

Learning AND Leading



A TOOL KIT FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND CIVIC ACTIVISM



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for community & youth development



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The ***Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development***, an independent nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, works to unleash the potential of youth, adults, organizations, and communities to engage together to create a just and equitable society. We connect thinkers and leaders of all ages to develop fresh ideas, forge new partnerships, and design strategies that engage young people and their communities. We turn theoretical knowledge into practical know-how that advances the field of youth development and promotes social change.

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Getting Started

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Youth Leadership for Development Initiative (YLDI), a three-year project coordinated by the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development with the support of the Ford Foundation, was launched in September 1999. Twelve diverse organizations in seven states and the District of Columbia were selected to participate in this initiative to explore civic activism as a strategy for youth development. YLDI provided financial support for the participating organizations, all of which promote positive youth development by building youth leadership skills through civic activism.

The project participants documented their progress in both areas and worked together as a learning network to evaluate and disseminate discoveries. The participants reflected a wide range of youth constituencies: low-income Asian immigrants; Asian/Pacific Americans; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth; Latinos; African Americans; Native Americans; suburban youth; youth from faith-based organizations; and young women and girl leaders.

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) was contracted to conduct a two-year evaluation of YLDI. SPR, which is based in Oakland, CA, has nationally recognized expertise in research and evaluation of programs and policies. The process for evaluating YLDI was specifically designed to strengthen the field of youth development by identifying and disseminating best practices and other lessons learned about the intersection of activism and youth development.

Through YLDI, the Innovation Center and the project participants hoped to build the capacity of YLDI participants to

- ★ use civic activism as a component of their work;
- ★ give youth development practitioners models and information on how to integrate civic activism into their programming; and
- ★ stimulate research and new practices and policies for integrating civic activism and youth development.

Learning and Leading was designed with practitioners in mind. It draws heavily on the experiences and knowledge of the groups that participated in YLDI. Each section incorporates resources on civic activism and youth development.

In addition to the community partners who participated in YLDI, the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development would like to recognize the authors of the research reports and practitioner tools, stories, and activities that contributed so much to the creation of this tool kit. These include activities created and piloted by YLDI partner sites, especially Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, OUTRIGHT, Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), and Leadership Excellence.

Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth and Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003.

Creating Youth-Adult Partnerships. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 1996.

Lessons in Leadership: How Young People Change Their Communities and Themselves. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003.

H. Lewis-Charp, H. Cao Yu, S. Soukamneuth, and J. Lacoé, *Extending the Reach of Youth Development Through Civic Engagement: Outcomes of the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative.* Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003.

I. Mohamed and W. Wheeler, *Broadening the Bounds of Youth Development: Youth as Engaged Citizens,* Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2001.

Youth-Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003.

C. Garthwaite, ed., *Youth Leadership for Development Initiative Resource Guide.* Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2002.

Youth Leadership for Development Initiative: Broadening the Parameters of Youth Development and Strengthening Civic Activism. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2001.

For additional information and products, please visit the Innovation Center online at www.theinnovationcenter.org or call (301) 270-1700.

OUR GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Learning and Leading is grounded in a *youth development* approach. By this we mean that the program tools and activities were designed to enhance the likelihood that young people will experience positive rather than negative outcomes as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

The National Research Council (Eccles and Gootman, 2002) has found that youth development programs succeed when they create positive settings. Such settings are characterized by physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for personal effectiveness and mattering opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school, and community efforts. Gambone, Klem, and Connell (2002) have also determined that youth benefit when they have access to

- ★ supportive relationships with adults and peers,
- ★ challenging and engaging activities and learning experiences, and
- ★ meaningful opportunities for involvement.

For three years, members of the YLDI learning community grappled with one key question: How does civic activism serve as a component of youth development programming? This question grew out of a strong conviction that civic activism and youth development are complementary, not competing, approaches to youth work. By *civic activism*, we mean a safe and constructive way to build a positive identity and acquire leadership skills while gaining satisfaction from building community and creating social change.

The findings of the YLDI evaluation documented by Lewis-Charp, Yu, Soukamneuth, and Lacoé (2003) suggest that at least three factors can explain how and why civic activism can be used to “broaden the bounds” of conventional youth development programming:

1. Youth involved in civic activism were attracted by the programmatic and organizational focus on their own cultures and backgrounds.
2. Civic activism provided a forum and context for them to reflect and solve problems related to day-to-day challenges facing their families and communities.
3. Civic activism gave youth opportunities to apply vocational and leadership skills.

These conclusions reflect the reality that an increasing number of youth are active in organizational decision making and program planning and that others are acting as agents of social change. As youth development organizations seek to enhance leadership opportunities for adolescents, both within their own organizations and in the community, activist organizations are looking for ways to pay more attention to holistic youth development.

Learning and Leading does not claim to have all the answers, but it does reflect a growing understanding of *youth leadership* as a critical link between civic activism and youth development. The concept of youth leadership seems to capture how the YLDI practitioners understand their work across a variety of organizational and program contexts. Youth and adults within these organizations, for instance, repeatedly emphasized that leadership is about learning to listen, empathize, cooperate, and subsume personal interests to those of the group.

In keeping with the insights and experiences of YLDI participants and the findings from the evaluation process, *Learning and Leading* uses a leadership development framework to explore identity development, youth organizing, and youth involvement in organizational decision making as crucial links between youth development and civic activism. The following sections emphasize three sets of practices and lessons that flow directly from the findings mentioned above.

- ★ **Personal Leadership** is tied to identity formation.
- ★ **Organizational Leadership** expands on the role of young people as decision makers.
- ★ **Community Leadership** focuses on youth organizing as a catalyst for community change.

The three areas reinforce each other as part of a developmental process. Young people cannot be effective change agents unless they are developing holistically; the ability to engage young people at all three levels is a crucial part of the link between youth development and civic activism.

ABOUT LEARNING AND LEADING

Each section of *Learning and Leading* includes a description of key concepts, a set of promising practices, checklists, a list of resources, vignettes illustrating practical lessons from YLDI learning community members, and workshops or activities that have been used successfully with groups of young people. In general, *workshops* are longer, more in-depth, sessions, but they may require less preparation. *Activities* are quick, simple exercises that can set the stage for deeper discussions on a given topic.

If you work with a *youth development* organization, you can use this publication to enhance leadership opportunities for adolescents both within your organization and in the community. If yours is a *civic activist* organization working with young people, it can enhance the developmental aspects of your work. It is our hope that youth workers of all kinds will use this resource to create a range of supportive contexts and of opportunities for young people to grow.

Notes



Personal Leadership

What I have learned about leadership is it's not totally about standing in front of people, taking charge, and telling people what to do. It's more about your personal leadership . . . how you feel about yourself and how comfortable you are with yourself and sharing yourself with other people. It's . . . like the interaction between people is a form of leadership.

— YOUTH

RESEARCH OVERVIEW¹

Young people build identity as they begin to see themselves as part of one or more distinct communities, such as a racial or an ethnic group. This process, which is a critical component of any youth development framework, can be particularly important for young people who are marginalized as a result of race, class, gender, or sexuality.

Socialization and discrimination have had negative effects on the development of many marginalized youth. Providing opportunities for young people to explore and express how society has thwarted their development often helps them move forward in positive ways. How the difficult topics of gender, class, sexuality, and race are dealt with has major implications for the content of youth programs, how programs are delivered, staff training and development, and the creation of a safe environment that encourages all youth to explore and act on their own truths.

¹ Source: H. Lewis-Charp, H. Cao Yu, S. Soukamneuth, and J. Lacoie, *Extending the Reach of Youth Development through Civic Engagement: Outcomes of the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative*. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003 (see Appendix 2).

Identity has two dimensions: identity affirmation and identity exploration. *Identity affirmation* is associated with a positive self-concept and with acceptance and affirmation from peers. *Identity exploration* is a process through which youth learn more about their identity as they seek alternative modes of self-expression.

The process of identity development can be thought of as personal leadership because it generates a self-awareness that is often the precursor to more active forms of civic engagement and community leadership. Identity formation helps link an individual with the collective experience. An intentional commitment to identity formation, particularly with adolescents who are disengaged from society's mainstream, has tremendous implications for the future of youth development and civic activism.

The Youth Leadership for Development Initiative (YLDI) had five identity-support group partners. All the groups dealt explicitly with marginalized identities, including those based on age, race, ethnicity, or sexual or gender orientation. Research from the YLDI sites suggests that the groups were particularly strong at promoting youth development by supporting youth in their (1) interests, (2) sense of being challenged, (3) perception of emotional and physical safety, (4) affirmation of identity, and (5) exploration of identity. Although each identity-support organization used unique strategies tailored to its own particular populations, the organizations shared three kinds of practices:

1. Creating Supportive Relationships: In particular, the organizations paid attention to the context for adult–youth relationships, making sure to create a setting that fostered mutual learning and respect. They all stressed the importance of adult role models and emphasized creating safe spaces for youth to explore their identities. Three of the five organizations actively recruited and trained adult volunteers from similar backgrounds or experiences to work with and support young people.

2. Drawing on History, Art, Music, and Culture: The identity-support groups were also explicit about celebrating and affirming identity; imparting information on the history, art, and spiritual traditions of their group; and equipping youth with knowledge and skills to deal with prejudice.

3. Facilitating Critical Self-Reflection: The organizations did not perceive identity as a fixed or “essential” set of cultural characteristics or personal qualities. Rather, they sought to transform society and social relations through critical self-reflection. They pushed youth out of their comfort zones to consider how injustice is internalized and perpetuated within themselves and their communities and to explore how they might work to counter it.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Checklists 1 and 2 were developed from the research findings.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 1

Create Supportive Relationships Between Adults and Young People.

- ✓ Create an environment in which relationships are two-way: Constantly reinforce the principle that adults can learn as much from youth as youth can learn from adults.
- ✓ Foster open communication between youth and adults. Create a space where both parties can share their dreams, ideas, and feelings with each other.
- ✓ Tackle “adulthood” by constantly challenging the assumption that adults have the right to guide or direct young people as they see fit. Avoid language, attitudes, or activities that may subtly contradict the voice of youth or devalue their contributions.
- ✓ Talk about what youth–adult partnership means in your group.
- ✓ Remember that all youth and all adults are not the same. Explore different personality styles and learn to communicate in ways that match individual needs and preferences.
- ✓ Identify structural barriers that may hinder the formation of supportive youth–adult relationships. For example, if time in your program is dedicated only to *doing*, build in time for *being*: Make sure youth and adults can hang out together, get to know each other, and connect emotionally.
- ✓ Actively engage adults from the community as mentors.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 2

Provide Critical Education on the History of the Group. Celebrate Culture and Identity Through Art, Dance, Spirituality, and Other Forms of Expression.

- ✓ Design activities that explain aspects of history and culture. Explore the relevance of the past and incorporate lessons from history into everyday life.
- ✓ In hands-on immersion workshops, allow participants to explore the historical roots of social issues.
- ✓ Examine the lives and actions of people who have made significant contributions to social change.
- ✓ Engage in activities that use elements of popular youth culture as a medium for political analysis, expression, and identity.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 3

Create a Space in Which All Young People, Regardless of Race, Class, Gender, or Sexual Orientation, Can Work Through Issues of Power, Discrimination, and Oppression.

- ✓ Incorporate into the program readings that explicitly address discrimination and oppression.
- ✓ Put quotations on the wall from people such as Martin Luther King Jr., Susan B. Anthony, Abraham Lincoln, Cesar Chavez, and Nelson Mandela. Explain their relevance to today's society.
- ✓ Explore white privilege and discuss what it means to be a white person versus what it means to be a person of color.
- ✓ Look for practical ways to make your center a safe space.

CASE STUDY 2.1

TOHONO O'ODHAM COMMUNITY ACTION

In Arizona, Tohono O'odham community members walk or run more than 50 miles across the Sonoran Desert to the Pacific Ocean to collect salt for the community. When they get to the ocean, they run along the shoreline before they step into the water. Each member looks for a vision of his or her own strengths and gifts. This journey is known as the Salt Pilgrimage; it is always done in silence, and always as a group—no one looks for his or her gifts alone. Some people understand their strengths right away, on the first Salt Pilgrimage; others go to the ocean year after year. But still they go, and still never alone.

The Salt Pilgrimage, according to Tristan Reader, co-director of Tohono O'odham Community Action, is a perfect metaphor for the work of Tohono O'odham Community Action (TOCA): Whatever your path, however long it takes, TOCA will walk with you. TOCA will walk with you to the ocean over and over again.

The purpose of TOCA's YLDI project, the Youth–Elder Outreach Initiative, was to bring young people more fully into all of TOCA's efforts to revitalize the Tohono O'odham community. Among TOCA's other programs are the Tohono O'odham Food System Program, the Tohono O'odham Basket Weavers Association, and the TOCA Arts and Cultural Revitalization Program. Like the people on the Salt Pilgrimage, though, none of the programs stands alone. They are all integrated, and it would be difficult at times to separate them into discrete activities. When the community gathers for a Rain Ceremony, for example, religion, art, and agriculture all play a role. “It's how the O'odham are,” Tristan says. “Everybody does everything together.”

For a long time, though, despite their efforts to revitalize the community, young people have not felt a part of the whole. Tristan tells the story of an angry granddaughter who was getting into trouble. Her grandmother asked her, “What do you want from me?” The granddaughter replied, “Everyone tells me what I should and shouldn’t do. I want someone to tell me who I am.” So her grandmother revived a coming-of-age ceremony for her granddaughter. This happened just before TOCA began its YLDI work; since then, TOCA has learned over and over that a strong cultural identity will lead to a strong personal identity. Its leaders have also learned that when young people participate in the work of the community, they acquire concrete leadership skills such as taking responsibility, planning, organizing, and strategizing. When young Tohono O’odham people engage in TOCA’s community development efforts, they gain strength—and as they gain strength, so does the community.

In the Tohono O’odham community, this process doesn’t always happen in the context of specifically “youth development” activities. And it doesn’t always happen in a linear fashion, one success building on another. Tohono O’odham young people step in and out of what some might call “success,” but to TOCA, they are always on their way to it. One young man decided to participate in TOCA’s 250-mile Desert Walk to raise awareness of diabetes and traditional foods. This was, says Tristan, a young man whom people knew as “silent” and a heavy drinker. He joined the walk mostly to get away from his day-to-day life and to do something different—but by the 11th night of the walk, he was standing in front of 300 members of the Tohono O’odham community, saying that joining the walk was the best decision he’d ever made, that he wanted to start making better decisions with his life.

He also said to them, “Here’s the other thing I recognize: It’s not gonna be easy. I will make mistakes.” He did, and he’s now serving prison time, but TOCA understands that the process is not simple or easy. “Young people can only carry around so much,” says Tristan. TOCA has learned that it doesn’t work to define success traditionally. “When he comes back to the community, he’ll apply what he learned. If you’re about creating strong members of a community, you can’t expect it all to happen immediately. It may take a long time.”

TOCA has learned to be patient in its work and to meet challenges calmly and with help from partners. It is not easy; the Tohono O’odham reservation is as large as the state of Connecticut, so it’s hard for young people to come together outside of school. Those who do come to the project often leave for college or art school, so TOCA is “always at a starting point” with young people, says Tristan. Still, this year several young people are organizing a community poetry reading—a way, says Tristan, “for youth voices to literally be heard” in the community. It has been a unique opportunity for young people to set their own timelines, because most of TOCA’s work—like most of the other work of the Tohono O’odham community—depends on the season for agriculture or on the needs of the greater community.

This, says Tristan, is another of the challenges of doing youth development work in the Tohono O’odham community. TOCA wants to affect the whole community, and although programs like the poetry reading can be about young people, most of its work must be about the whole community. In fact, given the nature of the Tohono O’odham people and TOCA’s role of cultural revitalization, the work must not be about one particular group, even young people. To address the cultural needs of the people, TOCA has to attend to concrete functions such as when the crops must be planted.

That role returns TOCA full circle to the understanding that, just as none of its programs can exist on its own, neither can any of the Tohono O’odham people—not if they are to survive as a culture. TOCA’s work with young people is about developing their identity not only as youth, or even as native people, but also as part of a community where everyone depends on each other as much as on the weather and the wind.

That doesn’t always happen dramatically, but it happens. A young man fails in school, then discovers his skills as a basket weaver and ends up a recognized native artist. A young woman speaks to her grandmother and finds a new way to begin. It happens slowly: in a circle or a jagged line, in unrecognizable moments that lead to where they are meant to be. Year after year the people go back to the ocean, and TOCA stays with them.

Tohono O’odham Community Action Lessons Learned

- ★ A strong cultural identity will lead to a strong personal identity.
- ★ When young people participate in the work of the community, they acquire concrete leadership skills such as taking responsibility, planning, organizing, and strategizing.
- ★ Success can’t always be defined in a linear way. Youth development and leadership development don’t always happen in the context of activities focused specifically on “youth development” and they don’t always evolve as one success building on another.

CASE STUDY 2.2

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

In a large room with a bare floor, 65 African-American young people who are blindfolded are led in a guided visualization of voice, music, and other sounds.

They begin in Africa with peaceful music, a sense of connection to family, and a sense of freedom. The music changes, and they are pushed around, still blindfolded, the sound of chains rattling in the background. Then they are forced to the ground, body to body, accompanied by the sound of screaming and moaning. It is the Middle Passage, a time of slave ship holds packed with human beings living and dead, traveling to the auction block and on to plantations, with the sounds of whips and reminders of terrible loss and grief.

The visualization continues onward through time until today, into scenes of black-on-black crime, calls of “nigger” and “bitch” in the streets, gun shots, and music that degrades. Afterward, in a circle of 10 to 12 young people and two counselors, some young people cry quietly, some are silent as stone, and all recognize a pain as deep as time is long.

