



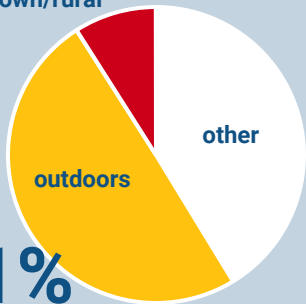
# Voices

presents

## 2019-2020 West Slope Youth Priorities

378 students surveyed by their peers

small town/rural



51%

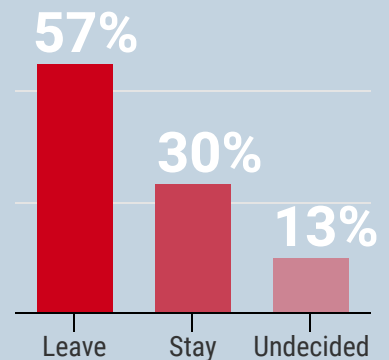
of all students surveyed said their favorite reason for living in Western Colorado was access to the

*outdoors*

### BIGGEST NEEDS

- More activities for youth
- Access to affordable higher education
- Better job opportunities
- Mental health support
- Community connection

They don't plan to stay citing lack of opportunity and a desire to experience new places as their main reasons for leaving



"I would like to see more care towards younger people in the community, like holding more events for teens."

-11th Grade

"I would like to see more support for the environment. We have access to many outdoor opportunities but we don't always support our environment politically."

-12th Grade

"Changes that would help me is maybe more mental health support for people like me going through tough things."

-11th Grade

### Garfield County

#### Needs

- Affordable higher education
- Being valued as youth in their communities
- Affordable healthcare
- Opportunities for minority populations
- Wilderness/environmental protection

#### Likes

- Outdoors
- Beauty of area
- Environment
- Calm/quiet

#### Dislikes

- Expensive
- Lack of opportunities

School / Community safety • Climate change  
Mental health access • Affordable healthcare

### Mesa County

#### Needs

- Job opportunities
- Increased mental health access & support
- Recreation center
- Less polarization / more kindness
- Environmental protection

#### Likes

- Outdoors
- Outdoor recreation
- Hunting/fishing

#### Dislikes

- Weather
- Lack of retail /restaurants
- Too small

#### Top Issues

School / Community safety • Climate change  
Good jobs • Protection of public lands

### Montrose County

#### Needs

- Affordable higher education
- Job opportunities
- Increased mental health support
- Road improvements
- Activities for youth
- Suicide prevention
- Community connection

#### Likes

- Outdoors
- Small town
- Beauty of area
- Clam/quiet

#### Dislikes

- No activities
- Drug addiction
- Mean people

#### Top Issues

School / Community Safety • Job opportunities  
Mental health access • Affordable education