

YOUTH POWER!

AMPLIFYING YOUTH VOICE AND PEER ADVOCACY

MISSION:

YOUTH POWER! is the New York State network of young people who have been labeled and are seeking change. Together, we have decided to speak up about our experiences because no one knows what it is like for us better than we do. Through peer-to-peer mentoring, we empower young people to be active citizens, aware of government operations, their rights and the ability to use their voices to influence policy, practice, regulation and law. We are young people helping other people, ensuring availability of self-help and peer support while changing systems so that young people get the support they need with the respect and dignity they deserve.



MEMBERSHIP:

As a member, you stand with hundreds of young people across the state in saying that you believe in what we are doing and want to strengthen the numbers behind our mission. Becoming a member means you get all the latest information about things that are important to young people and give as much of your time to us as you want or can. YOUTH POWER! is a safe space for those looking to organize advocacy, to speak out and amplify their voices for change. Young people ages 12-29 with a disability, emotional & behavioral challenges, or experience in New York State systems such as Special Education, Juvenile Justice, Foster Care, or Addiction Recovery can become a member.



The Council: The YP! Council is the guiding force behind all of the network's work and activities. All council members are young adults with disabilities who may also have experience in New York State public systems. The Council also facilitates YP!'s three working groups.

The Staff: We pride ourselves on being a peer run network. YOUTH POWER! employs youth and young adults with disabilities and/or cross-systems experiences. Employees operate as official representatives of YP!, mentor young leaders, and coordinate network activities.

LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

WORKING GROUPS:

Action: Leads our advocacy and activism. We have a lot to say and this group makes sure our members are heard!

Outreach: Creates ways to grow the YP! network and strengthen its voice. The printed member newsletter is developed by this group.

Special Events: Takes the lead in planning our major events such as the FTNYS Annual Conference Youth Track and our University of YOUTH POWER!.

REGIONAL TEAMS: Through the regional team, YOUth are in charge of planning YP! forums, events and outreach. These teams meet 1-2 times a month using Go-To Meeting (Connect via phone, computer, or app).

TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: YP! offers a variety of trainings on youth leadership, advocacy, and engagement for youth and adult partners. We also offer our expertise, strategies and support to help existing or newly forming youth-led groups. This assistance includes strategies for development, structure, engagement, sustainability and other technical assistance needs groups may have.

EVENTS: We have designed a variety of empowering and education events for both youth and adults. Some examples of events we have organized are statewide & regional youth forums, educational sessions with staff in inpatient and residential centers, conference youth tracks, youth empowerment sessions, youth speak outs, leadership dinners, and round table discussions.



REGIONAL YOUTH PARTNERS: YP! employs five full-time regional organizers. These young adults have personal experience in state systems and are charged with connecting local youth-led groups, increasing youth inclusion in government work, providing technical assistance and support, and strengthening YP! network activities on a regional and local level, including coordinating the regional teams.

Contact your Regional Youth Partner:

New York City, Call/Text 347-461-2819, www.Facebook.com/YOUTHPOWER.NY.C

Long Island, Call/Text 631-245-5289, www.Facebook.com/YOUTHPOWER.NY.LongIsland

Hudson River, Call/Text 518-322-2096, www.Facebook.com/YOUTHPOWER.NY.HudsonRiver

Central, Call/Text 315-679-1476, www.Facebook.com/YOUTHPOWER.NY.Central

Western, Call/Text 585-314-2452, www.Facebook.com/YOUTHPOWER.NY.Western

STATEWIDE INITIATIVES



NEW YORK INSTITUTE FOR SELF ADVOCACY (NYISA): is YP!'s initiative designed to train people ages 21+ with developmental disabilities to advocate for themselves and their peers in community, systematic, and policy settings. NYISA will teach participants important skills such as public speaking, elected representative relations, social media literacy, budgeting, and more. Graduates of the institute will become part of the Emerging Leaders Network who will spread self-determination and self-advocacy across the state. For more information, contact ZKilmer@YOUTHPOWER.NY.org



AMPLIFY-NY: YOUTH POWER! is hosting regional youth leadership forums and supported leadership activities across New York State for young people ages 14-24 with developmental and other disabilities. AMPLIFY-NY amplifies the voices of young people and the opportunities they have to build self-advocacy and leadership skills as well as self-confidence, empowerment, and self-determination. Alongside the Youth Leadership Forums will be trainings for caregivers. For more information, contact AMPLIFYNY@YOUTHPOWER.NY.org

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