

# About YWIC

**Our teen worker model is recognized as a best practice throughout the city**, and the **Youth Work Innovation Center** is an expansion of that program. We engage middle and high school students in project-based programming to help prepare them for the workforce while training the next generation of Youth Workers.



## Why change the current model?

Middle school students are under-served in our after school programs, and this program aims to bridge the gap between our elementary and teen programs. Over the years, our teen worker program has flourished and we want to take it to the next level.

## What are the benefits?

Neu-Life is already known as a quality organization with an innovative model. This will expand our model to reach more youth and provide a greater impact. This model can be replicated in agencies across the country, and be known as a best practice in hiring and youth work. We can potentially engage our youth from K4 through high school and beyond!

**Youth Work  
Innovation  
Center**

2014 W. NORTH AVENUE  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53205

## WHAT DOES THE NEW MODEL LOOK LIKE?

The program has three main components:

### MIDDLE SCHOOL WORKERS

This is our entry into our workforce development programs. We recruited 5th graders from our Jackson & Brown Street CLC sites and youth from nearby neighborhoods to be a part of our pilot program. They interviewed to be a part of the program, and once selected were placed in project-based work groups, modeled after the teen worker program. This program includes professionalism and prevention curriculums in addition to hands-on activities to keep students engaged. The projects are based on current workforce needs and student interests. All youth are enrolled in our Student Advocate preventative case management program and will receive small stipends for their work.

### HIGH SCHOOL TEEN WORKERS

Teen workers are currently recruited from nearby neighborhoods and through Employ Milwaukee's Earn & Learn program (and soon from our new Middle School program). Teen Workers are interviewed to be a part of the program, and once selected, are placed in project-based work groups. The program includes a mentorship program, where teens develop curriculum and facilitate activities for the Middle School Workers and elementary youth from our CLC sites. Teen Workers who wish to work in the Youth Work field will be given the opportunity to become Entry-Level Certified Youth Workers through the Child and Youth Care Certification Board (CYCCB), and are actively recruited to be our next generation of Neu-Life youth workers. Currently, around half of our current staff are Neu-Life alum! Other tracks to employment include CNA training, basic carpentry, catering and hospitality experience through our catering company, Farmfork Catering, social media marketing/design, and much more. All Teen Workers are also enrolled in our Student Advocate preventative case management program, focused on setting (and meeting) professional, academic, and personal goals. Teen workers are paid an hourly rate.

### YOUTH WORKER TRAINING CENTER

Small groups of youth from our elementary locations will be transported to the YWIC to participate in a variety of activities, led by new-to-the-field youth workers, both Neu-Life Assistant Teachers and High School Teen Workers. Veteran Neu-Life staff will observe the new teachers, give feedback (using the YPQI coaching assessment), and model best-practice youth work.