

# December 2025 Newsletter

Free Painting Workshop,  
Year-End Giving, How to Help a Friend,  
Holiday Resources, and more!



## Youth Matter! You Matter!



**Big News!** We're thrilled to announce a \$10,000 Challenge Match for our year-end Youth Matter! You Matter! Campaign. Every gift you make between now and December 31 will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your impact for youth in the Snoqualmie Valley!

No matter the size, your contribution helps us kick off 2026 strong—and thanks to this match, your generosity goes twice as far, up to \$10,000.

Join us today and make a difference that matters!

[Donate Now](#)

**“Empower Youth Network programs help us cultivate kindness by providing students with the tools they need to navigate a million different situations.”**

Micailah Donner, Twin Falls Middle School Counselor



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## Holiday Office Hours

**Empower Youth Network's office will be closed from  
Wednesday, December 24, 2025 through  
Thursday, January 1, 2026.**

If you need to get in touch about general inquiries, please contact us via email at [admin@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:admin@empoweryouthnetwork.org). We will be checking that inbox periodically throughout 12/24 - 01/01.

For urgent matters, please contact Interim Executive Director Helene Wentink at [helene@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:helene@empoweryouthnetwork.org).

For emergencies, please call 911.

If you or someone you know is experiencing thoughts of suicide; a mental health crisis; substance use concerns; any other emotional distress, please do not hesitate to reach out to the **988 Lifeline** for support.

Thank you for your understanding! We look forward to catching up once we're back and everything in store for 2026. In the meantime, we hope you have safe, fun holiday celebrations and a very happy new year!

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## 2026 How to Help a Friend Training



**Our 2026 How to Help a Friend Training is now open for registration!** This training is for high school teen leaders who will help train 6th, 7th and 8th graders in the Snoqualmie Valley and Riverview School Districts.

How to Help a Friend is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention training. The in-class middle school training is a peer-led educational program that teaches 6th - 8th grade students healthy coping strategies, how to recognize the signs and symptoms of suicidal thinking, and encourages help-seeking behaviors.

This training requires committing to both training dates Thursday, January 8, and Wednesday, January 14; from 5 - 7 p.m. and located in Fall City at the Fall City Fire Station Meeting Room.

**Register for Free**

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## Holiday Coping Strategies & Flood Support

As much joy as this season can bring, it also can come with its' own unique struggles. You might be feeling the stress of gift shopping, expectations for celebrations, showing up for social gatherings, or the winter gloom has you feeling a little down, or any other challenges you just so happen to be dealing with during "the most wonderful time of the year." Not to mention, the floods

across Snoqualmie Valley!

There are coping strategies and resources below that can help get you to a better place this season. If you relate to any of this, you are not alone.

### Managing Holiday Stress

Ways to Deal with Depression During the Gloomy Days of Winter

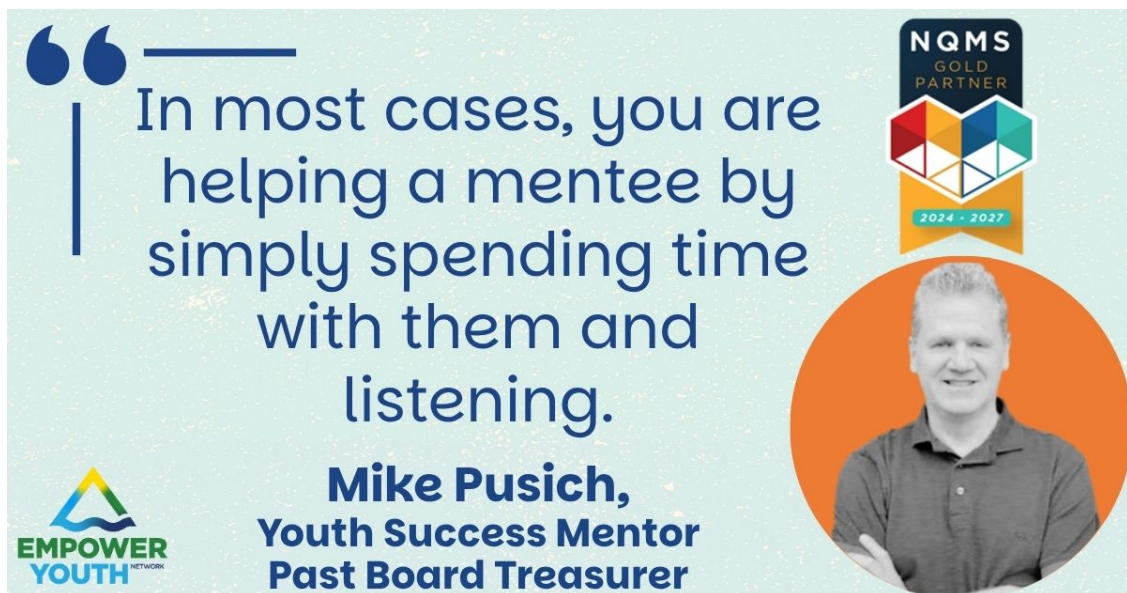
Snoqualmie Valley Food Bank / Kiwanis Giving Trees (Scroll Down to Seasonal Section)

A Supportive Community for All (Widescale Support)

Flood Response Volunteer Opportunities

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## Youth Success Mentors Needed



“In most cases, you are helping a mentee by simply spending time with them and listening.

