Ramona Mullahey,
Yve Susskind, and
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Youth Participation in Community Planning

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Yve Susskind is a doctoral candidate in urban, technological, and environmental change at the University of Michigan. Her work with Sharon Sutton on Urban Network, a national effort to engage youth in learning about and improving their communities, ignited her interest in youth involvement in community planning. That research focused on children's views of the physical environment as a stage for enacting a class-embedded way of life and sought to understand whether creative work focused on the neighborhood environment can be used as a means of developing positive visions of the future and cultivating moral imagination. Her current research focuses on social change organizations where teenagers are in leadership roles. She is examining the organizational processes and structures, as well as the teens' experiences, learning, and identity development, as well as the organizations' accomplishments in their communities. The research is to contribute to the development of a model of "empowerment planning," a term adopted by Dr. Kenneth Reardon.

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P a r t 1

Supporting Youth Participation

If our democracy is to grow in its capacity to solve its weighty environmental, economic, and social problems, it will be because young people are learning to participate effectively in public life. It is because young people are discovering that involvement in public life is not what we leave to a public official to do for us or to us. It is an exciting, rewarding dimension of the "good life" we all want.

- FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ, CENTER FOR LIVING DEMOCRACY

There are many powerful examples of children and youth taking responsibility for making the world a better place and transforming themselves to help shape their communities. Never before have young people demanded a more active role nor been better equipped to assume broader responsibilities as designers and planners of healthier, more livable communities that are friendlier to families, children, and youth. This take-charge attitude arises from the desire to have a significant voice in issues that affect everyone, to make positive changes in the quality of life, and to create more meaningful roles for themselves in society as effective decision makers. In 1998, more than a quarter of the U.S. population was younger than 18; by 2005, there will be nearly 73 million Americans younger than 18.

This is an opportune time to reflect on the particular gifts young people contribute to the world community, as they discover their potential to make a difference in their schools, their neighborhoods, and their communities. Through first-hand experience, young people are building self-reliance, connecting with others, and learning about their inner resources and their own creative potential to forge a new sense of what is possible. They are transforming ideas into pragmatic proposals for action and advocating solutions to the urgent problems confronting their communities, their country, and their world. Among other things, they are planting urban gardens to beautify inner-city neighborhoods, striking for peace, lobbying political leaders to end world hunger, and publishing magazines, such as *Children's Express*, to reach out to others. They are putting their communities on notice by implementing the Agenda 21 initiative on sustainable development, by creating sustainability indicators relevant to youth, and crafting a whole new role in the United Nations for young people.

We need more people who are aware of the common good and are willing to work for it. We need capital humans as much as we need human capital. How can we harness the idealism, passion, and energy of the next generation and engage them in the community planning process as full participants in shaping the world that they will inherit? This PAS Report will explore examples of how communities have involved children and youth in their planning endeavors, social activism, and policy making.

The goal is to develop an informative guide that provides planners with practical tools for their citizen participation tool box. It will include a typology for thinking about young people's participation in projects, describe some of the techniques used to engage this younger constituency, identify key elements in designing an effective program, and present newly emerging models from forward-thinking communities that attempt to formalize newly empowered youth in decision making.

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This report will be a practical guide to the emerging field of youth participation. It will inform practicing planners and community decision makers about how they may take the following steps:

- Establish a new paradigm for citizen participation

- Examine the benefits of youth participation in planning and decision making

- Discuss a typology for youth participation

- Provide examples of how communities have engaged young people in planning

- Identify some common elements in designing a youth participation program

- Introduce examples of youth-based initiatives for social change

- Profile emerging models for formalizing youth involvement in community decision making

The report will not contain an exhaustive analysis of the theoretical basis for youth participation, nor will it provide a model that will be effective for every community endeavor. However, it will present, in Part 2, a range of activities for youth involvement and suggest strategies for developing a youth participation program that can be tailored to the needs of specific communities. Planners and other public service officials should understand that organized efforts to engage young people in the public participation phase of the community land-use planning process are time-limited, discrete activities. They should be viewed as seminal opportunities–the initial stage to broadening and deepening the base of stakeholder participation and to building communities that work for all citizens.

This is only the beginning. Youth voices demand to be part of the ongoing public dialog and dynamics of community change making. Part 3 looks at youth participation through another lens; namely, the words of young people themselves as they share their stories of self-empowerment and personal growth through social activism. Based on a field study of youth empowerment, coauthor Yve Susskind examines in detail young people in Seattle who defy negative stereotypes of teenagers through what she describes as empowerment planning. Empowerment planning focuses on achieving community and social change by developing grassroots planing and leadership skills in relation to some need in the local community. The two organizations featured are youth-driven and directed—run by teenagers who address issues like youth homelessness, gay rights, youth violence, education reform, and other social issues that affect the well-being not only of youth but of the entire community. Not only do the two documented case studies provide insights on how young people are overcoming barriers to youth involvement, but they also show how young people are creating personal, community, and social transformation by altering the conditions that limit the rights and opportunities of certain groups from fully participating in society.

In Part 4, we look at how young people are collaborating with adults in community decision making to form, review, and help shape policies that affect their lives. This section of the report identifies three models where youth in partnership with business, government, and the non-profit community are formalizing the impact of young people through innovative approaches that solidify their participation in the public policy arena. These powerful examples reflect communities where youth involvement in the policy process is institutionalized and sustained and where young people have assumed leadership roles and are operating in the political arena to mobilize resources for programs that support youth.

Part 5 distills the key insights of youth involvement and empowerment. It reflects on how young people transform promise and possibilities into effecting and sustaining fundamental change in the community. It reaffirms the role of youth in the emergence and rediscovery of participatory democracy and the richness of a public life.

Although the report highlights examples of young people of all ages—children and teens—engaged in shaping the future of their communities, the primary focus of the case studies will be on emerging models involving older teens and young adults, ages 14 to 20, in direct action: finding their voice, speaking out, making informed choices, and forging a united vision of the future. The transition from youth to adulthood is enriched and enhanced, lives made more relevant, as youth mature and become effective advocates for positive change. They experience a sense of community and purpose, self-worth, and personal growth as they learn to care for others at a deeper level. They infuse community life with their spirit and boundless, youthful energy.

The community benefits immediately when young adults assert their rights to participatory democracy. As youth assume the responsibilities of active community citizenship, they take ownership of their community by being part of the solution and not the problem. Their courage, contributions, insights, and leadership strengthen the threads that form the civic fabric of community, nurturing a more civil society.

The core value in involving young people (regardless of age) is to ensure their genuine and active participation: to create opportunities for young people to choose to take part in defining a community problem, crafting a solution, and ultimately, taking "ownership" for making their community a better place. Tokenism and adult control are to be avoided. Adults must step back from traditional roles and stereotypes and help create a culture of mutual respect and support with their younger community counterparts. It is imperative in facing the critical community problems emerging today that youth and adults share the power and work effectively together for our common future.

THE CONCEPT OF PARTICIPATION

Participation is the involvement of people in the decisions that influence their lives (Checkoway 1994). Some kinds of participation and some participants are more influential than others. In 1969, geographer Sherry Arnstein increased awareness of the differences between token participation and the kind of involvement in which people have influence and effect real change. Others, including community planner Barry Checkoway, health educators Barbara Israel, Arlene Eisen, and Mark Zimmerman, and community psychologists Stephanie Riger and Julian Rappaport, have continued to show that participation does not automatically result in influence. From the perspective of community planning, influential youth participation occurs when:

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Genuine Involvement

A major consideration in all these community efforts to broaden the base of public participation to include young people is the degree of their involvement and their participation. As educator George H. Wood points out, "Since the beginning of the American democratic experiment, the belief was that ordinary people, engaged in everyday talk, could resolve public problems and issues." Understanding democratic participation goes beyond the teaching and learning of the principles of democracy in classrooms. It requires developing the confidence and competence to participate, which is acquired gradually through actual practice.

Young people's participation in their community can assume a variety of forms. Genuine participation occurs when the child has the opportunity to choose to participate at the highest level of his ability. The ideal is to create opportunities with young people as partners in the planning and design that maximize their ability to speak about the issues that concern them in ways that are most comfortable and supportive for them. Furthermore, good projects should aim to stretch a young person's capacities to reach beyond previous knowledge and enhance her or his self-concept upon achievement and a sense of satisfaction. Good youth projects should nurture a sense of learning by encouraging young participants to examine themselves in action, reflect on their experiences, make the connections on how their work relates to community needs, analyze any problems that occur in the process, and learn to be self-correcting and accountable.

1. actions aim to intervene in existing conditions,

2. involvement is part of the public dialog and decision making, and

3. engagement is influential and changes are significant.

What Is Youth Participation?

There are many forms of youth involvement. Many youth enlist in community service, an increasingly popular youth movement. Others engage in enrichment programs, such as recreational and after-school activities to receive academic and cultural or religious tutoring. In some cases, adults have created forums for students to speak or write on various issues, such as violence or the environment. However, which of the above examples meet the criteria for influential participation in community planning? Many experiential curricula involve youth in hands-on learning. For example, planners and designers have developed curricula for young people to learn about and engage in planning and design techniques. In some instances, these educational programs alter traditional power structures in schools by creating nonhierarchical communities inside classrooms where students participate in directing their own education.

While such activities as these contribute to young people's development and learning, they do not necessarily qualify as participation in community change. Community service often does not focus on or result in community change. Youth involvement in many service activities is oriented toward helping people in need rather than toward changing the conditions in the community or society that create need.

Enrichment programs may improve opportunities for youth and provide positive alternatives; they may contribute in the long run to change in communities by making them more pleasant, less violent places and by making the individuals who live there more successful. Such interventions for youth, however, usually do not involve them in the actual processes of envisioning, planning, and creating change. Learning the skills and gaining the confidence to speak out are essential to building lifestyles of ongoing involvement. When such expressions do not become part of community dialogue and decision making, the act of speaking out can be frustrating and alienating. Finally, teaching youth about community change by practicing the steps of the process is not the same as teaching them to be agents of change by attempting to effect real change. It is questionable whether the former increases the influence of youth in city, neighborhood, or program planning and design. Thus, young people's work that focuses on individual learning and development, rather than on changing their surroundings, is not real participation. Youth participation in nontoken community change requires that youth become part of the actual process and trajectory of change in their communities. Participation should not only give young people more control over their own lives and experiences but should also grant them real influence over issues that are crucial to the quality of life and justice in their communities.

Service learning has emerged as an effective teaching/learning strategy that connects meaningful community service and volunteerism with academic curriculum. Within the framework of the school environment, students learn civic responsibility by applying newly acquired academic skills and knowledge to meeting real community needs. It is a form of experiential education and citizenship education where the community becomes the learning laboratory as students are engaged in real-life problem solving. Personal growth is achieved as young people learn and develop through genuine participation and increased competence, performing meaningful work and being involved in both project planning and imple-

mentation. Service learning changes the paradigm of how we view youth in the community from a cause of problems to a source of solutions.

Forms of Youth Participation

Many existing or emergent methods of participation are available from focus groups to town meetings to public hearings to protest demonstrations to community surveys. This report will explore three forms of youth participation: youth in community planning, youth-based initiatives for social change, and youth in policy making.

Youth participation in community planning occurs when young people have a role in the planning process. Young people may be sought as consultants to identify problems. They may participate in research to identify causes and resources for solving problems. They may recruit and mobilize other youth to create more inclusivity in community planning. In this form of participation, young people are ideally involved in formulating goals and action plans, as well as in taking and evaluating action. Some examples of youth-based initiatives for social change may also be examples of community planning, but the differences are that, in the former, youth control the agendas, the organizations, and the processes, whereas, in the latter, they do not necessarily have that control. On the other hand, their participation may be more influential if it is connected to power in the community.

Youth-based initiatives for social change are those in which young people define the issues that they work on and control the organizations through which they work and the strategies they use. In this form, youth employ a variety of strategies, including advocacy, social action, popular education, mass mobilization, and community and program development, to achieve their goals for social change.

Youth participation in policy making takes place when young people have direct decision-making authority or advisory roles in making public policy decisions. Young people participate in policy making, for example, when they sit on a county or city committee that selects grant recipients, or when they are voting members of commissions that allocate funds or develop recommendations for a state agency, county commission, or mayor's office. They engage in policy making when they are selected to represent a youth perspective, or, because of their experience or expertise, to provide advice on a board or committee. Youth participation can be very susceptible to tokenism but also has the potential to provide a direct line to government decision making.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF INVOLVING YOUTH

The unprecedented scope of change facing our communities today requires a broadly inclusive decision-making pattern that engages a diversity of stakeholders. The problems, issues, and challenges our society faces are becoming more global and complex. To nurture an effective public voice, we need to encourage and motivate people to exercise real citizenship, which means taking responsibility for the common good and working together to define shared, win-win solutions for common problems that challenge community life.

One way to broaden the base of public participation and to develop competent and active citizenry is through the involvement of young people in processes that shape their future and improve the quality of their community. By expanding the opportunities for participation in government, we reach beyond traditional practices and help to develop a climate in which stakeholders are ready to make the tough choices. By creating greater awareness of the challenge of change that continually confronts communi-

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ties, in guises such as welfare reform, we can help to energize citizens to create a common vision and strategy for achieving community well-being in its broadest sense.

Young people need the experience of genuine participation and knowledge of the responsibilities of real citizenship to become effective decision makers. Involving citizens in the process of determining a direction for the future of their community helps establish a collective vision and a sense of community. It encourages them personally to invest in their city's or neighborhood's future. A community planning process can serve as a springboard to actualize democratic citizenship.

Planners have been trained to view the city in specific ways; though valuable, these perceptions tend to narrow our field of vision. If we are to develop a new vision of the city—one that strengthens community and the family—we must begin to see the city in new ways, ways that a child, a teenager, or a parent may see it. (*The Playful City Conference Workbook* (Driskell et al. 1990), for example, proposes draft policies, guidelines, and ideas for creating urban environments that meet the needs of children, youth, and families.)

Actively involving children and youth in real community projects rather than in classroom simulations provides learning experiences that enhance the capacity of students to forge solutions to real world problems. Such experiences are essential to educating youth for social responsibility. By using the community as a classroom, young people have an opportunity to make sense of a complex world, to become competent decision makers capable of accessing and processing information, and to make informed choices that will affect their lives and the future of their communities.

The theory of America's democratic process is that ordinary citizens can resolve the pressing public issues and answer the social questions of the day. Civic competence is a prerequisite for assuming what Jefferson termed "the office of citizen." Meaningful learning through real life applications develops practical knowledge. Engaging children and youth in experiential learning enhances their sense of community, place, and belonging, as well as enhancing their lives. They learn that they have something to contribute and that they have the opportunity to participate in making a qualitative difference in shaping the places where they live. When the community becomes the curriculum, young people learn to make the connections between academic subjects and abstract concepts.

Developmental Capacity

Our nation's increasing diversity poses a significant challenge. Young people's capacity to participate is influenced by many variables, such as cultural traditions, social class, and informal teachings assimilated from the environment and daily experience. Many children and youth of color, those from low-income households, or speakers of languages other than English often feel alienated, forgotten, and marginalized. Traditional standardized school tests and assessment practices ignore the different competencies, learning styles, and variety of settings in which young people exercise these capacities.

Empirical research and experiences validate beliefs that students of any particular age group will differ in the way they learn. Most researchers believe that learning styles are a function of nature (inborn or innate predisposition) and nurture (early socialization that occurs in the family and cultural environment). Furthermore, a consistent finding in both observational and data-based research on cultures demonstrates that, within a given group, there are as many variations among individuals as there are commonalities. In other words, there is great diversity within a culture. Each child brings his or her unique competencies when he or

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she interacts with others. As Gardner (1984) states, "We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems that we face in the world." Gardner further suggests that these intelligences are catalyzed by participation in a culturally valued activity and follow a developmental pattern specific to each individual's growth; that is, each intelligence develops at different rates given the appropriate encouragement.

Developmental psychology informs us that there are differences in a child's capacity to participate, in part, due to contextual factors, such as culture, environment, social class, and even gender, that may influence their perceptions and understanding. For example, according to Multiple Intelligences theory, an intelligence must be valued by a culture to be considered a true intelligence. Every culture has and uses all seven intelligences. Specific cultures may place greater emphasis upon one intelligence, such as musical intelligence in an oral culture, as more valuable than any of the other six intelligences.

The implication of this perspective on youth participation is to recognize that there is no universal set of stages in a child's development, but rather a continuum of evolving competencies functioning in ways unique to each person. This points out the need to develop a broad range of techniques (i.e., multiple approaches) to enable all young people to participate in a project that will span the various domains of intelligence as well as individual differences and disabilities. Diversity and inclusiveness are key strategies in designing opportunities for interaction and participation. Diversity has value and adds value as young people (or adults for that matter) with different competencies, experiences, beliefs, and knowledge brought together in constructive ways can bring their various perspectives to innovate solutions imagining a shared future and a commitment to the common good.

Planners, community decision makers, and community advocacy groups are strategically placed to offer authentic projects grounded in the rich learning opportunities of the everyday world. Through hands-on, action-based activities that connect children and youth with their immediate surroundings, planners can provide meaningful planning initiatives that can develop the capacity of young people for community planning and that can increase their level of social responsibility. Civic responsibility is acquired through practice and involvement. By using their varied talents and perceptions as a social resource, planners can promote in young people a heightened self-esteem and social commitment from an early age.

