



Community Service hours are a mandate for some school districts and an opportunity for teens and young adults to build life skills. Youth want something fun and meaningful and The Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live Partnership provides that foundation. High school, Friday Night Live, (FNL) and middle school, Club Live (CL) youth work in partnership with adults to create essential and powerful projects that enhance and improve our local community. Youth research, plan, design, implement and evaluate social action activities, advocate for safe and healthy environments, and promote health policies to decrease access and availability of substances in our community. Rather than a sole focus on education to have youth “Just Say No” or to make “healthier choices”, youth develop projects that directly impact their lives. They enroll the community, merchants, parents, schools, media, law enforcement, elected officials, neighborhood groups and other youth to take an active role in contributing to the wellbeing of all our citizens.

High School Student, Allie, age 17 stated; “I only recently began volunteering with Friday Night Live but already I know how passionate every staff member and youth alike are about this program. Initially, what drew me in was an opportunity to volunteer, something I’ve always enjoyed, but I’ve realized the extreme significance of the work here. FNL is working with and for youth to discourage Drug and Alcohol use, this mission is why I really want to continue volunteering with this program.”

Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live mission is to build partnerships for positive and healthy youth development which engage youth as active leaders and resources in their communities. Youth engage through local chapters at school sites or the county FNL office. During the summer internship program, experienced youth host a leadership training institute that familiarizes others to FNL, share their skills and current projects. Participants review jobs descriptions, develop their resumes, select the job they are interested in, and interview for a stipend position. Schedules are developed and youth begin attending work at the FNL Office. Here they plan and implement projects such as:

- Responsible Alcohol Merchant Awards (RAMA) is a comprehensive community wide drive to support, educate and honor responsible merchants who take an active role to limit youth access to alcohol. Youth review local and state law with merchants, conduct a visual survey of the store to insure compliance and document the best practices such as security measures, employee training, product placement and advertising. Youth roll up their sleeves and assist stores needing support, with a store makeover to help them achieve compliance with the law and introduce best practices. Merchants recommendations are forwarded to law enforcement and they are honored for their commitment to the health and safety of the community.
  
- Choose Your Ride (CYR) a campaign to promote safe rides home and reduce impaired driving in our community. Restaurants and bars are provided materials to display and distribute to remind customers that there are alternatives to impaired driving such as ride share services, having a pick-up plan, and designating a driver. Many venues offer food and non-alcoholic beverage incentives to the Designated Driver to do their part in creating safe roadways for all.
  
- Day Out With Thomas at Roaring Camp, provides youth an opportunity to expand their skills in visitor satisfaction and technical expertise through a variety of services such as food, train experience, sales and children's activities. FNL members raise funds, which they use to conduct trainings, attend conferences, and purchase materials for their projects, while spending the day with awed toddlers.

FNL allows youth to build caring relationships with peers and adult partners while building skills and having fun. Youth promote messages through youth driven and led, goal-directed, action oriented, innovative projects. Through shared experiences they encourage and empower each other to be active leaders and a community resource. FNL has a broad appeal to diverse ethnic, racial and social groups. "I like FNL because of the community of people who are involved in it.

Everyone is very accepting of one another”, shared Luke, age 14. Luke began FNL through the summer internship program a couple of years ago, started a chapter at his high school with a fellow student and is now a lead trainer and project manager for RAMA. FNL encourages and supports youth to identify and address their concerns and provides a wealth of opportunities and resources through conferences, training and hands on learning and practice of leadership skills. Transportation is provided for youth county wide to eliminate that barrier to participation.

Youth express that working in an office environment, at their schools and in the community, make them feel safe and more connected. FNL has helped them to attain paying jobs because of the skills they have built. James age 12 shared,” I like FNL because it gives me something fun to do in the summer so I am not bored. I have learned communication skills and I now know where everything is in Santa Cruz County.”

Friday Night Live/ Club Live has eight active chapters for the 2017-2018 school year serving Santa Cruz County youth. Join Friday Night Live at Aptos, Scotts Valley, Soquel, and Watsonville High School as well as Ceiba College Preparatory Academy. Club Live Chapter’s meet at Branciforte, Lakeview and Mission Hill Middle schools. Youth who do not see a chapter at their school site are encouraged to participate in projects throughout the year through the Youth Council.

To learn more about Friday Night Live, connect with active youth leaders and get involved, give us a call at 831-454-4974, email Maggie McGonigle at [Maggie.McGonigle@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Maggie.McGonigle@santacruzcounty.us), visit us at the FNL office at 1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz or send us a message on Facebook at SCCFNLP.