

**YAB**

**PA**

**YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD**

*The* **Blast**  
**NEWSLETTER**

**Spring Edition 2026**

**Official Newsletter of the  
Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board**

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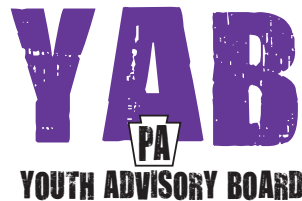
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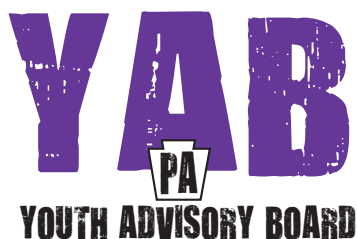
# Activity



### Big congratulations to Adriana Termine and Lilly Warmijak from Chester County!

Adriana and Lilly received the *Chief Justice Max Baer Children's Summit Youth Scholarship Award* at the Children's Summit on **April 23, 2026**. They were two of just **seven youths across Pennsylvania** selected for this honor. Another one of the scholarship recipients was YAB member Libby Steven, who you'll hear more about later in **this edition** of the BLAST newsletter!

At the Summit, youth shared their lived experiences in the child welfare system, discussed their educational and life goals, and gave shoutouts to the people and support that helped them overcome challenges. Adriana, Lilly, Libby, and all the recipients represented their counties with strength, honesty, and pride. It was truly an inspiring event!



## *Statewide Updates*

Youth from across the state gathered on March 19, 2026, for the Statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB) meeting, a full-day experience centered on connection, leadership, and youth-driven change. The meeting brought together youth leaders, facilitators, and agency partners to share ideas, build skills, and collaborate on issues that matter most to young people.

The day opened with welcoming remarks from Youth Ambassador Qasim and an interactive icebreaker led by Beth from the Southwest Region. The activity helped youth connect with one another and set an energetic, inclusive tone for the day. Youth then received exciting updates about the 2026 Youth Summit that is taking place June 10–11, including plans for an evening outing at ABC Bowling Alley (East), the announcement of Jim Donovan as the keynote speaker, and upcoming trainings focused on engagement, collaboration, advocacy, and child welfare.

Throughout the day, youth explored education and employment topics, including resources that support postsecondary planning and preparing for life after high school. Youth also worked in regional groups to move forward Citizen Review Panel recommendations focusing on strengthening families, supporting parenting youth, preparing youth for adulthood after adoption, and expanding employment resources. These conversations allowed youth to think creatively, share lived experience, and shape solutions together.

The meeting wrapped up with an interactive job readiness game that sparked thoughtful discussions about workplace expectations, accountability, and follow through. Youth shared ideas about creating clear, youth-developed guidelines to support participation and leadership within YAB. Participants were thanked for their time, energy, and leadership and encouraged to continue sharing their voices at future meetings.



# NYTD COUNCIL

## **What the NYTD Council Is All About:**

The NYTD Council is a group of young people who have experienced foster care and want to help improve outcomes for transitioning youth. As a member, you'll learn what NYTD is all about, speak up for youth in the child welfare system, and encourage others to share their experiences through NYTD surveys. Your voice helps strengthen Independent Living (IL) programs across Pennsylvania and makes sure youth are heard.

## **What NYTD Council Members Do:**

### **Advise & Share Insight**

- Give feedback on how NYTD collects and reports information
- Help Pennsylvania and partner organizations understand real experiences behind the numbers

### **Provide Youth Voice**

- Advocate for foster youth and young adults transitioning out of care
- Recommend policy change based on NYTD data

### **Interpret Data**

- Look at NYTD reports and help identify trends
- Simplify information for youth to understand

### **Training & Outreach**

- Help create youth-friendly resources, videos, and training materials
- Join webinars, conferences, and community events to teach others about NYTD

### **Working With Community Partners**

- Collaborate with child welfare groups, state agencies, and federal partners to improve how data is collected and how services are delivered



## Expectations of NYTD Council Members:

### Be Active & Engaged

- Participate in meetings, trainings, and webinars—online or in-person
- Engage in conversations, share your thoughts, and bring your experiences to the table

