

Let's Cultivate Systems That Match the Promise of Wyoming's Young People

Our opportunity: Creating pathways for all Wyoming youth to develop their full potential and strengthen our communities.

Over the past year, the Wyoming Enrichment Network (WYEN) asked young people across the state: "What learning would help you grow into the person you want to become?" Their answers reveal youth who are curious, driven, and ready to contribute:

- "I wish I was learning about current events. I believe that it is extremely important to learn history, but it would be great to learn what is happening in the world today."
- "I wish I was learning how to write a story and be able to workshop it with a group."
- "I wish I was learning practical life skills."
- "Have more student voices. We should have students talking and sharing with people in charge."

These aren't just wishes—they're blueprints showing exactly what young people believe they need in order to develop into the skilled, engaged community members Wyoming depends on. Across our state, young people are ready to step up when we build the structures that support their growth.



Photo: Boys & Girls Club of Cheyenne



Photo: Sheridan Chess Association

Our Ask: Build Wyoming's Future Through Young People and Their Families

As you shape Wyoming's budget this session, keep in mind that when we invest in the experiences that unlock young people's potential—career-connected learning, mentorship, hands-on exploration, and the organizations that create these opportunities—we're building the foundation for thriving Wyoming communities.

The budget choices you make today will determine whether young people can chart their courses here at home, developing the capabilities and connections that let them contribute their unique talents where they're needed most.



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We're Hearing From Young People



Three powerful themes emerged from middle, high school and college students across Wyoming:

We learn best through doing

Young people learn best by making, building, and solving real problems:

- Hands-on projects that apply knowledge
- Creative work they can workshop and refine with others
- Exposure to real workplaces and mentors

"I know how important it is for youth to have mentors they trust. Being a college student, I'm close enough in age that they see me as someone they can become. I see so much potential in them—the kind that just needs a little push in the right direction."

Equip us with tools for independence

Students want practical skills that prepare them for adult life:

- Managing money (taxes, budgeting, financial literacy)
- Taking care of a home (cooking, basic repairs, household management)
- Preparing for careers (workplace skills, professional development)

"Learning real world skills that would help me take care of a house, cook meals, and manage money. It would be beneficial to introduce these skills to middle schoolers, especially as they become more independent and enter high school."

We're ready to DO more!

Wyoming youth want to strengthen their communities today, not someday by:

- Serving as role models for younger children
- Engaging with current events and civic life
- Having their voices heard by people in charge

"I want to make my community better by being a role model to the youth and by giving the younger generations something positive to look up to."

Wyoming's youth are showing us what they're ready for. Let's invest in their potential—and in growing thriving communities where they will want to stay and contribute.

We ask you to: Prioritize investments that create clear pathways from curiosity to capability to career, ensuring every young person in Wyoming can access the experiences and support that help them contribute their unique talents to our communities.



Photos: (Clockwise from top) Photo: UW Science Initiative + Girl Scouts in Cheyenne, Wyoming State Fair Competition, Eureka Program at Big Piney Middle School