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Adultism

Dorothy Stoneman (1988) defines adultism this way:

> Adultism refers to the attitudes and attendant behaviors that result when adults presume they are better than young people and that young people, because they lack life experience, are, therefore, inferior to adults. Children are taught, disciplined, guided, punished, and controlled without their agreement, as part of preparing them for entering the adult world. Often, adults were treated this way themselves as youth, and the process has been internalized. Adult statements that reflect this way of thinking include: "When are you going to grow up?" "What do you know? You haven't experienced anything!" "It's only a stage. You'll outgrow it." "You're so smart for 15!" As a result young people are talked down to and not seen as contributing individuals with valuable opinions and ideas who are capable of making responsible decisions. Many become passive recipients of information rather than people who assert themselves to voice their particular concerns and viewpoints.

Adult Self-Assessment of Attitudes toward Youth

One way to assess your perspective towards young people to gauge your ability to work effectively with youth is to take the following test:

1. How would you assess your present level of working with young people?
   (Circle your answer.)

   Do you respect their ideas?   Yes   No

   Do you give them encouragement?   Yes   No

   Do you provide resources for their activities?   Yes   No

   Do you listen carefully to what they have to say?   Yes   No

   Do you promote their active participation?   Yes   No

   Do you encourage critical thinking and reflection?   Yes   No

   Do you build mutual support?   Yes   No

   Do you empower them to make decisions?   Yes   No

2. Place a check mark next to the answers that tell you that you need to change if you truly want to involve youth.

3. Underline those questions that mention issues that you could start working on today.

Source: Adapted from Checkoway, "Adults as Allies."

In the view of one youth:

> Mainstream cultural influences have conditioned us (in reference to the general public) to devalue youth. The younger generation themselves fall prey to this train of thought. Take for instance the saying voiced by a great deal of them: "I want to be somebody when I grow up." As if they weren't currently somebody. All too often, youth have no sense of self-worth. It's this lack of self-worth which leads them to devote their time and efforts to negative activities.

Some of the obstacles to involving youth in community change are listed here.

- Adults view youth as problems and not as resources.
- Adults plan programs or projects without involving youth in the process.
- Adults do not share their power with young people.
- Young people do not view themselves as a group that can create change.
- Young people may have good ideas but are unsure about how to implement them.

An easy way to identify whether your behavior is adultist is to consider your responses to the following questions: Would you treat an adult the same way you are treating a young person? Would you talk to an adult

in the same tone of voice that you use with a young person? Would you have similar expectations of a young person and an adult? Adults have pivotal roles in supporting youth to develop their leadership capacity as full participants in creating community change. If we are to be successful at working with young people, we must scrutinize the way we interact and communicate with them. Adults must respect the ideas, concerns, and abilities of young people. As in any facilitation process, adults must provide essential information as may be needed to make informed decisions, and then stand back and let the youth do the work and make their own decisions. Encourage the ideas and contributions from these youthful decision makers, take them seriously, compliment them, and create an atmosphere conducive to open discussion.

Planners, especially, can help young people acquire the core skills needed for participation and civic action: solving problems, assessing community conditions, gathering information, manipulating data, analyzing critically, setting priorities, thinking creatively and reflectively, developing and presenting action plans, and making decisions to implement programs. The overriding goal is to help young people be competent participants as well as community leaders.

A TYPOLOGY FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Arnstein's seminal ladder of participation (1969) describes a typology for the range of different kinds of adult involvement in institutional program decision making. (See Figure 1.) Each of the eight rungs of the citizen

Figure 1. Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation
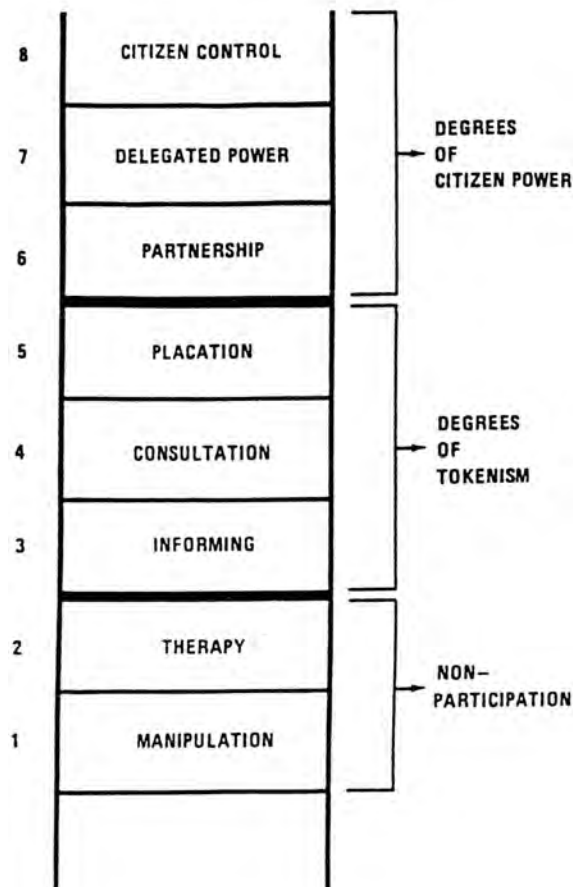
participation ladder corresponds to a differing degree of citizen power in determining outcomes:

Roger A. Hart has applied the ladder metaphor, using new categories to best illustrate the levels of young people's participation when working on projects with adults. (See Figure 2.) The beginning typology provides a framework for examining how adults can support the involvement of children and youth in community planning projects. The information can be used as a basis for designing a program that maximizes opportunities for young people to participate at the highest level of their abilities.

According to Hart, the first three rungs of the ladder (manipulation, decoration, and tokenism) are unacceptable because they fail to maximize participation and are designed and controlled by adults, with children and youth playing predetermined roles. Manipulation occurs when young people's involvement is consciously used by adults to com-

Figure 2. Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation
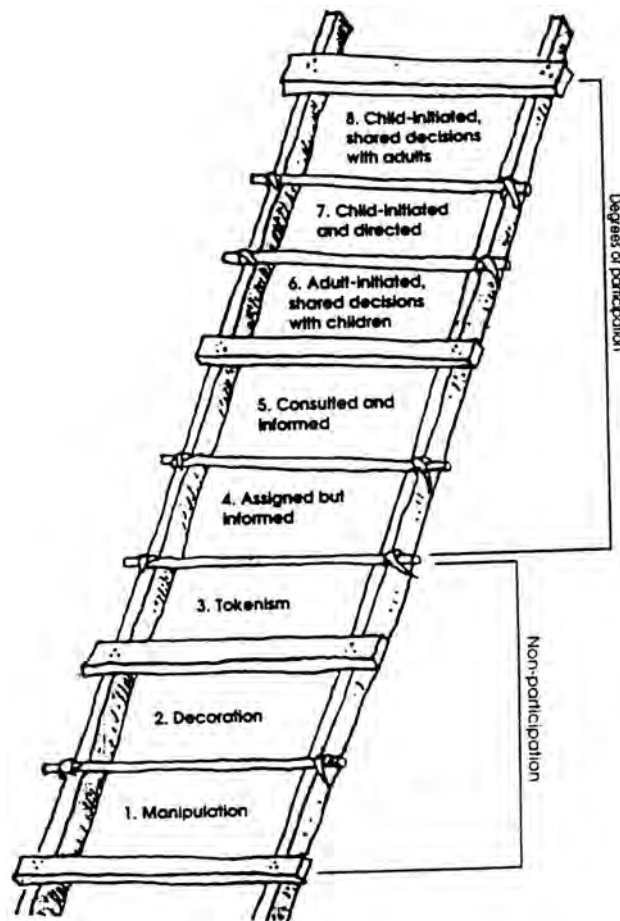
municate the adults' messages. Decoration occurs when adults simply use children to promote or support a cause without any pretense that the children understand the issue themselves or are involved in organizing the activity. Tokenism, a much more common form of involving young people, deals with symbolic representation rather than a genuine voice and effective participation.

In the higher rungs of the ladder of participation, Hart's underlying principle is choice: young people may not want to participate at the highest possible levels. However, participation programs should be designed to

maximize the opportunity for the child to participate at the highest level of his or her ability.

The "assigned but informed" rung of the ladder is the first step towards substantial participation. Although children may not have initiated the project themselves, they have an understanding and a sense of ownership that may arise from critically reflecting on the issue. The "consulted and informed" rung includes projects designed and run by adults who consult with children who understand the process and are able to form opinions that adults then consider seriously. The sixth rung takes adult-initiated projects another step by sharing the decision making with young people who should be involved in the entire process. Hart points out the general tendency to involve children only in the conceptual design phase and not in the development of the technical details, steps that are generally performed by professionals, such as planners, engineers, and architects. It is at this point that young people should be part of the discussion to learn how and why compromises are made so they can obtain a more realistic experience of a real-life, decision-making process.

The highest rungs on the ladder are "child-initiated/child-directed" and "child-initiated/shared decisions with adults." They require a level of competency and self-confidence from both young people and adults. The first category requires committed youth with a level of maturity and an ability to cooperate with their peers. The second category, or the eighth rung, involves the element of trust in which young people are able to include adults without feeling subjected to adult control. This demonstrates a realization by the youth that collaborating with adults may further the success of their project.

Hart's ladder of participation attempts to explain a complex subject in a manner that is simple to use and understand. It provides an overall frame of reference to guide the development of participation projects to ensure that genuine involvement actually occurs. Although the aim is to encourage the highest rungs of participation in involving children and youth in community planning endeavors, the actual level of participation may fluctuate among the upper rungs, depending on the capability and interest of the young person in a specific project. In his informative and practical book, *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*, Hart emphasizes the authentic participation of children in developing democracy and sustainable communities. He presents organizing principles, successful models, practical techniques, and resources for involving young people in environmental (meaning environment in the broadest sense) projects.

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P a r t 2

Involving Youth in Community Land-Use Planning

Public participation in community land-use planning is perceived, all too often, as limited to a select group of adults or established influential interest groups, generally those with an economic interest. Ordinary citizens, for the most part, feel left out of the system, taking a back seat in the decision-making process. Young people are, in most cases, an underrepresented, powerless, minority group lacking legitimacy in the community planning process.

As the challenges confronting our communities today are legion, the ability of communities to collaborate successfully in shared planning for the future and shared problem solving demands inclusiveness in the way we do business affecting public issues and community concerns. Coming together to participate in the effort to solve problems is essential. Some communities are breaking the traditional mold, finding new ways to tap into the wellspring of civic vitality with initiatives that strive for inclusion. This requires a change in consciousness and a willingness to remove the barriers that inhibit our ability to respond readily to change, a desired quality characteristic of the young.

What follows are several outstanding examples of communities giving children and youth, a previously underused resource, a voice in shaping their community's future by involving them in the land-use planning process. These *democratic experiments* serve as templates for bringing a new stakeholder group into the participation process. "Democracy," states Frances Moore Lappe' and Paul Martin Du Bois in *The Quickening of America*, "is not just about changing the rules; it's also about changing the culture--our attitudes, values, and expectations." These models reflect Hart's upper levels (fourth to the sixth rungs) of the ladder of participation. Although adult-initiated, the projects tend to offer genuine participatory experiences in which young people take part in the decision-making process.

TORONTO

In 1990, the City of Toronto involved nearly 8,000 young people in the preparation of a new official plan for the central area. This program, known as Kidsviews or Youthviews, depending on the age group participating, formed a key component of the public participation process of Cityplan '91. The young planners participated in six planning-related activities designed for grades 1 to 13, as well as for Toronto's homeless young people. These activities included:

- a student conference on urban issues;

- a two-day workshop, in which teams built a new city neighborhood using Lego blocks;

- a survey to identify places, buildings, and neighborhoods they liked;
- an exhibition of more than 200 paintings, models, plans, essays, murals, and poems;
- a role-playing, development game in which students prepared a redevelopment proposal for waterfront lands; and
- an in-class assignment in which students prepared their own official plans.

Initiated by the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department, the program was developed in conjunction with the Toronto Board of Education, the Metropolitan Separate School Board, Youthlink-Inner City, a street-based counseling agency, and Beat the Street, a charitable organization that promotes literacy. Participation came from some 100 city schools, as well as from more than 100 street kids. The Toronto Board of Education helped implement the program by involving teachers from across the city in the planning and development of classroom curriculum for the individual activities. A promotional campaign targeted to every school formed the basis for soliciting student involvement. A broad range of local boards of education, city departments, and community agencies facilitated this initiative.

The result of Kidsviews and Youthviews was a report to guide planners in the preparation of the new official plan and the establishment of a Young People's Advisory Board to guide the city council and city staff on matters that affect and interest Toronto's youth. Several other proposals that arose from the program involved the development of new core curriculum on municipal government based on the Kidsviews experience for Toronto schools.

The quality of the feedback from Toronto's young people confirmed that much could be learned from youth. The Toronto Young People's Advisory Board was established to provide an ongoing forum for young people. Housed in the Healthy City office, the board served as a subcommittee of the city council (prior to the amalgamation of the city with six other existing municipalities in January 1998) and worked on issues of youth and violence, race relations, and the impact of the unified new City of Toronto on children and youth. (See Part 4 of this report, Youth in Policy Making, for more about Toronto's Young People's Advisory Board.)

SALT LAKE CITY

Project 2000, a citizens' group in Salt Lake City, took a similar approach to Toronto's and developed the Kidspeak program to involve Utah's young people. Kidspeak was initiated in 1987 to help students identify issues and local problems that have an impact on them and on their community. When Project 2000 began initiating dialogue on the future of the state, the group realized the importance of giving a voice to the children, who were future community leaders and decision makers. They believed that, through education and increased awareness, young people could be equipped with the skills needed to face the challenges of the future. Kidspeak gives a voice to young people by involving them in projects that make their communities better places to live.

The curriculum, as implemented through Salt Lake City's public schools, is designed to present issues that will affect the future quality of life in the state of Utah. The emphasis is placed on students solving local problems and seeing the impact of local problems on the nation and the world. The problem-solving and planning process engages students to think critically and to learn the importance of being involved in their community. The outcome is to help students make a positive contribution in their community, neighborhood, or school, and thereby develop a sense of ownership and pride in the future of their community. Students learn language arts skills through honing community problem-solving tools, such as writing letters to public officials or newspapers, interviewing, conducting surveys, fund raising, creating news releases, writing grant proposals, initiating petitions, lobbying, writing resolutions, initiating ordinances, delivering speeches, campaigning, and registering voters. These activities teach students all the basic skills of democratic citizenship while connecting the application of those skills to real world issues.

LOVELAND, COLORADO

In Loveland, Colorado, a community of about 38,000 people 50 minutes north of Denver, a planning effort called Agenda for the 90's and Beyond was initiated in 1990 to involve the entire community in long-range planning efforts. A hybrid planning tool, the Town Image Framework Plan, blends the work of Sir Raymond Unwin in 1902 and Kevin Lynch's *Image of the City*. The Town Image Map, developed as part of the plan, replaces the traditional comprehensive plan land-use map as the map that forms the policy-level, physical planning core for Loveland. The Town Image Map identifies existing and future paths, edges, nodes, districts, and landmarks of communitywide significance that are vital to preserving and enhancing Loveland's economic, social, and environmental character or qualities.

The city planning division, as lead agency, managed and coordinated the project, and the city's citizens set the agenda and made decisions related to the project. The citizen involvement process, designed by the Agenda for the 90's and Beyond steering committee, comprised an average of 25 citizens (the exact number of members varied because membership was always open to anyone who wanted to join).

