

DYD January 2026 Newsletter



DYD partners,

The new year is already off to a promising start for youth development and care-first approaches here in Los Angeles. In just the first few weeks of 2026, diversion referrals—which direct young people toward community-based programs as an alternative to justice system involvement—are on the rise, and interest in our [Reentry Action for Youth \(RAY\) program](#) has skyrocketed. Whether we are supporting young people in our neighborhoods or those navigating the legal system, our mission remains the same: providing every youth with the resources they need to thrive.

The challenges of 2025 demonstrated the profound resilience of all LA County youth and as we navigate new uncertainties in 2026, that spirit of strength and mutual care remains our North Star. This community power fuels our commitment to systemic change, ensuring we don't just survive challenges but grow stronger through them.

Looking ahead, DYD is eager to take on a more active role in providing direct programming both in the community and within County facilities. By working in close coordination with the Probation Department and our partners in experienced community-based organizations, we are spearheading a holistic continuum of care. Our goal is to build more opportunities for learning and belonging for all young people—ensuring that whether a youth is stepping into their first leadership role or navigating the transition home, they are met with a clear path toward a bright and supported future.



DYD was recently honored to join the vibrant crowds in South Los Angeles at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade for a powerful day of community and reflection. We were truly moved by the "intergenerational magic" on display—from the infectious energy and passion of the youth activists to the profound wisdom and steady presence of our seniors. Witnessing these generations march side-by-side served as a beautiful reminder of why we do the work we do.

I invite you to [learn more about our vision](#) and join us this year as we advocate for the dignity and future of all LA County youth. As always, I value your input and feedback. Connect with us at info@dyd.lacounty.gov with any questions or concerns and please explore [DYD.LA](#) for more information and resources.

David
DAVID J. CARROLL
DIRECTOR



DYD Launches Peer Narrative Ambassador Fellowship



This month, DYD teamed up with the [Arts for Healing and Justice Network \(AHJN\)](#) to launch the Peer Narrative Ambassador Fellowship. This four-month paid program empowers system-impacted transition-age youth artists to lead the conversation on justice.

Our new Peer Narrative Ambassadors (PNAs) are already diving deep- investigating the history of youth incarceration and justice movements in LA County to better understand the challenges youth face today. Over the coming months, these artists will work under professional mentorship to craft personal art projects that reflect their unique visions for youth justice.

Keep an eye on this space for updates as their creative journeys unfold!

Full Throttle: Street Racing Kills Gears Up for a Massive 2026



2026 is shaping up to be another powerful year of action and education for DYD partner Street Racing Kills (SRK)! Together, we are hitting the ground running with school and community-based workshops designed to save lives.

By using immersive reenactments, powerful testimonials from victims and former participants, and sobering car crash displays—like the one hosted this month at the Lancaster Boys & Girls Club—SRK brings the real dangers of illegal street racing and takeovers into sharp focus. [Click here](#) to connect with and learn more about SRK street safety programs.

Youth Advisory Board Opportunity

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN!

los angeles county
department of
Youth Development

HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISOR ♦ 2ND DISTRICT

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD



CALLING ALL YOUNG LEADERS (AGES 17-25) IN WATTS & WILLOWBROOK!

Are you passionate about advocacy and community change? Share your voice, listen to others, and help us improve local opportunities for youth!

Youth Advisory Board members will advise county leadership on programs and services, engage in collaborative workshops and listening sessions, and play a key role in designing a Youth Center in South Los Angeles. This is a paid opportunity.

PAID OPPORTUNITY



SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE!

We're excited to announce this paid opportunity for young people to advise county leadership, collaborate on local programs and help design a brand-new youth center in South Los Angeles! Check out the flyer above and scan the QR code above for more info.

Real Talk, Real Impact: Join a Heart of Youth Justice Reimagined Meeting

HEART OF YOUTH JUSTICE REIMAGINED

February Gatherings for Heart of YJR Youth Leadership Work Groups

los angeles county department of
Youth Development

EAST LOS ANGELES
February 5th
5pm - 7pm
4876 Gleason St.
Los Angeles 90022
bit.ly/4r4em3kl

ANTELOPE VALLEY
February 12th
5pm - 7pm
38417 20th St East
Suite A Palmdale 93550
bit.ly/AVHYJR

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
February 26th
6pm - 8pm
1101 San Fernando Rd.
San Fernando 91340
bit.ly/818youthjustice

SOUTH CENTRAL
February 26th
5pm - 7pm
7625 S. Central Ave
Los Angeles 90001
bit.ly/sclahyjr2026

LONG BEACH
Meeting details coming soon!

