.au*) 1800 55 1800 (free call from a land line). Provides counselling services for young people aged 5-25 years. Counselling is available by phone and email 24 hours a day and by web chat from 2pm to 8pm Monday-Friday and 9am to 7pm Sat and Sun.

NSW Mental Health Information Service: (*www.mentalhealth.asn.au*) 1 300 794 991 (cost of a local call). Hotline open from 9-5 weekdays (EST) that provides information (including evidence based practices) and support to people affected by mental illness. The information service may also be accessed via email contact.

Itsallright: (*http://www.itsallright.org*) Youth section of the SANE organisation (*www.sane.org*), helping young people who have or have friends or relatives with mental illness: 1800 18SANE (1 800 18 7263; cost of a local call). Helpline phone open from 9-5 weekdays (EST) to provide information and support for anyone concerned about mental illness. Enquiries may also be made online and are usually answered within 3 working days.

Youth beyondblue: (*www.youthbeyondblue.org.au*) 1300 22 4636 (cost of a local call). Youth services for beyondblue (*www.beyondblue.org.au*). Provides fact sheets and information on mental health and additional challenges faced by teenagers. Available referral services are also listed.

Web-based information

ReachOut! (*http://au.reachout.com*) Web-based service that aims to inspire young people to help themselves through tough times.

Headspace: (*www.headspace.org.au*) Offers a comprehensive website and one-stop-shop services that are youth-specific.

CyberSmart: (*www.cybersmart.gov.au*) Provides resources to help parents, teens and kids safely navigate the Internet.

NetSafe: (*www.netsafe.org.nz*) Provides resources for safe and responsible Internet use.

Thinkuknow (*www.thinkuknow.org.au*) Provides resources for trainers, teachers, parents, and young people about how to have fun and be safe on the internet, potential problems and means for reporting issues.

Orygen Youth Health: (*www.oyh.org.au*) Ensures that young people can access high-quality mental health, and drug and alcohol services.

The Inspire Foundation: (*www.inspire.org.au*) Online programs that prevent youth suicide and improve young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Bullying NoWay! (*www.bullyingnoway.com.au*) Resources for parents, students, and teachers. Includes information about what to do if a child is a bully or has been bullied, and how to respond to bullying behaviour.

Face-to-face support

Headspace: (*www.headspace.org.au*) Intervention services to young people aged 12 to 25 years.

YouthLink and YouthReachSouth: (*www.youthlink.perthwa.net*) Free counselling service for young people aged 13 to 24 years. Counselling available in person at 223 James Street, Northbridge (ph: 9227 4300) or Level 2/25 Wentworth Parade, Success (ph: 9499 4274).

Your local doctor

Counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists: For information on practitioners in your local area, call the beyondblue info line, on 1300 22 4636.

Notes