

# Youth Empowerment Solutions for Peaceful Communities - Implementation Guide

**TECHNOLOGY NUMBER: 5083**



## BACKGROUND

Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES)

Developed by researchers at the University of Michigan, YES is a theory-based youth program that is engaging and highly regarded. While most violence prevention programs address youth risk factors, YES envisions youth as the creators of solutions to youth violence. The curriculum involves young adolescents in conceiving, planning, and carrying out community change projects. In YES, youth and adults work together to accomplish the program goals. The YES Curriculum focuses on developing leadership skills, community pride, cultural identity, program planning, and resource mobilization. Youth-led community change projects may include cleaning up neighborhoods, creating murals, planting community gardens, building playgrounds, or other initiatives chosen by the participants. Trained local adult volunteers assist and mentor youth.

The YES Curriculum is available in Multicultural or African American versions. The 2nd Edition includes updated content and guidance for program implementers. YES Program demonstrates positive results in promoting healthy development and reducing risks for violence Evaluation results indicate that YES participants are less likely to become victims of crime in their neighborhoods, demonstrate more conflict avoidance and resolution skills, and spend less screen time as compared to youth not involved in the program. The developers have created a guide to assist organizations and communities in making decisions about selecting, implementing and adapting the Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES) program. It is designed for individuals who are responsible for choosing, supervising and carrying out youth programs.

**Technology ID**

5083

**Category**

Content

Software & Content

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This guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the Youth Empowerment Solutions Curriculum. It includes sections on YES core components, assessing readiness to implement YES, determining the need for adaptations, designing adaptations and reflecting on their results. A corresponding Evaluation Guide provides all of the tools necessary to conduct process and outcome evaluations of the YES program. Applications and Advantages Applications Tested youth empowerment program for schools and community organizations Advantages YES is based on sound theory and has proven results Curriculum includes detailed instructions for all components of the program YES provides a comprehensive package of materials for planning, implementation and evaluation Training by the developers is available