



YMCA COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION

“Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility”

The YMCA values the individual worth, uniqueness and diversity of all people. We seek to remove barriers to participation in programs and activities that will enable all people to meet their full potential, and experience meaningful involvement in the YMCA Movement and the community, according to the Mission statement and values of YMCAs in Australia.

Our commitment to social inclusion will be achieved by our Member Associations through:

- **Striving to remove any barriers to full participation in community life**
These barriers may be social, economic, attitudinal, cultural, geographic or political.
- **Supporting and fostering active citizenship**
In particular we are committed to fostering a spirit of volunteering and local governance
- **Enhancing peoples rights, access and opportunities**
The principles of Access and Inclusion are an important element of Social Inclusion.
- **Advocating for the rights of all people in our communities**
The YMCA is uniquely placed to use its relationships to influence decision makers on behalf of those less able to express their views and needs.

BACKGROUND

The Federal Government defines social exclusion as “the outcomes for people or communities suffering from a range of problems such as unemployment, low incomes, poor housing, crime, poor health and disability and family breakdown.”

Statements made by the Government also note that exclusion is not just about disadvantage, which is complex and multidimensional and can be inter-generational, and prevalent in specific locations and population groups. They have stated that social exclusion occurs when:

- people lack access to job opportunities, education, health care or credit;
- indigenous people or migrant groups are treated with disrespect or subject to discrimination because of cultural difference;
- children and young people are deprived of intellectual stimulation or proper nutrition; and
- older Australians are isolated from society and cut off from their economic role in our society.

The reasons for the YMCA’s need to focus on social inclusion are ethical, practical and legal. They include:

- It is an affirmation of the YMCA’s Mission.
- Social inclusion is a matter for all Australians and benefits everybody.
- The Australian community is increasingly diverse with people requiring (and expecting) differing approaches to meeting their needs. Local people best understand the needs of the local community.
- The YMCA is mindful of the legislative requirements underpinning inclusion principles, and that different requirements exist at the federal, state and local levels. These include:
 - Racial Discrimination Act 1975
 - Sex Discrimination Act 1984
 - Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 - Age Discrimination Act 2004
 - Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991
 - Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988
- The YMCA is mindful that the principles of Social Inclusion are being implemented in all levels of Government, and that each view these principles from a ‘whole of government’ perspective.

AGREED ACTION

YMCAs are committed to ensure that:

- To the best of their capacities YMCAs will ensure that no-one will be turned away from accessing a YMCA program due to an inability (not unwillingness) to pay.
- Areas most in need of YMCA services are targeted. We understand where the needs exist in our communities and mobilise our resources accordingly.
- Success in inclusion is measured against set goals and Key Performance Indicators that reflect the work of each YMCA and their capacity to respond.
- YMCA leaders demonstrate a strong and visible commitment to the YMCA Mission and Values, and to the YMCA's commitment to Social Inclusion.
- YMCA leaders communicate to all employees and volunteers that they have a responsibility to ensure their actions are consistent with the YMCA Social Inclusion principles.
- Learning and development programs for leaders and managers include how to demonstrate the YMCA Social Inclusion principles.
- YMCA strategic planning incorporates Social Inclusion decision-making, and this is integrated at all levels (volunteers, staff, management and governance) of planning and performance measurement.
- YMCA communications, including marketing materials and publications are designed to be accessible by all people. Our choice in imagery reflects the diversity of the community.
- Appropriate resources are allocated at all levels (volunteers, staff, management and governance) to facilitate the achievement of Social Inclusion goals
- We seek to partner with organisations and agencies who share our commitment to Social Inclusion.