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YOUTH LEADERS IN KANSAS (YLINK) PROGRAM

• Youth Leaders in Kansas, known more commonly around the state by its acronym, YLINK, offers an opportunity for young adults to develop community awareness and youth leadership skills during the formative ages of 12 to 18 years. Various YLINK sites can be found in cities and small towns across the state of Kansas. They operate with the local support and guidance of caring adult volunteers, community partners, and alongside the youth's primary caregiver(s), especially parents.

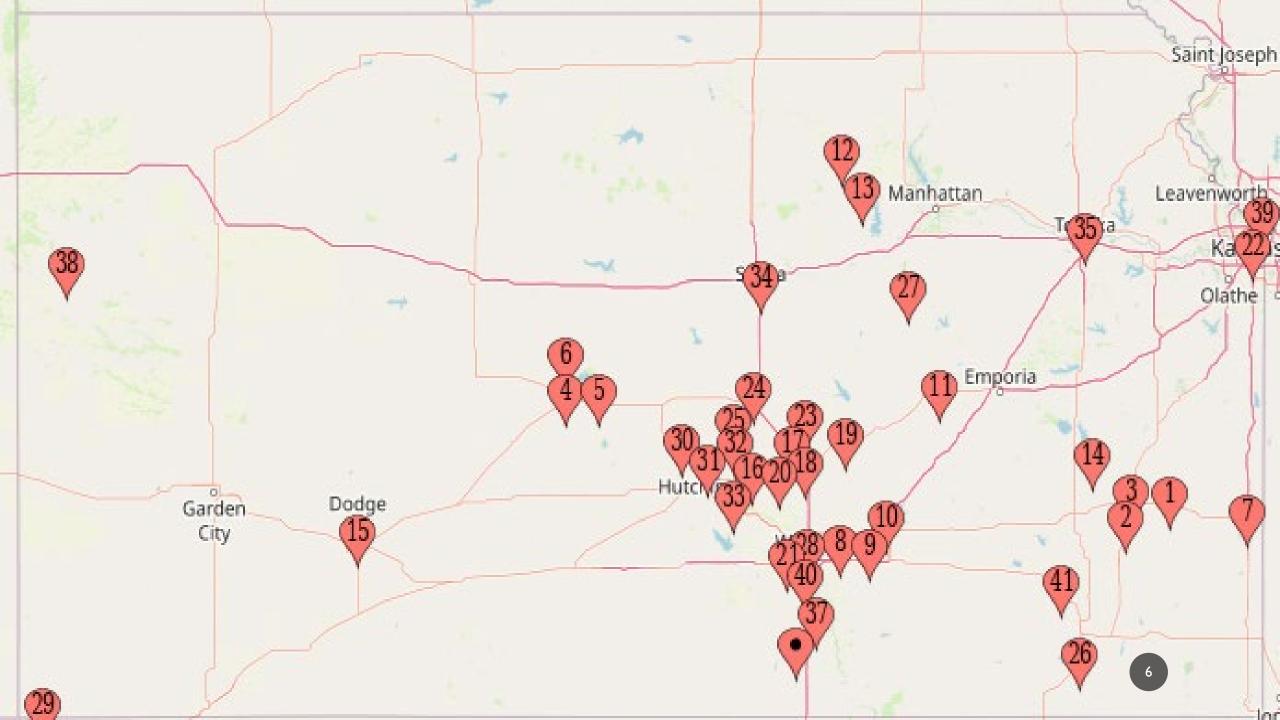
EXPERIENCES

FOCUSES

EXPOSURE/OPPORTUNITIES

NETWORKING





EXPERIENCES

The program provides an array of experiences which includes, but is not limited to:

- Improving family and peer relationships
- Community Engagement
- Incorporating knowledge and training for employment and/or vocational education
- Self advocacy skills

FOCUSES

YLINK groups promote and provide programs that address:

- Mental health stigma reduction
- Suicide prevention
- Behavioral health awareness
- Youth voice and advocacy

Exposure/Opportunities

There are also opportunities for youth to participate in the state legislative process and learn about advocacy at every level

