

## Statewide youth network

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### Overview

The purpose of the Statewide Youth Network (Youth Network) is to facilitate the development of working relationships, a united voice and process for youth across Washington, including youth run organizations and groups, to collaborate and partner in Washington State's behavioral health system change initiatives. The Statewide Youth Network is also an integral piece to sustaining the System of Care values in Washington State and will work in collaboration with the Washington State Children's Behavioral Health Statewide Family Network (Statewide Family Network).

In 2018, 33 youth and youth leaders from across Washington state attended a two-day meeting, including Youth Tri-leads from Regional Family Youth, System Partner Round Tables (FYSPRTs), Wraparound with Intensive Services youth partners as well as representatives from multiple youth serving systems including behavioral health, juvenile justice, juvenile rehabilitation, foster care, houselessness, and substance use. This meeting was facilitated by Youth MOVE National.

The purpose of the 2018 meeting was to acknowledge community feedback that Washington needs an infrastructure to enhance youth engagement and leadership and to support the sustainability of youth voice, support the current youth workforce, to engage youth interested in being youth partners and to partner with and inform system leaders.

A steering committee of youth leaders was formed as a follow up to this meeting and this steering committee identified that they would like to build a youth network modeled after the Statewide Family Network.

In 2021, the Health Care Authority (HCA) worked with an organization to further develop the Statewide Youth Network and in October 2021, HCA announced that after continued learning over the last couple years around the implementation of this program that it will continue to fund the infrastructure development of the Youth Network.

In 2022, after significant time had passed since the 2018 meeting and in consideration of the impacts of the worldwide pandemic, HCA, in partnership with Youth MOVE National completed a process to gather updated information from young people, youth leaders and youth partners across Washington with lived experience in behavioral health. A variety of methods were used to provide young people with multiple options to participate and share their voice and expertise. The information gathered as part of this process will be used to inform youth leadership initiatives moving forward.

HCA will be completing a competitive solicitation process to identify a contractor for Youth Network work. The anticipated timeframe for a contract to be in place is 2023.

### Who can participate

Youth partners, FYSPRT Youth Tri-leads, and youth ages 13 and older with lived experience as a youth in youth-serving systems such as behavioral health, child welfare, juvenile justice, juvenile rehabilitation, developmental disabilities, education, houselessness, and substance use.

### Key partners

Youth, youth leaders, youth run programs or organizations, and youth-serving system representatives from child welfare, juvenile justice, juvenile rehabilitation, developmental disabilities, education, health, mental health, substance use, and other community members including faith communities, law enforcement, early learning, tribal partners, and vocational rehabilitation.

### Annual budget

\$230,000 - Mental Health Block Grant dollars

### For more information

- Youth Liaison (position currently vacant, contact information to be added upon hire)
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