

# Hampton, VA Youth Planner Program

The Youth Planner Program was created to ensure a positive community for Hampton's youngest citizens, with a permanent opportunity for youth to be involved in city decision-making. Since 1996, the Planning Department has hired two high school students as 15-hour-per-week employees. These youth planners are given access to all the same resources as other city planners. One planner, the Senior Youth Planner, is a high school senior while the other, the Junior Youth Planner, is a high school junior. As the senior graduates, a new youth planner is hired, and the Junior Planner moves up.

Youth Planners are responsible to:

- Collect, organize, and analyze a wide variety of data related to youth including surveys, census data, focus groups, community forums, etc.
- Support the Hampton Youth Commission, including providing staff support to the committees of the commission
- Facilitate their peers to generate creative, practical solutions to problems
- Create, update, and implement the *Youth Component of the City of Hampton's Community Plan*
- Make regular presentations to the Planning Commission and City Council
- Represent the City of Hampton in local, regional, and national conferences

Based on surveying and focus groups conducted by the first planners with hundreds of their peers, the strategic issues for Hampton youth were identified as:

Caring Relationships

Youth Share Leadership

Essential Life Skills

Career Preparation

Places to Go, Things to Do

Getting Around

Strategies to address these issues are created by the Planners and Hampton Youth Commission, and then adopted by Planning Commission and City Council as an official component to the city's Community Plan. Each year the HYC determines strategies to tackle for the year that address the strategic issues. Youth Planners, as staff to the Commission, carry out the support services necessary for successful implementation.

See also:

[http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/15\\_2/15\\_2\\_12\\_YouthwithInfluence.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/15_2/15_2_12_YouthwithInfluence.pdf),

[http://www.pps.org/tcb/youth\\_planners.htm](http://www.pps.org/tcb/youth_planners.htm), and [www.areyouinthegame.org](http://www.areyouinthegame.org).

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