Youth Engagement Evaluation:
Summary and Final Report

Submitted to:
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Youth who are civically engaged are less likely to partake in health-damaging behaviors and more likely to have improved health outcomes, including a reduction in rates of alcohol and drug use, and fewer teenage births.¹

Section 1: Background and Introduction

In the past three decades the prevalence of obesity among youth has increased dramatically² and research shows that the obesity epidemic may reduce life expectancy with minority populations hit the hardest³. While youth represent almost one-quarter of the U.S. population (approximately 74 million⁴), they rarely have the opportunity to shape the health programs, services and policies that impact their lives. Youth are almost always the subjects of research projects aimed at youth programs and services, as opposed to research partners actively shaping the research process⁵.

Youth participatory action research (YPAR) has emerged as a research paradigm employed to give youth voice. The YPAR model defines youth as assets, rejecting the age old, deficit oriented stereotypes. YPAR is based on the same principles as participatory action research (PAR), but mandates that the research process be led by youth with guidance from an adult ally. Youth are tapped to lead research projects because of the unique energy and insights they provide, and their unbridled enthusiasm, optimism and credibility to promote change.

Through the research process, civic engagement and advocacy, youth gain valuable practical skills and become empowered as social change agents. Similarly, organizational benefits through YPAR include the development of processes to continually engage youth and a redefined, youth friendly culture. Communities benefit from having a contingency of skilled young people able and willing to infuse the youth perspective and voice into civic affairs. The research process is enhanced, with creativity manifested through the youth lens. Finally public health is enhanced through the development of appropriate youth-focused health promotion interventions resulting from the engagement of hard-to-reach youth from marginalized communities who are often overlooked by health systems.

1.1 The Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI): Implementation and Evaluation

The Network for a Healthy California (the Network) has been supporting youth-driven health promotion initiatives in various locations throughout the state since first receiving funding from the US Department of Agriculture, in 2006/07. Beginning with six sites, the Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI) targeted “low resource middle and high school age youth” to “empower and activate youth to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and increase physical activity among youth Californians.”⁶ By the end of 2011 the project had expanded to 29 sites, developing youth leaders who have successfully engaged a variety of stakeholders and community leaders to address health and nutrition issues at the local level.
Using a YPAR framework, these health promotion projects required youth participants to: (1) identify the issue or problem; (2) define what is known about the issue or problem; (3) identify needs for additional information to better understand the issue or problem; (4) determine research methods and an approach for collecting information, via teamwork; and (5) use the information to improve education, understanding of, and strategic actions for community change. Youth at the YEI sites developed a variety of projects based on their research and advocacy work, in partnership with an adult ally. A report by a consultant to the Network “Inspiring Youth Growing Change: A Guide to Engaging Youth” (Deborah Marois, in press) summarized themes, accomplishments and challenges associated with YEI, including the need for a more formal youth-focused approach to evaluation of the initiatives at both the local level and statewide.

In anticipation of taking the YEI statewide in FY2012/13 the Network proceeded with plans to develop an evaluation component for the YEI, based on the principles of YPAR and its application to public health. In response to an Invitation to bid issued in November 2011, LPC Consulting Associates, Inc. submitted a proposal to develop a comprehensive evaluation protocol based on a review of the literature, development of a logic model for YEI, and the creation and pilot testing of tools for data collection by and for youth engaged in these projects. Upon completion of these tasks, LPC staff also drafted training materials to integrate with the existing Network training for youth teams, introducing the evaluation component and resources. The work summarized and described herein took place between January 1 and September 30, 2012.

### 1.2 Developing the Youth Engagement Evaluation

LPC’s approach to evaluation is grounded in the tenets of the Participatory Research paradigm as developed by Saul Alinsky, Paulo Freire and Kurt Lewin. From the outset LPC includes individuals traditionally referred to as “subjects” or “objects” of the research, as active participants in the evaluation process. We include key stakeholders in the development of the logic model which guides the research questions, design and process; we continue to engage constituents and stakeholders throughout the evaluation to review and pilot test data collection instruments (e.g., surveys, interview and focus group protocols); and we often include stakeholders or constituents for a preview of preliminary findings and draft reports. In the PAR tradition, LPC views constituents and stakeholders as partners in evaluation; whereas LPC brings technical expertise to the table, constituents and stakeholders bring knowledge of their community and the program activities. We include training and technical support in our evaluation studies to facilitate the transfer of knowledge to develop capacity for constituents, stakeholders, and client organizations. The Youth Engagement Evaluation provided an opportunity for LPC staff to advance the youth engagement agenda to the evaluation of the YEI.

The following sections describe the core elements of developing a youth engagement evaluation:
• **Review of Documents and Literature:** The evaluation team examined the YEI experience to date, and identified research and best practices related to YPAR. The review of documents and the literature informed the development of data collection tools, protocols, and training for the YEI. LPC submitted a comprehensive review of the literature to the *Network* in August 2012.

• **Develop Logic Model and the Evaluation Protocol:** LPC’s standard approach to designing any evaluation study is to develop a logic model that reflects the Theory of Change, and provides a framework to describe program implementation and the evaluation into an integrated whole. For this project, we engaged youth in the process for drafting a logic model for the YEI. We also generated multiple versions of the logic model product, one of which is more “youth friendly” and streamlined. LPC submitted the logic models to the *Network* in May 2012.

Based on the input from key stakeholders and constituents, we identified both process and outcome measures for the YEI. The logic model development process opened up dialogue between youth at project sites, *Network* program staff and the evaluation team, which lead to a collaborative approach for determining the data collection methods, metrics, and sources of data.

• **Test, Revise, and Finalize Evaluation Protocols and Instruments:** Once we drafted data collection tools for the Youth Engagement Evaluation in the spring of 2012, we scheduled site visits with two YEI projects to “pilot test” the tools. To remain true to the youth engagement approach, we sought input from youth and adult allies on the draft evaluation protocols and data collection tools and instruments. Site visits provided a unique opportunity to: test the rationale of the Logic Model; explore proposed options in collaboration with youth and program staff; and pilot test both the content and processes for data collection. Though originally scheduled to occur prior to the end of the 2011/12 school year, one visit was rescheduled for August 2012 which resulted in final revisions to the tools being complete in early September 2012.

• **Develop Training Materials for Evaluation Protocols:** To insure the evaluation tools will be administered and evaluation protocol adhered to, the evaluation team developed training materials to support implementation. We designed the training to dovetail with existing YEI youth training for new and existing grantees.

The complete process succeeded in large part due to the close working partnership with the *Network* staff, adherence to the scope of work, collaborative problem solving, and capacity building for program staff and youth throughout the evaluation.

### 1.3 Overview of Final Report to the Network
This is the final report for the work completed by LPC Consulting Associates, Inc., the development of a Youth Engagement Evaluation framework, protocol, training, and tools that align with the purpose and intent of the Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI). The following sections address the developmental states of youth engagement evaluation (Section 2); present a summary description of all products and deliverables (Section 3); and summarize findings and recommendations for implementing the Youth Engagement Evaluation.
Section 2: Developmental Steps to Youth Engagement Evaluation

The Youth Engagement Evaluation development process began in January 2012 and concluded in September 2012. During those nine months, the LPC evaluation team worked in partnership with the Network staff and project sites to create and finalize the products of this comprehensive effort. The evaluation team reviewed existing materials provided by Network staff; developed a logic model framework; designed and pilot tested data collection tools and a protocol; and developed training materials. In addition, we completed a review of relevant literature to inform the process.

Figure 1 presents a continuum of youth participation in research and evaluation, illustrating a range of levels of involvement from low to high, accompanied by descriptors for each level and examples of youth activities at each level. Youth participants in the YEI are working in close cooperation with an adult ally, and are engaged at the highest level of involvement.

![Figure 1: Continuum of Youth Participation in Research and Evaluation](image-url)
For the design and development of the Youth Engagement Evaluation, the evaluation team sought youth involvement as well. To complement the YEI and to reinforce the principles of YPAR, the evaluation team engaged with youth in the following manner:

1. We created a web-based questionnaire that was emailed to sites in order to learn about the projects.
2. We invited YEI project sites to participate in the development of the evaluation framework and tools; we sought input from YEI sites with at least 2 years of experience.
3. We developed a logic model webinar that was shared with three YEI sites.
4. We solicited input from youth during the webinar for the creation of a YEI logic model.
5. We submitted the draft logic model to the participating sites, for review and editing.
6. We solicited samples of existing data collection tools and materials that sites had developed and used.
7. We sought YEI project sites to volunteer for an on-site review of the data collection tools, and pilot testing.
8. We visited two YEI sites where youth and the adult ally reviewed the proposed data collection tools, and provided input and suggested changes.
9. We integrated changes from each site visit into the final data collection protocol and tools.

These activities represent moderate to low youth involvement as shown in Figure 1. Again, this approach complemented the highest level of involvement represented by the YEI, within the logistical and resource limitations of the youth engagement evaluation project. By the time youth receive training on the evaluation component of the YEI, their involvement with the evaluation will advance to the moderate level of involvement because they will be administering the data collection tools and analyzing the data.
Section 3: Description of Products and Deliverables

The scope of work for the Youth Engagement Evaluation project included an outline describing all tasks required for the purpose of: (1) understanding the background and development of the Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI); (2) researching existing literature on youth-led participatory action research in public health; (3) developing a logic model and data collection tools and protocol, adhering to youth engagement standards; and (4) developing materials and resources designed to advance the capacity of youth engagement evaluation. Table 1 below presents the outline of core tasks and activities, deliverables, and timelines for the work completed by the evaluation team.

### Table 1
Summary of Tasks and Deliverables for Youth Engagement Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task or Activity</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participate in initial meeting with Network for a Healthy California to discuss and plan project details.</td>
<td>Project plan and timeline</td>
<td>1/30/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI) program documents</td>
<td>List of documents reviewed</td>
<td>2/29/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Review and summary of literature on youth action research</td>
<td>Literature review summary</td>
<td>6/25/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Create Theory of Change graphic</td>
<td>Logic Model</td>
<td>3/30/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Draft protocols for practitioner-oriented evaluation of Youth Engagement Initiative</td>
<td>Draft protocols and data collection instruments</td>
<td>4/30/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Test evaluation protocols and draft data collection instruments</td>
<td>Summary of site communications for testing</td>
<td>8/15/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Document findings and recommendations from the pilot testing; revise protocols and data collection instruments</td>
<td>Report from testing and revised protocols and instruments</td>
<td>8/31/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Develop training materials for evaluation protocol and data collection instruments</td>
<td>Training materials</td>
<td>9/24/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remainder of this section describes key deliverables, including the literature review, the logic model, data collection tools and protocol, and the training resources.

### 3.1 Literature Review

The evaluation team collected and reviewed literature pertaining to youth engagement and PAR from three disciplines: Sociology, Education and Public Health. Altogether, we developed a comprehensive review of the literature to emphasize the observations of other researchers and the lessons learned that were most relevant to the Youth Engagement Evaluation for the
YEI Evaluation: Summary and Final Report

YEI. The final summary document is based on more than 30 sources from the fields of participatory action research (PAR), using photovoice research methodology, and youth engagement and outcomes. The final product is “Youth Participatory Action Research: A Review of the Literature” July 2012, submitted to the Network for a Healthy California in July 2012. The document includes the following sections:

- **Overview**: a brief overview that describes the research context within which PAR was developed, and the central tenets of PAR as a research paradigm;
- **Essential Elements**: A review of the essential elements of YPAR, that includes YPAR outcomes, challenges and best practices developed by YPAR practitioners;
- **Photovoice Methodology**: An overview of the photovoice methodology and a youth photovoice project;
- **YPAR Projects**: A brief description of national and international YPAR projects, with an emphasis on how youth were engaged in the research process; and
- **Intended Outcomes**: Evidence of YPAR intended outcomes with an assessment of the need for evaluation of YPAR programs.

This literature review was undertaken to inform the development of a process and outcome evaluation toolkit for the Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI). It is also a stand-alone product to inform others interested in the continuing development of youth participatory action research.

### 3.2 Logic Model

In February 2012 the evaluation team met with the Network staff to develop an approach for engaging youth from the YEI in the creation of a logic model to guide the development of the Youth Engagement Evaluation. The team created a PowerPoint presentation related to the Theory of Change and the logic model, to be shared with a sample of willing YEI sites via webinar and/or conference calls. Both time and distance limitations prevented the evaluation team from engaging with youth face-to-face for this initial introduction to evaluation. In addition to an overview of the Theory of Change and a sample logic model, the webinar/conference call elicited input from the youth with the following four questions:

1. What issue did your group select to research and why?
2. What activities will your group do to address the issues
3. What would “success” look like for these activities?
4. How do you (or will you) measure your progress with this project?

