



[NB this presentation is for the use of YOTs and other cross-agency YCAP working groups and can be used to explain the action planning process to other group members.]

**Why do action planning?**

- Youth crime is a complex social issue. There is no one cause, and no one solution
- ‘Collective Impact’: research is increasingly showing that local people and professionals can successfully tackle complex social issues in their communities if they work together and focus on an agreed action plan, with shared goals and shared ways of measuring progress
- Action planning is about achieving collective impact. It is a step-by-step process to help a community design, develop and deliver solutions to address youth crime

**An action plan will help us:**

- Agree on a shared vision
- Identify what the current situation is and what we want to focus on
- Identify clear goals and work out how to achieve them
- Keep track of whether what we are doing is working
- Most important - Achieve long-lasting positive change

**What does a successful plan look like?**



### Where to start?

The community action planning guide sets out a seven step process for action planning.

Each community is different, and will be in a different stage on this tree.

YCAP is not about being prescriptive, it's about communities finding the solutions that work.

The idea is that this tool should help, not hinder, us as we go through the action planning process.

# 1. Preparation

## Form the group



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## Gather key info

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### Firstly, get the group together:

- This may, or may not, start with a Youth Offending Team (YOT). Another existing group in our community could also be used to do action planning, such as a BPS forum. Or a local community group might lead the planning and form a new group, of which YOT members are a part.

Ideally our group will:

- Be inclusive of a wide range of interests (government agencies, local government, Department of Internal Affairs, iwi/ hapū, Non-Government Organisations, local school representatives, truancy officers, youth, etc)
- Remain of a manageable size

Note: The community action planning guide includes a worksheet on 'who to include and why'.

### Secondly, gather some information about our community:

Everyone involved should bring any relevant statistics they can collect in advance to our first action planning session. We should pool information so everyone gets to see the whole picture.

The community action planning guide explains the type of statistics that are available and where to get them from. It's not always straight forward, so we would benefit from asking everyone what statistics they have access to well in advance of the meeting.

### Statistics allow us to:

- Come to a common understanding about what is happening in our community
- Compare issues in our community with what is happening in other places in New Zealand
- Prioritise which issues should be of particular concern in our community
- Identify measures which will help us to assess the impact of our group's actions so that we know which of our approaches are working, and which are not

## 2. Understand our community

### What is our community?

### Build a shared picture



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#### Define the community:

Which geographical area is our group going to focus on?

Are we focussing on a suburb, a city, a region?

Communities are usually self-defined. We will need to consider:

If our proposed area is large, such as a region:

- Do the people around the table have a vested interest in all the areas being discussed? Will we all be able to attend meetings? Will the 'community' have a stake in the plan?

If our proposed area is small, such as a suburb:

- Do we run the risk of doubling up our efforts? Does one area have significantly different issues to the area next door? Will staff from government agencies have to work on too many different plans?

[Example: In a larger town or city, one option would be to have a steering group for YCAP action planning that focuses on youth justice in the whole city. The steering group can identify hotspots (suburbs, or issues) that need extra attention and then establish sub groups to look more intensively at those local areas or issues, including others from the community in coming up with actions to tackle relevant issues.]

Think about:

- What works for us?
- What works for the various communities we are responsible for?
- What's the best way forward for us?

#### Build a shared picture

•This goes back to the statistics we were gathering in step one. We will need to analyse them as a group. At the same time, we will need to do a stock-take of what else is going on in our community. What is there? What is working? What is not working? What are the gaps?

•Ideally, we should do a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). We could ask: What does our community do well? What not so well? What are our particular youth justice concerns? Why does our community look the way that it does?

### 3. Clarify issues

Identify



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Prioritise

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#### Identify issues

Out of the SWOT, a clear picture should emerge about what issues our community sees as particularly relevant in relation to youth justice.

We may identify issues about

- *Young people* e.g. there is an issue with violent teenage girls in our community, or we have an issue with fight clubs or kids taking illegal drugs
- *The wider community* e.g. locals have highlighted their concern about graffiti or police have noticed an increase in car theft
- *The agencies who work on youth justice* e.g. not working well together or not sharing information correctly

#### Prioritise issues

It's a good idea to focus on only two or three things to start off with. We should narrow the scope of what we are going to work on as much as possible. We can always add more later. To start, we should choose a couple of issues that stand out as a priority.

## 4. Involve our community

“Partnering”



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Double-check our membership

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### Involving the community

Sometimes we may feel that it is difficult to involve the community in action planning. However, getting buy-in from the community is what really makes action planning successful.

A YCAP approach should engage the community in an in-depth way throughout the planning and implementation phases.

We should:

- Involve iwi/ hapū, community groups and interested individuals when coming up with solutions
- Try to involve people who are influential in our community, those with good networks and those with access to resources in the community
- Try to inspire people to help develop our solutions and put them into practice
- Try to involve hard-to-reach communities (minority groups such as immigrant communities, socio-economically disadvantaged groups, gang communities, etc)

### Keep in mind...

“Partnering” may mean we need to hold public community meetings. Or it may mean we hold smaller meetings with interested groups, or with key individuals. It may mean we visit schools (if we are working on education issues), or running a survey of youth. It may mean we invite local marae representatives to a workshop. It may mean we hold a sausage sizzle and use that to canvas public opinion and recruit keen people to help with our planning.

