



# Advocacy Platform

## HOW YOTO CREATES CHANGE

Every day, YOTO supports youth experiencing homelessness with the essentials they need to stay in school. Advocacy takes this work further — lifting up youth voices, raising awareness, and shaping policies so all young people have the opportunity to thrive. Most often, this means raising awareness and sharing youth perspectives, but at times, with Board approval, YOTO also takes formal positions on key legislation.

### FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION

Schools aren't only places of learning — they are also vital access points for meals, transportation, counseling, and stability for youth experiencing homelessness. *YOTO advocates for strong, equitable, and fully funded public schools, including the wraparound services youth need to thrive.*

### ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

College, career training, and other postsecondary opportunities open doors to stability and success. Yet for youth experiencing homelessness, systemic barriers often put these pathways out of reach. *YOTO advocates for policies and programs that remove barriers and expand access to affordable higher education and career pathways for all youth.*

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing instability is one of the greatest barriers to a young person's success in school. In Pima County, rising rents, housing shortages, and evictions make it harder for YOTO youth and host families to stay housed. *YOTO supports policies and investments that expand access to stable and affordable housing for all youth.*

### ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

When youth don't have food, period products, hygiene supplies, or healthcare, it's much harder for them to stay healthy, focus in school, and succeed. Cuts to critical services only deepen these challenges, leaving too many young people without the essentials they need. *YOTO advocates for consistent access to basic needs so all youth can thrive.*

### TAX INCENTIVES FOR YOTO DONORS

Tax incentives like the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit provide significant support for YOTO's programs. Along with other tax-advantaged giving options, these incentives encourage new donors and sustain ongoing community support. *YOTO advocates for state and federal policies that make charitable giving more accessible and help sustain vital services for youth experiencing homelessness.*

## YOTO's Advocacy Priorities