

Youth Work Workforce Goals

STABLE:

Reduce turnover by improving recruitment, increasing rewards, expanding career paths.

PREPARED:

Increase preparation by providing multiple professional development opportunities and delivery systems.

SUPPORTED:

Increase job satisfaction and performance by addressing needs for recognition, supervision and work/life balance.

COMMITTED:

Increase youth benefits by making the values, principles and goals of youth work clear and rewarding those who demonstrate them regularly in practice.

What is the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition?

The Next Generation Youth Work Coalition brings together individuals and organizations dedicated to developing a strong, diverse after-school and youth development workforce that is stable, prepared, supported and committed to the well-being and empowerment of children and youth. We believe that this entails progress in at least five key areas: standards and competencies; professional development and training resources; learning delivery systems; career ladders and compensation guidelines and research and evaluation systems.

Each of the four workforce characteristics—*stable, prepared, supported and committed*—connects to a concrete strand of work currently underway in organizations and communities to address the challenges that threaten the ability of after-school and youth development professionals to do their jobs *and* live their lives.

Who should be involved in the Coalition?

The mission of the Coalition is to provide a forum and a vehicle for *all* individuals and organizations at the national, state and local levels who work with and on behalf of children and youth. The Coalition is for those who influence or are influenced by workforce issues to come together to discuss, determine, document and form an action agenda. The action agenda is for building a strong, diverse workforce starting with a commitment to addressing the needs of after-school and youth development front-line workers. The focus is the local youth work workforce, in particular those individuals working directly with children and youth.

DEFINITION OF A YOUTH WORKER

A youth worker is an individual who works with and on behalf of children and youth to facilitate their personal, social, and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence, and place in society as they make the transition for dependence to independence.

The Coalition's membership includes representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- youth workers (front-line and management, from multiple fields e.g. after-school, youth development, prevention, recreation, faith-based)
- funders (public and private)
- employers (public, private independent and affiliates)
- intermediaries (e.g. state and local networks, coalitions, alliances and support organizations)
- universities and colleges
- policy makers and influencers
- research and training organizations (national, regional and local)
- workforce investment boards
- young people interested in youth work

All are critical links in the chain that connects practice to policy.

Why should I be involved?

Because, whatever your vantage point, you have a strong desire to:

- understand this rapidly growing workforce;
- engage in discussions about how to strengthen it;
- share information about workforce developments in your organization and community;
- begin or strengthen discussions among and between youth work professionals and others;
- access information, ideas, guides and tools that will help you make the most of your efforts;
- feel structurally connected to a larger movement and have your efforts and insights with those of others—be an active part of the voice and future of the Coalition.

By joining, you will receive the quarterly Next Generation Youth Work Bulletin and be on the mailing list for other publications. You can receive tools to host a workforce discussion in your organization, network or community. The primary role the Coalition will play, however, is to inform and support discussions about the public policy, institutional, organizational and individual practitioner changes needed to create a stable, prepared, supported workforce committed to the well-being and empowerment of children and youth.

We are looking for change makers who want to be involved.