

# Youth Action Network Newsletter

YAN Squad

September Edition

09/07

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Hey Everybody!

September is one of the most important months for YAN, because we are helping to put on the 2nd Annual Stand Up Rally! Those of you who attended last year will remember the enthusiastic crowd, spectacular dancers and inspirational music from Austin's own artists. And you can't forget our planner debut and fantastic t-shirts that *you* helped to make!

Well, guess what? It's happening again! As long as you provide the crowd, we will provide the dancers and the music. And I can't forget the **brand new** planner that you will have the chance to be first to own. All this is taking place:

**September 9th from 3-5pm @ Fiesta Gardens**

## Stand Up Rally



In 2006, Austin Voices for Education and Youth hosted the Stand Up Rally in order to raise awareness of the high school drop-out epidemic that now threatens the youth of America. According to statistics found on the EDin'08 website, approximately 1.2 million students in America drop out of high school, ¼ high school students don't graduate on time, 3 out of 10 college freshmen repeat high school class, and 65% of convicted felons are high school drop outs.

It is said that every 24 seconds a student drops out of high school! That means that by the time you finish reading this, 2 to 3 students will have made the decision to end their educational experience. This is why Austin Voices has set out to put on events like the Stand Up Rally, which will be taking place on September 9, 2007 from 3-5 pm at Fiesta Gardens, located right next to the Chicano Park.

But it doesn't end there! We also are continuing the highly successful Stand Up Clubs in five different

AISD high schools, which include Johnston, Lanier, LBJ, Akins, and Reagan. These clubs educate students and parents about the High School Redesign effort that is taking place in many of the high schools throughout the state of Texas. Stand Up Clubs are centered on youth voice, helping them express their ideas, needs, and desires about the kind of education they envision for themselves.

If you want to see what the hype is all about, come join us for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stand Up Rally and be counted among the many students who have made the commitment to Stand Up for a better education. Together we can make it happen!

### Youth Council Update

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The Youth Action Network is happy to announce the formation of Austin's first Youth Council! The Youth Council is sponsored by The Ready by 21 Coalition, a collaboration of community organizations who have recognized the Austin area's need for youth representation in our city's policy-making. After a rigorous application and interview process, 14 members were selected. Members were chosen from a broad spectrum of neighborhoods, schools, and racial diversity. The Youth Council came up with their own mission statement in the first ever youth council meeting in July of this year: **The Ready By 21 Youth Council is a representation of Austin youth that will work to bridge the gap between youth and adults through civic engagement, community empowerment, and by utilizing youth voice to address issues throughout the city.**

As of August 2007, the Ready by 21 Coalition has endorsements from the AISD Board of Trustees, the Community Action Network and the United Way of Central Texas, as well as Austin's Mayor Will Wynn. The members of the Youth Council, were formally recognized and presented with City of Austin certificates during a Community Action Network meeting at city hall. Members of the Youth Council are currently involved in grant writing requesting funding to support trainings, workshops, and team building activities.

The members of the council serve as representatives of their schools and communities, to bring elected officials the issues that are preventing the success of Austin's youth.

### Hey Garza Students!

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**Interested in Educational Justice, Youth Empowerment, and Community Action? Do you want your voice to be heard? Then Austin**

**Voices has a class for you!**

**See Ms. Grayson in room 201 for more information.**

**Get your Austin Voices Planner!**

Ladies and Gentlemen, fasten your seat belts and get ready for the new and improved Austin Voices 2007-2008 school year planner!

This planner was envisioned, designed, and created by youth.  
It provides...

- Organization for every lifestyle
- Calendar months August 2007-July 2008
- Stimulating questions that take you outside your everyday routine
- Thought provoking articles about issues youth feel are important
- Calendar includes information on social movement dates
- Student art on every page
- Creative craft ideas
- Innovative activity pages
- Inspiring quotes for every week

Now, starting September 9th at the Stand Up Rally, you have a chance to support us by owning your very own Austin Voices planner!

Planners are being sold at the Stand Up Rally by Austin Voices, but you can also buy them from Vulcan Video

and BookWoman stores for \$10.

If you buy the planner directly from Austin Voices at the Stand Up Rally, students get a 50% discount! That's right, \$5!

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Sincerely,

The YAN Squad

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