



## Host a YALSA Local Meet-Up

**Purpose:** provide a convenient opportunity for members and potential members to discuss relevant issues, network, socialize, exchange ideas and share news and information about YALSA.

### Plan Your Meet-Up

For tips on event planning, visit [www.wikihow.com/Organise-an-Event](http://www.wikihow.com/Organise-an-Event)

- Decide on your main goal for organizing a YALSA Meet-Up. Talk with colleagues to gauge where the most interest is. Possibilities include:
  - Provide an opportunity for those interested in teen services to socialize and get to know one another
  - Enable attendees to participate in a continuing education opportunity
  - Gather people together to discuss a local issue impacting teens and/or libraries
  - Organize a group to advocate for teens and libraries
  - Host a fundraising event for YALSA (use YALSA's fundraising guide at [www.ala.org/yalsa/getinvolved/support](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/getinvolved/support))
  - Create an event that is a mix of some the above
  - Other
- Determine your audience. Think about who may be interested in attending: school librarians, public library staff, grad students, after school providers, youth development workers, YALSA members, etc.
- Choose a date and time, keeping in mind the needs of your audience.
- Secure a location, and strive to ensure that it's accessible to people with physical challenges.
  - Home
  - Meeting room at a library, school or other municipal space
  - University or college classroom or lounge
  - Coffee house
  - Restaurant/bar
  - Other?
- Decide on what activities will take place at the Meet-Up and secure necessary resources, speakers, etc. Possible activities could include:

- Activities with a social focus
  - Potluck supper
  - Happy hour
  - Party
  - Coffee Klatch/High Tea
  - Brown bag lunch
  - Other
- Activities with a continuing education/professional focus
  - Lecture/presentation
  - Round table discussion
  - Make & take
  - Speed networking
  - Show & tell or petting zoo for hands on interaction w/ YA materials, tech, etc.
  - Advocacy related activities
  - Other
- Advertise your event
  - The method or places you advertise depends on the audience you're trying to reach. The YALSA Office can help you contact members in your area. Contact Letitia Smith, YALSA Membership Marketing Manager, for assistance at [lsmith@ala.org](mailto:lsmith@ala.org) or 1.800.545.2433 x4390.
  - Decide if you want people to RSVP.
  - Choose a method that's the best fit for you and your target audience:
    - Send out an e-vite.
    - Post information on relevant library listservs.
    - Post fliers in library break rooms.
    - Create paper invitations and distribute.
    - Leverage social media.
- Download or request handouts and swag from YALSA by visiting [www.ala.org/yalsa/handouts](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/handouts). Based on the topic the event will be focusing on, choose appropriate materials to hand out at the event. Please give the YALSA Office 10 business days to process the request, if you want hard copies.

## **Carry Out Your Event**

- Arrive early, set up, then mingle when people arrive.
- Consider having name tags available, especially if most of the attendees do not know each other well.
- Be a welcoming and gracious host to everyone: chat with people who are alone and introduce them to others, etc. For tips on hosting an event, visit: <http://www.wikihow.com/Host-a-Successful-Party>
- Consider doing an ice-breaker if most attendees do not know each other well.
- Be available to answer any questions that people may have about YALSA.
- Personally hand out swag and materials instead of letting it sit on tables.
- When appropriate, talk to people about how you have benefited from being a YALSA member.
- Stay until the very end to gather up left over materials, take down, signs, etc.
- If another event is planned for next month, advertise it at this one.
- Be sure to thank any helpers.

## **Sample Event Outline**

7:00 – 7:30 PM: networking, mingling, etc. Collect business cards for door prize and do an ice-breaker activity, if desired

7:30 – 8:00 PM: round table discussion, speaker, activity, etc.

8:00 – 8:15 PM: Q & A, share-out

8:15 – 8:30 PM: share news and info about YALSA and membership, answer any questions

8:30PM: give out door prize, thank everyone for attending, and get input for a topic or focus for the next Meet-UP

## **Tips**

- Recruit other YALSA members who can assist you with planning as well as be present at the event to greet people and circulate.
- Consider having a sign-in sheet so you will have attendees' names and contact information for use when planning future meet-ups.
- Create signage, if necessary, to guide people to the location or room where the event is being held.



- Consider offering a door prize. Plan on bringing something people can drop their business cards into. If you'd like a door prize from YALSA, indicate that if/when you request swag. YALSA can provide books or audiobooks for door prizes.
- Recruit a group of colleagues to take turns planning & hosting YALSA Meet-Ups.

### **Strive to Create an Inclusive & Welcoming Environment**

- Make no assumptions about the attendees other than a common interest in teen services.
- Welcome everyone, including both members and non-members of YALSA.
- Review any presentation content and style for inclusive language, professional content versus personal beliefs, and potential sexist, discriminatory, or similarly insensitive language.
- Introduce panelists, speakers, etc. in an inclusive, non-sexist manner.
- Avoid graphics and visual aids on fliers, handouts, presentation materials, etc. that show people in stereotypical roles.

### **For further resources**

- 10 Steps for Designing and Facilitating Inclusive Presentations, <http://ow.ly/TOnP303khCv>
- Ready, Set Grow: a Starter's Guide for becoming Culturally Competent, <http://ow.ly/taU7303kkoZ>

### **Follow Up**

- If any attendee asks a question about YALSA that you're unable to answer, let them know you'll find out the answer and someone will get back to them. Get their email address, then contact Letitia Smith at [lsmith@ala.org](mailto:lsmith@ala.org) or 1.800.545.2433 x4390 with the question.
- Share any useful feedback about the event with Letitia Smith.
- If there is interest in doing more than meet-ups, you and your colleagues may want to consider starting a YALSA Interest Group. Learn more at [www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/faq](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/faq)

### **A Note about Funding**

Please note that YALSA does not have any funds to support meet-ups other than the cost of shipping the swag and/or handouts. Therefore, it is imperative that you do not incur any costs or enter into any formal agreements with businesses. YALSA will not reimburse anyone for food, room rental, advertising, supplies or any other expenses.