YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL™

THE POWER COALITION

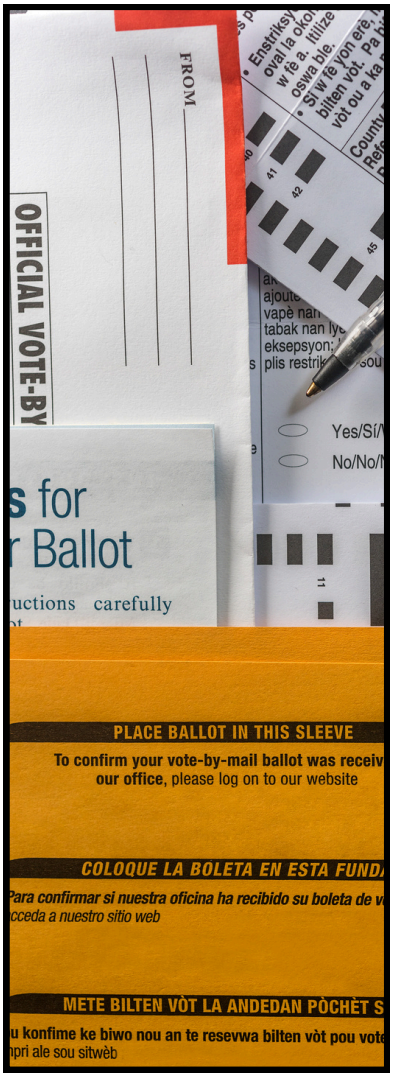
WHY SHOULD YOUTH CARE ABOUT VOTING?

CLEARING UP VOTING MISINFORMATION FOR YOUTH: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)



Life is hard. It can feel hopeless. It can feel scary. It can feel like there is nothing you can do about it. It seems like headlines bring bad news every day, and youth are facing violence at the highest levels of power and authority.

But, you CAN do something. Something important that some people in power are trying to take away or control. **You can engage with the concept of voting!** Voting can make a real change, especially locally in your community! We acknowledge that not everyone believes in voting or the systematic power / change it could have. However, we hope all can agree the right to vote, to make that choice, is critical to democracy and is a constitutionally guaranteed freedom.



Regardless of whether you choose to vote yourself, we should all be fighting to save our self-agency, freedom, right to vote, and to make choices for ourselves. Fighting for the right to vote is a way to take action and have an impact on issues that affect local, state, and national change, because right now - adults in power are actively trying to take this away.

Youth MOVE (Motivating Others through Voices of Experience) National (YMN) deeply values centering youth agency and autonomy, which is why, in partnership with the People Organized for Wellness, Empowerment, and Recovery Coalition (POWER-C), who believe the same, we have collaborated to create this FAQ youth voting resource as a companion to the POWER-C's recently released **voting guide**.

We want to share some frequently asked questions to clear up some voter misconceptions and misinformation we have heard from youth.

WHY SHOULD YOUTH CARE ABOUT VOTING?

I AM A COLLEGE STUDENT OUT-OF-STATE. AM I READY TO VOTE? HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM REGISTERED?

It usually takes less than five minutes to register to vote or check your registration! There are online resources that make checking simple and fast. You must be 18 years old to vote, but in some states, those who are 16 or 17 may register to vote, but will not receive a ballot or be eligible to vote until an election occurs on or after your 18th birthday.

For those attending college, there are options! Register to vote in the place where you consider your 'place of residence'. If you are not in that state at the time of the election, you can request an absentee ballot to vote at that location. Check your State's Secretary of State website for more information about your specific state.

RESOURCES:

- Everything You Need to Vote - Vote.org
- Frequently Asked Questions - Vote.org

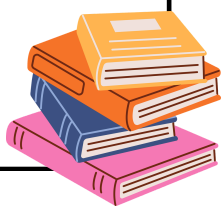


I AM NOT SURE WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT, AND A LOT OF WHAT IS WRITTEN IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND. WHERE CAN I FIND A PLAIN-LANGUAGE GUIDE OR PREVIEW OF MY LOCAL BALLOT?

Jargon is frequent in systems and can be frustrating. Election information can also be overwhelming! Research the bills, props, and candidates ahead of time and ask questions. All registered voters will receive a voting guide in the mail, which is a great resource to start. Your local Candidates will likely be engaging in debates in cities around you, which is one way you can hear directly from them and assess how their points align with what is important to you. Your local organizations might be advocating for props and bills; this is another great way to learn more. Keep in mind that political materials may activate strong reactions or contain misinformation. It is important to research and learn how to identify misinformation. Look into the language used and check the source. Also, reach out to those you trust! Talking to those youu trust in your community can be a great way to stay grounded and identify points of misinformation.

RESOURCES:

- **Visit your State's Secretary of State website, as they will have a Voters' Pamphlet available online if you don't receive one in the mail with your ballot.**
- **Sample Ballot Lookup - Ballotpedia**





YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL™

THE POWER COALITION

People Organized for Wellness, Empowerment, and Recovery

WHY SHOULD YOUTH CARE ABOUT VOTING?

DOES MY VOICE REALLY MATTER? HOW DOES ONE VOTE AFFECT ANYTHING?