THE KIDSPEAK CURRICULUM

The curriculum that was used as a basis for Kidspeak is available as a publication. The Kid's Guide to Social action: How to Solve the Social Problems You Choose—and Turn Creative Thinking into Positive Action (revised, expanded, updated edition) by Barbara A. Lewis can be purchased from:

Free Spirit Publishing
400 First Avenue, North
Suite 616
Minneapolis, MN 55401–1724
800–735–5050 (fax)
www.freespirit.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Loveland's Agenda for the 90's and beyond is managed by:

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500 E. Third Street
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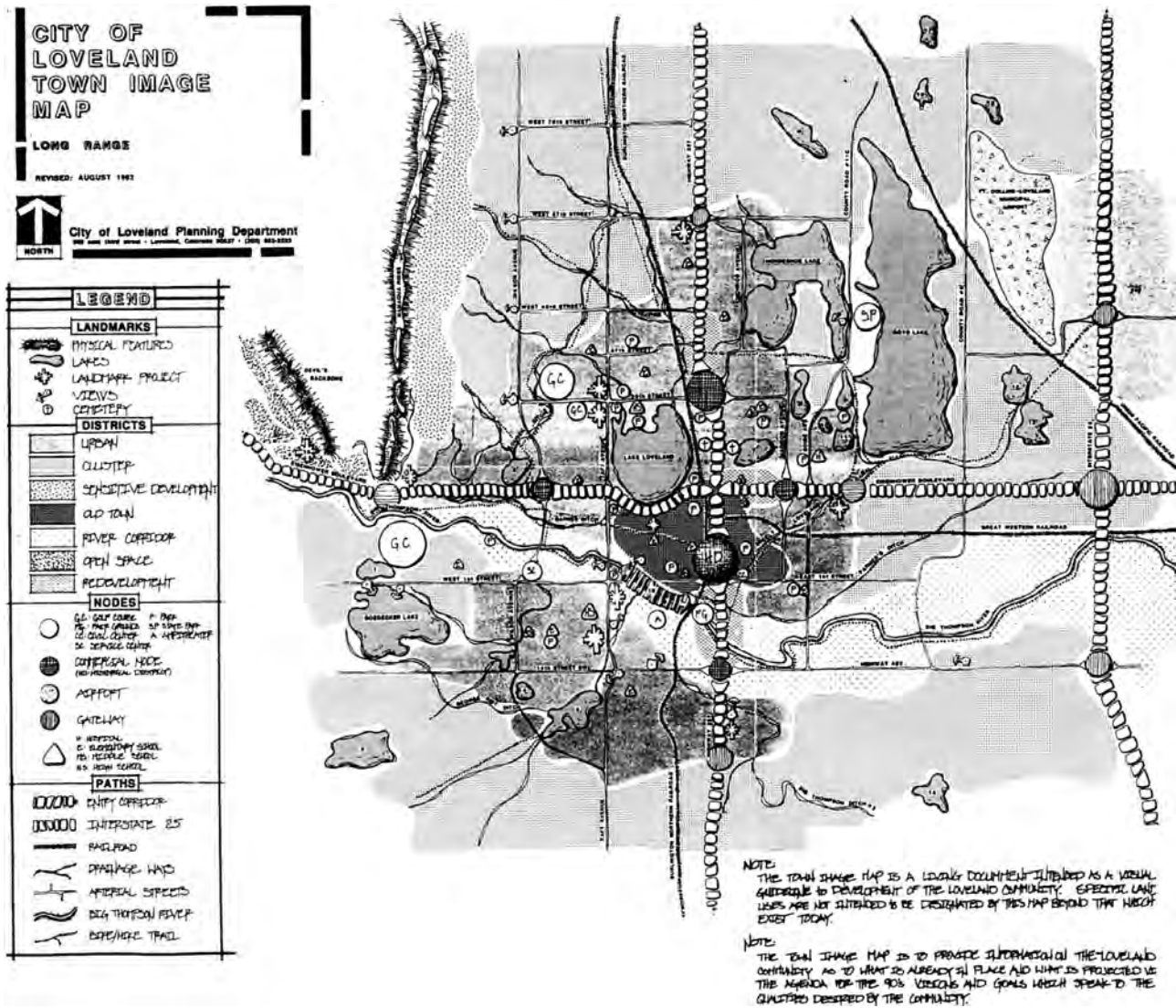
Leaders of the agenda project recognized very early on that young people were an integral part of the planning process. A student was appointed to the steering committee and to a task force formed to involve students. Through the efforts of the task force, the students of every high school in town were surveyed concerning their thoughts about Loveland's future. A steering committee member spoke to students about the project and the importance of their input.

But involvement was not limited only to high school students. Third graders study Loveland as part of their regular curriculum for that school year. Consequently, several hands-on activities were developed to get them involved. The first was a cognitive mapping exercise to see what students identified as important in their community. (Cognitive maps are the mental maps or "pictures" of physical elements or features of a place that people remember as signifying their experience of that space. They reflect spatial intelligence.) The information collected through these maps was placed in a computer database along with more than 400 cognitive maps to develop the Town Image Map and the associated vision and goals. Next, students at the four elementary schools in town were divided into small groups to design collages of what they wanted and what they did not want for Loveland's future. Each group was given poster board to illustrate either

"what they would want for Loveland" or "what they would not want" for Loveland's future. The only rule was that everyone had to agree before something could go on the poster board. The results were presented to the entire class along with a discussion of their general hopes and fears. Barbara Miller, the principal from an elementary school, commented:

> The picture collages completed by the children displayed some recurring and powerful messages. Their "hopes" included more attention to the environment, clean water/air/land, open spaces and protecting wildlife. The family, through pictures of caring and happy people, was also evident in their work. Their "fears" were shown through pictures of wars, violence, and crime as well as concerns related to drugs, smoking, and alcohol. The issues expressed by adults were remarkably mirrored by the children.

A ninth-grade civics class developed a weekly call-in talk show for teens to discuss community issues important to them. This presented an opportunity for the agenda project to learn more about what young people considered the important issues and to give them a voice. As one student commented, "You know, it is great to get the chance to really talk about things."

LEMON GROVE, CALIFORNIA

In preparing a recent update of its comprehensive General Plan, the City of Lemon Grove, California, launched the Lemon Grove Kids City Planning Program. The purposes of the program were to:

- obtain input on a children's vision of the future of Lemon Grove and identify the community issues that are most important to local children;
- educate children about city planning;
- promote interest in planning as a career; and
- promote interest in community involvement.

Because of limited resources and time constraints, the city's planning consultant focused on a fifth grade class. Three classroom sessions were conducted in consecutive weeks. The culminating event was a presentation of the students' ideas to the group of citizens and elected officials charged with the General Plan update.

The first session introduced the concepts of city planning. The students then constructed a variety of building types. The second session started with a conversation on the types of land-use categories found in cities. The students then constructed a model of their ideal city. In the final session, students were able to discuss what they liked most and least about their city. They then divided into groups with adult facilitators to discuss in more specific detail their ideas on topic areas, such as housing and neighborhoods, public buildings, stores and commercial areas, office and factories, and transportation.

Homework assignments between sessions required the children to explore the city with their mothers and fathers and to take a closer look at what Lemon Grove had to offer residents. They also were asked to pay attention to where buildings were located. The kids were assigned to ask their parents what their likes and dislikes were about the city and how they would change things. These activities simultaneously involved their parents in the General Plan update, thus multiplying the impact of involving the kids in the comprehensive planning effort. In addition to constructing the miniature city, the fifth graders wrote short essays about what it is like living in Lemon Grove.

Some of the creative ideas that the kids presented included a trolley station as a downtown hub, with a mall providing a convenient child care center for commuters, a history center, and theaters for films, operas, and rock concerts. Other suggestions included more security on the trolley, safe local bus service for children and seniors, nonpolluting factories, and a crime-free community. A document, the *Kids Element*, was produced that summarized the characteristics of the ideal city and the children's directives for the future of Lemon Grove. The students presented the *Kids Element* to the citizens committee and city council responsible for updating the General Plan.

Many of the children's ideas are reflected in the adopted Lemon Grove General Plan document. In several parts of the updated General Plan, the children's ideas, as expressed in the *Kids Element,* are the same as policies adopted by the community. Important similarities in both plans include statements that:

- focus on the need to upgrade and improve public facilities;

- locate housing close to shopping and activities such as parks, theatres, and schools;

- improve transportation and mobility in the Lemon Grove by emphasizing a system oriented to pedestrians; and

- create safer, cleaner neighborhoods.

Looking at the results of the Kids City Planning Program in retrospect, the City's General Plan consultant shares:

> . . .we can create much better plans for all the community if we first address how we are going to plan our cities for children and seniors. Think about how easy that city will be to get around.

In addition to constructing the miniature city, the fifth graders wrote short essays about what is was like living in Lemon Grove. According to the teacher:

> This has been a great experience for the kids. It's been a number of lessons in language arts, math, and social studies incorporated together. But most important of all, it's taught the kids to have a sense of involvement and pride in their community. After all, they are our caretakers of the future of Lemon Grove.

HONOLULU

The City of Honolulu Department of Planning, in its efforts to update the development plan that will guide the growth of urban Honolulu to the year 2020, incorporated a family-centered perspective in its focus group process. Schools are a major resource in Honolulu for providing information and support to families. With middle schools and high schools serving as the vehicles for involvement, kids, parents, and school staff were invited to share their ideas and visions for their neighborhoods' and community's future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Honolulu's efforts to involve youth in the update of the city's development plan are headed by:

Bob Stanfield
Department of Planning
   and Permiting
City and County of Honolulu
650 S. King Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-527-6094
808-527-4950 (fax)

Sessions were held at both public and private middle/intermediate schools and high schools. Each school was allowed to choose how the sessions would be organized; namely, the session could be attended by all students, or by students with parents and school staff, or by parents and school staff only. Some teachers and students felt that open discussion would be inhibited if parents and teachers shared the session with youth. Sometimes, parents were not able to participate due to scheduling conflicts.

More than half of O'ahu's population resides in a 90-square-mile area of "urban Honolulu" that, for planning purposes, is known as the Primary Urban Center (PUC). The PUC serves many capacities. It is the state capital, county seat, and headquarters for virtually all major commercial, industrial, educational, cultural, and transportation activities in the State of Hawaii. The PUC includes the major hospitals and medical centers, a major port, and an airport. The state's economic engine and major destination, Waikiki, is also located here. In 1995, the school-based groups of students, parents, and school staff in 10 middle and high schools in the PUC were asked a series of facilitated questions to share their views on how Honolulu should develop over the next 25 years. The questions included:

1. What is your vision of what urban Honolulu should be in the next 25 years?

2. Which areas, places, buildings, and resources (both man-made and natural) do you think should be preserved?

3. Which areas within urban Honolulu should be developed? Where should growth occur?

4. Where do you think growth should not occur?

5. In the year 2020, what should our neighborhoods look like and how should they function?

Transportation, open space, affordable housing, recreational opportunities for children and youth, jobs and economic development, preserving cultural and historic landmarks and view planes, services for the aging population, and quality of life were key issues and concerns expressed by all ages.

The input from each school-based group was presented to the City and County of Honolulu Planning Department. All participants were invited to a series of public workshops and meetings to review existing conditions and trends, to identify and evaluate alternatives, and to help the department develop a recommended plan vision and policies. Along with the feedback of other stakeholders, these recommendations helped the department to focus its research efforts and policy development, and to set its priorities to respond to the collective vision. It was the first time that students and family viewpoints were explicitly solicited, meaning that a new constituency was participating in the planning process. A policy evaluation report summarizing all of the workshop material was published in February 1999. A final plan will be completed sometime in the near future.

SEATTLE

In 1991, three Seattle Youth Summits were organized by Seattle KidsPlace, "a kids' lobby for an effective Seattle." Youth participation in the summits was sponsored by the Boeing Corporation; more than 500 young people from Seattle schools attended the summits. Summit participants expressed frustration at the one-shot appeal for their input. They did not want to just have their say and let adults do the rest; they wanted follow through and help to do it themselves. In Feburary 1992, The Seattle Youth Involvement

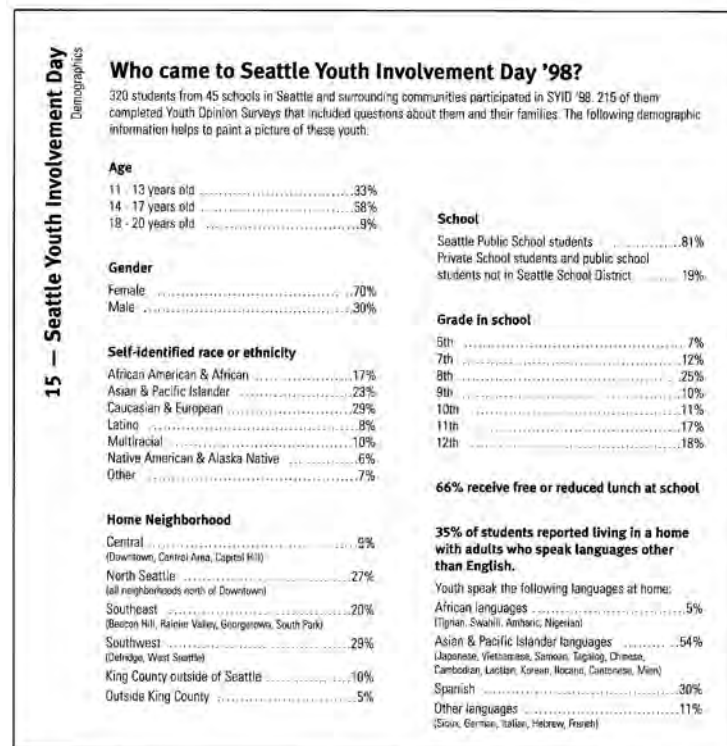Day, which involved more than 700 participants, catalyzed the development of a youth force to involve young people in a more meaningful way in their community. In 1992, a youth advocacy group, the Seattle Youth Involvement Network (SYIN), became a reality. The purpose of SYIN is to provide young people in elementary, middle, and high schools a forum for discussing education, neighborhoods, and the future of the city.

Supported, in part, by then Mayor Norman Rice and The Boeing Company, SYIN has grown to become a private, nonprofit community organization. Its mission is "advocating with youth to initiate positive change in the community through volunteer service and the political process." Its goals include catalyzing opportunities for youth involvement in service and leadership and supporting youth-initiated projects. It offers training and technical assistance to young people and young professionals, serves as a clearinghouse for information on current youth programs and volunteer opportunities, builds coalitions, and raises public consciousness about the positive contributions made by young people such as via the Seattle Youth Involvement Awards. SYIN surveys youth annually and creates focus groups on a variety of issues relevant to the well-being of young people, such as youth violence, student and gender equity, and employment needs.

SYIN's board of directors, which oversees the work of the agency, is comprised of young people and adults. In addition, a youth-facilitated Youth Leadership Council broadens the participation of young people in SYIN's decision-making processes, planning, recruiting, and project implementation. SYIN has produced several publications, including the *School-to-Work Survey Report*, the *Youth and Business Leaders Forum Report* on youth employment, the *Youth Yellow Pages*, and the *Service Learning Study Guide*.

15 — Seattle Youth Involvement Day Demographics

Who came to Seattle Youth Involvement Day '98?

320 students from 45 schools in Seattle and surrounding communities participated in SYID '98. 215 of them completed Youth Opinion Surveys that included questions about them and their families. The following demographic information helps to paint a picture of these youth.

Age

11 - 13 years old	33%
14 - 17 years old	58%
18 - 20 years old	9%

Gender

Female	70%
Male	30%

Self-identified race or ethnicity

African American & African	17%
Asian & Pacific Islander	23%
Caucasian & European	29%
Latino	8%
Multiracial	10%
Native American & Alaska Native	6%
Other	7%

Home Neighborhood

Central (Downtown, Central Area, Capitol Hill)	9%
North Seattle (all neighborhoods north of Downtown)	27%
Southeast (Beacon Hill, Rainier Valley, Georgetown, South Park)	20%
Southwest (Delridge, West Seattle)	29%
King County outside of Seattle	10%
Outside King County	5%

School

Seattle Public School students	81%
Private School students and public school students not in Seattle School District	19%

Grade in school

6th	7%
7th	12%
8th	25%
9th	10%
10th	11%
11th	17%
12th	18%

66% receive free or reduced lunch at school

35% of students reported living in a home with adults who speak languages other than English.

Youth speak the following languages at home:

African languages (Tigrian, Swahili, Amharic, Nigerian)	5%
Asian & Pacific Islander languages (Japanese, Vietnamese, Samoan, Tagalog, Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian, Korean, Ilocano, Cantonese, Mien)	54%
Spanish	30%
Other languages (Sioux, German, Italian, Hebrew, French)	11%

SYIN has excellent resources to help interested groups build multigenerational teams. For instance, the training manual, *Youth Voice Begins with You*, offers tips, tools, exercises, examples, and activities to nurture and help

sustain youth-adult partnerships in community building. The series of publications, Youth Tip Sheets, covers such topics as action planning, addressing stereotypes, creating youth-adult partnerships, liability issues, and defining roles and responsibilities. *Respect* is an advisory handbook created by SYIN and the Seattle Police Department that provides information on working together to improve communication and addresses issues expressed by police officers and youth in forums and meetings.

The Seattle Youth Involvement Day is now an annual event where an estimated 500 middle and high school students come together with the mayor, city council, the Seattle police, school leaders, and state legislators to discuss solutions to youth concerns and propose changes. Discussions have covered a wide array of topics, including multicultural education, after-school activities, teen health, and school safety.

An example of SYIN's involvement in community planning is the collaboration between SYIN, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and the Seattle Planning Department in 1993 to involve young people in surveying other young people to collect their input on Seattle's comprehensive plan. The plan, Toward a Sustainable Seattle, is a vision for managing the growth of Seattle to 2014. Specifically, the surveying was a seven-week project involving five young people trained in surveying techniques with community resources from the planning department and outside consultants. The five young people prepared the survey model, did the surveying, prepared a final report, and presented that report to city officials. Over the seven weeks of the program, approximately 450 young people of all ages were surveyed and made recommendations for planning, housing and neighborhood quality, parks and recreation, and transportation. Age-appropriate workshops were designed to address each age group's level of understanding. Survey questions included the following.

1. How much should Seattle grow?
2. What is the best way to control urban growth in Seattle?
3. What is the best kind of transit system for Seattle?
4. How can we ensure that services and infrastructure keep pace with growth?
5. What is Seattle's regional responsibility?
6. How can we ensure that the plan reflects citizens' changing values, that it is practical, and that it can be implemented?

