

The Future of the YES Fund

In its final years of the pilot, the YES Fund has proven to be a success. It has not only provided direct funding for youth in need, but it has also helped create policy-level changes at Bainbridge schools that minimize the negative impacts of late fees or fines on the most financially vulnerable students. And as a result of this program, there is a stronger connection between schools and social service providers in our community.

Through the generosity of donors, BCF has been able to secure sufficient funding for one more year of the YES Fund program, and will continue to seek support moving forward. We invite you to continue to support the YES Fund, giving opportunity to all kids in our community. For more information please call us at 206.842.0433 or visit us online at www.BainbridgeCF.org.

The YES Fund has been viewed as such a successful program that Fishline Food Bank & Comprehensive Services has created a similar initiative called Student Opportunities & Advancement Resources (SOAR) to provide financial assistance for students (K-12) who reside in Poulsbo, Keyport, Suquamish, and Bangor.

Thank You to YES Fund Donors

This work would not be possible without the support of these donors who contributed to the YES Fund in 2019-2022:

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For more information about the yes fund or to make a gift visit:
<https://bainbridgecf.org/programs/yes-fund>



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2023 Youth Experience Support Fund Progress Report



Youth
Experience *yes!*
Support Fund

“[My student] would never have seized this opportunity if she knew she had to ask parents for that much money each trip. So YES! enables her to reach her full potential...we are very grateful. It has fed her passion for human rights, interest in world news and abilities in public speaking.”

– Teacher of a YES Fund Recipient

YES Fund

In mid-October 2018, community advocates working with

Bainbridge Community Foundation brought together key players to discuss youth in our community. The organizing question was about how to support youth who do not have access to services, whether it is because these services don't exist for them, they don't know how to access services, or they choose not to access services on their own. Discussions first centered on the many programs that were already in place to support youth with varying degrees of success.

Numerous studies have proven the importance of positive childhood experiences in predicting healthy behavior in early adulthood. Research has also demonstrated that negative childhood experiences can lead to harmful future behavior. There is a strong relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and behavioral problems such as substance use disorders. When children are exposed to chronic stressful events, their neurodevelopment can be disrupted and the child's cognitive functioning or ability to cope with negative emotions may be impaired.

Locally, a substantial gap area that was identified was the ability to fund activities that would expose these young people to positive experiences.

To respond to the this gap in services, Bainbridge Community Foundation created the Youth Experience Support Fund (YES Fund). **The YES Fund provides financial assistance to young people who may not have the resources to meet basic needs, to achieve academic success, or to pursue extracurricular activities.** Qualifying needs would include basic school or personal supplies, health services, or

educational and sports activities, so that these students have a chance to reach their true potential. Furthermore, funding would still be considered if youth came forward with a need beyond that scope. The YES Fund makes funding available to all youth, along with flexibility on the use of those funds.

Since the initial contribution of \$75,000 to support a three-year pilot program, the world has been through a pandemic which has had a significant impact on mental health—especially on youth. BCF's 2022 State of the Sector report, which uses data to identify challenges of affordability and mental health in our community, shows that depression and anxiety rates have risen overall at local middle and high schools over the last two years. Additionally, while students report lower depression rates on Bainbridge Island compared to the rest of the state, anxiety rates are higher on the Island compared to the rest of the state.

Bainbridge Youth Services (BYS) has seen requests for counseling services more than double what they were two years ago. Their data show that 20% who come to BYS have thoughts about self-harm while 29% have had suicidal thoughts. Almost 50% have anxiety and 28% experience depression, as either their primary or secondary reasons for requesting services.

For students who are experiencing financial strain, which could be compounded by mental health concerns, the YES Fund helps give them access to affordable and healthy outlets. The YES Fund supported hundreds of requests from students throughout the pandemic, and will continue to do so as long as funding permits. Donations are still needed to continue this level of support.

