

Overview of Youth TimeBanking (YTB), YTBNJ.org, and YTB100 during COVID-19.

YTBNJ.org is a 501(c)3 nonprofit. YTBNJ was incorporated in November 2019. The ideas for YTB were developed over several years and the current form of YTB has been in existence since spring 2016. Youth have been involved with other forms of timebanking in various ways for many years. The YTBNJ Team had plans it was about to implement in 2020 until COVID-19 put them on hold. The team reconsidered what we could realistically do and developed a project called **YTB100** described below.

Timebanking was started in 1980 by Dr. Edgar S. Cahn and International Timebanking Day is celebrated in March with participation from across the world. Youth TimeBanking or YTB was inspired by a meeting with Dr. Cahn in 2012 along with Chapter 12 of his book “No More Throw-Away People: The Co-Production Imperative.” Dr. Cahn defined five core values of timebanking. 1) We Are All Assets: everyone has something of value to share. 2) Redefining Work: rewarding all work, including unpaid and caregiving work. 3) Reciprocity: paying it forward ensures that we help each other build the world we will live in. 4) Social Networks: people helping each other enriches our lives. 5) Respect: the foundation for a healthy community and strong democracy. See also <https://timebanks.org/>. Furthermore, co-production emphasizes the need for people, including youth, to be involved with creation, design, management, delivery, and review of services they use. With this model, everyone affected is involved in a meaningful way. Exchanges are not transactional. They are relational-participatory. YTBNJ involves youth in the spirit of co-production to influence projects like **YTB100**.

YTB is a community service practice that uses time as its currency. Youth earn YTB credits for their service contributions. Youth can then apply their credits towards school supplies, sports gear, cell phone minutes, a supermarket gift card, etc. With consent of their parent-guardian, youth can exchange their YTB credits in a reciprocal manner for a service or help, such as a ride, field trip expenses, or lessons for something they want to learn. YTBNJ reaches youth through its network of community organizations: Care Management, Family Support, Youth Partnership, Family Success Centers & others. YTB helps participants expand their world by meeting good people, seeing new places, and doing things with and for others. Through YTB youth can find mentors and trusted adults to rely on.

YTB’s primary purpose is to support youth in their transition to adulthood by identifying service opportunities that increase community awareness and expand their network of social supports. YTB encourages youth to discover their talents and develop skills to help; and to safely expand their comfort zone for helping at home, in their neighborhood, community, county, and beyond. YTB strives to bring opportunities for youth to take safe risks. We want youth to realize that their capacity and capability to help others is very much needed by their community. YTB is open to all youth, including youth with complex and-or special needs. YTB respects youth from all backgrounds.

YTBNJ.org’s **Vision** is that all youth transition to adulthood with the experience of demonstrating responsibility for service to others and with a strong sense of being connected to their community.

YTBNJ.org’s **Mission** is to provide training and implementation support for Youth TimeBanking with community, family, & youth organizations and to provide technical assistance with data reporting tools.

YTBNJ’s current projects:

- During COVID-19, YTBNJ.org is coordinating **YTB100**. The goal is to earn 100 YTB credits by the end of a YTB100 season, which is four months. Youth will receive a reward each month. The YTB Team will send participants a weekly list of activities to complete in five different categories. The categories are Write, Move, Design, Learn, and Serve. A small number of youths are participating in Season 1 from NJ, CT, VT along with members of a youth club in Jamaica.
- After COVID-19, YTBNJ will coordinate opportunities for youth focused on five areas: 1) Community Service; 2) “Practice Sessions” with YTB Coaches to learn new skills; 3) YTB Event Days to demonstrate project activities; 4) YTB Field Trips for volunteer service experiences, and 5) YTB Leadership at Youth Conferences and YTB Event Management.

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