

YOUTH FORUM

Family Services of Westchester

Office: (914) 872-5287; Peer Line: (914) 872-5280

Locations

WHITE PLAINS

Family Services of Westchester, Inc.
One Summit Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606

PEEKSKILL

Family Ties of Westchester, Inc.
8 North Division Street, Peekskill, NY 10566

WHAT IS YOUTH FORUM?

Youth Forum provides support, advocacy and recreational opportunities for older adolescents and young adults who currently have or have had experience with mental health services in Westchester County. This is a peer-driven initiative where participants provide support for each other as well as work alongside staff in developing the program. Our Knowledge Nights offer information and resources that foster a new, more appropriate level of interdependence.

PEER SUPPORT

- Knowledge Nights
- Rap Sessions
- Advocacy
- Outreach
- Leadership

SOCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Peer Interaction
- Recreational Activities
 - Movies
 - Picnics
 - Amusement Parks

PEER LEADERSHIP

For members who demonstrate an exceptional level of conduct and remain proactive in their personal and/or professional lives, Youth Forum provides opportunities to:

- Educate various systems, which include schools, mental health and probation professionals
- Speak at conferences and participate in training panels on both local and national levels regarding youth involvement and the stigmas associated with the mental health system
- Attend and co-facilitate aging-out network meetings and support circles for youth in the community
- Lead various sub-committees

If you or anyone else you know are interested, feel free to contact us at the numbers above.

YOUTH FORUM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

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Youth Forum's members and support staff have control over the acceptance of new members. Membership is open to anyone meeting the criteria for eligibility unless that person proves to be a considerable distraction and/or poses a significant and current threat to the general safety the Youth Forum community.

Membership is voluntary. All members receive a monthly calendar and can choose which evenings they want to attend. Members are expected, out of common courtesy, to call the program's coordinator by noon of the day they wish attend. If a member is out of communication for more than 4 weeks they must set up an appointment with the coordinator before returning to group.

POPULATION SERVED:

Older adolescents / young adults who are or have had experience with mental health services in Westchester County.

CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY:

Must be a Westchester resident between the ages of **16-24** and have been a significant consumer of mental health services through inpatient or outpatient psychiatric treatment, and/or case management services. Members may also have experience with residential, foster care placement or special education services.

SITES:

Youth Forum currently meets at two locations:

- Family Services of Westchester, Inc., One Summit Avenue, White Plains, NY
- Family Ties Resource Center, 8 North Division St., Peekskill, NY

HOURS TIMES AND DAYS OF PROGRAM:

Knowledge Nights are on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5-730PM in White Plains; Thursdays from 6-8PM in Peekskill.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM:

Youth can participate throughout the year.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED ANNUALLY:

Over 50 youth served to date.

YEAR ESTABLISHED:

1997

CONTACT INFORMATION:

William Montañez, Program Coordinator:

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