— MIDDLE PASSAGE WORKSHOP

The scene described above is from Camp Akili, a summer program designed by Leadership Excellence to create opportunities for young African Americans to connect with what Executive Director Nedra Ginwright calls their “legacy of pain.” Before Camp Akili, “Crying was not in my vocabulary,” says Ronnell Clayton, a former camper and now a counselor. “People in my family had passed, my good friend had passed away at school. Still, I didn’t cry. After the Middle Passage workshop, I just cried and cried. I cried for three hours.” Leadership Excellence believes that when pain is acknowledged, healing can begin. And healing is at the foundation of its work.

Healing hasn’t always had such priority, though; it’s one of many lessons learned along the way by a small group of young people who wanted to make something happen. The lessons they learned are important enough to document in curricula and articles created through their involvement with YLDI.

In 1989, Shawn Ginwright and his friend Daniel Walker were students at San Diego State University. Both had participated in leadership camps designed to help young people achieve their potential. The information was good, but some things were missing. First, Shawn and Daniel were “just about the only black folks there.” Second, the emphasis was exclusively on skills like public speaking and group facilitation—skills that are, in Nedra’s words, “important, but insufficient.”

Shawn and Daniel envisioned a leadership training opportunity for young African Americans that would include culture and self-development. They gathered about 10 other San Diego State students, including Nedra, and created a summer program they called “In Search of Excellence.” That camp evolved into what is now Camp Akili; in Swahili, *Akili* means “excellent mind,” and excellent minds—free minds, strategic minds, determined and empowered minds—are exactly the point.

Shawn and Nedra continued their work after graduation from college while they worked full-time jobs. They counted on other community members to help with the work with young people. In addition to continuing the summer program, they began to address the academic failure of high schools serving low-income youth. They believed then that the problems facing young African Americans were rooted in a poor sense of self, including cultural self, and the low expectations of teachers and others who affected young peoples’ lives. Over the years, their analysis began to include a belief that many behaviors have their roots in pain. And if behaviors come out of pain, they reasoned, the answers lie, at least in part, in healing.

In those early years, Nedra says, they never intended to start a nonprofit, and they were novices at leading an organization. But, “We were young, and we had a passion,” she and Shawn say. They channeled that passion into weekly meetings with other young adults to plan Camp Akili, which Nedra had by then begun to coordinate. They also sought and received funding from donors like the Vanguard Foundation and organized events to encourage community change around African-American youth development.

Nedra remembers one event they planned, a lecture series to educate teachers about how to educate black youth. They invited Drs. Julia and Nathan Hare to speak in a hotel to a large group of educators from throughout Riverside County. They reserved the room, flew the speakers in, rented a van to truck in computers to facilitate registration, and waited happily for the 200 or so participants they expected would attend. But they didn’t understand publicity for big venues, and they hadn’t gotten fliers out until the week before. The night of the big event, their distinguished speakers addressed an audience of five: Nedra, Daniel, Shawn, and Shawn’s very proud mother and aunt. It was a great workshop, though; they paid the tab by selling Shawn’s new computer, noted the experience as a lesson learned, and moved on.

By 1994, young people who finished Camp Akili were ready for something that would last throughout the school year, so Leadership Excellence created Stand 4 Somethin’, a community service-learning program. As Stand 4 Somethin’ has evolved, Leadership Excellence has learned that for the program to be effective, it needs to be about more than community service. It needs to be about community activism. With support from youth activist organizations such as the Youth Force Coalition and C-Beyond, they realized that community service activities could be more effective and generate more sustainable results if they were linked to political analysis.

“It’s the difference,” says Nedra, “between ‘The park is dirty, let’s clean it up’ and ‘The park is dirty? Why is the park dirty only in the low-income community?’ And what are we gonna do about that ‘why?’” That kind of thinking results from an excellent mind, and that kind of thinking builds a genuine sense of liberation in young people.

The goal of Leadership Excellence programs is to positively affect black youth development and liberation, not to organize and win campaigns. The organization believes that although African-American social movements have focused—perhaps necessarily—on winning campaigns, those social movements ignored the issues caused by the basic pain of African Americans. When Shawn writes about the work of Leadership Excellence, he talks about the “major external things happening in young black lives that limit their access to [the things they need for the lives they want]; things like unemployment, pervasive violence, and the criminalization of youth.” Those are the macro issues, he says, but we’re also missing the point if youth work doesn’t attend to the micro issues that have been described by Alvin Poussaint in *Lay My Burdens Down* as “Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome”: hopelessness, despair, racial shame, and disconnection from humanity.

But it’s one thing to acknowledge these things, and another to do something about them. To effect real, lasting change in communities, those issues need to be addressed first—so that’s where Leadership Excellence begins.

Leadership Excellence doesn’t go out looking for young people interested in activism. Indeed, the group would be hard pressed to find them. Young people come to the organization on referral from probation officers, social workers, and schools, and through community outreach as well as voluntarily from the streets and schools. Some youth are drawn by an interest in hip-hop to Camp Akili, where, Nedra says, they recognize “they’re not operating out of the greatness they were created to be.”

Ronnell Clayton remembers a moment of such recognition during his second time as a camper: “I realized I was grateful. I had a lot of things going for me.” He and the others at camp discovered, “We are blessed to be able to go through every day full-fledged. I had to ask myself, what have I done with my life?” Through cutting-edge workshops that use hip-hop culture as a lens and a backdrop, campers explore issues such as cultural appreciation, a shared history of enslavement, spirituality, and sexism.

The 14- to 18-year-olds who come through Camp Akili want to act on what they’ve learned; Stand 4 Somethin’ gives them that opportunity. After that, they may apply for Camp Afrique, a Leadership Excellence trip to Ghana that is designed to increase cultural and global awareness.

Ronnell didn’t want to go to camp at first. His mother did the research, he says, and sent him off in the summer of 1995, between 9th and 10th grade. “It was awkward being one of the youngest people there,” he says, and the workshops didn’t “take.” Three years later, having graduated

from high school with what he calls “attitude problems,” Ronnell went back to Camp Akili, again at his mother’s insistence. “I did not want to go, but she said, ‘You’re going!’” By 1998, the workshops had a sharper focus on healing, and this time, he says, “They stuck. I got everything.”

For Ronnell, a big part of it was not only the power of the workshops but also the way adults treated him: “With the utmost respect. . . . I believe that’s what it was, they respected me right off. As youth, we don’t have a lot of say. And if you get say, then you have got to lead.” Once he saw the respect, “Then I’ve got to hold myself accountable”—not just for the big life choices but also the ones that seem small, like language. “I came back from camp that time and said to my friends, ‘Y’all can’t curse around me.’ They laughed.” But he was serious. “For two years I haven’t said ‘bitch, niggah, ho’. I found other ways to say things—‘dude,’ ‘cousin’—or I get quotes from songs and use them as sayings. When my friends do that stuff, I just say, all right, you’re gonna do that, but I’m gonna do this.” The Leadership Excellence experience changed his life so much, says Ronnell, that he “wants to give [his] community everything I have.” He’s starting by facilitating a youth program in his own neighborhood.

Even though Leadership Excellence can catalyze this kind of change for young people, there have been and are challenges; and when they come, Leadership Excellence learns how to move through them. When the Hare lecture in Riverside didn’t reach its audience, the group learned how to publicize events. When funding was hard to find, and when the funding they could get came with strings too tight to accept, leaders attended a fundraising school sponsored by the Bay Area Black Unity Fund to find other options.

The first trip to Ghana was also the program’s first experience running a program with a major funder along for the ride. On that trip, one of the youth leaders was caught with marijuana. What to do with the young person? What about the perceptions of the funder? The answer was to look to African culture. So the leaders called a family meeting of all trip participants, including one funder, and asked the family to hold the young person accountable. The family asked him to account for his behavior, spoke about how his actions affected them and the group, and talked about how his behavior could affect the organization. That experience, plus a meeting with his mother when he got home, was consequence enough. Each challenge, small and large, results in learning.

Documenting what is learned is the YLDI part of the work of Leadership Excellence. The group now has written curricula for both Camp Akili and Stand 4 Somethin’, and in his writing, Shawn has begun to articulate the foundations of their work. Leadership Excellence has pushed the concepts of youth development beyond “Band-Aiding” problems and “asset building” to incorporating social identity and social context.

Through social and cultural awareness, self-development, and healing, Leadership Excellence seeks to “create youth who are personally and socially aware and conscious and who want to make change in themselves and the community.” Success may be measured by a young woman’s decision to wear her hair naturally, a young man’s rejection of sexist terminology, or young people choosing to make change in their community. One young woman advocated that her school create a child care program so that young mothers like herself could learn. Success occurs when young people change the kind of music they listen to or become more critical of mainstream culture. “Our movement,” says Nedra, “creates healthy, socially conscious young people who have the tools and commitment to create social change.” When those young people talk about organizing, they talk about raising consciousness: It has become their passion.

Leadership Excellence Lessons Learned

- ★ Many behaviors come out of pain. If behaviors stem from pain, changing them lies, at least in part, in healing.
- ★ For a program to be effective, it needs to be about more than community service. It needs to be about community activism.
- ★ Skills like public speaking and group facilitation are important but insufficient. Effective youth and leadership development strategies also need to incorporate culture and self-development.

2 This workshop was created and piloted by Leadership Excellence, a YLDI partner. For more information, contact Leadership Excellence.

Personal Leadership Workshop

WHO ARE YOU?²

Overview

This is a self-reflective workshop that asks youth to work in groups of 2 or 3 as they respond to questions with words, pictures, or both. The workshop provides a safe medium in which participants can address questions about their sense of self.

Purpose

To stimulate critical, self-reflective thought about the ideas and images that young people have of themselves and to foster healthier, more productive ideas of self

Time Required

1.5 hours

Materials

CD covers or construction paper, markers, pens, and crayons for each young person

² This workshop was created and piloted by Leadership Excellence, a YLDI partner organization (See Appendix 3, Contact Information).

Preparation

You can prepare CD covers ahead of time by using the template provided (see handout). To make a CD cover, simply copy the shape from the handout on a piece of paper, cut along the dotted lines, and then fold it in half along the solid line. There should be one CD cover for each participant. If you prefer, you can have participants draw on blank pieces of construction paper.

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup & Individual Artwork	30 min	Ask participants to respond to questions using written words, pictures, or both. Use a nonthreatening format, such as “Design your own CD cover,” to give participants a safe medium to answer questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Who are you? ★ Who do you pretend to be? ★ How do others perceive you to be? 	Blank CD covers OR construction paper Markers, pens, and crayons
Step 2: Small-Group Discussion	30 min	Once participants have responded to the questions, divide them into groups of 2 or 3. Ask them to meet in their small groups and explain what their creations represent.	
Step 3: Group Reflection	30 min	Ask the small groups to wrap up their discussions and reconvene as a large group. Use the following questions to guide participants in reflecting on the experience and bring closure to the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ How did you feel participating in the exercise? ★ Were you able to be honest? ★ Did any of the questions make you uncomfortable? ★ What questions were easy to answer? ★ What questions were difficult? ★ What did you learn about yourself by doing this exercise? ★ What did you learn about others? 	

“WHO ARE YOU?” HANDOUT

CD COVER TEMPLATE

FRONT COVER
Front page

FRONT COVER
Back page

Personal Leadership Workshop

HISTORY WALL³

Overview

A participatory activity that generates a shared picture of the past of the community and the assets it contains

Purpose

To create a shared picture of the history of the community

To identify the gifts and the challenges from the past that may affect the future of the community

Time Required

After setup, about 1.5 hours

Materials

Half sheets of paper or large index cards, sticky wall, markers, tape or thumbtacks, flip chart or butcher paper, set of colored arrows

Preparation

Work in advance with a few members of the group to answer the following questions:

- ★ How far in the past do we want to go back? To the time when the oldest person in the room was born? To a time in early history that is significant?
- ★ What is the overarching question?
- ★ What “divisions” should be on the wall (e.g., society, community, individual)?
- ★ What do we want to do with the finished product?
- ★ What materials besides written notes do we want to use? If people want to use pictures, sound recordings, or other media, make sure they bring these.

This activity requires a “sticky wall.” You can buy one through the Institute of Cultural Affairs (www.ica-usa.org) or make your own, using a large piece of nylon sprayed with Spray Mount Artist’s Adhesive. You may also use butcher paper or a bare wall with sticky “Post-it” style notes (see handout for details).

³ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

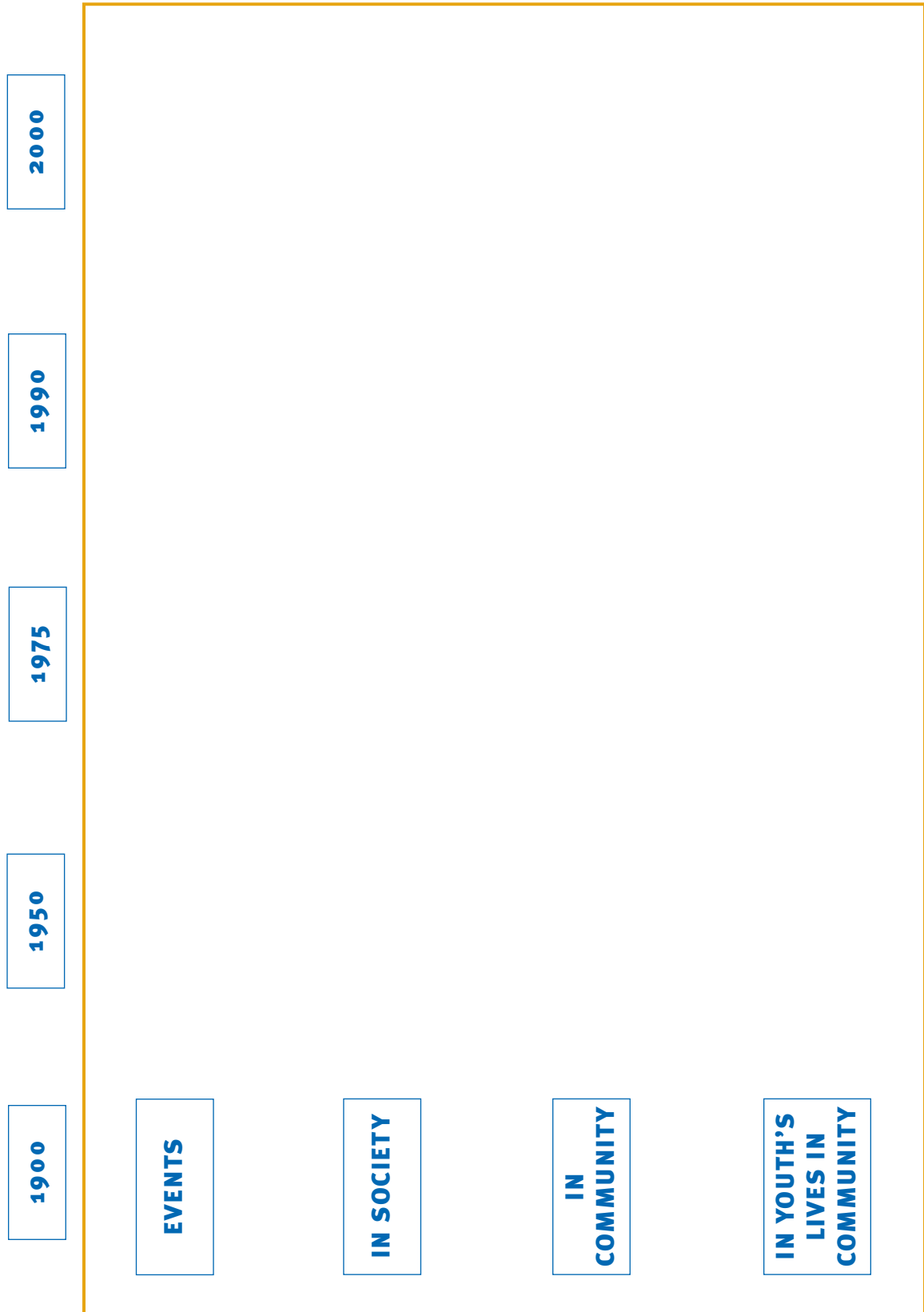
WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup	30 min before the session starts	<p>Divide your sticky wall into 3 horizontal sections. On the far left side, label the sections with half sheets (e.g.: “society,” “community,” and “youth’s lives in the community”).</p> <p>Along the top of the wall, place a set of half sheets with dates on them (see Figure 1).</p>	<p>Half sheets of paper or large index cards</p> <p>Sticky wall</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>Tape or thumbtacks</p>
Step 2: Setting the Context	15 min	<p>Explain to the group, “We are going to look at the history and journey of this community by recalling key events, people, and actions that have affected our community, its spirit, and especially its young people.</p> <p>“Every neighborhood or community has a richer and more powerful history than just one person can be aware of. We want to quickly develop a shared picture of the history and journey of our community. In this way, we can come to a new appreciation of our shared past.”</p> <p>Ask some warm-up questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ When did you first become connected with the community? ★ What is one key event that you remember happening in the community? ★ Who were the key people involved in the events? ★ Why is it useful to look at our history? <p>Explain how the wall is set up: A timeline runs along the top. On the sides are the groups whose history is being examined (e.g., society, community, youth). Explain what each category is, and ask the group for examples of events that could go into each category.</p>	