Responses to these questions resulted in a report with the young authors' recommendations, which included:

- Provide low-income housing that is well built, maintained, and landscaped
- Provide more affordable apartments near grocery stores and other businesses
- Develop more late night programs with youth input
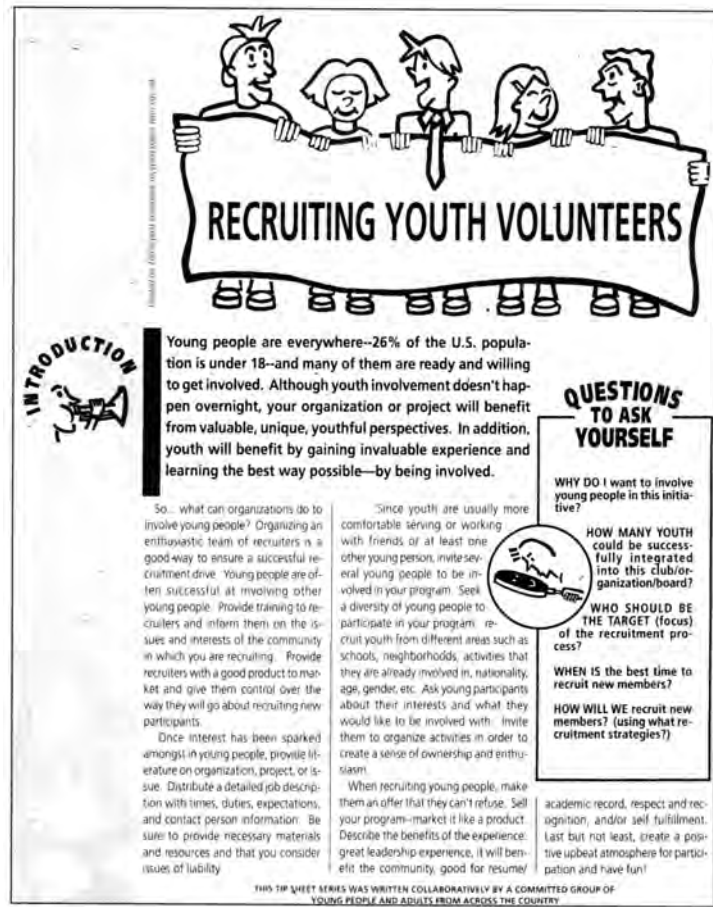
- Keep parks open longer

- Establish teen centers

- Schedule buses more frequently, especially on weekends

- Build more bike lanes, trails, and racks

- Develop a rail system that is affordable for youth, with stations near housing, jobs, and shopping

- Provide vans for community centers to take kids home at night

- Preserve views from neighborhoods

- Encourage multicultural community atmosphere

- Clean up streets

One value shared by youth and their adult counterparts is the desire to preserve the lower-density, single-family character of Seattle's diverse and unique neighborhoods. As the traditional resistance to higher densities remains in some neighborhoods, current planning efforts focus on neighborhood planning and neighborhood self-determination on how growth should occur, and on translating the comprehensive plan's citywide vision and goals into neighborhood terms. According to *Planning* magazine (March 1999), as 1999 began, 37 neighborhood plans were proceeding through the city's review and approval process.

The survey analysis was synthesized into a final report, the Seattle Youth Report, and, in August 1993, was presented to the Department of Construction and Land Use, the City of Seattle, and the Seattle Planning Department. The report was included as part of the public participation component of the comprehensive plan, which was adopted in July 1994.

REFLECTIONS

These community examples demonstrate a range of approaches to involving youth in community land-use planning. In all, except for SYIN, youth involvement was, according to Hart's ladder of participation, adult-initiated, and, for the most part, adult-directed. In the case of SYIN's participation in the comprehensive plan effort, youth who were invited to a mayor's community briefing on the draft plan proposed the need for more visible youth input. Subsequently, a written proposal was presented to the planning department and the SYEP. Youth had an opportunity to collaborate with the planning department and help develop the program, prepare the surveys, keep records, do outreach, plan and facilitate group discussion, and prepare the final report. SYIN achieved a genuine, shared decision making between the adults and youth.

There were also different outcomes from these community participation initiatives. For example, the success of the construct developed by the Toronto Planning and Development Department in collaboration with its partners allowed for a scope, scale, and level of sophistication that ultimately led to a recommendation to formalize youth participation as part of municipal government. Salt Lake City's curriculum resulted in a well-received kid's guide that is featured in many book catalogues around the nation. Loveland teens designed a welcome brochure for visitors to the City of Loveland. Honolulu youth had the opportunity to became part of the planning process that continued for two years. Lemon Grove students can point to a General Plan that reflects their ideas on the physical development of the city.

Adults in every youth participation initiative found their experiences revealing. They were impressed by the ability of young people to grasp the essence of complex issues (no matter what age), the seriousness that they brought to their participation, the inclusiveness in their approach to community development, and a common desire to provide practical solutions. It is this deep human need to be taken seriously, to be a contributing member of the community—meaningful participation—that should motivate planners and public officials to create opportunities for young people to participate in community planning and problem solving , and to value that participation.

P a r t   3

**Youth-Based
Initiatives for Youth
Empowerment and
Community Change in
Seattle, Washington**

Young people want to be respected as individuals and recognized for their achievements, just like adults. They want a role in the decision-making process that affects them. They want the personal satisfaction of helping others and of improving their community. And they are willing to develop the skills and competencies needed to be effective contributors to society and to work toward greater social justice if given the chance.

In this section, we will describe two representative examples of youth initiatives in which young people have accepted responsibility for identifying a variety of social concerns and for devising methods to deal with them. Both initiatives reflect youth empowerment models in which young people initiate, design, and organize projects that respond to the critical needs of their peers and help transform their society. Social change involves youth in causes that expand the rights and opportunities of groups or persons in society who are disadvantaged in any way. These issues may include gay rights, homelessness, prevention of sexual abuse, etc. Youth create projects to change conditions of social inequality in the community and to change the beliefs and practices that maintain them.

In Seattle, a city with a rich tradition of progressive participatory planning and the site of these two initiatives, there are many organizations involving young people confronting such issues as youth homelessness, education reform, gay rights, and other issues that affect the well-being of young people and their communities. The 1996 Seattle Youth Report listed at least 16 youth empowerment agencies. Seattle also provides funding, through its Department of Neighborhoods, for projects initiated and led by youth (ages 12 to 20) to improve the community. Grants of up to $1,000 are provided from a Youth Working in Communities Fund. Applicants for grant money must form, or belong to, groups of five or more young people and cannot be from an adult-led organization; however, every applicant must have an adult sponsor organization. Applications are reviewed by the Youth Review Team, which makes recommendations to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Throughout this section, we have opted to use quotes from the young participants involved in these initiatives. Like the programs themselves, only by hearing literally what these young people have had to say can one get a clearer understanding of how these youth-initiated opportunities help them to grow, achieve, and develop positive attitudes toward themselves as participants in the adult world.

The case studies in this section were conducted in 1996 to 1998 as part of coauthor Yve Susskind's doctoral research on organizations where young people are leaders in social change and community activism. The fine grain detail helps explain how these youth-directed and youth-run groups

cope with the challenges of youth empowerment in an often complicated human process of self-discovery and adulthood; their words offer the most eloquent and direct explanation of their beliefs, motivations, and needs, as well as their desire for a more meaningful life.

THE SEATTLE YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT

The Seattle Young People's Project (SYPP) is a nonprofit youth empowerment organization run by young people. SYPP is dedicated to assisting youth to speak out and take action on the issues that affect their lives. SYPP provides young people with the tools and resources to work toward change in society, their schools, communities, and neighborhoods. A young member of SYPP's board of directors describes the organization's empowerment philosophy:

> The main thing is youth empowerment, which means youth making decisions about things that affect their lives. SYPP is like a loudspeaker and youth have the power just to grab that loudspeaker and express what they want to express and they have all these tools to do what they want with it, like to organize a rally around it, and they have all this money that they could use. So, that's the big idea of youth empowerment.

Unlike many other self-described youth empowerment organizations, in which the priority is to provide organizing or leadership training, in SYPP's model, young people begin by organizing. They seek training and guidance from others in the organization, or from outside volunteers, as these are needed, to move forward on their actions. A young person in SYPP explains that youth are people who are ready to act and who become empowered by taking action:

> It's such a crazy idea anyway, like someone has to give you power for some reason. That is not where power comes from. Power comes from doing something. That's where you get power, and the space that there is for you to accomplish things, that's the power, that's where power comes from. No one can give you it and teach it to you.

As this young person explains, the work of SYPP begins with, and revolves around, activism, not training:

> It's a really action-based organization rather than a theory. It's not like you're a youth. It's like you're a person organizing something that you care about. Core [SYPP activists] wouldn't be like "I'm involved with SYPP because it's youth empowerment." They'd be like, "I'm involved in SYPP because I care about rights for queer youth," or things like that. SYPP makes it possible for youth to do what they see fit because so many times, just because you are youth, people don't think that you are going to have a developed opinion or a developed voice. And we do.

Also contrary to some other examples of youth involvement, SYPP is not a clearinghouse of youth who are asked to represent all youth on an issue. However, one result of SYPP's accomplishments is that, because the organization is known in the community, it gets calls as if it were. Some SYPP participants do not see this as a positive role for the organization; they see it as tokenism—getting one youth to represent all youth. This young person explains:

> We have had enough rallies, we've wrote enough letters, we've done enough things that we are being noticed by people. Now they're coming to us. It's funny, like a little joke around here that we're like Kids R Us. It's interesting. People are like, "I need a black male who's 16," or whatever. And it's not such a good thing.

Origins

SYPP began in 1991 when a young man from Boston, Flip Rosenberry, arrived in Seattle with family money to start a youth organization. He realized that organizations run by youth basically did not exist. "So," as a youth board member explained the history, "interestingly enough, SYPP was started and organized by an adult."

> What he did was he went to high schools, he stood outside the doors and got people to sign up that were interested. Told them a little about the idea of youth running an organization. This was how he brought it into existence, by just communication. Then the youth came together, they had meetings together, figuring out the way things were.

At the beginning, the bylaws of this nonprofit organization stated that the president of the board would be an adult. Later, those bylaws were changed so that all offices, except the treasurer, are to be held by people under age 19. SYPP has evolved in many other ways since 1991.

> A lot has been worked through. Nineteen ninety-one wasn't that long ago, especially for an organization. We're building, everyday we're growing a lot and learning a lot. The initiatives got started. Different people were interested in different things so they started Project Street Life [an initiative to fight for the rights of Seattle's homeless youth], and the Anti-Violence/Anti-Curfew initiative was also one of the original initiatives. Then it sort of grew and grew and kept on rolling. When Flip moved, an executive director and youth advisor were hired. It's grown and we moved from the Eastlake office to here [office in Seattle's Central District], and Flip is gone.

> At the beginning, the bylaws of this nonprofit organization stated that the president of the board would be an adult. Later, those bylaws were changed so that all offices, except the treasurer, are to be held by people under age 19.

Organizational Structure

The following description is taken from a 1996 SYPP document.

> SYPP is composed of youth-led projects, called initiatives, that allow young people to create concrete changes in the conditions that affect them. Our 520 youth members, all under 19, are given the right to vote on proposed projects that other young people introduce. Once a project passes a vote of SYPP's membership, it becomes an officially sponsored initiative of our organization. At SYPP we believe that all young people have ideas and opinions that deserve to be taken seriously. Our democratic initiative process guarantees that any young person can take leadership and make their voice heard.

An initiative is made up of a core group of between 5 to 20 volunteer young activists drawn from the larger SYPP membership, recruited through friendship networks or at SYPP events and actions. Each initiative is led by a paid intern who works about 16 hours per week. Core groups meet about once a week. SYPP's budget can support seven initiative interns. It also provides funding for interns for recruitment and fund raising.

Young people become members of SYPP simply by signing up. Membership forms are made available at rallies, events organized by a SYPP initiative, such as a conference or workshop, or at an event hosted by another organization at which SYPP has a table. Members are also recruited at SYPP's big annual fund-raising events, including a bowl-a-thon and an auction. When young people sign up as members, they indicate which initiatives interest them. The recruitment intern is then responsible for calling new members and hooking them up with core groups. Many members do not join core groups. All members are notified of SYPP events, and many who are not active in core groups come to those events.

Figure 3. Seattle Young People's Project Organizational Chart
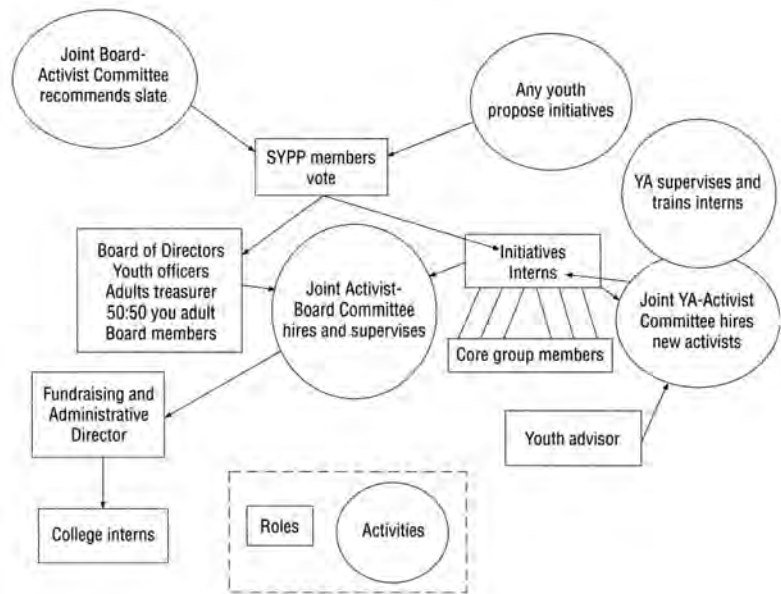
   In addition to the youth interns, SYPP has two adult staff, a college intern, and, on occasion, a work-study student. The adult staff include the fund-raising and administrative director (called the F and A, formerly the executive director position) and the youth advisor (YA). The F and A's job description contains the following specific duties.

- Staff board events, functions, and committees

- Assist the board in setting and implementing annual fund-raising plans and other board responsibilities

- Identify funders and write grants

- Coordinate direct mail and other donor campaigns

- Train and involve youth in fundraising

- Oversee and hire (with youth input) adult volunteers, college interns, work-study students, or interns who assist with fund-raising and administrative tasks

- Deposit checks, pay bills, and do payroll

- Develop and monitor the budget, and prepare tax returns and other nonprofit reports

- Answer phones and mail out information to callers

- Direct outside organizations and individuals to appropriate youth staff or initiatives

   The YA's job responsibilities include the following:

- Coordinate the hiring of youth interns

- Orient, train, and supervise the interns

- Serve as a resource to interns on organizing, event coordination, and core group facilitation

- Help interns set and revise goals

- Facilitate staff meetings with all interns

- Oversee and work with interns to provide youth outreach, recruitment, and member training

- Monitor initiative budgets

- Act as a liaison between the board and interns

- Ensure that the office is a productive, clean, and professional work space

Adult staff are hired by a hiring committee made up of interns, youth board members, and adult board members. All members of this committee have equal voting power, and the committee's decision is approved by the full board. The bylaws of the organization require that half of the board must be younger than 19. The board supervises the adult staff. In turn, the YA supervises the youth interns, and the administrative director or YA supervises the college intern.

Resources

The tools and resources that SYPP provides for each initiative include space in the office, funding to support an intern, a budget for the initiative's actions, projects, or events, and training and support, when needed. The quality of support and training depends greatly on the needs of the interns and on the skills and style of the YA, as well as on the relationship between the intern and the YA. There is no formal training program.

SYPP is housed in a one-room office in a multiuse commercial building in Seattle's culturally diverse Central District. It is within walking distance of one of Seattle's large high schools and on several major bus routes.

The organization's annual budget is approximately $125,000. About one-third of that comes from government and foundation grants, including city agencies and foundations. Two-thirds of the budget is contributed by individuals through major gifts, SYPP fund-raising events, direct mail, and phone solicitations. There is no membership fee. Initiatives are responsible for raising a quarter of their budgets, and they do this through writing grants, soliciting major gifts, and holding benefit events, such as concerts. Adult friends and contacts of SYPP activists occasionally volunteer to help organize initiative fund-raisers.

Initiatives have different size budgets, depending on the activities they are planning. For example, the initiative called Puget Sound Student Alliance, which organizes an annual two-day conference for about 100 youth, has a larger budget than some of the other initiatives because it pays for lodging, transportation, and food. Interns create the budgets for their initiatives at the beginning of their terms. These budgets are submitted to, and approved by, the YA.

A SYPP initiative organized a discussion on hip-hop music and culture.

Initiatives and Interns

Intern terms are roughly matched to the school calendar; there are three trimesters, fall, winter/spring, and summer. Interns are sometimes rehired

for additional terms, in the same position, for a different initiative, or for one of the administrative internships. Hiring decisions are usually made by a committee including young activists and the YA, but some YAs have made unilateral hiring decisions. Hiring decisions are influenced by, on one hand, the need to bring in new people, talent, and perspectives, and, on the other, the expediency of hiring experienced people within the organization to provide some continuity.

Initiatives are focused on issues identified by youth through membership surveys and meetings and by individuals or groups of youth who propose new initiatives for a vote by the full membership. Members vote through mailed ballots and follow-up phone calls to members who do not return ballots. (Not all members vote; sometimes it is only a small fraction of the entire 500 youth membership who vote.) Once voted in, an initiative receives funding for an intern and activities. Initiatives remain active until they naturally die out for lack of interest. When there are too many initiatives to be funded in a trimester, initiatives take turns operating without an intern.

In February 1996, the initiatives were:

1. Puget Sound Student Alliance (PSSA), focusing on education reform and multicultural education;

2. Anti-Violence/Anti-Curfew (AV/AC), working against both youth violence and restrictions upon youth rights;

3. Queer Youth Rights (QYR), bringing awareness of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth issues to the community and acting to defend their rights;

4. Sexual Harassment/Sexual Assault (SH/SA), advocating for stronger school policies on these problems;

5. Empowered Youth Educating Society (EYES), taking action for youth rights wherever they are threatened; and

6. Urban Agenda (UA), a newsletter by and for young people of color.

Initiative Structure and Process

When initiatives are born, the intern at the time writes up mission, goals, and strategy statements. Initiatives change over time with each new session because incoming interns usually build core groups around their own activities and friends. So, the mission, goals, and strategies of initiatives can change over time. In the past, interns had kept the statements current, rewriting them as necessary to reflect what the core groups were planning to do during the intern's term. However, recently, the YAs have not stressed these written statements, and they are not all up to date.

