

Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities

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Starting up a Project to Counter Military Recruiting

If you would like to organize an effort to counter military recruiting in your community, here are some good tools and sources of information to get you started:

1. First, read Project YANO's report, "Using Equal Access to Counter Militarism in High Schools." In it we share some very important lessons learned over many years of organizing. It can be downloaded from www.projectyano.org or ordered by mail for \$6.50 from Project YANO.
2. Several organizing tool kits are available to download from the National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth, www.nnomy.org. Select RESOURCES from the top menu and click on Downloads, then select Toolkits/guides. Focus on the items with the most recent dates.
3. At nnomy.org you can also get basic information on the key methods the military uses to recruit, including: military aptitude testing (ASVAB) in high schools, military access to student lists, high school programs like Jr. ROTC, mobile recruiting vans, and more.
4. If you are a high school student, download the flier "Actions Students Can Take..." from www.projectyano.org.
5. If you are a non-student, reach out to existing community organizations that might provide volunteers or sponsorship for a counter-recruitment project. They can include social justice or peace groups, religious organizations, or even a teacher union. Exchange ideas with them and ask if they will help form a coalition, project or task force.
6. Organize a community forum and invite parents, students, organizational representatives and other community members to discuss the issue and begin forming a project to inform youths about alternatives to the military.
7. A simple way for non-students to reach out to potential student activists is to organize volunteers to hand out leaflets outside school entrances in the morning. For information on your right to do this, visit the Youth page at COMD's Web site, www.comdsd.org.
8. Download or order samples of educational literature for young people produced by the organizations listed on the reverse.
9. Recruit military veterans to help educate young people about the realities of military enlistment and war. Ideally, look for vets from working-class and other communities that are under the greatest pressure from recruiters. To reach them, place ads in small newspapers,

post notices in public places, carry leaflets for vets to antiwar activities, and reach out to community groups whose members might include vets (see www.veteransforpeace.org).

10. Once you have an organization or project formed, apply for a start-up grant (e.g., \$1000-\$3000) from one of the foundations listed below.

11. Research local job training, apprenticeship, community service, and college financial aid resources that can be distributed as alternatives to enlistment. List them in fliers.

12. Before you begin reaching out to schools and school staff, read the recommendations for approaching schools in the “Using Equal Access...” report from Project YANO. This report and some of the other tool kits at nnomy.org will give you specific ideas for activities and goals to pursue. Those goals can include, among others, proposing a school policy on recruiting, gaining equal school access to present alternatives to students, removing JROTC shooting ranges, limiting military (ASVAB) testing in schools, etc.

13. Join NNOMY’s national counter-recruitment discussion list (see below), where you can ask questions and share information with hundreds of other organizers around the country. Join the group at www.facebook.com/DemilitarizeOurSchools.

Some good information sources:

“Before You Enlist” (Eng./Span.) www.beforeyouenlist.org; best video educational tool.

Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft (COMD), P.O. Box 15195, San Diego, CA 92175; (760)753-7518; www.comdsd.org (see the students’ rights info. on the youth page).

National Call to Save Civilian Public Education; www.savecivilianeducation.org

National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth (NNOMY), www.nnomy.org

Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (Project YANO), P.O. Box 230157, Encinitas, CA 92023; (760)634-3604; contact@projectyano.org; www.projectyano.org

War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; (212)228-0450; www.warresisters.org

Youth Activists/Youth Allies Network, 224 West 29th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10001; (212)239-0022; www.yayanetwork.org

Foundations that support counter-recruitment work:

-A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, 168 Canal St., 6th Floor, NY, NY 10013, <https://ajmuste.org>

-Resist, P.O. Box 301240, Boston, MA 02130, www.resist.org