



National Conference for Community and Justice

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“IT’S MORE THAN JUST A CAMP IT’S A WAY OF LIFE!”

ANYTOWN is a week long residential program for youth, ages 15 to 18 years old. The ANYTOWN program has been in effect across the country since the early 1950’s. The goal of the program is to provide an opportunity for young people to explore their own social identities and biases in order to work toward creating an inclusive and just community, a community where all people are celebrated and all individuals belong.

The ANYTOWN program focuses on educating young people to be effective leaders in our pluralistic society. At ANYTOWN youth become delegates, representing their families, schools, communities and our global society. Delegates develop increased communication skills, cultural awareness, family relations, good citizenship, leadership abilities, and self-esteem. Delegates also develop a deeper understanding of diversity and learn ways in which to *leverage diversity*, working toward the creation of a community where all individuals are celebrated for their differences as well as their similarities. ANYTOWNers learn to better understand themselves and others as they experience the variety of cultural, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds from which members in the ANYTOWN community come.

ANYTOWNers can expect many things from their experience. They will make **true** friends in a very short of time; they will express themselves, and they will not only be listened to, they will be *heard*; they will get up in front of a group even if they thought it too great a challenge; they will learn to support and care for one another; they will sing silly songs and remember how to play; they will feel the sting of facing up to their own prejudice and learn about the different “isms” which we are all hurt by; they will feel the joy of climbing to a new level of human understanding and awareness; they will come to think of this diverse group of delegates, as people with whom they have much in common; they will start out missing their own beds, but they will end up missing ANYTOWN more than they ever could have imagined.