

Association of New York State Youth Bureaus

The Cornerstone of New York's Youth Development!



Invest \$5 Million in the Youth Development Program to Enhance Mental Health Services and Supports for Our Youth

The Executive Budget proposes level funding of \$21.6 million for Youth Development Programs (YDP). **The Association of New York State Youth Bureaus respectfully requests an increase of \$5 million for this program to help address the growing mental health needs of young people.**

Youth bureaus across New York State are experiencing rising mental health challenges in their communities, yet they lack the flexible funding necessary to expand services and programming during out-of-school time hours. Increased investment through the Youth Development Program would enable municipal county youth bureaus to scale up essential supports in the community, by contracting with local youth bureaus (city, town and villages) and community-based organizations through programs such as suicide prevention, cultivating digital literacy, emotional resilience, and responsible online behavior to protect children and adolescents and other evidence-based mental health interventions.

Youth Development Program Examples

The following examples are Youth Development Programs currently operating across the state.

Orange County Youth Bureau

Voices United 4 Change Support Groups

Provides ongoing, customized supports for youth with mental health challenges and their parents/caregivers who help support them.

- Peer-led youth and parent/caregiver virtual support groups
- Interactive youth support group is held for 10-15-year-olds with mental health challenges
- Interactive support group is held for parents/caregivers of youth with mental health challenges.
- These groups are catered towards youth with mental health challenges and their parents/caregivers in order for them to better understand and cope with these challenges.

Moorehouse Medical School Teen Program in Mental Health

This program is for Teen Community Health Workers who worked with youth from migrant families and empowered teens to serve as bi-lingual leaders, advocates, and educators to their peers and adults in their community.

- Students had already completed a 20-module program fulfilling the certification requirements for Moorehouse Medical School and continued on to study mental health.
- They completed modules and followed up with providing mini sessions to other teen groups and participating in community events, especially with Spanish speaking groups throughout the year.

Visiting Classrooms Equine Ability and W.I.T.H (Winslow's Incredible Teen Helpers)

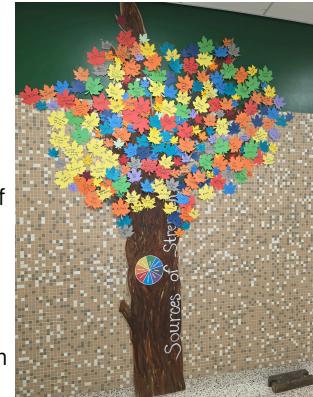
This unique inclusive, two component program uses horses in a therapeutic way to actively engage and empower young people with and without disabilities.

- **COMPONENT 1:** Equine-Ability was comprised of youth ages 4-16 who participated in weekly educational sessions including mounted and unmounted skills, and classroom learning.
- **COMPONENT 2:** W.I.T.H was a year-round, weekly program comprised of teens ages 14-21 from local school districts who supported Winslow by assisting in lessons, educating the public, completing off-site projects and more. They received advanced volunteer training and were responsible for meeting a certain number of volunteer hours each week.

Madison County Youth Bureau

BRiDGES, Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc.

- Peer to peer youth led meetings to develop and implement school activities and messaging campaigns centered around the eight Sources of Strength in the Strength Wheel (family support, positive friends, mentor, healthy activities, generosity, spirituality, medical access, mental health).
- Target audience is secondary level/grades 7-12th grades in two school districts with plans for expansion to more as able/funds allow.
- Program activities include support of training student leaders, meetings to determine campaigns based on the strengths, and maintenance and completion of campaigns.
- Operational locations are school district classrooms, meetings rooms and training spaces and youth meet as needed, frequency determined by tasks for each campaign.



Greene County Youth Bureau

Common Grounds Dispute Resolution

The program provides conflict coaching sessions for resolution, anti-bullying and mediation for youth. In this modern word, to support mental health for youth, peaceful resolution to conflict is desired over violence and this funding will allow us to continue to have a lasting impact on this community.

Livingston County Youth Bureau

HOPE Youth Mentoring (Helping One Person Excel)

The program offers youth the opportunity to be paired with a responsible adult and participate in group activities, field trips and community service projects. Mentorship acts as a powerful support system for mental health offering non-judgmental guidance, reducing feelings of isolation and building resilience.