"I loved how it was a safe space. Everyone was so nice to each other & I felt comfortable."

"HYJR has shown me a new perspective of cooperation and collaboration and helped me get a JOB!"

"I noticed drastic changes in my attitude and the way I carry myself; I also am more confident expressing myself."

"I feel more connected and informed with my city and government; I look forward to this meeting every month."

Ready to build your network and sharpen your leadership skills? HYJR meetings are more than just a monthly gathering—they are in-person spaces co-led by young people, for young people. It's your chance to connect with peers, build your leadership skills and make your voice heard in the community. Youth who attend receive a gift card for their participation.

Check the flyer above to discover what youth are saying about HYJR and use the bit.ly links or QR codes to sign up for a meeting near you!

Finding Your Space: Discovering Community at Our SPOT

The image shows two promotional posters for Our SPOT programs. The left poster is for DJ Academy, featuring a DJ at a turntable and a group of youth dancing. The right poster is for Basketball, featuring a basketball and a group of youth playing.

DJ Academy

The DJ Academy is a 10-week, instructor-led program offered at 16 SPOT locations that teaches youth DJing and music production while building confidence and leadership through live performances. Participants gain real-world experience at cultural arts events and summer concerts, with four cohorts offered annually beginning in the fall.

WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS, AND FRIDAYS
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM
February 4 - April 11

Participating Locations

- Loma Alta Park
3330 N. Lincoln Ave, Altadena, CA 91001
- El Cariso Park
13100 Hubbard St, Sylmar, CA 91342
- Stephen Sorensen Park
16801 E Ave P, Palmdale, CA 93591
- San Angelo Park
245 S. San Angelo Ave, La Puente, CA 91746

Scan the QR Code to Register!
Or Visit your local Our SPOT or go <https://tinyurl.com/OurSPOTDJ3>

Hilda L. Solis, Holly J. Mitchell, Lindsey Horvath, Janice Hahn, Kathryn Barger

BASKETBALL

JANUARY 26 - MARCH 24
Practice days and times vary by location.
Tournament Date: Saturday, March 28, 2026

Join Our SPOT's 2nd Basketball program for a fun, fast-paced season where teens build skills, compete with other parks, and represent their site on the court. Free and open to ages 12-18. No experience needed!

Scan the QR code to check out the sites and register for free!
<https://tinyurl.com/OurSPOTBB>

DYD is proud to support Our SPOT, a free, year-round program from LA County Parks and Recreation designed specifically for teens aged 12–18.

Operating during those critical after-school and evening hours, Our SPOT provides a safe, supportive space where local youth can truly thrive. Whether they're looking for a hot meal and homework help or want to dive into mentoring, sports, and career exploration, there is something for everyone. It's more than just a hangout—it's a community where teens can socialize and discover new passions.

Learn about upcoming Our SPOT DJ Academy and basketball programs and locate Our SPOT parks near you by [clicking here](#).

From Raw Data to Real Impact: Using Live Insights to Better Serve Young People



DYD team members this month launched our new Apricot centralized data system, which transforms raw numbers into powerful narratives that showcase how the youth in our programs are thriving and succeeding. By identifying service gaps and youth interests, this platform allows us to provide LA County young people with responsive, targeted support while giving program providers immediate access to live data. A new Apricot dashboard will connect the public to our impact through quarterly comprehensive performance reports—stay tuned for updates!

