YOUTH LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY AUSTRALIA
INSPIRING YOUNG LEADERS, IGNITING CHANGE

YLAA 2026 NATIONAL TOUR IMPACT REPORT

11500 YOUNG PEOPLE / 850 SCHOOLS / 5 CITIES



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THE SUMMARY

In 2026, YLAA delivered its biggest National Tour to date. Across five cities, 11,500 young people discovered they don't need a title, a badge or permission to lead.

These weren't passive audiences. They were rooms full of young people who arrived as students and left as leaders in the making, ready to take what they learned back to their schools and communities. This report is a record of what they experienced, what they learned and what they did next.



ABOUT YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY AUSTRALIA (YLAA)

Since 2018, we've positively impacted **65,000 young people** and supported **1,500 primary and secondary schools** across Australia.

YLAA is Australia's for-youth, by-youth school leadership provider. We're a youth-led, registered not-for-profit and DGR-registered charity. We deliver national conferences, tailor-made in-school programs, and youth work with councils and government.

Our approach is simple. We design *with* young people, not just for them. And we build change that lasts, well after the day ends.

THE REACH

11,500 STUDENTS. 850 SCHOOLS. 5 CITIES.

In 2026 YLAA delivered its biggest National Tour yet, reaching young leaders across five major Australian cities. Reach has never been the point on its own. What matters is the individual student who walks out of the room ready to lead. But reach tells us how many of them got that chance, and this year it was more than ever.

BRISBANE

810 PRIMARY STUDENTS
1165 SECONDARY STUDENTS

PERTH

1046 PRIMARY STUDENTS
785 SECONDARY STUDENTS

SYDNEY

1000 PRIMARY STUDENTS
1844 SECONDARY STUDENTS

ADELAIDE

483 PRIMARY STUDENTS
559 SECONDARY STUDENTS

MELBOURNE

2156 PRIMARY STUDENTS
1506 SECONDARY STUDENTS



STUDENT FEEDBACK

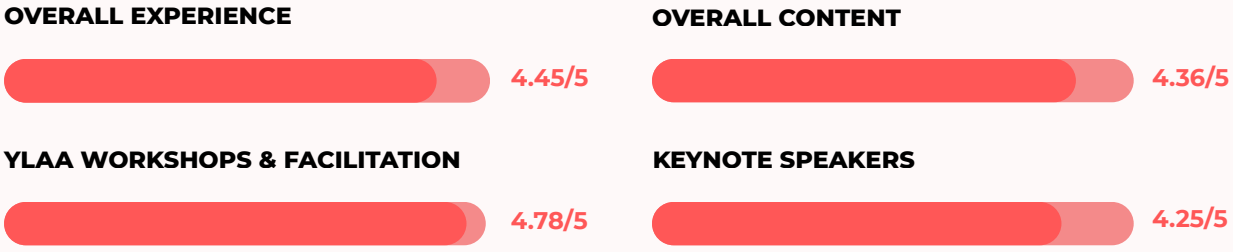
More than 96% of students left feeling **more prepared**, **more capable** and more ready to lead.

THE STATISTICS

97.4%
OF STUDENTS FELT MORE PREPARED TO LEAD.

96.2%
OF STUDENTS FELT MORE ABLE TO CREATE CHANGE.

96.3%
OF STUDENTS FELT MORE PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE.



WHAT THEY SAID

THE MOST COMMON VALUED ASPECTS OF THE EVENTS FOR STUDENTS

Engaging Experiences · Keynote Speakers · Connection & Networking · Inspiring Content · Insightful Facilitators · Activities · Interactive Format · Personal Stories · Fun Atmosphere · Learning Opportunities

WHAT THEY LEARNT FROM THE EVENT

> A leader doesn't need a badge or a cap. It's the actions that make someone a real leader.

> Anyone can be a leader if they have the confidence to step up and help others.

> I can make a difference even if I'm not the loudest person in the room.

> Leadership is about how you treat people and include others, not having a title.

> Imperfect action is better than perfect inaction... this will stay with me.

> My age does not determine my ability to achieve extraordinary things.

> I feel empowered to take a lead in my school. it made me realise how life is short and I need to make moves now.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST PERSONAL LEARNING?

01 CHANGE AND AGENCY

Students discovered they have the power to create change regardless of age, with many sharing that the event was the first time they truly believed their voice and actions could make a difference in their school and community.

02 REDEFINING LEADERSHIP

Students consistently reflected that leadership is not about titles, badges or positions but about actions, values, empathy and the courage to step up even when it is hard.

03 SELF CONFIDENCE AND BELIEF

Confidence and self-belief emerged as the most common personal breakthrough, with students articulating that they left feeling more assured in themselves and their capacity to lead.

04 IMPERFECT ACTION

The concept that imperfect action is better than perfect inaction resonated powerfully, with students recognising they had been holding themselves back waiting for the perfect moment.

05 AUTHENTICITY

Students valued being encouraged to embrace who they are, with many writing that the event gave them permission to lead in their own way rather than conforming to a stereotype of what a leader looks like.



TEACHER FEEDBACK

Confidence, Impact and Experience Ratings — 2026 National Tour

THE STATISTICS

94.0%
OF TEACHERS FELT MORE CONFIDENT IN STUDENTS' LEADERSHIP.

94.4%
SAID THEIR STUDENTS ARE MORE EQUIPPED TO CREATED CHANGE.

4.44 /5
Overall Content

4.53 /5
Overall Experience

4.74 /5
Event Management & Professionalism

8.82 /10
NPS — LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND



> A great in-depth guide to problem solve within local communities. After 7 years, YLAA have once again stepped up to the plate and encouraged thousands of students to become great leaders.

