



MADISON SOS

THE YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FORUM

empowering teen girls through community leadership and activism

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ACTIVISM PROGRAM FOR TEEN GIRLS SEEKS MEMBERS

Madison—Madison SOS (Speak Out, Sister!), an initiative launched earlier this year to engage and empower high school teen girls through city-wide leadership and grassroots activism, is looking for students interested in participating in its fall Young Women's Leadership Forum.

Participants in the Forum will partake in six exciting workshops where they will learn how to take action on the issues that most matter to them. Along with twenty other teen leaders, they will discover how to speak out on the social justice issues affecting their lives, receive tips from local activists and leaders on the ways they can make a difference, and become stronger leaders.

Participation in Madison SOS is FREE, but registration is limited. Any high school girls entering grades 10-12 who are interested in participating in the Madison SOS Young Women's Leadership Forum are encouraged to attend an informational meeting on Friday, August 31 from 5-6 pm at the YWCA Madison (101 E Mifflin St, on the capitol square). Attendees will meet Madison SOS presenters and other teen leaders, receive a schedule of workshops, preview some of the workshop topics, register to win great door prizes, and enjoy delicious food catered by Whole Foods!

Madison SOS is organized by West High junior Natalia Thompson, who created the program as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award project (a leadership project aimed at establishing a sustainable solution to a community issue). She developed the program in response to her own research and observations on engagement levels of local teen girls. Natalia cites a landmark 2000 study by The Body Image Project, which found that the percentage of girls who say they are "happy with the way I am" drops from 60% to 29% between elementary and high school, explaining the strong correlation between self-esteem and the feeling of empowerment fostered by community engagement.

Natalia adds, "The Madison community has so much to gain from listening to the voices of its youth, including teen girls. And Madison can benefit in so many ways from a stronger, more active community of teen girls. As teens, we're tomorrow's leaders, so we shouldn't wait to get engaged in our communities."

Madison SOS will help participants arrange transportation to workshops if needed. Email madisonsos@yahoo.com with questions or for more information.

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