We may be a little biased on this, because Youth MOVE stands for *Motivating Others through Voices of Experience*, but your voice (and vote) **absolutely matters**. Your vote is your right, voice, and choice! Regardless of whether you decide to vote personally, it's a choice that all should have, and it shows elected officials the change you want to see. Local and state elections are critical, though often overlooked. Your vote has a greater impact in these elections, and they affect your life, your community, and local/state laws.

RESOURCES:

- **Does every vote matter? From Harvard University**



WHAT IF MY VOTE DOESN'T GET ELECTED OR PASSED?

Don't stop using your voice! If the candidate you voted against is elected, they still represent you! Make sure you know how to contact your representatives, and continue making your voice heard. Follow organizations that align with values you believe in, as they will also have opportunities or Hill Days you can participate in. Whatever you do, don't stop advocating for the change you would like to see! Our country needs YOUR voice!

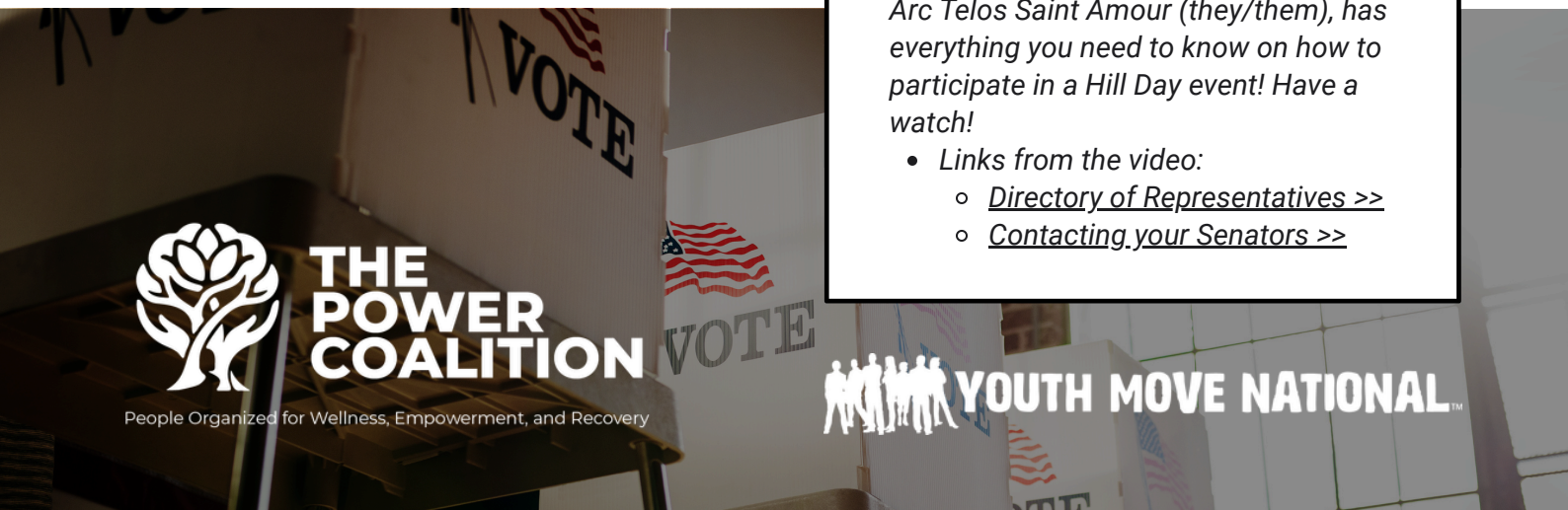
RESOURCES:

- **You Can Advocate for Change in 20 Seconds or Less!**

  Join Arc Telos Saint Amour (They/Them), Youth MOVE National's Executive Director, as they walk us through ways you can take action today to stand up and fight against fascism!

- **Hill Day 101**

  Do you want to be more involved in your local government? Are you interested in policy reform and the legislative process? Arc Telos Saint Amour (they/them), has everything you need to know on how to participate in a Hill Day event! Have a watch!
  - *Links from the video:*
    - *Directory of Representatives >>*
    - *Contacting your Senators >>*



WHY SHOULD YOUTH CARE ABOUT VOTING?

I'M AFRAID THAT MY SYSTEM-IMPACTED EXPERIENCE WILL PREVENT ME FROM VOTING. HOW CAN I MAKE SURE?

Don't let the *system* hinder your right to vote! There are resources and supports for youth who have experience within the juvenile or foster care system. Every state looks different!

RESOURCES:

- **The POWER Coalition Voter Guide for People with Lived Experience**
  POWER-C's Comprehensive Voter Guide for People with Lived Experience aims to help make the voting process more accessible, understandable, and relevant to our community. These fact sheets provide practical information about voting, elections, and how they can make an impact on our everyday lives.
- **Voting Rights | American Civil Liberties Union**



CONTRIBUTORS

Who is YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL™

Youth MOVE National connects, supports, and develops youth leadership in advocacy to create positive change. We practice authentic youth engagement through youth driven decision making by elevating youth voices of lived experience. We ensure that young people are heard and valued as leaders in the agencies, communities, and systems that impact their lives.

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL >>

Who is THE POWER COALITION
People Organized for Wellness, Empowerment, and Recovery

The People Organized for Wellness, Empowerment, and Recovery Coalition is made of up individuals and partner organizations dedicated to ensuring all those with mental health and substance use challenges, including youth and young adults, have voice, choice, and freedom to define their own journeys within their communities, to live full, authentic, thriving lives.

LEARN MORE ABOUT POWER-C >>