

NAME

2026

Saturday 13 June, 2026

PY: ENCOURAGE SYDNEY

A day of training and encouragement for youth leaders

PY ENCOURAGE 2026 – TIMETABLE

Hub timetables will vary.

10:00	Doors Open: Mingle	
10:30	Opening Session: Welcome, Worship, Prayer, Bible Reading Bible Talk: Cam Clausing	<i>p4</i>
11:00	Small Groups	
11:30	Training 1: Options: a) Giving a better talk Jim Mobbs	<i>p5</i>
	b) How to help youth with mental health concerns Jeremy Ward	<i>p10</i>
	c) Panel: Multicultural youth groups Chair: David Balzer, with Kamal Weerakoon, Hany Abraham, Andrew Sylvester and Jiye Kim	<i>p14</i>
12:50	Lunch	
1:50	Training 2: Options: a) Giving the talk and giving feedback: Lather and shave Jim Mobbs	<i>p16</i>
	b) How to help youth with neurodivergence: what a youth group program that includes everyone looks like? Simon and Steph Wong	<i>p18</i>
	c) How to help youth struggling with pornography Owen Seto	<i>p22</i>
3:10	Afternoon Tea	
3:35	Small Groups	<i>p24</i>
4:15	Final Session including singing	
4:30	Finish / pack up	
5:00	<i>Optional post-event dinner (Sydney) – Lanzhou Beef Noodles, cnr Clarence St & Burwood Rd. Table booked from 5pm – all welcome!</i>	

Training sessions run for up to 65 minutes, followed by 15 minutes of reflection and adapting what you have heard to your own context.

ABOUT PYNSW

Welcome to the third annual PY Encourage Sydney event.

We are excited to welcome you to Christ College, and to our live hubs in Newcastle, Manilla and Wagga Wagga. We're also glad to welcome those joining later via recorded sessions at hubs in Grafton (20 June), the Mid North Coast (27 June) and Gulgong (4 July). The vision of PYNSW is to see Presbyterian Churches in NSW filled with children and youth who know, follow, love, and share Jesus, actively participating in the life of the church.

We hope today helps you head back to your church feeling encouraged, having met some fellow youth group leaders, and better equipped to teach God's word and care for the young people God has placed in your ministry.

We welcome your feedback, and hope to see you next year at PY Encourage Sydney, or at a regional camp, at Summer Camp or the Lead for Life Internship soon.

David Phillips

PYNSW General Manager on behalf of PYC



<https://ew261sjf.paperform.co>

Housekeeping:

Food and drinks are only able to be consumed in the dining room.

Toilets are available on both floors of the college.

Please keep an eye on the time and plan to be ready each session.

In case of an emergency the assembly meeting point is outside the unit block next door on Clarence Street.

Giving a better talk

Jim Mobbs

1. Preparing a talk

Knowing what preaching is.

Knowing what preaching isn't.

Knowing the "four expositions":

- Exposit the text:
- Exposit the listeners:
- Exposit the world:
- Exposit ourselves:
-

Knowing our steps. From getting the passage, to getting feedback.

Knowing our goals for preaching.

Knowing The Vibe.

Knowing good questions to ask.

Knowing myself.

Knowing “what's out there...”

Knowing how to use others to help.

Knowing how to tell a story.

Knowing application.

Preaching to youth

Suggested framework(s):

THE STORY:

THE MEANING:

THE RESPONSE:

THE WHAT.

SO WHAT?

NOW WHAT?

Tips: do's and don'ts.....

Don't go down rabbit holes. Be reluctant to go to other passages. Stick with your text.

Be personal. Share what you learnt about and from the passage, not what some commentator says.

Start your sermon with a great question.

Use props. Dead plant.

Resist the urge to be telling people how much you know about the passage.

Preach like you're sitting with people. A "dialoguey monologue..."

Do ask for feedback from someone you trust.

2. Presenting a talk

Be a sloth... Pause, don't rush.

Be cheeky with your Bible reading, and sermon angle:

Notes.

Be visual... Use pictures.

Be warm.

Be yourself.

Be engaging. Repetition. Voice, etc.

Be aware. Yourself. Others.

Be prepared.

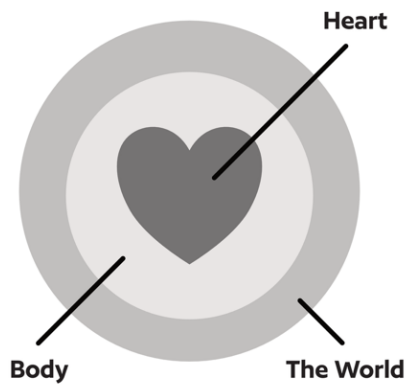
Be “dialoguey” with your monologue.

Don't be:

How to help youth with mental health concerns

Jeremy Ward | jeremy@christiancounselling.sydney

What do we mean by mental health/illness?



