



WHAT IF



YOUNG PEOPLE RAN THE GOVERNMENT?

AT YMCA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT, THEY DO.



WHAT IS YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT?

Youth in Government (YIG) is a hands-on civic learning program where students in grades 7-12 become state legislators, lawyers, justices, the media, or cabinet members and spend three days running a model government in the Wisconsin State Capitol.

YIG starts in the fall when students join or form a delegation at their school or YMCA. Delegations meet regularly to prepare for their program areas, learn about state government, and practice their writing and presentation skills. In early March, student delegates from across the state gather in Madison for the annual YIG conference, where they elect their own leaders, debate their own ideas, and build a vision for a stronger state.

Young people in YIG aren't spectators; they are leaders, organizers, speakers, and decision makers. When needed, YMCA staff members, teachers, YIG alumni, and trained volunteers are present to guide from the side and provide support.

But it's not all work. The conference includes two nights at the beautiful Best Western Premier Park Hotel, the chance to explore a variety of food options along State Street, and fun evening activities including games and crafts, trivia, bingo, karaoke, and a talent show.

WHAT PROGRAM AREAS CAN I CHOOSE FROM?

LEGISLATURE: State senators (11th and 12th grade) and representatives (8th, 9th and 10th grade) prepare bills on issues of their choosing, participate in committee hearings and floor debates, and vote on which bills should become law.

COURTS: Judicial delegates (10th, 11th, and 12th grade) play the dual roles of lawyer and justice. Each student prepares a legal brief and argues their assigned side of a case, plus has an opportunity to serve on the bench and rule on cases.

MEDIA: Members of the media (10th, 11th, and 12th grade) research, report and write as a team to produce a daily newspaper, news releases, and broadcasts using both print and digital formats.

LEADERSHIP CORPS: Delegates (7th grade) work in small groups to create bills, argue court cases, write media articles, and gain exposure to all YIG program areas.

IMPORTANT DATES 2022-2023*

- Registration Opens: October 18, 2022
- Registration Closes: January 24, 2023
- Pre-Gov Orientation Session: February 5, 2023
- Youth in Government Conference: March 3-5, 2023

*In addition, each delegation will hold regular program meetings throughout the fall to prepare for the conference. Meeting times and locations will be set by the local delegation director and student leaders.

WHY SHOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN YIG?

- Discuss and advocate for issues that are important to you.
- Learn to organize your ideas clearly and persuasively.
- Meet students from different racial, cultural, economic, and political backgrounds.
- Build self-confidence and improve your public speaking skills.
- Gain skills that set you apart in job interviews or on college applications.

The YIG conference is an experience like no other. You will spend three days with other young people who are interested in government and our society, exploring ideas, making new friends, and building the skills to take action.

“I have learned more than I ever thought about issues that are pressing now and for the future of my generation. Youth in Government opened my eyes to new opinions and experiences more than any class I have ever taken.”

—Ben, 10th grade

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARTICIPATE?

State program registration includes all meetings and resources for the 4+ month program season, two nights' lodging at the Best Western, a State Dinner on Saturday, private meeting spaces at the hotel and State Capitol, and evening activities. Local delegations charge an additional fee to help cover costs (transportation, food, etc.) that is specific to each delegation.

YIG is open to students of all backgrounds, opinions, and regions of the state. **We offer need-based scholarships to reduce registration costs. IF YOU ARE COMMITTED TO ATTENDING YIG, WE ARE COMMITTED TO GETTING YOU THERE.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: YMCAOUTHVOICE.ORG

No delegation at your school?

Email Barb Schmidt at bschmidt@mtrymca.org or call 920-482-1566 and we will help get one started! For more details about YIG and other YMCA Center for Youth Voice programs, visit ymcayouthvoice.org.



WHY YIG? BECAUSE DEMOCRACY MUST BE LEARNED BY EACH GENERATION.