



Association of New York State Youth Bureaus YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK

The Association of New York State Youth Bureaus respectfully requests in the SFY 2026-27 budget, \$225,000 to continue to implement and oversee a NYS Youth Leadership Network. This network, which was funded by the Legislature annually since 2019 will continue to provide needed supports and services to youth and youth development professionals statewide through evidence-based training and engagement. Research has found that effective and engaging training can empower youth to avoid at-risk behaviors and give them the foundation upon which they can make positive decisions, be their best advocate, and achieve lifelong success. The Youth Leadership Network would be comprised of the following components:

1. Statewide Youth Leadership Forum

- This forum offers over 200 youth, many high-risk and from marginalized populations, opportunities to develop skill sets and learning on issues such as citizenship, social and racial justice and equity, mental health & substance use disorder, and many more.
- Youth will be empowered to further develop their leadership skills through civic engagement opportunities, in-person and remote learning.

2. Regional Youth Development Leadership Forums

- Youth Bureaus will expand the number of youth and youth development professionals across the state that will engage in training and services on social and racial injustices, alcohol and substance use prevention, mental health, sexual and interpersonal violence, and other issues, as needed.

3. Sharing of Best Practices & Capacity Building

- To oversee, facilitate, and collect data and outcomes of the Youth Leadership Network, it will be necessary for the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus (ANYSYB), as well as county, city, town & village youth bureaus, and youth-serving community based organizations, to maintain and build capacity to support New York's youth and families.
- A statewide learning exchange will offer hundreds of youth serving professionals and youth the ability to share practices and learn new, innovative ideas in youth development.

The Youth Leadership Network will empower youth in communities across the state by creating opportunities for youth and youth serving professionals to participate, lead and succeed through essential training and services that will help build and sustain a healthy youth network. Investing in our youth and youth development professionals means investing in the future of NYS.

Youth Bureaus across the state report that the youth they serve are experiencing growing challenges as communities continue to be plagued by poverty, homelessness, gangs and food insecurity.

1 in 6 U.S youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year.

About 18.5% of children in New York lived below the poverty level in 2021, or 4.6 percentage points higher than the statewide average.

Black and Hispanic/Latine minors make up 67% of those incarcerated, but only 43% of the population of minors in New York State.

50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24.

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14.

Contact

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact:

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Statistic Sources:

1. [JAMA Pediatrics Research Letter, Feb. 11, 2019](#)

2. [NYS Office of the NY State Comptroller](#)

3. [Citizen's Committee for Children of New York](#)

4. [National Library of Medicine - National Center for Biotechnology Information](#)

5. [National Institute of Mental Health](#)