



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## Young People Deserve a Seat at the Table

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CBS News recently proclaimed that “kids in the U.S. and around the world are in crisis.” Self-harm among youth is on the rise, and enduring problems like bullying and sexual assault continue to wreak havoc. Young people feel the impending doom of climate change and await the day when their school is assaulted by an active shooter.

These crises are exacerbated by decisions made by adults. In Florida, local and state legislators threaten and criminalize classroom conversations about gender and race. In Mississippi, voter restrictions create barriers for young voters. And dozens of states across the country have banned or are considering bans on gender-affirming health care for trans youth. Although young people are cited as the beneficiaries of some of these decisions, they play no role in making them. It’s about time that we invite teens to the table.