



**Title: "Youth Mattering: The Power of Youth and Communities Thriving Together"**

**Description:**

Welcome to the "Youth Mattering" Story Competition! This competition aims to highlight the importance of mattering among youth and the community. We invite students in 6th to 8th grade and 9th to 12th grade to participate by crafting compelling stories that explore the significance of mattering in today's world. The winning stories will be printed onto storyboards and featured in a special StoryWalk event in Augusta in May!

The winners (one from grades 6-8 and one from 9-12), will be selected by members of the Kennebec County Youth Advisory Board (KC YAB). The KC YAB has members from grades 7 through 11, with representation from the following schools: Erskine Academy, Cony Middle and High School, China Middle School, Gardiner Area High School, and Hall-Dale Middle and High School.

The location of the StoryWalk and winners of the competition will be announced during the Youth Mental Health Awareness Event taking place on Saturday, April 6, 2024, in Downtown Augusta. The winners will also be notified via their contact information shared below.

**Prompts:**

Participants are required to choose one of the following prompts to base their story on:

- Reflect on a personal experience where your voice as a young person made a difference in your community or someone's life.
- Imagine a world where youth are not heard or valued. What would that world look like, and why is it essential for youth to be recognized and empowered? How does youth empowerment help communities?
- Tell the story of a young individual or group who took a stand against injustice, prejudice, or environmental issues, showcasing the power of youth activism.
- Reflect on the importance of mental health among youth and what communities can do to address this problem.



- Imagine a community where youth and community members work closely together to tackle issues such as mental health, substance use, or other issues. What does this community look like? How do they work together? What are the results of their partnership?

### **Guidelines:**

- Stories should be original
- Word count should be between 500 to 1000 words.
- Submissions must be typed and formatted appropriately.
- Participants must include their name, grade, and school with their submission (via the Google form listed below in the submission instructions or through the email list provided).
- Each participant can submit only one entry.
- Participants must reside and/or attend school in Kennebec County.

### **Judging Criteria:**

The Kennebec County Youth Advisory Board will judge the entries based on the following criteria:

1. Creativity and originality of the story.
2. Relevance to the chosen prompt.
3. Clarity of expression and storytelling.
4. Impact and ability to convey the importance of youth mattering.

### **Prizes:**

- One winner will be selected from the 6th to 8th grade.
- One winner will be selected from the 9th to 12th grade.
- Winners will receive recognition and have their stories printed onto storyboards for the StoryWalk event.

**Submission Deadline: Thursday, March 28, 2024**



Winners will be announced on Saturday, April 6, 2024.

**How to Submit:**

Participants can submit their stories via email to [a.hughes@hccame.org](mailto:a.hughes@hccame.org) with the subject line "Youth Mattering - Story Competition Submission" or by completing the [Google submission form](#).

We look forward to reading the inspiring stories that showcase why youth matter. Let your voices be heard and make a difference through your words!