

# Youth Action Council (YAC)

The Youth Action Council (YAC) is a leadership model developed by the Alliance to cultivate youth as leaders in preventing sexual and dating violence among their peers. Our youth leadership model has three main elements designed to encourage participation and skill development, involving young people in decision-making and leadership:

1. Education about the dynamics and root causes of sexual and dating violence, and facilitation of discussions about how this issue impacts the lives of young people in NYC.
2. Teaching skills that will enable youth to educate and facilitate discussions among their peers about sexual and dating violence and their experiences.
3. Development of leadership skills so youth can take action on the issue of sexual and dating violence.

Not only do YAC members build leadership skills, but their involvement also encourages civic responsibility and community service, helping young people to feel valued by addressing issues important to them. Young people highlighted that they want to be part of the YAC because they can make a difference in the lives of their peers; they want to help end sexual violence among youth, they want to voice teens' concerns, and they want to raise awareness about these issues.



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*I wanted to be a part of YAC because it will help be a way to not only voice certain issues amongst teens, but also a way to help find solutions. I have always had an interest in solving different problems, but sexual violence is one that grabs my attention more than others due to the increase in sex and sexual assault among teens. I think people, including myself, need to become more aware of the consequences of their actions. I think this is also a great opportunity for me to further build my leadership skills while gaining new ones.*

**—Anastasia Ramirez, 17-year-old female YAC member**

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*I wanted to be a part of YAC because I find sexual assault a serious problem all over the world and I'd like to help the cause.*

**—Mahfug Hossain, 17-year-old male YAC member**

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**Currently**, the Alliance is developing a Prevention Training program to help youth understand the causes of sexual violence. This will include analyzing gender roles; violence and the media; unhealthy and healthy relationships; and other topics, with the goal of teaching youth leadership skills to prevent sexual and dating violence. In addition, this year youth will be learning Participatory Action Research skills so that they can explore how sexual violence impacts the lives of their peers.



YAC April 2008 meetings



**New York City Alliance  
Against Sexual Assault**