Initiatives have diverse histories, structures, and strategies. SH/SA and QYR were among the initiatives created by SYPP at its inception. Their strategies have varied, depending on the interest and experience of the intern and core group members and on the training and background provided by the YA. PSSA was also one of the original SYPP initiatives. PSSA focuses on the issue of education reform and multicultural education, but its main purpose is to implement a specific project, an annual education conference for youth. However, in the past, PSSA has also mobilized youth into political action on issues raised at its annual conference. For example, PSSA got student evaluations of teachers implemented at a Seattle high school.

EYES and AV/AC, on the other hand, were initiatives that grew over time but were not part of the initial SYPP efforts. EYES began when a group

Margin notes:

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of youth, some of whom had been active in QYR previously, carried out an independent political action and then came to SYPP with a proposal to become a new initiative. Similarly, AV/AC was formed in response to a pressing issue. Both initiatives address youth issues through various political actions, as described by an SYPP member:

> EYES came about last spring. Norm Maleng, the King County prosecutor, pushed really hard for the Becca Bill, which especially affects homeless youth. It's a parental rights package so that if you stay at shelters, the shelters are obligated to give people the names of who stays there. It gives the police a lot more power. They can put you in a shelter overnight, or if they are called into a situation, they have a lot more power to arrest you and detain you overnight. So, when a group of people who had worked with SYPP previously found out about this, they organized a funeral for youth rights within four days, working at one o'clock in the morning, staying up all night doing this, and there was a great turn-out, and it was in the papers and all that. It was in 1995. So then they formed into a group that kept meeting after that.
>
> AV/AC began as a response to a curfew that was proposed as a means of basically stopping youth violence. It's turned into mainly focusing on antiviolence since the curfew didn't get passed. AV/AC did a community forum, with police and youth, which was really successful. They organized a panel of police speakers and other people in the community. It was mainly youth, but anyone was invited to go. They talked for three hours about police-youth relations, like police harassment, and things like that. It's about confronting them and trying to work out a way that relations could be smoother. They also had a candlelight vigil for all the youth that had been killed by an act of violence. They had a rally before hand at the Seattle Center.

UA existed before its members approached SYPP to ask that it be made an initiative. It was formed when young people realized a need for a forum for youth of color. UA is project-focused:

> Urban Agenda is a newspaper written by and for youth of color in the Seattle area. It started off as its own thing separate from SYPP. They had their own core group and they knew exactly what they wanted to do. They would have meetings, and they just needed someplace to sponsor them. They were separate. But they couldn't really do it on their own because they didn't have the financial support, so it was a perfect partnership. They have their own president, they have their own situation. But they do have meetings here, and people from that initiative have been active in other parts of SYPP.

Core groups select and plan actions in a variety of ways. Some that are ongoing make decisions collectively. In other cases, core groups may fall apart when interns turn over. In these situations, the incoming intern will often decide what that initiative will do that session and then recruit other youth, usually friends, who are interested in helping. In between these extremes are the ongoing core groups in which the intern is really the main decision maker and the rest of the group acts to endorse decisions and to work as volunteers.

Other Roles for Youth and Adults

Young people within SYPP who are not serving as interns volunteer to help carry out SYPP activities, especially fund raising and recruitment. Adults also volunteer for SYPP, providing transportation, accounting, retreat facilitation, distribution of flyers, and printing. In general, adults participate in SYPP at the request of youth. They may be invited to advise, provide

At the Funeral for Youth Rights, young people protested passage of a Washington State "parental rights" bill that makes running away a crime and allows parents to involuntraily commit their teenage children to mental institutions without independent review.

information or training, present at a conference, or make connections to resources or people in power. Because of policies that reserve majority power for youth, adults cannot dominate policy decisions. More importantly, the role of adults in initiatives—where the work of the organization is done—is very restricted. Adults cannot proffer ideas for initiatives and have only occasional, invitational roles as outside resources. A SYPP board member describes the role of adults in SYPP:

> Adults participate in some ways, like at the conference we had a panel with adults who have different roles in education. PSSA is the one that adults have been the most interested in. However, there's not that much room for adults to start running things. They can't really have that much power. They were invited to come and speak. The way that they can help out with SYPP is through three ways, through financial support, through supporting us, like coming to our rallies, and things like that. And then the third is that adults are older, they have been around longer, they do know how to do certain things and have more connections, and because the way this society is set up, they do have more power. There's lots of different connections, like if we need an in with the superintendent, or some other powerful person. And, helping us, like teaching us how to do different things like with computers, or providing their skills, to volunteer their skills.

Youth and adults also volunteer as members of the board of directors. The board of directors is responsible for making policy decisions, participating in fund raising, approving one-time allocations of funds, supervising and evaluating the adult staff, and mediating conflicts and grievances. The board also approves the overall organizational budget, which includes the allocations for initiatives. Interns submit budget requests, which are approved by the YA and then sent to the board as part of the budget. Board directors are elected by the membership in a manner similar to the membership vote on initiatives; a slate of nominees goes to the membership for vote. Decisions are made when proposals are passed by consensus-minus-two (only two nay votes are allowed), and consensus cannot be blocked solely by adults. Board officers include two copresidents, a treasurer, and a secretary. The president and secretary are youth positions, and the treasurer is an adult. The board provides a transitional role for SYPP participants who turn 19 to continue to play leadership roles in the organization.

A former board member describes the relationship between youth and adults on the board:

> Being on the board, I get to work with adults and with youth. Youth empowerment comes into play when you're dealing with adults and seeing how they treat you, and it makes you realize that you're being listened to with respect, and these adults really want to know what I have to say and really want to have my input on things and really just care.

Roles in SYPP are flexible, and the organizational structure is loose, with youth serving in multiple capacities, simultaneously or one after the other. Ad hoc committees frequently form, made up of individuals with multiple roles. For example, interns and core group members brought up problems with race relations in the office at board meetings, and an all SYPP meeting on internal issues was called. Board members, interns, core group members, former adult employees, and community members met and drafted a proposal that was brought to the next board meeting.

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Accomplishments

Core groups have organized rallies and demonstrations to protest unjust legislation and school policies. They use other advocacy strategies, including writing policy alternatives, lobbying, or working with policy makers to get changes instituted. For example, the SH/SA initiative gathered data on incidents in the schools, drafted policy changes based on these data, and then worked with the superintendent and his staff to try to change the district's policies. SYPP activists sometimes have direct roles as policy makers when they sit on councils, such as the school district's Sexual Minority Advocacy Council.

QYR members en route to teaching a workshop at the annual Young Loud and Proud conference in San Francisco.

Some initiatives focus their energies on educating the public on their issues. Some, like UA and QYR, publish newsletters. QYR, PSSA, and EYES give presentations, sit on speaker panels at conferences, and hold workshops for other youth. PSSA, SH/SA, and AV/AC have organized their own conferences and forums to engage youth, and sometimes adults, in dialogue around complex issues such as establishing multicultural curricula in the Seattle schools, young women's empowerment, and police-youth relations. Core groups have also used surveys, flyers, and pamphlets to mobilize political support or opposition on various issues such as advertising in schools and the need to revise sexual harassment policies.

SYPP has created an opportunity for young people to be politically active and to achieve powerful changes in city, school, and county policy and in public awareness. An important outcome of SYPP's existence and work for youth and adults in Seattle is that youth have a place in which they feel comfortable being who they are, having political positions, freely expressing their views, and taking action in a very public way. Not only is this a positive outcome for youth, but, when people in a community are active, the entire community is enhanced. One SYPP activist puts it this way:

> Here's this outlet that you can do something with. That's the thing that's with all the initiatives, it's like here's this outlet that you potentially can have an affect, and that's of great benefit to everyone in Seattle, that this exists and that youth can do something about what they care about.

The community also benefits through the impact that SYPP has on the public's perception of the role of youth in public society and the relationship between youth and adults. SYPP has created an awareness in Seattle that young people are active, politically and socially, on a variety of issues, and that they are a politically powerful voice in the city:

> SYPP puts the idea in people's heads that youth are organizing things. We're not letting the people forget that we are watching, like with police harassment, we are keeping the voice of youth present in all different parts of our lives.
>
> I think this is why we have had enough rallies, we've written enough letters, we've done enough things that now we are being noticed by people. I think this is why SYPP keeps on changing and growing—because we're getting more and more attention. They're coming to us now. There is that awareness that youth are doing something. The superintendent isn't forgetting that youth do care about their curriculum. And different people aren't forgetting that, because we've made ourselves visible.

In the interviews for this case study, SYPP participants focused on the effects that activism has had on politicizing youth giving youth the skills, confidence, and motivation to be politically active—and on the increasing acceptance in Seattle of youth activism. The participants have been less vocal about actual policy and social changes that they have influenced. Here are a few examples. One policy change wrought by SYPP that affects large numbers of young people is the institution of teacher evaluations by students at one of the large high schools in Seattle. One SYPP activist reports hearing classmates say, "When are we going to get the teacher evaluation forms? I can't wait till we get those."
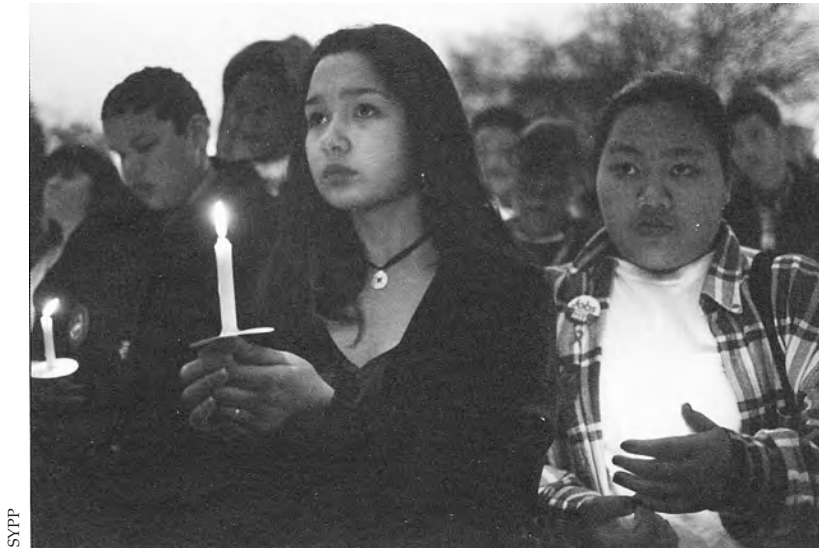
Another change that SYPP participated in was the establishment of gay and lesbian support groups in all Seattle high schools. Members of QYR served on the district advisory group that wrote the recommendation and implemented the decision to initiate these groups. In another area, youth in the SH/SA initiative took their background research and hundreds of petition signatures to the superintendent and began the process of negotiating changes to the Seattle School District's sexual harassment policy. However, that project was suspended when the initiative's co-interns were replaced when their term ended and the new intern decided to start an entirely new project. There has recently been some discussion of reviving the policy negotiations.

SYPP's Anti Violence/Anti Curfew initiative organized A Call II Action, where SYPP members solemnly read the names of the 144 youth who were murdered in King County and Seattle in the 1990's. This picture was taken at the Call's Candlelight vigil.

As with any advocacy organization, gauging the impact of its activities is often difficult. This is the case when, as is the case with most work for social change in any society by people of any age, advocates do not have decision-making authority or direct lines of communication with the decision makers. Despite the difficulty of evaluating the effectiveness of tactics such as letter writing, lobbying, public awareness campaigns, and demonstrations, these social change tools have been part of movements throughout history. SYPP activists use them liberally and may have affected the decisions of public policy makers. For example, EYES was involved in an ultimately successful campaign to end corporate advertising in Seattle schools. PSSA has advocated for multicultural education in Seattle's schools since its inception, and a former PSSA activist was recently hired to write a curriculum for use in the schools. Through its rally of over 250 middle and high school students and other actions, EYES continues to be among the many voices throughout Washington state fighting the Becca Bill and similar parental rights legislation. Through these and other actions—teen forums, meetings with teachers, administrators and politicians, press conferences, letter writing—SYPP activists have been part of several social movements in Seattle and in the state.

How Do Youth Benefit?

As described above, the diversity of the organization (racial, sexual orientation, political and social views, and so on) has created an environment where people have learned to work together across divisions. When asked to describe what she has gotten out of being in SYPP, one person said,

Experience dealing with people that are different. That is a really important outcome. People talking to each other that wouldn't otherwise have the possibility to, or the opportunity to. I went out this one time with a bunch of people that had been involved with PSSA, a really diverse group. You had one person that was just out for the night, let out from juvy, and you had another person with a completely different background, and we watched this video about Berkeley High School. It was about their whole efforts at a multicultural curriculum, and we just kept on having to stop it to have these big discussions, and these are people from completely different backgrounds, that I would never ever have had the chance to talk to going to school. Some of them went to my school and I'd never talked with them. And the PSSA conference was a prompt for some people to talk about that some people were openly gay, and these other people were against gays because of their religion. A big conversation like that by people coming together. And they have to work together, I mean they don't have to like each other, but they have to work together because they're involved with SYPP.

Youth involved in SYPP also said that they have gained remarkable self-confidence in acting in ways that they can see have positive and real consequences.

Interns gain a lot of respect for themselves, a lot of responsibility is put on their shoulders. They gain trust in themselves that they can do this again. The power of seeing something and being like "I created this with the work of a lot of other people." To look at a rally or look at a conference and be like "Look at this, this is from an idea that came from my head."

Members who may not be actively involved in SYPP but may come to some events or actions learn about issues and gain awareness of opportunities for taking action on issues that they care about. They learn that young people are indeed activists in their community. One SYPP participant describes membership as a first step or an introduction to a more active role; members do not gain as much as interns, but they do get an introduction to whet their appetites for future activism.

Members of SYPP get to see that other youth are active. They get to see the options and the opportunities and the power that other youth have in organizing things around what they see is wrong. I think that SYPP is not really designed right now to fully benefit all the members or to draw them all in. It has a greater benefit to the people that are involved in the everyday actions of SYPP. However, I've seen members that have first come to a rally of SYPP say, "God, this is really interesting," then become a core group member, then become an intern, start speaking at rallies. It completely gives people the power to speak and be listened to.

Other participants who are more active, such as interns and core group members, get more out of the experience. In the words of a SYPP intern,

Interns gain respect for how much work has to go into things. The more responsibility you have, the more you're going to get out of SYPP because the more you're going to realize you don't need an adult doing things for you, that you don't need so much training from adults. Being part of a core group, you realize how things get organized, how you organize a conference, how you do press releases, how you deal with writing grants, how you deal with everything. It is pretty much like training to run other grass roots organizations.

I've learned a lot about funding, about logistical matters. I've learned a lot of people skills and there's a lot of growth that comes out of every conflict that we have, like between the people coming from different backgrounds, figuring out how to work together and seeing all the people's different struggles.

Lessons and Implications

In fall 1997 and spring 1998, SYPP focused much of its attention on strengthening the organization by identifying, understanding, and solving problems and conflicts within and among the staff, activists, and board.

SYPP has recognized the need to balance the autonomy of interns with SYPP's collective will. They have found that initiatives are more effective when they consist of ongoing core groups whose decision making and organizing work are done collectively. Those that are less effective are those in which core group members see their role as volunteers helping the intern (often a friend) on a one-time project. One reason initiatives so often run on the second, less effective model is that SYPP's culture and philosophy tend to emphasize the autonomy of the intern as a way to ensure that youth, not adults, control initiative activism. Organizational or collective control has, in the past, been equated with adult control, while autonomy is equated with youth power.

This emphasis on youth autonomy combines with the tendency for "grass roots organizing to become fluffy when someone is paid and others aren't because the people who are not paid don't take as much responsibility and so all the work falls on the shoulders of the one paid person and not enough gets done," as stated by a SYPP youth activist. As a result, some initiatives are very intern-centric; the intern comes up with ideas and proposals, brings these to the core group for approval, and then does most of the work to carry out those decisions.

When a core group has been weak, an incoming intern must focus much of her or his time on recruiting and mobilizing the group. This detracts from the intern's feeling that she or he is accomplishing very much during the time of the internship. If the greater part of a four-month term is spent recruiting and developing a core group, the result may be a strong core group but few accomplishments. SYPP interns have found it hard to mobilize people when little is being accomplished.

By looking at the dynamic between youth autonomy and effective collective organizing, SYPP has clarified its goal as being to mobilize a youth movement in Seattle, rather than simply carrying out a series of projects or events. This realization has altered the way that SYPP recruits and hires interns; the focus is now on identifying and supporting youth as grassroots organizers, rather than as project developers and coordinators. SYPP now recognizes the importance of providing training in some of the basics of community organizing, such as recruiting members, facilitating meetings, and raising money.

