

The Island

The YES conference takes place on Star Island, a beautiful location off the coast of New Hampshire. As part of the Isles of Shoals, Star Island is cherished for its rich history and for its wonderful religious, educational and family retreats.

For almost a century, the island and its sponsorships have been organized by the nonprofit Star Island Corporation. To learn more about the island, go to www.starisland.org



Financial Aid

The cost of the conference varies slightly from year to year. Last year's conference fee and room and board rates can be found at <http://goo.gl/zGNtmb>

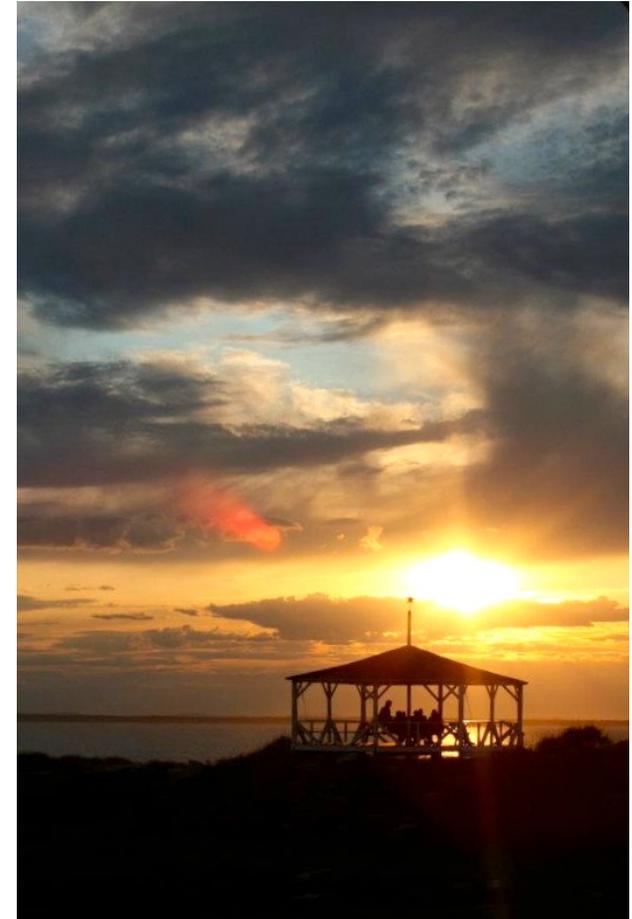
YES strives to ensure that all youth can attend the conference regardless of their financial circumstances. If the cost of the conference is a factor in determining whether or not you can attend, please contact our registrar at registraroftheyes@gmail.com



Since 2009, the YES Conference has been organized by Religious Youth Empowerment, Inc. (RYE). For more information about the organization, feel free to visit www.rye-inc.org



The Youth Empowerment & Spirituality Conference on Star Island



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Introduction

Every year during the last week of June, youth ages 15-22 gather for an entirely youth-led conference on a beautiful island to take a break from everyday life and build an open, spiritual community. It is a transformative week of adventure, thought-provoking workshops, and impromptu dance parties under the stars.

The Youth Empowerment and Spirituality (YES) conference is built around an intentionally welcoming community that provides young people with opportunities to explore who they are and foster meaningful connections with others in a safe space.

We seek to empower youth to be vocal participants in their local and global communities by giving them access to opportunities to grow as leaders and spiritually-grounded people.

In order to achieve these goals, we strive to ensure that the conference is one in which everyone feels comfortable.



Our covenant is simple: Respect yourself, everyone else, and the island. Drugs and alcohol are prohibited, and we adhere to these rules strictly, as they ensure the strength of our community. Though we practice Unitarian Universalist values, we welcome those of all spiritual backgrounds.

Our adult advisors and conference minister work with the youth staff over the course of the week to help us uphold this covenant and make sure the week runs smoothly.



Typical Activities

Daily Workshops

During the day, members of our conference (known as "shoalers") participate in a variety of workshops of their choice. They are designed and run by other conferees, and although the topics vary from year to year, some past favorites include:

- Gender & Sexuality
- Communication
- Social Action
- Arts and Crafts in the Art Barn
- Movie-Making

YES believes in providing leadership opportunities to all members; shoalers who are not designated workshop leaders have the chance to create and run their own workshops, called one-shots, throughout the week.

Evening Activities

Each evening, the YES conferees gather in "family groups" for games, discussion, and personal sharing. These smaller groups of 7-8 people form the building blocks of our conference's community and help forge new connections and friendships. After family groups, shoalers enjoy a family-style dinner. We choose a different theme each night, and conferees have the option to dress up in wacky costumes accordingly.

Nightly Worship

Worships usually consist of an activity or topic for discussion, several short readings, and a song. Worships serve as a sacred space for deeper sharing and exploring personal identity, and as such, they provide some of the most memorable and profound moments of the week.