The format for the discussion was brainstorming, with input from youth and adult allies in each of three YEI sites. We successfully engaged in a logic model development process with youth participants who provided input toward the development of the first draft of a logic model. The evaluation team shared the draft composite logic model with three YEI sites to solicit changes from youth before finalizing the logic model in March 2012.
The logic model was revised to conform to a model framework developed by and for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and a streamlined version better suited to use with youth researchers. Copies of both logic models are included in Attachment A.

3.3 Data Collection Tools and Protocol

The evaluation team developed several data collection tools accompanied by a protocol to describe who should administer the data collection, at what intervals, and whether the data collected was process or outcome data. The data collection tools consist of “core” and “supplemental” tools designed to collect information systematically across YEI project sites, reflecting the range of activities and approaches used among past and current YEI grantees.

- Core data collection tools are considered essential for reporting site level work to the Network, and for reflecting on site-specific milestones and accomplishments. Among the essential information to be collected are: (1) description of youth participants; (2) youth participation rates; (3) records of activities, events, and media coverage; (4) an assessment of implementation of youth participatory action research principles; (5) a youth self-assessment; and (6) a template for annual reports to the Network.

- Supplemental data collection tools are considered elective, based on decisions at the YEI project site level. These forms provide the means for sites to collect and report data that will enhance the core data collection. The supplemental tools include: (1) an assessment of each youth participant by the adult ally; and (2) a youth team report at the conclusion of a YEI project. The reason these two tools were not considered essential is that YEI sites with large numbers of youth participants would present an enormous and unrealistic burden on the single adult ally. The Team Final Report is also optional, recognizing that this report is an immense amount of work and some YEI projects would not be able to compensate youth to work outside of their regular meeting times to complete this report. YEI sites will complete an annual report however, even for specific projects that transcend years, and include cohorts of youth that change from year to year.

The distinctions between core and supplemental forms included input from two YEI sites, where youth reviewed data collection tools and helped determine the balance between important and “nice to have” data. The evaluation team made site visits to meet with YEI youth in Del Norte (May 30, 2012) and Alameda County (August 15, 2012). The final data collection tools are described as follows:
### Table 2
Core vs Supplemental Data Collection Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Core Data Collection Tools</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Form for Youth Researchers</strong>: All youth complete this form to participate in YEI. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Demographic data, baseline data, and optional screening questions. Sites may add permissions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YEI Team Meeting Sign-in Sheet</strong>: Use at all youth-attended YEI meetings. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Individual levels of participation, tracks Stepping Stones progress, and activities completed during meetings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event and Activity Log</strong>: Completed after every activity or event. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Types (coded), audience (coded), description (open), # of researchers, youth, adults, school staff, and community members involved or reached by the activity or event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publicity Tracking Log</strong>: Tracks media about the project – either generated by the project or about the project. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Type of publicity, type of media (coded), brief description and target audience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YPAR Project Evaluation</strong>: This survey assesses youth’s experience with YPAR. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Opinions on youth engagement, YPAR fidelity and experience with adult ally.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of Year Youth Survey</strong>: This survey measures changes that youth experience after participating in YEI. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Skills learned, knowledge gained, future advocacy plans, changes in behavior, and current activities and interests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Engagement Team Annual Summary Report</strong>: Provides a quick snapshot/very brief description of each site’s program. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Research question, # of youth involved, focus area, targeted change, project description, and a summary of findings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Supplemental Data Collection Tools</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Ally Assessment of Participants</strong>: This post-assessment measures changes in youth observed by the adult ally. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Key skills gained from participation in YEI.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Engagement Final Team Report</strong>: <em>Due at end of project</em>. Provides an outline of items to include in a creative product to conclude the entire project. <strong>Data collected</strong>: Research methods, instruments, findings, outcomes, accomplishments, challenges, conclusions, and youth biographies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The YEI training for youth and adult allies will include a component on the Youth Engagement Evaluation, with an overview of the logic model and the tools to be used in conjunction with project implementation.

### 3.4 Youth Engagement Evaluation Training Materials

The Youth Engagement Evaluation concluded with the creation of materials to integrate in the standard YEI training curricula, provided to YEI grantees and youth by the Network staff. In anticipation of the expanded statewide YEI in the fall of 2012, the training materials include a PowerPoint presentation describing the process for developing the evaluation framework and resources. The PowerPoint presentation includes exercises and introduces youth and adult
allies to the data collection tools and protocol. The presentation also provides flexibility for the Network staff to integrate and customize slides that address their priorities for grantee evaluation work. The presentation and all materials developed for the Youth Engagement Evaluation will be included in the training binders for each YEI project site.

3.5 Summary of Youth Engagement Evaluation Resources

Between January 1 and September 30, 2012 the evaluation team from LPC Consulting Associates, Inc., in partnership with the Network staff and selected YEI project sites, developed, tested, and finalize the following resources for the Youth Engagement Evaluation:

- “Youth Participatory Action Research: A Review of the Literature;”
- Logic Model Framework describing the YEI project implementation and evaluation measures;
- Nine data collection tools, (7 core and 2 supplemental);
- A data collection protocol; and
- Youth Engagement Evaluation training presentation.

LPC submitted all deliverables to the Network in both hard copy and on a compact disk in September 2012. Interested parties may request electronic copies of any of these materials from:

Name
Telephone
Email
Web site
Section 4: Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Youth Engagement Evaluation provided a working framework for standardized reporting and assessment of all YEI projects throughout California. The development of this framework was systematic, building on a base of experience with multi-year YEI projects and a review of recent literature on participatory action research and youth engagement in public health efforts. A preliminary evaluation overview of the YEI projects by Deborah Marois provided a valuable platform from which to advance the evaluation agenda, and brought forward a comprehensive review of all YEI projects funded through 2010. Marois also served as a consultant on the Youth Engagement Evaluation project, a resource to both the Network and LPC Consulting Associates, Inc.

The approach to the Youth Engagement Evaluation balanced the need for evaluation expertise with youth involvement to remain true to the principles of youth engagement. The development stages described in this report, and the deliverables from the project will serve as resources for the statewide rollout of the YEI in FY 2012/13. The Youth Engagement Evaluation represents the first time the YEI will have an ongoing evaluation to document and describe both the process and outcomes of projects, both individually and collectively. The evaluation resources have been designed to develop local capacity for evaluation, to actively engage youth in the data collection and analysis, and to elevate the awareness of the projects designed and implemented by youth to address obesity and related public health issues in their respective communities.

Key findings from the Youth Engagement Evaluation include:

- This experience was an affirmation of youth engagement in the process for developing an evaluation for youth to administer, based in large part on their experiences to date;
- Though there is literature related to youth engagement and participatory action research, this project examined ways to blend lessons from each of these disciplines, and ways to apply the lessons to the YEI project;
- Youth who have engaged in research for their YEI projects have an elevated understanding and appreciation of how research may be applied to an evaluation of their efforts;
- The Youth Engagement Evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative measures, and will facilitate ongoing program development and improvement.
- The Youth Engagement Evaluation will augment the YEI to date, with a standardized approach to accountability and reporting to funders and stakeholders alike; and
- A standardized set of data collection tools and forms will provide the means for YEI projects to raise awareness about their work, at the site level and statewide.
With the accomplishments of the Youth Engagement Evaluation, it is critical to insure these resources provide value to the YEI sites and to the Network for a Healthy California. The following recommendations represent the next steps toward realizing that value:

1. Identify and recruit a site to use the Evaluation Toolkit in the fall and winter of 2012 to fine-tune the tools and become a champion for the toolkit.
2. Introduce the Youth Engagement Evaluation resources at the upcoming YEI project training, with existing and new YEI grantees; solicit input from the training to modify that component of the training for future grantee cohorts.
3. Develop a database for sites to use for on-site data entry, and to forward data to the Network for state level aggregate analysis of quantitative data. This may be a web-based or online database.
4. Develop summary data reports to support the YEI sites as they integrate data into their own self-assessment process, for formative evaluation (e.g., ongoing program development and improvement).
5. Develop summary data reports to support the Network in understanding and sharing information related to the aggregate accomplishments of the YEI projects.
6. Share resources developed for the Youth Engagement Evaluation through the Network website or other venues.

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4 http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html April 31, 2012
9 Youth In Focus, Youth Rep Step by Step: An Introduction to Youth-led Research and Evaluation
2008 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Used with high school reform grantees supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
Youth Participatory Action Research

A Review of the Literature

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This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health’s Network for a Healthy California with funding from USDA SNAP, known in California as CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit www.cachampionsforchange.net.

The contents of this report are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the California Department of Public Health.
SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

In the past three decades the prevalence of obesity among youth has increased dramatically\(^1\) and research shows that the obesity epidemic may reduce life expectancy with minority populations hit the hardest\(^2\). While youth represent almost one-quarter of the U.S. population (approximately 74 million\(^3\)), they rarely have the opportunity to shape the health programs, services and policies that impact their lives. Youth are almost always the subjects of research projects aimed at youth programs and services, as opposed to research partners actively shaping the research process\(^4\). In addition, negative youth stereotypes are pervasive throughout American culture. Historically terms such as disaffected, apathetic, immature and lacking discipline have been synonymous with youth. The negative perceptions of youth, have in part led to their disenfranchisement. While age can be an impediment to youth engagement in civic affairs, age coupled with race, ethnicity, gender or class can create seemingly insurmountable obstacles to youth involvement in areas that impact their lives\(^5\).

However, the tide on youth engagement is starting to change; in the past decade, public health and youth development practitioners have begun to engage youth through a research process aimed at giving youth a voice and encouraging their participation in health, scholastic, and civic affairs\(^6\).

Youth participatory action research (YPAR) has emerged as a research paradigm employed to give youth voice. The YPAR model defines youth as assets, rejecting the age old, deficit oriented stereotypes. YPAR is based on the same principles as participatory action research (PAR), but mandates that the research process be led by youth with guidance from an adult ally. Youth are tapped to lead research projects because of the unique energy and insights they provide, and their unbridled enthusiasm, optimism and credibility to promote change.

YPAR involves youth in areas of their lives where they are greatly impacted, but typically exercise little influence (e.g. schools, health programs). YPAR projects have been conducted both nationally and internationally on a wide range of health and social issues. A diverse array of youth have been engaged in YPAR through schools, community based organizations, state government and international government agencies such as the World Health Organization. YPAR is increasingly being used by public health practitioners who realize that resources are ineffectively allocated toward health promotion programs when youth are not involved in the planning and evaluation of those programs\(^7\). In addition, research is demonstrating that:

Youth who are civically engaged are less likely to partake in health-damaging behaviors and more likely to have improved health outcomes, including a reduction in rates of alcohol and drug use, and fewer teenage births. (Soleimanpour, Brindis, Geierstanger, Kandawalla, and Kurlaender, 2011:710).
Not only do youth develop personally from their involvement in action research, but the organizations and communities that sponsor YPAR projects benefit as well. Through the research process, civic engagement and advocacy, youth gain valuable practical skills and become empowered as social change agents. Similarly, organizational benefits through YPAR include the development of processes to continually engage youth and a redefined, youth friendly culture. Communities benefit from having a contingency of skilled young people able and willing to infuse the youth perspective and voice into civic affairs. The research process is enhanced, with creativity manifested through the youth lens. Finally public health is enhanced through the development of appropriate youth-focused health promotion interventions resulting from the engagement of hard-to-reach youth from marginalized communities who are often overlooked by health systems.

The information presented in this literature review is a synthesis of findings from academic journals and Internet resources. This literature review includes:

- **Overview**: a brief overview that describes the research context within which Participatory Action Research developed, and the central tenets of PAR as a research paradigm;
- **Essential Elements**: A review of the essential elements of YPAR, that includes YPAR outcomes, challenges and best practices developed by YPAR practitioners;
- **Photovoice Methodology**: An overview of the photovoice methodology and a youth photovoice project;
- **YPAR Projects**: A brief description of national and international YPAR projects, with an emphasis on how youth were engaged in the research process; and
- **Intended Outcomes**: Evidence of YPAR intended outcomes with an assessment of the need for evaluation of YPAR programs.

This literature review was undertaken to inform the development of a process and outcome evaluation toolkit for the Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI) launched by the California Department of Public Health’s Network for a Healthy California in October of 2006. YEI engages low resource middle and high school age youth, in a youth-led PAR project aimed at increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and increased physical activity.

**SECTION 2: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH**

Although there is debate as to the origin of PAR, three sources are often credited, Saul Alinsky8,9,10, Paulo Freire11,12,13, and Kurt Lewin14. The PAR paradigm was developed through critical analysis of social research methods where research “experts” controlled both the production and distribution of knowledge15. The PAR methodology was developed as an antithesis to the dominant research paradigm, and includes four tenets that at one time were perceived as non-scientific:
1. **Inclusion**: A central tenet of PAR is the inclusion of local communities as active participants in the research process\textsuperscript{16,17,18,19,20,21}. Those who will be impacted by the research being conducted are drawn in as research partners to co-create the research question, design and process. PAR gives voice to those affected by the research by, “breaking down distinctions between the researcher and the researched” in analyzing conditions that affect their health and well-being (Flicker et al., 2008:288).

