As another year comes to an end, we turn inward for reflection. Through all of the remarkable accomplishments of 2014, it is clear we are moving the needle in our mission to **empower youth, in partnership with adults to create community change**. This year YES! became stronger than ever due to our continually expanding community of partners. In North Carolina, where we are headquartered, youth and adults tackle local policy change efforts focused on adolescent health. Across the country, we train other organizations to create environments where those youth can exercise their skills and critical knowledge to enhance the communities that they serve.

Through the generous support of our funders, donors and clients, we are able to contribute to the vibrancy of the local communities where we have offices, while expanding our geographic reach to communities across the Southeastern United States and beyond. Although grant funding has decreased, YES! has maintained our capacity while increasing our visibility on a national scale. It is proven that where YES! places its focus, great achievements are made.

**In FY14, YES!**:
- Impacted more than 259,957 people through a changed policy, system or environment;
- Increased the number of agencies served through training and consulting from 35 to 49;
- Expanded its geographic reach through training and consulting in 9 additional states;
- Increased individual donations by 51.6% and corporate and in-kind donations by 191.7%

As a demonstration of our commitment to youth empowerment, we elected a former youth staff as the Chair of our Board of Directors for FY15, and hired a former youth staff into a full time adult staff position with YES! this year as well.

In this report you will find many examples of ordinary youth, adults and organizations accomplishing extraordinary things. When people are given opportunities to become active in community decision-making, they improve their own lives, organizations and communities. At YES!, we are grateful to provide these opportunities to the youth and adults that we employ and empower.

We are proud to share with you some of the stories of how our work has advanced youth empowerment and equity.
Young people under the age of 18 make up more than a quarter of the U.S. population, yet their potential as a generation to contribute to a better society is systematically ignored. Our nation is suffering economically, creatively and civilly as a result. Empowering young people to participate in effective youth-adult partnerships is a proven, replicable approach to solving community problems.

Youth Empowered Solutions (YES!) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to empower youth, in partnership with adults, to create community change. YES! has developed a nationally-recognized Youth Empowerment Model of social change through youth empowerment.

The YES! Youth Empowerment Model© engages young people in work that challenges them to develop skills, gain critical awareness, and participate in advocacy opportunities that are proven to create change.

YES! Board of Directors, Fiscal Year 2014

Meka Sales, Chair
David Jolly, Vice Chair
Lee Storrow, Secretary
Thomas Cornwell, Treasurer
Angela Gilmore
Sage Dunston
Roxanne Elliott

Katherine Hagan
Saleem Hussaini
Sally Migliore
Rebecca Reeve
Anne Thornhill
Heather Jones

Our Vision
YES! envisions communities where the valued standard is empowered youth leaders working alongside adults to create positive change.
YES! by the Numbers

- 6 years old
- 3 offices in NC: Raleigh, Charlotte, Asheville
- 10 adult staff and 15 youth staff
- 60% of staff are under the age of 18
- In FY’14, YES! staff trained 207 youth and 157 adults in 9 states
- 80% of YES! youth staff are youth of color, live in a rural area, or live in a low-wealth community.
- 77% of training participants
- 99% of youth and adults who attended a YES! training reported learning new skills
- 57% reported taking action
- 29 policy, environmental and systems changes took place, impacting 2,591,957 people
How YES! Works

YES! hires high school students.

They learn how to identify and research problems.

develop solutions

engage key stakeholders

gather community support

work with the media

and change local and statewide policies.
In 2014, YES! empowered youth and adults to...

**Increase access to real food**

Advocate for increasing real food options in eight communities across North Carolina through the North Carolina State Alliance of YMCAs.

**Increase access to safe places to work, learn, play and live**

Convince Asheville, N.C. City Council to fund Sunday bus service, **impacting 72,800**.

Persuade the Asheville, N.C. Transit Committee to increase equitable leadership by appointing a community member whose primary mode of transportation is the bus to a voting seat.

Secure space for Madison County, N.C. students to be active by revitalizing a campus trail that can be used by all **661 students** in the high school.

Facilitate building a playground for families in Mooresville, N.C., **impacting 33,451** people.

**Change the way health care leaders make decisions about adolescent health**

Incorporate youth representation into the Asheville/Buncombe and Wake County, N.C. Student Health Advisory Councils (SHAC).

Establish **5 working youth councils** within the Montefiore Medical Center in N.Y.

Create **2 slots for youth** to participate in the North Carolina Institute of Medicine Task Force on Patient and Family Engagement.

**Improve effectiveness of youth-adult partnerships in creating community change**

Achieve an approval vote to post “No Texting While Driving” signs on streets within the Zebulon, N.C. Youth Council’s community.

Institute a PTSA (Parent-Teacher-Student Association) with student membership, instead of a PTA (Parent-Teacher Association), at a new high school in Wake County, N.C.

**Hire and pay 3 youth** interns to do policy work focused on getting sidewalks and crosswalks to the Durham Hub Farm’s community garden.