2021-2022 Funding Cycle Summary



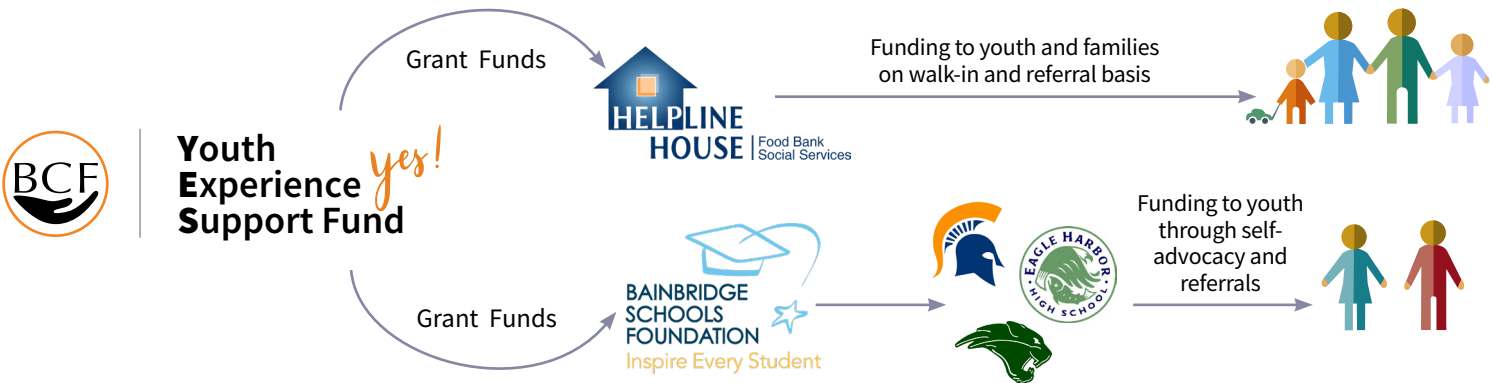
Lessons From 2021-2022 Funding Cycle

During the pandemic, the YES Fund was critical for supporting youth learning from home and paying for basic expenses. Over the course of the pandemic, YES Fund partners modified allocations as needed to meet demand. In the 2021-2022 Funding Cycle, YES Fund partners agreed to return to the original allocation level of 2019-2020, and \$15,000 went through BSF for the middle and high schools and \$10,000 went to Helpline House for all grades. Due to increasing demand for YES Funds, BCF allocated another \$3,000 to Helpline House. BSF ended up distributing \$13,201 and Helpline House distributed \$20,489 using current and previous funds to support the funding cycle of 2021-2022.

For more than two years, the YES Fund has proven its ability to be flexible and adapt to changing conditions. This collaborative work between the schools and Helpline House ensured that first and foremost, the increasingly urgent needs of youth were met over the course of the pandemic. As our community manages the long-lasting impact on mental health and affordability in our community, we hope to continue supporting these needs. BCF was in regular communication with both Maria Metzler, Executive Director of Helpline House, and Kristen Haizlip, Executive Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning at Bainbridge Island School District, to discuss the program's implementation and any revisions or clarifications that needed to be made. BCF is very grateful for their hard work in ensuring the program's success.

YES Fund Program Model

The Yes Fund is a partnership between BCF, Bainbridge Schools Foundation (BSF), Bainbridge Youth Services, Helpline House, and Bainbridge Island School District. For middle and high school students, BCF provides grants from the YES Fund to BSF, and then the nonprofit redistributes the funds to Bainbridge High School (BHS), Eagle Harbor High School, and Woodward Middle School. Administrators identify students to receive the funding through two methods: (1) students identify their own needs through an online questionnaire or (2) a student is identified through a recommendation from teachers, counselors, or coaches. Bainbridge Youth Services also assists in getting the word out to youth about the funding opportunities. For all ages, including grades six and under, BCF provides grants to Helpline House, where the resources are quickly be made available for families with qualifying needs.



Funded Requests

For the 2021-2022 Funding Cycle, BHS funded 62 students and 100 requests for a total amount of \$13,201, which was up from \$6,307 the year before. The largest variety of requests were funded though Helpline House, with a distribution of \$20,489 during the 2021-2022 Funding Cycle. See below for a list of how the funds were spent.

