

Youth Leader Guide

A practical guide for young people leading a YouthConnect Network chapter: how to run meetings, lead people, work with adults, and finish what you start.

Your job as a youth leader

You are responsible for the chapter's direction, its meetings, and its follow-through. Your adult advisor supports and supervises you; they do not run the chapter for you. That distinction is the whole point of this network.

Run a meeting people want to attend

- Send the agenda before the meeting, not during it.
- Start on time and end on time, even if not everything is finished.
- Assign every task to a named person with a date.
- Close every meeting by reading the task list out loud.
- Send a three-line recap within 24 hours.

Lead a project from idea to done

- 1 Name the need in one sentence.
- 2 Define what "done" looks like and how you will know it worked.
- 3 List every task and who owns it.
- 4 Set the date and confirm the location and your advisor's attendance.
- 5 Do outreach twice: once two weeks out, once two days out.
- 6 Run the project.
- 7 Collect feedback the same day, while people remember.
- 8 Debrief with the chapter within a week and record results.

Working with adults

- Bring a plan, not a problem. Adults say yes to specifics.
- Give advance notice. Two weeks is respectful; two days is not.
- Write things down after conversations and confirm by email.
- If an adult asks you to do something outside chapter authority, say you need to check with YouthConnect Network first. That is always an acceptable answer.

Talking with residents

- Introduce yourself, your chapter, and why you are there in two sentences.
- Ask, then listen. Most useful information comes after the first pause.
- Never promise an outcome you cannot deliver.
- Thank people by name when you follow up.

Staying nonpartisan

Chapters serve everyone in a community. Do not endorse candidates, parties, or ballot questions, and do not use chapter channels for partisan messaging. Civic learning and issue-based service are encouraged; partisan activity is not. See the Civic Engagement and Nonpartisanship Guide.

When things go wrong

- Low turnout: shrink the event, not the effort. Ten engaged neighbors beat an empty room.
- Members drifting: give each person one specific, visible job.
- Conflict: raise it early with your advisor. Never let it play out over group chat.
- Safety or conduct concerns: report immediately to your advisor and to admin@youthconnect.network.

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Questions: admin@youthconnect.network · Version 1.0 · Last updated: August 2, 2026