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## Youth Coalition of Mercer County

Our mission is simple: to provide youth with the tools to be their authentic selves.

This is accomplished through community service projects, assisting in environmental scanning of alcohol and tobacco licensed establishments, and engaging in meaningful discussions and training on mental health, substances, and identity. The Youth Coalition is a place where youth can connect with others from across the county, as well as with individuals in government, policy, non-profits, and social movements.

The commitment for this coalition includes two monthly meetings: one General Membership meeting (held at the Mercer Council office: 1931 Brunswick Avenue, Lawrence Township, NJ 08648) and one Subcommittee meeting (held on Zoom). Subcommittee meetings will focus on five different areas:

- **LGBTQIIA+ Advisory Board:** Addressing issues specifically affecting LGBTQIIA+ youth and seeking programming to provide assistance.
- **Opioid-TOPS:** Exploring ways to prevent addiction pathways related to opioids/opiates.
- **Marijuana/Vaping:** Involving students in multilateral efforts to regulate the sale of marijuana, establish THC limitations, and educate on responsible consumption. This subcommittee will also provide education and raise awareness about the harmful effects of overconsumption on the developing brain.
- **Tobacco/Vaping:** Engaging youth in multilateral efforts to regulate the sale of tobacco and flavored vapes, and to educate merchants. This subcommittee will also organize park clean-ups and raise awareness about the harmful effects of nicotine on the developing brain.
- **Alcohol:** Addressing issues related to the normalization of drinking and access to alcohol.

Middle school, high school, and university freshman and sophomores are invited to inquire about membership, involvement, and volunteer opportunities. Creative and literal interpretations of these committees and membership are welcome. If there is a passion for any of these subject areas, collaboration within and outside the YCMC network offers volunteer hours, educational opportunities, service-oriented tasks, possible certifications, potential scholarship opportunities, and more.

The Prevention Education team at Mercer Council also delivers presentations on various topics, including Vaping, Marijuana, Tobacco, Alcohol, Responsible Serving, Driver's Education, Conflict Resolution, and Opioids.

**For more information, please contact Ruth DelPino at [rdelpino@mercercouncil.org](mailto:rdelpino@mercercouncil.org).**