CAC of Livingston County

Livingston County is the only county in the state that does not have a Child Advocacy Center (CAC). CACs provide a safe child friendly environment that coordinates investigations, medical exams, mental healthcare and victim advocacy for abused children.



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City of Salamanca Youth Bureau

Salamanca Youth Center

The Youth Center provides a "drop-in" site for youth between the ages of 5 and 18 Monday-Friday. Both recreational and educational activities are offered. Funding would allow us to expand our capacity to serve more youth, providing at-risk youth with a safe reliable space to support their mental health needs and to develop outside of school.

Arts Alive Summer Theater Program

This free summer program is open to children from 1-12 grade and offers an opportunity for children to participate in all aspects of a theater production. This program has been a staple of the community for 30 years and funding would create more opportunities for youth summer employment. Engaging in the arts significantly boosts mental health by reducing stress and anxiety while improving self-esteem.

Supervised Summer Playground Programs

This program provides youth between the ages of 5-15 with quality recreational activities during summer break. Youth employees are stationed on 5 of the cities playgrounds for six weeks throughout the summer. This year, Youth employees received mental health first aid training in order to better serve the children that attend the program. Funding for this program would support more engaging opportunities to bring youth together on the playgrounds and to foster positive relationships between youth in the community.



St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau

SLC People Project - Early Education Mental Health Awareness

This school-based mental health education program provides K-2 students age-appropriate lessons in classrooms by trained presenters, often alongside regular classroom teachers to maintain consistency and comfort. Lessons are focused on identifying emotions, coping strategies, mindfulness, and recognizing trusted adults. Uses story-based learning, group discussion, and hands-on activities to reinforce emotional literacy and self-regulation skills.

Holistic Life Foundation

Provides school-based mindfulness, yoga, and emotional regulation supports for approximately 120 students, helping them manage stress, anxiety, and behavioral challenges during the school day. Uses trauma-informed, culturally responsive practices to offer restorative alternatives to disciplinary removal, keeping students engaged in learning. Integrates wellness supports directly into school routines through dedicated Mindful Moment spaces and collaboration with school staff.

Pathways to Independence

Provides intensive, therapeutic life-skills training for youth with emotional, behavioral, and developmental challenges through individualized and group-based occupational therapy. Youth often face significant barriers to independence, including trauma, mental health needs, housing instability, and involvement with child welfare or justice systems. Uses hands-on, real-world skill development (cooking, budgeting, self-care, problem solving, and social skills) in a structured, clinically supervised setting.



Monroe County Youth Bureau

Youth Diversion Center: Hope on the Horizon

Youth Support: Focuses on mental health, reducing trauma, and providing social support. **Educational & Vocational Training:** Includes tutoring, resume building, and hands-on career skills. **Resource Access:** Offers a "food pantry," "clothing closet," and transportation assistance.

Mentorship: Provides guidance to help youth achieve personal and professional growth.

In its first year, Hope on the Horizon served 611 youth, supporting academic success, college enrollment, and workforce readiness, with students maintaining an average GPA of 2.8 and 70% participating in internships. Building on this impact, the program aims to reach 900 youth next year while continuing to strengthen pathways to education and career success.

CPGR Afterschool Program

Parents participate in a required orientation upon enrollment and youth are actively involved in planning, hosting, and promoting monthly parent engagement activities and support recruitment of families, which promotes youth leadership development, strengthens youth voice, and contributes to consistently high levels of parent participation. Actively involving family members strengthens resilience and reduces emotional distress which improves academic and social outcomes. CPGR's after-school program is recognized for its culturally relevant programming, structured and safe environment, strong community trust, and comprehensive continuum of services supporting the whole family—from early childhood through adolescence.

RMCYB Community Special Events and Initiatives

The funds received allow us to provide positive programs and initiatives through a network of agencies, organizations and government partners that promote education, youth development, cultural enrichment and social supports to youth. Staff provided technical and onsite support to cultural, educational and informational, social events and programs that reached over 2000 youth. These programs provided information on community challenges such as violence, youth employment, and mental health. Social, education, mental health and cultural events also provided youth the opportunities to learn about HBCU Colleges, civic engagement, importance of literacy, youth rights within the justice system and service learning.