We should do whatever seems appropriate and most likely to achieve the goal - which is buy-in from the community and some real, long lasting solutions to youth crime issues.

### Next steps:

*Double check the issues we prioritised*

Were they the right ones? Did they align with our community's priorities?

*Double check our membership*

Once we have confirmed what issues we will be addressing, we may need to tailor the membership of our group to fit with those issues. For example, if we are looking at truancy, we will presumably want the local attendance service to be involved in meetings. If we are looking at after-hours drinking in town, we will definitely need local government at the table.

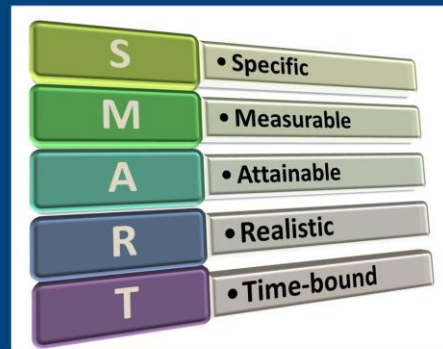
**The key point here** – We will need to make sure our group (or sub-group) has the right number of members to function well. We probably don't want more than about 12-15 members in the core action planning group.

## 5. Set goals

### Get SMART



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### Set a baseline

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#### Setting goals

It is surprisingly difficult sometimes to re-express an issue as a goal. People often start by trying to decide what actions they are planning to do. However, deciding on actions really needs to come at the end, or we run the risk of being side-tracked by the individual interests of group members. We need to set a goal first, then identify what actions we will take to achieve that goal.

To explain it simply: Our 'goal' describes the state (or point) we want to get to. Our 'actions' in step 6 will describe how we plan to get there.

#### For example

Our issue might be: "Our community has particularly high rates of youth reoffending compared with other places in NZ. The statistics are particularly bad for rangatahi Māori."

*Interim goal:* In partnership with local iwi/ hapū, understand why this is the case.

*Long-term goal:* Reduce overall youth reoffending rates to NZ national average or lower.

Then make this into a SMART goal. It is particularly important that our goal be measurable, or we will not be able to tell when we have achieved it.

So in the example, just mentioned, the goal might be to "reduce or eliminate the discrepancy between Māori and Pākehā reoffending rates by June 20XX."

In this example, we would need to make sure we know exactly what the current situation is – what is the discrepancy currently? **This is our baseline.** Then we will be able to tell if our work is having an impact or not by comparing our baseline to statistics six months or a year down the track.

Note: It is a good idea to start with some easy wins. It's important our group feels it is making some progress quickly – this will motivate and inspire us to keep going and try to solve some of the bigger, harder issues.

## 6. Finalise our plan

Choose our actions

Write up our plan

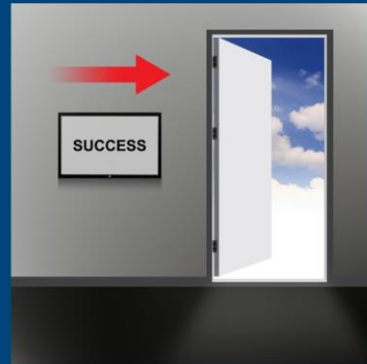


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### Choose your actions

This is the really challenging part– what actions will our group take, what will we do, to achieve each of the goals? The success of our community action plan hinges on getting this right. If we think of our goal as the place we are aiming to reach, an action lays out how we plan to get there. Each action is a stepping stone towards achieving our goal.

There are a variety of different actions we could take to achieve a particular goal. Brainstorming with a wide range of people is a great way to make sure we don't miss any potentially genius solutions.

Remember: Try to hold back and let the actions come out to match the problems, rather than the other way around.

We are all busy people – we should try to limit our actions to the critical few that we all agree will make the most difference to youth crime in our community.

### Write up your plan

The community action planning guide contains a template action plan (as a Word doc) which provides a good starting point.

Most importantly, we should:

- List all of our issues
- Next to each issue write the corresponding goal
- Under each corresponding goal write each of the actions we plan to take to achieve that particular goal
- For each action we will specify what we will do, how we will do it, who will take responsibility, and when it will be done by

So by now we are nearly there! The plan is in place – the next, 'easy' step is – implement!



## 7. Put our plan into action

Implement  
Monitor  
Evaluate



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### There are three aspects to putting our plan into action:

- implementing – doing the work
- monitoring – regularly checking the work is being done
- evaluating – assessing whether the work has had a positive impact

### We will need to:

Set some guidelines for our group (meetings – how often / where / who organizing)

Agree on some dates to:

1. Review progress on each action – are these being done?
2. Review progress on each goal – are we getting some way towards achieving these?
3. Review the action plan as a whole – evaluate whether it is working or not. Are there any changes to our baseline measurements? Do we want to add some more goals or actions? And so on.

# Good luck!



**SURVEY**

Very Good

Good

Average

Poor

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