2. **Shared Authority**: A second principle of PAR is the necessity for shared authority between the researchers and community participants, in that “all phases of research and action are shared equitably among partners in collaboration” (Ozer et al., 2010:152). PAR recognizes that both the researcher and community participants bring inherent knowledge and that a true partnership is necessary for the sharing and transfer of that knowledge. Whereas residents have knowledge of their communities, researchers have knowledge of theory and technical skills. An essential element of PAR is the transfer of that knowledge, particularly the technical skills transferred from researcher to community partners. Through an iterative process of research and action, community members become empowered to act independently as researchers and social change agents\textsuperscript{22,23}.

3. **Knowledge Legitimacy**: A third tenet of PAR is the legitimization of local knowledge. According to London, “PAR valorizes local knowledge, and expresses confidence in the ability of people to critically reflect upon their own experiences to generate scientific knowledge,” (2006:2). Participatory research is based on the epistemological assumption that knowledge is constructed socially, and therefore collective analysis of life experiences with regard to power and knowledge creation is appropriate\textsuperscript{24}. The collection and critical reflection of local knowledge, or life stories, allows community partners to understand the multiple ways in which individuals are impacted in their community and to recognize the socio-political environment that shapes their lives. That shared understanding is necessary for the development of collective empowerment to guide change in communities and the research participants themselves.

4. **Vehicle for Social Change**: The ultimate goal of a PAR project is positive social change that is driven by empowered community members based on the research they conducted. PAR projects should not end with a report that sits on a shelf. Project participants should be mobilized to act through the collective analyses of research findings. Furthermore, the ultimate path to action is chosen by the project participants whose lives will ultimately be impacted by the action taken.
SECTION 3: YOUTH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Through the use of YPAR, public health and youth development practitioners are increasingly including young people in research on important social issues or programs that affect their lives. The principles of YPAR parallel those employed for PAR projects in that researchers share authority with the research participants who are trained in all aspects of the research process, encouraged to share their stories, and through critical reflection and research become aware of the factors that shape their lives and become empowered to make positive social change. According to Jonathan London, youth-led research;

... pushes PAR to include age as an identifier that should not serve to deny the legitimacy to speak one’s own truth. PAR offers the opportunity for young people to speak the world as they see it, to envision the world as they desire it, and then to take action to make these visions a reality (2006:2).

A defining feature of YPAR is the decision making influence of youth. In YPAR youth make the decisions regarding the projects focus, and direction and are actively engaged as research partners, as opposed to having a token level of involvement. For both youth and adults, YPAR is a departure from traditional roles, norms and power relations. Traditionally adults have authority over youth in most settings, and control the production and distribution of knowledge. In YPAR, youth share authority with adults and influence the production (research) and distribution of knowledge (research report and presentations). YPARs departure from long held roles, norms and power relations makes “an emphasis on promoting youth’s sense of ownership and control over the process” an essential element (Ozer et al. 2010:153). Youth development practitioners postulate that the youth-led nature of YPAR can serve to attract youth who otherwise might not participate in a research project. For example, according to Anyon and Naughton;

... the youth-led design is critical in a community like West Oakland, where academic disengagement is prevalent and similarities with a traditional classroom arrangement are to be avoided. Furthermore, given the participants’ sense of powerlessness in other areas of their lives, the youth-led nature of a program can give a sense of control that has a unique draw in communities like this one (2003:5).

In youth-led research, the adult ally is largely responsibility for promoting and ensuring the decision making influence and continued engagement of youth.

The adult ally shapes the environment within which the research is being conducted and is responsible for promoting youth’s ability to take ownership and manage the research process. Serving as a research partner, the adult ally provides education and training to youth on all facets of a research project. Through education and training, the adult ally guides youth through the research process in such a way that
youth are enabled to make the decisions necessary to move the project forward and ultimately become empowered to create social change. In addition to promoting youths’ sense of control over the project, the adult ally must also promote the social and political engagement of youth to address the problems identified by their research. Power and Tiffany (2006:80) posit that YPAR;

engages young people in research on important social issues that enables them to exercise their political rights, prepares them for active participation in a democratic society and empowers them to make social change.

Youth-led PAR projects are guided by the same principles employed for community-based PAR projects. However, what sets YPAR apart from community-based PAR is a research process led by youth in partnership with an adult ally. The youth navigate the research seas from the beginning of the journey – defining the research question – to the end – acting on research recommendations - and ultimately feel empowered to become agents of change.

Benefits of YPAR

Youth development practitioners employ YPAR as a research methodology primarily due to the benefits correlated with the approach. The primary rationale for conducting a YPAR project is the positive benefits realized by youth, although organization, community, research and public health benefits also are associated with the methodology.

Table 1: Youth Skills and Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Development</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Increased social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Improved self-respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Enhanced self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public speaking</td>
<td>Increased self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>Instilled sense of civic responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Increased Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Community awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>Trusted and respectful relationships with adult ally and members of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting facilitation</td>
<td>Confidence in their ability to affect positive community change/empowered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Awareness of the social factors shaping their lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Opportunities to serve as role model/mentor for other youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Youth Benefits: Youth gain new skills and positive benefits through training and applied learning and as a result of being engaged in advocacy and civic engagement activities. Ultimately, youth become empowered through the process of training, conducting research, and compiling research findings in a report aimed at directing the refinement and/or development of programs and/or policies that impact them. Table one outlines both the skills and positive benefits correlated to youth involvement in YPAR projects.

It is interesting to note that YPAR has the potential to affect long-term youth outcomes; youth can apply the skills and benefits gained through participation in an YPAR project to other aspects of their lives, i.e., academic, employment and community engagement.

Organizational Benefits: Typically, positive social change in an organization or community is the long-term goal of an YPAR project. Given the goal of instigating change in an area(s) they do not control, youth must involve the organizational and community powerbrokers in their quest for positive change. Through successful engagement of the powerbrokers, it is inevitable that some degree of organizational and community benefit will be actualized. According to Powers and Tiffany:

> Engaging youth in research and evaluation not only generates useful knowledge for communities and individuals but also provides opportunities for the development and empowerment of youth participants, leading to benefits for young people, organizations, the broader community, and the research process (2006:79).

According to London, Zimmerman and Erbstein (2003) organizations will benefit from YPAR projects in three different areas:

1. **Skill and knowledge building**: Organizational skill and knowledge building benefits include an expanded understanding of community issues, increased staff and institutional capacity to foster and maintain youth-led research projects, an improved organizational culture, and relevant programming and services;

2. **Leadership and relationship development**: An organization’s leadership development capacity is enhanced through YPAR by increasing the organization’s ties to a potential pool of skilled employees. Additionally, YPAR strengthens the relationships between the organization, youth and community members by engaging those who might not have interacted with the organization outside of a youth-led research process; and

3. **Identify formation**: The identity of the organization is bolstered by the inclusion of youth centered or intergenerational characteristics.
Community Benefits: Comparable to the above organizational benefits identified, London, Zimmerman and Erbstein (2003) also distinguish potential community benefits that result from YPAR project involvement. Communities benefit from an increased capacity to cultivate intergenerational partnership and youth leaders. London et al (2003) also posit that the community will have increased social capital, “through a new generation with civic responsibility, analytical skills, and empowerment to address the challenges of the community,” (2003:38). YPAR also leaves a lasting legacy in communities as a result of new decision making models that engage multiple generations and instill intergenerational communication and collaboration.

Research Benefits: Whilst youth, organizations and communities benefit from YPAR projects, the research process and products are enhanced through youth involvement. A youth led research design will result in data collection tools and methodologies that are youth friendly. In addition, youth populations that are difficult to reach by adults can be accessed and recruited by youth to participate in the study. Data analysis and interpretation is improved because it involves experts in the issue being researched. Lastly, the final reports developed through youth-led research are creative in nature and speak to a wide range of youth and community audiences.

Public Health: Progressively over time, YPAR has become a strategy employed to improve public health and health services. According to Sánchez, Lomelí-Loibl and Nelson, “YPAR can be a key tool for prevention and early intervention in the health field and beyond,” (2009:8). Historically, health prevention and intervention programs aimed at youth were not informed by the youth perspective and at times alienated the intended audience. Through YPAR, youth can provide firsthand accounts, and “ethnically and culturally diverse perspectives that are vital in implementing responsive health programs,” (Soleimanpour et al. 2008:709). Youth perspective can ensure that youth prevention and intervention health programs use relevant messaging, outreach and data gathering techniques. In addition, through YPAR youth gain leadership and advocacy skills and a belief in their ability to succeed. Youth engaged in health related YPAR projects become change agents impacting their immediate social networks and often times community networks, which is beneficial to achieving public health goals.

YPAR is associated with youth, organization, community, research and public health benefits. The broad array of benefits is a byproduct of a process that is largely used to engage youth in area of their lives where they are greatly impacted, but are afforded little influence. YPAR is a methodology employed by YPAR practitioners in the hopes of transforming youth into social change agents through education, training, research and advocacy.
YPAR Challenges

All situations present both opportunities and challenges and YPAR projects are no exception. While the above section highlights benefits correlated with youth-led projects, the below section presents potential challenges identified by YPAR practitioners. The majority of the challenges are directly tied to the context within which the project is based, (e.g. community, school).

In their article, Ozer, Ritterman and Wanis (2010) outline YPAR challenges by drawing on their experience implementing a youth-led PAR project in a San Francisco middle school. The school is located in an affluent neighborhood, but on average, two-thirds of the student population are economically disadvantaged and do not live in the immediate school vicinity. The youth-led research team included 32 ethnically diverse students in the 7th and 8th grades, two university students and an adult ally who met daily during an elective period. After the first year, interviews were conducted to obtain data pertaining to project activities, impacts and challenges. The data revealed that the student’s maturity level, the academic calendar, and teacher’s tenure presented challenges to YPAR implementation.

Researchers observed challenges posed by the uneven maturity levels between boys and girls. While middle school girls were focused, the boys were energetic and unfocused. Observation logs noted that the boys poked each other, talked over each other, and continuously sought attention. Unsurprisingly, the unfocused enthusiasm of the boys was disruptive and created a challenge for the transfer of decision making authority to students, which is mandated by the YPAR paradigm.

While the authors note that a lack of time is always an issue when conducting a PAR project, “the academic calendar and competing demands represent formidable challenges for school-based PAR,” (Ozer et al. 2010:160). YPAR projects conducted in a school-based setting only have nine months, not accounting for winter and spring breaks, to complete the necessary education, training and research. For projects that cannot be completed within the nine month timeframe, student attrition due to graduation and competing demands can become problematic when the program is reconvened with a new cohort of youth the following academic year. For example, the new cohort may have difficulty following through on the previous research and taking ownership of a research question and process not defined by them. Bringing the new cohort up to speed requires time, which detracts from the already tight nine month timeframe. It is interesting to note that the above mentioned challenges will be largely mitigated by the adult ally working in partnership with youth. Although the adult ally plays a central role in the process, the ally’s tenure can also have an impact on the YPAR implementation.
The adult ally’s social networks, or lack thereof, can influence the YPAR project in various ways. A teacher with a long tenure at a school is likely to have social ties to administrators, other teachers and student clubs. The social capital inherent in existing networks can be leveraged by the teacher to engage other stakeholders as a practice audience, change strategy consultants or as partners. According to Ozer, Ritterman, and Wanis;

Students engaging in PAR projects that seek to make changes in schools are operating with limited power in a politically-sensitive environment; forming alliances with more powerful stakeholders such as teachers and administrators and getting them “bought in” early on thus improves the likelihood of having a positive impact (2010:162).

In comparison to veteran teachers, newly hired teachers will lack established social ties and will have to expend more energy in the identification and recruitment of allies. In addition, a newly hired teacher may be concerned about negative repercussions that might result from mentoring students engaged in politically-sensitive issues. Regardless of tenure, staff turn-over can also pose a challenge to YPAR project.

As mentioned previously, the adult ally plays an essential and integral role to the success of a YPAR project. When there is adult ally turn-over, “background, history, and forward momentum are lost,” (Marois, 2011:23). A new adult ally will need to complete training and build relationship with both the youth and project stakeholders; which can add more time, to the typically tight project timeline. Moreover, the departure of an adult ally can negatively impact the retention of youth who have developed meaningful relationships with their outgoing mentor. Retirement and budget cuts are the leading causes of staff turn-over. In lean economic times, school funding is tenuous at best. Precarious budget situations can make long-term planning impossible in school districts threatened by lay-offs and cut backs to balance budgets. Interestingly, research illustrates that family budgets also can impact on YPAR projects.

Anyon and Naughton authored an issue brief that outlines the benefits and challenges of sponsoring an afterschool youth-led research project in the high-poverty, urban setting of West Oakland. While they conclude that the YPAR paradigm has value in that context, the high-poverty setting poses challenges to the program design. Challenges faced by the West Oakland project included transforming power relations, converting the youth agenda into community change and the competing demands placed on youth.