SYPP participants have also found that the continuity of a core group as an organization and the continuity of its work are often impaired when an intern's term ends. One reason for this is that YAs have varied in the degree to which they involve core groups in hiring decisions. In such cases, when the YA's primary goal is to bring in new people, the continuity of the core group can be severely compromised and even destroyed. When YAs have hired to bring in new blood, they have often given the message to the new interns that they are completely autonomous in planning their initiative. Not only are the core groups and projects that preceded these interns destroyed, but these incoming interns are shortchanged because they have to try to accomplish

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something meaningful in only four months with no core group to start with. On the other hand, in other situations, interns have been hired with the expectation that their role is to facilitate an ongoing activism organization. While this process may protect core group cohesiveness, their initiatives will sometimes lack the energy that new people and new, creative projects bring.

A more important impact on core group continuity than the YA's hiring decisions is the strength of the core group when interns turn over. Because of the trimester system, the continuity of projects is jeopardized when the internship turns over if a core group has not developed as an activist organization (rather than as an advisory group for the intern), with goals and activities directed by the collective will of the group. The results can be the untimely end of work on changing a policy or the loss of contact with youth who have been inspired to the brink of action by an SYPP event.

SYPP has begun to recognize that for core groups to be effective in their activism and for the organization to be a catalyst to mobilize more young people than it does, the organization must deal with the dilemma of achieving continuity and productivity of initiative work while continuing to bring in new people as leaders. The current solution to this dilemma is to hire initiative interns from within active core groups and to put more programmatic resources and recruiting energy into starting new initiatives.

200 young peope attended the May 20 Funeral for Youth Rights.

The extent to which initiatives connect to adult organizations or coalitions of organizations working on similar issues varies, sometimes as a function of the personal contacts interns already have when they are hired. Other factors influencing whether interns will network outside of SYPP include the interns' visions for their initiatives and the needs and opportunities they see for networking. Also, some interns have more networking skills, interest, and inclination than others. The YA and the training that she or he provides also have a great impact here. Other organizations will sometimes contact SYPP, and the networking will occur that way. While these connections are made occasionally, SYPP has not formed enduring partnerships with other organizations or joined ongoing coalitions.

A drawback of transitory relationships is that at events in the city where youth are given the opportunity to be involved in policy making, even when the focus of the event is a youth-related issue, SYPP is rarely represented because they are not well connected to the community of youth involvement. From the perspective of a grassroots activist, SYPP does not network well with other youth organizations and therefore is not at the core of the political movements or the dialog of the community. On the other hand, one of the benefits to not forming permanent relationships with other organizations is that SYPP interns and core groups are able to control their agendas, strategies, and organization. SYPP participants, both youth and adult, are often skeptical of what is called youth involvement in Seattle—situations that adults create for young people to speak out on issues. They feel that adults identify the issues, set the agendas, and limit the options open for discussion. In such situations, young people are used to legitimize a process that is adult driven.

Networking has been most effective in SYPP when the interns develop their own contacts with adults and youth in the community to support the work that they are doing. When the connections occur in this direction, SYPP youth are the ones setting the agenda and setting the parameters for the role of adults. Not all interns have had the necessary skills or connections, however. One suggestion is to have youth who are experienced networkers teach other youth how to network effectively without giving up control. An adult skills bank has been set up so that core groups can search for possible adult allies who can help with specific requests while being guided by the intern or core group. In addition to assisting SYPP activists form and control their own alliances, a new role for the YA may be to maintain contact with youth organizations and policy makers, so that SYPP youth can have a voice in community dialogue as the youth see fit.

SYPP participants have found that youth empowerment organizations, even if built on the traditional model of a nonprofit organization, must have boards of directors that are more active in the organization and better connected to the staff, interns, and volunteers. Because of the adultist nature of society, the inherently hierarchical structure of the traditional nonprofit too easily creates the impression of a power imbalance between adults and youth. While the SYPP board does not make decisions about the agendas, goals, or activities of the initiatives, many of its decisions do affect the initiatives. Typically, such as with staff evaluations and budget requests, the board heeds the recommendations and requests of the interns and core group members. However, occasionally the board has made decisions that have been unpopular with at least some interns. SYPP interns and core group members have said that they feel there is not enough connection and communication between the board and the activists. They feel that the board sometimes makes decisions without enough information about what is really happening in the organization. A youth board member describes the problem:

> Where there's a problem with SYPP is the connections between the board and the staff. Here we are deciding these large things about finances and things like that; however, the board, especially the adults on the board, are not directly involved with SYPP. Some of them will only come to a couple of meetings a month or something, and that's all they know.

Board members and activists have agreed that there is neither enough communication between the board and the interns nor sufficient involvement of the board in what is going on in the office. Interns have charged that the board abuses its power when it acts without adequate input from interns. Some SYPP participants have said that this is an issue of youth-adult power imbalance, even though there are youth on the board. They feel that the adult viewpoints, though in the minority, should have less weight because they are adult viewpoints in what is supposed to be a youth-run organization. A solution proposed but not implemented was to merge the leadership of the organization either by inviting interns onto the board or dissolving the board and having interns and core group activists carry out the board functions, with adults serving only advisory, nonvoting roles. While there are some interns currently on the board, many have said that playing both roles is too much work. The present solution has been to require that board members occasionally attend core group and staff meetings and volunteer in the office, and that the YA and, whenever possible, interns and core group members come to board meetings.

This solution was conceived after the firing of a YA. There were several interns at the time who felt that the firing was unjust and felt that intern

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input into the process had been very weak. They felt ignored and left out of an important decision. In response, interns, core group members, and some youth board members formed a youth committee to restructure the way decisions are made. At that time, a member of that committee stated that:

> It was a real wake up call for us that there is a lot that needs to change about SYPP. And we're doing it, we're making it the way we want it. That committee came up with a proposal for a new structure. The youth committee would be a large body that would make large decisions about SYPP, instead of the board. It would be open to all youth in SYPP: interns, core group members, former interns, any youth. Adults would be asked to be there as allies, to offer experience and skills, but not vote. Adults would be welcome to contribute their opinions and they could contribute in that way.

In this instance and similar occasions, young people in the organization have taken the initiative to organize democratic, loosely consensus-based processes and facilitate ad hoc meetings not officially sanctioned by the board. However, typically the plans that are made in these situations do not get implemented—at least not directly. Youth who are not on the board do not have policy-making power. Their ideas for changing the organization often do not get adopted for several reasons. Not all youth know how to, or choose to, use the organization's official process for change, which is to take proposals to the board. If they know the process, they may not trust the board, or they may feel they can make decisions and affect change in the organization at a more grassroots level. Additionally, the youth who take the initiative to come up with new ideas and who have the motivation to see them through are the busiest members in SYPP and do not really have the time or energy to make all their ideas reality.

The board, however, has become more responsive to criticisms and suggestions from the activists. While many ideas for improvement have gotten lost because of lack of time, energy, or know-how on the part of board members to follow them up, some of the input of these ad hoc committees has been taken to heart. For instance, the board has held meetings that have been open to the whole organization to discuss internal issues, such as racism in SYPP, and has then formed cross-organization committees to formulate policy changes. An additional option is to amend the organization's bylaws to create official channels for youth who are not on the board but who are members, interns, or activists.

The board and staff have become safe and effective forums for the discussion of race and diversity in the organization. While these discussions sometimes point out difficult truths, they have helped move the organization forward. SYPP participants feel that recognizing internal racism is an important step in strengthening the organization.

Organizational analysis by SYPP board members and staff often revolves around issues of race and diversity. For example, in discussing the hiring of adult staff, a board member asks, "Do we want both of the point people in our organization to be white females? How does that look? What does that say? Will that attract people of color to our organization or would that deter them?" An all-SYPP internal issues meeting called by the board in response to criticisms made by youth activists identified race as a factor in many dysfunctions. For example, in talking about why sometimes there is a slump in active participation in SYPP initiatives, especially by youth of color, people at the meeting realized that most of the existing initiatives had been originated by white people and so may not have represented the interests of youth of color. Another

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realization was that youth interns and activists felt that the board was not representative of them. They felt both that there was not enough interaction between the board and activists, and that the board, being at that time a white majority, did not appear approachable to youth of color. The board is currently in a recruitment mode, focusing on recruiting youth of color as directors.

Despite the prominence of dialogue on the issues of race and diversity, documents show that SYPP had greater racial diversity than the city of Seattle at the time that interviews were conducted for this case study. SYPP also contains a diversity of viewpoints, values, beliefs, cultures, and political analyses. There is no philosophy that ties the initiatives together or defines the orientation of the activist work. There is no such overriding value or political leaning, other than youth empowerment, to either guide or restrict the work of the initiative.

> Just because it's a youth organization doesn't mean that all youth in the organization are going to have the same views. That's an interesting thing to work through. We are all under this umbrella of youth empowerment, and even though we're all within SYPP and we are all being empowered, we are definitely all working on our own things. Some people are involved with SYPP because they care about anti-violence, but they don't care at all about QYR.

The process works. The diversity creates tensions when racist, sexist, or homophobic comments or incidents occur. Friction also arises when people do not agree that each others' initiatives represent their views. But the structure of SYPP helps people overcome those schisms—the common space, in which all interns work, gather for staff meetings, and encounter each other creates opportunities to build bridges. Democracy, a faith in people, and in the power of diversity are what keep the focus of the work oriented against oppression and toward social justice, even though there is no official SYPP statement of that orientation. SYPP is a combination of Hart's "child-initiated and directed" rung, and the "child-initiated, shared decisions with adults" rung of the participation ladder. The former rung describes initiatives and the latter the board and staff.

YOUTH–N–ACTION

Youth-N-Action (YNA) is a body of young people between the ages of 14 and 21 in King County, Washington, who represent viewpoints of youth on policies and issues in order to improve their communities. King County contains a great number and diversity of communities, from the big city of Seattle, with its dense neighborhoods, to places where people live on acres of land, on the shores of Puget Sound or in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. There are suburbs, cities, towns, and unincorporated rural land all in the same county. YNA, a youth-led group of activists, is responsible for providing a meaningful way for young people throughout the county to influence the policies that affect their lives.

Kaleem, a core member of YNA, says the purpose of the group is:

> to voice the youths' opinions because without it being structured, there's no way that youth are going to be allowed to talk at adult conventions or discuss the laws like we have in Olympia (the state capitol), organize youth summits and programs. YNA being structured and funded we can develop programs that will help the youth out and voice the youths' opinions on every subject, not just the subjects that people will let us. We're a group that voices the opinion of everybody.

Renee, another core member, describes what YNA does this way:

> Our duty is to change people's thoughts. I want people to think of youth as being human and being someone with the same needs as adults, because adults were teens once, too, they know it was hard. I just want to change people's attitude towards us.

While YNA is charged with representing the diverse viewpoints of youth throughout the county, Sharon, the adult coordinator for YNA, says that, for the young people who are the core of YNA, "the priority is to advocate for youth who have no voice."

YNA is a diverse group that includes all kinds of young people, including some who are currently incarcerated who have earned the opportunity to speak at schools and community forums, some who have been homeless, some who are immigrants to the U.S., and some who are honor students. The people who you will read about in this case study have been assigned pseudonyms to protect their privacy. Below is a bit of information about each of them, to put what they will have to say into context.

Kaleem was incarcerated in a juvenile detention facility, Echo Glen, until early 1997 . At Echo Glen, he was involved in a youth group that helped him begin to learn some leadership and service skills. Since his release, he has been living in a group home, still under incarceration, but with more freedom to participate in the life of his community. Kaleem is now almost 17. He has transformed his life, in large part through the support and experiences of YNA.

Amir immigrated to the United States when he was about six years old. He had to learn to adapt to a new culture and to make his life something he could be proud of. Like Kaleem, he had some trouble with the law earlier in his teens and, now, at 15, has set out to make the world a better place. He is now a leader in the youth council in his community.

Renee and Martin are cousins. They have helped each other through some hard times with their families. Both are finishing up high school and have found strong support in their activism and friendships in YNA as they heal and grow. In addition to YNA, Martin has been active in several school and community-based social change organizations, focusing on traffic safety, recovery from substance abuse, rights for gay and lesbian youth, and political expression through the arts. Renee has become a dynamic public speaker and has worked for POCAAN—the People of Color Against AIDS Network in Seattle—since her early teens.

Kira, Kevin, and Lorraina are other YNA members mentioned in the case study. Kira and Kevin have been with YNA since the beginning. Kevin, 15, lives in a suburb of Seattle and goes to one of the best high schools in the area. Both he and Lorraina, who is also around 15, live in a semirural part of the county and have to travel a long way to get to meetings and events. They feel that they have had relatively happy and trouble-free lives in supportive families. But they also recognize racism, homophobia, and other problems in their communities and schools, and work hard to change them.

Angie, a high school student recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction, does not live in King County but has been inspired and assisted in her community organizing by YNA at several workshops and meetings.

Sharon is the adult coordinator of the program. She grew up in Seattle but went away for school and work for several years. She has returned and is a passionate youth ally and advocate for the rights of all young people to be heard and to be politically active.

Origins
In 1994, members of the King County Children and Family Commission, the King County Executive, and members of the Metropolitan King County

Council all focused on finding solutions to the rising tide of youth violence in the county. To this end, then King County Executive Gary Locke sponsored a Public Safety Summit at which the top priority for action was identified as diminishing youth violence by involving communities.

In response to that call to action, county council members Larry Gossett and Jane Hague spearheaded a series of county-sponsored community forums on youth, which were open to both adults and youth. The sponsors did not anticipate that many young people would attend these forums, but they were wrong. Youth came out, saying that they were tired of adults making decisions about where funding goes in the county. The young people said that they wanted to be on boards and commissions that made decisions on youth policies, programs, and funding. The council realized that having youth input in all decisions that affect youth would help youth programs, and young people themselves, succeed.

The reaction was swift. Within six months after these forums were held, the county was hiring a staff person for a pilot project, which at that time was called the King County Youth Involvement Project. Sharon says that the thinking was that the program would be a pilot, not a permanent program, of the county.

> They thought that, yeah, youth came out for the first forums, but if it's important to the youth, they'll start coming to these meetings, they'll be a part of this, and they'll be invested. If not, it was just a couple of youth who were vocal at these particular meetings.

The pilot would be a test to see if there really was enough of a youth movement, and enough adult community support, to keep the project going on a more permanent basis.

Sharon says that she does not know what the future of the project will be, even though YNA has received extensive support from both youth and adults. The feedback from the county has been that it looks like the program is working, but it is very rare for a pilot program of any sort to become a permanent department or subdepartment of the county infrastructure. Usually the county's goal with pilot projects that work is for them to become independent organizations, outside the county infrastructure. Sharon says, "Nothing's permanent in county government. What happens after our three years is up depends on what happens in the budget."

Organization and Administration

The county council allocates funding for YNA through the King County Children and Family Commission. Because of its community organizing function, YNA is housed within the King Community Organizing Project, which assists communities in establishing coalitions and networking among community groups. The YNA core group is made up of representatives of youth action councils (YACs). YACs may be existing youth organizations in local communities or groups that YNA members help create. Sharon says that YNA is like the congress of the YACs because, "Logistically I couldn't transport and feed hundreds of kids, so that's the only reason that it can't be a bigger group, larger than 30." Core members' responsibility is to bring youth issues from their communities through the YACs to the attention of policy makers to promote understanding and action.

YNA is the body responsible for implementing the County Council's policy on youth involvement. It has almost complete control over the activities and the policies that govern their project. Core members are responsible for allocating a budget of $72,500 in January of each year. Once they subtract Sharon's salary and van expenses, food and lodging (for conference visits where

Figure 4. The Youth-N-Action Organizational Structure
(as drawn by a YNA member)
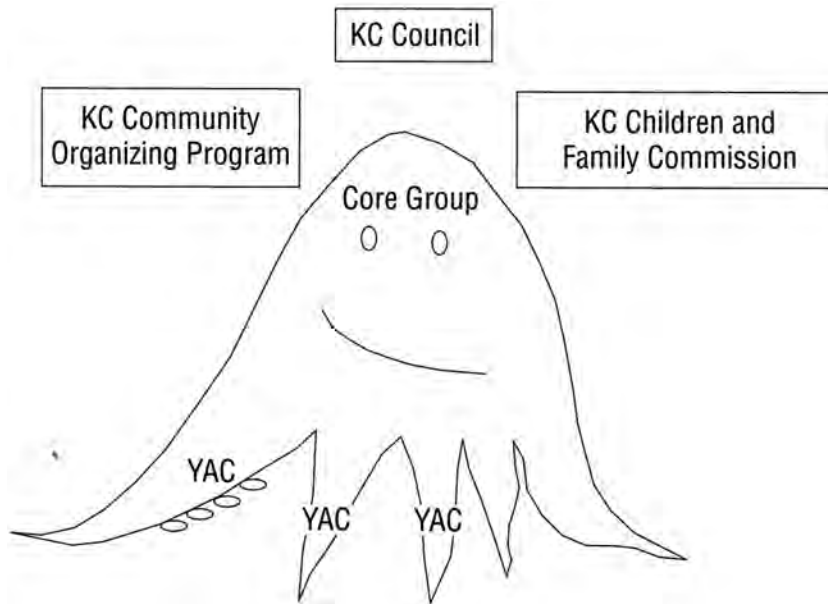
expenses cannot be covered by sponsors), and other administrative costs (supplies, food for meetings), they are left with about $35,000 or $40,000 to spend. They have always chosen to do mini-grants and decided to pay themselves stipends for doing speaking engagements. Sharon has an office on the 37th floor of one of Seattle's downtown skyscrapers. Her cubicle contains her computer, paperwork, posters, other memorabilia from community events, and photographs of young people and her family. There is not much room for people to meet and work, although Sharon and occasionally one or two core members take care of the administrative tasks there. Monthly core meetings are held in a conference room at the Seattle Center. Subcommittees meet in locations all over the county, at shopping malls, core members' homes, or other places that work out for the individuals in the committees, who may live many miles from each other.

