



Conejo Valley, California

## ***Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)***

### ***What is LeadYoung Institute?***

LeadYoung Institute (LYI) is a community-based program to identify and develop 10- to 18-year-olds, gifted in organizational leadership, in the Conejo Valley (California, USA; just north of Los Angeles).

### ***How does LYI define leadership?***

The founder, Alan E. Nelson, Ed.D., formerly taught at Pepperdine and now teaches leadership at USC Marshall School of Business and related topics at the Naval Postgraduate School. He defines leadership as “the process of helping people accomplish together what they would not or could not as individuals.” Leaders are those who catalyze leadership, and leading is what they do to accomplish this. Thus, the impetus is on executive skill development as opposed to self-actualization, citizenship, or any number of other qualities often confused with leadership among youth.



### ***What do you mean by students “gifted in leadership”?***

In 1972, the US Department of Education denoted leadership as a domain in its definition of gifted and talented education. California adopts that definition as well. Dr. Nelson’s work the last decade, with thousands of students around the world, confirms that between 5 and 10% of preteens and teens possess a superior ability to learn organizational leadership skills at an accelerated pace.

### ***Is LYI open to any student?***

LYI is open to any student who qualifies, similar to a travel team athletic program, AP/GATE academic course, or top tier artistic troupe. Genetic research the last 10-15 years shows that a predisposition to leading is 10-60% hereditary, depending on the quality being measured. In other words, it’s both nature and nurture. Inviting those with lower aptitudes into the program will tend to overwhelm them and potentially decrease their confidence and self-esteem, as well as slowing the others from developing their potential.

### *How do you estimate leadership gifting?*

Our initial invitation is based primarily on 3 assessments, much like a 3-legged stool:

1. Submit 2 Social Influence Surveys (SIS) submitted by an adult on the student (only 1 allowed from a family member). The SIS is a free, 25-question, online instrument on the same website as the LYI webpage ([www.LeadYoungTraining.com](http://www.LeadYoungTraining.com)).
2. One letter of recommendation (in addition to the application) from a person who has observed the student in a social setting, where s/he exhibited leadership behavior.
3. A skill-drill activity where the student participates in fun, brief, project-based activities with other students, where trainers can observe the potential nominee.



are 4 modules of each program.

### *What do LYI training programs look like?*

LYI will strive to construct an organic approach to leadership development, meaning it might look different in a school hosting an LYI program versus one we provide for the community. Primarily, it will utilize the project-based training curricula developed by Dr. Nelson over the last decade. LeadNow is for 10- to 13-year-olds and consists of eight 90-minute sessions per semester, after school. It involves 15- to 30-minute mini-projects, where designated team leaders lead 4-6 peers in a project with live coaching and debrief sessions. LeadWell is for ages 14-18, done like LeadNow or in sixteen 45-minute sessions. Half of LeadWell involves a single project in teams of 5-8 where students rotate leadership roles, resulting in an event or real-life project with a facilitated post-mortem analysis. There

### *What is the cost?*

Costs will vary, depending on whether a student is involved in the main community program or in school/civic group sponsored ones. A typical module will range in price from \$200 to \$400 and include training, workbook, T-shirt, personalized coaching, and training materials. Yet a sponsoring organization could offer low- or no-cost programs to its members. (Contact LYI for more info.) The plan is to offer \$500 per year memberships that include 1 module of training, a parent seminar, and personalized coaching. This exclusive community will include mentoring, local field trips, and social events. Non-member applicants can select programs a la carte, but will not be invited to certain events. Students/families with financial challenges will be offered partial or full scholarships, based on need and available funding.

### *Is there any training provided for parents and/or educators?*

Parents of LYI participants will receive special training to coach their students and develop leadership potential in the home, as well as become advocates for the students in schools and other organizations. Students gifted in leadership are often misunderstood and thus responded to inappropriately.

### *How can adults get involved with LYI?*

LYI needs adults who are willing to serve as certified Trainers and Koaches. College students, parents, and community leaders interested in serving young leaders should contact Dr. Nelson directly ([info@kidlead.com](mailto:info@kidlead.com)). He'll interview you and walk you through the process that best fits LYI needs and your skills and availability. LYI is open to volunteer and paid roles, so let us know what you're most interested in pursuing. We're also interested in mentors, fundraising networkers, and sponsors. We're also looking for other charities for which we can offer project opportunities to our participants.

### *Is LYI a non-profit or for-profit organization?*

LYI is sponsored by KidLead Inc., a federally recognized, 501(c)(3) charitable organization, founded by Dr. Nelson. KidLead works with other non-profits in the US. LeadYoung Training Systems is a DBA of Dr. Nelson that holds the intellectual property and curricula used by LYI. It is involved in international partnerships and curricula sales via Amazon.com and LYTS.



### *How is LYI different from other youth leadership programs?*

LYI is the world's first community-based effort to ID and develop students gifted in organizational leadership. While LYI applauds other leadership-oriented programs offered by schools, faith communities, and other civic groups, none of these focus solely on students specifically gifted in leadership, offering training curriculum modeled after executive programs that include project-based activities with Socratic coaching.

### *Is LYI seeking sponsors?*

LYI values the involvement of individuals, civic groups, and corporations interested in investing in young leader development in the Conejo Valley. Plus, we're pioneering work and research related to the identification and development of leaders at a very young age. Whether you want to sponsor a specific school or faith community or donate scholarships for in-need students, we would love to talk further about PR and marketing opportunities in exchange for your support.

### ***What happens after LYI training?***

Perhaps a better way of putting this is “in addition” to LYI training. Our goal is to offer concentrated organizational leadership development skill training. But in addition to our accelerated training curricula, we plan to include an array of ongoing opportunities for young leaders to take their abilities to the next level. We plan to network with local, SoCal, and national leaders for the purpose of offering mentoring opportunities. Plus, we will offer extended programs to help these young leaders develop their skills via community projects, primarily focusing on local charities for give-back experiences. In other words, we’ll help LYI participants gain real-world experience with coaching and supervision. Older students will be invited to join Dr. Nelson in his classes at USC for further networking. We also plan to offer long-term networking and analysis to study the longitudinal effects of young leader development. Alumni will be encouraged to keep in touch with LYI as they grow in their careers.

### ***My student’s schedule is already so full. How can I justify one more activity?***

Whenever you go to a food buffet, chances are you peruse what’s available and select your favorite items to go on your plate. No doubt, the caliber of student we’re seeking is probably busy, but we’re convinced that establishing a priority for a top-quality program like LYI will help qualified students find room in their calendars. Leadership is a lifelong skill, transcending athletics and other entertainment options. For example, less than 1% of Division I college basketball players will ever be recruited into the NBA, so it only makes sense to invest in what will result in the greatest impact over the long term. Top universities today are looking for more than GPA and SAT scores. They’re looking for students who are well-rounded and who can add to their campus culture, not just obtain a degree.



### ***How can I nominate a student?***

You can nominate a candidate as easily as sending a name of the student, with contact info, to [info@kidlead.com](mailto:info@kidlead.com). We’ll immediately follow up. Obviously, the more info you can provide, the better. We appreciate all talent scouting help, as young leaders tend to emerge in social settings such as school, athletics, civic groups, and faith communities.

### ***How can I apply for my student?***

Instructions for applying are on the LYI webpage: <http://leadyoungtraining.com/training-curricula/leadyoung-institute/>

### ***How can I find more info on LYI?***

Alan E. Nelson, Ed.D., founder, is more than happy to talk to you on an individual basis, as well as providing seminars and explanations for your group or organization. Feel free to contact him at [anelson@kidlead.com](mailto:anelson@kidlead.com).