

## **Youth Advisory Council**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Why was the Council created?**

*What made Laurel House want to do this?*

- We know that young people have their own experiences of sexual violence, and you have important things to say that can make a difference to the way victim-survivors are supported in Tasmania.
- We wanted to give you ways that you can use your lived experience to make a difference for other young people and to prevent sexual violence.

#### **What do I need to join the Council?**

*Please talk to us about this if you aren't sure if you can apply.*

- Be a victim-survivor of sexual violence, including childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or sexual exploitation.
- Be living in the north or north-west of Tasmania.
- Be between the ages of 13 and 18 (but we are open to talk with you if you are younger or older than this). We may have some workshops for younger people and their parents which are separate to the Council.
- Have consent from your parent or caregiver to join and be able to sign a consent form before the first meeting.
- Have access to a laptop, computer, or iPad and able to use Zoom software. If you haven't used Zoom before we can teach you.

#### **What sort of things will you do?**

*There may be more than this as time goes on.*

- Attend meetings or have discussions about how you think young people should be supported and how sexual violence can be prevented.
- Give your opinions and feedback on Laurel House resources or help create new resources.

- Telling us what can be done better for young victim-survivors and how we can do things better at Laurel House to support young people or their caregivers.
- Update the Board of Laurel House on what we have been talking about in meetings, so they know what we are doing and how we want things to change.
- Give advice and support to other organisations, including government on ways they can do better for victim survivors.

### **How will Laurel House do this?**

*This is the ways we work at Laurel House:*

A Youth Engagement Lead, Keelie McMahon, who has experience working with and alongside Victim-Survivors and is also a young victim survivor herself, will be supporting you every step of the way.

- We will be doing it in a *trauma informed way*, which means we will have things in place so you can feel safe to do this work.
- We will use a *youth development model*, which means we will give you chances to do training, learn the skills to do the work and build your decision-making skills while being part of a group.
- We will use a *strengths-based approach*, which means we respect that you are the expert on your life and experience, and you have your own individual strengths.
- We will use an *empowerment and healing model*, which means we want to help you use your experiences to bring change for other victim-survivors as well as feeling like you are making a difference.

### **What type of guidelines will help the work?**

*Boring but important stuff that we use to make sure we do the work well.*

- Laurel House policies including the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy, Continuous Improvement Policy, Code of Conduct and Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- United Nations Conventions
- Other guidelines and frameworks created by people that have worked with victim-survivors that tell us the best ways to do the work, including the Experts by Experience Framework and Y-Change model.
- Government child safety frameworks
- Laws relating to children and young people

You don't have to read all of these long documents, but they are for Laurel House to use. If you want a copy of these or want this explained, please let us know.

### **How will my parent or caregiver be involved?**

*We want to make sure you are safe and supported and parents or caregivers play an important role in this for young people under 18 years.*

- Only parents or caregivers that have not been abusive to you can be involved.
- They will need to give their permission for you to be involved (unless we think you are able to do this yourself).
- They will have support from us after meetings or between meetings if needed.
- They can attend workshops we may hold to help them support you.

### **What if I have a disability or have other diversity?**

*We welcome all people to apply no matter your identity or background.*

- Laurel House is inclusive and welcomes people from all identities, backgrounds and experiences to apply.
- We are inclusive of people with disability, neurodivergent people, people who are culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ people, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, First Nations people and other forms of diversity.
- We welcome you to tell us what you need to be part of the Council.

### **What support will I have?**

*These are the things we do so you feel okay and safe to do the work.*

- We will talk to you before a meeting to find out what you need to help you participate and feel safe.
- There will be debriefing after each meeting. A counsellor will be there to support you during this time.
- If you need more support after the meeting, then you can talk to a Laurel House counsellor one-on-one.

- You can bring a trusted support person to the meetings – this could be a parent or caregiver, a teacher, a counsellor or anyone else that will help you to feel safe and supported to participate.
- Your parent or caregiver can get this support too.
- The Youth Engagement Lead will also support you in all the work.
- If you are a current client of Laurel House your existing counsellor can also support you. Talk to your counsellor if you want to apply.

