

## Youth Programs

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Neighbors in Action engages young people in the Brooklyn, New York, neighborhoods of Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant in meaningful educational, recreational, vocational, and artistic opportunities. We train teens to become peer leaders and community organizers and help prepare young adults for the world of work. Many of our alumni stay involved and participate in leadership and organizing work after they graduate from our programs.

### **Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets**

Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets—YO S.O.S.—is the youth branch of Save Our Streets Brooklyn, our anti-violence campaign. YO S.O.S. gathers young people who have been exposed to violence and trains them to become peer educators and community organizers in the movement to end gun violence.

Through a combination of experiential workshops and community organizing opportunities over the course of eight months, YO S.O.S. participants develop leadership skills including public speaking, creative problem solving, networking, event planning, resume writing, and campaign planning. Participants who successfully complete the program receive a stipend, community service credit, and assistance in securing paid summer employment or internship positions.

### **Justice Community Plus**

Justice Community Plus connects young adults with work-readiness opportunities. The program provides work placement, vocational training, soft-skills development, and assistance with job searches and career planning. Participants, who range in age from 16 to 29, receive:

- Employment training: Group and individual job training and job search assistance designed to lead to employment

- Education training: Assistance enrolling in high school equivalent classes
- Coaching: Individual coaching with staff members to identify goals and address challenges that may inhibit career aspirations
- Stipend: A stipend of up to \$1,400 for completing personalized milestones.

### **Community Mobilization**

All participants in our youth programs work together to design and implement public education campaigns that bring awareness to the issue of gun violence and promote community healing and peace. Youth are encouraged to use creative, cutting-edge methods to reach the broader New York City youth community.

Participants also engage in community anti-violence projects, cultural enrichment outings, and service projects. Each spring, youth participate in an annual Arts to End Violence gallery show, the Kingston Avenue Fest block party, and the Save Our Streets talent show.

### **Organizational Background**

Neighbors in Action began life as the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center in 1998. The program changed its name in 2018 to recognize its expansion into new neighborhoods and new programmatic areas. Neighbors in Action is operated as a program of the Center for Court Innovation.