

What is the Youth Leadership Advisory Team? (YLAT)

Maine's YLAT is a dynamic group of young people and adult partners from across the state working together to make sure that youth in care have the best possible experience. YLAT is a team effort involving youth, the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the community.

"I hope to show everyone that we are kids who care; kids who are taking action to change a not-so-great situation. We deserve praise and respect."

Crystal, age 18

Who can participate in YLAT activities?

- Maine Youth, ages 14-21, who are in care, in transition from care, in kinship arrangements, in reunification, or in adopted families
- Former youth in care, ages 22+
- Adults who are committed to supporting the efforts

How can young people join YLAT?

- Visit the YLAT webpage, www.ylat.org to find a meeting near you.
- Contact Ahmen Cabral at 207-228-8548 or toll-free at 1-877-792-YLAT or email Ahmen at ahmen.cabral@maine.edu

What happens in YLAT?

- **District YLAT meetings.** Youth, former youth, and adult partners gather for monthly regional meetings statewide to address critical issues facing youth in care.
- **Panel presentations and speaking engagements.** YLAT youth share their experiences to train, educate, and challenge audiences.
- **Advisory groups and committee work.** Youth work with adult partners to help create and improve policies and practice.
- **Creative projects.** Youth use the arts to inspire change in the system.
- **Statewide events.** Youth are invited to design and attend statewide events.
- **Philanthropy and community service.** YLAT members give critical input on how to give away thousands of dollars to innovative projects helping youth in foster care.

What are the benefits to young people?

- Connect with other youth in care and caring adults in a supportive, safe environment.
- Help to change the child welfare system.
- Make a difference in the community by speaking out and participating.
- Learn new skills in communication, advocacy, public speaking, and team work, while building confidence (and resumes).
- Connect with additional resources.
- Get a stipend for speaking engagements and project work.

Want to get involved with YLAT?

Check out the website, www.ylat.org for more information.

Follow YLAT on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/MaineYLAT

...Answers for youth in care, by youth in care