Although West Oakland youth wanted to participate in a youth-led research project focused on bettering the community, they were faced with conflicting demands on their time due to their family’s economic situation. Youth were expected to spend their after school time caring for siblings or working to supplement the families income, as opposed to working on a youth-led research project. The deeply ingrained economic
realities of the community also caused an impediment to transformation of power relations between the youth and adult allies.

While the adult allies attempted to create an environment for the transfer of authority to youth, at first, the youth were unfamiliar and uncomfortable with that authority. The issue may stem from long-held role norms and the lack of opportunities in economically depressed neighborhoods. Anyon and Naughton believe, “habits and notions of power relations between youth and adults are deeply ingrained, especially in high-poverty communities where young people believe they have little control over their own destiny,” (2010:4). While the adult allies were ultimately successful in the transfer of authority, the socioeconomic forces at play made that process arduous and complex.

The norms surrounding power relations also had an impact converting the youth agenda into community change. In order for youth to impact change, they must navigate bureaucracies created by and for adults. In West Oakland, youth were often confronted with adults in bureaucracies who felt powerless to make change and found it difficult to share the power they had. Although adults listened to youth, they were not ready for youth to be active change agents, shaping policy or practice in a substantive way. The prevalence of adultism is not simply confined to West Oakland, as Marois notes, “adults have their own ideas about effective strategies and find it difficult to resist imposing these,” (2011: 21). In addition the bureaucracies are not always equipped to respond to youth recommendations. For many communities, long-term funding is scarce and economic resources are not readily available to implement the youths’ vision for change. Additionally, individuals outside the immediate organization or community often make funding decisions that determine which change strategies are implemented and often times, there are multiple agencies involved in those funding decisions.

As to be expected, there are challenges inherent in implementing an YPAR project. Some projects will be negatively impacted by challenges, while others will have the resources and skills necessary to surmount the obstacles. Challenges associated with the implementation of YPAR involve all of the actors necessary for a successful project, (i.e., youth, adult allies and community partners). The challenges range from the maturity level of youth involved in the project to the norms surrounding power sharing among youth and adults. However, it should be noted that the projects briefly discussed above were implemented successfully despite the challenges encountered. Perseverance among the participants resulted in meeting challenges head-on and identifying solutions. While the stories shed light on the challenges that can arise when implementing youth-led research, they should simply serve as illustrations of potential challenges YPAR interventions might anticipate and prepare for, as opposed to definitive challenges every YPAR project will encounter.
YPAR Best Practices

Through the ups and downs of youth-led research, YPAR best practices or lessons learned have emerged and been documented by youth-led research practitioners. Below is a brief overview of some of the best practices identified in the literature.

- Organizational readiness: Before embarking on a youth-led research project, the organizational sponsor should ensure they are adequately prepared for the task at hand. Readiness includes an assessment of the organizational culture to accommodate the responsibilities and demands of a youth-led research project. According to Jonathan London (2006), organizational readiness should be assessed on two different dimensions: the anticipated level of youth authority and youth inclusion.

The level of authority bestowed to youth in youth-led research will require a supportive organizational culture and an adult ally with strong facilitative leadership capacities. Organizations also will need the resources (e.g., funding, adult training, logistical support) to sustain the project, due to the high level of youth inclusion. London cautions that research projects with a high level of youth inclusion and authority require a high level of organizational capacity if they are to succeed. If organizational readiness is not considered and the institutional capacity is inadequate to support the tenants of PAR (e.g., providing a positive learning environment that culminates in empowerment and social change), the youth and/or community may be let down by unrealized expectations. There are various youth development organizational assessment tools available. A few examples include: (1) assessment questionnaire available in Putting Positive Youth Development into Practice published by the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth, and (2) an assessment checklist available in Assessing Your Organization’s Readiness for Youth Development published by ACT for Youth Center of Excellence.

- Trained Adult Ally: The adult ally plays a significant role in YPAR projects. The adult ally is typically responsible for youth recruitment, education and training; garnering the support of the sponsoring organization and project partners, and helping youth navigate the overall research process. A key function of the adult ally is setting the tone of the research project by sharing authority with youth from the start of the project, and helping youth to embrace their new role. While youth education and training is explicit in the YPAR paradigm, a successful project will also require training and support for the adult ally. In order to perform their critical role, most allies will require training on how to, “support youth voice in a meaningful way,” (Anyon and Naughton 2003:6). The sharing of authority with youth is a new role for adult allies and one that some adults may resist. Training provides a foundation for allies ready to meet the challenge of an YPAR project by providing them with tools to comfortably transition into their new role. In addition, adult allies need training on
the basic tenants of PAR and YPAR and how to adopt the model to the needs and skills of youth. According to Marois, “because results and activities can vary depending on the skill level and interest of the adult allies, selecting the ‘right’ adult ally is an important factor in project success,” (2011: 10).

- **Realistic Time Frame:** Research projects with a high degree of YPAR fidelity may require a significant amount of time to complete. Not only must youth be trained and research conducted; ultimately the research results should be used as a catalyst for change. Organizational sponsors, adult allies and youth must set realistic time frames for the completion of an YPAR project. When setting a time frame, consider the following: 1) the development, application and refinement of new skills; 2) data collection, analysis and synthesis; and 3) the action steps necessary to make change. It is important to note that seasoned professionals can require a significant amount of time to implement and complete a research project. Time frames should allow for youth to, “learn, practice and improve their craft,” (Powers and Tiffany, 2006:86). In addition, consider obstacles that may prevent youth from shepherding the project through completion. As mentioned previously, school-based YPAR projects are confined to a nine month time frame for research related tasks. As a result, students involved in the project from the beginning, who are nearing the end of their middle or high school careers, may not be able to participate in the final phases of project. In this case, actions might be strategically placed throughout the research process to accommodate those students who cannot participate in the culminating action or final phase of the project. For example, once youth have been trained on research methods and defined their research methodology, they can make a formal presentation of their progress to school administrators and leadership to garner the support of project stakeholders. This is a significant and realistic action step for YPAR.

- **Multiple Modes of Participation:** The YPAR methodology does not explicitly address youth recruitment strategies. However, integral to the methodology is the recruitment of youth with diverse life experience and/or cultural backgrounds. This diversity also extends to the academic backgrounds, skills and talents of youth. While the heterogeneity of youth is an asset for YPAR projects, it also requires the use of multiple modes of participation that cater to the youth’s level of development and academic strengths. Youth may feel uncomfortable engaging in research tasks that utilize academic skills that are undeveloped. For example, youth that lack interest in math may struggle with quantitative data analysis, but excel at qualitative data analysis. Employing a variety of activities that address the various modes of learning and academic backgrounds of students will increase the participation of the full spectrum of youth. In Redwood City, YPAR practitioners;
...developed a blend of activities – some written, other oral; some in small groups, others in large groups – so that youth could engage in the ways they felt most comfortable while still being exposed to other types of learning experiences they found more challenging. Furthermore, we tried to foster a cooperative environment in which everyone was expected to support one another in learning and working towards a common goal (Fernandez 2002:4)

Gradually increasing the complexity and/or number of tasks over time is another strategy employed to immerse youth at varied academic levels. According to Powers and Tiffany (2006) the changing development needs of youth can be accommodated by slowly increasing the complexity of youth responsibilities, while also providing opportunities for those who want to decrease their level of involvement. The gradual approach can also be defined as initially giving youth well-defined tasks and encouraging them to take on more, less-defined tasks as their motivation and expertise increases. Gradually increasing the amount and/or the complexity of tasks, while also incorporating multiple modes of participation, are YPAR practices aimed at eliciting the involvement of a diverse array of youth. Ozer and colleagues also note that, “YPAR projects must be different from typical classroom relationships and curricula to avoid ‘business as usual’ interactions and role demands,” (2010:160).

- Early Alliances: YPAR projects can be impacted both positively and negatively by alliances or the absence of relationships with powerful stakeholders. Established relationships can facilitate the research process or open doors for the incorporation of research data in the decision-making process. In West Oakland, YPAR participants noted that the;

  ... most significant accomplishments were facilitated by the relationships they developed with adults in power. For example, without the support of the principal, the students would not have been able to distribute surveys to the whole school or, later, become part of the Leadership Team (Anyon and Naughton 2003:6).

Conversely, Fernandez noted that the lack of relationships or alliances negatively impacted the ability of a Redwood City YPAR project from meeting the goal of aligning the research and action timelines to facilitate full youth engagement. With regard to the alignment of timelines Fernandez notes;

  This alignment for us was even more difficult since there wasn’t a visible critical mass of adult allies or young people in the decision-making bodies to advocate for concrete entryways for youth involvement and therefore the use of the data into decision-making, (2002:6).

Given the direct impact that alliances and relationships can have on an YPAR project, youth and adult allies should focus on getting buy-in from powerful
stakeholders early in the process to increase the chances of having a positive impact.

• Transparent and Open Dialogue: There are many factors that can shape the implementation of an YPAR project. Examples of those factors include available funding, organization policies, the skills and talents of youth and adult allies, the project timeline, stakeholder expectations, and the completing demands on youth time. While adults may want to shield youth from directly addressing those factors, not discussing them could negatively impact the research processes. According to Flicker et al., “the key to authentic youth participation is not to deny these environmental factors but to encourage transparent and open dialogue with the youth,” (2011:297). Flicker et al. assert that youth have the ability to comprehend and successfully navigate boundaries. They illustrate their assertion with an example of youth becoming disenchanted by some project participants doing more work than others. The solution posed is to discuss the low morale and devise an equitable strategy for recognizing work that all youth participants believe to be fair. While the low morale of team members can be a difficult discussion topic, left unchecked it can lead to youth disengaging from the project. The YPAR paradigm is based on youth sharing power with adults. If youth are not encouraged to weigh all the factors when making projects decisions, they are not truly involved in a power sharing relationship.

The above discussed best practices were derived from the experiences of dedicated youth-led research practitioners reflecting upon YPAR project challenges or successes. While the best practices reviewed above may not speak to all of the issues that should be considered prior to YPAR implementation, it does establish basic criteria for success. In considering organizational readiness, adult ally training, realistic timeframes, incorporating multiple mode of participation, establishing early alliances and engaging in open and transparent dialogue, YPAR project partners will be primed for success.

SECTION 4: PHOTOVOICE

Photovoice is a community-based, participatory action research process whereby community residents document their concerns with photographs and create action plans for change. Developed by Wang and Burris in 1997, the methodology was first used with women in the Yunnan Province of China. Since its inception, the photovoice methodology has been applied to a variety of research topics including the, “environmental factors that can affect health and to advocate for improvement in health for communities,” (Necheles et al.:221). Public health researchers and practitioners have successfully used photovoice to, “reach hard-to-reach communities and engage them in a meaningful, action-oriented research process,” (Catalani and Minkler, 2010:447).
Similar to YPAR, photovoice seeks to give voice to those who are marginalized through a participatory process to identify community issues, conduct research (i.e., photography, critical dialogue) and advocate for positive social change. At the onset of a project, participants receive cameras to take pictures that represent a particular issue or aspect of their community that is of concern to them. The participants then share their photographs, and with the assistance of a facilitator, proceed through a freewrite or facilitated discussion using SHOWeD, a Freirean-based process to critically analyze the issues. SHOWeD is a series of questions that are “designed to uncover the root causes” of an issue (Strack et al. 2010:633). The SHOWeD questions are as follows:

- What do you See here?
- What is really Happening here?
- How does this relate to Our lives?
- Why does this problem/situation exist?
- How can we become Empowered?
- What can we Do about it?

Based on the freewrite and discussion, participants create photography captions to narrate their opinions and observations. The process concludes with the development of an action plan to guide policy and systems change advocacy efforts. Much like YPAR, one of the goals of photovoice is the long-term empowerment of participants to become social change agents. The addition of visual cues and story-telling through pictures reinforces the youth voice.

In addition to empowering participants, photovoice and YPAR share other similarities. Both photovoice and YPAR bring together residents to conduct research on pressing community issues. As with YPAR, community residents and researchers involved in the photovoice project operate as equals for all phases of the research process. Both YPAR and photovoice participants receive training from a research partner or a facilitator throughout the research process. Similar to the YPAR adult ally, the photovoice facilitator shapes the research environment and must operate as a mentor, building rapport with community participants. As a result, Strack and colleagues (2010) identify the need for robust facilitator training prior to implementing a photovoice project to aid in the retention of research participants and the overall success of the project.

