

## How much does the Youth Leadership Forum cost ?

The entire program is FREE to the youth participants. Costs are covered through grants and corporate sponsorships.

## Who can participate?

Youth Leadership Forum is open for high-school students from Grayson, Fannin and Cooke counties. Students from other counties are welcome as long as they can get to the seminar and NTYC.

## How do I apply?

Contact NTYC for the required application form, ask your high school counselor, or visit the NTYC website on the back of this brochure. Applications require a recommendation from a teacher, counselor or other adult, in addition to the signature of your school principal and must be returned before Friday, November 21.

## Is this an approved absence from school?

In most cases, yes. We meet with each area high school to discuss the program and request that the principal list it as an excused absence. All high schools have approved the program in the past. Check with your counselor to make sure.



North Texas Youth Connection (formerly Grayson County Juvenile Alternatives) provides the following youth services at no cost to clients:

### **Family Counseling**

A free counseling program for families of youth ages 0-17 who are running away, truant, experiencing family conflict, or committing delinquent offenses but not on formal probation.

### **Emergency Youth Shelter**

14-bed temporary shelter for males and females ages 10-17 provides runaway, homeless and abused youth with a safe place to stay until they can be reunited with their family or an alternative living arrangement secured.

### **Community Outreach**

Coordinates the area Safe Place program, provides life-skills groups to area youth organizations, oversees the Youth Advocacy Council, and develops Diversity Conference and Youth Leadership Forum.

## 24-Hour Crisis Hotline

**903-893-4717**

or toll free

**1-800-568-7776**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Grayson County Juvenile Alternatives, dba  
**North Texas Youth Connection**  
P. O. Box 1625  
Sherman, TX 75091-1625

Phone (903) 893-4717

Fax (903) 868-2260

[www.ntxyouthconnection.org](http://www.ntxyouthconnection.org)

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM



*Young people who have successful policymaking experience often become permanently involved in community leadership. Youth offer perspectives and ideas not often discussed by their adult counterparts in the community, on boards of directors, and as policy-makers.*

*-YouthBuild USA*



*Grayson County Juvenile Alternatives, Inc.*

## Why should I participate?

- You get to talk to adult decision-makers about decisions that will affect you and your peers rather than feeling helpless
- You get to list participation on college and scholarship applications
- You learn valuable skills you need to become a successful adult
- You create new relationships with adults and peers
- You gain a better understanding of the community and its diversity
- You acquire a more positive stature in the community
- You gain a better appreciation for adults and the multiple roles they play
- You begin to see your own potential as limitless

- You begin to view the world, and your ability to affect it, in a positive way
- You feel needed and useful
- You feel enhanced power, autonomy and self-esteem

## What is involved?

Students selected to participate will attend the training session on **December 4, 2008** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Grayson County College's Center for Workplace Learning. They split into teams and learn subjects such as the voter registration process, team-building and motivation, legislative issues and how bills work their way through the legislature.



Each group will have help from adult facilitators to discuss what issues are affecting them and their peers, and investigate topics of interest that are coming before the Texas Legislature. They will then select the one issue where they want to focus their efforts.



Forum members will meet for two more sessions on Saturdays in January, preparing for their trip to the State Capitol in Austin on February 4. Youth travel on a chartered bus, leaving at 3:30 a.m. Meetings with representatives at the capitol are scheduled throughout the day, after which the bus will return the students to NTYC around 11:00 p.m. Meals are provided.

Past visits with legislators have been so successful that language NTYC Youth Leadership Forum members have suggested have been included in final versions of bills that became law. These include parts of the "Minute of Silence" bill for public schools, teen driver regulations, and legislation to curtail skyrocketing higher education costs at public colleges and universities in Texas.