**Mike Pusich,**  
Youth Success Mentor  
Past Board Treasurer

**EMPOWER YOUTH NETWORK**

**NQMS GOLD PARTNER**  
2024 - 2027

A circular portrait of Mike Pusich, a man with short grey hair wearing a dark polo shirt, is set against an orange background.

**Imagine the power of showing up for a young person who needs someone to believe in them.** Volunteering as an in-school mentor with Youth Success Mentoring (YSM) a program of Empower Youth Network (EYN) is

about being a steady, caring presence in a student's life.

Many kids face challenges that make school and life feel overwhelming, and having an adult who listens, encourages, and reminds them of their potential can change everything. Your time and attention can spark confidence, inspire dreams, and create a ripple effect that lasts far beyond the classroom. When you step into that role, you're not just giving back—you're shaping a future. Meeting 1:1 with the same student one hour a week during the school day for the school year, CAN transform a life. Will you be that difference?

Email the Youth Success Mentoring Team

Apply to be a Mentor Now

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## Needing Help is Human Necesitar Ayuda es Humano



Positive Community  
Norms Campaigns  
by  
Empower Youth  
Network

**What are the Needing Help is Human and Necesitar Ayuda es Humano Campaigns?** These community campaigns are grounded in positive community norms, the primary goals of which are to correct misperceptions, build hope and promote healthy behaviors, rather than focusing on what is negative or broken. We want to encourage a culture where seeking help is seen as normal and human, whether it's for food, basic needs, financial challenges, mental health support or crisis.

**How can I help?** Spread the word! The more normalcy we can create around help-seeking behaviors, the more supportive we can be to our community, our

families, and our youth. If you would like information on this or any other programs, please do not hesitate to reach out!

**Contact the Community Campaign Coordinator**

**Needing Help is Human**

**Necesitar Ayuda es Humano**



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## Weekend Power Pack Updates



Volunteer groups pictured above (from left to right): Aubrey Rosenthal & friends at the Yoga Garden, Cub Scouts of Pack 569, and the Graham family.

Rain or shine, flooding or fine, we are keeping students in the Riverview School District (RSD) fed over the weekends and break no matter what! We could not do this without your support.

Aubrey Rosenthal & friends held a packing party at The Yoga Garden that put together 260 Packs for us.

Cub Scouts of Pack 569 and their parents assembled 230 Packs at the Empower Youth Network office.

The Graham family stopped by again this year to drop off 74 packs they completed all on their own.

Each week, EYN provides roughly 200 Power Packs to students in need, helping ensure consistent access to nutritious meals. There are so many ways we can collaborate, so no RSD youth go hungry!

**If you or your organization is interested in participating in a packing party, please contact us below.**

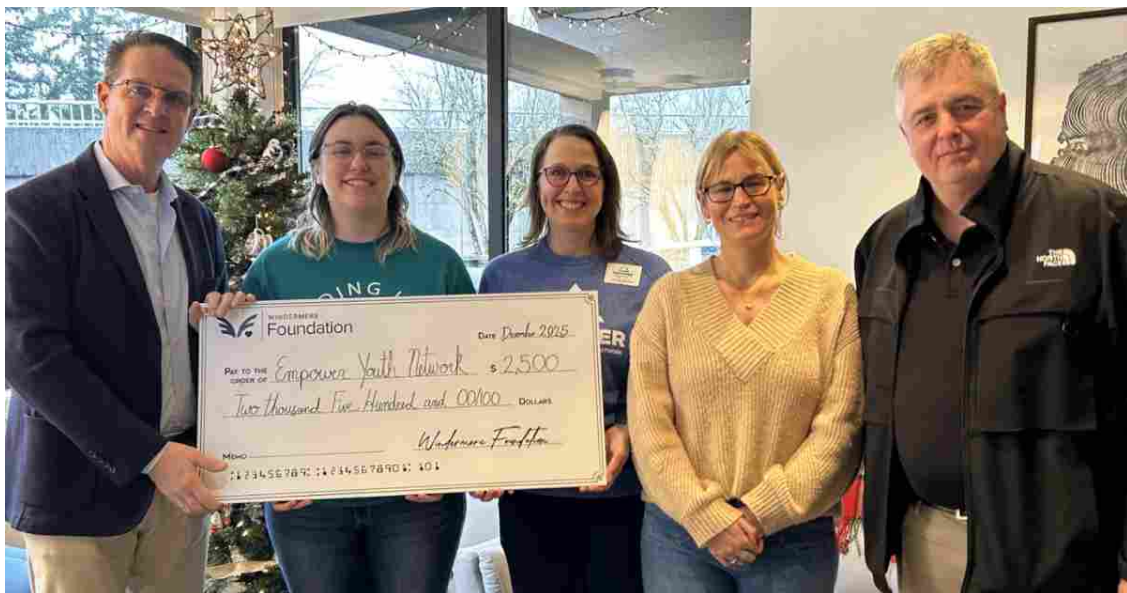
Together, we can make a difference to keep kids fed.

