



JUNE | 2025

## UNPLUGGING TO THRIVE: NATURE AND TEENS

Time in nature like outdoor camps offers teens something new and exciting- less screen time, and more green time. Engaging in the natural world, has been linked to reduced stress, improved mood, and increased physical activity- factors that are especially important during adolescence, a period of rapid growth and emotional development. According to the Child Mind Institute, time in nature activates different senses for teens, and provides better stimulation.

Beyond physical health, time outdoors like at camp is also instrumental in fostering social skills and independence. Camp settings encourage teens to interact with peers from diverse backgrounds, work collaboratively on group challenges, and develop strong communication and problem-solving skills. Being away from home in this environment pushes teens out of their comfort zones, helping them build resilience, confidence, and a sense of responsibility.

Most importantly, outdoor camps provide a structured but fun environment for self-discovery and growth.

We saw all of this in action at our Youth Leadership Conference on May 10th, 2025, at Fairview Lake YMCA—a fun, inspiring day of connection and growth!

## 2025 YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Teens took part in a fun, leadership-building workshop led by the Lindsey Meyer Teen Institute.



**100% OF STUDENTS  
AGREED OR STRONGLY  
AGREED THAT THE  
YOUTH LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE WAS A  
POSITIVE EXPERIENCE  
FOR THEM**

Students were able to participate in variety of outdoor activities, including:

- Axe throwing
- Archery
- Boating
- Giant swing
- Tie dying
- Candle making
- Plant potting
- Scavenger hunt
- Bracelet making
- And more!

*"It was a perfect day"*

*"I got to step out of my  
comfort zone"*

*"It was a safe space"*



# YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD SPOTLIGHT



## PEER MENTORS SHINE AT THE CONFERENCE

Youth leadership took center stage at this year's conference, and our peer mentors truly delivered. Chadi, Lily, Andrea, Gloria, Jalissa, and Nardos—all members of the Youth Advisory Board—demonstrated exceptional maturity and initiative during the Natural Highs workshop, facilitated by the Lindsey Meyer Teen Institute.

Throughout the session, these student leaders guided small groups, led team-building activities, and created a supportive environment where every participant felt safe, included, and encouraged to be themselves. Their ability to connect with peers and foster community was a highlight of the day.

Peer mentors reflected on the experience as not only fun and inspiring, but also as a meaningful opportunity to grow their leadership skills. For many, it was a chance to step into new responsibilities and model positive behavior in real time.

We're incredibly proud of their work and grateful for the example they set. Their leadership made a lasting impression—and showed just how powerful youth voice can be when given the space to shine. We look forward to the 2026 Youth Leadership Conference!!



**@YAB\_NNJ**

**REACH OUT TO [RACHELK@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG](mailto:rachelk@centerforprevention.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
HOW YOUR STUDENTS CAN GET INVOLVED WITH CFPC'S YAB!**

WHOLE SCHOOL  
WHOLE COMMUNITY  
WHOLE CHILD



THE CENTER  
FOR PREVENTION & COUNSELING

**NJHealth**  
New Jersey Department of Health  
Family Health Services

**COMMENTS & QUESTIONS: EMAIL [TAMARA@CENTERFORPREVENTION.ORG](mailto:tamara@centerforprevention.org)**



