

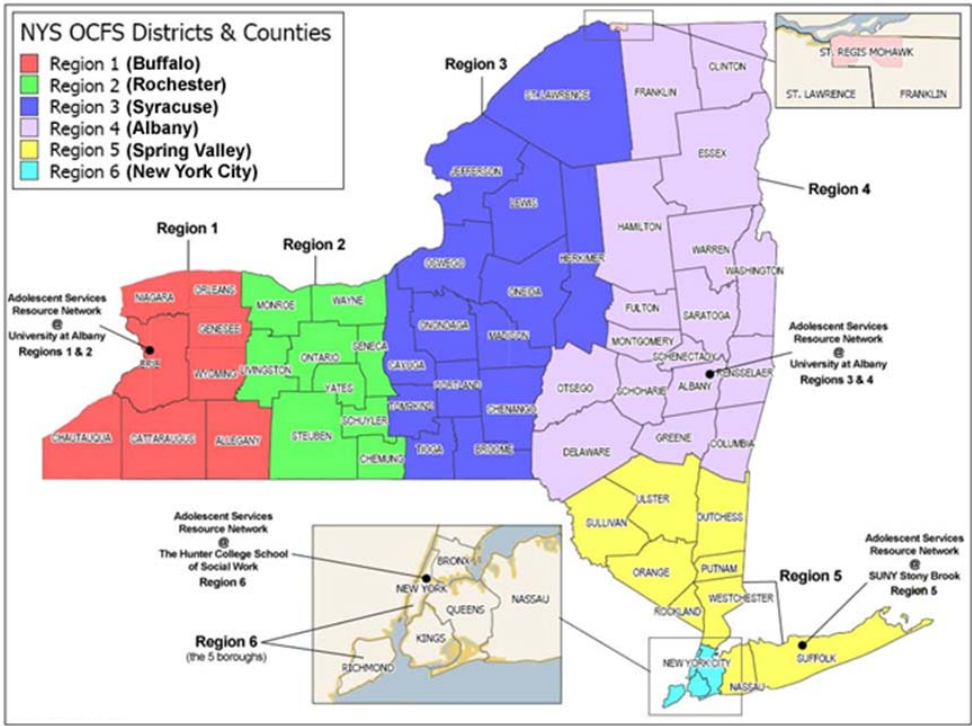
If you want to learn more about Youth In Progress, please contact the representative in your region or visit our website.

www.YouthInProgress.org

Youth In Progress Statewide Team
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 Melissa Rivera (212) 452-7483



Need to Know Series: What is Youth In Progress?



Youth In Progress
 New York State Foster Care
 Youth Leadership Advisory Team

"The mission of Youth In Progress is to enhance and advance the lives of today's and tomorrow's youth by enhancing their sense of self and responsibility. To do this, we pledge to educate everyone involved in the various systems Youth In Progress members represent to the realities of this experience."

Written and designed under a contractual agreement between the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (Bureau of Training) and the Adolescent Services Resource Network, Professional Development Program, University at Albany.

"I am a youth advocate for the 27,000 youth that currently live in foster care, and I love it. I enjoy representing and advocating for my peers. It has been the greatest thing I have ever accomplished. My past wasn't the best, and that's why I am in control of my future, this is the power of being a youth in foster care and actively being involved in Youth In Progress."

What We Do

- ☞ Serve on leadership boards for agencies, local districts, and national organizations
- ☞ Participate in a variety of speaking engagements and conferences, regionally, statewide, and nationally
- ☞ Act as co-trainers for caseworkers, child care staff, and foster parents
- ☞ Help produce and appear in training videos specific to working with adolescents in care
- ☞ Participate and conduct focus groups
- ☞ Host annual regional foster care Youth Speak Outs
- ☞ Distribute the *Handbook for Youth in Foster Care* regionally, to youth ages 14-21

"I feel that I have a personal obligation to serve my generation and all those that follow behind. There is a great need for youth that are willing to create, and initiate change. Due to my personal experiences I believe with all of my heart that I am one of them. There will be a day when youth will not be tokenized, forgotten, or misused."

Ongoing Goals

- ☞ Raise public awareness of the experiences of youth in care
- ☞ Increase youth involvement in all systems that touch their lives
- ☞ Empower youth through the development of leadership and decision-making skills
- ☞ Improve policies and practices to assist youth transition out of foster care
- ☞ Increase awareness, availability, and participation in services provided to youth transitioning out of care

Our Roles

We each have equally important roles to support our mission. Regardless of specific roles, members of our team are expected to demonstrate their commitment to our mission by:

- ☞ Acting as positive role models
- ☞ Being dependable
- ☞ Demonstrating respect for others
- ☞ Setting aside personal differences
- ☞ Modeling Youth/Adult Partnerships
- ☞ Accepting and offering constructive feedback
- ☞ Offering constructive feedback
- ☞ Listening to youth in care and offering them guidance that will allow them to achieve success in their lives and to realize their full potential

"I joined Youth In Progress because I like to help others and thought sharing my experiences in foster care and helping to create solutions to make it a better system for other youth in care would help future kids in foster care."

Team Members

Youth leaders

Youth ages 14-21 who are involved in the foster care system in NYS

Mentors

Caring adults who accompany youth leaders to retreats, events, and activities. Mentors include: caseworkers, child care staff, parents, foster parents, and any other caring adult involved in the youth's life.

Alumni

Youth In Progress leaders who were involved in the foster care system in NYS and have made a commitment to remain involved in Youth In Progress activities since exiting placement

Adolescent Services Resource Network (ASRN)

Network of university training partners who coordinate local Youth In Progress groups

Regional Office Liaisons

Designated from each of the six NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) regional offices to work with and support Youth In Progress activities

OCFS Central Office Staff

Designated to work with and support Youth In Progress activities