### Be Willing to Learn

- Familiarize yourself with how NYTD works and why the data matters
- Stay informed about foster care policies and transition-age services

### Show Leadership & Professionalism

- Represent the Council and system-involved youth respectfully
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information and conduct all discussions responsibly

### Work as a Team

- Collaborate with other youth and professionals
- Support your fellow Council members in outreach and advocacy

### Give Helpful Feedback

- Review videos, reports, and training materials to ensure they are youth-friendly
- Suggest ways to make NYTD more engaging and easier to understand

*By agreeing to participate in the NYTD Council, members will help shape the policies and services that affect youth currently in foster care as well as youth who have exited foster care and youth who will be in care in the future. Your voice helps make sure decisions are based on real experiences, not just numbers.*

# National Foster Care Month

## Take Action in May Recognize National Foster Care Month

Each May, we honor and recognize National Foster Care Month to raise awareness about students experiencing foster care in your schools, agencies, and communities.

Honoring and recognizing National Foster Care Month is an important part of keeping the education needs of children and youth in foster care in the minds of the public.



Education Stability for  
Children and Youth  
in Foster Care  
in Pennsylvania



School  
Stability  
is the  
Keystone  
of  
Learning

### Build Community and Raise Awareness throughout National Foster Care Month

**Organize a supply drive** within your school community to collect comfort items, essentials, and school supplies for a child's first night in care. Coordinate your donations with your local county children and youth agency (CCYA).

**Raise awareness of National Foster Care Month** by coordinating a Wear Blue Day at your school or organization and share your photos with parents or guardians and on school social media.

**Be intentional about checking in** with students experiencing foster care. Ensure they are on track and have resources to finish the current school year strong. Visit our Educators' Guide webpage for several helpful ideas at [Bit.Ly/EnrichFC](https://bit.ly/EnrichFC).

**Ensure that students** in foster care placement and eligible for Act 1 have been properly identified and receive the benefits they are entitled to. Learn more at [Act1EdInstability.org](https://act1edinstability.org).

**Identify a secondary school Point of Contact** for students, foster parents, and child welfare agencies to ensure support and access during summer break, and to ensure that students are ready to begin school on time next fall.

**Identify and connect students** in foster care placement to programs and services available during the summer months. Make necessary referrals to ensure adequate support during summer break.



Scan QR code to visit our  
Educators' Guide webpage with links  
to resources to enrich your practice,  
or visit [Bit.Ly/EnrichFC](https://bit.ly/EnrichFC)



#FosterCareMonth [PAFosterCare.org](https://PAFosterCare.org)



Pennsylvania  
Department of Education

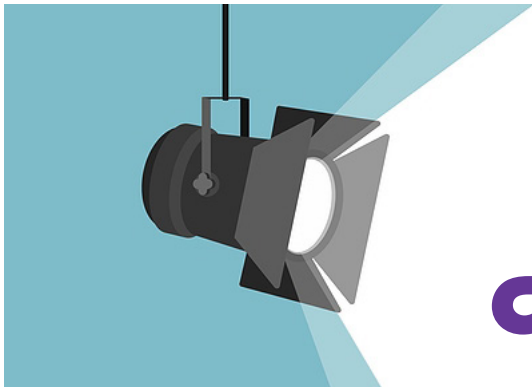


CENTER FOR SCHOOLS  
AND COMMUNITIES



Prom season is an exciting milestone for teens—and a critical time for driver safety. As celebrations begin, parents and caregivers play a key role by setting clear, SAFE rules for new teen drivers, including expectations around passengers, seat belts, speed, and distractions. A quick conversation today can help keep prom night fun and safe for everyone.

Learn more: [www.NHTSA.gov/teen-driving/driving-tips-prom-season](http://www.NHTSA.gov/teen-driving/driving-tips-prom-season)



# Youth Spotlight: *Libby Steven*

## Recipient of the Chief Justice Max Baer Children's Summit Youth Scholarship

At just 19 years old, **Libby Steven** is already a shining example of resilience, leadership, and purpose. A proud Wyoming County native and Tunkhannock Area High School graduate, Libby is now a freshman at **Marywood University**, where she completed her *very first semester with a perfect 4.0 GPA*. Her dedication to academics is matched by her commitment to service, community, and personal growth.

