

YOUTH VOICE INITIATIVE

FLY believes that youth are the experts of their own experience, and amplifying their voices is integral to FLY's DNA. FLY's original model grew out of ideas and feedback provided by youth who were detained and who hoped to prevent other young people from becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. Twenty years later, while FLY's model has grown and expanded, FLY continues to prioritize youth voice by engaging and collaborating with young people as true partners in our work.

FLY'S YOUTH VOICE VISION

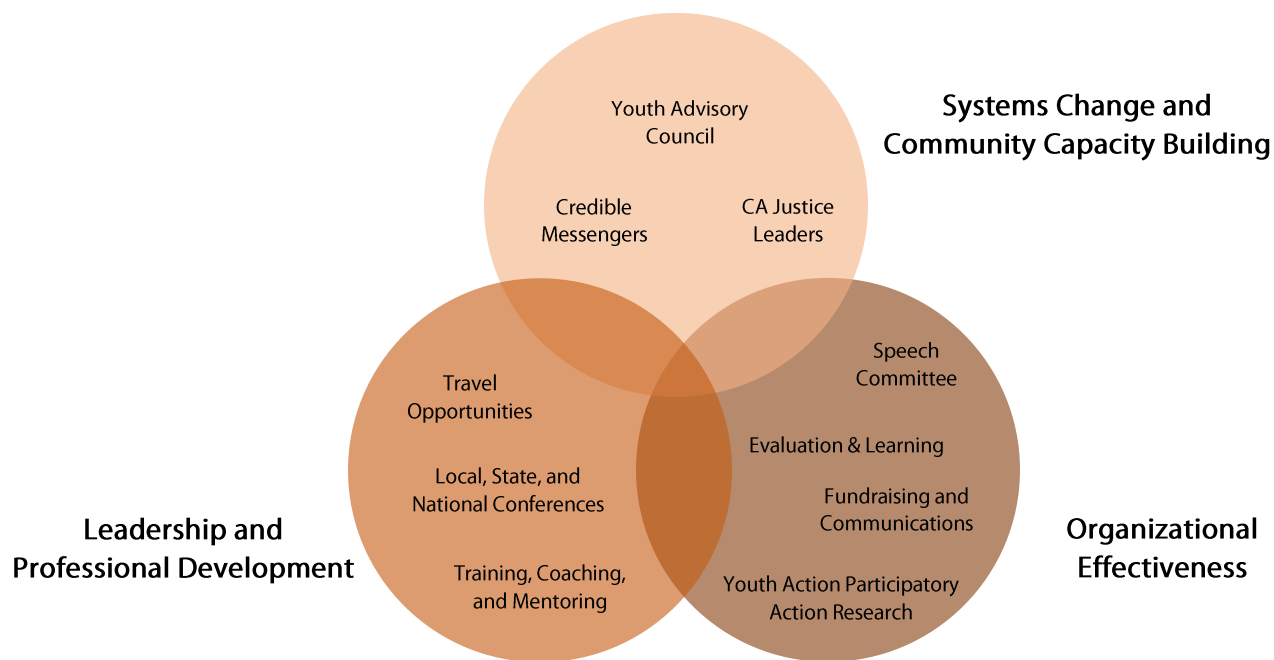
We envision the inclusion of youth voice as both a value of organizational culture and a vehicle of change in FLY's IMAGINE 2030 strategic plan. Our vision is to ensure youth voice is codified and implemented successfully throughout FLY while ensuring appropriate partnerships/collaborations with system partners and community members. Young people impacted by the system will lead the process to elevate their voices authentically to shape and shift institutional practices and policies and enable the system to become more effective, humane, and just.

KEY VEHICLES OF CHANGE

YVI builds off a theory of change that FLY's programs create opportunities for young people → to find their voice → to narrate their own stories and → to change the public narrative of young people in the justice system. YVI supports FLY's fundraising efforts, organizational learning efforts and strategic directives, and most recently serves as a key vehicle for change in FLY's systems change efforts.

FLY's Youth Voice Initiative has three primary goals for change. The efforts listed are key examples of ways FLY is meeting or plans to meet these goals.





Systems Change and Community Capacity Building

- Through the **Youth Advisory Council**, youth who formerly participated in juvenile justice services provide input on current system processes, policies, and practices.
- In the **California Justice Leaders – Impact for Justice** partnership with AmeriCorps, FLY alumni serve guide youth and young adults currently in or released from California’s Division of Juvenile Justice facilities on the path to successful reentry.
- The **Credible Messengers Project** provides FLY alumni a paid mentorship experience working with youth who are exiting the Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall or Ranch.

Organizational Effectiveness

- FLY’s **Speech Committee** youth have completed FLY’s programs and become ambassadors for FLY, speaking about their experiences, engaging with donors and other stakeholders, and participating in other youth voice efforts.
- Youth voice is an integral part of FLY’s **Fundraising and Communications**.
- Youth play a role in FLY’s **Talent and Culture** through the hiring process, trainings, and key committees.
- Youth collaborate with FLY’s **Evaluation & Learning** department to incorporate youth voice in FLY’s internal program evaluations.
- In **Youth Participatory Action Research**, youth partner with researchers and policy professionals to improve the conditions of youth lives and communities using engaging research techniques that center equity and community voice in the process.

Leadership and Professional Development

- **Travel opportunities** allow FLY alumni to broaden their perspective on leadership, citizenship, and justice on journeys outside of their communities and comfort zones.
- FLY youth attend and present at **Local, State, and National Conferences**.
- **Training, Coaching, and Mentoring** for youth helps them hone their leadership and communication skills as well as their ability to mentor other youth.

For more information, contact Susie Rivera, Vice President of Youth Voice Initiatives at FLY, at susie@flyprogram.org