Teenagers: development & culture

3 metaphors for our role as the church

Refuge

Lighthouse

First responder

Talk openly about mental health

Initial steps

Evaluate the situation

Meet with the family (where possible)

Show grace

Build the relationship

Relate personally

Listening well

'We' & 'normalising the abnormal'

'Knowing truth from the inside'

When to refer

What's best for the teen?

Instinct

Liability issues

Burnout

Intensity

Physical cause or significant trauma/abuse

Helping with anxiety & stress

One teen's story

Luke 12:22–34: certainty in an uncertain world

The Lord's heart beneath, 'Don't be afraid'



Exercises to do with teens (scan QR code) <https://bit.ly/py-mental-health>

1. Riding the waves of emotions
2. Guided breathing
3. Writing thoughts & feelings (leaves or clouds)
4. Five senses 5-4-3-2-1
5. Taking care of today

Healthy habits

Anxiety questionnaire

Resources

- CCEF/New Growth Press mini books; e.g.
 - PTSD: Healing for Bad Memories by Tim Lane
 - Anxiety and Panic Attacks: Trusting God When You're Afraid by Jocelyn Wallace
 - Overcoming Anxiety: Relief for Worried People by David Powlison
 - Bipolar Disorder: Understanding and Help for Extreme Mood Swings by Edward Welch
 - Hope for the Depressed: Beyond a "Cheer Up" Theology by Edward Welch
 - I Just Want to Die: Replacing Suicidal Thoughts with Hope by David Powlison
 - Freedom from Addiction: Turning from your Addictive Behaviour by Edward Welch
 - I'm Exhausted: What to Do When You're Always Tired by David Powlison
 - Why Me? Comfort for the Victimized by David Powlison
 - 31-Day Devotionals for Life series (P&R); topics include Anxiety, Depression, Addictive Habits, A Painful Past, Shame, Pornography etc.
- Also, The Small Book Devotional Series (New Growth Press):
 - A Small Book for the Anxious Heart by Edward Welch
 - A Small Book About a Big Problem [Anger] by Edward Welch
 - A Small Book About Why We Hide [Shame] by Edward Welch
 - A Small Book for the Hurting Heart [Grief & Loss] by Paul Tautges
- Teenagers and Mental Health: A Handbook for Parents, Pastors and Youth Leaders by Monica Kim & Danny Kwong
- Mental Health and Your Church: A Handbook for Biblical Care by Helen Thorne & Steve Midgley
- Untangling Emotions: God's Gift of Emotions by J. Alasdair Groves & Winston T. Smith
- Caring for One Another: 8 Ways to Cultivate Meaningful Relationships by Edward Welch
- Understanding psychiatric diagnoses, as a helper: Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnoses & Medications by Michael R. Emler

From PYES 2025 Where to find help – Phone and online services

- Lifeline – crisis support: 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue – services for teens as well; helpful articles on website: 1300 22 4636
- Kids Helpline – telephone counselling up to the age of 25: 1800 55 1800
- SANE – for people with complex mental health needs: 1800 18 7263
- NSW Mental Health Line – advice and recommend services: 1800 011 511
- Head to Health – government agency helping people connect with services: 1800 595 212
- Jericho Road – recommend Christian counsellors: 1800 818 133
- Someone.health – bulk-billing online psychologists

Panel: Multicultural youth groups

How can multicultural youth groups work better? How can we help second-generation immigrant teens as they cope with different values from their ethnic parents?

Chair: David Balzer | Panel: Kamal Weerakoon, Hany Abraham, Andrew Sylvester, Jiye Kim (PLC Chaplain)

My notes from the Panel:

Kamal Weerakoon

1. Being at home with Christianity overseas
2. Being at home with Christianity here in Australia
3. Eph 6:1-3
4. Eph 6:4 "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. "

How to help youth with neurodivergence

What a youth program that includes everyone looks like
Simon and Steph Wong

Introduction

Importance of listening to lived experience

What is Neurodiversity

- Neurodiversity – It is the concept that neurological d_____ are a natural variation of the human b_____ rather than “d_____” to be cured.
- Neurodivergence – natural variations in human brain functioning where people experience the world differently from neurotypical people

Understand the Models and Premises

“The Bible doesn’t tell you about driving, but it does tell you how to drive a car!”
Tony Payne

- **Medical Model**
- **Sociological Model**
- **Political Identity**

What does the Bible say?

1. Creation (Gen 1:26–28, 9:6; Psalm 139:13–16)
2. Diversity (Gen 1:11, 12, 21; Rev 7:9–10)
3. Fall (Romans 3:10–12; 2 Cor 5:14–15; John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9; James 1:10; Proverbs 25:8–10)

Bounded and Centred Sets

4. Redemption (Exodus 4:10; John 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:7, 21–26)
5. New Creation (Rev 21:4; 1 Corinthians 15:42–44; John 20:24–28)

Questions

1. How to balance caring and inclusion and group dynamics in youth groups?
2. How to care for teens at church when their development differs from peers?
3. When do we aim for inclusion in church or specialist ministries?
4. How to teach the Bible with neurodiversity in mind?
5. How do we best love people and help them understand they belong and are valued in Christ's body?