Libby is an active and valued member of the academic sorority **Alpha Sigma Psi**, an organization deeply rooted in philanthropy. Through her involvement, she contributes to efforts supporting **St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**, the **Jude Zayac Foundation**, and the **Ronald McDonald House**, demonstrating her passion for helping others both on and off campus.

Beyond her collegiate involvement, Libby continues to lead locally and regionally as a member of her **Youth Advisory Boards**, where she advocates for youth in foster care and works to create meaningful change. Her voice, her empathy, and her lived experience make her a powerful force for progress in her community.

This year, Libby was awarded the **Chief Justice Max Baer Children's Summit Youth Scholarship**—a scholarship established to honor the late Chief Justice Baer's unwavering dedication to supporting dependent youth. The scholarship provides **\$1,500 per year**



**for two years**, totaling **\$3,000**, to help former dependent youth pursue their education and futures with confidence and stability. Libby's accomplishments and aspirations embody the spirit and legacy of this award.



### **Recent Recognition**

Libby was formally recognized and presented with her award during the **2026 Children's Summit in Hershey, Pennsylvania, on April 23rd, 2026**, a moment that celebrated her achievements, her perseverance, and her inspiring path forward.



### **A Journey of Strength and Transformation**

What makes Libby's achievements especially remarkable is the journey she overcame in getting here. Her story includes transitions through **kinship care, foster care**, and even a placement that took her all the way to **North Carolina** before she was reunified with her family. Through every transition, every challenge, and every moment of uncertainty, Libby stayed focused, determined, and hopeful.

Her lived experience inspired her calling: she is now a **Social Work major**, working part-time on weekends when she comes home, fueled by the desire to give back in the same way she was supported. Her career goal is to become a **Family Preservation Caseworker**, helping families remain safely together and ensuring other youth feel seen, heard, and supported.

Libby's story is complex, motivational, and truly the **epitome of a coming of age journey**. She is a role model not only because of what she has achieved, but because of who she continues to become.

So today, we celebrate her strengths.

We celebrate her heart.

We celebrate her future.

☆ **Let's give it up for Libby!** ☆



# PITT

## *Regional Campus Tuition Pledge*



Big news for students and families across Pennsylvania! The University of Pittsburgh has announced the **Pitt Regional Campus Tuition Pledge**, a new program launching **Fall 2026** that makes college tuition **free** for thousands of students.

Through this pledge, **Pennsylvania residents** with a household income of **\$75,000 or less** can attend Pitt's **Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown** campuses, or the **Titusville nursing program**, and pay **\$0 in tuition**.

### **How it works**

Pitt applies all federal, state, and school financial aid first — then covers the rest of the tuition balance. That means:

- New and current students can qualify
- First year, transfer, and returning students are all included
- No special application required — just complete the **FAFSA** each year



**Note:** Tuition is covered, but books, housing, meals, and other fees are not included.



### **Why this matters**

Many students at Pitt's regional campuses are first generation college students or come from close knit local communities. This program is designed to remove financial stress, making it easier to **start college, stay enrolled, and earn a degree** — all while staying close to home.

This pledge is a major step toward making higher education more accessible and affordable — and proof that college **can** be within reach.



**Thinking about college?** Pitt just made the dream easier to achieve!

# Pennsylvania Doula Commission



Doula support—especially for low-income and young mothers—has been shown to improve breastfeeding success and overall maternal outcomes. Doulas provide education, advocacy, and continuous support during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum, helping families feel informed and empowered.

If you are a **young mother** and need support, or if you want to help expand access to doula care in Pennsylvania, learn more here:

[www.padoulacommission.org](http://www.padoulacommission.org)

#WorldDoulaWeek



Auberle's **412 Youth Zone** was created in partnership with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services to support young adults ages **16–23** as they transition into adulthood. The program offers Independent Living resources for youth exiting foster care or experiencing housing instability.

