YOUTH OREGON UNITED

Y.O.U.'S NETWORK OF COMMUNITY-BASED AND STATEWIDE PROVIDERS IS CENTERED ON ACHIEVING HOUSING STABILITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND YOUNG ADULTS BY EMPOWERING YOUNG PERSONS' OWNERSHIP OF THEIR VOICE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF SYSTEMS CHANGE FOR HIGHER QUALITY RESULTS.

Volume 003 | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | 17 August, 2026

Real Stories of Housing & Hope: The X's

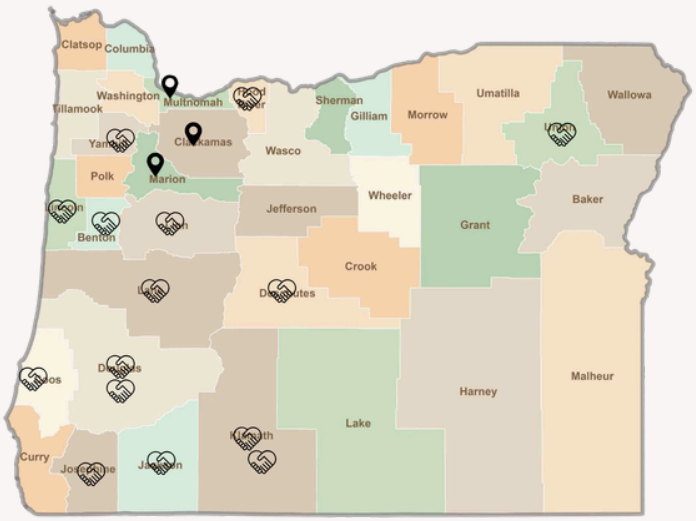
Location : Coos County, OR **Provider (s):** Coos Bay Public Schools (ARK Project)

A family of seven came to our community after leaving their home out of fear of immigration enforcement. With five children under the age of eight, they were living in motels, with Mom working nights and Dad working days just to pay for a place to sleep.

Once the children enrolled in school, we quickly realized how much the family was struggling. They had never lived in our area, had no transportation or support system, and were walking five to eight miles a day to get to and from work. They were doing everything they could to take care of their children, but they were overwhelmed and didn't know where to start.

We first connected them with our drop-in center, where we helped with basic needs, including laundry. At first, they came in two or three times a week just to keep up with laundry, but that simple connection grew into a trusting relationship. We started talking with the parents about their goals and what they needed for their family. We helped connect them with housing and transportation resources, school support, and other community services. We also made sure the children had opportunities to participate in cultural and after-school programs, make friends, and experience things they may not have otherwise had access to because of transportation and cost. We worked alongside school staff and community partners to help the family navigate everything together.

Today, they are living in their own home, the children are doing well in school, have friends, and are able to simply be kids. What started with something as simple as laundry became a relationship that helped this family move from just surviving to feeling settled, connected, and hopeful about their future.



The Oregon Impact

Across the state, a network of partners are working together as a united front to move Oregon forward. Partners are showing up for one another and most importantly showing up for youth.

Network Partner

Provider Partner

Check the map and see if your community is united!

Get United! (503)910-4826 morgan@caporegon.org thomas@peaceathome.com

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Youth Council Spotlight: Partnership Against Alcohol & Drug Abuse (PAADA)

Name : Healthy Communities Youth Advisory (HECK YEAH)

Location : Lincoln County

Ages : Sophomore - Junior High Schoolers

Frequency : 1x week during school year & 5x week during summer

Membership : 3-5 youth

Compensation per youth : Varies



The Healthy Communities Youth Advisory, known as **HECK YEAH**, is a youth-led group sponsored by Partnership Against Alcohol & Drug Abuse (PAADA) that gives young people in Lincoln County a space to build leadership skills, connect with peers, and help shape the services and communities around them. Formally organized in September 2025, the group brings together youth who want to make a difference and focuses on making opportunities, resources, and support more accessible to young people.

HECK YEAH was built around the idea that **youth should help determine what they need and how organizations can support them.** During the summer, members met frequently, participated in activities, and helped run a youth literacy program and distribute free lunches. As the group grows, they are working toward creating smaller groups throughout the county so more young people can participate, including those who cannot easily travel to Waldport, where their brick and mortar lies.

Members host and participate in the **Youth Leadership Academy (YLA)** alongside students from local schools and Job Corps, working together to strengthen youth groups, build acceptance, and create positive change. Recently, the youth received microgrant funding and developed a project to improve safety at their school by installing cameras in areas with less adult supervision. Youth collaborated to plan and lead the event, deciding what activities and discussions would best support their peers.

