

YOUTH TRUTH

You must be the change you wish to see in the world. –Mahatma Gandhi

Students at every high school should have a voice in how their school is run. At your high school, maybe student council is a great forum for discussing and dealing with issues that impact students. But maybe your school doesn't have a student council or you and your peers need another forum for getting students together to discuss how to improve life at school. If this is the case, you might want to start your own club. A YouthTruth club can be a number of different things, and you can create your very own idea of what it should look like at your school. A few ideas include:

- Meet once a week during lunch (or after school) to discuss what improvements you'd like to see at your school and how you and your peers could help turn these ideas into reality. You could come up with a discussion question of the week and advertise that question around campus. Those students who are interested in discussing that topic will bring their lunch and their opinions to your meeting location.
- Choose one issue discussed in the YouthTruth survey and form a student group to work on addressing that issue.

(For example: Students at Kennedy High School didn't feel like they had enough access to information about colleges they were interested in attending. A concerned Junior named Marco decided to start a club dedicated to planning a college tour. Marco asked his Math teacher to be the club sponsor and recruited 10 of his classmates to participate. The club met every Thursday during lunch to choose which colleges to visit and to raise money to fund the trip.)

- Form a sub-committee of Student Council that is responsible for reporting on YouthTruth at student council meetings and helping staff understand and respond to student feedback.
- Advocate for changes through an existing forum (school newspaper, school website)
- Report on changes taking place at your school in response to YouthTruth by posting comments, adding pictures, or writing an article on the YouthTruth website.

Tips for Starting a Club:

1. Decide what the purpose of your club will be. Choose a club name.
2. Outline the structure of your club. Will there be leadership positions? Will there be a specific role that each participant plays (President, Secretary, etc.)? Will this involve a small or large group of people? Who on campus should be involved? When will your club meet?
3. What staff member will be your sponsor? A teacher, counselor, or administrator can help you organize your YouthTruth club by reserving a classroom where you can hold meetings or discussions. This staff member can also give you ideas about how to run your meetings, how to engage other students, or how to best approach your principal with recommendations for positive change.