The **412 Youth Zone Podcast** brings these supports to life by featuring real conversations between Youth Zone staff and youth participants. Together, they talk openly about topics that matter, like **housing, mental health, independence, and navigating adulthood** while uplifting youth voices and experiences.

 Check out the podcast and hear stories that inspire, empower, and inform:  
<https://412youthzonepodcast.libsyn.com/>

# Youth Leadership Camp

**Are you looking to connect and build on your leadership skills?** Join us for an exciting and empowering **Youth Leadership Camp** at **Camp Thompson** from **June 20–22!** This weekend experience is designed specifically for **9th–12th grade students** who want to grow in confidence, teamwork, communication, and leadership.

Through interactive workshops, outdoor activities, and group challenges, participants will build meaningful connections, strengthen their leadership abilities, and gain skills they can use in school, their community, and beyond—all in a fun and supportive camp environment.

Youth will also have the opportunity to **join the CFY Coalition**, a network focused on youth leadership, civic engagement, and positive community impact. **Scholarships for the camp may be available** through involvement with the CFY Coalition, helping ensure access for all interested students.



**Location:** Camp Thompson



**Dates:** June 20–22



**Who:** 9th–12th graders

For more information, CFY Coalition involvement, or scholarship opportunities, please connect with:

**Aaron Zipp**

**Email:** [aaron@cfygettysburg.com](mailto:aaron@cfygettysburg.com)

**Phone:** 717.752.2695



**YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP**

\*\*\*Scholarships available now!\*\*\*  
Please note that participation in the CFY Youth Coalition during the 26-27 School Year is required for free admission.

**CAMP THOMPSON**  
An overnight camp for high school youth  
Rising 9th - 12th grades

**JUNE 20-22**

***Are you looking to connect and build your leadership skills?***

CONTACT AARON ZIPP AT 717.752.2695  
AARON@CFYGETTYSBURG.COM  
\*YOUTH & CAREGIVER INTRODUCTORY MEETING REQUIRED\*

Looking for FUN ways to make a positive impact in YOUR community?  
**Join CFY's Youth Coalition!**  
Learn more at [www.cfygettysburg.com/youthcoalition](http://www.cfygettysburg.com/youthcoalition)

**COLLABORATING**  
Doing what works  
in Adams County **FOR YOUTH**





# OMHSAS *Wellness Days*

Wellness Days 2026 is almost here!

Join **Youth MOVE PA**, PMHCA, and partners across the region for a day built around connection, creativity, and community wellness.

Every spark of strength creates a brighter journey!



## Event Dates & Locations

July 11, 2026 – Washington Park, Stone Pavilion

July 25, 2026 – Wilkes-Barre, Kirby Park



## See the Agenda Below

### ► What to Expect

- Youth centered activities
- Local vendors & community partners
- Wellness experiences for all ages
- Giveaways, raffles, and more

### ► Hosted in collaboration with amazing sponsors & partners across PA!

- Luzerne-Wyoming Counties MH-DS
- **Youth MOVE Revolution**
- **AMI Inc.**
- Carelton Behavioral Health
- Capital Area Behavioral Health Collaborative
- **Aetna Better Health**
- **The Bradley Center**
- **Nice Ink**
- **New Perspectives at White Deer Run**
- **Community Care Behavioral Health Organization**
- **Lincoln Manufacturing & Hydraulics**



Scan the QR code on the flyer to learn more or click this link:

<https://www.pmhca.org/Wellness-Days>



# 6th Annual Wellness Days REGISTER TODAY



## Events

From music and speakers to balloon art, face painting, food trucks, a bouncy house, arts & crafts, and even first responders—Wellness Days has something for everyone!



## For All Ages

From kids to caregivers, Wellness Days offers fun and meaningful events for all ages and community members!



## Partners & Sponsors

Wellness Days will be hosted in collaboration with Luzerne-Wyoming Counties MH-DS, Youth MOVE Revolution, AMI Inc., Carelon BH, CABHC, The Bradley Center, Nice Ink Tattoo Shop, and White Deer Run. CCBH, Lincoln Manufacturing Inc.



## Sponsorship & Tabling

Interested in becoming an official event sponsor or tabling at Wellness Days this year? Please [CLICK THIS LINK](#) or scan the QR code below.