With grant funding from the UCLA Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the UCLA RAND Center for Adolescent Health Promotion launched a photovoice project with 13 students, 13 to 17 years of age, who served on the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The project aimed to engage youth in conversations around health and foster the development of health advocacy.
projects. Youth received digital cameras, memory cards, photo-editing software and a photo album for organizing photos. Students photographed community images to illustrate things that contribute to healthy or unhealthy lifestyles. In addition to taking more than 3,500 photos, youth participated in nine, 2-hour sessions over a five month period to receive training and engage in critical reflection and dialogue. The youth used a photo sorting process to identify themes, and then worked with a graphic artist to create posters that addressed the three themes that emerged – nutrition education, stress in the community, and stress in school. Copies of the posters were provided to photovoice participants, their schools and community partners to assist in spreading the message. After participating in the project, one student photographed the food at her school cafeteria, which she used to lobby the Director of Food Services for healthy lunch options. In addition, all youth participants encouraged the funder to conduct more research on obesity prevention using participatory methods.

Photovoice is one example of a participatory research method that supports working with marginalized groups on a variety of issues. Photovoice shares many of the same attributes as YPAR and has been successfully employed by health-oriented youth development practitioners to engage youth in research and social action.

SECTION 5: YPAR LEVELS OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES

YPAR projects have been conducted both nationally and internationally, with various levels of youth engagement. In most cases youth are involved in all aspects of the research process, from developing the research questions to presenting research findings and recommendations. YPAR projects employ a wide range of research methodologies and reporting procedures for a myriad of research topics. While YPAR is diverse on many different levels, YPAR practitioners have observed and reported positive youth, organization and community outcomes. The case studies presented below illustrate the various topics including public health related issues researched by YPAR projects, with an emphasis on the ways in which young people were engaged and the observed outcomes.

1. HIV/AIDS Communication Strategies - What every adolescent has a right to know – Bosnia / Herzegovina

From 2001 to 2003, UNICEF sponsored a global initiative aimed at building youth skills and informing UNICEF’s global HIV/AIDS communication strategies. The initiative involved youth working with adult supporters to research the impact of HIV/AIDS on young people’s lives and communities. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the research team included an adult and five core youth researchers, and 15 to 20 youth researchers’ ages 13 to 19 years old. The youth were involved in almost all aspects of the research design, including selecting research topics from a predetermined list provided by UNICEF, developing research procedures and
instruments, recruiting peers and adults to participate in the study, surveying peers and adults, debriefing about the research process, entering and analyzing data, interpreting data, presenting findings, developing publications and meeting with other youth researchers to share findings and experiences. The youth also used research results for action planning. The youth researchers gained research, public speaking, presentation, group facilitation, planning, and advocacy skills as a result of their involvement with the Right to Know campaign. Youth who served as peer educators, also acquired teaching skills. The research process benefited from youth engagement as well, “the project reached segments of the rural youth population that would not have been reached by traditional methods,” (Powers and Tiffany 2006:85).

2. Teen Smoking - Smoke Free World
Nine youth ages 14 through 19 were involved in a grant funded project titled “Smoke Free World” (SFW) to investigate teen smoking. The project was sponsored by TeenNet (now Youth Voices Research Group), an applied research center that was affiliated with Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. Initial SFW research methodologies included Internet research, critical reflection and a photovoice project. After conducting exploratory research the youth decided to focus on environmental and social justice issues as opposed to individual smoking cessation.

Over two years the youth researched international tobacco issues such as the use of western images to promote tobacco sales overseas, international marketing to women and children and a wide range of international tobacco issues. The research culminated in the development of, “a website, video, several public service announcements that aired on television and online and an interactive youth-focused workshop that they have presented at various schools and conferences to over 500 peers,” (2011:293). The youth participants credited their involvement in the Smoke Free World project as a catalyst to them becoming more involved in their community.

3. Youth-led needs assessment of South of Market (SOMA)
In 2000 – 2001 Serving Our Youth and Communities, a collaborative of local youth serving organizations, sponsored a youth-led needs assessment of the South of Market (SOMA) neighborhood in San Francisco. The collaboration sponsored the project to counteract the dearth of youth voice in discussions related to planning for the future of SOMA. A diverse group of seven high school teens ages 14 through 17 were engaged in the project and Youth In Focus, a consulting and training non-profit focused on community and social change, provided training and technical assistance. The youth selected the issues to research, which included recreation, drugs, violence, and housing. Over a four
month period youth, “designed, administered, analyzed, and reported out the results of a survey on youth experiences and aspirations for the SOMA neighborhood. The team conducted 194 surveys with young people ages 5 -18,” (London 2006:7).

The youth analyzed the survey data, produced a written report and video titled REALISM to document their research findings and recommendations. Youth presented their research findings and recommendations at a meeting of the San Francisco Redevelopment Authority and the video REALISM was screened at the National Community Building Network annual conference in Seattle. In addition, a community coalition used the youth’s research findings and recommendations to effectively lobby for the construction of a new elementary school to prevent neighborhood youth from being transferred to other school districts; however, the youth were not engaged in that effort. In a large part, the construction of a new school is a positive community impact that resulted from the SOMA youth-led needs assessment. Youth reported a sense of pride and self-efficacy from participating in the project and the acquisition of public speaking, writing and visual production skills.

4. Youth Homelessness - Independent Living Study

The Independent Living Study (ILS) was conducted to, “better understand the scope and nature of youth homelessness in an update New York community,” (Powers and Tiffany 2006:80). The purpose of the study was to obtain community planning data to qualify for federal funds to serve the communities homeless population. Typically, methods used to collect data on the homeless underestimate the number of homeless youth because the population is mobile and does not utilize traditional services. Given the limitation of traditional methods, ILS recruited six formerly homeless youth to participate in the project as core research team members, and 10 youth interviewers to facilitate a youth-friendly approach to collecting data on a hard-to-reach population. The research team also included two university students who helped facilitate the research process.

The youth involved in the ILS project developed the research tools (i.e., survey instrument and interview protocol) and methodology; recruited research participants; collected data, including 165 one hour interviews over the course of three months; interpreted findings and made presentations to key community stakeholders (e.g., legislators, funders, state policy makers). Ultimately, policy makers and funders changed funding priorities and service delivery to address the issues faced by homeless youth based on the ILS research and recommendations. Youth involved in the ILS project reported that adult partners listened to them, valued their insights and acted upon their findings, which
increased youth’s sense of agency of personal efficacy. Youth learned how to
design, plan and implement a project. They gained research, public speaking
and advocacy skills. In addition, the research sample was also bolstered as a
result of youth-led recruitment efforts.

5. Youth Services - Redwood City and the John W. Gardner Center

The Redwood City youth research project was the result of a partnership
between the community collaborative Redwood City 2020 and the John W.
Gardner Center - a Stanford University research institute – aimed at identifying
the youth services at a new school-based family center. The research team
consisted of Gardner Center Staff and 13 middle school eighth graders. The
youth involved in the project developed the research questions, selected the
research tools, collected and analyzed data, generated findings, developed
recommendations and actions and presented findings to policy makers and
community members. The youth also engaged in a process of reflection, revising
research questions and redefining problems as they went along. The assessment
process was instrumental in the city securing $400,000 for the family center.
Fernandez reports that;

we have also begun to see a paradigm shift, both in adults recognizing the
importance of youth being at the table, as well as youth understanding the
complexities of effecting change and understanding the challenges faced by
adults (2002:3).

Adults involved with the project reported being revitalized by seeing young
people involved in decisions regarding resource allocation. As a result of
participating in the project, youth reported increased confidence and the
attainment of research and public speaking skills. Youth also recognized the
positive relationships they had developed with adult partners and a sense of
optimism about creating community change.

6. Youth Expression - Peace Power

Peace Power was a project sponsored by Beat the Street, a community-based
learning center for young adults in Toronto. Over the course of 32 weeks,
seven youth were engaged in identifying and researching topics of interest to
them, which included surviving day-to-day street life, homelessness, poverty,
racism and barriers to accessing support services. The youth participated in
several trainings that focused on building skills and expressing themselves in
different ways in order to meet their goal, the creation of dynamic shows to
communicate their positive message to youth audiences (i.e., Chase your
Dreams; Develop Yourself; and Widen your Perspective). In order to develop the
skills, content and approach for their production, the youth also attended lyric
and songwriting, breakdancing, video production, Forum Theatre, contemporary
photography and Acid Pro music production software workshops. The culminating effort consisted of a youth-developed show that included video, photography, breakdancing, music production and drama about the issues identified at the outset of the project. The production reached audiences of more than 700 youth and adults. Youth involved in the Peace Power project reported that, “music technology enabled them to communicate their feelings in a way that they felt would be heard,” (Ficker et al. 2008:297). The youth believed that the use of technology as a communication medium also facilitated the distribution of their message in areas where street-youth voices are often not heard.

The case studies above illustrate the variety of research topics and ways in which youth are engaged in youth-led research projects. They also exemplify the types of organizations that elect to sponsor YPAR projects. While the project outcomes are diverse, they converge in three broad areas: youth, organizational and community level outcomes. The case studies make a strong case for YPAR as an effective youth development and social change strategy for a variety of social and health oriented goals.

**SECTION 6: YPAR EVALUATION**

Engaging youth in research has been correlated to beneficial outcomes for both the youth and the organization, and community partners involved in the project. The case study findings reveal benefits that were either observed or self-reported by adult and youth research partners. While the literature overwhelmingly indicates that there are benefits associated with YPAR, it also identifies the need for the evaluation of YPAR programs to authenticate the positive effects correlated with the methodology.\textsuperscript{120,121,122,123}

Powers and Tiffany conclude that organizational and community benefits are realized through youth-led research; however they note that, “there has been little systematic study to establish an evidence base for these effects,” (2006:79). Similarly, Checkoway and Richards-Schuster also conclude that positive benefits are correlated to youth-led research and evaluation, including psychosocial benefits for youth, but that the, “benefits are not established by long-term study,” (2002:23). The authors assert that there is need for research that addresses participation models, including those that are sensitive to culture and age; short and long-term impacts; and factors that facilitate and limit effective practice.\textsuperscript{124} Ozer et al calls for the development of a common framework to inform YPAR implementation and evaluation efforts, which builds on Checkoway and Richards-Schuster’s assertion.
Ozer et al. (2010) maintain that the existing literature provides broad principles to guide PAR projects, but that the field lacks specific guidelines for youth-led research implementation that would allow for an accurate evaluation of YPAR projects. A framework or model could be used by YPAR practitioners to not only inform YPAR implementation, but to also inform formative evaluation efforts. The authors present two school-based PAR conceptual models - a) youth-level effects model, and b) school-level effects model - that identified targeted outcomes of PAR project conducted in a school based setting (see attachment A).

The youth-level outcomes effects model includes intervention activities (i.e., PAR being conducted in the classroom), in combination with key processes (e.g., teacher student power sharing, group work) leading to youth-level outcomes (e.g., perceived school connection, skills, efficacy in research, communication and advocacy). The school-level outcomes model includes PAR being conducted in a targeted setting (i.e., classroom/school) leading to school level outcomes, which are as follows: alliance between students and adult staff, meaningful student roles in school policies and practices, student-adult inquiry and learning and collective efficacy of students for research and advocacy. The authors conclude that one way to build on the model is to integrate ongoing program development through formative evaluation in the action phase of YPAR project. This would enable youth to assess the immediate benefits of their actions, given the amount of time it can take to achieve meaningful change. They reason that

   a clear advantage of more quickly engaging the students in action steps that are relevant to the problem but do not necessarily involve a change in policies or practices is that they feel they are making something happen” (Ozer et al. 2010:162).

For example, while the ultimate YPAR goal (i.e., policy change, infrastructure updates) may not be achieved for some time, student led evaluation can assist youth in determining that actions taken during the project process (i.e., presentations to raise awareness) were an important and meaningful step towards achieving the identified solution to the problem. Flicker et al. (2008) also believe that evaluation can support the youth-led research process by providing a means for youth to analyze their chosen action. In addition to incorporating evaluation as part of YPAR projects, and developing an YPAR framework to guide YPAR implementation and evaluation, Ozer and colleagues (2011) believe YPAR evaluations would also be bolstered by a clear definition of empowered outcomes.

The empowerment of youth is a strong driver for the use of the YPAR research paradigm. However, the notion of empowerment is vague, which makes the task of operationalizing empowered outcomes challenging at best. In addition, the flexible youth development model is problematic for evaluation given the various research topics and methodologies employed by YPAR projects. Ozer et al. argue that empowered outcomes must be defined in order to effectively evaluate an YPAR
program. They believe that the definition of empowered outcomes cannot be issue specific, must include all of the relevant dimensions to be measured (e.g. resource mobilization, sociopolitical context), while also being developmentally appropriate.

In their quest to build on previous research efforts and move the field forward, Ozer and Schotland developed a self-report survey that measures empowered outcomes in four areas:

- adolescents’ motivation to influence their school and community setting,
- participatory behavior,
- general sociopolitical skills, and
- perceived control in their schools.