Get Involved: Join the DYD Quarterly Public Convening

**JOIN US FOR DYD'S QUARTERLY VIRTUAL MEETING!
(FORMERLY THE DYD STEERING COMMITTEE)**

**QUARTERLY PUBLIC
CONVENING**

 **DATE**
Thursday, March 5

 **TIME**
3:00 - 5:00PM

 **LOCATION**
Zoom



REGISTER BELOW TO JOIN!
bit.ly/QPCM2026

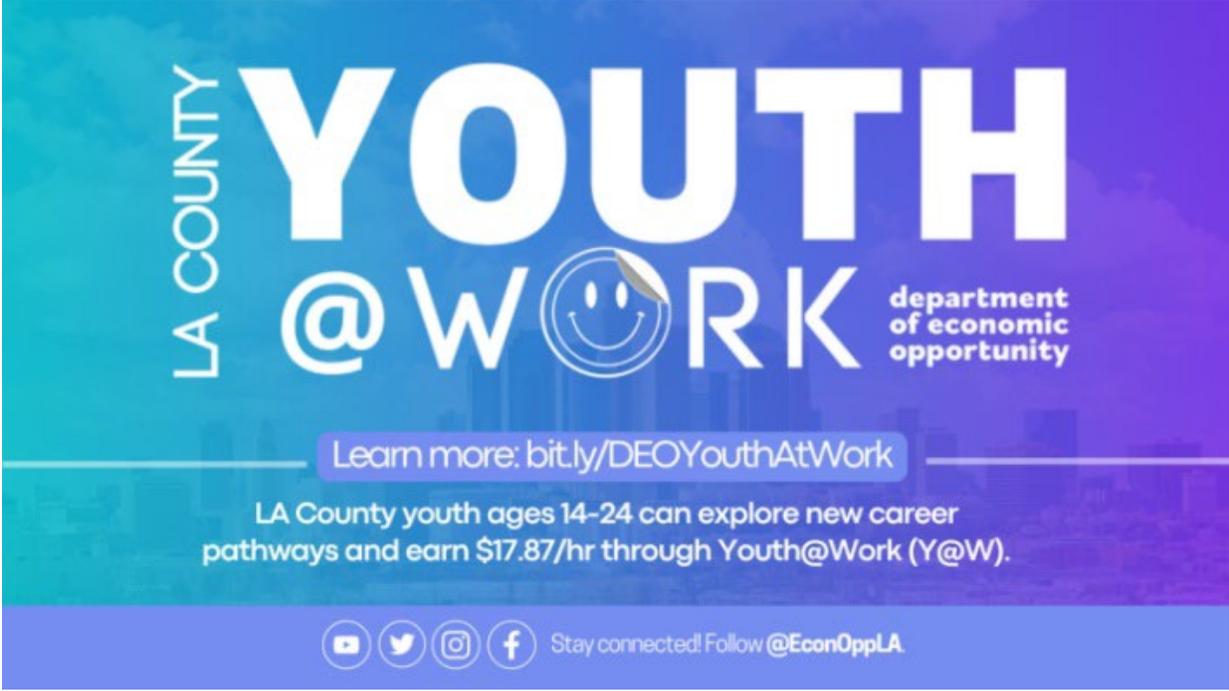


Want to stay up to date on future convenings?
Sign up for DYD's newsletter at:
bit.ly/dydnewsletter

Get ready to connect, learn and contribute! The DYD Quarterly Public Convening (QPC), formerly known as the Steering Committee, is your essential platform for all things DYD. Whether you're already familiar with DYD or new to our work, the QPC is your chance to learn more and get involved. You'll discover what's currently happening at DYD, engage in shared learning around youth development topics, and hear directly from youth themselves about programs, key issues, and their impact on young lives.