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 2: Continued</p>		<p>Explain the purpose of the activity: “We will be doing this to answer the question, ‘What are the resources and challenges that come from the past related to _____?’” <i>[Complete the sentence with the overarching question decided with the group beforehand—e.g., youth in the community.]</i></p> <p>Explain the process that will be used: First we will brainstorm individually. Then we will share our ideas in teams and post them on the timeline. When all the events are on the timeline, the whole group will reflect together on our community’s journey.</p>	
<p>Step 3: Brainstorming</p>	45 min	<p>Say to the group, “Take 3 to 5 minutes working alone to jot down about 3 events for each of the 3 categories. Try to include events from different time periods, and write the approximate date in the corner of the paper.”</p> <p>After five minutes, say, “In your teams, share ideas and eliminate duplicates. Write each event on a separate half sheet of paper in large, easy-to-read letters. Be sure you have some sheets for each category. Take about 10 minutes to do this, putting your sheets on the wall as you go along.</p> <p>NOTE: If the group is large, consider asking the teams to submit cards that they believe are unique and clear and have a few volunteers put about 50 of them on the wall.</p> <p>When all the cards are posted, the wall will look like Figure 2. Read through all the cards in one category, from left to right. Let people tell stories from the group. Ask if anything is missing.</p> <p>Do the same for the other categories.</p> <p>NOTE: There may be many negative events as well as positive ones. As a trainer, watch for this and solicit positive cards during the brainstorming as a way to move people into a more future-oriented frame of mind.</p>	<p>Markers</p> <p>Sticky wall</p> <p>Half sheets of paper or large index cards</p>

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 4: Trends and Phases	10–15 min	<p>Ask the group to think of its history as a story: If it were divided into chapters, where would the turning points be?</p> <p>Mark each turning point on the timeline with a colored arrow. Then draw arches between them.</p> <p>Ask the group what the whole journey might be called. How would they complete the title <i>The Great Journey of _____</i>?</p> <p>Write the answer across the top of the butcher paper.</p>	<p>Butcher paper across top of wall</p> <p>A set of colored arrows</p>
Step 5: Group Reflection	10–15 min	<p>Ask some of the following reflection questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What were some of the key things that you heard in the stories? ★ What are some of the feelings this raises about your community? ★ How was it to be one of the youth (or elders) and tell your story? ★ What does this tell us about this community? ★ What have our challenges been over time? (Note these on a flip chart.) ★ What gifts from the past might help us as we move into the future? (Note on the flip chart.) 	Flip chart

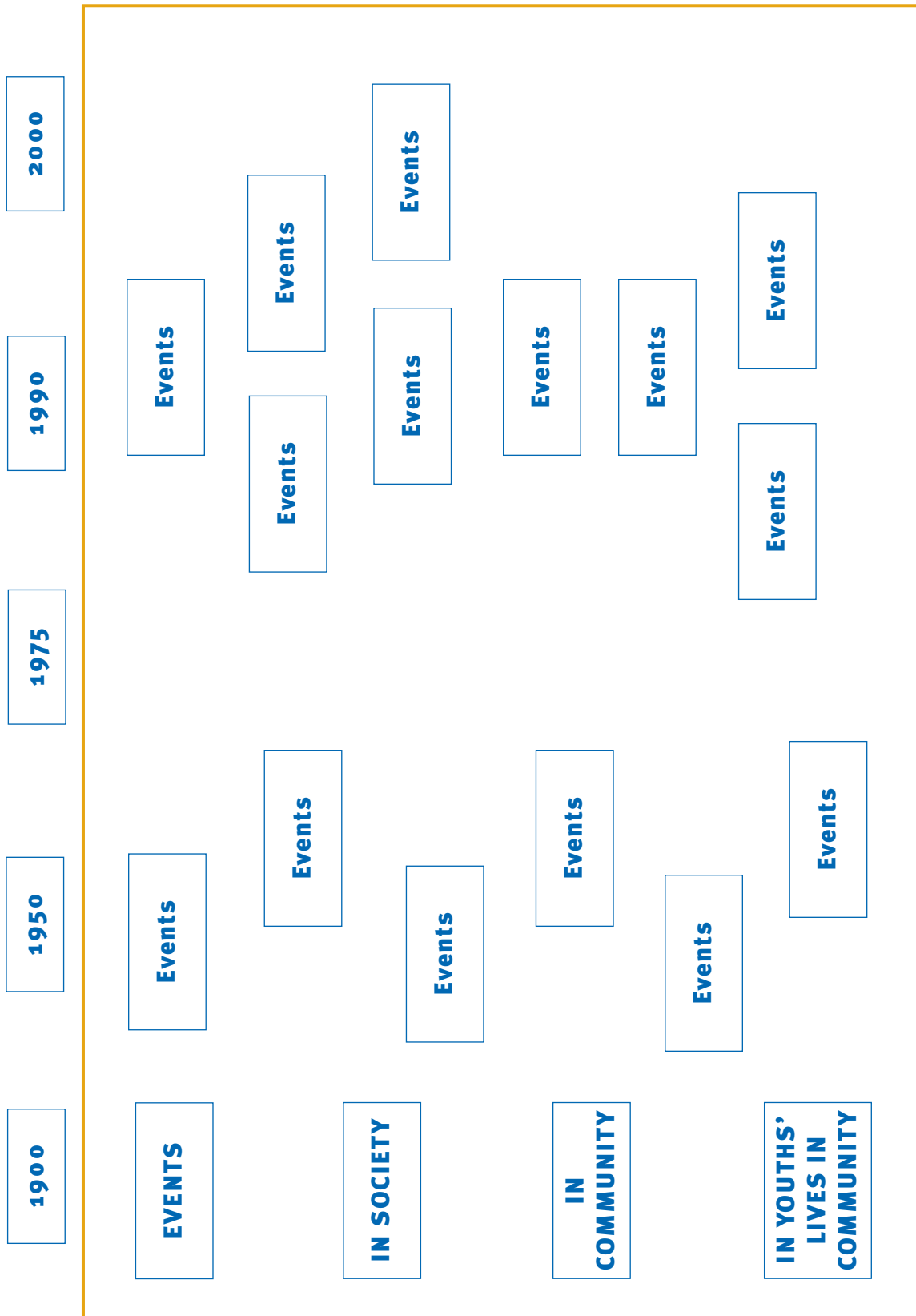
HISTORY WALL FIGURE 1

SETUP FOR THE HISTORY WALL



HISTORY WALL FIGURE 2

THE HISTORY WALL AFTER BRAINSTORMING



HISTORY WALL HANDOUT

How to Make a Sticky Wall

Many of the activities in this tool kit are enhanced by the use of a sticky wall. Sticky walls allow participants to stick standard pieces of paper to them without tape; pieces can be repositioned and reapplied easily. Sticky walls are respectful to participants because the words or pictures they themselves have written (not those transcribed by a trainer) are displayed. Sticky walls are also flexible because they allow a group to view, discuss, and reposition contributions easily. Sticky walls can be used repeatedly and mounted on most walls using heavy-duty tape or tacks.

You can acquire your own sticky wall in several ways.

Buy one.

You can buy one from the Institute of Cultural Affairs through the ICA Web site, www.ica-usa.org. The ICA wall measures 5 by 12 feet and costs \$50.

Make a fabric sticky wall.

You can create your own sticky wall using rip-stop nylon from a fabric store in the length and color of your choosing. It is recommended that you choose a piece of fabric that is as large as is practical for your space and that you hem the fabric to prevent fraying if you intend to carry the sticky wall. Before using it for the first time, spray the entire sticky wall on one side with Spray Mount Artist's Adhesive or another brand of nonpermanent adhesive used for mounting. The adhesive should be reapplied after the wall has been used a few times. Keeping your sticky wall folded in a zippered plastic bag when not in use will prolong its life. The cost of a 5 x 12 feet piece of nylon and a can of Spray Mount is about \$25.

Make a paper sticky wall.

Sticky walls can be created by taping together sheets of butcher paper, mounting them on a wall, and spraying the surface with Spray Mount. A can of Spray Mount costs about \$6.

Use a wall you already have.

By using Post-It brand or other adhesive notes, you can achieve the same result on a bare wall or on taped-together pieces of butcher paper stuck to a wall. One caution is that adhesive notes tend to lose their stickiness with reapplication.

Personal Leadership Workshop

STAGES OF YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS⁴

Overview

A facilitated brainstorming session for groups that wish to explore the concept of youth–adult partnerships

Purpose

To gather information from participants about the knowledge and skills they think are needed to start, sustain, and advocate for youth–adult partnerships

Time Required

45 minutes

Materials

Three flip charts with easels, markers, tape

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup	Before the session begins	<p>Prepare separate flip charts that read as follows:</p> <p>What skills/knowledge/attitudes are needed to start a youth–adult partnership?</p> <p>What skills/knowledge/attitudes are needed to sustain a youth–adult partnership?</p> <p>What skills/knowledge/attitudes are needed to advocate for youth–adult partnerships?</p>	<p>Three flip charts with easels</p> <p>Markers</p>
Step 2: Setting the Context	10 min	<p>Remind the group that everyone has a variety of experiences with youth–adult partnerships. You could say, “As I look around the room, I can only imagine the variety of experiences each of us has had working in partnerships throughout our lifetime. This exercise has been created to help us share our knowledge and skills related to youth–adult partnerships. Different skills, knowledge, and experiences are needed for different stages of youth–adult partnerships.”</p> <p>Ask for one or two ideas for each flip chart.</p>	

⁴ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Youth-Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 3: Small-Group Brain- storming & Presenta- tions	20 min	Divide the participants into three groups and assign each to one flip chart. Ask the groups to do a quick but thorough brainstorm and to record every idea on the flip chart. After 5 minutes, ask a member of each group to post its flip chart in the front of the room and present the ideas to the group as a whole.	Tape
Step 4: Group Reflection	15 min	Process the exercise in the large group using the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What ideas stand out for you? ★ What ideas are familiar? ★ What ideas are new to you? ★ What ideas are similar across the three stages? ★ What is missing from our lists? ★ How can these ideas help you start a youth–adult partnership? Sustain one? Advocate for one? ★ How can what we learned in this exercise be applied to our work together in the future? 	

Personal Leadership Workshop

POETRY IN MOTION: IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS⁵

Overview

A structured conversation about the characteristics of effective youth–adult partnerships

Purpose

To set the tone for effective youth–adult partnerships

To get ideas out on the table and give participants a chance to be heard

Time Required

35-55 minutes

Materials

Flip chart with easel, markers, tape, three or four sets of Poetry in Motion cards

Preparation

Create three or four sets of Poetry in Motion cards. Each set should have 20 cards with one word or symbol per card. Use brightly colored paper cut into geometric shapes (circles, triangles, or squares), and write the words with markers in large, bold letters. The 20 cards are shown below:

a	creativity	in	the
adult	community	include	to
and	expanding	of	together
are	harnessing	partnership	youth
bigger	healthy	talent	!

⁵ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Youth-Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setting the Context</p>	<p>5–10 min</p>	<p>NOTE: It is important that each participant speak. The trainer might get answers to the first question by going around the table so that everyone is clearly a participant. Later questions can be addressed to the group and answered randomly by whoever volunteers. The trainer should be affirming, stay neutral, practice active listening, and keep the conversation flowing quickly, sensing when the group is ready to move to the next question.</p> <p>Ask participants to think about a time when they were part of a successful partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What do you remember? ★ What made it work? ★ How did it feel? <p>Next, ask the participants to think about the same things while visualizing a youth–adult partnership.</p> <p>Ask, “What are some of the characteristics that are important to you?”</p> <p>Note the answers on a flip chart. When all the ideas are written on the flip chart, ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Which ideas stand out as most important? ★ Which will be hardest to achieve? ★ Which ideas are you most interested in working toward? <p>Finally, tell the participants that they are going to do a “word scramble” to help them organize the concepts they have been discussing into a statement reflecting their ideas.</p>	<p>Flip chart with easel</p>

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 2: Small-Group Word Scramble & Presentations</p>	15–20 min	<p>Divide the participants into small groups of 3 or 4 participants. Give each group a set of the Poetry in Motion cards.</p> <p>On the wall, post the following statement:</p> <p>“Effective youth–adult partnerships. . . .”</p> <p>Ask each group to arrange its word cards to complete the sentence using all the cards. Give the groups 5 to 10 minutes to complete the task. When all groups are finished, ask a representative from each group to present its sentence. The Poetry in Motion sentences can be posted on the wall.</p>	<p>Poetry in Motion cards</p> <p>Tape</p>
<p>Step 3: Group Reflection & Commitments</p>	15–25 min	<p>In the large group, ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What common themes do you see? ★ What insights do you want to keep in mind as you work in youth–adult partnerships? <p>Ask the group, “As you move forward in building a youth–adult partnership, what are you committed to?”</p> <p>Elicit a few statements and write them on the flip chart.</p> <p>Ask the group whether everyone can agree to make those commitments. Continue until consensus is reached.</p>	<p>Flip chart with easel</p>

Personal Leadership Activity

MIRROR, MIRROR

Overview/Purpose

A simulation activity that allows pairs of participants to explore the relationship between leading and following

Purpose

To identify qualities of an effective leader

Time Required

5–15 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

None

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup	2 min	Have the participants pair off and stand facing their partners as though they were looking into a mirror. The partner whose birthday is nearest to the actual date is the “leader” for the pair.	
Step 2: Leading/ Following in Pairs	6 min	Ask the leaders to move and ask the followers to match their partners’ movements like a reflection in a mirror. After about 3 minutes, have the partners switch roles.	
Step 3: Group Reflection	7 min	<p>After about 3 minutes, stop the activity and ask the full group the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Can someone share what happened in your group? (Ask 3 or 4 pairs to briefly describe what happened.) ★ What did it feel like to be the leader? What did it feel like to be the follower? ★ What surprised you about this activity? ★ What patterns did you notice? ★ What was helpful to you as a follower? ★ What was helpful to you as a leader? ★ Based on this exercise, what are some challenges that you think leaders face? ★ What lessons can we draw from this activity to help us in our roles as leaders? ★ What should we remember to do? ★ What should we remember to avoid? ★ What one or two things are you going to do differently in your leadership role? 	

Personal Leadership Activity

LEADING CHANGE

Overview

A simulation activity that allows pairs of participants to explore ways to approach and manage change

Purpose

To identify skills and strategies leaders can use to deal effectively with change

Time Required

10–25 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

None

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup	10 min	Have each participant select a partner and stand facing him or her.	
Step 2: Change Exercise in Pairs	3–5 min	Ask the partners to take a good look at each other and then turn away while each one changes one thing about his or her appearance. Facing each other again, each partner should try to guess what is different about the other.	
Step 3: Group Reflection	5–10 min	At the end of the activity, ask the full group the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Can someone share what happened in your group? (Ask 3 or 4 pairs to briefly describe what happened.) ★ What surprised you about this activity? ★ What patterns did you notice? ★ What was helpful to you as you tried to guess what was different about your partner? ★ What lessons can we draw from this activity to help us deal effectively with change? ★ What should we remember to do? ★ What should we remember to avoid? ★ Based on this exercise, what are some challenges that you think leaders face? ★ What one or two things are you going to do differently in your leadership role? 	

Personal Leadership Activity

THE PARTY⁶

Overview

An activity that uses brief one-on-one conversations to highlight the skills and accomplishments of each team member

Purpose

To provide each participant with feedback about skills he or she can contribute to the team

To emphasize the importance of regular feedback systems

Time Required

10–20 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

None

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setting the Context</p>	2 min	<p>Go outdoors or to a room with a large amount of open space. Ask participants to envision themselves at a party (you can decide what kind of party!). They are mingling and having short conversations with each other.</p> <p>Participants should comment on the things they appreciate about each other (e.g., “I appreciate your sense of humor—it really lightens things up” or “I appreciate how logical you are—I think it will help keep us focused”).</p> <p>They must follow two rules:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to as many people as possible. When you finish talking, move on. 2. When someone is talking to you, you may not say anything to him or her. You can only listen until the other person is finished and it is your turn to talk. 	

⁶ Source: Innovation Center, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth and Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 2: Mingling	5 min	Take a few minutes and have participants mingle and say their “appreciations” to each other.	
Step 3: Group Reflection	5 min	<p>After the activity is finished, sit down as a group to talk. Use the following questions to reflect on the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Think about how you felt during the activity. Was it easy or difficult? Why? ★ What was surprising about what people told you? ★ How often do you recognize the contributions of others on your team? ★ How can you as a team continue to appreciate each other after this activity? ★ How can you help your teammates and coworkers recognize the contributions and accomplishments of others? 	

