



**What do Young People Want... READ ON!**  
**Our Community Through Their Eyes**



Youth in Philanthropy (YIP) is a NPCF youth leadership program that provides area teenagers real, hands-on experience with philanthropic giving and involvement in how our communities work. YIP provides young people guidance, money, and mentorship to directly fund local nonprofit organizations. Each

grant cycle challenges them to study proposals, manage budgets, conduct site visits, work together, and present their decisions to an audience of peers and adults. After review, students award one nonprofit a \$10,000 grant.

When applying to the program, students are asked two critical questions. These questions require them to think about challenges their generation faces and how their community could help. We asked our students from Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison and Rappahannock counties and these are their responses from their applications. We then, as a group, came up with the most critical issues for young people and how we could start to solve them.

## **QUESTION:** **WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACED BY AREA YOUTH?**



### **THEIR ANSWERS:**

- I think the biggest challenge faced by youth is **peer pressure**. Most youth are pressured into making bad decisions such as drinking or smoking and have a hard time saying no. This leads more people to fall into the wrong path and continue making these bad decisions when from the start we could have said no.
- **Lack of activities** for kids my age, there are very few things to do on the weekends for fun.
- In my own community, there is a huge struggle to find **basic Internet access**. Lack of quality Internet puts teens at a disadvantage when it comes to schooling and their social life. This makes it difficult to take online classes, or even submit work for their in-person classes, which commonly use virtual platforms.

- I believe the biggest challenge faced by youth is the **pressure of social media** use. Social media has changed the way we communicate with each other and how we feel emotions. Constant attachment to social media challenges youth by creating an urge to compare, fear of missing out, or feelings of loneliness. I believe that you need more places where they can escape from social media like parks and recreation centers.
- Drugs and peer pressure.



- The biggest detrimental effect on youth in my county is the lack of clubs or enrichment programs. Things like a computer club or art club could provide a huge positive impact on youth. They provide a circle of friends and develop skills. We need to expand these opportunities to all age groups - **getting kids something to do after school.**
- What the next step will be. **Planning and procrastination.**
- I think people my age need help **prioritizing** what is actually good for them.
- **Bullying** is unfortunately a global issue kids have to face every day. It's important to prioritize taking actions when we see it happening.
- The biggest challenge faced by youth in this area is **social anxiety**. I think that COVID quarantine definitely made an impact on their mental state.
- I think the biggest challenge many young people face now is the disconnect between society and reality, with **spending too much time online and on social media.**
- I think the biggest problem faced by youth in my area is a combination of three things – **impoverishment, hunger and bad or inappropriate influences** through social media and environmental aspects. Impoverishment can cause unhealthy stress, which leads to poor mental health.
- Environmental aspects such as bad living conditions and poor or **dysfunctional family settings** can cause stress and even cause horrible things later in life.

**QUESTION:**  
**WHAT KIND OF THINGS DO YOU THINK  
PEOPLE YOUR AGE NEED FROM YOUR  
COMMUNITY?**



**THEIR ANSWERS:**

- I believe people my age need more places to experience nature in my community. In this digital world, teens my age are pressured to be online. Outlets outside like **hiking or biking trails** have benefits for physical and mental well-being.
- Our community could spread mental health awareness and offer people the **resources they need to get help**.
- Support. **Academic support, emotional support, physical support**, just having someone there to push us to be better.
- Swimming Pool

- Mainly the seven things a youth needs are **healthy food, shelter, medical care, clean water, and protection from harmful substances**, such as drugs, alcohol, and violence. Also, they need to be educated in a way that teaches them the value of keeping an **open mind**, and the belief that there is good in other people. Finally, they **need good social skills**.
- I think the overall community needs to become closer and **more cooperative** with each other.
- I believe youth would benefit from more opportunities for community engagement. I believe that we need more of these events to **unite the youth and community**.
- I think most people in my age are in need of a sense of community and a **safe open environment** for them.

- I think **education** is most important at my age. So things such as educational events or tools will be most beneficial for people my age.
- I think that more than anything else, people my age need **better education**. My school is underfunded just this year. The high school had to cut a math class due to a teacher shortage. There also is a shortage of school bus drivers. Some students don't have a steady Internet connection at home, which is an issue, as a lot of classes are fully online now.





- In general, I think it would really benefit people my age if our community and the county as a whole were **more invested in public education**. We don't get the same opportunities other schools that are situated in better areas do. Also I think young people don't have enough opportunities to **connect with one another outside of school**.
- **More social outlets** like State Climb, bowling alleys, arcades, and roller-skating rinks.
- I would say people my age need **more guidance** in matters with school and mental health. There are resources shared with us, but many of my peers don't trust the source the help is coming from.
- People my age need **support from the community**.
- People my age need **stimulating extracurricular activities**, just like YIP. I feel my county lacks opportunities for youth to engage in things that would help them in their future lives.