

# Engage students & help your local environment; Start a YES! Team at school!



Youth Eco Solutions (YES!) empowers youth to create solutions to today's ecological challenges through hands-on action projects.

- Unique opportunity for students to learn about energy, waste, local foods, habitat restoration, water quality issues, climate change and more through hands-on projects
- Students become community advocates and leaders
- Students solve real-life challenges, fulfill community needs and build lifelong skills

School administrators, teachers, businesses and community members play a key role in the success of YES! team projects. So far, more than 7,200 local businesses, organizations, and community members have been involved with YES!

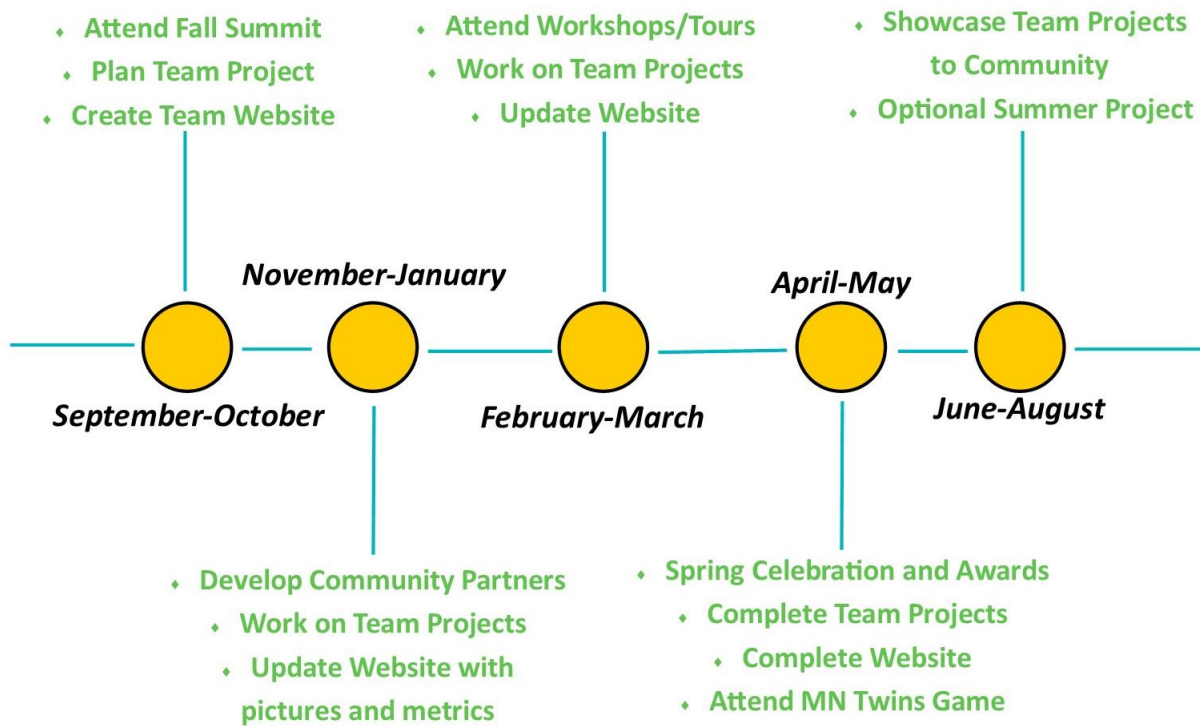
Teams have the opportunity to participate in various collaborative activities with other teams. Opportunities include the Fall Summit (a kickoff for the year), customized workshops, and Spring Awards.