Personal Leadership Activity

MUSIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Overview

A series of listening and discussion exercises that explore the historical significance of music in various social movements

Purpose

To generate an awareness and appreciation of music as a driving force behind social change

Time Required

15–45 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

Music with social justice themes, CD/cassette player

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
Listening & Discussion Exercises	<p>Have people bring in music with social justice themes. As trainer, bring music from a variety of movements and traditions that participants may not be familiar with (e.g., civil rights, labor, gay/lesbian/bi/transgender, hip-hop, folk music from the 50's and 60's, songs from farm workers, songs of immigration, or Celtic songs).</p> <p><i>Option 1</i> Discuss the origin and messages of the music participants brought.</p> <p><i>Option 2</i> Discuss the role of music in various social justice movements.</p> <p><i>Option 3</i> Play selected pieces of music and use the following questions for in-depth reflection on specific songs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What did you hear in the music? ★ What did you feel in the music? ★ What themes did you identify? ★ How does the music support action? ★ How does the music and the movement it represents support healing? ★ What lessons for your work can you take from these songs? ★ How can you use music as a way to educate others? 	<p>Music with social justice themes</p> <p>CD/cassette player</p>

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
	<p><i>Option 4</i></p> <p>Trace the path of music history and make connections to your culture. Have participants pick a favorite music style and research its roots. Select different traditions and ask, What major forces and people were influencing this music 50 years ago? 100 years ago?</p> <p>NOTE: These exercises may be stand-alone activities or may be combined for a longer, more in-depth workshop.</p>	

Personal Leadership Activity

FAMOUS PAIRS

Overview

An icebreaker that calls for brief one-on-one conversations about famous pairs of people

Purpose

To prepare participants for a discussion about the roles and contributions of major historical figures

Time Required

15–45 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

Half sheets of paper, markers, tape

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setup</p>	<p>Before Session</p>	<p>Prepare a list of famous pairs of people or characters. Some possibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Romeo and Juliet ★ Mickey and Minnie Mouse ★ Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera ★ Watson and Crick ★ Cleopatra and Marc Anthony ★ Lou Abbott and Bud Costello ★ Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz ★ Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson ★ Merriwether Lewis and William Clark ★ Napoleon and Josephine Bonaparte ★ Huey Newton and Bobby Seale ★ Orville and Wilbur Wright ★ Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt ★ Georgia O’Keefe and Alfred Stieglitz ★ Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Jr. ★ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels ★ Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony ★ Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata <p>NOTE: Some of the pairs are intended to be “light” or fun; others are major historical or cultural figures whose roles you might want to explore more deeply later. Add or substitute pairs that are meaningful and relevant to your group.</p>	<p>Half sheets of paper</p> <p>Marker</p>

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 2: Pairing Up		<p>Write each name on a card (1 name per card).</p> <p>If the participants know each other well, tape 1 card on each person's back; have participants ask each other questions to try to figure out the name of the person they are wearing and find the other half of their pair.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Allow participants to see their own cards and ask each other questions (without using any names) to find the other half of their pair.</p>	Tape

Personal Leadership Activity

TRADING CARDS

Overview

An icebreaker that calls for brief one-on-one conversations about individual traits and characteristics

Purpose

To prepare a group to discuss issues of identity and their implications

To spark a deeper conversation about how prejudices and perceptions can affect one's identity within a group (if the group members know each other well)

Time Required

15–40 minutes, dependent on group

Materials

Index cards or half sheets of paper, marker

Prepare

Prepare the “trading cards” in advance using index cards or half sheets of paper. On each card, write a personal “I” statement that reflects someone’s identity (e.g., “I like chocolate” or “I speak more than one language”). For groups that do not know one another well, it is probably best to make the cards very neutral and not based on appearances. With groups that know one another well, it’s possible to use cards that are more personal, although doing so can lead to deep and sometimes emotional discussions about personal issues that the group may not be ready for.

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setting the Context	2 min	Tell the group you will give each person 2 cards. Each card has a trait on it, such as <i>[read two or three of the cards out loud]</i> . They will have 5 minutes to find someone who has a card that matches theirs. Participants should try to trade both cards to attain two new cards that describe themselves and should be encouraged to trade with two different people.	Trading Cards
Step 2: Exchanging Cards	5 min	Allow the group time to exchange cards and to talk and share with one another. When everyone has two new cards, ask the group to come together to discuss what happened.	

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 3: Reflection</p>	<p>8–20 min</p>	<p>To spark discussion, use the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Share one or both of your cards with the group. Is there one that you feel best describes you? Which one? ★ Can anyone describe what happened as you shared your cards? ★ Were any cards difficult to exchange? ★ How did it feel to exchange your cards with others? ★ How did you choose the people with whom you exchanged your cards? How were you chosen? ★ How do you think this process would be different if we did not know one another? If we knew each other better? ★ Were any assumptions made as you tried to exchange cards? Were the assumptions fair? How did your assumptions about others affect the way you interacted with them? 	

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth and Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change

www.theinnovationcenter.org

Youth–Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual

www.theinnovationcenter.org

Color Lines

www.colorlines.com

Creating Youth–Adult Partnerships: Training Curricula for Youth, Adults, and Youth–Adult Teams

www.theinnovationcenter.org

National Youth Development Information Center

www.nydic.org

Putumayo World Music Foundation

www.putumayo.com

Voices of the Civil Rights Movement, Black American Freedom Songs 1960–1966

www.amazon.com

Notes



Organizational Leadership

Being a leader means knowing how to be part of a team. We all depend on each other. We respect what our peers can do. We work as a team.

— YOUTH

RESEARCH OVERVIEW¹

Young people have various degrees of influence in the organizations that serve them. Drawing on definitions and tools used by the Funders' Collaborative for Youth Organizing (FCYO), Social Policy Research Associates (SPRA) has identified a continuum of youth involvement in decision making to examine its relationship to youth development. The key points on this continuum are as follows:

Youth-led Groups: Youth have decision-making authority in all or most aspects of the organization. Adults serve primarily as advisors to and supporters of young decision makers.

Youth-led Projects: Youth have decision-making authority over discrete areas and tasks within the organization. Adults advise youth and occasionally seek their opinions when making decisions in other areas of the organization.

¹ Source: H. Lewis-Charp, H. Cao Yu, S. Soukamneuth, and J. Lacoie, *Extending the Reach of Youth Development through Civic Engagement: Outcomes of the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative*. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003 (see Appendix 2).

Intergenerational Groups: Youth and adults consult on most decisions. The goal is to reach consensus between young people and adults on all or most decisions.

Adult-led/Youth-input Groups: Youth advise adult leaders. Adult leaders solicit input from youth but retain the decision-making authority.

In the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative (YLDI), youth-led organizations and youth-led projects within adult organizations were the two structures that seemed particularly well suited to promoting youth participation and community involvement.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 4

Create organizational structures that facilitate effective youth leadership.

- ✓ Create formal and well-defined decision-making roles for youth.
- ✓ Create clear job descriptions for youth leaders, provide high levels of support, and ensure accountability.
- ✓ Teach adults to step back without “tuning out.”
- ✓ Create the time for youth decision making and input.
- ✓ Consider stipends or hourly pay for youth in leadership positions as a way to help recruit and retain youth.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 5

Infuse youth involvement strategically so that it is meaningful and effective for both the youth and the organization.

- ✓ Structure leadership positions and opportunities so that young people take on increasing responsibility.
- ✓ Build in cycles of reflection at the individual and organizational levels.
- ✓ Articulate specific learning objectives for youth leaders.
- ✓ Create a plan for how the objectives will be realized.

CASE STUDY 3.1

C-BEYOND

What's great is when people decide they're committed to the struggle.

— FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

C-Beyond is about organizing: Using people power so that the people most affected by inequality can fight for equality. It is also about building leaders so that, once the fighting is over, people can continue to be leaders in their communities and in their own lives.

C-Beyond started in 1997 when a group of graduates of the University of California at Berkeley saw that there was no organizing going on in the Concord, California, area, even though there was plenty to organize about: issues of racism, housing discrimination, unequal education, immigrant rights and discrimination against youth. Their organizing efforts gained attention, and soon they had a collection of volunteers with the energy to make C-Beyond into a sustainable organization. Today there's a staff of five – a full-time executive director and organizing director, and three part-time paid youth organizers who do outreach and retention as well as run youth programs.

They're all there to support the work of organizing against oppression and for racial and economic justice. Every campaign is organized as a series of mini-campaigns, strategically designed to have many small wins that lead up to a big win. Right now they're active in an education reform campaign, creating "Report Cards" for the schools in their area and organizing a media event to bring attention to the low grades; youth staff members are involved in every aspect of the campaign.

Strategy is important to C-Beyond, says Lisa Pintado-Vertner, a former executive director, because, "When we're not strategic, we do work that's not meaningful." Strategy means being conscious, aware of the impact of each step, and learning from what happens today to make tomorrow's work more effective.

C-Beyond takes this perspective deep into their everyday work. A lot of what they've been doing in their YLDI project has involved creating systems that make it possible for people to be effective in their first job. It's a young staff, so everyone has a high learning curve. "There's a form for everything," Lisa says, "but it's not about bureaucracy. Every time you fill out the form to use the video camera or whatever, you gotta be thinking, 'Why do I need it? What am I gonna accomplish with this?'"

The forms help young leaders develop organizational leadership skills by forcing them to engage in strategic thinking. C-Beyond teaches them what questions to ask. The "Make it Hot" form for conferences, for instance, goes step by step through not only the preparation process but also the evaluation process afterwards. "Was it hot or not?" it asks, and "Why?" Because so many of the forms are teaching tools, not all of them need to be used by everyone forever. "Once they learn the skills, they don't have to fill out a form," Lisa says.

Of course, the basic purpose of C-Beyond—and one of the basic skills that C-Beyond youth staff learn—is organizing for social justice. Yet one of the biggest challenges to effective organizing at C-Beyond has been tension among the staff. “Drama,” Lisa says. “People feel hurt and neglected by each other. They pull away and it interferes with the work.”

Last year, the people at C-Beyond decided to get strategic about staff relationships with each other. They decided that to do the work well they had to learn how to confront each other—“call people out”—and check each other honestly on issues that come up in their work together. Now they have quarterly “Airing Out” meetings facilitated by Rachel Timoner, a consultant hired by C-Beyond as part of their involvement in the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative. Each quarter, Rachel has a one-on-one meeting with each staff member, or he or she fills out a form. One way or the other, all staff members have to say what’s going on for them in the work, what’s bothering them, and what dynamics are getting in the way. Then Rachel brings that information to the group and facilitates a discussion of each issue. The process teaches people to work through the conflicts to improve their work.

“We’ve done it three times,” Lisa says, “and already we’ve learned a lot about how to call each other out right when the issue happens.” C-Beyond now has a “24-hour rule”: A staff member who has a problem with another staff member has to bring it to that person within 24 hours or else let it go and not let it affect the work. The organization has decided that talking behind each other’s backs and not resolving conflicts with each other interferes with the work of organizing for social change. Airing Out is a strategic response to that decision.

C-Beyond has also learned that accountability to agreed-upon goals and protocols is one of the best ways to ensure that staff are able to share power. Everyone must adhere to the rules set forth in the C-Beyond *Policy and Protocol Manual*, and the Airing Out process is teaching staff members how to hold each other accountable. When Michelle, the 17-year-old campaign coordinator, needs to hold people accountable—staff her own age who are responsible for outreach in the schools—it’s not about Michelle, it’s about the work. She bases her feedback on the manual, and she has to do it in the way agreed to in the Airing Out—but she’s the one who does it. She gets the power.

Part of the power of C-Beyond’s work for high-school-age staff, Lisa says, is that the work helps them “develop an analysis” of what’s happening in their own lives. They overlay their own experience with C-Beyond’s analysis of social justice and oppression to “understand what’s happening” in their own lives. Some staff have had what Lisa calls “a rough life . . . not a lot of support.” The work gives them not only skills and confidence but also a way to see their lives in a broad social context and to see what can be done about it.

For that to happen, Lisa says, “You gotta have an infrastructure” that helps people know how to do their jobs and how to analyze what the work is about. The forms, protocols, and Airing Out sessions help them learn how to do their jobs. Part of the infrastructure to help them learn to

analyze is a monthly session facilitated by Michael James of the Center for Ethics and Popular Education. The sessions, which are based on Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and later work, help C-Beyond staff understand what they already know and apply it to an analysis of social justice. In the discussions, says Lisa, "Some of what [young people] say is just hella brilliant." Michael feeds that brilliance back to them, helping them see their own wisdom as oppressed people and the validity of their own analysis.

The result of their group processes is that staff at C-Beyond are "committed to the struggle" even outside the organization. Lisa talks about one staff member who wants to be a nurse, but she also intends as a nurse to reform the health care system. She's 19 years old and supervises four high school students as the membership coordinator. She'll take her new work and analysis skills—both are equally important at C-Beyond—out into whatever work she does in the world.

That's part of what being a sustainable organization means to C-Beyond. The staff need to sustain C-Beyond as an organization, but they also want the work to be sustained beyond it. To that end they've started a chapter across the bay in Oakland and have forged a good working relationship with their fiscal sponsor, the Youth Empowerment Center. They're also working to better organize their members; their organizational priority over the past few years has been to build the capacity of staff to do the work well, and now they're ready to work with youth organizers who are not on staff. C-Beyond used to throw parties to bring young people into the organization—until the organizers realized that youth came only for the parties and had no real interest in organizing. The new strategy will "appeal to people who already have an interest in rights and community," says Lisa. Right now, "We only want people who already want to change things." Eventually, though, they'd like to create "more strategies to bring people who are more marginalized" into the work.

The staff now understand much of what it takes to work effectively. The structure is there to create teachable moments at every turn. Now the work is to apply C-Beyond's organic leadership development process to the members at large to keep expanding their work of organizing for social justice.

C-Beyond Lessons Learned

- ★ Youth leadership is best supported by organizational work that is both strategic and meaningful.
- ★ Tensions among staff can be one of the biggest challenges to effective organizing.
- ★ Accountability to agreed-upon goals and protocols is one of the best ways to ensure that staff members are able to share power.

CASE STUDY 3.2

YOUNG WOMEN'S PROJECT

Being a woman is a beautiful thing. . . . I believe I can do anything I put my mind to, and [I believe] that change starts with us.

— BOARD MEMBER AND TEEN WOMEN IN ACTION TRAINER

Washington, D.C., is one of the hardest cities in which to organize. Traditional organizing begins by finding the person or agencies responsible for an issue and then designing a campaign to put pressure on them. But in D.C., says Nadia Moritz, executive director of the Young Women's Project, "No one is responsible for anything." So when the Young Women's Project became aware through young women living in group homes that the D.C. foster care system had no regulations for group homes, it took a different tack.

Project representatives did the traditional organizing work: They "harassed the mayor's office for months," according to Moritz. But they also collected models of effective systems elsewhere to get an idea of how the regulations should look. When the mayor's office finally hired a new staff member who was interested in working on the problem, the Young Women's Project was ready with a whole set of regulations, and that's what's in the system now, word-for-word. "It's what we're good at," Nadia says. "If you don't have time to do it, we'll do it for you!"

The Young Women's Project evolved out of that kind of creative response to frustrating issues. It started when a loose collection of women in their early to mid 20s acknowledged to each other that young women's needs were largely being ignored in Washington, D.C. They began to gather resources, do training for each other, and support each other. Soon they were organized as a volunteer collective. After three years together they saw how underresourced teen women were in the city and narrowed their focus to this issue. With the Center for Community Change as a nurturing fiscal sponsor, the Young Women's Project hired Nadia, a member of the original collective, as executive director. Since then, the organization has grown to 6 full-time staff members and as many as 30 part-time teen staff members during summer programs.

The Young Women's Project now works through two basic programs: the adult-led Teen Women in Action (TWA) program and the youth-led Teen Leadership Project (TLP). TWA is an intensive leadership-training program with a curriculum that covers advocacy, issues, and social justice. After a series of workshops, teen women work together on a project. At the start of the project, adult staff members take leadership roles. Then they gradually move out of those roles, becoming resource and process monitors while the young women handle the project. The result, says 17-year-old Olivia Ricks, is that young women learn "the most important skills a leader should have . . . patience, active listening, and speaking." Cheryl Ross, a Young Women's Project member and Teen Women in Action trainer, adds to that, "commitment and an open mind."

The TWA curriculum builds on itself; if it is to be effective, the young women must show up for at least 55 percent of the workshops. The Young Women’s Project has discovered that one of the best ways to get young women in the door is to offer a stipend for their participation. Once they get in the door, only about 25 percent of the teens remain motivated by the stipend; the others appreciate it, they say, but stay for the program itself. Each teen who participates in 55 percent of the project receives \$2.50 per hour; those who participate in 75 percent or more get \$4.00.

That may seem like a lot of money for an organization to distribute, but Nadia says that the Young Women’s Project was spending a similar amount on staff to recruit and retain young women. Instead of using the resources to pay staff, the project decided to apply the principle of wealth redistribution to the problem. It’s been a significant learning experience for the Young Women’s Project to find that switching to a stipend system had a major positive effect on recruitment and retention, respected the needs of young women who had to have jobs, yet ended up as a relatively insignificant part of the budget.

Meanwhile, the TLP is gaining strength. This project brings young women on staff for part-time school-year or summer positions where they become part of a team working on a specific issue. First, with help from adult staff who pass on what they know about training, the TLP teams create a peer workshop on their issue; then they take it out into the community, especially middle schools.

Over the three years of the process, the Young Women’s Project has found that teen trainers are more effective than adults with middle-school audiences. They design and offer workshops on reproductive health, mental health, violence, and sexual harassment. Recently, a youth team has begun to deal with foster care issues. Once they have mastered an issue through the process of designing and facilitating the workshop, the TLP teams analyze the problem further to identify a critical area in which they’ll organize.

The TLP has created a need for a new social change curriculum and a new decision-making structure that reflects the TLP’s core value: Young women need to have the power to make decisions for everything they do. Each team has rotating leaders who meet once a month as a council to make decisions for the whole project. This new system has brought to light a lesson that’s become important to the Young Women’s Project: Giving people power—even members of the constituency—without the benefit of knowledge and responsibility puts the larger constituency at risk.

Early in the evolution of the TLP, staff noticed that team members were likely to make decisions that worked for them as individuals or for the members of the team but that affected other teens in ways that were not always positive. In response, staff members sought a way to shift decision-making values from an “individual mind to a community mind.” They created a process that enables teams to start out with small, low-impact decisions and move on to larger ones.

Staff use a process borrowed from YLDI partner Youth United for Community Action called “red-flagging,” in which staff members never vote on organizational decisions and don’t interject their ideas unless a decision seems to be going against a core value articulated by the team. For example, when one team was about to decide to hire a person they liked a lot for a foster care project, even though they had clearly said they would only hire from within the foster care system and that teen had left the system, Nadia spoke up. “I was transparent about it,” she says. “I told them it sucked and that I felt uncomfortable saying it, but . . . I needed to red-flag. They were about to go against their own core value.” The young people on the team were gracious, Nadia said; though some had feelings about her intervention, they eventually understood that their decision needed to be about the community, rather than the person they liked or themselves.