HECK YEAH also provides opportunities for young people to develop **professional and employment skills.** Through a partnership with the local literacy center, youth have supported programming, learned hands-on skills, and gained experience working alongside adults and other young people.

Most importantly, HECK YEAH creates a space where youth can have **candid conversations about the issues affecting their lives** and help determine what comes next. With youth represented on PAADA's board and partnerships continuing to grow, HECK YEAH is helping ensure young people in Lincoln County are not simply being served, but are helping shape the systems and communities meant to support them.

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Provider Spotlight: YOUTH 360

Location : La Grande (Union County)

Ages serviced : 14-24 with wraparound services

Key Youth Programs : Employment, HRSN, drop-in







YOUTH 360 has built its work around a simple but powerful idea: **for youth, by youth**. Originally launched in 2020 through a teen employment program and officially becoming a nonprofit in 2023, YOUTH 360 serves young people and families in Union County by creating opportunities to build skills, relationships, and stability. Their work centers on five key areas: **health, housing, employment, education, and mentoring.**

A defining part of YOUTH 360's approach is **putting young people to work , not just serving them**. Youth make up a significant part of the organization's staff, helping lead activities, prepare meals, support events, and develop new ideas. The organization intentionally creates employment opportunities for youth who may have limited work experience or have struggled in traditional employment settings. Through these positions, youth build professional skills like reliability, communication, and leadership while gaining confidence and meaningful work experience. **Education support** is built in along the way as students must be engaged in education, reinforcing the connection between employment, skill-building, and academic success. **Housing stability** is another important part of their work. Through Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) services, YOUTH 360 provides case management, rental and utility assistance, and connections to community resources across the Eastern Oregon CCO service area.

Youth leadership also shapes the spaces and programs they use. When YOUTH 360 rebuilt its center, around 20 young people worked alongside staff to help create the space, selecting colors and flooring, using tools, and even signing their names inside the walls. Their **Family Resource Nights** similarly put youth at the center, with young people preparing and serving meals, taking orders, and helping lead family-building activities.

YOUTH 360 is committed to **meeting youth where they are,** even when things are difficult. By trusting young people as employees, leaders, and partners, YOUTH 360 continues building a community where youth have meaningful opportunities to shape their own futures.

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Teachable Takeaway: Reaching Teens AI Guidance

What is Reaching Teens?
Reaching Teens is an on-line learning platform and curriculum curated by the American Academy of Pediatrics under the supervision of Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg. YOU providers have recognized the strength of the tool to unify the quality of our practices working with clients across the state. The platform includes an AI tool to provide immediate guidance of the vast library of professional development concepts.



This newsletter shares the reality of Family X and the reality of living with moment-to-moment fear of immigration services. We prompted the AI navigator about the best ways to support a family who has departed from their home for this reason:

Understand Their Housing Situation: Use a harm-reduction, flexible approach rather than pushing permanent placement. Migrant populations, whether international or domestic, may not be seeking permanent housing if their destination is another city. It is good practice to integrate a harm-reduction approach to these youth and offer temporary assistance to minimize the risk of them being unsheltered, rather than attempt to place them into long-term housing.

Building Trust Given Fear of Systems: Never overpromise safety or confidentiality you cannot guarantee. It is critical to know local laws around reporting abuse to authorities. Never make promises that can't be kept, for example, "I won't tell anyone" or "I will make sure you are safe." Instead, be honest about what protections you can offer. Also, be transparent about boundaries and what's realistic. Transparency includes letting families know what is appropriate and inappropriate and what is realistically possible in support.

Address power imbalances rooted in historical harm. Many immigrant families carry justified wariness of systems that have separated families. Whether we like it or not, we are part of the overall child-serving and protecting system that historically has had the power to separate parents from their children... As a helping professional, therefore, we can sometimes serve as a trigger for past individual or collective trauma. It's understandable, therefore, that a parent would feel defensive in this potentially threatening situation.

Assess and address linguistic and cultural barriers directly. Professional language interpretation is considered the best practice for reducing linguistic barriers for immigrants... providers should discuss and maintain appropriate confidentiality with all youth, as well as treat all youth equally. Also, create a visibly welcoming environment. Magazines that are in multiple languages and represent a variety of cultures can help youth who are immigrants feel welcomed and at ease while anxiously waiting to see you.

CHECK IT OUT!

The Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP) Youth Action Board (YAB) has a newsletter by youth, for youth!

Scan & Subscribe!

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