### **What sort of training will I be doing?**

*Once you join LEAPY you can tell US what YOU would like to do. We have made a list but want your ideas too*

Once you are a member of LEAPY we will talk to you about what you would like to do. You will not have to participate in anything that you don't want to. That is your choice. Ideas we have are:

- Training on understanding trauma
- Training on how to tell your story in your own words to help make change
- Problem solving
- Public speaking
- Art-based workshops
- Self-care when advocating
- Other fun or team building activities

### **What will I be doing?**

*This is so you know what is required of you and how you will do it*

- You will be attending regular meetings (approximately 1 meeting per month) with the first meeting to be held in June 2024.
- Meetings will be held after school hours.
- Some extra meetings may be held in between if needed. If this happens you will be given notice ahead of time (at least two weeks).
- Meetings will be held hybrid. This means they will be mostly online but could be some face to face depending on where the members are located. You can use the chat function in meetings if you don't want to use audio or video and closed captions will be used.
- You will be part of LEAPY for 2 years but have the choice to stay longer if you wish. You can leave LEAPY at any time by letting the Youth Engagement Lead know by email, SMS or phone.

## How will the meetings be run?

*This is so you know what meetings look like*

- Most meetings will be done over Zoom, but sometimes we may organise to meet as a group in person.
- Meetings will start at 4pm and go until 6pm (with one or two breaks in between)
- You will be given a document explaining what is going to be happening and discussed in the meeting and any papers that will be talked about at least five days before the meeting.
- Decisions will be made by consensus. This means that for a decision to happen most of the group have to agree.
- You can tell us what you need to attend meetings and we will do our best to accommodate.

## Who will be at the meetings?

*All the people that will be there*

- Between 8-15 other LEAPY members similar to you. This group may be smaller depending on how many applications we get and who can attend on the day. There will need to be at least four (4) members at the meeting for decisions to be made. If there isn't then their decision can be in an individual meeting.
- Kathryn Fordyce (she/her), CEO Laurel House
- Keelie McMahon, Youth Engagement Lead Laurel House
- Laurel House counselling staff will be at each meeting and will stay after the meeting is finished if you need to have a chat.
- Invited specialist members (you will be told this well before the meeting so you know who they are).
- During the 2024 year, we will be working together to find someone to co-chair the meetings with Kathryn (one of the young people from LEAPY). This co-chair will help facilitate the meetings when needed. Co-chairs will change once a year.

## **What if I decide I do not want to be part of LEAPY anymore?**

- If you decide that you want to stop being part of LEAPY all you have to do is call, text or email the Youth Engagement Lead. You are in charge of your involvement with LEAPY and if you decide you want to leave, that is completely fine.

## **What are the meeting rules & responsibilities?**

### *The things that make meetings safe and equal for everyone*

- We will make it safe for you.
- You are not allowed to share the names of people in the group or what they say to anyone outside of the group. You cannot tell people you know that you are on the group together.
- It is important to know that you can talk to Keelie or to a Counsellor about what others in the group have said if you are worried or upset about them.
- Everyone will get a chance to share what they think. Everyone will be treated with respect.
- You will not be asked to tell us details of your experience or re-tell your story. Do not share details of your experience in a way that may upset others.
- The meetings will finish on time.
- The Youth Engagement Lead will organise for a phone call to happen before and after each meeting if you feel like you need some extra support. These phone calls are optional, so you do not have to schedule one unless you want to.

## **Can I bring a support person to the meeting?**

### *You don't have to do it alone.*

- You can bring a support person to the meeting.
- If you do this, you ideally need to let us know two days before the meeting they are coming.
- They will need to sign a confidentiality agreement and will have rules about being at the meeting.

## **Will I be paid to attend meetings?**

*Yes, we value your time doing this work.*

- You will be paid an honorarium of \$30 per hour. This means you aren't employed directly as an employee, but you will still be paid money to come.
- You will be paid this for the agreed time you spend preparing, coming to meetings, check-ins and debriefing.
- There may be some other work between meetings. Some of this will be paid (for example if it is for Laurel House directly) but some may not be (for example if it is for unpaid research by another organisation). We will let you know before if it is paid or not so you can decide if you want to be part.

## **What do I do now?**

*Now that you have read everything, we would love you to apply.*

If you have any questions about this Terms of Reference or any other questions please get in touch with Keelie McMahon by phone or text on 0490 213 158 or email [keelie.mcmahon@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:keelie.mcmahon@laurelhouse.org.au)

If you would like to make an expression of interest for LEAPY please apply online here: <https://tinyurl.com/56zvd2cz> or get in contact with Keelie and she will send you the form to apply.

Applications Close 5pm on 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 at 5pm.

After we have received your application, we will be in touch to discuss further with you.