The TLP has also taught the Young Women’s Project much about the impact of internalized oppression on peer leadership and decision making. When staff were pushing to redistribute wealth through the TWA, teens pushed back, saying that those teens who were not responsible enough should not have the money. The phased-in decision-making and red-flagging processes have served well to address that dynamic in decisions; teen leaders have an opportunity to gain the necessary perspective and knowledge to make just decisions based on core values, not on internalized ageism or other forms of oppression. Teen leaders begin to see themselves not as *above* those they lead but *for* them. Cheryl Ross says she has discovered that “Leadership means helping other people, not just [myself].” Judy Alvarez, an 18-year-old TLP staff member, writes that “Leadership is the power to help yourself and others; it doesn’t make a person idol-like, but full of humanity.”

The Young Women’s Project is, in Nadia’s words, “obsessed” with being “objective-driven.” After each workshop, both adult and youth teams immediately debrief using an evaluation tool that helps them determine which behaviors were affected by the workshop and gather evidence of the degree to which the objectives of the workshop were met. Using direct quotes or observations, teams report their progress at weekly meetings. Each team is expected to move forward on its objectives as demonstrated by workshop results and project results.

Progress in workshops is measured by recording behavior change. Organizing work is measured in small wins. A returned phone call is as much a win as a major public policy change. The point is to move forward—to see and measure the results of the work of the teams.

Seeing the impact of their work matters, and the young women learn to recognize it when they see it. When 17-year-old Tdisho Doe was part of a team working on reproductive health issues with young women in group homes, she “had a really good time,” but more than that, she says, “After our workshop we had some really good feedback. The kids at the group homes had some very positive things to say about us. And they invited us back.” A win, and Tdisho knows it: “When people invite you back, you know you have done your job right.”

The structure of the Young Women’s Project allows teens to gradually acquire the knowledge, skills, and sense of responsibility they need for leadership. Judy Alvarez, who’s been with the Young Women’s Project since middle school, says that as a result of the structure, she feels “better prepared . . . to make better decisions about my health, my future, and overall my life.” Recently, she adds, she was in a meeting where she described herself as an activist. “It felt different, but nice,” she says, to understand herself as able to “better the lives of others in the community, as well as us.”

The Young Women’s Project is now determining how to grow. Each team has a constituency of members, but the membership has not yet been convened. Paid staff and the stipend participants in the TWA project currently do all the work. Volunteers are ready to become active, but the organization hasn’t yet designed the right structure for their involvement. Visions for the future include nurturing spin-off groups, much as the Center for Community Change nurtured the Young Women’s Center.

That approach would make sense. Judy Alvarez believes the Young Women’s Project “gives many teens options in their lives, options to better their lives as well as the lives of others, like a cycle.” As that cycle continues, more teen women will become young adults who have more to say—and more power to say it.

Young Women’s Project Lessons Learned

- ★ A stipend system had a major impact on recruitment and retention, respected the needs of young women who had to have jobs, yet was relatively low cost.
- ★ Teen trainers are more effective than adult trainers with middle school audiences.
- ★ To give people power—even members of the constituency—without the benefit of knowledge and responsibility can put the larger constituency at risk.
- ★ Youth leaders can play a role in documenting and evaluating as well as implementing programs.
- ★ Recognize and track small successes. Encourage youth leaders to celebrate the results of their work.
- ★ Encourage youth leaders to take on increasing responsibility within the organization.

CASE STUDY 3.3

COALITION FOR ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN YOUTH

Because of CAPAY, I've grown to be stronger.

— BOARD CO-CHAIR

In 1992, at a Boston high school, a white American boy harassed a Chinese-American girl. The harassment continued, and other Asian/Pacific Islander–American (APIA) youth were targeted. When a small group of APIA students at the school demanded action, school officials did nothing. The students walked out in protest. Rather than hear their concerns about racism and exclusion, the superintendent threatened to suspend them. No other school officials offered support.

The APIA youth reacted with anger and disbelief. With help from older members of the APIA community, they decided to organize a gathering of APIA youth from around the state to protest the school's response to their concerns. The adults helped the youth learn what they needed to know and gathered resources for organizing the event. More than 700 APIA students showed up. Twenty-five young people came away from that conference ready to organize for the long term and, with the guidance of a few adult community leaders, they did. In 1994, the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY) was born.

The story of its beginning illustrates one of the abiding beliefs and lessons of CAPAY's work: A youth-led model works best with the respectful support and guidance of adults. CAPAY's board is made up entirely of young people. Adult staff members often remind the youth board that staff work for them. The board sets priorities, makes funding and budget decisions, facilitates meetings, and organizes CAPAY's annual Leadership Symposium. Its two adult staff members attend all the meetings but speak only to address process issues and provide information as needed by the board. The staff walk the young people through dry runs of meetings and events, teaching them facilitation and other skills so they have the capacity to lead.

Since 1994 one of CAPAY'S strongest learning models has been its Community YouthLearn (CYL) program. The first phase of CYL is an 8- to 10-week Asian American Studies Workshop that begins with the year 1653, when, as Phitsamay Sychitkokhong, former development coordinator for CAPAY, says, "the first Filipino jumped ship." CAPAY created the workshop series with the assistance of Peter Kiang, director of Asian-American studies at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, who remains a strong ally to the organization, which is housed at the university.

The workshop marks the first time many of the young participants have understood their history; for even more youth, it's the first time they see the breadth of the culture and history of all APIA youth. CAPAY board co-chair Amy Wong writes that as a child in Boston's Chinatown, she believed, like most non-Asians, that "to be Asian was to be Chinese, because there weren't any

Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Burmese, or Laotian people at my school.” She goes on to say that “the abundance of information [in the workshops] helps us build our knowledge of our pasts, and in turn we will be able to see what is wrong in society today and aim to fix it.”

That’s indeed what the youth go on to do. During the workshop series, they work onsite with other organizations to address issues for members of the APIA community. For instance, CAPAY youth recently partnered with Viet-AID, an adult community group, to address the fact that because the Boston police had no officers who spoke Vietnamese, speakers of Vietnamese could not report crimes.

When they complete the workshop series, CYL participants commit to a 200-hour internship in an APIA community-based organization. As a culminating project, CYL youth apply what they have learned from both the workshop series and their internship to a project of their own design. One group created a mural of the lives of Vietnamese youth in Dorchester, a city that borders Boston. Another group created an APIA youth resource library, which is housed in CAPAY’s office and is used by university and high school teachers and students and community-based organizations. Young people also organize CAPAY’s annual Leadership Symposium, which attracts more than 350 APIA youth each year.

As CAPAY youth engage in these efforts, and in the work of managing the organization, they gain both a stronger sense of social justice and a set of leadership skills they can use for the rest of their lives. Amy Wong states, “I have learned it is okay to be angry at racist people, but it is necessary to take that negative energy and change it into positive energy. I have been trained to fight against it and not be subjected to silence.” She also says that she’s acquired concrete skills from her work at CAPAY—for example, she is now “able to lead a discussion and facilitate workshops and meetings.”

Young people from CAPAY who bring their skills to other settings sometimes find themselves frustrated when other youth aren’t as aware of the issues and history of APIA youth as CAPAY youth are. CAPAY tries to send two or three young people each year to conferences, both to broaden their experience and knowledge base and to encourage the other organizations to broaden theirs. CAPAY teaches its delegates to question what they hear and to listen well. CAPAY youth leader Michael Ma used those lessons when he attended Anytown, a mostly white youth program developed by the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ). “At first,” he writes, “I questioned everything. . . . I was worried because nobody else was saying anything.” As the conference went on, he was able to challenge some assumptions, understand more fully what was being said by others, and make good connections with the other participants.

Young people from CAPAY have also gone to conferences sponsored by groups like the National Association for the Advancement and Education of Cambodian Americans, Vietnamese Americans, and Laotian Americans to help adults in the APIA community better understand young

people as leaders. CAPAY's participation in the SPR evaluation process has helped its members learn to be more explicit about its programs. They want to focus more on CAPAY's antiracist message and be more intentional in their outreach to the full diversity of APIA youth. Most current CAPAY members are Chinese or Vietnamese Americans, and CAPAY would like to do more to welcome and encourage participation by other APIA youth.

In fact, CAPAY's YLDI focus has been evaluation: taking careful stock of the impact of its programs and looking for ways to improve the organization. With significant help from SPR, CAPAY has examined how its work affects individual learning as well as the community. Because CAPAY's explorations have led its leadership to believe that they need to do more to help CAPAY youth see themselves as part of the organization and feel more connected to the larger community, CAPAY has begun to host community forums where young people can talk about issues both in and outside of CAPAY. As a result, the organization is beginning to address sexism within the organization as well as expand further into members' communities. They also hope to send more CAPAY youth into schools in APIA neighborhoods to talk about their issues and experiences.

The impact of evaluation on CAPAY's work has helped the organization's board and staff internalize that evaluation is an important part of what they do and that their work with young people and in the community is better when they take the time to evaluate its effects.

Like many other organizations, CAPAY has been challenged by budget cuts leading to staff reductions. Over the past few years, CAPAY has gone from 6 full-time to 2 part-time staff members. The organization has responded by drawing on community volunteers and former participants to help organize and lead its annual symposium and to serve on the adult board of advisers. The board is being more careful now to articulate priorities based on real capacity, always documenting its work to capture lessons learned.

Youth leadership is crucial in the process, and it's a challenge. As one former staff member says, sometimes young people "don't know what they don't know," so CAPAY staff walk a narrow line between actively raising the awareness and skills of youth leaders and being careful not to step in and take too much power away from young people. This balance will remain a challenge, but it is essential to maintaining a truly youth-led structure.

All year long, CAPAY recruits young people from schools and community-based organizations to come to general meetings, where APIA youth talk about their experiences and address APIA youth issues. In June, young people elect a steering committee, and many apply for the CYL. As young people tell each other their stories, they begin, as Amy Wong writes, to "educate ourselves . . . and celebrate our heritage." As they talk and find their voices, staff members look on, offering careful observations and gentle lessons. Listening respectfully to young people in this way is often moving; in fact, Phitsamay says, "I cry whenever they talk."

CAPAY's approach—offering information about social identity and expecting service to the community—is a powerful mixture. For many youth, it makes CAPAY what Amy Wong calls “a second home”; it is a new way of seeing themselves and their world.

Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth Lessons Learned

- ★ A youth-led model works best with the respectful support and guidance of adults.
- ★ Evaluation is an important part of what they do; their work with young people and in the community is better when they take the time to evaluate.
- ★ Sometimes young people "don't know what they don't know," so it's important to walk a narrow line between actively raising the awareness and skills of youth leaders and being careful not to step in and take too much power from young people.

Five Questions to Ask About Organizational Leadership

1. How does your organization define youth, and which decisions do youth make in the life of the organization?
2. Do those decisions pertain to day-to-day operations, long-term planning, or both?
3. Who decided on this arrangement?
4. If both youth and adults work in the organization, is there a fair division of labor according to strengths and interests?
5. Are particular young people being asked to take on too many roles because they are skilled youth leaders?

Five Things to Consider When Working With Youth Staff

1. Youth staff who have gone through a particular process understand it better than those who have not had firsthand experience with the program.
2. Youth staff members can often relate well to youth who are participants.
Some staff members may need time to grow into their positions. Others may not be able to make the necessary adjustment.
3. Young staff members deserve effective coaching and supervision.
Supervisors should communicate their expectations clearly, invite staff to share ideas, conduct regular check-ins, and prioritize staff development.
4. Do not overburden the youngest staff members early on.
Youth staff members are often balancing multiple commitments that compete for their time and attention.
5. Program graduates joining the staff can have a positive effect on other members or participants, providing an additional incentive for them to succeed.

This list has been created by Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.

Organizational Leadership TEAMS AND ROLES

Overview

This is a short activity with one-on-one conversations as a basis for discussion about roles in teams.

Purpose

To define the characteristics of successful teams and team members and to foster team building among participants

Time Required

25 – 30 minutes

Materials

Flip chart, marker, copies of Handouts 1 & 2

In this short activity, one-on-one conversations are the basis for discussion about roles in teams. The purpose of the exercise is to define the characteristics of successful teams and team members and to foster team building among participants.

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Set the Context	5–10 min	Explain to the group, “Teams take many forms, such as groups working together, organized sports, or friends. Visualize a time when you were a member of a successful team. What was it? What did you do?”	
Step 2: Discussion	10 min	Say to the group, “Ask a partner the questions on the flip chart.” Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ When were you a member of a successful team? ★ How would you describe your role and contribution to the team? ★ What did others do? ★ How did you know the team was successful? ★ What did you learn as a member of this team? 	Flip chart with the questions at left written on it

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 3: Reflection	10 min	<p>Record answers to questions (2) and (3).</p> <p>Give people Handouts 1 and 2 to check against and look back on.</p> <p>In this short activity, one-on-one conversations are the basis for discussion about roles in teams. The purpose of the exercise is to define the characteristics of successful teams and team members and to foster team building among participants.</p>	Copies of handouts at the end of this section

HANDOUT 1

Roles: What can you bring to your team?

As a member of any team, it is helpful to know what is expected of you. Ideally, what is expected of you will match your interests and skills. All teams should incorporate certain important roles. Below are descriptions of some of those roles. This list is really just a beginning; blank spaces are left at the end for roles unique to your team.

ROLE	DESCRIPTION
Future thinker	Thinks about the big picture and reminds people of what they can accomplish
Gatherer	Makes sure that everyone knows about meetings and activities and reminds them to come
Speaker/performer	Enjoys speaking or being in front of large groups of people to share information
Money person	Keeps track of current funds and makes plans for getting funds in the future
Organizer	Keeps track of time and deadlines
Networker	Makes partnerships with new people and groups
Facilitator	Creates processes for the group to reflect and to succeed
Documentor	Helps the team think about where it has been and what it has accomplished

It may take a while for people to decide what they are interested in and what they are good at. Roles change as people gain new interests and skills. Roles also overlap. People might play more than one role. You might also decide that you want to learn more about another aspect of leadership. Leadership—and all the things that go into being a leader—involves skills that you can learn and adapt to your own style.

HANDOUT 2

A bird's eye view of teamwork²

Geese can teach us lessons about building a good team. Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying in V formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way:

- ★ As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.
- ★ When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.
- ★ When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing, and another goose flies the point.
- ★ Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.
- ★ Finally, when a goose gets sick or is wounded by gunshots and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies; only then do they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their group.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quickly and easily because they are traveling on the momentum of one another. If we share work and leadership, we will be able to stay moving in the right direction longer. It makes sense to take turns doing demanding jobs and to encourage people to keep up the good work.

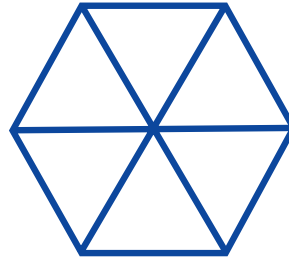
² Adapted from a speech given by Angeles Arrien at the 1991 Organizational Development Network, based on the work of Milton Olson and circulated to Outward Bound staff throughout the United States.

Organizational Leadership PEN PUZZLES

This activity models shared leadership. Divide the group into teams of 2 to 8 people and give each team 12 identical pens (pencils or toothpicks will also work). Ask the team to work together on the following tasks:

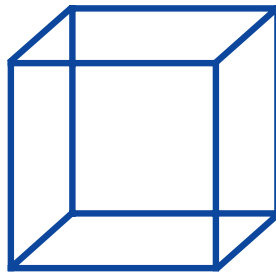
Puzzle 1. Use all 12 pens to form 6 equilateral triangles. (An equilateral triangle is one that has 3 equal sides.)

Solution: A 6-sided pinwheel-like figure



Puzzle 2. Use all 12 pens to form 6 squares.

Solution: A cube

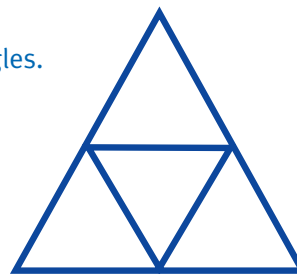


OR

Assign the group to teams of 5 or 6 people and give each team 9 pens. Ask the team to work together on the following tasks:

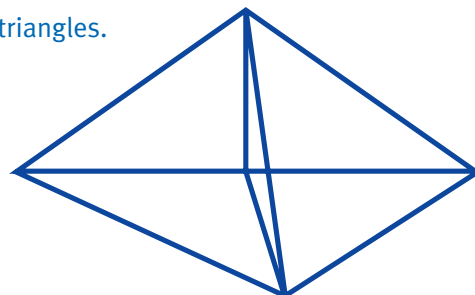
Puzzle 1. Use all 9 pens to form 5 equilateral triangles.

Solution: Four small triangles embedded within one large triangle



Puzzle 2. Use all 9 pens to form 7 equilateral triangles.

Solution: A prism with 2 triangles forming the base



Offer hints and suggestions if the teams are having a hard time figuring out a solution.

Use the following questions to process the activity:

- ★ Describe what happened in your team.
- ★ What feelings did you have as you were going through this exercise?
- ★ What patterns did you observe?
- ★ What caused you to have a breakthrough?
- ★ What helped or hindered your progress as a group?
- ★ What lessons did you have from the first task that helped you with the second task?
- ★ What elements of shared leadership were necessary for your team to be successful?
- ★ What roles did people play?
- ★ What are the things you are going to remember or tell others about shared leadership?

**The first group to solve Puzzle 1 may not be the first group to solve Puzzle 2. If that happens, you may also want to reflect as a group on this.*

Organizational Leadership GUESSING GAME

This activity recognizes individual talents and gifts that contribute to the functioning of the team. Prepare small folded pieces of paper with the names of members of the group (or the people in the room at present). Pass around a hat with the names and have everyone pick one, ensuring that each participant gets someone else's name and no one tells whose name he or she has picked.

