

What is Youth & Government?

Youth & Government is a YMCA program — an organization committed to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Youth & Government is a statewide program that involves thousands of teens nationwide in state organized model government programs. Teens from across the country meet in their local schools and YMCA clubs throughout the year to discuss and debate issues that affect citizens of their state and propose possible legislation to make state government effective.

The program culminates with teens serving as delegates at their individual state conferences, debating bills, learning about the democratic process, and practicing parliamentary procedure, press relations and lobbying techniques.

YMCA of the USA Statistics

- ◆ 38 states across the country participate in the program
- ◆ Over 47,000 teens participate nationwide
- ◆ 4,000 volunteers involved



Local Y Involvement

Every Y in New Hampshire provides support to the Youth & Government Program by recruiting delegates from their local schools, assisting in the organization of district caucuses, preparing appropriate local arrangements, attending the Pre- Legislative Session, and serving in key leadership roles during the Model Legislature.

School Connections

Approximately 60 history teachers and community volunteers work with delegates in their local schools preparing bills and supporting district and state election campaigns. In addition, they attend all sessions of the program supporting the work of their students as they experience state government as committee members, representatives and senators.

State Leadership

State leadership supports the Youth & Government program through the use of the state capitol and also contributes their time in addressing delegates at opening sessions or providing training in specific aspects of state government.

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NH YMCA Youth & Government Program



“Democracy must be learned
by each generation.”



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YOUTH & GOVERNMENT



New Hampshire Program Goals

The goals of the YMCA Youth & Government Program are to develop young men and women to become better citizens by being both knowledgeable and active in determining the future of our democracy. Each participant is given an opportunity to:

- ◆ Gain leadership training and experience in understanding the legislative process
- ◆ Develop critical thinking and analytical abilities
- ◆ Actively participate in a model legislative process
- ◆ Improve interpersonal communication skills
- ◆ Increase awareness of social issues and their possible solutions and practice public speaking

An additional benefit of participation is the opportunity for schools to provide a structured academic enhancement program. This incorporates research on various topics of social significance with a focus on effective writing skills.



New Hampshire Program Design

The YMCA Youth & Government program in New Hampshire celebrates 72 years of history. The program serves 300 teens from 30 schools throughout NH. The program takes place throughout the school year culminating with the Model Legislative Session held in the state capital buildings in April. Here students experience state government and the legislative process first hand. Sitting in the seats of the House of Representatives, the Senate Chambers, and the Supreme Court students have a first hand glance at the democratic process and what it takes to pass legislation.

Elective officials include: the Youth Governor, House Speaker, Senate President, Chief Justice and Editor in Chief. Other delegates participate as members of the Executive Council, Representatives, Senators, Supreme Court Judges, Press Corp members, lobbyists and committee members .

Students work with their advisors to write legislation which will be compiled into the Billbook. Each year over 100 bills are submitted. These bills become the work of the House and Senate Committees and are forwarded to the Supreme Court for constitutional review.



Annual Timeline

- September** Schools informed of program dates, Y&G introductions and recruitment
- October** Handbook & registration material prepared
- November** Delegate recruitment begins
Students begin writing legislation for Billbook; Advisor Orientation
- January** District caucuses held throughout the state
- February** Caucus election results and Bills mailed to Y&G Director
- March** Pre-legislative Session held to elect state officials. Two students selected to participate in Youth Advocacy Day in Wash DC.
- April** Pre-Legislative Session held to elect state officials; Two day Model Legislature held in Concord
- June** Y-USA Y&G Youth Governors Conference
- July** Y-USA National Affairs Conference