After testing their instrument, they conclude that their survey is applicable to a broad spectrum of youth development programs, but that the survey questions would need to be refined to address issue specific research topics and the context within which the program is conducted (e.g. school versus organizational project sponsor). While Ozer et al. pinpoint the necessity of defining empowered outcomes at the individual level; Strack et al. believe the definition of outcomes at four different levels is necessary for photovoice processes and outcomes evaluation.

Strack et al. present a photovoice logic model based on the social-ecological model of health (see attachment B). Not only do they believe that the logic model will help with photovoice implementation, they also believe it useful for evaluation purposes. They attest that a theory-driven evaluation, allows for the identification of processes that are tied to changes in measured outcomes. The authors outline program fidelity, systems-level change and causality questions that should be raised to evaluate the causal link between activities at the community, organization, interpersonal and individual levels and outcomes. Program fidelity questions include the following, “was each element of the proposed photovoice logic model in place? Were the activities carried out as planned? Was attendance and quality of program elements sufficient for each activity? Were there sufficient physical and personnel resources available to carry out each activity?” (Strack et al. 2010:634). Systems-level questions pertain to the level of activities beyond the individual level, the diffusion of photovoice efforts within the community and project barriers. Finally, causality questioning looks at the observed intended and unintended outcomes, the strength of causal relationships between activity and outcomes and other explanations for observed changes.

Millstein and Sallis believe that evaluations of youth advocacy obesity prevention efforts need to look at process measures, and also “measures of change in individuals, social factors, built environment and policies,” (2011:7). In order to guide evaluation efforts,
they developed a model that depicts the health behaviors related to childhood obesity prevention and the multiple and intersecting influences on youth advocacy (see attachment C). The model contains both inputs and outcomes and characteristics of advocacy programs and behaviors. Inputs and outputs are defined for the individual advocate, social environment, built environment and policy level. The authors placed both inputs and outcomes on multiple levels to illustrate that while each domain is separate, they also interact to produce change. The individual level refers to the psychological processes of change related to both advocacy and nutrition and physical activity behaviors. Individual level inputs include self-efficacy/self esteem and individual outputs include increased self-efficacy/self esteem. The social level input and outputs take into consideration the individual in context of multiple groups, for example the level of social support before and after the project. Built environment inputs and outputs are defined as the neighborhood characteristics and broader context within which the advocacy work is being conducted (e.g., neighborhood location and physical characteristics), and the policy level refers to the regulatory factors that influence health behaviors. Finally, the core of the model is the “process of training and implementing advocacy behaviors,” which includes education, skill development, behaviors and informed public participation: broad engagement (Millstein and Sallis, 2011:4).

While Strack et al. describe a conceptual model that can be used to inform photovoice evaluation and Millstein and Sallis present a model to guide evaluation of youth advocacy efforts, Flicker and colleagues outline an evaluation model concerned with micro, meso and macro level outcomes, which has been applied to technology-based youth research projects. The TeenNet Research Program at the University of Toronto developed a participatory research program that incorporates the use of media technology and evaluation to engage youth in health promotion and community action. They aptly named their technology driven model “e-PAR”.

TeenNet evaluates their programs on three different levels: micro, meso and macro.

- Micro-level evaluation is focused on e-PAR process impacts at the individual or youth group level, with an emphasis on effective youth engagement. The e-PAR model weaves evaluation into the process by encouraging staff and youth to identify individual and group indicators of success (e.g. meeting attendance as a measure of group functioning) and then measure those indicators (e.g. surveys, focus groups) after the completion of each stage of the e-PAR model.

- Meso-level impacts are associated with the impact of e-PAR on the community organization sponsoring the project. For example, the ability of the organization to support the project and youth engagement and the necessary structures and resources necessary to sustain the e-PAR model are impacts evaluated at the meso level.
Macro-level evaluation is concerned with how the e-PAR model fits with the organization's culture and impacts on the organization or the larger community. The authors note that evaluation is built into the e-PAR model to, “ensure that the e-PAR process can adapt to the realities and personalities of those community organizations and youth who undertake an action project,” (Flicker et al. 2008:297).

Evaluation is instrumental in program refinement and is necessary for causally linking the positive benefits realized by youth, organizations, and communities to the YPAR process. While the literature contains examples of positive benefits correlated to YPAR, the literature also sheds light on the lack of outcomes identified through rigorous evaluation. Although evaluation can assist with verifying the causal connection between activities and outcomes, it can also be used as an YPAR action tool to engage youth and to refine YPAR processes while the research project is being conducted. YPAR practitioners should encourage the incorporation of evaluation in YPAR projects to understand both the short and long-term impacts that result from engaging youth in research. In addition, consideration should be given to a youth-led or youth-involved evaluation process based in keeping with the YPAR paradigm.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

A review of the literature reveals that Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) has emerged as a common research paradigm employed to encourage and foster youth voice. Through the integration of participatory action research with public health advocacy and youth development practitioners are increasingly including young people in research on important social issues or programs that affect their lives. YPAR projects have been conducted both nationally and internationally on a wide variety of topics in a variety of settings. YPAR includes the three basic tenets of PAR:

1. The inclusion of local communities as active participants in the research process;
2. The necessity for shared authority between the researcher and community participants; and
3. The legitimization of local knowledge, as defined by the decision making influence of youth.

In YPAR, youth are actively engaged as research partners and make the decisions regarding the project’s focus and direction. In large part, YPAR is utilized due to the benefits and skills realized by youth as a result of participating in the research project. Over the past decade there has been a marked increase in the use of YPAR by public health professionals. The reasons for this are threefold: 1) research illustrates that civically engaged youth are less likely to partake in health-damaging behaviors; 2) the inclusion of youth voice results in appropriate youth-focused health prevention and
intervention programs; and 3) youth engaged in health related YPAR projects become advocates for health changing behaviors which is beneficial to public health goals. While the literature includes stories of youth positively impacted by participating in YPAR projects, it also outlines the need for the long-term study and evaluation to provide overwhelming evidence of empowered outcomes. The Network for a Healthy California is adding elements of ongoing evaluation to the YEI, based on lessons learned in practice and from this review of literature on YPAR. In the fall of 2012, with USDA SNAP funding the California Department of Public Health will begin funding YEI projects that include a toolkit for evaluation of project activities and outcomes.


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ATTACHMENT A: SCHOOL BASED PAR YOUTH & SCHOOL LEVEL EFFECTS MODEL

(a) Intervention

PAR → Classroom → Group work

Key Processes

- Teacher-student power-sharing
- Networking opportunities
- Positive class climate (e.g. engagement, student perspectives)
- Opportunities for skill development (e.g. research, advocacy)

Youth-level Outcomes

- Skills, efficacy in research, communication, advocacy
- Positive ethnic identity, Sense of purpose
- Perceived school connection
- Psychological and political empowerment
- Expanded social networks and support

(b) Settings Targeted

PAR → Classroom → School

School-Level Outcomes

- Alliances between students and adult staff
- Meaningful student roles in school policies and practices
- Student adult inquiry and learning
- Collective efficacy of students for research, advocacy
ATTACHMENT B: SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL LOGIC MODEL FOR GUIDING PHOTOVOICE EFFORTS

Inputs
- Institutions
  - Host organization
  - Funder
  - University or external partner
  - Intermediate organization

Activities
- Photovoice Participant:
  - Photovoice training
  - Photovoice ethics
  - Advocacy training
  - Training in selected health topics or issues
- Photovoice Participant:
  - Participant recruitment, introduction to photovoice and consent process
- Photovoice Participant:
  - Photovoice ethics

Outcomes
- Participant Outcomes/Changes:
  - Photovoice Participant
  - Participant KAS (Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills)
  - Targeted health topics, emerging issues
  - Positive self-efficacy for being change agents
  - Advocacy skills set
  - Participant behavior changes:
    - Health behaviors
    - Advocacy behaviors

Long term
- Policy and Socio-Environmental Changes
- Health Status Changes in Community

Organizational Processes:
- Photovoice exhibit at host organization
- Photovoice exhibit for community awareness
- Creation of media strategy
- Action planning activities

Community Processes:
- Community photovoice exhibit(s)
- Media coverage / PR
- Infrastucture to raise community awareness
- Letters to editor
- Developed statements to policy boards
- Personal contacts with policymakers,

Group Processes:
- Photo review sessions
- Captions preparation
- Advocacy training
- Action plans

Group Outcomes/Changes:
- Positive social networking
- Increased group empowerment and collective efficacy for local advocacy
- Family and social network outcomes
- Changes in parent-school network knowledge, perceptions and actions

Community Level Outcomes/Changes:
- Positive changes in community
  - Perceptions, knowledge and action
- Changes in community social norms
- Policies, ordinances introduced or changed
- Desired physical changes in community

Interpersonal

Relationship building time
ATTACHMENT C: CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF INPUTS, PROCESSES, AND OUTCOMES OF YOUTH ADVOCACY FOR OBESITY PREVENTION.
REFERENCES


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We are grateful for the hundreds of youth and adult allies who are working together across California to create healthier communities, with more opportunities for nutritious food and physical activity in schools and neighborhoods. Thank you for your devotion, energy, and passion which enabled the Youth Engagement Initiative to grow from a pilot project into a state-wide effort.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE YEI EVALUATION TOOLKIT / DATA COLLECTION GUIDE

Now that the Network for a Healthy California’s Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI) is available in all counties throughout the State, it is important to turn our attention the sustainability of our collective efforts to improve health. Evaluating our activities will help us learn what works best to engage youth in obesity prevention and decide how to proceed in the future. The data you collect will provide valuable information at the local and state level for program planning, engaging new partners, soliciting support, and telling the story of our successes and challenges.

The purpose of this guide is to explain the evaluation and data collection process, provide instructions for the completion of the forms, and enable local project sites to tell the story of YEI in their community. This guide and the associated data collection tools will help you systematically track and document the activities and outcomes of your Youth Participatory Action Research (Y-PAR) projects.

This guide is intended for adult allies and project coordinators participating in YEI at local project sites across California. Please read the guide carefully so you will feel comfortable completing the forms, collecting data and documenting your work.

How were the Data Collection Tools Developed?

Following the principles of community engagement, the data collection forms were created with the participation of youth and adult allies at YEI project sites. All sites were invited to take part in surveys, webinars and site visits in order to inform the development of the initiative’s logic model and evaluation tools. Fourteen sites volunteered to complete an online survey. The Alameda County Office of Education’s Project Eat and Del Norte Unified School District went the “extra mile” to participate in a logic model webinar and a site visit to test the draft data collection tools. As a result, the evaluation toolkit is more user-friendly and the logic model more accurately reflects the YEI theory of change.

Additionally, the LPC research team conducted a review of the academic literature relevant to Youth Participatory Action Research (Y-PAR), youth engagement, Photovoice and evaluation of efforts similar to YEI. This background research provided a context for the development of the logic model and evaluation tools. Please see the literature review attachment for details.

Why Fill Out Forms and Collect Data?

One of the primary reasons to collect data for program evaluation is to learn whether or not the activities you’re carrying out are having the intended effect. You will be able to track your results locally and use the information to make decisions about your Y-PAR project. The information you enter on the data collection forms also will be entered into a statewide database. The data will be used to create reports that help tell the story of the YE initiative and
show how it is working across California. This information will become part of our Statewide YE Evaluation, which will give us a picture of our collective work and progress as a whole.

Collecting and analyzing program data allows us to learn what changes are happening for youth after they become involved in the YE initiative, what impact youth are having in their schools and communities, and how the YE initiative can be improved. This information also allows us to explain to policy makers why funding for this program should continue and assure the public that their tax dollars are being wisely invested.

Documenting the positive benefits and results of the YE initiative can also help you gain more support for your efforts at the local level. For example, information from the data collection forms can persuade other stakeholders in your community to partner with you or provide additional funding for your Y-PAR project.

**Learning from What We Do: What is a Logic Model?**

Evaluation enables us to learn how we are making a difference with the programs and projects we undertake to improve health. We are guided in our efforts by a *theory of change* – a set of ideas about how and why we think a program will produce desired results. This theory of change can be thought of as a series of “if-then” relationships. For example, if we build the capacity of youth to conduct research about nutrition and share the findings with decision makers, then policies and practices will change – such as better quality food in schools.

A *logic model* is a one-page picture that displays the theory of change and shows the connection between project activities (what you’re doing) and project outcomes (what you accomplish and your impact). A logic model not only helps explain what you’re doing and why, it also guides program planning and evaluation. Additionally, it can be a very effective tool for communicating what you hope to achieve in order to gain community support for your efforts.

The Statewide YEI Logic Model illustrates the range of strategies and activities that local project sites use in order to achieve short and medium-term outcomes, as well as long-term impacts. It provides a sense of what we’re trying to achieve as a whole and helps people understand how the YE initiative is designed to work. To create the Statewide YEI Logic Model, local project sites volunteered to provide input through surveys and webinars. Youth and adult allies described why they selected their research issues, what activities were planned or implemented, and what success would look like at the end of the project. This information was compiled and analyzed and informed the development of the Statewide logic model. Local project sites are encouraged to adapt the Statewide logic model or create their own to enhance decision making and engagement of other community partners.