TEACHER HIGHLIGHTS

We asked teachers what stood out. Across five cities and hundreds of responses, the same four themes kept surfacing. They weren't prompted and they weren't ranked, they simply came up again and again in what teachers chose to tell us. Here's what they valued most.

01 AUTHENTIC, INSPIRING STORIES

Real-world stories from speakers who had walked similar paths left a lasting impression, helping students feel seen and think about their own journeys.

THE QUOTES FROM EDUCATORS

"Getting to hear real stories from the speakers and from other students helped students see that leadership isn't just about being the loudest in the room."

"The range of presenters - all great, relevant stories for our students. I believe that students felt the journeys of the key speakers were relatable."

"The real-life examples from the speakers showed that it's possible to come from nothing and achieve something."

02 STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Moments where students could participate, not just listen, gave them ownership of their experience and built confidence in young leaders.

THE QUOTES FROM EDUCATORS

"I asked my students. They liked that it was interactive and had practical ways to lead and make change."

"It was great to see young people on stage. Inspiring. Guest speakers from a youth perspective. Hearing student voice – great range of topics, strategies and messages."

"Loved activities the kids participated in. It was super energetic and I loved watching my kids let their guard down and just participate. This is a highlight compared to last year."

03 ENERGY OF FACILITATORS

Teachers valued how upbeat and enthusiastic the facilitators and speakers were that energy kept attention and excitement high throughout the day.

THE QUOTES FROM EDUCATORS

"High energy maintained and channelled. Dynamic speakers who could relate their stories to teens. High inspiration and CAN DO!"

"The hosts did an amazing job of interacting with the audience. The games and movement breaks helped regulate our students."

"It was really inspiring to feel the energy all around. All of the speakers were really passionate and motivating."

04 ORGANISED, PRACTICAL TASKS

Activities that got students moving and talking with others were a standout, consolidating learning in a way that was easy to take back to school.

THE QUOTES FROM EDUCATORS

"Practical tools, 3 stages of follow-up. Chances for students to mingle and engage with other schools."

"Lots of practical takeaways for students with easy to remember steps and acronyms. Age appropriate, lots of music, fun and dancing."

"The energy of presenters. Content was interesting and relevant. 48hr challenge to ensure their learning continued."

WHAT SCHOOLS DID NEXT?

The 48-hour challenge we set at the end of every YLAA event isn't just an activity, it's a launchpad. Here's what three schools did with it.

IRAMOO PRIMARY SCHOOL, VIC

"UNLEASH THE FUN" - LEADERUP 2026 WINNER

The Grade 6 Leadership Team left the 2026 Dream and Lead conference and went straight back to school to find out what mattered most to their peers. The answer was clear: students feeling lonely or left out during playtime. So they built a dedicated space running three days a week where students from different year levels could meet new people, discover shared interests and feel like they belonged. Complete with activity videos, posters, a flash mob assembly announcement and a community mural, Iramoo didn't just spot a problem – they listened, acted and turned an idea into something their whole school could be part of.

XAVIER CATHOLIC COLLEGE, NSW

"AT XAVIER, RESPECT ISN'T JUST LIVED - IT'S EXPECTED." - LEADERUP 2026 RUNNERUP

The Xavier Student Leadership Team turned one of their core school values into something students could see every single day. Each of the school's eight Houses designed a mural showing what respect looked like in action, displayed in locker areas and bathrooms as daily reminders. With the Principal and Leader of Student Wellbeing on board from day one, what started as a leadership team idea became a whole-school movement.

SILKWOOD SCHOOL, QLD

"CONNECT THROUGH PLAY"

The Silkwood leadership team identified low motivation and student disconnection as the challenge they wanted to tackle. Their solution was simple and powerful – create more opportunities for students and teachers to get involved, have fun and break the disconnect. Through posters, a trivia challenge with prizes and a tournament-style activity afternoon, they brought different year levels together and built connection through something everyone could get behind.

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GIVEN THE TOOLS, THE BELIEF AND THE PERMISSION TO LEAD.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2027

At YLAA we believe the best events don't just deliver, they listen. Every piece of feedback we receive is treated as a gift, and every year we use it to raise the bar.

We share this openly because transparency is a value we hold as seriously as impact. The schools and students who trust us with their time deserve to know not just what went well, but what we're doing about what didn't. The following five priorities aren't shortcomings, they're our commitments. They reflect where our school community is telling us the greatest opportunity for growth exists, and where we'll be focusing our energy in 2027.

01 DEEPEN POST-EVENT IMPACT

The top request from teachers and students alike was what happens after the room empties. We are doubling down on post-event tools and the YLAA Digital Resource Hub so the conference becomes a launchpad.

02 MORE STUDENT VOICE

More peer stories, Q and A and co-led moments. In 2027 we will expand student roles, peer panels and student-led segments across all cities.

03 SPEAKER RELEVANCE FOR ALL

A more intentional speaker selection process that prioritises lived-experience diversity so students from regional, culturally diverse and lower-SES backgrounds see their stories on stage.

04 ENERGY AND FORMAT IS THE EDGE

Music, brain breaks, games and high-energy hosting are credited as the reason students absorbed the content. A genuine competitive advantage worth protecting and growing.

05 CROSS-SCHOOL CONNECTION

Students consistently asked for more structured chances to connect and collaborate with other schools. Clearly appetite for a much bigger part of the day in 2027.



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Our vision is to empower young people to drive meaningful change and build a more positive sustainable future.

We aim to achieve this through equipping young people with essential leadership skills through experiential learning, empowerment and education.

Thank you.