“YES! has helped me understand the importance of being proactive and taking action.”

Amber Smith
YES! Graduate

“YES! has provided me with resources and countless possibilities to develop, impact and influence.”

Barak Biblin
YES! Graduate
Transform stores and private residences into no underage drinking zones

Protect thousands of North Carolina youth by collecting 3,696 pledges from adults across the state to monitor and secure the alcohol in their home.

Warn customers and clerks about alcohol products that target youth in more than 60 stores across NC, prompting stores to check ID.

Raise the profile of underage drinking

Express commitment about community changes necessary to prevent underage drinking through 30 pro-health earned media pieces.

Incorporate youth empowerment into the requirements for grant funding with NC Preventing Underage Drinking Initiative.

Protect thousands from secondhand smoke

Convene a coalition of city officials and community stakeholders to adopt a smoke-free policy at the Oxford Housing Authority and a tobacco-free policy at all Oxford City Parks, protecting more than 9,000 community members.

Meet with N.C. county leaders after conducting community education events and building support in Beaufort and Tyrell Counties to pass policies prohibiting all tobacco use on county grounds, protecting more than 50,000 people.

Collaborate with the business industry and the NC Department of Public Health to provide support and resources to Westminster Properties, ushering in smoke-free multi-unit housing to protect 6,200 residents.

Convert schools into tobacco-free zones

Gather support on campuses through surveys, petitions, educational events, cigarette butt pick-ups, and administrative meetings to pass 100% Tobacco-Free Schools policies in Peach and Pierce Counties, Ga., and adding e-cigarettes to an existing policy in Forsyth County, N.C., impacting 60,000 students.

“Because of YES!, I can advocate for important causes competently.”

Sierra Garrison
YES! Graduate

“I can make an influence anywhere I go as long as I let my voice be heard.”

Ellana Valladares
YES! Graduate
Panel with Shellie Pfohl of President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition
Asheville, N.C.
September 2013

Southern Obesity Summit
Nashville, Tenn.
November 2013

University of North Carolina Minority Health Conference
Chapel Hill, N.C.
February 2014

SparkAction Top 24 Under 24 Drug Mythbusters Award
March 2014

Triangle Community Foundation What Matters Luncheon
Raleigh, N.C., April 2014

Midwest Alcohol Policy Summit on Preventing Underage Drinking
Columbus, Ohio
April 2014

Aspen Ideas Festival
Aspen, Colo.
June 2014

National School-Based Health Care Convention
Seattle, Wash., June 2014

Child and Family Day at the N.C. Legislature
Raleigh, N.C., June 2014
North Carolina Partnerships

Active Living By Design
Albemarle Commission
American Heart Association
Boys & Girls Club, Nash & Edgecombe County
Buncombe County Health Department
Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System
Coalition for Safe and Drug Free Cherokee
Coalition for Safe and Drug Free Graham
Dare CASA
Georgia Community Prevention Network
Gilliams Promise
Healthy Start Foundation
Macon County Health Department
Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force
NARAL Pro-Choice NC Foundation
North Carolina Alliance for Health
North Carolina Alliance of YMCAs
North Carolina Coalition Initiative
Orange County Health Department
Patriot Place Health Center
Place of Possibilities
Rutherford County United Way
Town of Zebulon
United Way of Forsyth County
UNC Greensboro
Western Youth Network
YMCA of the Triangle

Out-of-State Partnerships

Children’s Council (SC)
Community Connections (NE)
East Central Public Health (GA)
Lima Family YMCA (OH)
Montefiore Health System (NY)
M+R Strategic Services (DC)
National African American Tobacco Prevention Network (USA)
National School-Based Health Alliance (USA)
Lima Family YMCA (OH)
Montefiore Health System (NY)
M+R Strategic Services (DC)
Rapides Foundation (LA)
Richland County Health Dept. (WI)
Texas Health Institute (TX)

YES! has worked in these states since its inception in 2008
Individuals Who Gave $100 or More in FY’14


Fiscal Year 2014

Foundation Support
Beehive Collective
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation
Duke Energy Foundation
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
World We Want Foundation

Corporate Partners
Amaya Painting
Bhavan Enterprises
Centurion Construction
First Health of the Carolinas
Malvin, Riggins & Company
North State Bank
Paragon Bank
Revenue and Expenses

Revenue
$822,865
- 43.5% Grant Income
- 31.8% Custom Service Revenue
- 17.3% Unrestricted Net Assets
- 3.7% Individual Contributions
- 2.7% Corporate and In-Kind Donations
- 1% Interest, Awards and Tax Credits

Expenses
$822,865
- 74.3% Programs and Services
- 12.4% Fundraising
- 13.3% Management and General

Return on Investment
For every $100 invested in YES!, **33 people** are impacted by a changed policy or system.

Average number of people impacted per change: **8,964**
Please visit our website for an online version of this report and more information on our local, statewide and national work, and the services we provide.