

# Douglas County Youth Initiative Report



# Background

- Founded by the Partnership of Douglas County Governments in 2005
- Partnership members fund and serve on the Advisory Board for the Initiative
- **Members:**
  - City of Castle Pines
  - City of Lone Tree
  - Douglas County Government
  - Douglas County School District
  - Douglas County Libraries
  - Highlands Ranch Metro District
  - Town of Castle Rock
  - Town of Parker



*The Youth Initiative provides a method for coordinating local youth-serving efforts and assessing the needs of youth residents by envisioning a community in which youth are involved, valued, productive, protected and healthy.*

# Mission

Unite the Douglas County community, including youth, parents, agencies, governments, schools, nonprofits and other adults, in our mutual efforts to:

## Douglas County Youth Initiative Mission:

*Support youth and encourage their contributions to the broader community. Effectively intervene with youth who are endangered by their decisions and/or situation. Support and expand opportunities for youth to express viewpoint*  
Programs of DCYI make sure to follow DCYI's values: youth are **involved, valued, productive, protected and healthy**

### DCYI STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2024

#### INVOLVED

Youth Congress - direct access to youth  
La Liga - direct access to youth  
DC Youth Commission - valued and productive  
DC Youth Forums: meeting local elected officials - direct access to youth; involved  
DC Youth Leadership Summit April 2024 - direct access to youth  
Plan mini Youth Congress events for middle schools / work with BOE to discuss implementation

#### VALUED

Outstanding Youth Awards - valued, protected

#### PRODUCTIVE

Recognizing and growing youth leaders - Youth Commission, Youth Congress  
Hosting various programs to assist with current youth trends - Lunch-n-Learns

#### PROTECTED AND HEALTHY

WrapAround  
Truancy Project  
Teen Court Project / on-going discussions  
Oasis/work with BOE to discuss

=NEW PROJECTS DISCUSSED



# Advisory Board

- City of Lone Tree Councilmember **Jay Carpenter**
- Douglas County Commissioner & DCYI Chair **Abe Laydon** and Special Projects Manager **Maureen Waller**
- Douglas County Libraries Trustee **Zach McKinney** and Community Services & Partnerships Manager **Jaime Gotlieb**
- Douglas County School District Director **Becky Myers** and **Dr. Stephanie Crawford**
- Highlands Ranch Metro District Director **Andy Jones**
- Town of Castle Rock Councilmember **Tim Dietz**
- Town of Parker Councilmember **Brandi Wilks**
- City of Castle Pines Councilmember **Chris Eubanks**



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# Youth Initiative Programs

- WrapAround
- Truancy Project
- La Liga
- Youth Awards
- Youth Congress
- Connections: Mental health action - DC Youth Forums
- DC Youth Commission



DCYI has two main programming areas: Youth Leadership/Youth Development *and* helping at-risk families via our WrapAround program

# WrapAround: Saving Families, Saving Costs

- Free
- Voluntary
- Work with families with youth ages 5-21
- Work in the home for 12-24 months
- Trying to keep kids, safe, healthy, and remain in the home
- Get to know the whole family PLUS their neighbors, friends, relatives, teachers, doctors, etc.
- Clients: Self-referral or from an agency; mostly DCSD schools and Human Services/Child Welfare
- Review each family on a scale of 10 life domains to understand their needs and foster success
- Alternative to other systems



# WrapAround Families:

- 6<sup>th</sup> grader - trouble at home and school due to behavior concerns; WRAP helped family connect with Developmental Pathways, helped coordinate ABA in the home, and helped with parenting
- 10<sup>th</sup> grader - chronic medical condition, was referred to court for truancy, worked with family to advocate for youth's mental and physical health
- 7<sup>th</sup> grader - not attending school consistently, WRAP helped family understand that school was necessary for the success of the student



# DCYI Programs

**Truancy:** DCYI utilizes WrapAround principals and methodology for youth in court for truancy. To note, DCYI WRAP has been doing this for the past 10 years, and has recently hired a WRAP Facilitator to help families in court.