The work of organizing and planning all YNA activities happens at the core group and subcommittee meetings. Three-hour monthly core group meetings are usually facilitated by Sharon. She prepares the agendas from a combination of ongoing discussions and projects, issues that YNA members bring to her attention (including the need for member orientation and training, which is described in more detail below), requests for YNA advocacy services that have come up since the last meeting, and administration issues. As facilitator, Sharon calls on youth to report, asks for volunteers for activities the group has agreed on, restates decisions that were made, proposes ideas, asks the youth for ideas, raises and focuses questions for the group to consider, and brings up administrative items. She does not make decisions for the group. The youth participate by providing input, opinions, and ideas, and making decisions and volunteering for tasks. They raise questions, concerns, and disagreements and interrupt bad process, such as when people are having side conversations or getting the group off the agenda. During meetings, Sharon and the youth members share responsibility for reporting on subcommittee meetings, giving background on issues that require discussion, and making announcements. Sharon is often the one who brings out into the open the questions and issues that need to be decided, although the final decisions are all made by the young people.

There are subcommittees for all the of YNA's projects. In December each year, YNA holds a youth summit in which young people from all over the county identify the most pressing issues for youth in King County. In 1998, those issues were: youth advocacy and involvement, violence and communication, teen health issues, education, and attitudes/apathy. At the beginning of the year, the core group selects the projects to address those issues. The core group allocates its money for those projects. Subcommittees are created for each project. During the year, other goals and project ideas come up and the group votes to take them on and then new subcommittees are added. Subcommittees meet regularly—once a week if they have events coming up, less often if their activities are not so immediate. The youth in those subcommittees facilitate their own meetings, although Sharon will sometimes also attend.

In 1998, YNA's project subcommittees included administration, the youth summit, mini-grants, media and public relations, a web page, and new member orientation. There used to be a subcommittee for the most important of YNA's activities, public speaking, but that is now taken care of at core meetings or through arrangements with Sharon. Not an official project, recruitment is also an important YNA activity.

Sharon is the primary administrator for YNA, but core members do have occasional roles as well. The core group allocates its funding to projects at the beginning of each year. Two subcommittees have primarily administrative roles. The mini-grants committee, as described below, develops and evaluates mini-grant applications. The YNA report addendum committee was responsible for writing a section of the YNA progress report and responding to the Children and Family Commission's requests for clarifications on YNA's 1998 work plan. Because of the size of the budget and logistical constraints, there is a limit to how large the core group can be. So, YNA has had to come up with a way to screen and orient potential new members.

A YNA core group meeting.

Gene Alberts

Another development also created a need to establish some guidelines for participation. The new guidelines require current members to be interviewed about their present level of commitment as a way to help everyone clarify their responsibility to the group. New core members are required to attend two core meetings, be interviewed or write about their reasons for wanting to join, and attend an orientation and public speaking training. The YNA New Member Orientation Committee evaluates new members' applications on the basis of age, geographic representation, attitude, communication skills, their support of a positive lifestyle, and respect for others.

YNA recruits. Sometimes alone, but more often with core members, Sharon goes to meetings of various organizations to enlist new YNA members. In these visits, they primarily try to reach populations and geographic areas that are underrepresented in the group and in youth leadership programs everywhere. Recruiting missions have taken them to juvenile detention and treatment facilities, tribal schools, and young women's empowerment

programs. Outreach efforts also include attending the events of other organizations to build and maintain connections and support the actions of youth throughout the county.

The attitude in the state regarding youth offenders has been a hindrance to recruitment and advocacy on behalf of incarcerated youth. Despite the success the group has had with helping convicted youth turn their lives around, and the importance of injecting the reality of those young people's lives into discussions of crime prevention, YNA constantly battles the bureaucracy of the juvenile justice system when trying to get into the detention facilities to get the voices of those youth heard. Sharon explains that, in the current political climate in Washington state,

> it's very, very difficult politically to get into an institution like Echo Glen or Woodinville Treatment Center no matter what you want to do, especially now when they're really trying to deny kids rights to any kind of activity outside of the institution. It takes a lot of phone calls and you really have to know someone in there. The lockdown of all after care facilities is hurting our youth member who's in there, because he can't participate in positive things and he's about to get let out and so he needs to have positive ways to be involved in the community as a safety net for him so that he's not even in a position to entertain getting back involved in that old element. That is one of my biggest challenges as a coordinator.

Roles of youth. There are two basic roles for youth in YNA—core members and members at large from YACs. Core members are those who make the commitment to regularly attend monthly meetings. If they are unable to make a meeting they have to let someone know that they will be gone. Absences are excused if they relate to school, family, or work. Absences are designated as unexcused when members do not call, or when they had agreed to speak at an event and then do not show up. Two unexcused absences are allowed per year before a core member becomes inactive. Core members have first priority on and are paid for speaking engagements. They represent the views of the members of their YACs.

YAC members make up the second tier of participation in YNA. Every young person in a YAC that is represented in YNA is a member of YNA. They may attend core meetings, help on projects, and come to events sponsored by YNA, such as the Youth Summit. They may also take speaking engagements although they would not get paid and would not be the first ones that Sharon would contact when she is calling around to line up speakers. They also do not vote in core meetings.

The coordinator's role. The coordinator is a conduit for information to YNA's youth participants. The youth recognize that because she is employed almost full time for the county as a community organizer, she has access to information that can benefit their advocacy work. She brings that information to the youth and organizes it based on the priorities that the youth identified at the beginning of the year. Even though Sharon has access to information on opportunities for activism, she does not advocate for issues. She tells the youth about the opportunities to give input and helps them get to the places where they can give it. If someone asks her opinion, she refers them to the young people in the organization. Amir explains that Sharon functions in the role of agent for the youths' activism. People call her to find youth to speak, do workshops, sit on committees. "When people want to get to YNA, she's kind of our agent, so they go to her about the activities, or the retreats that they want us to do, stuff they want us to teach. They go to Sharon with that, and then Sharon has it on the agenda at the next meeting."

Sharon fields the calls, and then she calls the young people who have expertise, from their lives, in the issue they have been invited to speak

There are two basic roles for youth in YNA—core members and members at large from YACs. Core members are those who make the commitment to regularly attend monthly meetings. If they are unable to make a meeting they have to let someone know that they will be gone. Absences are excused if they relate to school, family, or work. Absences are designated as unexcused when members do not call, or when they had agreed to speak at an event and then do not show up. Two unexcused absences are allowed per year before a core member becomes inactive.

on. Kaleem says, "If there's an educational issue we're not going to put somebody out there who doesn't know anything about education but might know more about violence." There used to be a subcommittee that delegated speaking engagements to the appropriate youth, but the group decided that Sharon was familiar enough with the youth and their areas of expertise that she could act as their agent. When possible, she asks people to volunteer for engagements at the core group meetings, but if there is a request made between meetings, then she will call the youth who she thinks will be best suited. The individual youth make the decisions whether to take the engagement. However, if the engagement is not within the priority topic areas selected by the youth for the year, or if the request is made in a way that is not inclusive, representative, or respectful of all the youth (e.g., if they say they cannot have youth who have been incarcerated or only want one youth to represent a huge and diverse county), or if the event is not significant, Sharon will screen those out and "just bring the important stuff to the core group."

The coordinator also handles the logistics behind YNA member activities. As Sharon puts it:

> They [the YNA members] don't have time to be persistent, calling, calling, calling. The logistics, I arrange the logistics and then they show up. They say, "Sharon, can you get us an audience with council member Gossett?" They can call on their own, but they just usually ask me to do it. Just so I can keep track and arrange transportation and everything. It's not a power thing, it's just the most effective way to get the appointment.

Renee says, "Sharon signs the papers and provides transportation." Not only does she provide the transportation, she is the driver. She frequently traverses the county from end to end, hours of driving, to transport the youth to their engagements.

Sharon advocates for them when necessary. Martin explains, "She'll say, 'You guys, these people are saying this about you and I don't like it, and I want you guys to do something about it. What do you think we should do?' She says we, but she means us." As an advocate for the youth in YNA, Sharon also points out injustices in society to motivate youth to action and to the serious task at hand. She gives encouragement and helps them get information on the issues for which they will be advocating. Sometimes she tells them what she feels needs to happen to make an action succeed. She uses stories of how good a job someone did, or how something bombed because people were not prepared.

Sharon is also a recruiter. Even though she almost always travels with YNA core members on recruiting ventures, she is the person in the group that new members often connect with in a way that builds trust and motivation to get involved. She is an encourager, advocate, mentor, and champion, helping the young people see their value to YNA and to their communities

Decision-making power. Consider Renee's comment on who holds the decision-making power within YNA.

> Who has the power? We do. The youth, we have the power. Our group is youth organized. We make the decision on what we're going to do, how we're going to do it, why we're going to do it. We decided on the structure, that there would be committees. We call each other and say, "We're going to have the committee meeting here at such and such a time." [In committee meetings] we focus on our main idea and then we call everyone else in YNA and tell them what's going on or we tell them at the next meeting.

Young people in YNA insist that they are the ones who control the decisions, focus, and activities of the group. They are also adamant that the coordinator's role is important, but they clarify that the differences between her role and their roles are not about power but about function. Her role is also different because she is an adult who has a lot of organizing experience to share with the youth. Also, because she both cares deeply about their rights to be heard and also is an adult in an adultist society, she can advocate for them in situations in which those rights are being threatened, such as when they're not taken as seriously as an adult when they call the governor's office.

Accomplishments

Mini-Grants. Sharon says that the mini-grants program came about because "YNA core members decided they wanted to fund other groups that are doing positive things in the community. They fund groups in Seattle as well as everywhere else in King County." The grants are for up to $500 for youth-led projects that reduce drug use and violence in the King County community by addressing one or more of the five issues prioritized at the youth summit.

Unlike many programs that seek to reduce drug use and violence, YNA recognizes that youth involvement and empowerment in all areas of their lives is the key to preventing self-destructive and community-destructive behaviors. The projects that have been funded include performance art on youth issues, leadership training for incarcerated and other youth, youth community gardens, initiating peer mediation programs, curriculum development, career development, cross-cultural understanding and diversity training, development of local youth leadership, and conferences.

Media and public relations. YNA has developed a media campaign to raise awareness on youth issues and recruit members. The campaign includes a public service announcement that is aired on local TV and radio stations. The announcement has brought many inquiries from youth who are interested in joining YNA as well as from curious and supportive adults.

Web page. A subcommittee is working with an adult volunteer from Microsoft to develop a web page. Currently displayed are pictures and statements form the core group members and information on the organization. The page is still being developed.

Public speaking, advocacy, and consultation activities. YNA's public speaking and advocacy take place at conference hotels, retreat centers and camps, elected official's offices and meeting rooms, schools, community centers, detention centers, and agency offices. People call Sharon to invite YNA to speak at their events or meetings.

YNA core members facilitate discussions among participants to identify the most important issues facing youth in King County.

Many of the YNA's speaking engagements are by invitation to local workshops and conferences. They have done presentations for the Washington State Parent Teacher Association about what needs to change in schools to get kids to start participating in programs. The Seattle Police Department invited them to do a Campaign Against Violence Brown Bag Forum. They did a presentation for Project HELP (Helping Everyone Live Peacefully) of Asian Pacific Islanders Rising Above. They have also spoken at state and national substance abuse prevention conferences, and one YNA member was hired to cofacilitate the Washington State Substance Abuse Conference.

YNA members have been on televised panels including one on which they shared the stage with the former governor, Seattle Chief of Police, and the county executive and spoke about drug prevention and teen apathy. They were on a town meeting TV program on drinking and driving. Many of YNA's presentations are to youth audiences, such as their workshop on activism at the Partners in Prevention camp, and their seminars on how to establish YACs at the Seattle Center Peace Academy and the Stop Auto Fatalities Through Youth Efforts (SAFTYE) 1997 Conference.

YNA members also attend conferences and workshops as participants. For example, Sharon and several members attended a two-week community leadership and nonviolence training workshop. They have also attended a big annual youth conference of the Seattle Youth Involvement Network.

YNA members meet with county and state elected officials, police chiefs, and other policy makers to advocate on issues of concern to youth in King County. They lobby on youth issues in the state capitol, in other Washington cities, and in Washington, D.C., as when they were on U.S. Senator Patty Murray's Senate Advisory Youth Involvement Team and when they represented one member's YAC, called Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). They have met many times with the governor, lieutenant governor, and attorney general. Their advocacy work also includes participation in rallies and marches.

YNA members were often being asked to speak at various functions, but many members had no formal training in public speaking. Consequently, the consistency and quality of the work they were doing in the community was starting to be questioned. Amir gives an example: "I've had people come up and say that person wasn't even talking. Is she a part of your group? Or what was she, or he, doing there." Lorraina also described a problem when she said that some people who were signed up to be speakers and were being paid were not actually participating as presenters at their engagements.

Training for public speaking had always been informal. A solution that was tried was to have a youth subcommittee delegate speaking engagements to those youth that they knew were good speakers. The subcommittee did not work very well because the people on it felt uncomfortable having to judge their peers and make that kind of decision and also because the people who were not chosen were not getting any chances to improve their skills and gain experience. That was when YNA decided that Sharon should be the one to call people who were knowledgeable on the topic and ask if they were interested in speaking. A new subcommittee was formed to develop some new guidelines for participation in speaking engagements.

In their advocacy, YNA members serve as a link between their own YACs and elected officials and policy makers. For example, Kaleem will work with the coordinator at Echo Glen, the youth detention center, to try to go to a youth group meeting to get input from young people there. In the meantime, while they are working through the red tape of that plan, he talks to some of his friends on the phone and brings their ideas to YNA meetings. He says:

> they got some kids at the youth group in Echo Glen that have a long time there so they won't be able to start going to the programs out here for a long time, so I call back and get their input because their voices need to be heard more than anybody, because some of the things that they say make so much more sense than anything else. There's a lot of gang violence at Echo Glen because they put everybody together and I talk about that because it needs to stop out here first. As soon as people out here figure out it's not what's in anymore, gang affiliation is not in anymore, they won't bring it in to the institution. Also, school. People at Echo Glen tend to be behind other people in the community, so I want to bring up

the issue of schooling at the institutions. Kids are getting out of there one or more grade levels behind. There's hardly any science classes. They may end up graduating, but what grade level will they graduate at?

YNA is not an organization that provides services. It does not create programs and services for youth, but it does provide input and advice for people who are creating programs and services. In their consulting, they provide direct advice on program development for community-based activities like teen centers and after-school programs. They give input about how to develop the programs so that people will come and how to get the information out to the youth. They provide training for adult-led organizations, such as youth service agencies and health departments, on how to increase youth involvement and set up new programs. For example, Kaleem says that he always recommends they "find a couple of youth in the community who are leaders and have those youth go out and get everybody else, because youth will listen to other youth." They have met with jail directors to provide technical assistance on strategies for getting the word out on prevention for both incarcerated and nonincarcerated youth.

YNA members serve on planning and hiring committees, such as the one for HBO's show "Faces of Addiction," and the King County Health Action Plan Teen Workgroup. They helped Partners in Prevention plan its annual camp and sat on the hiring committee for a Youth Involvement Coordinator of the South King County Youth Violence Committee Community Mobilization Project.

YACs include both groups that YNA helps set up in different communities as well as organizations that already existed and now have representation in YNA. Sharon gives some examples.

> Maple Valley, their youth group asked YNA to come and do a workshop about how to set up a youth action council. So, they had already decided that they were going to do something, but they didn't know how, so YNA spent a whole day out there and now we have two youth from Maple Valley in our group and twice now they have been funded for mini-grants for their activities. Their thing was how do we mobilize and get a skateboard park out here, and they've already got their skateboard park and so it bore fruit, so that's one of our big successes. In Enumclaw they wanted the same thing. They did get the money and the council did approve it, but now the neighborhood is protesting. All the ducks are in a row. We'll see what happens.

They also tell youth who attend presentations that YNA will provide guidance on how to set up a YAC.

While paying youth activists stipends for their work is something that YNA members voted for, it seems like its more important to the young people that their contributions are recognized and validated than that they are paid. Sharon explains,

> It's interesting because they fought very, very hard to get those $25 stipends, and once they got those stipends actually the amount of speaking engagements went down. It wasn't money, it was the fact that they wanted to be validated and recognized for their contribution of giving input and also they handle their transportation costs and food on the way there and time off from missed work, that kind of stuff. So, really you can't say that money inspired any of the kids because we still have hundreds and hundreds of dollars left in our stipend budget that hasn't been spent. They just want the acknowledgment and the respect and the audience, and that carries a lot more weight than getting paid.

YNA is not an organization that provides services. It does not create programs and services for youth, but it does provide input and advice for people who are creating programs and services. In their consulting, they provide direct advice on program development for community-based activities like teen centers and after-school programs

Stipends promote young people's connection to YNA because the youth feel it is a place that respects and values their input, and stipends are one way that respect is shown.

Kaleem stays involved because:

> every intention of this group is good. We don't do this so that we can make the money. We do this because we want to make a change. We get paid $25 for going to speak, but we don't go out to speak because we want to earn the $25. When I started YNA I didn't know that I was going to get $25 for speaking. I did it just because I wanted to help out and express my opinion as well as other people's opinions. I did my one speech two weeks ago, and I still haven't turned in my form to get paid because I went to the PTA convention to let people know what we need in school for other youth, not for the money. Being able to help somebody out, that just does enough for me.