*You can think about saving energy or you can talk about it, but you really need to just get out and do something to protect the environment. I think that YES! is a great way to do that!*  
–YES! Student



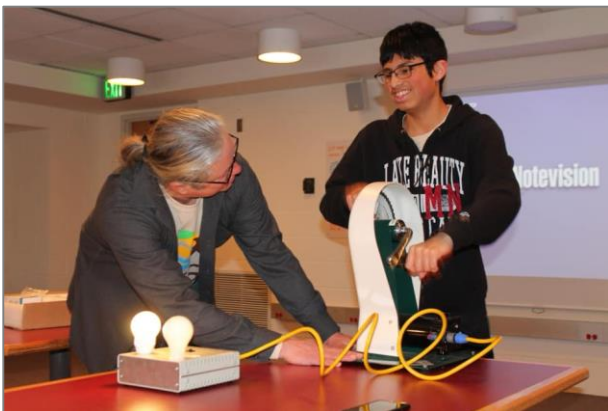
*YES! benefits are not temporary; the skills stay with you for a lifetime!*  
–YES! Student

# A Year in the Life of YES!



## Funding Resources for YES! Teams

- The YES! program provides project seed funds to teams. Each team is eligible for district expense reimbursement, like transportation & substitute teacher fees. (Amount available varies from year to year.)
- By participating in the YES! program, teams compete for YES! awards and cash prizes regionally with the opportunity to progress to the State Championship.
- YES! coordinators assist teams with seeking additional support from local organizations and businesses, fundraisers, and grants.



Through YES!, students are learning by doing. Projects have included: planting pollinator gardens; building solar panels; conducting energy audits; designing and building compost bins, tiny houses, super-mileage vehicles, solar boats and wind turbines; growing local food, restoring shoreline, monitoring water quality, and much more!

**Through YES! team projects, students have:**

- Restored local lakeshores, cleaned up local lakes and rivers, built rain barrels, and planted rain gardens
- Completed a \$25,000 school tree trench installation
- Reduced school electricity costs by \$5,000 annually
- Reduced cafeteria food waste by over 50%
- Operated a passive solar greenhouse
- Restored native prairies and shorelines
- Created a vehicle that achieves 425 miles per gallon
- Educated elementary students and community members on ecological literacy
- Impacted an additional 110,000 students and nearly 140,000 community members
- Hosted community events including Youth Convening Minnesota



**Teams must complete at least one project on the yearly theme and can choose from other categories for additional projects:**

- Clean Transportation
- Climate Change Solutions
- Environmental Education
- Land Restoration & Habitat
- Local Foods & Gardening
- Regenerative Agriculture & Soil Health
- Renewable Energy & Energy Conservation
- Waste Reduction
- Water Quality & Water Conservation



## Choose a YES! format that works best for your school and team!

- **YES! as an Elective Course:** YES! team projects and workshops can help your students master STEM standards, complete service-learning requirements, and earn science credits needed for graduation. The course could be a school quarter, semester, or entire year.
- **YES! as Part of an Existing Class:** Enhance a current class by adding project-based learning to your curriculum! YES! can be tailored to any subject, including science, technology, math, social studies, language arts, business, and career exploration.
- **YES! as an Extracurricular Club:** Teams have found creative ways to form a YES! club before or after school as well as during lunches and study halls. Some teams meet once a week; others meet biweekly or monthly. YES! can also be integrated with an existing club.
- **YES! as a Community Council:** Teams can pair with other community groups or members to form a council that partners in YES! initiatives.

Visit the [Start a YES! Team page](#) on our website to learn more and access the Team Registration Form.

For more information about YES!, see [yesmn.org](http://yesmn.org), or contact YES! Program Director Shelli-Kae Foster or the YES! Coordinator in your region!

- **Shelli-Kae Foster, YES! Program Director**  
**YES! North West and North Central Coordinator**  
(320) 491-1894  
[shelli-kae@yesmn.org](mailto:shelli-kae@yesmn.org)
- **Deb Groebner, YES! Southern Coordinator**  
(612) 716-8438  
[deb@yesmn.org](mailto:deb@yesmn.org)
- **Jasmine Nieto, YES! West Central Coordinator**  
(320) 905-7408  
[jasmine@yesmn.org](mailto:jasmine@yesmn.org)



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