NETWORKING









Wichita Northwest High Grizzlies for Change

2022-2023

Youth Leaders in Kansas





Rise Up Reno at CADCA

In Grapevine, Texas

Rise Up Reno stayed very busy this quarter. Club sponsors were invited to attend the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of American (CADCA) Mid-Year Training Institute in Grapevine, Texas with staff for extra prevention training. Youth leaders volunteered at the National Night Out community event by painting faces. Rise Up Reno expanded into two new school buildings this year, bringing its total to seven groups. All sponsors were provided orientation training and planning time to organize priorities for this year's prevention campaigns. Youth attended coalition meetings in August where they worked on creating a new vision statement and in September where they received the first part of a training on Adverse Childhool³ Experiences (ACEs), resilience, and trauma-informed care.



Regardless of how happy, good looking, smart or popular someone seems on the outside, everyone is fighting their own and often very private battles. Many times kids will tell their friends about their struggles more readily than parents, adults, or mental health professionals.

In response, 16 Clay County members of YLinK gave up their "Day OFF" of school to participate in a "Day ON" for helping their friends and classmates.

Dragons Lead the Way

Belle Plaine High School

2022-2023







Allen (3) Moran Iola Humboldt	Barton (3) • Ellinwood • Hoisington • Great Bend	Butler (3) Andover Augusta El Dorado Bourbon (1) Fort Scott	Clay (4) Clay Center High School Clay Center Jr. High Wakefield High School Wakefield Middle School
Coffey (I) LeRoy Ford (I) Dodge City Morton (I) Elkhart	Harvey (6) Burrton Halstead Hesston Newton Peabody Sedgwick	Marion (I) Goessel Saline (I) Salina Chase (I) Cottonwood Falls	Morris (I) White City Montgomery (I) Independence Johnson (I) Overland Park
Reno (6) Hutchinson High School Hutchinson Middle School Buhler High School Haven High School Prairie Hills Middle School Nickerson High School	Sedgwick (5) Student Empowerment North High School Northwest High School West High School Mental Health America	Shawnee (3) Topeka West High School Highland Park High School Topeka High Bourbon (1) Fort Scott	Sumner (2) Belle Plaine Wellington McPherson (2) McPherson Inman
Wallace (I) Sharon Springs	Wyandotte (I) Kansas City-Piper Middle School	Wilson (2) Fredonia Jr/Sr High School	



Group Expectations

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

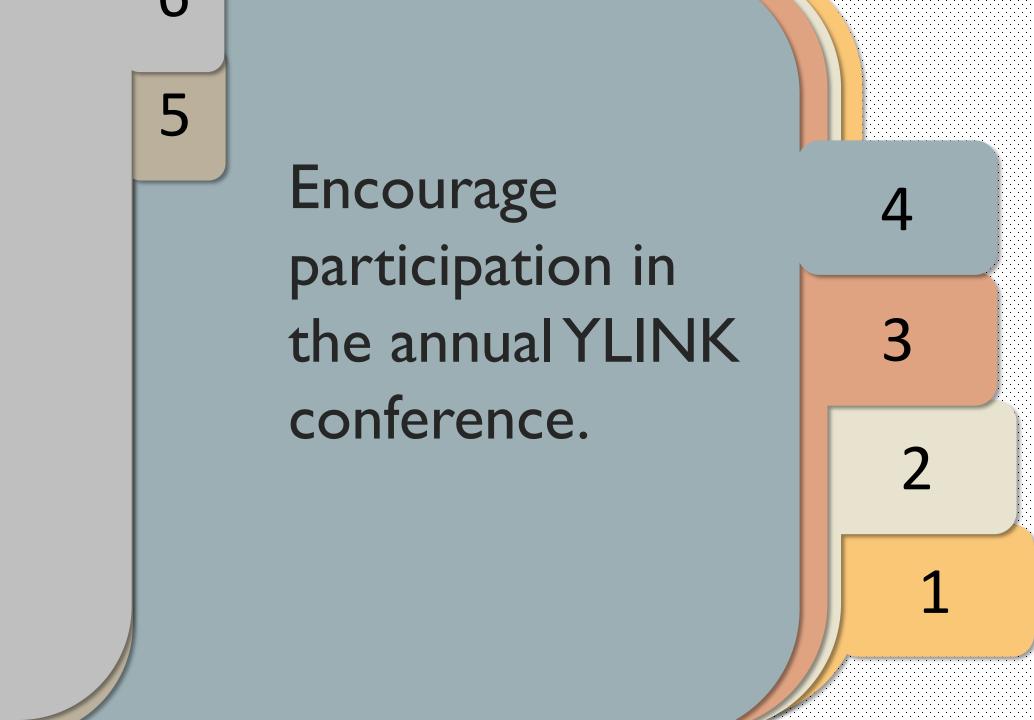
- A.YLINK sites will develop goals focused upon community issues that support stigma reduction and youth advocacy.
- B. These groups will be youth-led and youth-directed, but they will be supported with guidance when needed from parents, guardians, or other adults providing supervision to the youth group.

