



Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES)

YES Programs

YES for Peaceful Communities
(2004 – 2009): The pilot YES program in Flint, Michigan which facilitated the development of the YES curriculum

Genesee County After School Study
(2010 – 2016): YES for Positive Youth Development was tested as an after-school intervention in partnership with Flint Community Schools and the Genesee County Intermediate School District.

YES and the Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center (2010 – 2015): The YES curriculum was adopted as one of six MI-YVPC interventions and was implemented in partnership with Church Without Walls in Flint, Michigan.

Adaptations for STRYVE
(2013-2015): Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE) is a national youth violence prevention initiative led by the CDC. Four STRYVE programs in Houston, TX, Boston, MA, Salinas, CA, and Portland, OR, implemented YES as a component of their community-level violence prevention strategy.

YES for Healthy Relationships
(2016-2019): The CDC funded Wayne State University researchers, in partnership with the University of Michigan team, to adapt and implement the YES curriculum to address dating and sexual violence among middle schoolers in Wayne County, MI.

YES for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Appreciation, and Solidarity (IDEAS)
(2020-2025): The goal of YES-IDEAS is to empower youth to address racism and racial discrimination as a way to reduce violent behavior.

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What is YES?

YES is an evidence-based program that empowers youth to make positive changes in their communities and to work with adults who support their efforts. The goals of the YES program are to: 1) provide youth with opportunities for meaningful involvement in preventing youth violence and creating community change; 2) enhance the ability of adults to support youth in an empowerment framework; and 3) change the social and physical environment to reduce and prevent violence (especially youth violence).

YES includes three essential elements:

1. Youth empowerment activities;
2. Training for adult staff and volunteers;
3. Community development projects that youth design and implement with support from adults.

Youth empowerment activities include workshops for program planning, budgeting, implementation, and evaluation; opportunities to engage peers in community change efforts; developing ethnic identity and pride; and working with adults to achieve these goals.

YES helps youth develop the skills they need to assess their community, and it gives them decision-making power in developing and implementing community change projects. Participating in empowering activities can help youth avoid risky behaviors and develop into productive healthy adults.

Selected Publications

Thulin EJ, Lee DB, Eisman AB, et al. Longitudinal effects of Youth Empowerment Solutions: Preventing youth aggression and increasing prosocial behavior. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. Published online January 20, 2022. doi:10.1002/ajcp.12577

Morrel-Samuels S, Rupp LA, Eisman AB, et al. Measuring the Implementation of Youth Empowerment Solutions. *Health Promot Pract*. 2018;19(4):581-589. doi:10.1177/1524839917736511

Zimmerman MA, Eisman AB, Reischl TM, et al. Youth Empowerment Solutions: Evaluation of an After-School Program to Engage Middle School Students in Community Change. *Health Educ Behav*. 2018;45(1):20-31. doi:10.1177/1090198117710491

Reischl TM, Zimmerman MA, Morrel-Samuels S, et al. Youth empowerment solutions for violence prevention. *Adolesc Med State Art Rev*. 2011;22(3):581-600, xiii.

Franzen S, Morrel-Samuels S, Reischl TM, Zimmerman MA. Using process evaluation to strengthen intergenerational partnerships in the Youth Empowerment Solutions program. *J Prev Interv Community*. 2009;37(4):289-301. doi:10.1080/10852350903196290

The YES Curriculum, along with an adaptation guide and an evaluation guide, are available for download on the YES website.

<http://yes.sph.umich.edu/>

