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**We need the support of all Rotary Clubs in District 9780!!**

**Do you want to make a difference to young people?**

**There is an amazing program which Rotary Clubs could support young people to attend in 2025.**

**The RYLA experience runs each year and has the capacity to take 50 – 55 young people between the ages of 18 and 25 and change their lives.**

**The RYLA experience makes a huge difference:**

Stepping into a room filled with random strangers on the first day of RYLA was a daunting experience. Little did I know that this program would transform my life in ways I couldn't imagine. Throughout the days that followed, RYLA opened my eyes to a whole new perspective on leadership and personal growth. Gradually, I found myself settling into the program and embracing the challenges it presented. I learned to be more initiative-driven, foster open communication, and gain the confidence to express myself freely. This transformation didn't go unnoticed. When I interviewed for the position of optical assistant at Specsavers, the recruiters were intrigued by my RYLA experience and how it had shaped my outlook on life and work. The skills I gained at RYLA served me well in my role, and I excelled in my responsibilities. As I progressed in my career, landing the role of lab assistant at Biolab, I continued to apply the lessons from RYLA in my daily interactions. Even my university friends were fascinated by the shift they saw in me. I was more passionate, driven, and confident than ever before. I loved sharing my RYLA journey with them, knowing that the program had played a pivotal role in shaping the person I had become.

**2022 Rylarian**

**When is it? April 6th – 11th 2025**

**Where? Kangaroobie, Princetown**

**What does it cost? $625 per person. However if you are interested in RYLA but financially cannot commit, there are other ways to help – please read on!**

**Applications open now and close on 7th March 2025**

**How long has Rotary been involved with the RYLA experience?**

**RYLA was adopted as an official program of Rotary International in 1971 and has been a worldwide success ever since. It is the most comprehensive youth leadership training that Rotary delivers. The aims of RYLA are:**

* **To demonstrate Rotary’s respect and concern for youth**
* **To provide an effective training experience for young people and those who see themselves as potential leaders**
* **To encourage leadership of youth by youth**
* **To recognise publicly young people who are rendering service to their communities**

**Every RYLA program needs to promote Rotary and its service to the community. However for each participant, the RYLA experience will include the following elements:**

* **Leadership and decision making skills**
* **Positive Leadership and motivation**
* **Communication Skills**
* **Problem Solving and Conflict Management**
* **Building Self Confidence and Self Esteem**
* **Global Citizenship**
* **Goal setting**
* **Community contribution and public speaking**
* **Developing resilience.**

**Is it successful?**

**Our 2023 Rylarians thought so and commented at the end of their RYLA experience:**

* How I see myself is different. I feel much more confident and comfortable with who I am and what I have within me to give to the world and others around me. I also feel so connected to this group of people. They are like family and I am so blessed to have them all in my life now. I don’t feel so alone now.
* I see everything differently after this program. The way I approach my life, my study and the way I talk will forever be changed after this experience.
* I hoped to work on my confidence and my connections within myself. RYLA has helped me achieve both. I am on my way to being confident in all aspects of my life and I know I have been given the skills to navigate any situation with confidence. I have been provided the opportunity to look within and see myself - the leaders have shone a mirror into my soul allowing this to become a reality.