Outcome/Goal

 Organize and develop leadership opportunities to include prevention, behavioral health stigma reduction and advocacy.

Encourage participation in Youth Mental Health Advocacy Day at the state capital.

Plan, organize and hold events for Youth Mental Health Awareness Month in May.



Encourage participation in the State-Wide Youth Advisory Group providing feedback to the Governor's Behavioral Health Services Planning Council.

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When using YLINK funds for an event, program or activity there is an expectation that the YLINK Banner will be displayed, youth will wear YLINK shirts, buttons or other items that promote the connection with YLINK. The YLINK logo needs to be used on printed materials for the event. All printed materials with the YLINK logo will need to be approved by KDADS prior to printing.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Each YLINK site shall participate in an array of activities focused upon mutual support, leadership opportunities, improved relationships, and strengthening community supports.

 Each YLINK site will participate in activities in their community and at the state level that support the goals developed by the group focused upon youth leadership or the reduction of stigma and/or bullying.

 C. Each YLINLK site will participate in: I. Regularly scheduled meetings with adult supervision/support. 2. Mental Health Awareness activities • 3. Annual YLINK Advocacy Day • 4. YLINK Summer Conference 5. YLINK Regional Meetings

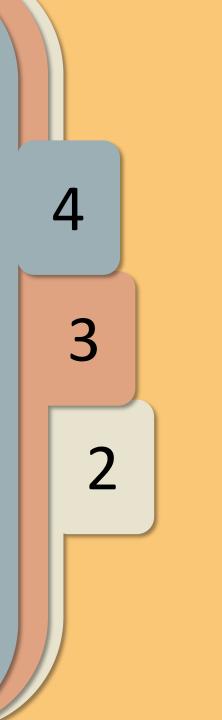
Each YLINK site will work to develop community partners that will support the goals of the YLINK site.

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QUARTERLY REPORTING



CURRENT GOALS

MEETING DATES, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES

NUMBER OF PERSONS PARTICIPATING; NUMBER OF PERSONS BEING **REACHED**

3

1

FUTURE PLANS

4

3

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"To me,Y-LINK has been not only a way to give back to my school and community, but also a source of

hope for the future of our town and a way for me and fellow members to grow with each other and learn how to make the world a better place." - Senior at Wallace County High

School YLINK has given us students

many opportunities to do great things for our community that we might not have been able to do without the resources of YLINK. We really focused on helping others and positively impacting their mental health.

- Belle Plaine High School Student

"Being from a rural area, I didn't think there was other liked minded youth who were passionate about change. Attending YLINK was an eye-opening experience. I was able to connect with youth who had that same fire. Being in that environment motivates and excites you to keep doing vital work.YLINK is an opportunity to join a group of goal driven youth who are making a change." - Junior at Great Bend High School

"I personally have a passion for prevention and YLINK has helped me to gather information to share with my community and others. I love helping with mental health and by attending YLINK, it offers so many opportunities to help put our perspectives as youth together and change the lives of many for the better."

School

- 8th grader at Hoisington Middle

"YLINK has impacted me because it's made me open minded and easier to talk about mental health and suicide prevention in a way that other generations have struggled or brushed aside. We can help the older generations see that it's ok to talk about mental health and suicide prevention without feeling ashamed or uncomfortable.YLINK has provided us with the funds necessary in order to spread the word to as

many people as we can." - Highland Park High **School Student**