**La Liga: Senior and Junior programs,** provides soccer for Spanish speaking youth, providing free uniforms, equipment, connection, and comradery.



## DCYI Programs

### Outstanding Youth Awards: Spring

DCYI Advisory Board selects 10 outstanding youth who have overcome personal adversity and created positive change in their lives. Provides business, community and civic leaders an opportunity to honor youth that might not otherwise be recognized.

### Youth Congress: Fall

Students work with community and elected officials to share their ideas and give feedback on issues pertaining to them. Held each year, high school students hear from subject matter experts on a variety of issues and then tackle these complicated problems. From unifying the teen curfew to growing opportunities to champion youth voice, students learn how challenging it is to problem solve and the difference they can make by working together.



# DCYI Programs

## Educational Series

DCYI hosts Lunch-n-Learns on a variety of topics. DCYI uses youth and community input to identify current issues and invite speakers. Topics: Autism, Mitigating Negative Behaviors, Prevention of Teen Suicide, and Drugs in our Community.



## DC Youth Forums

Advisory Board Elected and Appointed leaders have prioritized speaking to youth. One of the best ways to do this, to hear the pros and cons, the gaps, and the needs, is to speak with youth directly, via “A Forum for Youth.” And where best to do this? In the schools where kids are! In 2022-23, Advisory Board members visited five schools to have casual and informative conversations with youth!

# GREAT EXAMPLE OF PROVIDING YOUTH VOICE!

## Stadium District Funding

Douglas County Youth Commissioners helped direct funding from the sale of the Denver Broncos. They recommended almost 1 Million Dollars in grants!

First, they worked on youth priorities to help establish a funding criteria. They established the following **Youth Priorities**:

- Mental Health
- Education/STEM
- Prevention/Mentoring
- Special Needs
- Arts, Recreation & Sports
- Vehicles/Buildings
- Agriculture



*Douglas County Youth Commission students served on the panel for a Live Town Hall to discuss funding distribution. Students helped allocate almost \$1 million.*

# Call to Action! What the DCYI can do for Douglas County:

Between Youth Congress and working with youth countywide, two ideas have surfaced:

1. **Rec Center programs for teens.** As we have several established youth commissions throughout the County, perhaps we are discussing teen centered programming
2. **Hosting an annual joint meeting** between the Douglas County Partnership of Governments, DCSD Student Advisory Group, and the various County Youth Commissions to discuss County Leadership.



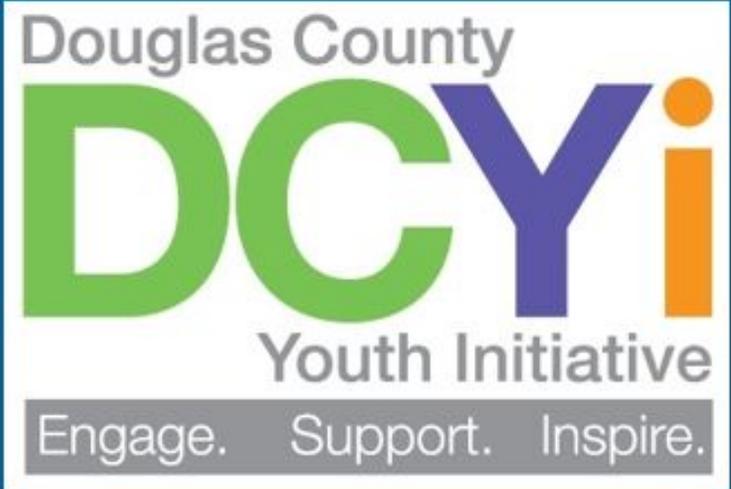
# Funding Request

DCYI is requesting a **funding increase for 2025, \$19,800 to \$25,000**. Advisory Board members will bring this request to the attention of their respective Boards and Councils.

## Funding is for:

- Truancy project
- School visits
- DC Youth Commission
- GED preparation
- Youth Leadership Summit





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