Give the following instructions: "Look at the name on your paper and think of one thing that you appreciate about that person." With the whole group sitting in a circle, ask one person to start by sharing what they appreciate about the person whose name they drew. Ask the other members of the group to guess who is being described. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a chance to share and be appreciated!

Organizational Leadership KNOTS

This activity allows participants to practice collective problem-solving. Have participants stand in a circle and place their hands in the center of the circle. Ask each person to grab the hands of two other participants. Make sure that nobody holds both hands of the same individual or holds hands with someone standing right next to them. If the group is large, you may want to ask participants to divide themselves into teams of no less than 6 people.

The result is a human knot. The group's task is to untangle the knot without anyone's hands being released. At the end of the exercise, process the activity using the following questions:

- ★ Describe what happened in your team or within the group.
- ★ What feelings did you have as you were going through this exercise?
- ★ What patterns did you observe?
- ★ What caused you to have a breakthrough?
- ★ What helped or hindered your progress as a group?
- ★ What elements of teamwork were necessary for your team to be successful?
- ★ What roles did people play?
- ★ What are the things you are going to remember or tell others about problem-solving as a team?

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

At the Table

www.atthetable.org

Center for Creative Leadership

www.ccl.org

Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development

www.theinnovationcenter.org

Jossey Bass Publishers

www.josseybass.com

Planning and Evaluation Resource Center

www.theinnovationcenter.org



Community Leadership

*Leadership has to take place in relation to other people; you can't individually be a leader. Who are you leading? What are you leading?
For young people to take on leadership roles, it's still in relation to other members of the community.*

— PROGRAM LEADER

RESEARCH OVERVIEW¹

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) defines youth organizing as “the union of grassroots community organizing and positive youth development, with an explicit commitment to social change and positive action, based on the premise that young people are capable of taking leadership to transform their community.” Organizing is one way in which young people can take on community leadership roles. The effectiveness of youth organizing as a community engagement strategy is rooted in the motivation for and achievement of tangible social change as well as the feeling that those in power need to listen to young people. Youth-organizing groups support diverse youth working in a focused way toward clear goals for community change.

Community change drives the work of most of the YLDI youth-organizing groups, although they all prioritize youth development in order to build the capacity and sustain the commitment of youth organizers. In contrast to YLDI identity-support groups, the youth-organizing groups all

¹ Source: H. Lewis-Charp, H. Cao Yu, S. Soukamneuth, and J. Lacoë, *Extending the Reach of Youth Development through Civic Engagement: Outcomes of the Youth Leadership for Development Initiative*. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003 (see Appendix 2).

have youth on staff as paid organizers. They also have a nonpaid “membership” base that participated in YLDI meetings and events.

The issues youth-organizing groups addressed generally arose from the local community context or from their own experiences of injustice. They included environmental issues (i.e., toxic waste dumping, air and water pollution, and lack of green spaces), lack of policies against sexual discrimination in schools, police harassment, lack of recreational spaces for youth, and unsafe working conditions for local garment workers. At times, they also teamed with other local and national organizations to weigh in on matters of state or national policy.

YLDI youth-organizing groups gave diverse young people, largely from resource-poor communities, a chance to explore and act on social issues. To engage youth, the groups used similar strategies, most of which can be mapped back to the field of community organizing. For instance, each group engaged youth in the following activities:

- ★ Political education
- ★ Community or power mapping
- ★ Issue identification
- ★ Membership recruitment
- ★ Direct action

Youth-organizing groups excelled in involving youth in decision making, learning about the community, finding opportunities to give back to the community, and taking civic action. They were particularly good at allowing youth to extend their skills and practice them in new settings.

PROMISING PRACTICE CHECKLIST 6

Provide Consistent and Structured Activities for Youth to Deepen Their Knowledge of and Commitment to the Community

- ✓ Help youth understand the community context.
- ✓ Find out which community issues are meaningful and important to young people.
- ✓ Use the community as the arena for applying young people’s skills.
- ✓ Foster a relationship-based approach to community leadership.
- ✓ Draw on youth-organizing strategies—education, advocacy, and direct action—to engage youth as leaders in their communities.

CASE STUDY 4.1

YOUTH UNITED FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

We trust that youth have the capacity to do their own work.

— EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2.5 square miles of East Palo Alto contain a lot of heavy industry. When two community members decided to work for an ordinance to change from heavy to light industry, the big industries naturally fought back. But Youth United for Community Action (YUCA) has been working on environmental justice for a long time, and the young people in YUCA decided that supporting the ordinance change would become part of their larger strategy to engage in grassroots community organizing.

By law, the city should have given YUCA 180 days to collect the 710 signatures they needed to get the ordinance on the ballot, but a paperwork glitch made it 90 days. The youth got going anyway, knocking on doors to get the signatures. They had to find older community members to work with them, because each signature had to be witnessed by a voting resident 18 or older. Even with the short time and the added task of partnering with older residents, YUCA activists collected 955 signatures—but when the town verified them, it knocked the number down to 590.

The organizers were disappointed, but they trusted those signatures; they knew they'd done it right. So they sat down and did what they know how to do well: They analyzed what was going on. "Can we trust the city?" they asked. They weren't sure that they could, so they decided to verify the signatures themselves. They created another mini-campaign just to verify the signatures, and they kept going.

They learned that when working with the city, it's up to the activists to keep issues on the agenda. Seeing how special interests come into play was a valuable experience for YUCA youth.

All of this happened because YUCA youth know how to analyze a situation, come up with a plan, and implement it. They've been through YUCA's training; they have the support of YUCA staff; and YUCA has been in the streets, doing the work, for a long time.

YUCA started in 1993, when young people of color active in their communities came together to form an organization that would train a new generation of leaders to be on the forefront of

change. Their plan was to give young people of color meaningful leadership experience in community-based efforts for environmental and social justice. Their objectives were as follows:

- ★ Support and increase the capacity of grassroots community-based organizations working on social and environmental justice issues.
- ★ Support, prepare, and develop youth of color as leaders.
- ★ Provide a vehicle for young leaders to come together to prevent the barriers that have divided past movements and continue to divide communities today.

“In past movements, divide-and-conquer has been a tool used by oppressors to stop people of color from creating social change in our communities,” says Oscar Flores, YUCA’s executive director. But YUCA wanted to bring together young Native Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Latinos, and African Americans to address community issues. From its start, YUCA has always been about youth of color: “There’s always been that lens,” Oscar says. “From that we strive to come to a common vision and connectedness.”

The first method YUCA used to achieve those objectives was the FIRE (Fighting Injustice and Regulating Equality) Fellowship Program, formerly known as the Irving Fellows for Sustainable Communities Program. This program has always been statewide. YUCA selects and trains interns who work for 10 weeks in the summer with community-based organizations in the San Francisco Bay area and Los Angeles. At first, YUCA interns were mostly college students. In 1997, in response to the high number of high school students participating in FIRE, YUCA created Higher Learning. Higher Learning core members are local high school–age students who are paid organizers working year-round on issues they feel are important in their communities. At the Los Angeles site, the focus is currently on school reform. The East Palo Alto site is focusing on environmental justice.

YUCA invests time and resources in making sure that young people are truly ready to take on community leadership roles. YUCA youth organizers are trained for the work and get continuing support from staff. YUCA calls its primary training in organizing skills “Organizing 101.” The curriculum explains different models and approaches to organizing—looking at political, historical and economic issues—and then puts theory into practice through a mock campaign. YUCA also uses the Popular Education Model, which is based on the work of Paulo Freire, the influential popular education theorist and author, to create interactive workshops on a whole range of social issues. These workshops form the base on which organizers analyze what’s happening in their communities.

Young people in Higher Learning make all the decisions. Staff members ask questions to help clarify their thinking, help them get the resources they need, and red-flag decisions that seem out of line with YUCA's goals and values. But Higher Learning core members run their own processes. They hire new core members—"No staff allowed," says Oscar—and they plan and implement every YUCA campaign. "When they have full ownership, they step up to the tasks," Oscar says. Higher Learning members feel a responsibility for their campaigns, YUCA as a whole, and their communities.

In the past few years, YUCA has learned that in order to do the work well, staff and members need to be intentional about having a clear organizational structure. To that end, YUCA's YLDI project has been to evaluate and document the work of the organization, which includes creating a training manual for use by other organizations. YUCA has also worked to strengthen its board of directors—which is made up of youth and young adults—and to build systems of communications and accountability between and within both YUCA sites. One of the first steps in that process was to bring in the Imoyase Group, a consulting group that supports social justice, to do a historical assessment of YUCA. According to Oscar, much staff transition was occurring at that time, and a great deal of information was living "in people's heads, not on paper." YUCA had grown fast, and as it grew, informal systems of documentation and communication were no longer effective. Clear lines of communication and responsibility were necessary.

Since then, YUCA has learned that communicating with each other effectively helps its members be more accountable to each other and the organization. In staff retreats, with the help of facilitators, they've been able to change their processes to increase communication. Oscar uses the example of the weekly staff check-in meetings between the East Palo Alto and Los Angeles sites. In the past, those meetings were frustrating: People might show up late or not at all, and the meetings were repetitive and not as helpful to staff as they could be. In the retreat, staff talked about what was good about the meetings and what wasn't. Says Oscar, "It was pretty simple, actually. We revamped the process." Now, Oscar creates an agenda and asks for notes about the previous check-in so that people prepare in advance. Oscar begins the meetings by asking whether anyone has any red flags about the notes and then they move on to new business. Now, attendance is up, and people are hardly ever late.

YUCA's eight staff members have also realized the need for team development. Staff retreats are quarterly; part of the director's job is to ensure that "we grow as a whole every time we meet," in those retreats, says Oscar. People come to staff positions, Oscar says, "with different levels of social consciousness" and different communications skills. Oscar is responsible for identifying issues in those areas, and he brings in outside trainers to help staff learn together. For example, YUCA had a workshop on sexism at a recent staff retreat, because more men were joining the staff. "We gotta talk about that now," he figured, "or [sexism] will play itself out." YUCA has committed to continuing this process, and it always budgets for outside consultants to help staff learn as the organization develops.

Another aspect of YUCA's development is that Higher Learning alumni are beginning to organize as a group. There has been no structure in the past to “keep track of them, [including] what they're up to and how they're doing,” says Oscar, so YUCA asked two alumni from each site to contact others and create a plan for a Higher Learning alumni group. The planning is in the preliminary stages, but it seems likely that the alumni will serve as mentors for the high school youth in the program.

All of YUCA's work—training, organizing, and even the internal changes in structure—is designed to ensure that the organization's processes have integrity and that the group is using resources in the best way possible to support young organizers. Everyone at YUCA is young, and everyone there has what it takes to change the community.

YUCA Lessons Learned

- ★ To do community leadership work well, staff and members need to be intentional about having a clear organizational structure.
- ★ Communicating with each other effectively helps everyone to be more accountable to each other and the organization.
- ★ When young people have full ownership of their work, they step up to the tasks.

CASE STUDY 4.2

YOUTH MINISTRIES FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

This is our community. Nothing gets done here without our permission.

— ORGANIZING INTERN

There's an old cement plant in the Bronx, right on the Bronx River. It was about to become a parking lot—but city planners didn't count on Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice organizers. The neighborhood around the plant is where they live and work, and they wanted a park, not a parking lot. The organizers stopped the bid for a parking lot and got the land transferred to the Parks department. The youth celebrated, started planning, and even organized a visioning meeting for the neighborhood.

Right in the middle of that process, they hit a snag: The city wanted to use an old road that ran through the lot to get trucks to the Hunt's Point Market. No way. Youth Ministries organized again: They circulated petitions, they used street theater to inform residents, and they got more signatures. They met with the Department of Transportation, and they got press attention. They stopped the trucks. They're still fighting to get the road off the map altogether, but they'll get that park. Children need a place to play, and everyone needs green space for his or her spirit.

In this neighborhood, 65,000 people live in one square mile. Until a few years ago, the 15,000 young people who live in this community had nothing but school and the streets. In 1994, five high school and college students decided to change that. Now, there's a place for young people ages 7 to 21 to go—a place where they learn to understand what's happening in their community and how to change it.

One of the founders is current executive director Alexie Torres-Fleming. She and her friends met in Alexie's attic at first; later, they asked to use the basement of a local church for programs for young people. Hernan Melara was 12 then. He started going to Youth Ministries "right when the doors opened," he says. Alexie's parents were his neighbors, and they told him about what she was doing. It sounded "new and different," he says, so he tried it out. Soon he was into the arts and music programs, which were offered at Youth Ministries from the start, along with sports and fitness. Now he's progressed to activism on the park.

Since 1994 Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice has grown to 15 staff members and 2 major departments, one that works with 7- to 11-year-olds and one for young people age 12 and older. Each year the programs are organized around a common theme; in 2002, it was the history of the South Bronx. The arts and recreation programs are what first draw many young people to Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice. Younger youth may first get interested in the arts programs;

older youth may come to play basketball. They come for the courses offered in drama, the art class on graffiti, or a hip-hop/break-dancing course that reminds them where hip-hop started—in the Bronx.

Programs for older youth are organized in four phases. The first phase, Arts and Activism, is designed to appeal to young people's self-interest at first, but the curriculum actually raises consciousness about social justice issues, thereby planting seeds for young people to develop an understanding of oppression and a desire to know more about it.

That brings them to the second phase, Education for Liberation. Here, young people start to learn about particular issues by discussing books like Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* and attending performances, talks, and readings that are part of the Youth Ministries' "Freedom Forum." The Freedom Forum offers lots of opportunity for discussions and, as former staff member Yomara Velez says, "Young people love it!"

The third stage of programming is Community Service. This stage begins when, as Yomara says, young people become "politicized and humbled." They begin to understand the issues and struggles of people in their community and to acquire skills to "serve, not save" others.

In the fourth phase, Community Organizing, young people have the opportunity to receive a stipend and take on responsibilities for community assessment and working on social justice campaigns. In the first three phases, young people are Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice *members*. In phase four, they're *organizers*. By the time they reach that level, they are well grounded in a social justice analysis of what's happening in their communities, and they have many of the skills needed for organizing efforts to address community issues. They also participate in facilitator and other trainings offered by the Youth Ministries Leadership Institute. When something like the cement factory/park issue comes up, they're ready to respond.

Staff members of Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice help youth organizers learn from their experiences. Hernan says he learned a lot of his organizing skills "by ear": by working with more experienced organizers and listening to staff members explain issues and strategies. In this way he learned to be a "gatekeeper."

"Say you get 10 people," he explains, "and each one knows 5 and each of them knows 5. Then you got 250 people at a rally." He learned that it's hard to get people out unless they understand the issues. "Some people don't even know we have a river," he says. So he and other Youth Ministries organizers hand out fliers and organize events like a canoe ride down the river. "It starts out recreational, but then we start to show them things like the cement factory, and where the park would be. Then they start to care about the river." Then, he says, "You'd be surprised how many of them come out!"

As young people at Youth Ministries gain more skills and more of what Hernan calls “passion for this work,” they want to take on more leadership. This can be a challenge; local officials are often not interested in talking with young people, and even other grassroots organizations, which are almost always run by older adults, are not always accessible to them. Many decision-making meetings are scheduled during the day, when youth organizers are in school. In the past, staff members have acted as “translators”: They attended daytime meetings, then told youth organizers in the evening what happened, but they learned that using adults as translators kept both power and learning out of the hands of young people. So Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice staff have advocated more and more for evening meetings. Staff members help young people create agendas and prepare presentations to community groups, but the young people do the presenting.

The youth in Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice wanted to have younger organizers in more prominent leadership roles in its campaigns, but the organizers who are paid stipends are in high school, and Youth Ministries wants them to stay there. Youth organizers therefore only work two hours for two days each week. That’s enough time to organize, but “to lead campaigns would take a lot more time than they have,” says Yomara. Young people can get so involved with organizing that they start to flunk out. When that happens, they must go back to the Education for Liberation phase, even though they resist. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice is working on ways to help young organizers balance social justice and school work. “There’s no formula,” says Yomara. “We just have to figure it out.”

Youth Ministries programs work with young people up to age 21. Organizers often want to continue with the program after graduation from high school, but at that age and in that community, they have to make real money to contribute to the family income. A stipend isn’t enough, so Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice created the Internship Program as a stepping stone, which brings young people, says Yomara, “a step closer to receiving a salary” for their work. It’s a little more money, it requires a little more time, and it is real leadership. Interns feel a sense of ownership for campaigns. They write training curricula, organize events, and support youth organizers. It’s been really, really great,” says Yomara. “It creates space for them to learn, take ownership, and be held accountable. It teaches them what it’s like when you have a job—how you’re expected to act at work.”

For some young people, it’s an adjustment. They move from two hours twice a week, working on campaigns that someone else has final responsibility for, to being in charge and accountable. Staff members expect them to show up when they say they will, to do what they said they’d do. And it’s not about some boss making money; this job is about changing their own community. As an intern, Hernan says that working 30 hours every 2 weeks at a job he loves is great. He’s a senior in high school, so this is enough work for him right now. When he graduates, he’ll get other work: “Right now the only thing I know is organizing. I want to see what else is out there for me. But later on, I’ll come back to organizing.”

A few years ago, Youth Ministries organizers and staff drove out to Westchester County, a wealthy suburb of New York City. They rode around for 50 minutes looking at the part of the Bronx River that flows through Westchester. Hernan remembers what they saw there: “A green walking park, geese, turtles, other wild life.” Their own part of the river was full of old cars and tires, tangled with weeds, and bordered by factories and roads. Hernan says, “We were asking ourselves, ‘Why can’t we have this? Why can’t we have the geese and the turtles, and the place for little kids to play?’ And the answer was: We can. We just have to organize.”

