



Youth in Governance

Making Room at the Table for Young Citizens

Youth who get involved in their communities make significant contributions to the quality of life and are more likely to be active, productive citizens as adults. When adults and young people cooperate on civic work, youth develop citizenship skills and both youth and adults gain an appreciation for the contributions of youth.

Extension's Response

In communities throughout the state, Extension agents and specialists work to expand the role of youth community leaders and active citizens. This includes providing training and experiences with democratic practices, engaging youth in community decision-making and community governance, working with elected officials to establish youth positions on public boards and councils, and training adults on effectively working with youth as partners.

Outcomes

Statutes and policies have been changed in seven counties to permit young people, under the age of 18, to be seated on local government committees.

Youth now serve on local government boards and committees in seven counties.

34 Youth Courts, where teens hear cases and have the authority to determine penalties for first-time juvenile offenders, now operate in Wisconsin. Extension plays a major role in developing new courts and training youth jurors.

Youth Courts in Wisconsin have an average repeat-offender rate of 13 percent.

Contact: Matthew C. Calvert, 4-H Youth Development Specialist
608-262-1912 matthew.calvert@ces.uwex.edu

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