## Contact Us

We would also like to give a huge thank you to everyone who has donated via our Amazon Wish List. **If you would like to purchase items on our Wish List, please do so below.**

Thank you for your continued support!

## Purchase Wishlist Items



People pictured above (from left to right): Brian McRae, Michelle John (EYN Grants Coordinator), Michelle Marshall (EYN Weekend Power Packs Coordinator), Ali Mills and Todd Baxter.

**Thank you** to the **Windermere Foundation** for supporting Weekend Power Packs with a \$2,500 grant check! We are grateful for these funds to continue feeding Riverview School District youth on the weekends and over breaks. It was great to stop by the Windermere office yesterday, 12/17 to chat about the work we do, and how we can only do it with collaboration like this!

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## Free Upcoming Youth Events

A poster for a Penguin Painting Workshop. The background shows a person painting a penguin on a canvas. The text is overlaid on the image.

**FREE** Penguin Painting Workshop

Location: Northwest Art Center in Duvall

For middle and high schoolers!

Friday, January 23  
2:30–4:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

A poster for a UV Resin Jewelry Making workshop. The background shows several colorful, circular resin jewelry pieces. The text is overlaid on the image.

**FREE** UV Resin Jewelry Making

Location: Works from the heART in North Bend

For middle and high schoolers!

Monday, February 16  
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

*Penguin Painting and Jewelry Making are both free events that are open to **middle** and **high school students** to attend.*

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## Pathways Updates



Pathways to Employment Success got to have some fun over at the Riverview Learning Center (RLC) the last couple of weeks helping youth explore potential career options and giving them the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you to Riverview School District board member Lori Oviatt for helping out on Monday, 11/17 with a Resume Building Workshop. Students learned how to account for AI in their job search, best practices for formatting, and how to emphasize the experience they do have.

Thank you to the City of Carnation for stopping by on Monday, 12/01 to help conduct a Mock Interview Workshop. Students got to have their resumes reviewed and walk through the general interview process with City Manager Rhonda Ender and Mayor Jim Ribail.



Thank you to First Light Farm and CDK Construction for being a part of the RLC Career Day on Monday, 12/08. Students got to hear about farming techniques, education, and internship opportunities as well as pathways in construction, how to get into the field, and the benefits of working at CDK.

Interested in empowering the next generation of leaders?

Learn more about Pathways

Contact us



# THANK YOU

*First Light Farm &  
Learning Center*

**CDK**  
CONSTRUCTION

## Kindness Month Recap



Cities pictured above (from left to right): Duvall, Carnation, North Bend, and Snoqualmie.

Thank you to everyone who celebrated Kindness Month with us in November! Communities across all of Snoqualmie Valley lived up to what **#BeKindSV** is all about in so many different ways, celebrating with yard signs, coloring books, a screening of Paddington at the North Bend Theatre, proclamations, and so much more. Already looking forward to next year! Special thanks again to the City of Duvall, City of Carnation, City of North Bend, City of Snoqualmie,

Riverview School District, Snoqualmie Valley School District, and the Snoqualmie Tribe for continuing to support us in the many ways we get prevention work done.



Pictured above: Riverview School District Board and EYN staff

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## Some Useful Resources for Today



SAFER  
SCHOOLS  
TOGETHER

The digital landscape in 2025 looks vastly different than at the turn of the 21st century. It is imperative we inquire about what we need to know as parents/caregivers to protect children and teach them how to responsibly and appropriately utilize technology. **Read the guide by Safer Schools Together.**

hopelink

**The Hopelink Mobile Market** distributes food, and everything is free! Access a wide selection of fresh produce, dairy, and breads, as well as frozen foods, and more to choose from. Mobile Market clients can shop two (2) times per month and must be enrolled.



The Snoqualmie Valley Food Bank helps provide a variety of different services. Learn more about their [programs here](#) and there [shopping hours here](#).

### **What resources or work should we share in the next newsletter?**

Please contact Communication and Engagement Coordinator Maddy Horn at [maddy@empoweryouthnetwork.org](mailto:maddy@empoweryouthnetwork.org).

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#### **About Empower Youth Network**

Empower Youth Network's mission is to promote and inspire youth to lead safe, healthy, and successful lives. The Network helps build, support, and coordinate community leadership to promote health and wellness through effective strategies to make the Snoqualmie Valley a place where all residents thrive.

Check out our [website](#) to learn more.

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