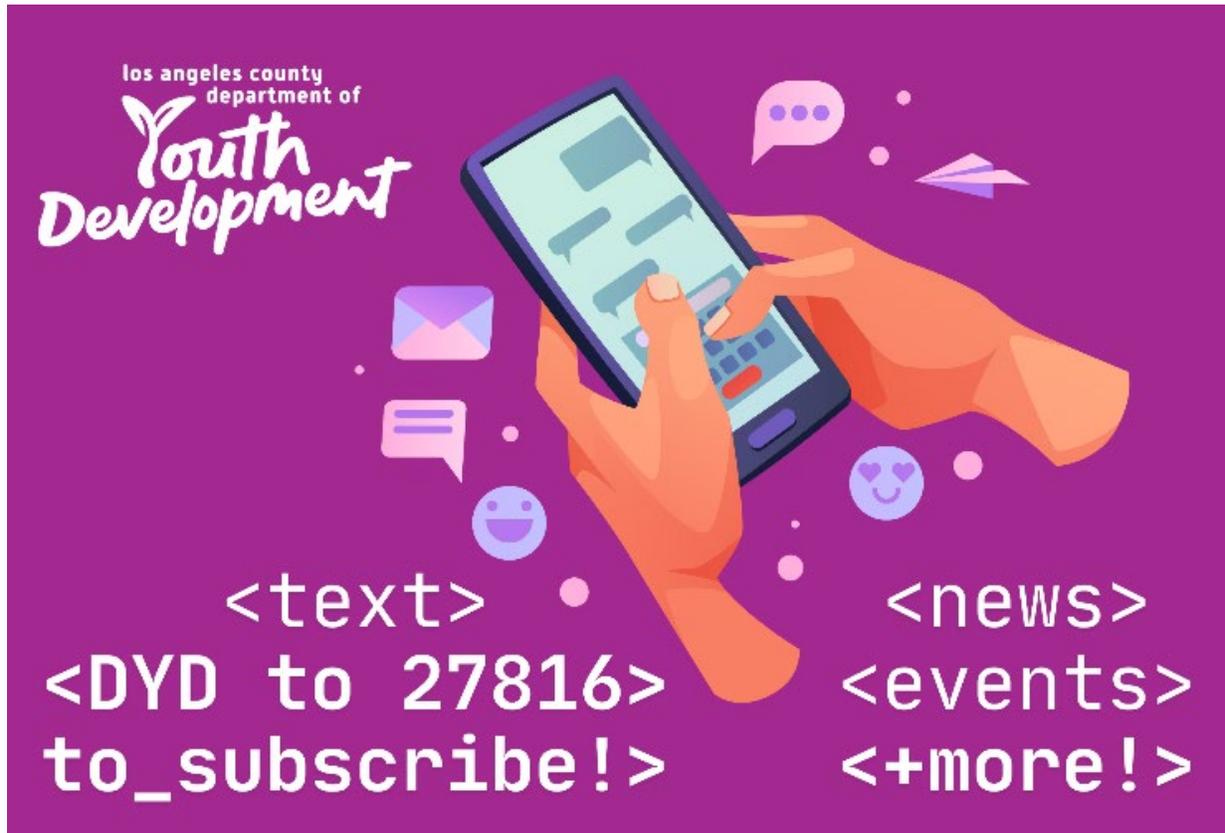
Ready to join us? Register for our next Quarterly Public Convening on Thursday, March 5 at 3PM by [clicking here](https://bit.ly/QPCM2026) or by visiting bit.ly/QPCM2026. See you there!

Employment Opportunities: Check Out Youth @ Work

A promotional banner for LA County Youth @ Work. The background is a gradient of teal and purple. On the left, 'LA COUNTY' is written vertically in white. The main text 'YOUTH @WORK' is in large white letters, with the '@' symbol being a smiley face with a pencil tip. To the right, 'department of economic opportunity' is written in a smaller white font. Below this, a white button contains the text 'Learn more: bit.ly/DEOYouthAtWork'. Underneath the button, a white text block reads 'LA County youth ages 14-24 can explore new career pathways and earn \$17.87/hr through Youth@Work (Y@W)'. At the bottom, there are icons for YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, followed by the text 'Stay connected! Follow @EconOppLA'.

Youth@Work provides opportunities for young people (ages 14-24) to gain valuable experience and develop in-demand skills through salaried positions in thriving industries. This program will connect you with local employers and America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), where you can gain real world experience and build your confidence. Take the next step toward a bright future by clicking [this link](https://bit.ly/DEOYouthAtWork) or the banner above to learn more!

Text to Subscribe



Stay up to date- text DYD to 27816 to subscribe to our newsletter for news, events and announcements!



Care First

Care First uplifts the message that proven, prevention and healing-centered approaches give young people the resources and opportunities they need to succeed and lead meaningful lives. Young people thrive when they have access to supportive adults, community resources, and real second chances—and communities become stronger, healthier, and safer. [Visit D.Y.D. LA](https://www.dyd.la) or click on the banner below to Learn more about D.Y.D.'s Care First approach and how you can get involved to support and empower LA County youth.