

# Celebrating International Youth Day

UNITED  
NATIONS

INTERNATIONAL  
YOUTH DAY

2018  
SAFE  
SPACES  
FOR YOUTH

#YouthDay #SafeSpaces4Youth

International Youth Day was designated by the United Nations in 1999 and is celebrated annually on August 12th. This year's theme is **Safe Spaces for Youth**.

Young people need safe spaces where they can meet, engage in activities related to their diverse needs and interests, participate in decision making processes and freely express themselves. While there are many types of spaces, safe spaces ensure the dignity and safety of all. Safe spaces such as civic spaces enable youth to engage in governance issues; public spaces afford youth the opportunity to participate in sports and other leisure activities in the community; digital spaces help youth interact virtually across borders with everyone; and well planned physical spaces can help accommodate the needs of diverse youth especially those vulnerable to marginalization or violence.

Ensuring that safe spaces are inclusive, youth from diverse backgrounds especially those from outside the local community, need to be assured of respect and self-worth.

Sometimes youth may lack the space to fully express themselves without feeling uncomfortable or unwelcome. Without a safe space, youth from different race/ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation or cultural background may feel intimidated to freely contribute to the community. When youth have safe spaces to engage, they can effectively contribute to development, including peace and social togetherness.

*For more information about the United Nations and International Youth Day go to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/international-youth-day-2018.html>.*

## **Newspaper Activities :**

Look through the newspaper for news or information about activities for young people. Are they part of International Youth Day? If not, are they accessible and welcoming to all young people in the community?

Safe spaces includes spaces for young people to connect and express themselves online. Young Voices of New York ([www.yvnewyork.com](http://www.yvnewyork.com)) is a website designed to provide an opportunity for young people under the age of 14 to have a forum, to increase their communication skills, review books and movies, and share ideas with other youth across New York State. Join us today - Permission forms are available at <https://tinyurl.com/yvnyParent>

## **On Twitter @UN4Youth, #SafeSpaces4Youth**

*This youth centered information was brought to you by this newspaper's Newspaper in Education program. Please consider becoming an NIE sponsor!*