“I grew up here,” Hernan says. “I feel safe here. I’ll stay here. I see things in the future, how they can be. I don’t want a cement plant. I want a park for my children and their children. This is my community. Nothing gets done here without my permission.”

Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice Lessons Learned

- ★ Using adults as “translators” kept both power and learning out of the hands of young people. It’s important to make sure that young people have access to the work and address barriers (such as daytime meetings) that hinder their direct participation.
- ★ Young people can be drawn into civic activism programs through arts and sports programs that integrate information about the community and community issues into the curriculum. Information can lead to a sense of ownership, and that can result in a commitment to social change.
- ★ The paid internship program has been the solution to the problems of not having enough young people in lead roles and of older youth leaving the program because they need to support themselves and their families.

Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice Top 10 Tips for Youth Organizing

- 1.** Training in youth-organizing skills is critical.
- 2.** Join coalitions, but carefully. Partners should share at least one interest and gain additional power by working together rather than working alone.
- 3.** Less experienced members or participants can contribute to campaigns. Do not limit organizing activities to those with formal organizing titles.
- 4.** Be flexible about staffing, finances, and time lines. Different campaigns require different levels of resources.
- 5.** Get some initial closure in the first 90 days. Build in regular times for reflection.
- 6.** Create clear time lines for campaigns. If the goals have not been met by the projected dates, reshape the goals or acknowledge defeat, and move on.
- 7.** Organizing teams should provide regular updates to the organization.
- 8.** Assess parents' interests and skills and involve them in the work.
- 9.** Regularly evaluate the organizing process and its outcomes.
- 10.** Whether you win or lose, celebrate the effort!

CASE STUDY 4.3

ASIAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN ADVOCATES

People together is power.

— AIWA VOLUNTEER

Ellen Trieu was 14 in 1996, when, as she says, she “first walked through the doors of Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA).” She had taken a summer job doing office work—boring work, she adds—and she was only in it for the money. But that summer, she began to connect her family’s experience with AIWA’s work and got to know some of the adult staff members at AIWA. By the end of the summer, she was interested enough to say yes to Stacy Kono’s invitation to come back the next year as an intern. Ellen was one of the youth for whom AIWA’s youth program was developed. Now, she says, she’s “here to stay.”

In 1998, a friend brought 13-year-old Teresa Ruan to AIWA. It “sounded interesting,” she says. For two or three years, Teresa showed up and barely spoke. This year, at an intern-led discussion, young people got talking about their vision for their community. During another AIWA meeting, Teresa had heard about a youth-led campaign to fight the expansion of the county juvenile hall. When it was her turn to talk about her vision for her community, Teresa spoke up: “We don’t need money being put into building bigger jails; we need more money for schools.”

That is how it works at AIWA’s Youth Build Immigrant Power Project (YBIP). Young people show up with a friend because they want to hang out with other Asian youth. They discover their common experience as immigrant youth and their common experiences within their families and communities. First, they develop personal leadership skills as they learn about social justice issues and begin to connect their experiences to those of other low-income communities and other people of color. What they learn leads them to commit to working for change.

AIWA exists to educate, serve, and foster the empowerment of Asian immigrant women and their families—especially their children—so that they may actively participate in the decision-making processes that determine their living and working conditions. AIWA organizes around the rights of low-wage immigrant workers, especially garment workers, and offers Asian immigrant women ways to learn the skills they need to affect their lives.

From 1992 through 1997, AIWA organized the Garment Workers Justice Campaign; children of garment workers were key participants. AIWA won. Seeing the energy and effectiveness of young people in that campaign helped AIWA understand the need for a youth program, but they weren’t sure how to begin. Their direction came from two sources: the children of AIWA’s adult participants and youth development agencies that were already working with Asian young people. Stacy Kono says, “Young people whose moms were garment workers played a key role in build-

ing the mission and direction of the youth program,” helping to narrow its focus to “young people from immigrant families, rather than all youth or Asian-American youth more broadly.” They were right, and AIWA has continued to believe in its initial understanding that youth programs must grow out of the needs and beliefs of young people, as articulated by young people.

As its mission evolved, AIWA looked to other organizations working with Asian youth for insight and ideas about how to set up programs. Eric Tang of the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence and Grace Kong of the Laotian Organizing Project were particularly helpful; they each had worked extensively with low-income immigrant youth to organize for justice within their communities.

YBIP’s mission is to build the leadership and organizing skills of low-income Asian immigrant youth. When the project was first started, AIWA was eager to involve young people as leaders in organizing for social justice, but it soon learned that, just as its leadership development work with adult immigrant workers takes time (with women working 6 to 7 days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day, they have little time to spend with the organization), so does its work with young people. As staff learned more about other YLDI organizations, they considered the need for Asian youth to connect with each other before they connected with ideas that lead to activism. They learned from organizations like OUTRIGHT that isolation had to be addressed even before consciousness raising took place and that having an informal general meeting night would bring more young people through the doors. Young people need to have a sense of connection with each other before they can begin to discover common answers to questions such as, What are the problems of Asian immigrant youth? and, What are we going to do about it?

YBIP’s monthly general meeting for discussion and training shifted to a drop-in format, where young people come for social reasons: to hang out, play games, and sing karaoke. On the surface, the drop-in may not seem part of YBIP’s day-to-day work of political education and skill-building, but it is: It’s a way in, an opportunity for outreach. As young people tell each other their stories in informal settings, they begin to make connections between the stories and understand how their experiences are related to the overarching social structure and its inequality. One young woman states that she began to understand “why it was the humming of sewing machines that put me to sleep as a kid, and not the humming of my mother. It is because of the structure of the garment industry” that exploits immigrant women for corporate greed.

Recently, YBIP participants organized a solidarity rally in San Francisco for a “girl-cott” of the Donna Karan Corporation. It was a big success: Eighty people showed up for the rally, which included street theatre featuring “Charlie’s Angels” types fighting for workers’ rights. YBIP’s paid interns and youth core leaders organized the rally.

YBIP usually offers only six internships for the summer and for the school year, but YBIP leaders wanted more youth to have the same opportunities to learn as the interns. They decided to create a weekly after-school leadership training curriculum called the Asian Youth United Program.

It covers racism, classism, and sexism; public speaking; AIWA's history; and Web design. Each participant makes a serious commitment to the training, and at the end each designs a Web page that addresses the issues of the community. To address the continuing need for connection, the serious training is also peppered with field trips and fun.

Young people at YBIP learn through experience as well as training. Ellen Trieu tells of her first organizing work, leafleting garment shops in Oakland, near San Francisco. If the managers let them in, the young women took “mental notes of the conditions of the shops, number of workers, and labels that are sewn in.” Ellen says that they learned “what a sweatshop is and the unjust nature of the garment industry. Garment workers who work the hardest and most labor-intensive jobs get paid the least.” She gained a better understanding of the garment industry, and a question emerged that led to her continued activism today: “Where is the justice in this?”

Qiao Wen Xie, a student at Oakland High School and one of the core leaders at YBIP, got involved with the program because her mother is a garment worker who comes to AIWA classes and training. As she and other YBIP participants began to understand their parents' working conditions, they wondered how those conditions affected other young people. They organized a survey of Oakland Chinese youth last year and, according to Qiao, “found out that low-income immigrant youth are concerned about their parents' jobs, language barriers in our community, and problems with public schools we go to.” As a result, she says, “I want to fight for change in our community.”

YBIP's biggest challenges are the limits on the time and capacity to do all that needs to be done. They meet this challenge by talking about it, “breaking things down,” as Stacy says, so they can prioritize. Out of these frustrating times, YBIP has reaffirmed the youth development principle that it's important to have caring adults involved in the work. When young people run into frustration, it's helpful to have adults available to brainstorm with—to work through ideas and help them get the resources they need. YBIP youth and adults have also learned the value of talking with young people from other organizations. They prepared carefully for site visits with the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY) in Boston and the National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC) and the Sexual Minority Youth Action League (SMYAL) in Washington, DC. Young people researched the organizations, discussed what they do, and created questions; debriefed the trips together; and reported back to other youth and adults at AIWA about what they learned.

There are always new challenges. As more young men join the YBIP program, organizers are working to ensure that young women and young men can participate fully, given the dynamics of sexism. They wonder about youth–adult partnerships and youth-only space. They wonder how to get more young people to come to their programs and stay involved.

Youth and adults at YBIP continue the work even as they continue to learn. The Asian Youth United program started up in the spring of 2003; core leaders will help facilitate that program so that, says Teresa Ruan, other youth “can become leaders like me.” They will keep learning about their parents’ lives, their peers’ lives, and their own life. And they’ll organize. Last year they organized the Donna Karan Rally; now they are launching a campaign for health and safety in the workplace for injured garment workers. These young people are fighting for justice together as part of a community; they share an understanding that, as Teresa says, “People together is power.”

Asian Immigrant Women Advocates Lessons Learned

- ★ Youth programs must be developed out of the needs and beliefs of young people, as articulated by young people.
- ★ Community building comes before consciousness raising. Give young people time to share with each other and make personal commitments to their communities.
- ★ Cross-organizational connections are useful for finding your “place” in the work.
- ★ It’s important to have caring adults involved in the work.

Community Leadership Workshop

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?²

Overview

An interactive overview of different approaches to community change

Purpose

To help participants understand the purpose and process of community organizing and other change strategies

Time Required

45 minutes

Materials

Nine volunteer actors, large signs (identifying the name of each character, the church, and the city), tape, paragraph for Narrator (Handout 1), five sets of description papers (Handout 2), markers and butcher paper for five groups

Preparation

Complete the script that the Narrator will read (Handout 1). Fill in the blanks by naming the city, church, vacation spot, and pastor. (NOTE: You may wish to use semifictional names that will still have meaning for participants, like “San ColoredCisco.”) Once you have completed the narrative, make a copy for the Narrator and prepare large signs that clearly show the name of each character, the church, and the city. Write out the three questions for small-group work on a piece of butcher paper. Make five copies.

² This workshop was created and piloted by YUCA, a YLDI partner organization (see Appendix 3, Contact Information).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Role Play</p>	<p>5 min</p>	<p>Volunteers will act out what happened as the Narrator reads the script given in Handout 1.</p>	<p>Nine volunteers to act out the following parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Narrator ★ Elected official ★ The church ★ Businessperson ★ People in church (2) ★ Pastor ★ Local radio deejay ★ Ku Klux Klan member. <p>If your group is not that big, use stuffed animals or chairs for some roles, but the Klan member should be a real person.</p> <p>Sign that says St. _____ Church</p> <p>Signs that label each character.</p> <p>Sign that says _____ (fictional city name)</p>

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 2: Small Groups	10 min	<p>Divide participants into 5 groups. Give each group one of the description papers shown in Handout 2. Explain to the participants, “This is all your group can do, given the resources you have and the decisions your board and staff have made. These are your limitations. In your groups, tell us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What is the problem? ★ Why does your organization think the problem exists? ★ Based on what you can do, what is your organization’s response? <p>“Write the answers to questions 1–3 on your group’s butcher paper and prepare a 2-minute skit showing your organization’s response to the situation.”</p>	<p>Markers and butcher paper for each group</p> <p>Description papers for each group (see Handout 2)</p> <p>Butcher paper sheets with questions 1–3 written on it and posted on the wall</p>
Step 3: Presentations	10 min	<p>Tell the participants, “We will call up one group at a time. Briefly describe your group. Tell us your answers to Questions 1 and 2. Then, when we yell ACTION, act out your response (Question 3). When we yell FREEZE, stop. Then tape your butcher paper to the wall—we’ll use them later.”</p>	Tape
Step 4: Discussion	20 min	<p>Ask the participants to come together in a circle to review the notes from the small groups.</p> <p>Explain, “First, we will define some terms (see Handout 3). To identify the different methods of working for change, we’ll use what you did in the skits.</p> <p>“Group 1 was the drop-in shelter. How would you describe the type of work Group 1 did in the community? [Answer: Service.] So, one type of work is service. Service is an approach to change that meets immediate needs.</p>	Handout 3

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
		<p>“Group 2 was people who speak to City Council and the media. How would you describe the type of work Group 2 did in the community? [Answer: Advocacy.] So another type of work is advocacy. Advocacy is an approach to change that is characterized by someone speaking or working on behalf of others.”</p> <p>Continue through the terms using the definitions in Handout 3.</p>	

HANDOUT 1: SCRIPT FOR NARRATOR

What is community organizing?

Volunteers will act out what happened as the Narrator reads the following scenario.

Narrator: There is a low-income community of color, _____.

Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned.

The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months.

After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning.

Narrator: FREEZE!

Actors should stay onstage for the small-group role plays.

HANDOUT 2: DESCRIPTION PAPERS

What is community organizing?

Description Paper 1:

There is a low-income community of color, _____. Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned. The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months. After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning. **Your group provides food, shelter, blankets, toys, and clothing to people who need them. You have a 24-hour drop-in center. Sometimes you go into the community and pass things out.**

Description Paper 2:

There is a low-income community of color, _____. Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned. The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months. After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning. **Your group speaks out to the City Council and the media about issues affecting the community. You always go and represent people who you believe cannot speak for themselves. Thus, you speak on their behalf.**

Description Paper 3:

There is a low-income community of color, _____. Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned. The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months. After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning. **Your group tries to get businesses to support your community. You negotiate with local and big businesses to invest more in the community and support community activities. In the past, you got businesses to partner with churches to sponsor child care for kids in the neighborhood.**

Description Paper 4:

There is a low-income community of color, _____. Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned. The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months. After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning. **At every election, your group runs a campaign for a candidate that you believe represents the community well. Last time, your group supported Reverend _____ for the City Council. However, Pastor _____ lost by two votes.**

Description Paper 5:

There is a low-income community of color, _____. Last Sunday, St. _____ Church there burned. Inside the church, residents were gathering to go on a big trip to _____, so they had all their clothing and many of their personal belongings with them. Many of these things were burned. In addition to the main part of the church, a child care room burned. The pastor of the church, Reverend _____, led people to the school nearby to escape the fire. This was the fifth church burned in the community in five months. After each fire, the local radio station receives an anonymous call from people claiming to be members of the Klan, saying that they did the burning. **Last year, your group organized community residents to oppose a Klan rally/block party in your community. Many people turned out for the rally. You have been watching the pattern of churches being burned and notice similar things. You did research and found out for certain that the Klan is behind the church burnings.**

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING? HANDOUT 3: DEFINITIONS

Service: An approach to change that meets immediate needs. For example, if a person is hungry, you give him or her food. If a church burns, you collect money or canned food for the people affected. Shelters are another example of this type of work.

Advocacy: An approach to change characterized by someone speaking or working for or on behalf of others. For example, Amnesty International works for the rights of prisoners. They work in the community because prisoners cannot. If Amnesty International talks to the president about releasing a prisoner, it is advocating for the rights of that prisoner.

Economic Development: An approach to change in which the economic base of a community is built. For example, in East Palo Alto, a group called EPA CANDO works to help local businesses partner with each other to become stronger so they can compete with big businesses. The economic development approach says, “Let’s take care of our own.” Another example is Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) in Los Angeles; it has a young women’s cooperative for local business owners.

Electoral: An approach to change that works to improve the laws in our system by getting people elected to office who respond to the needs of the people. For example, youth mobilized in California to defeat Proposition 21 which would have altered the California juvenile justice system to allow young people to be tried and held with adult offenders. They did a lot of work getting people registered to vote and turning out the vote on Election Day.

Organizing: An approach to change that addresses the system itself. It usually combines a long-term strategy with short-term goals, and it attempts to change the system at its roots. For example, Youth Organizing Communities in California uses organizing to push for schools, not jails, and a true education that teaches young people about their roots.

In our communities, these approaches to social change often overlap. For example, the Black Panther Party not only organized against the police but also ran free breakfast programs for children who weren’t getting proper food. AIWA organizes against sweatshop conditions and leads English and “know your rights” classes for the immigrant women they work with. Actions may look the same but their analysis could be different. The work changes with the situation according to the identification of a problem and the analysis of why it exists.