**What are the expectations on Rotary Clubs?**

**We are asking our District Rotary clubs to do the following now for 2025:**

1. **Try to find potential attendees and encourage them to attend**
   * **Make contact with one or two local schools and align yourselves with their alumni program to identify young people who would benefit from being involved**
   * **Discuss this among members and those they know outside Rotary to find a young person who would benefit from the RYLA experience**
   * **If you are unable to find a young person to sponsor, offer to support a young person to attend and the RYLA committee can find an applicant for you to sponsor**
2. **Support these young people to apply and be prepared to put aside approximately $600 for the payment of the camp.**
3. **Support your applicant to commit to attending as for example, a barrier to attending could be missing work and this might be supporting them through study or day to day living.**
4. **If your Rotary Club cannot commit to the cost of the RYLA Experience (registration fee and possible support funds) for a young person, please consider donating into the RYLA Support Fund to assist participants to eliminate their barriers to attend.**
5. **Support the young person to talk to employers and/or University or TAFE to be given time to attend – you never know an employer might recognise the potential of the young person and help to pay the cost**
6. **Be prepared to support the participant by:**
   * **Ensuring they can travel to Cobden on the first day Sunday April 6th 2025**
   * **Arranging for possibly one or two Rotarians to attend the dinner on Thursday April 10th 2025**
   * **Check in every so often to make sure that they remain positive about attending**

**Remember it is also what the young person can give to your club. Maybe you could:**

* + **Make them a friend of your Rotary club and they could come and assist in some of your fundraising activities and join some of your social get togethers**
  + **They could come and speak about themselves before and after the camp.**
  + **You could introduce them to Rotaract**

**There are lots of ways they can link in and who knows maybe they will become a future Rotarian.**

**Another way to support the RYLA experience is to offer to be a host club and Rotarians can be the camp Mum and Dad.**

**The role of camp Mum and Dad is traditionally filled by two members of the host club for that year. Ideally this is a couple from the Club, however we frequently have a female and male club member who are not partners.**

**The role of camp Mum and Dad at RYLA is very important to its success. While at times the camp Mum and Dad may feel like they are not physically doing much, rest assured that their presence and attendance is VERY much felt by participants and the RYLA Leadership team alike. One of the roles is to be an ambassador of all things Rotary. They should take pride in telling participants about Rotary and the great work of their Club over dinners and in breaks whenever they should ask or enquire. As well as this, throughout the week they need to be available to support the Leadership team with anything they require, and they need to be available to chat openly with participants during mealtimes and generally enjoy being a part of this valuable Rotary experience. The Leadership team will refer to these Rotarians as ‘Mum and Dad’ throughout the week and encourage the RYLA participants to do the same (they need to be ready to adopt more than a handful of new kids!). As such, another invaluable part of the role is to be a pseudo ‘parental figure’ for any participants who may be missing home or in need of a few extra supportive or loving words through the week from someone who is not a formal member of the RYLA Leadership team.**

**The camp Mum and Dad will be greeted by the Leadership team at Kangaroobie at 2:15pm on the first day of the program and they will be given everything they need to begin the initial set up in preparation for the participants arrival along with an overview of the kinds of tasks they will initially be working on. These include but are not limited to.**

* + **Allocation of participants names to dorm rooms and duty lists.**
  + **Review participant applications and create a summary of any medical conditions, allergies, medications or details that the RYLA Leadership team may need to know about.**
  + **Attend morning meetings with Leadership team – every day at 8:20am sharp**
  + **Remain a point-of-call for participants during the night should they need anything urgent.**
  + **Complete daily shop runs as required by Leadership team– departing most commonly after morning tea and arriving back at Kangaroobie before lunch (they will be told where all the best coffee and ice cream is so that they can treat themselves!)**
  + **Be an extra set of eyes and ears for the Leadership team.**
  + **Any other small duties as required by Leadership team as the week progresses.**

**If you think your Club would like to be hosts in the future and provide Rotarians as the camp Mum and Dad please let us know.**

**How do young people apply?**

**Applications are now open. The closing date for the 2025 RYLA experience is Friday 7th March.**

1. **There is an application form attached for your Rotary Club contact to assist the applicant to complete. Please keep a copy and then email it to the RYLA committee before the closing date.**
2. **If your Rotary Club wants to sponsor a young person to attend and has no applicant, please let us know and we will try to link you to a young person as, for this RYLA experience we are adding in an option for young people who have not connected to a Rotary Club to apply directly to the RYLA committee.**

**Any questions? Please contact the RYLA Secretary, Chris Kinley** [**RYLADistrictSecretary@rotary9780.org**](mailto:RYLADistrictSecretary@rotary9780.org)