



Parent FA(a)Qs (Frequently Asked Awesome Questions)

What ages do you serve in your program?

Our unique hands-on leadership and service program is intended for teens 14 to 18 years old. Students who have finished their middle school program are eligible to register the summer before high school. Why? Because we love the energy and insight that high school teens bring to service and leadership. Their shared experience of being in high school helps them quickly build community and dig into meaningful conversations. We do offer some opportunities throughout the year where the whole family can get involved, enabling CYL members to engage family and friends in service.

What type of service opportunities are available to my teen through CYL?

At CYL, we believe that volunteerism is both about serving the common good and about discovering your own unique talents and passions. For this reason, we seek to provide a breadth of opportunities that allow our students to explore the many ways they can lead and make a difference in their community. Our students have participated in volunteer work directly influencing homelessness, youth at risk, adaptive sports, education, literacy, art, people with disabilities, environmental stewardship, food justice, the refugee population, and so much more. You can see many of our partners by visiting the partner page of our website. There are a variety of opportunities each month, and after testing the waters, we hope they will find the thing that sparks their passion and purpose.

What is the basis of your leadership curriculum?

Our leadership curriculum is organic and action-oriented, focusing on themes developed from a collection of the best ideas of great thinkers, educators, partner universities, corporations, and our own youth. It is our curriculum that develops our leaders into self-aware, civic-minded, and environmentally-sensitive change makers. We believe the best education should be founded and challenged in experiences with others. This is why we ask our Young Leaders to “take action” at the end of each Leadership Exploration Meeting.

What is the Decalibron Summit Program and why is it important?

The goal of our program is for high school students to figuratively reach a total of four mountain summits before they graduate high school. The CYL summits are named after the Decalibron Loop peaks in Fairplay, Colorado and this particular visual drives our Leadership Skills Development. These summits help our Young Leaders focus on social good, giving back, living outside their comfort zones, developing

the beauty that exists in their communities, and taking risks that benefit others – it's a leadership style that brings out the best in all of us! This process allows your student to explore their passion then commit to a cause; it moves them through this process through experiential learning so it feels natural and fun, not burdensome.

What non-profit and community organizations do CYL partner with?

CYL partners with over 45 non-profit organizations that focus on key issues in our community and beyond. Through our strong network of partners, we can help our students follow their hearts and find their passion. We support the missions that our students care about the most and we are constantly expanding our partner list. You can explore many of our partners and their missions by visiting our [partner page](#) on the CYL website.

How are volunteer and leadership hours tracked through CYL?

By becoming a member of CYL, students can track their service and leadership hours through our CYL Get Connected Portal. The portal allows us to track the service and leadership opportunities your student has signed up for and the hours they have dedicated to both. Participation is validated at each event through our adult leaders. They can also add service hours that they have completed outside of CYL. Students can also print their own service resume that they can provide to school counselors, college admission boards, or potential employers.

What is the unique benefit of my teen participating in volunteer opportunities through CYL?

The CYL program is built around five key values: Leadership + Service + Community + Adventure + Legacy. We infuse everything we do with these in mind. We seek to help students discover themselves, face challenges, become visionaries, and engage in the common good, plus we make sure we include lots of adventure along the way (because everything's better with a dash of fun!). Additionally, college and university admissions departments are looking for students who have both depth and breadth in their volunteerism. CYL offers students a robust program that they can engage with throughout their high school experience but also offers a gateway to explore a wide variety of causes and opportunities no matter what comes next on their journey.

How many service opportunities are available to my student through participation in CYL?

Through our CYL-led Service Adventures and our partner-led individual service engagements, the number of service opportunities is virtually unlimited. However, it is our goal to offer at a minimum of three CYL led Service Adventures a month and we anticipate offering over 35 in the upcoming year. Students are encouraged to explore individual opportunities with our non-profit partners, and we list many of those opportunities on our calendar as well. Through the combination of our CYL and individual service opportunities our students can engage in an unlimited amount of service opportunities, and it is not uncommon for our members to easily exceed the hours required by their high schools and clubs.

Do you offer service opportunities outside of our local community or outside of the United States?

CYL strives to get our students outside of our community to engage with their role as a citizen of the world and explore how they can make a difference wherever their journey takes them. These opportunities have ranged from helping the Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, to a serve & surf adventure to serve the homeless in Santa Barbara, CA., and a week-long service trip to Peru.

Where are the leadership meetings held and how can I get my teen engaged?

Our Leadership Exploration Meetings (LEMs) are chapter-based, and we currently have six active chapters. Each chapter is made up of students who either attend a school or live in convenient proximity to the chapter meeting. We encourage our students to engage with the chapter that is the best fit for them. Our current chapters include Denver, Arapahoe, Douglas, Jefferson, Pikes Peak, and Northeast Denver. Chapter locations and meeting dates can be found on the [contact page](#) of our website.

Does my teen need to participate in all of your program activities to be a member of CYL?

Community is one of our values and one of the things that makes CYL unique. The more your teen participates, the more they will become part of the bond of our community. However, understand that teens are busy with homework, clubs, sports, and after-school jobs. We encourage teens to become members and participate in ways that are most meaningful to them. If service is their passion and priority, they are welcome to join us on the adventures that excite them the most.

How can I get my teen's school or club involved in CYL?

CYL is a great pathway for high school service and academic clubs to connect to meaningful service opportunities. We also offer Custom Service Opportunities to schools or organizations that want to jump-start civic engagement within their program. We would be excited to engage with your teen's school to determine how CYL can help bring the unique value of our program to help them meet their objectives. Let us know your ideas by reaching out through our [contact page](#).

My teen is not really interested in outdoor adventures like hiking and skiing. Is CYL the right place for them?

We can't give you an answer to that question until they come and check us out. However, our dynamic community of teens thrives by embracing a diversity of interests and viewpoints. Plus, our robust program strives to guide students in their passions no matter where they lead. While we try to build outdoor adventure into many of the things we do, we truly believe that any student will find amazing opportunities and create lasting friendships by being a member of Colorado Young Leaders.