Community Leadership Workshop

CHARTING INDIVIDUAL CONNECTIONS³

Overview

A participatory workshop in which youth and adults can explore their gifts and strengths

Purpose

To identify participants' strengths and connect them to team needs

Time Required

Approximately 45 minutes

Materials

Flip chart, markers, half sheets of paper, tape, sticky wall (or tape)

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setting the context</p>	10 min	<p>Describe the purpose of the session: “We are all leaders in this project. One key aspect of leadership is the ability to identify your own strengths—what you are good at and what you can offer the team. Sometimes it’s hard for us as individuals to realize and name our skills and potential connections to the whole of the team. Therefore, others play a key role in helping people connect their skills to team needs. This exercise will help us practice those skills.”</p> <p>Refer to the flip charts:</p> <p>“For example, someone may be a skilled artist. How could those skills be used in our team?” Push to get the group to elicit at least five different examples (e.g., make posters, draw invitations to vision meeting, decorate trash cans for service project, help design team shirt).</p> <p>Ask, “For another example, how about people who have great skills in basketball—how could those skills be helpful to our team?” (Some possible answers: Since they are good team</p>	<p>Flip chart with the following written on it:</p> <p>Effective Leaders:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know their skills and gifts 2. Can connect their skills to team needs 3. Can help others to connect their skills to team needs <p>Markers</p> <p>Tape</p>

³ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 2: Brainstorming	10 min	<p>players, they could help us understand how teams work effectively; they could recruit their teammates to help out on service projects; they could ask the coach to let us use their facilities for meetings.)</p> <p>Tell the group, “In the next activity, we identify our individual gifts and think of ways these can be connected to our team needs and opportunities.</p> <p>“Take a moment to close your eyes. Think about something you are really good at. You might want to think about when you are happy or feeling good. Can someone give me an example?”</p> <p>Solicit several examples. Then say, “Everyone get it? Okay, write your gift on a piece of paper.”</p>	<p>Half sheets of paper</p> <p>Markers</p>
Step 3: Sharing	15 min (about 1 min per person)	<p>Say, “Now we are going to practice making connections and speaking in front of a group. I am going to ask each of you to come to the front of the room and tell us what your gift or skill is. Then we will give you some ideas of how those skills can be useful to our team and our work. Who would like to go first?”</p> <p>The first person walks to the front of the room and states his or her name and gifts. Ask the group, “How could X’s skills be useful?” Ask for several examples to help people realize that the same skills can be useful in a variety of ways. Do this for each participant.</p> <p>Pay special attention to group members who are shy or inexperienced with speaking in front of a group. Encourage them and coach them to speak loudly, look at the group, smile, and so forth.</p> <p>Another possibility is to ask speakers to say “Hello, my name is _____” and ask the group to respond with “Hi, _____, we’re glad you’re part of our team.”</p>	Tape or sticky wall

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 4: Reflection</p>	<p>10 min</p>	<p>Say, “Let’s think about your experiences in figuring out what your skills are. Was it easy? Hard? What did it feel like when I asked you to visualize your skills?” Pause to leave time for answers.</p> <p>Continue: “How about when you walked in front of the room and shared your skill? What was that like?” Ask for a couple of answers.</p> <p>“How many of you were scared thinking about the fact that you would have to stand in front of the group?” Ask for a show of hands.</p> <p>“What about after you did it? Were you still scared? What helped you become less scared?”</p> <p>“How about giving feedback and connecting skills to needs? What was that like? How was it helpful? Why is it an important leadership skill? What did you learn?”</p> <p>“Think about the gifts and connections we made in the group. What skills do we have a lot of? What others might be useful?”</p>	

Community Leadership Activity

MY PARTNER'S GIFTS⁴

Overview

A simple “getting to know you” activity

Purpose

To help participants learn more about each other and identify the specific gifts that each person brings to the team

Time Required

10–20 minutes, *depending on group*

Materials

None

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setup & Interviews	10 mins	<p>Pair participants with someone they don't know. Ask the pairs to interview each other using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What are your skills? ★ What would you like to learn? ★ What do you offer to the team? 	
Step 2: Sharing & Reflection	10 mins	<p>When the interviews are over, have the partners introduce each other to the group by sharing the answers to the interview questions. Give each person specific feedback about how her or his skills might be useful to the team.</p>	

⁴ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

Community Leadership Activity

GIFTS BINGO⁵

Overview

A “raggedy-start” activity

Purpose

To engage people who come early to a meeting and to instantly engage people as they come in to join the group

Time Required

See instructions

Materials

Bingo cards (see handout), flip chart or butcher paper, and prizes for winners

Preparation

Prepare the Bingo cards (see handout) and the flip chart with the rules.

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setup</p>	<p>NOTE: A raggedy-start activity should begin about 5 to 10 minutes before the meeting and continue for about 5 to 10 minutes after the official start time. Raggedy starts should be inclusive, mix people, be active, and relate to the work. For example, if one of the values of the group is to promote youth–adult partnerships, the raggedy start should also be designed to promote that value.</p> <p>Bingo is usually played with cards that have numbers on each of 25 squares; the winner often gets money. In Gifts Bingo as a raggedy start, the rules are slightly different. First, the squares on the cards are filled with tasks: “Find someone who _____” (e.g., “was born in 1980” or “has more than 3 pets”). Each square should relate to the skills, interests, and gifts that each of us brings to community work.</p> <p>Explain that in raggedy-start Gifts Bingo, you cover a square by having a person who matches what is in the square sign it. The objective is to get <i>all</i> the squares, not just 5 in a row. After someone signs your card, move on to a new person.</p>	

⁵ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
	<p>You can stop the game even if no one has all the squares. Have people raise their hands if they have at least 15, or at least 10, until you find a winner. You can decide on a prize; something small like candy works fine.</p>	
<p>Step 2: Playing Bingo</p>	<p>As people enter the room, have two or three designated greeters ready to hand them Bingo cards and explain the rules (see handout). You can also write the rules on a flip chart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Once you find a match, have that person sign the square. ★ After that person signs the square, move on to someone new. ★ Try to get as many squares as possible. ★ Yell “Bingo!” if you fill out your whole card. 	<p>Bingo cards (see handout)</p> <p>Flip chart or butcher paper hanging up with the four rules written out</p>
<p>Step 3: Reflection</p>	<p>At the end, award any prizes, then make sure the group has a short time to process the experience. To guide their reflection, ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Which squares were easy to get? ★ Which squares were hard? ★ Did anything surprise you? ★ What new assets did you discover among our group? ★ How can we build on our many personal strengths? 	<p>Prizes (candy)</p>

HANDOUT: Sample Bingo Card

Knows how to use PowerPoint	Can speak two or more languages	Can sing a Britney Spears song	Has bowled more than 175	Is a member of a successful youth–adult partnership
Plays basketball	Recruited someone to come to this meeting	Thinks this community is great place to live	Has volunteered with people of other ages	Has facilitated a meeting
Can draw a map of this community	Has conducted a survey	Has a friendly smile	Likes to cook	Has been a member of a successful team
Has lived in this community for more than 30 years	Has lived in this community for less than a year	Has had his or her own business	Knows where youth in this community like to go on weekends	Has written a book

Note: Fill in the blank spaces with your own ideas!

Community Leadership Activity

MAKING STONE SOUP⁶

Overview

A short storytelling activity about the value of collective work

Purpose

To explore the gifts and strengths that individuals bring to the group

Time Required

10–25 minutes, *depending on group*

Materials

Paper, markers, large bowl or pot

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Storytelling</p>	<p>Tell the stone soup story:</p> <p>Once upon a time there was a village in a land where there was a drought. People were running out of food. The head of the village told the people, “If we don’t have anything to eat, we will have to make stone soup.” She asked the people to come to the town square the next day with stones to make stone soup. One family set off to find a stone to add to the soup, and as they put it in a basket to carry, they noticed some potatoes in the kitchen. They brought the stone and the potatoes. As they walked to the town square, another family saw them, and when they saw the potatoes, they remembered that there were a few carrots in the garden that had not been pulled. So they brought the carrots. Another family saw the carrots and brought some beans, and so on. The stone soup ended up being chock full of things to eat, and the whole town had a feast.</p>	
<p>Step 2: Making Stone Soup</p>	<p>Ask people to add their “stone” to the soup, writing one of their personal gifts on a sheet of paper and putting it in the pot.</p>	<p>Paper</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>Large bowl or pot</p>

⁶ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 3: Sharing & Reflection	Read all the papers back to the group and ask a few questions to guide reflection: <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ What did you notice about your team's gifts?★ What was exciting about hearing about our gifts?★ Based on this exercise, what would you say our strengths are?★ What would you say our challenges are?★ How can we use this information?	

Community Leadership Activity

COMMUNITY MIND MAP⁷

Overview

An experiential activity designed to help participants to an understanding of the perceptions of their personal community and the importance and roles of different elements of community in their work

Purpose

To share personal pictures of the community

To identify common elements and the role of community

To identify ways in which connections between youth and adults can positively affect the community

To target specific sectors of the community for the work

Time Required

Approximately 40 minutes

Materials

Flip chart, markers

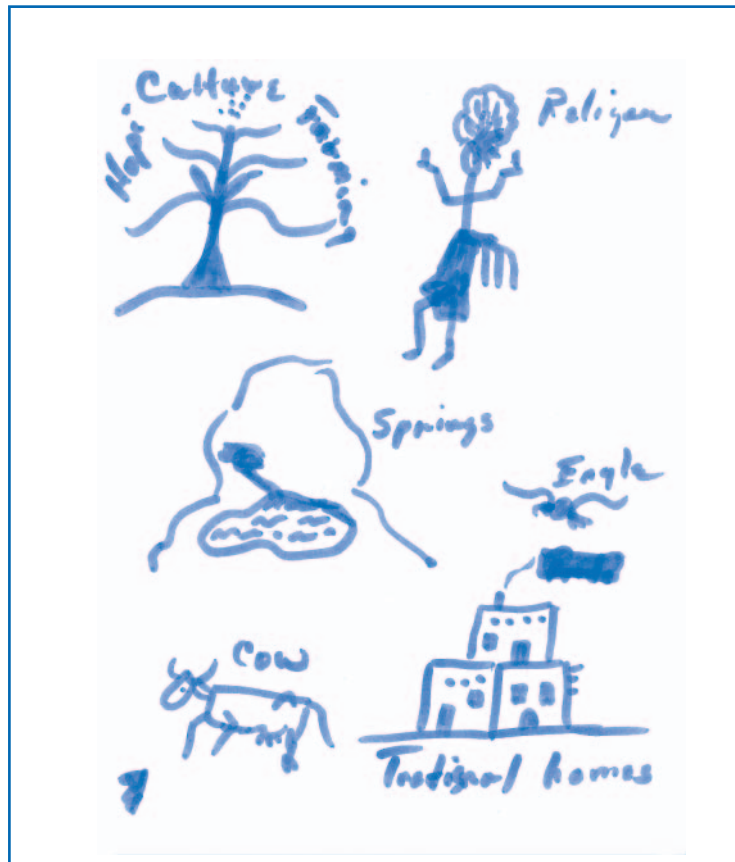
WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Lecturette	5 min	Welcome, session overview, and objectives	Flip chart with session overview and objectives
Step 2: Mind Mapping	10 min	<p>Explain that a mind map is a visual way to identify thoughts, feelings, concepts, and other not so tangible things. Set the stage by asking for examples of communities.</p> <p>Ask the group, “When you think of your community, what is the first word you think of? You might think of things like your family, places you go, and things that are special to you. Draw a picture that captures all those things. You will have about 10 minutes to draw, and then we will share our drawings or mind maps.”</p>	

⁷ Source: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change* (see Appendix 2).

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
		Participants then draw a mind map representing the personal communities to which they belong. (Sample mind maps can be found in the Handout.)	
Step 3: Sharing	10 min	Participants briefly explain their mind maps to the group (or in pairs, if the group is large).	
Step 4: Discussion and Reflection	10 min	<p>To help them process the experience, ask,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What pictures jumped out? ★ What words do you remember? ★ What feelings did you see expressed in the maps? ★ What did it feel like for you when you made your map? ★ Any surprises? ★ What common themes were expressed? ★ What differences emerged? ★ What gaps were there? What was left out of our collective maps, if anything? ★ Based on our discussion, what insights do we have as a group about the community? ★ Reflect on the maps. As community members committed to helping strengthen the community, what are some things we should keep in mind as we move forward? ★ What is the importance of understanding the community of our young people? ★ How can we value the community of our young people in our work? ★ What parts of the communities must we be sure to work into our plans as we move forward? 	Use a flip chart to record answers from questions 9–13
Step 5: Personal Reflection	5 min	The next step is to think about how the participants can apply what they learned from this session to their work. Ask them to write a “note to themselves” of one thing they would like to remember from this session and one thing they would like to do as a result of this session.	

COMMUNITY MIND MAP HANDOUT

Sample Mind Maps



Community Leadership Activity: CIRCLE ENERGIZER

Overview

A high-energy activity with lots of movement

Purpose

To energize participants and get a quick sense of the skills or talents present in the group

Time Required

Dependent on group

Materials

None

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setup & Circle Activity</p>	<p>All the participants form a circle around one member of the group. This person says, “I love my neighbor who can _____” (filling in the blank with a particular skill or talent that they themselves possess). Participants who share this skill, including the member in the middle, have to leave their position and race to an empty spot around the circle. The person left without a spot at the end of the round moves to the middle of the circle and the game continues until everyone has had a turn in the middle or until the group is ready to stop.</p> <p>This activity can be used as a personal leadership exercise by asking participants to name personal traits instead of skills.</p>	
<p>Step 2: Reflection</p>	<p>Process the activity using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What are the skills in your community? ★ Were you surprised by the people who could ____? (Fill in one of the skills or traits mentioned.) ★ As a leader, how do you determine the hidden talents in your community and mobilize them? 	

Community Leadership Activity

COMMUNITY SCULPTURE

Overview

A hands-on activity that requires participants to create a living sculpture of their community

Purpose

To help participants discover the elements, relationships, and processes that are critical features of their community

Time Required

Dependent on group

Materials

None

WHAT	HOW	MATERIALS
<p>Step 1: Setup & Sculpting</p>	<p>Participants form a circle around one member of the group, who strikes a pose that represents some aspect of the community. Add one more person at a time, making sure that each new piece is physically connected to the larger sculpture, until all the group members are part of the final creation.</p> <p>This activity can also be used to create a machine instead of a sculpture. In that case, participants can also use movements and sounds.</p>	
<p>Step 2: Reflection</p>	<p>Process the activity using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ What piece did you add? ★ What was easy about this activity? ★ What was difficult about it? ★ What does our sculpture tell you about our community? 	

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Alliance for Justice–Co/Motion
www.afj.org

Center for Third World Organizing
www.ctwo.org

Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing
www.fcyo.org

Innovation Network
www.innonet.org

John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities
<http://gardnercenter.stanford.edu>

Local Initiative Support Training and Education Network
www.lisn.org

National Organizers Alliance
www.noacentral.org

Youth Empowerment Center
www.youthec.org

Youth Action
www.youthaction.net

Youth Activism Project
www.youthactivismproject.com

What Kids Can Do
www.whatkidscando.org

Appendix 1

GLOSSARY*

Civic Activism: A safe and constructive way to build a positive identity and acquire leadership skills while gaining satisfaction from building community and creating social change. Through civic activism, young people can contribute meaningfully to building communities while gaining opportunities and support for their own development (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2001).

Civic Activist Organizations: Place-based settings dedicated to supporting young people's healthy growth and development; engaging youth in leadership and decision-making roles; and identifying and addressing barriers facing youth, families, and communities.

Identity: A self-constructed, dynamic set of motivations, abilities, beliefs, and individual history, all shaped by a person's navigation of challenges at each stage of development (Erikson, 1963). YLDI groups focused primarily on ethnic, racial, and sexual identity.

Ethnic Identity: A sense of group or collective membership based on a person's perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a specific group. Ethnic identity is particularly linked to a collective history, religion, geography, or language.

Racial Identity: The confluence of an awareness of others' perceptions and treatment (i.e. racism) and the person's sense of self in relation to his or her race. It is integrally linked to an ability to cope positively with discrimination (Cross, Parham, and Helms, 1991; Helms, 1990; Torres, 1996).

Sexual Identity: Resolution of (1) feelings of inner confusion and ambivalence as they relate to others' perceptions, and (2) an affirmative sense of self that enables a person to accept and express his or her sexuality (Shively, and DeCecco, 1993).

Identity Support: The creation of safe spaces in which youth can develop a sense of affirmation and belonging that is rooted in their ethnic, racial, sexual, and other identities (both their own and those of others). In such spaces, youth can learn about their identities and explore their experiences of oppression without fear of being stereotyped, harassed, or rejected.

* Cited in Lewis-Charp, H., S. Soukamneuth, H. Cao Yu, and M. Gambone. *Assessing the Case for Civic Activism: Developmental Outcomes of Youth Organizing and Identity-Support Organizations*. Presented at Society of Research on Child Development (SRCD) Conference, Tampa, FL, 2003 (draft).

Marginalized Youth: Young people who find themselves outside the boundaries of prevailing youth development programming due to their race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or immigrant status (Roach, Sullivan, and Wheeler, 1999).

Youth Development: The growth process in which all youth are engaged, during which they attempt to (1) meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and (2) build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute to their daily lives. Youth development is best advanced in settings that are rich in supports and opportunities:

Supports: Motivational, emotional, and strategic assistance to succeed in life. Supports can take many different forms, such as mentoring, counseling, and guidance activities. They must be affirming, respectful, and continuous. Supports are most powerful when they are offered by a variety of different people.

Opportunities: Circumstances that allow young people to learn to act in the world around them, to explore, express, earn, belong, and influence. Opportunities give young people the chance to test ideas and behaviors and to experiment with different roles (Newman et al., 2001).

Youth Organizing: The union of grassroots community organizing and positive youth development, with an explicit commitment to social change and political action. Youth organizing is based on the premise that young people are capable of taking leadership to transform their communities.

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Appendix 3: CONTACT INFORMATION

21st Century Youth Leadership Movement
P.O. Box 2516
Selma, AL 36702
(334) 874-0065
www.21cyouthmovement.org

Mi Casa Resource Center for Women
360 Acoma Street
Denver, CO 80223
(303) 573-1302
www.micasadenver.org

Asian Immigrant Women Advocates
310 Eighth Street, Suite 301
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 208-7288
www.aiwa.org

National Youth Advocacy Coalition
1638 R Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 319-7596
www.nyacyouth.org

C-Beyond
1846-B Grant Street
Concord, CA 94520
(925) 676-6556

OUTRIGHT
P.O. Box 5077
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 828-6560
www.outright.org

Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth
c/o Asian American Studies Program
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393
(617) 287-5658
www.capayus.org

Tohono O'odham Community Action
P.O. Box 1790
Sells, AZ 85634
(520) 383-4966
www.tocaonline.org

Innovation Center for Community and
Youth Development
6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 502
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(301) 270-1700
info@theinnovationcenter.org

The Young Women's Project
1328 Florida Avenue, NW, Suite 2000
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 332-3399
www.youngwomensproject.org

Leadership Excellence
1629 Telegraph Avenue, 5th floor
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 267-9770
www.leadershipexcellence.org

Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice
1384 Stratford Avenue
Bronx, NY 10472
(718) 328-5622

Youth United for Community Action
1836-C Bay Road
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Notes
