

YCA Fast Facts

- The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is an intervention program for at-risk youth consisting of a 22-week Residential Phase followed by a 12-month Post-Residential Mentoring Phase.
- The Residential Phase, set in a quasi-military environment, focuses on basic lifestyle changes approached through a rigorous program of education, training and service to the community.
- During the Post-Residential Phase, graduates are mentored by a caring adult who is a consistent and positive role model who works with the graduate to sustain his or her new positive lifestyle changes.
- ChalleNGe is administered by the National Guard Bureau (NGB) on behalf of the Department of Defense (DoD).
- There are 29 program sites located in 24 states and the territory of Puerto Rico.
- To qualify for ChalleNGe, applicants must be drug-free high school dropouts between 16 and 18 years of age.
- On a daily per capita basis, ChalleNGe is
 - 85% less expensive than High School
 - 320% less expensive than Job Corps
 - 433% less expensive than Juvenile Corrections
 - 600% less expensive than Adult Corrections
 - 660% less expensive than Private Military-style Programs
- ChalleNGe programs graduated 7,003 Corpsmembers for the current reporting period.
- Graduating Corpsmembers improved 1.7 grade levels in reading and 1.8 grade levels in math during the 22-week Residential Phase.
- Seventy percent of graduated Corpsmembers were awarded GED's, nearly double the 41% average pass rate for the same age group in reporting Adult Education programs
- Communities surrounding ChalleNGe facilities received the benefit of 590,665 hours of volunteer service to the community. This represents a value of \$3,041,925 based on the Federal minimum wage.
- The ChalleNGe program's unique Friendly-Match Mentor model for all graduates has demonstrable benefits over conventional Stranger-Match mentoring models.

The Youth ChalleNGe Program has been independently rated one of the most cost-effective, efficient and successful programs for at-risk youth in the United States. In 2003, 75% of program graduates received their high school diploma or GED. More than 50% joined the work force, 19% joined the military and 20% continued their education. Graduates have contributed more than 3 million hours of community service.