**YEI Evaluation Data Collection Tools and Description**

The following pages describe the data collection tools, along with how and when to use them.
Youth Engagement Initiative Logic Model

**Grantee Strategies and Activities**

- Building youth knowledge and skills in healthy choices
- Building capacity for youth to conduct research
- Developing presentations from research findings for decision makers, community, schools, family, peers
- Developing and creating campaigns, promotional materials
- Applying Y-PAR Model
- Partnering with schools, community groups
- Designing and administering demonstration projects

**Expanded Capacity for Youth-Led Research and Advocacy**

- Skills and expertise
- Involvement in advocacy, public awareness, mobilization, and organization
- Alliances

**Short and Mid-Term Outcomes (changes resulting from activities)**

- Increased Public & Political Will to improve access to:
  - Healthy food
  - Clean water, healthy alternatives to sugary drinks
  - Options and venues for physical activity

- Changes in Policies and Priorities
  - Better quality food at school
  - Clean water
  - Healthy snacks
  - Physical activities

- Shift in Norms & Values
  - Youth making healthy choices
  - Peers and families making more healthy choices
  - Schools and community support healthy choices

- Increased Involvement by Youth in Healthy Eating & Active Living Promotion
  - Youth experts
  - Youth research
  - Youth presentations to youth, school administrators, policy and decision makers, the community

- Youth Participants Increase Confidence, Skills, and Academic Performance
  - Public speaking
  - Promotion, graduation
  - Life skills

- Increased Healthy Behaviors
  - Increased consumption of healthy food, beverages
  - Increased physical activity
  - Reduced obesity rates

**Community Capacity to Scale and Sustain Changes**

- Ongoing youth activism
- Ongoing public awareness
- Increased youth involvement in research, advocacy for health

Audiences to target: Students, parents, school administrators, policy makers, elected officials, business community, community, funders

Adapted from original design for high school reform grantees supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2008.
### YEI Evaluation Data Collection Tools Quick Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed By</th>
<th>Core Data Collection Tools</th>
<th>When to complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ally</td>
<td><strong>Information Form for Youth Researchers:</strong> All youth complete this form to participate in YEI. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Demographic data, baseline data, and optional screening questions. Sites may add permissions.</td>
<td>![ ](Start up) <img src="On-going" alt=" " /> ![ ](End of year) ![ ](End of project)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>YEI Team Meeting Sign-in Sheet:</strong> Use at all youth-attended YEI meetings. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Individual levels of participation, tracks Stepping Stones progress, and activities completed during meetings.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>Event and Activity Log:</strong> Completed after every activity or event. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Types (coded), audience (coded), description (open), # of researchers, youth, adults, school staff, and community members involved or reached by the activity or event.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>Publicity Tracking Log:</strong> Tracks media about the project – either generated by the project or about the project. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Type of publicity, type of media (coded), brief description and target audience.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>YPAR Project Evaluation:</strong> This survey assesses youth’s experience with YPAR. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Opinions on youth engagement, YPAR fidelity and experience with adult ally.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>End of Year Youth Survey:</strong> This survey measures changes that youth experience after participating in YEI. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Skills learned, knowledge gained, future advocacy plans, changes in behavior, and current activities and interests.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>Youth Engagement Team Annual Summary Report:</strong> Provides a quick snapshot/very brief description of each site’s program. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Research question, # of youth involved, focus area, targeted change, project description, and a summary of findings.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /> <strong>Supplemental Data Collection Tools</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>Adult Ally Assessment of Participants:</strong> This post-assessment measures changes in youth observed by the adult ally. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Key skills gained from participation in YEI.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
<td><strong>Youth Engagement Final Team Report:</strong> <em>Due at end of project.</em> Provides an outline of items to include in a creative product to conclude the entire project. <strong>Data collected:</strong> Research methods, instruments, findings, outcomes, accomplishments, challenges, conclusions, and youth biographies.</td>
<td><img src="" alt=" " /></td>
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</table>
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING YEI DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Core vs. Supplemental: What’s the Difference?

All YEI projects must use the data collection tools that are designated as “core” to ensure a thorough Statewide evaluation of our progress. Additionally, the information collected in the core forms can provide information to assist YEI sites in their local project planning and sustainability efforts. Supplemental forms are optional. These additional data collection tools may enhance your evaluation and lead to a deeper understanding of the changes that result from the YEI activities implemented at your site.

Instructions for Completing Core Forms

1. Information Form for Youth Researchers

   WHO/WHEN: Completed by all youth and their parent/guardian prior to participating in YEI.

   WHY: The purpose of the form is to collect basic demographic information about youth researchers, learn about their interests and gain parent permission for their participation. YEI sites may choose to add additional permissions (e.g. photo release) as needed. This registration form can also serve double duty as an application for prospective youth researchers. The first page is required and the second page is optional. The form includes optional “interest questions” to screen potential participants to determine if they a good fit for YEI. Sites may elect to use these interest questions or tailor them to local needs. This baseline data will allow us to track how many youth participate in YEI, their demographics and what changes may result in their activities and community involvement after participating in YEI.

   HOW: Youth should take the form home to be completed in partnership with their parent(s) or guardian(s). The demographic information is important information to the funder, but students have the right to decline. Sometimes race and ethnicity questions are confusing and people do not complete this question correctly or feel they are not being represented. It may help us get accurate data if you help your students answer this two part question.

   Youth should complete the optional interest questions on their own, if applicable. Adult allies or other faculty/staff may score responses to the interest questions as a means of determining which youth are selected to participate.

2. YEI Team Meeting Sign-in Sheet

   WHO/WHEN: Completed by youth and adult allies at every YEI meeting. This form should be completed every time the YEI project has a regular project meeting (usually weekly).
WHY: The form tracks the participation of youth in YEI activities and progress toward the completion of the Stepping Stones. The data will be used to determine the number of students involved, the type of activities they participate in and which Stepping Stone is addressed. At the local level, the information collected on these forms also can help you determine how to allocate youth stipends based on attendance. This log also will help with the completion of the end of the year summary.

HOW: Youth should sign-in using this form during the meeting. Adult allies should check the box indicating which Stepping Stone the group is working on and briefly describe the activity.

3. **Event and Activity Log**

**WHO/WHEN:** Youth complete this form after every activity or event that the YEI project sponsors or attends, outside of regular team meetings. This form is used on an ongoing basis throughout the project year.

**WHY:** Tracking other people’s participation in events will help us understand the reach YEI has into the wider community. Tracking the participation of youth researchers in additional events and activities will help us understand what it takes to develop skills in youth and create changes in the school or community. Keeping track of your process also enables you to “tell the story” of your efforts. This log also will help with the completion of the end of the year summary and reports to your contract monitor.

**HOW:** Youth should record the date the activity took place. In the “activity type” column, youth should record a number 0-7 to indicate the type of activity or event, as coded at the bottom of the form. In the “Audience” column, youth should enter a number 0-10 to indicate who participated in the event, as coded at the bottom of the form. You may record more than one number in each of these columns. The total number of events and participants should be calculated and entered in the corresponding boxes at the bottom of the page.

4. **Publicity Tracking Log**

**WHO/WHEN:** Youth complete this form on an ongoing basis throughout the project year.

**WHY:** Media attention for your project helps raise awareness of your health improvement efforts, one of the intended impacts of YEI. This log is a tool to track publicity your YPAR project receives. By compiling this data at a state level, we may see patterns or connections between types of publicity and project outcomes. This can lead to sharing of promising practices. For example, we may learn that a particular type of publicity is very effective in raising awareness. This log also will help with the completion of the end of the year summary.
HOW: Youth should record the date the publicity took place. In the “Type of media” column, youth should enter a number 0-7 to indicate what kind of publicity was generated. Media codes are listed at the bottom of the form. Youth should write a brief description of the publicity. As a last step, youth should check which audience(s) was targeted to receive the message (check all that apply). You are encouraged to keep copies of publicity for future reference. This information can help you plan future outreach campaigns and support requests for funding from other sources.

5. YPAR Project Evaluation

WHO/WHEN: Youth complete this survey at the end of the project year.

WHY: This survey assesses youth’s experience with YPAR. The questions are designed to help us understand how closely the principles of youth development and engagement are being followed. The data will help us understand youth’s leadership experience. The information also can help adult allies assess their strengths and challenges in facilitating a youth-led project.

HOW: Youth anonymously complete the questionnaire, based on their project experience.

6. End of Year Youth Survey: This survey measures changes that youth experience after participating in YEI. Data collected: Skills learned, knowledge gained, future advocacy plans, changes in behavior, and current activities and interests.

WHO/WHEN: Youth anonymously complete this survey at the end of the project year.

WHY: This survey asks youth to report on their feelings, behavior and experiences before and after participating in YEI. This data will help us quantify the effects or changes on youth as a result of their participation in the program. The collective results can help us make the case for program sustainability at both the local and state level.

HOW: Youth anonymously complete the questionnaire, based on their project experience.

7. Youth Engagement Team Annual Summary Report

WHO/WHEN: Youth and adult allies complete this form at the end of the project year.

WHY: Completing this form provides the State with a description of each site’s project and a summary of the year’s activities and serves multiple purposes. At the State level, the information collected will guide future program planning, for example by helping to determine if program refinements or additional technical assistance are needed. By documenting impacts, the data collected will help tell the story of YEI both on the local level
and across the state. Additionally, youth and adult allies can track project progress and accomplishments from year to year, leading to a deeper understanding of the YPAR project and process. The results may be shared with community members, decision makers or media.

**HOW:** The completion of this form is intended to be a cooperative effort between youth and adult allies. We recommend reserving time at a weekly meeting to hold a discussion of the key questions. A youth researcher, youth team or the adult ally can take responsibility for entering the group responses for each question.

---

### Instruction for Completing Supplemental Forms

#### 8. Adult Ally Assessment of Participants

**WHO/WHEN:** Adult allies complete this form at the end of the project year.

**WHY:** This form allows adult allies to assess changes in youths’ skills and knowledge that occur after participating in YEI. This data allows us to quantify the collective impact of YEI on youth across the State. The results can help make the case for sustainability of the program on both the local and State level. Just as important, this tool may be useful for youth in employment or college applications.

**HOW:** Adult allies complete one form for each YEI participant, if feasible. This tool is most useful for youth who are consistently involved in YEI. You might ask youth at the beginning of the project if they would like to participate in this level of evaluation. For each item, adult allies should enter a score (4-0) that characterizes the level of mastery the participant has at the beginning of the program and at the end of the project year. The first number should be subtracted from the last and entered into the final column as a “+” or “−” number. Total each column to gain an overall sense of the youth’s progress during the year.

#### 9. Youth Engagement Final Team Report

**WHO/WHEN:** Youth, assisted by adult allies, complete the final team report when the YPAR project is complete – typically at the end of two years.

**WHY:** Completing a final report is an important skill for young people to learn. It represents the culmination of their work and is a product that can be shared with other funders, partners, prospective employers, and/or included in college applications.

**HOW:** Youth researchers should work together to decide what they want to produce and how to divide the work. An outline of final report components is provided as a guideline.
Teams are encouraged to **be creative** in designing their final product. For example, the final report can be in a PowerPoint presentation, a video, or PhotoVoice format. The adult ally or other senior project staff should complete a facilitator statement by answering the questions contained in the outline. Research instruments, pictures, logos, and copies of promotional materials or publicity should be included.

**SUBMITTING YOUR DATA**

**PHI to complete**

**What If I Still Have Questions?**

**PHI to Complete**
ATTACHMENTS A: CORE DATA COLLECTION TOOLS
End of Year Youth Survey

Program Site: _______________________________________________ Date: ____________________

These questions are about you. This is not a test, so there is no right or wrong answer. Please answer each question thoughtfully and honestly. We want to know how you feel about yourself and how you view making change in your school/community. Your name is not on the survey and will not be linked to your answers. If a question does not apply to you, or you are unsure of what it means, just leave it blank and go on to the next one.

Read each question and think back to how you would have answered the question BEFORE participating in the program and check the appropriate box. Then check the box that best fits how you feel NOW.

