PREPARING THE STUDENT ACTION TEAM

A Student Action Team consists of between four and 10 students, their support teacher and where appropriate other adults suited to task. Consider:
- How the SAT will be integrated into the school’s curriculum
- The number and year level of students to be involved (mixed or targeted age group or year level)
- A broad or specific issue.

When selecting SAT members:
- Define the characteristics you want for the team and which students might suit such a team
- Recognise that SATs can provide all students with opportunities for success and learning
- Be aware of students that demonstrate leadership but not necessarily in traditional ways
- Identify a clear process for selection.

A pre-defined topic about an issue that the school is currently facing.

Support the SATs through formal and informal training processes. Consider:
- Critical points throughout the process that will require training
- The skills that will be important to develop and activities that will address these (negotiation, organisation, cooperation, meeting processes, communication, commitment, public speaking, listening etc).

Students

Deciding SAT member roles

As with any team, each member requires a specific role. It is useful to form an ‘executive’ who will steer the project and get things done. Consider:
- The roles that will be useful (leader, time keeper, researchers, etc)
- How to allocate the roles.

Teachers

The Topic or Issue

For example: What are the issues or problems related to cybersafety that are relevant to the school community. Consider:
- Surveying the students or general community to find out what is important to them.
- Conduct a survey about what the online safety issues are and where in the online world students feel most unsafe.

Suggested steps
- Brainstorm ‘online safety.’ Include ideas about safe and unsafe behaviours/places
- Discuss the elements of the online community: who they are, where they are, what they do etc.
- Mindmap safety and online safety e.g. immediate/potential threats, physical/social safety etc.
- Consider community organisations with similar interests e.g. ACMA
- Define the topic/issue clearly.
- Identify possible links, action and research

The topic or issue needs to be SMART
- S pecific
- M easurable
- A cheivable
- R ealistic
- T imetabled
SELECT identified community organisations with similar interests e.g. ACMA

Supporters or Partners
- Agencies can support the students by providing advice, assisting with resources/information, advertising what the students are doing.
- Or the project can be developed in partnership with an agency that has similar concerns.
- It is essential to establish and maintain a key contact at any organisation.

TRAINING AND TEAM BUILDING
Support the SAT’s through formal and informal training processes. Consider specific skills:
- Contacting outside people/organisations
- Telephone protocols
- Writing letters
- Email
- Public speaking
- Organising events

DEVELOPING A PROJECT PLAN
The planning process is a whole group effort. It should set the goals, anticipate problems, and provide direction and structure. The following elements are key:
- Objective
- Aims
- Reasons
- Steps and strategies
- Timelines
- People and responsibilities
- Links with other groups
- Resources
- Evaluation

BEGIN RESEARCH
Identify resources that will assist the SAT to understand the key factors of their issue. Consider:
- Relevant research papers
- Websites
- Texts

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH
It may be necessary to carry out research in the local community – council, parent community, local media, other schools etc to find out:
- What people think about the issue
- Possible solutions
- What has already happened or been proposed etc?
Decide Action

Once the research is complete, it's time to take action. For example:
- Devise a report with RECOMMENDATIONS for others to take, or
- Are there things that the team can IMPLEMENT.

Types of Action

In all cases the team will have to present the outcomes of the work – to publicise, convince and gain support. This may be through:
- A written report that summarises the findings of the research
- Clear and simple recommendations for actions that an organisation can take
- An information evening that identifies recommendations and evidence to support these
- Meeting decision makers and requesting support (lobbying)
- Publishing your research and recommendations in the media: local or daily newspapers, radio, TV.

Reflecting and Evaluation the SAT and their Action

Reflection and evaluation questions should assist students to have a deeper understanding of the issue's they were investigating and how their involvement impacted on it. Questions may include:
- What was the task that the SAT aimed to achieve?
- What important ideas/concepts did the SAT identify?
- How did the SAT aim to solve the problem?
- What worked? What didn't?
- What could've been done differently to increase the impact of the action?

Next Steps

After reflecting and evaluating the SAT's action and effectiveness it is important to decide whether they believe there is a need to:
- Further investigate the current issue/topic?
- Being researching a new issue topic?

Start Again