Case Studies

Jono, a neurodivergent student, doesn't want to come to the PY camp or LIT conference although he loves Jesus and comes regularly to small groups.

- What questions would you ask to understand his perspectives?

He says he feels nervous in larger groups and loud noises are very uncomfortable, and if he's in that situation for a long time, he gets very tired. After praying he decides to come for a day trip.

- What questions would you ask to:
 - help him think through how he'll go
 - set up the environment
 - work out how to support him

Tina disclosed to the group that she has ADHD. During youth group discussions, she appeared to have difficulty maintaining focus, often going off track, displaying high physical energy and sometimes speaking loudly. They returned to unrelated topics instead of staying with the group's discussion.

- How do we maintain productive discussions for group members?

Principles For Inclusion

1. Curiosity
2. Co-regulation
3. Co-design

5 Myths

1. Pastoral care for neurodivergent people is outside of the scope of ministry
2. We can never know whether neurodivergent people with intellectual disability or who are non-verbal can ever go to heaven
3. My goal of inclusion of a neurodivergent member is to help them fit in and look like everyone else
4. Autism is a deficit in the brain that can only be redeemed in the new creation
5. Inclusion is not possible in churches; it's too much work on top of other ministries

Resource list

- On the Spectrum: Autism, Faith and the Gifts of Neurodiversity – Daniel Bowman Jr
- Jericho Road – <https://jerichoroad.org.au/2026/03/30/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-disability-advocate/> “What does it mean to be a disability advocate?”
- Everyone Welcome: accessible church for all (Sydney Anglicans - <https://docs.sydneyanglicans.net/s/sfsites/c/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/0690I00000EFjPwIAL>)
- olivetreetherapy.com.au
<https://www.instagram.com/olivetree.therapy>
<https://www.facebook.com/OliveTreetherapy.com.au>
- stephanie.wong@olivetreetherapy.com.au, simon.wong@olivetreetherapy.com.au

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How to help youth struggling with pornography

Understanding, Teaching, and Pastoral Care

Owen Seto

1. Admit We Have a Problem
2. Create a Safe Space
3. Build a Gospel-Centred Culture & Support
4. Consequences If We Don't

One thing

What is one thing you will do in your ministry this term as a result of today?

Reflection questions

- What challenged or surprised you most today?
- What are the challenges in your context of engaging this topic with young people?
- How are disclosures currently handled in your church – and does everyone know what to do?
- How are parents currently equipped? What would help them?
- What do you need to work on in terms of convictions, habits, accountability, sexual purity?

Resources

Articles and Online

- *Shepherding Children Through Exposure to Pornography* – Darby Strickland (podcast/article, CCEF)
- *How Parents Can Help Teens Struggling with Masturbation* – Julie Lowe (podcast/article, Harvest USA)
- *Science and Faith in Understanding Pornography Addiction* – Marshall Ballantine-Jones (article, Resist Program)
- *Helping Parents Talk to Teens about Social Media, the Internet and Porn* – Marshall Ballantine-Jones (YouTube)
- *Solutions for Reducing the Pornography Problem* – Marshall Ballantine-Jones (YouTube)

Books

- *Captured by a Better Vision* – Tim Chester (for leaders)
- *Sexual Detox* – Tim Challies (for teens)
- *Finally Free* – Heath Lambert (for those who seek help)

For expert help & support

- Resist Recovery Program – resistprogram.org (group-based program)
- Resist Ministries – resistministries.org (church resources)
- Greg O'Neil, Christian counsellor – secretmens.business (17–18+)

What's next with PY?

Summer Camp 2026

27 December 2026 – 1 January 2027

The Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops

Six days for youth from all across NSW (school years 6–12 in 2026) to gather together and learn about Jesus in community with one another – and have a great time doing it! This year's speaker is Andrew Vines, Minister at Hurstville Presbyterian Church.

Early bird \$629 – register by 27 July 2026, with a \$70 discount for each additional person in the same order.

Find out more and register: pynsw.org.au/whats-on/summer-camp



pynsw.org.au/summer-camp



Lead for Life Internship

Want to be a Christian leader? Want training to lead others? Want to help others know and love Jesus? The Lead for Life Internship is the place to go!

The internship combines an intensive training week running parallel to PY Summer Camp (27 Dec – 1 Jan), twelve months of ministry in your local church with a mentor alongside you, and serving as a small group leader at a PY camp or pre-approved regional youth camp.

It's pitched at school-leavers and above (roughly 17–23, with exemptions possible) and designed to be time flexible – living rurally, working, studying or taking a gap year are all fine. Cost: \$629 per intern plus \$250 from the local church – substantially subsidised by PY.

Find out more and express interest: pynsw.org.au/whats-on/lead-for-life

Young Adults camp – watch this space

We are exploring a PY camp for young adults. Would you or your young adults come? Tell us via the feedback form – your interest will help shape whether and how it happens.



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pynsw.org.au



See you next year!