

S.A.F.E. Youth Civic Empowerment Toolkit

Welcome & Purpose

This toolkit supports youth—especially youth of color, disabled youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and those historically excluded from decision-making—in understanding civic systems and engaging them safely and confidently.

Why Youth Civic Engagement Matters

Decisions made today shape young people’s futures. Yet youth voices are often overlooked. SAFE centers equity to ensure youth participation is meaningful, not symbolic.

Tracking an Issue

Issue or concern:

Why this issue matters to youth:

Who is impacted:

Where decisions are made:

What change youth want to see:

Preparing Public Comment

Meeting or body:

Your main message:

How this affects students or youth:

Your request:

Notes:

Community Story Collection

Story (optional):

Issue area:

What happened:

Why it matters to youth:

What change is needed:

Plain Language Templates for Youth

1. Subject: Student or Youth Perspective on [Issue]
2. Opening: I am a student or young person writing to share my experience...
3. Impact: This issue affects youth by...
4. Request: I am asking leaders to consider...
5. Closing: Thank you for listening to youth voices.

Accessibility & Youth Safety Notes

S.A.F.E. supports youth engagement that is accessible and safe. This includes adult allies, flexible participation options, language access, disability accommodations, and protection from retaliation.

From Engagement to Leadership

Youth engagement can lead to advisory councils, mentorship, and long-term leadership pathways supported by S.A.F.E.