

YOUTH DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

VERMONT YOUTH HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

EDUCATION

- Access free classes on Basic Life Skills (signing a lease, budgeting, taxes, resumes, etc.)
- Equal opportunities and experiences in arts education before, during, and after school
- A post-secondary education no matter their financial situation
- A student-directed, safe space for afterschool support and community engagement free of charge
- Time outdoors during the school (or work) day

EQUALITY & JUSTICE

- Explore their identities in a safe environment
- Education on gun safety and to live in a gun-aware community that is educated and aware of proper gun usage
- Have their voices heard in legal decisions that affect everyone
- Be protected in all of their life circumstances, be able to have their own privacy in their environments, and to have a private profile
- Education on anything concerning self-defense

HOBBIES & ENTERTAINMENT

- Free WIFI in or out of school or work for educational purposes
- Access free entertainment and opportunities to try a variety of activities
- Important people in their lives who spend time with them, and who teach them to do things safely (mentors)
- Live with and be supported by caring adults
- Provide input to the state when rules and regulations are developed that affect youth

HOME & SHELTER

- Access an affordable shelter with heating and electricity
- A safe place with a caring family and a bed
- Access clean, weather-appropriate clothing
- To be protected from abuse of all kinds

MENTAL HEALTH

- Have people in society who support their mental well-being
- A personal break to handle their mental situation
- Choose their own identity, whether that be sexual orientation, religious identification, and/or gender identification
- Have access to affordable mental health care

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- A healthy environment that provides the basic necessities to all life
- Know about the environment, and what is being done to it
- Have a say about what happens to the environment
- Safe recreation in the outdoors and in their communities

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Hygienic products, clothing, and utilities suitable for all climates and environments
- Have access to outdoor recreational and natural spaces
- Safe and affordable health care that covers medical treatment, preventative care, reproductive health, vaccines, and intervention in the name of physical safety
- Have sports and recreational resources for the purposes of promoting physical health and activity
- Access to sustainable sources of clean water and food (fresh and healthy)—enough for at least two meals a day

SOCIAL SUPPORTS & CONNECTIONS

- Express themselves through feelings, speech, clothing, actions, creativity, and more
- Have support and education from friends, family, and community
- Have access to healthy food and water
- Connect to each other through technology and transportation
- Be respected and heard
- Be engaged in community

WORK & TRANSPORTATION

- Choose a safe and healthy job, while making a fair wage
- Accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation regardless of economic circumstances

This text was created by youth ages 9-26 who attended the Vermont Youth Rights Summit on October 5, 2017. It is 100% their own words and phrasing, and is an evolving document that aims to capture what matters to youth across Vermont.