1. I want to make a difference in making my school/community a healthier place.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

2. I know where and how to gather useful data on making my school/community a healthier place.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

3. I can use research results to come up with solutions or recommendations for making my school/community a healthier place.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

4. I can share research findings in a meaningful way to adults, decision makers or other policy makers in my school/community.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

5. I understand how my surroundings affects my health.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

6. I see myself as part of a youth community that can solve problems we are concerned about.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

7. Eating healthy is important to me.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

8. I feel confident in knowing what is healthy and not healthy to eat.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

9. I feel confident in knowing what is healthy and not healthy to drink.
   - BEFORE
     - Yes, most definitely!
     - Yes, probably
     - Not sure
     - No, probably not
     - No, definitely not!
   - NOW
     -

10. I select foods based on their nutritional value.
    - BEFORE
      - Yes, most definitely!
      - Yes, probably
      - Not sure
      - No, probably not
      - No, definitely not!
    - NOW
      -
11. The snacks I choose are often fruits or vegetables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, probably not</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

12. I generally stay away from sugary drinks (soda, juice, energy and sport drinks).

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<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, probably not</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

13. Doing physical activity is important to me.

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<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No, probably not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

14. I know how much physical activity* I need to be healthy. (*includes walking to school, sports, exercise, etc.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
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<td>No, probably not</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

15. I am physically active at least 60 minutes a day.

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<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, probably not</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

16. When I choose a drink, I choose water over sugar sweetened beverages.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>NOW</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, most definitely!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, probably</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No, probably not</td>
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<tr>
<td>No, definitely not!</td>
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</table>

After participating in this project....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes, definitely!</th>
<th>Yes, probably</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>No really</th>
<th>Definitely not!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I have learned that I can make a difference in my community.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I plan to continue making my community a more healthy place.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I will be able to apply the skills learned to other issues I am passionate about.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Since being involved, I am more aware of healthy eating.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Since being involved in this project, I think I eat healthier.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>I can influence others to eat healthier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Since being involved, I am more aware of the importance of physical activity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Since being involved in this project, I do more physical activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I can influence others on the importance of physical activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Since being involved in this project, I drink fewer sugar sweetened drinks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Since being involved in this project, I am more aware of clean drinking water.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I can influence others on the importance of drinking water.</td>
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</table>

Activities and Involvement - Check all boxes that describe you:

- [ ] I have a job.
- [ ] I have had public recognition for my actions or work.
- [ ] I am involved in club sports.
- [ ] I am involved in extracurricular school activities (sports, band, drama, choir, cheer, school clubs, etc).
- [ ] I have presented to groups other than a classroom.
- [ ] I am on the honor role at school.
- [ ] I plan to go to college after high school.
- [ ] I am involved in community activities and/or do volunteer work for my community

One thing about this project that really stood out for me: ____________________________

One thing I would like to change about this project: ____________________________
The following questions are about how your project was carried out. The results will provide feedback on how youth participatory action research was used. Please answer each question thoughtfully and honestly. Your name is not on the survey and will not be linked to your answers; your responses will be confidential.

### For me, the project...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ...respected the opinions of youth.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2. ...supported decisions made by youth.</td>
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<td>3. ...let youth research the topic they wanted.</td>
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<td>4. ...let youth develop the survey or interview questions.</td>
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<td>5. ...had youth do the data entry.</td>
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<td>6. ...had youth analyze the data.</td>
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<td>7. ...let youth draw conclusions from the data.</td>
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<td>8. ...supported the conclusions youth made from the research process.</td>
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<td>9. ... accepted and/or acted on recommendations from youth.</td>
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<td>10. ...let youth determine the best way to share the results.</td>
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<td>11. ...had youth share the results with youth, staff, and/or community members.</td>
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<td>12. ...encouraged youth to stay involved in the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. ...provided necessary support for all steps of the research process.</td>
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<td>14. ...related well with youth.</td>
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</table>

### Additional Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes, most definitely!</th>
<th>Yes, probably</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>No, probably not</th>
<th>No, definitely not!</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. I developed a relationship with the Adult Ally (adult facilitating project).</td>
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<td>16. I would recommend the Adult Ally for future youth-led projects.</td>
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</table>

17. If you would like to share any other comments, please do so here:
Publicity Tracking Log

Site: _______________________________  Month/Year: ____________

Enter any media or publicity created about your project, include the date, type, description, and audience. Enter each media event on a separate line. Include a copy of the coverage or a web address for electronic media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type of media** (enter codes from below)</th>
<th>Description: give a brief description, including the publication (if applicable) and what it was about. If relevant, include a copy of the coverage or a web address for electronic media.</th>
<th>Audience ✓ all that apply</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Youth</td>
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**Media Code:
1= School announcements
2= Newsletter
3= Print media (newspaper)
4= Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
5= YouTube or other video site
6= Television media
7= Radio
0=Other
# Event and Activity Log

Site: ___________________________ Month/Year: __________

For events or activities outside of regular team meetings, enter each event or activity the project sponsors or attends on a separate line in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event &amp; Activity Type* (enter code(s) from below)</th>
<th>Audience(s)** (enter code(s) from below)</th>
<th>Description: provide the name and purpose of the event, and a brief description of what the youth did.</th>
<th># of YE team members participating</th>
<th># of non-team youth reached</th>
<th># of parents reached</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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**Activity Code:  
1= Meeting  
2= Presentation/ Educational Outreach  
3= Training/ Conference  
4= Research  
5= Field trip/site visit  
0= Other

**Audience Code:  
1= Youth  
2= Parents  
3= Community members  
4= Teachers/school staff  
5= Food service personnel  
6= School Administration  
7= School Board  
8= Partners  
9= Funders and/or potential funders  
10= Other policy makers  
0= Other  
NA = if not applicable

Total Activity & Events: __________

Total youth and adults reached: __________

Total by location: ______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Activity &amp; Events:</th>
<th>Total youth and adults reached:</th>
<th>Total by location:</th>
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Youth Engagement Initiative Event and Activity Log  
8/22/2012
YE Team Meeting Sign-in Sheet

Date: _________________________  Time meeting began: ____________  Time ended: ____________

Program Site: ________________________________________________________________

Adult Ally: ________________________________________________________________

|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|

This section completed by Adult Ally

Description of Activity:

Youth Sign-in Below

1. 
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<td>48.</td>
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<td>49.</td>
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<td>50.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Information Form for Youth Researchers

Program Site: __________________________________________________________

Form must be returned to: _________________________________ 5:00 pm on: __________________

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name: ___________________________ ___________________________
First Name Last Name

Address: ______________________________________________________
Number and Street ____________________________________________
City and Zip _______________________________________________

Phone: ______________________________________________________
Home phone ____________________________________________
Cell phone _______________________________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________

Grade: [ ] 6th [ ] 7th [ ] 8th [ ] 9th [ ] 10th [ ] 11th [ ] 12th Age: ______ Gender: [ ] M [ ] F

Are you Latino or Hispanic? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Race and Ethnicity: [ ] White [ ] Black/African American [ ] Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander
[ ] Asian [ ] American Indian/Alaskan Native [ ] Two or more of the races above
(check all that apply)

[ ] Other: ______________________________

PARENT AND EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian Name: ___________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Phone: _________________________________
Home phone ____________________________________________
Work and/or Cell phone ___________________________________

Emergency Contact Name: _______________________________
Relationship: __________________

Emergency Contact Phone: _______________________________
Home phone ____________________________________________
Work and/or Cell phone ___________________________________

ACTIVITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

The following questions are to learn about your interests and will not be used to determine your eligibility for the project.

Check all of the boxes that describe you:

[ ] I have a job. [ ] I have presented to groups other than a classroom.
[ ] I have had public recognition for my actions or work. [ ] I am on the honor role at school.
[ ] I am involved in club sports. [ ] I plan to go to college after high school.
[ ] I am involved in extracurricular school activities (sports, band, drama, choir, cheer, school clubs, etc).
[ ] I am involved in community activities and/or do volunteer work for my community

PARENT PERMISSION

The above participant has my permission to participate in the Youth Engagement Initiative project and to respond to any related surveys.

Parent/Guardian Signature __________________ Date ____________

Youth Registration Form 9/25/2012
INTEREST QUESTIONS (OPTIONAL)

What qualities do you have that you think would make you a good researcher? (someone who can collect information)

What are two reasons that you want to be a part of this project? Why?
1.

2.

Any other information you would like to share?

After turning in this form, you may be asked to come in for a short interview. Think about some questions you may have about being a researcher!
## Youth Engagement Team Annual Summary Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Site:</th>
<th>Project Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Begin Date:</th>
<th>Project End Date:</th>
<th># of youth involved:</th>
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</table>

### What was the research question for the project?

---

### Focus (✓ all that apply)

- □ Healthy food
- □ Healthy beverage
- □ Physical activity
- □ Other:

### Did youth receive any compensation?

- □ No
- □ Yes, explain:

### What policy or environmental change did the project try to address?

### Approximately how many people would this affect?

---

### Project Description (briefly answer each question below)

#### What was the purpose of the project?

---

#### What were the primary activities completed during this project year?

---

#### What data collection methods were used in your research?

(Photovoice, Survey, Interview, Focus Group, Observation)

---

#### What were some of the key findings and accomplishments during the year?

---
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you have any partnerships and/or utilize any additional resources in your project? If so, please describe.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What lessons did you learn through the process?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What challenges &amp; limitations did you encounter during the process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the next steps for your project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What conclusion and recommendations can you make about the work done by your project?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Include copies of research instruments, presentations, and any other supplemental materials.*
## Adult Ally Assessment of Participants

**Program Site**: 

**Youth Name**: 

**Adults Ally’s Name**: 

**Date**: 

---

To the best of your knowledge, please rate the program participant when they first became involved in the program, and where they are now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Great</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>O.K.</th>
<th>Needs Support</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>Enter score of where youth was at beginning of program</th>
<th>Enter the score of youth at end of program</th>
<th>Subtract first # from second # and enter score as a &quot;+&quot; or &quot;-&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Able to effectively give and receive both positive and constructive feedback.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Willing to imagine or remain open to considering alternative perspectives, and integrate new or revised perspectives into ways of thinking and acting.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Team Work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participates in building group cohesiveness and has a sense of accomplishment and pride in self and group.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides vision, direction, and encouragement to others and offers solutions to problems and accepts accountability.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research Skills</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Can determine best data collection method for various data collection needs and develop data collection methodology.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
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<td>Aware of different aspects of health and understands the role of individuals, the community, and organizations in achieving community health.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocates for the purpose of the project and shares message of the project with family, friends, peers, and staff.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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**Totals=**
Youth Engagement Final Team Report

FINAL PRODUCT OUTLINE- PROPOSED STRUCTURE

The Final Team Report should be a creative process to report the work done by the project. The following is a guide on what types of information to include in your reporting. Please include any pictures or art from your project that will help explain your findings.

While content is important, it is also important that the final product represent the accomplishments and personality of the team of youth. Be creative! Reports may be in the format of PowerPoint, video, Photovoice, etc. As with the rest of this project, we recommend that youth take the lead on creating the final product (except for the statement from the facilitator) and that the adults be consulted on layout and editing only.

- **Table of Contents** – This will help navigate through the final product, allowing people to quickly find the information in which they are most interested. It is also a good way to make sure that all of the pieces of the final product are included.

- **Facilitator Statement** – A statement from facilitator or executive staff member about why the organization/community/school decided to initiate this research project, who was involved, who helped support it, and what the future vision is for youth-led research. Describe the organization, school or community that hosted this project. Include the organization's mission, and a description of the specific program which hosted this research project. (completed by Ally)

- **Methodology** – Describe of the process used in the project. What happened this year? How did you select the topic? How did you develop the tools? How did you collect the data (when, where, who, how many)? How did you analyze the data and come up with the recommendations? This is the story behind the project; tell it as though you were talking to someone who did not know anything about your process.

- **Data Analysis** – Describe the key findings, supporting data and recommendations uncovered through this project. Include graphs, tables, pictures and any other supporting figures.

- **Outcome and Collected Accomplishments** – Describe any major accomplishments that your project experienced, or outcomes related to the work done by the project. Here is a chance to share something your project is really proud of.

- **Challenges & Limitations** – Describe any challenges or barriers that you discovered as a result of the work you did and, if any, suggestions for addressing these in the future. Describe of the limits of your data, weakness of your process, or areas that you would have liked to examine more closely. This is an opportunity for honest reflection on your process, as well as a place to identify where you could have done some things differently.

- **Partnerships** – If you developed partnerships and/or participated in networks that assisted your project, share a little bit about these and how you cultivated the relationship(s).

- **Resource Utilization** – Discuss any resources utilized for your work: financial, material, or volunteer. Did anyone donate money, food for events or meetings, give-aways, air-time, professional services?

- **Summary** – Include a statement detailing conclusions and recommendations, lessons learned, thoughts on process, ideas on next steps. May include additional areas of research, project changes, etc.

- **Thank you & Acknowledgement** – A place for you to say thank you to anyone who may have supported you in this process (provided you feedback, supported you in data collection, etc.)

- **Biographies** – Include a short bio created by each youth researcher outlining what they want people reading this report to know about them. May include a description of who they are, why they were involved, what they learned, what is unique about them, or anything else. If possible, we recommend pictures of the researchers.

- **Appendix** – Include copies of research instruments and raw data.

- **Logos** – Include logos of project sponsors (i.e. organizations, Youth In Focus, funders, etc.)
ATTACHMENT C: LITERATURE REVIEW