In the Beginning

In the summer of 2007, 75 young people and individuals representing 25 organizations from 10 countries convened for the 4-day summit Invisible No More! at Monmouth University in New Jersey, with the shared vision of an international partnership to address the needs of the most vulnerable youth. Co-sponsored by the Monmouth University School of Social Work and Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., the conference addressed the needs of young people, families and communities where the risk of detention and institutionalization is the highest, where the treatment is the harshest and where the likelihood for falling through the cracks is the most prevalent. While these circumstances exist for young people everywhere, they are most often seen in countries that are recovering from civil war or domestic unrest; have a government that is hostile to young people and the organizations that advocate on their behalf; or have no effective justice or human services system to prevent homelessness, victimization or unnecessary imprisonment or institutionalization of young people.

In 2010...

Building on the work of the Steering Committee that evolved out of the 2007 conference, a Board of Directors was established with the International Youth Advocacy Federation incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania and 501(c)3 status obtained from the Internal Revenue Service. In support of the International Youth Advocacy Federation’s mission to have the IYAF’s work be driven by the voices of youth, Monmouth University School of Social Work International and Community Development students collaborated with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) to develop and implement a research design that involved youth focus groups being conducted simultaneously in 3 countries. The intention and success of the project was to give VOICE to youth and create a framework for future youth focus groups to guide IYAF policies. Finally, a Pennsylvania YAP program organized an auction of artwork done by vulnerable youth as an IYAF fundraiser.

Visit us online at:
www.advocacy4youth.org

Our Vision

The International Youth Advocacy Federation (IYAF) envisions a world where all children and young people are safe and sheltered, experience emotional well-being and justice, have a powerful voice and can access opportunities to lead safe and productive lives in their communities.

Welcome to Our Newest Member!

Bethany Social Services of Albania

Our Mission

The International Youth Advocacy Federation is a multinational consortium of like-minded organizations and individuals that directly partners with young people, promotes family and community advocacy and assists vulnerable young people and their families to lead safe and productive lives in their communities. The IYAF maintains a dual focus on advocacy action and policy change.
Invisible No More!

IYAF Today...
The International Youth Advocacy Federation welcomes individuals and organizations to sign on as members and seize the opportunity to guide the IYAF’s activities and play a major role in working and supporting member agencies around the world. New members and founding members are joining together and developing change strategies to protect vulnerable youth-serving organizations, their staff and the youth and families they advocate for.

2012 Goals
- Provide an international forum for highlighting the human rights issues facing vulnerable young people and creating a strong advocacy response.
- Empower members to amplify their voices through strategic networking and collaboration.
- Expand organizational capacity, reach and impact through shared resources and joint projects.
- Secure grants to provide a wider reach along with joint efforts to locate funding sources and assist with project management.
- Educate and influence policy makers and stakeholders to create necessary systems change.
- Increase public awareness and encourage greater activism for constructive reforms.
- Publicize through witnessing and accompaniment the places and situations where young people and those who serve them are endangered.
- Learn, share and promote best practices to enhance services for young people and their families internationally.
- Mobilize young people to raise their often unheard voices and exercise their often unrecognized strengths.

“Some say that we were born with wings and that we just have to choose to fly instead of crawling. But sometimes people’s wings get damaged or malnourished, forces tie them down, or they were never told they have them in the first place. Maybe another way of seeking empowerment is letting people know they have wings, working together to heal the damage, providing nourishment, fighting the forces so that they can fly and not be kept crawling.”

-AT, youth focus group facilitator in Sierra Leone

IYAF Members include:
- Bethany Social Services of Albania, Lutheran Children and Family Services of Illinois,
- Monmouth University School of Social Work, Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., Sierra Leone YAP, YAP Ireland Ltd., Youth Advocates Ghana & Women in Struggle Pakistan

Our Membership
Members include agencies and individuals committed to family and community advocacy to help young people and their families lead safe and productive lives in their communities. IYAF provides members with access to research and global trends impacting young people, technical assistance, and a strengthened collective voice on the issues that most impact young people.

Let’s Work Together...
To show your solidarity and support and activate real change for youth and families worldwide, contact:
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