



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Association des malentendants canadiens YOUNG ADULTS NETWORK

Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 Term

Mission Statement

YAN is a non-profit network of young adults aged 18-35 with varying hearing levels that strives to educate communities about hearing loss, to provide resources and support to young adults with hearing loss so they can become productive members of society, and to foster connections and active leadership amongst our membership.

Vision Statement

The purpose of YAN is to raise awareness about the issues and concerns of hard of hearing young adults in Canada, to enable them to connect with each other, and to provide support for them to be involved within CHHA and to lead a healthy and happy life.

3.1 To be the vehicle of concerns and coordination for members' activities on behalf of and in the service of hard of hearing young adults in Canada.

3.2 To advocate for the development of social, educational, technical and employment environments which would enable young hard of hearing Canadians to achieve their potential.

3.3 To encourage the hard of hearing young adults to take individual and collective responsibility for their growth and development through the development and encouragement of social networking and mentoring, whether on a formal or informal basis.

3.4 To explore and advocate for the strengths of, and the obstruction to equal access of hard of hearing young adults and develop solutions to these barriers.

3.5 To promote the development of and access to technical aids, services, and facilities for people with hearing loss.

3.6 To promote the education of the general public, social institutions, professionals and the hard of hearing young adults themselves, about hearing loss problems and the available solutions.

Priority #1: Membership Engagement

- Promote programming focused on skills development, community building, and advocacy among young adults and strategic partners.
- Use of social media (and emerging mediums) to connect YAN with young adults, youth organizations, companies, and CHHA branches/chapters across Canada.
- Use of email lists/newsletters to notify members of latest developments and expand reach via other newsletters (i.e. iListen from CHHA-National, CHHA-BC Chapter newsletter, etc.).
- Encourage the creation of local YAN groups by YAN members, with the assistance of YAN and local CHHA branches/chapters (i.e. administrative support, marketing), to engage young adults through events and programs. In doing so, will facilitate stronger regional reach within the provinces/territories we serve.
- A key demographic to target are high school students who are transitioning into post-secondary education or employment.
- The Network will encourage membership to propose projects and support them when feasible.
- Implement and execute a distribution strategy for the YAN Posters created during the previous term, with assistance from CHHA-National. Ideal placement includes chapters/branches of CHHA, accessibility centres and in public spaces serving young adults with hearing loss.

- The YAN Board to host periodic townhalls, which will help to retain members by keeping them informed of the board's current plans for the future of YAN. As well as allow the board to find out what we can offer them, in terms of resources.
 - Summary of discussions held at townhalls to be made available to membership following the meeting.
- Host periodic YAN socials (virtually and in-person) to promote the Network, strengthen the community and create networking opportunities.

Priority #2: Employment

- Address the core issue that deaf people are among the least employed demographic in terms of a disability.
- Spread awareness of the employment challenges that hard of hearing young adults' encounter.
- An online resource for employers that clarifies the common challenges and suggests possible accommodations (i.e. debunking myths about people with hearing loss vs. Deaf in a work setting).
 - Establish a program or accommodations' list for both the employer and employee with regards to assistive devices (i.e. DM (formerly FM) systems, telephones, alert devices, etc.).

Priority #3: Advocacy and Awareness

- Webinars, YouTube videos, clips/reels, with some focusing on access to post-secondary accessibility services (i.e. systems, note takers, etc.) and advocating for our needs in work settings.
- Workshops and events specifically focused (or featuring themes) on improving mental health/well-being and bringing overall awareness to matter (i.e. mental health retreat).
- Workshops with an emphasis on importance of hearing health within the younger demographic (i.e. protection against noise pollution, etc.).
- Resources (and guidance on how to locate resources) for hard of hearing students transitioning to (or navigating) post-secondary education
- Establish relationships with audiologists, social workers, service providers, healthcare corporations, hearing clinics, etc.
 - Establish Transition Facilitators (i.e. VOICE for D/deaf and hard of hearing children), those of which are in contact with hard of hearing youth and can provide information to their clients about YAN.
- Explore the creation of a 'Big Brother/Big Sister' type mentorship program between young adults and youth to help them navigate living with hearing loss.
- Increase awareness in rural areas and those that are under-represented in YAN (i.e. outside of BC, NL).
- Advocate for awareness/accessibility in public spaces frequented by young adults.
- Collaborate and support CHHA-National on mutually beneficial initiatives to expand our reach (i.e. national campaigns, employment related efforts, etc.).

Priority #4: Governance

- Strengthen our governance and Network structure through the formation of standing and ad hoc committees, to complement the skills and experience of the YAN Board.
- Create and update policies and procedures not covered by the Bylaws to guide the Network in the day-to-day operations.
- Review Bylaws and update accordingly to provide real-world guidance, allowing the Network to focus on its work and guided by governing documents, rather than restricted by them.
- Strategize on ways to ensure continuity on the YAN Board and minimize the turnover that occurs during an election year under the current format.