## Strength Sparks Wellness

Every spark of strength creates a brighter journey toward wellness

## Registration

This summer, Wellness Days is coming to two exciting locations! Register online by scanning the QR code or [TAPPING THIS LINK](#) to secure your spot.



**Stone Pavillion  
Washington Park,  
Washington, PA**



**July 11, 2026**



**11am-3pm**



**Kirby Park,  
Wilkes-Barre, PA**



**July 25, 2026**



**11am-3pm**

**Got questions about Wellness Days? Reach out anytime at [ympa@youthmovepa.org](mailto:ympa@youthmovepa.org)—we're here to help!**



**717-221-1022**



**[ympa@youthmovepa.org](mailto:ympa@youthmovepa.org)**



**[https://linktr.ee/youth\\_movepa](https://linktr.ee/youth_movepa)**



**<https://www.pmhca.org/>**

CAPITAL AREA BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH COLLABORATIVE, INC.  
*Established October 1999*



White Deer Run.  
Treatment Network



# Wellness Days

EVENT AGENDA



11 JULY 2026 WASHINGTON PARK, STONE PAVILLION  
25 JULY 2026 WILKES-BARRE, KIRBY PARK

10:30 AM

Pre-registration

11:30 AM

Opening Remarks &  
Housekeeping

11:45 AM

Scavenger Hunt & Visit  
Vendor Tables

12:30 PM

Lunch & "Strength Sparks  
Wellness" Speakers

1:30 PM

Wellness Activities

2:30 - 3pm

Raffle Prize Drawing &  
Closing Remarks



SCAN HERE

\* Every spark of strength creates a brighter journey toward wellness \*

# Resources

## Mental Health Support

### National Suicide Prevention Hotline

Call: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

### National Crisis Text Hotline

Text "HOME" to 741741

### 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Visit:

[988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

Available 24/7/365.

Call, chat, or text.

ASL Videophone available for Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

## Housing & Safety

### Homeless National Hotline

Call: 1-800-786-2929

### National Youth & Teen Runaway Hotline

Call: 1-800-Runaway

### National Domestic Violence Support Hotline

Call: 1-800-799-SAFE

Visit: [www.thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org)

## Health & Wellness

### National STD Hotline

Call: 1-800-227-8922

## Legal Support

### Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network Call:

1-800-322-7572

## Child Protection

### National Child Abuse Hotline

Call: 1-800-422-4453

## LGBTQ+ Support

### 988 LGBTQ+ Line

Dial 988, Press 3

Text "PRIDE" to 988

Talk with an LGBTQ+ trained crisis counselor, available 24/7 for individuals under 25.

Visit: [988lifeline.org/help-yourself/lgbtqi/](https://988lifeline.org/help-yourself/lgbtqi/)

### Call Blackline

Call or Text: 1-800-604-5841

24/7 support for Black, LGBTQ+, and Black Femme communities

Visit: [callblackline.com](https://callblackline.com)

### LGBT National Hotline

Call: 1-888-843-4564

Visit: [lgbthotline.org](https://lgbthotline.org)

Hours: Mon-Fri: 1 PM - 9 PM PT /  
4 PM - Midnight ET

Sat: 9 AM - 2 PM PT / Noon - 5 PM ET

### Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity (MASGD)

Call: 71-QTM-INARA (717-864-6272)

Hours: Fri-Sat, 5 PM - 11 PM CT

Visit: [themasgd.org/lnara-helpline](https://themasgd.org/lnara-helpline)

## Youth Support

### Q Chat Space

Chat with peers in live, facilitated chats (Ages 13-19).

Visit: [qchatspace.org](https://qchatspace.org)

### The QTP Loveline

Call: 1-855-578-5683

24/7 on-demand service.

Visit: [queertransproject.org](https://queertransproject.org)

### National STD Hotline

Call: 1-800-227-8922

# *Upcoming Dates*

## **YAB Leadership Summit 2026:**

- Wednesday – Thursday, June 10-11, 2026

## **Older Youth Retreat:**

- Monday-Friday, July 27 - 31, 2026



University of  
**Pittsburgh**

School of  
Social Work

Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center