



City of Bellevue YOUTH LINK PROGRAM

Mission Statement

"To be a catalyst in responding to the interests and concerns of young people by engaging the entire community in implementing an agenda developed by youth."

What is Bellevue Youth Link?

A premier youth leadership and community service program in the City of Bellevue that gives young people a voice and opportunity to make things happen through direct involvement.

How does it work?

Every two years, Bellevue Youth Link hosts an all-city youth conference where young people learn and discuss issues and topics that affects them. Students attending the conference then vote on the topics that most concerns them and propose projects to address each issue. Members of the Bellevue Youth Council and Action Teams work to address those issues through the activities and projects in the program during the school year.

Who can participate?

Anyone who lives, works or goes to school in Bellevue can help! All volunteer hours go toward school community service credit. So, if you are a young person of middle or high school age or an adult who might be able to help make a youth priority a reality, contact us at **425-452-5254**. Youth Link applications are accepted year round!

Youth Link Board

The Youth Link Board (YLB) is an advisory board to the Bellevue City Manager. Comprised of twelve youth and six adults who work in equal partnership, the Board advises the City on youth issues and works in partnership with community groups and businesses to address youth priorities. Youth and adults interested in policy decisions with youth programs are encourage to apply. Board members serve a two-year term. For more info, please contact **Patrick Alina, Youth Link Program Coordinator**, at **425-452-5254** or via email at **palina@bellevuewa.gov**.

Bellevue Youth Council

The Bellevue Youth Council (BYC) is the membership body of Youth Link that helps promote various youth programs, provide leadership role for Youth Link, plan community service projects, and serve as a liaison to middle and high schools in Bellevue. Membership ranges from 50-60 students representing various schools, groups, and cultural diversity in Bellevue. Youths interested must fill out an application and commit to two meetings per month during the school year and are encouraged to participate in leadership trainings and conferences. BYC members are also encouraged to participate in the Action Teams. Applications are accepted year round. To apply, please contact **Patrick Alina, Youth Link Program Coordinator** at **425-452-5254** or via email at **palina@bellevuewa.gov**. You can also visit **youthlink.com** for more info or download the current application form.





Youth Link Special Events and Projects

Throughout the school year, members of the Bellevue Youth Council and Action Team help plan service project events including the annual "Trick or Treat for Cans" food drive, Kids Care Coat Drive project, Crossroads Thanksgiving Dinner, Unity Through Diversity event, Gumbo Night, and the annual Community Leadership Awards event. Youth Link members also attend regional youth conferences and other local special training events. New special projects and events are explored, discussed, and planned each month at the Bellevue Youth Council meetings. Students are encouraged to share ideas for community service projects, promote collaborative opportunities with other students, and practice shared leadership.



Youth Leadership Academy

A week-long youth leadership and community service training during summer for middle and high school students. Participants learn civic function, youth leadership opportunities, participate in team development exercise through hands-on training and challenge course, and work in teams to develop service project ideas for the upcoming school year.



Youth Link University

A six month youth business leadership course design to teach middle and high school students soft skills in the areas of business planning, project management, finance, product development, marketing, and other important business skill sets as taught by professionals from top companies such as Boeing, Microsoft, Expedia, Nokia, and many more. Students gain out of classroom experience by working in teams as they develop their business and project ideas facing real-world business challenges and learning strategies from professionals expert in their field. In 2017, Youth Link University received the Washington Recreation & Park Association "Program Excellence Spotlight Award for Innovative Programming".



Kids Care Coat Drive Project

Annual service project of the Bellevue Youth Council that collects an average of 3,000 coats and outerwear! BYC members work in partnership with local service organizations and businesses to deliver this much needed resources for Bellevue school students, residents, and organizations supporting homeless youth and families.



Diversity Action Team

As part of the City of Bellevue Diversity Initiative, Youth Link members help plan special events, forums, and opportunities of community engagement to celebrate and explore Bellevue's diverse community. From planning annual special events such as the "Unity Through Diversity" or hosting important conversation around race and equity, students learn first-hand the importance of celebrating our uniqueness and qualities as a community.



Community Leadership Awards & Youth Planning Committee

From concept to delivery, Youth Link members help plan the annual Community Leadership Awards event and biennial city-wide Youth Involvement Conference. Students learn skills in special events planning working in teams and committees managing and solving complex problems associated with large community special events. Youth Link is a partnership of the City of Bellevue and the Bellevue School District.



For more information, please call 425-452-5254 or visit youthlink.com



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable accommodation requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-5254 (voice) or email palina@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding accommodations, contact City of Bellevue ADA/Title VI Administrator at 425-452-6168 (voice). If you are deaf or hard of hearing dial 711. All meetings are wheelchair accessible.