Credibility. Through their accomplishments, YNA members have built credibility as experts and effective advisors, advocates, and public speakers. Sharon says,

They basically have the ear of the Washington state attorney general. Any time they want to come to Olympia and her schedule permits, she'll see them. The same with the county council, certain members of the council. They have some credibility behind them.

Martin agrees. "I know the Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen pretty well. Basically he uses my picture and my identity for some of his presentations. He says this guy is doing really well in Seattle, and what I'm involved with."

Because of the structure and credibility of YNA opportunities open up to them to have a voice in policy-making arenas. Kaleem says,

> Some adults are intimidated by youths' opinions. With the structure of YNA and the rapport that we have already built over the last two years with the lawmakers, we have a little bit of status now. I don't think that any individual youth would be able to get into the places that YNA attend to voice their opinions. With youth having YNA to voice their opinions, we're doing something good.

Outcomes for the Community and for YNA Participants

The following comment by Amir points out a crucial difference between organizations created to keep kids out of trouble and those that are about empowering young people as community change agents. He says,

> For a little bit I was really frustrated with what my youth council actually can do and now I can see it more as a group that the community put together for the youth to do positive things, so it would improve the youth in it more than that it does things for the community. I can't say nothing bad about the youth council because they have started a mentoring program for the elementary school kids. They are setting up a youth center and skate park. But when I think about it, YNA does a lot more for the community than one of these little youth councils. I think YNA is one of the strongest groups when it comes to outcomes.

Although it is often difficult to judge the effectiveness of groups that rely on lobbying and public speaking and don't have direct roles in making decisions about public policy, YNA members attest to some important outcomes of their work.

YNA has helped to change the community's perception of the role of young people in society. According to Kaleem:

> A couple of years ago, adults were not looking for any kind of youth opinion, whereas now, every week YNA has two to three things to go to and talk about. Adults are getting more enthusiastic about taking youths' opinions into consideration. YNA has done a lot to open up the minds of people, to get organizations running and youth programs started. Nine times out of ten they want us to come back and speak again. YNA has changed adults' opinion of youth very significantly.

YNA provides advice in the form of information and guidance to young people as they build their own organizations, advice that is easier for them to hear and more effective in reaching them, partly because it is coming from other youth, and partly because it is grounded in the reality of the lives of other young people like them. As Kaleem says:

> Youth will listen to youth a lot better than they will listen to adults. Most youth will tend to do the exact opposite of what adults say, so if a youth is out there telling them they should do this, they'll say, "Let's go see what that's all about."

Angie, a young woman who had heard YNA give a workshop for youth in Yakima, describes how YNA's approach worked for her:

> When I saw you guys at the convention in Yakima I felt great. It gave me focus. It was great to know about you guys because I thought the only support was people at Narcotics Anonymous meetings, but they were the worst when they got out of rehab. You helped me see that, if you want to do something, you can do it. Helped me see that I could do more to help other people, like to start programs to help other youth. And now we are starting all these things where I live. I've used what I've learned from YNA, like how to start programs, and I continue to get ideas for things to do, like we're going to do a dance. Things we can do to support people to prevent problems in the first place.

For both youth and adult audiences, the fact that the input is coming from young people who have lived the lives they are talking about is essential. YNA has provided valuable input that adults can use to make better decisions about youth programming and policy. Young people can follow advice that is founded on the reality of other young people's successes and failures. Renee explains the impact that youth presenters have on an audience. "The panel was boring until we started talking and our comments were so much stronger than everybody else's, because we're youth and we're talking about the things that are going on right now and things we are going through."

YNA has had a significant impact on networking among youth and youth leadership organizations in Seattle. The YNA mini-grants program provides youth leaders with funds they need for youth-initiated projects. Youth organizations also network at the annual YNA summit. YNA members are also recipients of the benefits of other organizations, such as when Kira received an award from the Seattle Youth Involvement Network. YNA has also collaborated on projects with other youth organizations, such as when they funded the SYIN's *Youth Yellow Pages* as a service to all youth in King County.

Youth share important issues at a YNA Summit: "Breaking the Ice, Melting the Differences," September 7, 1996.

The networking comes naturally as a result of the shared membership between YNA and the YACs. Amir explains that, although not an official part of core group meeting agendas (because there is not a time during meetings at which each person reports on what is going on in his or her youth council), networking does occur at the meetings.

> I see networking as a case-by-case basis. If somebody needs information, like I've talked to [the representative from the Kirkland Youth Council] before about how her youth council is structured between her different groups and everything. So I can take that back to my youth council. YNA had the Power of Hope retreat [on the agenda at a meeting] and, though YNA didn't pick up on the opportunity, we brought one of the flyers back to the youth council and then our youth council went to that retreat and it turned out to be one of the best things ever. If you really wanted to network, you could with YNA. It's on an as-needed basis. If somebody's doing something great, come tell me about it, I'll go. And then if my youth council is doing something great, I go and tell people about it, and then if they have questions on how we do that or whatever, they can come talk to us and we can go talk to them.

The youth councils represented in the YNA core group benefit from the skills, leadership, and information that their representatives gain in YNA. Amir describes the value to his core group.

> I think they get more from me being involved in YNA. All the skills I've gotten through YNA. I think that I can more effectively work with the youth council and, seeing what the other youth councils do, I can see more what we are capable of. I think it's a great idea to have every youth council have a representative in YNA.

As to what they gain individually from their participation in YNA, young people cite the opportunities given to them that they would not have otherwise. Sharon and the youth make a real effort to recruit young people who, as Sharon says, are "diamonds in the rough, the kids with leadership potential who you can then see turn into really good leaders," but who may not have had opportunities to learn and develop organizing, advocacy, and leadership skills. Kaleem feels that he is an example of someone who has been given such an opportunity. Even though he is no longer in the detention facility but is living in a group home with more freedom, he still has limited opportunities to participate in the life of the community. However, YNA provides a mechanism, a peer group and the necessary moral and logistical support, to take the opportunities as he is ready. As Kaleem explains:

> I haven't been doing a lot of stuff with YNA yet, because I kind of wanted to go in kind of slowly because I don't have a lot of opportunities like other people because of where I'm at right now at the group home. It's harder for me to get around. I have to go through a lot of permissions and stuff. I've been turning down a lot of things that they want me to do just so that I can take it kind of slow at the beginning.

Now, in 1999, his status demonstrates that he has indeed grown as a leader and advocate for youth. He is now one of the most active and well-respected activists and public speakers in the group. And he is planning to go to college.

Not only does he recognize that he has gained the benefits of learning leadership skills, Kaleem also sees that his participation in YNA has helped him stay on a positive track. During his time in detention, he was in a youth group that introduced him to leadership, organizing, and advocacy and helped him gain a vision for the possibility of a life making his community a better place. YNA has helped him make that dream a reality.

> I knew I needed something when I got out into the community that would keep me away from gang involvement, going back to crime. I knew if I had YNA as a place to go with friends that were trying to get out of all that I'd be able to stay away. It was a group of people that I already knew that were away from that so I didn't have to come out and try to find a group of people. I also wanted to be involved in what they were doing because they were doing a lot to try to improve things and they were really involved. I used to be involved heavily in gangs, but even though I still represent where I used to come from I don't have to go out there and act all violent. I know right from wrong now. I know where my head's at. I tell my friends it's not the time to do all that. I feel like if I'm going to talk the talk in YNA, I have to walk the walk. If I'm out there telling people you shouldn't be doing violence you need to be doing good in school, then I need to set an example by doing it for myself. If I was never involved in YNA, or any youth group, I probably wouldn't have made it back to the community as fast, I'd probably still be incarcerated, I'd still have the same kind of thinking, gangs, violence, I'd want to get out and sell dope. Without YNA or some kind of youth group, I wouldn't have no kind of positive thinking at all.

Amir and Renee also have found that being involved in YNA has helped them to have a positive direction to their lives–not only staying out of trouble, but also helping them create a vision for their future, helping them figure out who they are and what they want to become. For many YNA members, that vision includes community activism. Consider Amir's statement:

> See, I'm an immigrant, I came to the United States in '89. I was born in Afghanistan, lived in Pakistan and Iran for a little bit, and Germany. Then I moved to Seattle. I was young and have really no direction. I didn't speak the language. . . . When I finally got adapted. . . I didn't have the greatest friends, so I got into trouble, I got arrested a couple of times. . . . Then, when we moved to where I live now, I got into the youth council scene and then joined YNA. . .and that was when I really got set into who I want to be, where my focus was, with community work, that's what I was going to be focused on completely, politics and that stuff. That's where I saw my drive at the time. Since then, I've been sticking with community work and staying out of trouble. Now, the future is wide open for me. I have had some thoughts about politics, something like the UN. I really want to go back and help out my country. Anything with major decision making is what I'm looking at, that's what I want to do. Before YNA, I was thinking, back then, no college, I don't think so. I just want to get through high school. Maybe do some kind of apprenticeship with being a mechanic or something. A comfortable living. No risk taking. After YNA and after youth council and after all my different groups, I decided, no there's too many things that need to be changed, too many things that I can do to just sit back and be a mechanic or whatever. Yeah, I definitely trace it back to YNA.

Sharon's care and the admiration Renee has for her and other people in YNA have helped her stay positive and be a happier person. Martin, who is Renee's cousin, says about Renee, "If it wasn't for YNA, I don't think she'd be in school right now. If it wasn't for YNA and [her job], I don't think she'd be here right now, smiling and glowing. Society probably would have taken over."

Renee feels YNA has helped her become stronger as a woman.

> It's changed me mentally, physically, I care more about myself and respect myself more, because you know how a lot of girls just get ran over. As a woman, I feel like I have more power. Because a lot of times men think they're dominant all the time. I'm a young woman, and I

have a lot more knowledge than some old men. I feel good being able to speak how I feel and to speak my mind and to let people know, hey this is wrong, you need to do something about this because this is what it's doing, it's affecting my life, and other people's life. And I feel that people respect me more. Being somebody is about being in YNA. That's what's making me feel like I'm going to be somebody, because I have a role in this society that's important. I think it made me stronger as a woman too because Sharon is a woman and she's a strong lady. She inspires me a lot.

YNA members talk about how important the group has been for them as they develop socially. Kaleem: "One thing that YNA and Sharon have helped me with is learning to make friends because before I was resistant to meeting people, and now I can talk with people and be able to trust them, have conversations with them."

Other impacts that members have traced to their involvement in YNA include "learning things about all the issues. Sharon tries to educate us on all the issues so that even if we have not lived the issue, we'd still have some information on it. And also being with all kinds of different youth in the YNA program who know about this and that, you pick up things from each other."

Kaleem, Martin, Renee, and others have also noticed they're doing better in school. They are learning concrete skills, such as public speaking. Renee says, "People who see me now are just like, Renee, you've changed. I could always talk about my feelings, with my friends, but talking in front of large groups, and in front of important people, I didn't know that I could do that until I got involved with YNA."

YNA members are already using the skills, knowledge, opportunities, responsibilities they gain in other situations, not only in the commissions and other organizations they are asked to join because of the exposure and experience they get through YNA, but everywhere they go, everyday. Kaleem:

> Even when I'm sitting in class, even outside of YNA, I always bring up the youth issues in class. Recently I ran into some adults that were talking about how rap music is affecting youths' thinking and so I brought up what would the youth say, as if I was speaking for the youth. I try to open their minds. I feel that being part of a group that is bringing these issues to the table, even outside of there, that's what I think I need to do, speak where the youth voices need to be heard. Without YNA, I would have just kept on walking by, just let them have their conversation. But when I seen that they were talking against the youth, I felt like I needed to say something. I feel that I just need to bring up youths' issues in everything.

Amir also describes how he and other YNA participatnts are likely to use their experiences in the future.

> The experiences I'm getting out of this I'm going to be using in the future. Youth are going to continue to be involved and I want to be a part of that even as an adult, so I never forget that I did this as a youth.

Part 4

Youth in Policy Making

As young people respond to issues of importance to them, they seek a voice at the table with adult decision makers. They want their voices to be heard and understood; they want an opportunity to share power in policy making. They want to make a difference in their communities by working with policy makers to address issues related to the community's common good, bringing a fresh approach to community problem solving.

In some communities, youth are demonstrating that they feel confident about collaborating with adults to effect sustained, necessary change. Rather than minimizing their participation with adults in public policy problem solving and decision making, they are instead collaborating to achieve a shared, common purpose. They are generating visions and strategies to address public issues such as quality of life, education reform, sexual equality, and safe environments.

These youth are operating under different assumptions about adult involvement than are the young people of SYPP and YNA. They are developing constructive processes, practicing skills for collaboration, and defining a joint agenda for change. By bringing diverse perspectives to the table, youth and adults can achieve results in nontraditional ways. Sharing power is fundamental to this emerging model of civic participation. The strategy is to find common ground on basic issues and forge working partnerships with adults in leadership that go beyond limiting stereotypes. These fresh thinking young people are expressing their citizenship in ways that change their communities and their lives.

Several exemplary initiatives exist in which young people have institutionalized their role in policy making and are building relationships of trust and respect with adult community leaders.

HONOLULU: KE ALA HOKU

Ke Ala Hoku, "charting the course," is an ambitious grassroots, ground-up rather than a top-down, approach to community benchmarking. It is an intergenerational project with youth and adults working together at every level of planning and action. It also reveals that a working partnership with adults can help meet another youth need: that of a supportive adult role model.

Launched in the spring of 1995, Ke Ala Hoku is a collaboration of business and human service agencies. Initial project partners include the Aloha United Way, Hawaii Business Roundtable, Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, Hawaii Community Foundation, and the Hawaii Community Services Council (which administers the project). These groups were joined later by the Polynesian Voyaging Society. Funding support derives from the Aloha United Way, Hawaii Community Foundation, Hawaii Community Services Council, businesses, and nonprofits.

Mission

The mission of Ke Ala Hoku is to bring together adults and youth to chart the best future course for a sustainable Hawaii and to build community through community benchmarking. Benchmarking is a process that translates a vision to specific outcomes and develops a system for tracking progress towards these outcomes—a report card. Each outcome requires identifying potential indicators—the vital signs of any society—to help measure the progress towards achieving the vision. A benchmark adds the time factor (the yardstick) and is the amount of change in an indicator desired to take place within a specific period of time. Benchmarks provide an opportunity, in a state budgetary process, to guide the allocation of resources and evaluate the effects of policy choices, thus keeping institutions accountable for results.

The goals of Ke Ala Hoku are to create a vision of what Hawaii should be, to develop benchmarks to measure progress in achieving the vision, and to set priorities. To develop that vision, the Ke Ala Hoku Project forged a unique approach to community visioning: they turned to Hawaii's youth. Twelve high school students, who represented the counties in the state and who were recommended by a group of high school science teachers to serve on the Ke Ala Hoku Steering Committee, met to pose a challenge to all the children and youth in the state of Hawaii: "Describe the Hawaii you want to live in." The proposal was distributed to the state Department of Education, private schools, agencies who work with youth, and a variety of other channels.

An estimated 6,000 children and youth across the State of Hawaii responded with their visions describing the kind of Hawaii they wanted for the future. These responses were analyzed by the Youth Steering Committee (described in more detail below), which crafted 13 vision statements. As one member stated: "Every day the adults are making choices that affect our future, and this is the first time we have a chance to make choices that affect us."

Along with the children's vision, the group of students created this introduction:

> On a voyage to the future, who better to chart the course than those who will be living it? The youth of Hawaii have spoken, voicing their description of the future we want to live in. A vision was created from their responses, mapping the course. The voyage must begin now, and all of the people of Hawaii must work together to stay on course to reach this destination. Open your mind and envision the future of Hawaii as the youth see it. Let this vision be the guide on our voyage. This is their future. . . .

Through a process of state-level forums, countywide focus groups, community meetings, and events, the completed vision statement mapped the course in 13 areas: environment, safety, development, economy, education, preservation, society, drugs, native Hawaiians, transportation, recreation, health, and technology. In the second phase of the benchmarking process, 58 critical and core indicators were selected to track progress towards that vision. A data team was formed to find and analyze the baseline data for all indicators. Roundtable discussions were held to refine the indicators. More than 1,000 adults and youth participated in four statewide forums to select these indicators with a report issued for further discussion and distillation.

Early supporters who adopted the Ke Ala Hoku results-driven community planning framework include the Aloha United Way, the YWCA of Oahu, adolescent health programs of the Department of Health, and individual schools and neighborhoods across the state. For example, the Aloha

United Way is building the capacity of its member agencies to benchmark. It has committed to reorganizing its allocation process. The goal is to "allocate 75 percent of funds on the basis of results/outcomes and community benchmarks by the year 2002." It will allocate its campaign money to achieve specific benchmarks towards the Children's Vision.

In April 1998, Ke Ala Hoku launched its second statewide community campaign in partnership with a local television station and major newspaper. (The first was the creation of the Children's Vision and the 58 indicators.) Hawaii residents were asked to rank the 58 critical indicators and choose the top 10. Surveys were made available through daily newspapers, television stations, web sites, and a variety of other distribution methods. More than 5,000 people responded. The top 10 priority indicators were:

- Encourage people to live "Aloha"

- Reduce drug, alcohol, and tobacco use

- Prevent family violence and abuse

- Create more jobs

- Improve the quality of life

- Prevent youth gang activity

- Improve educational achievement

- Increase community and school safety

- Improve behavior toward the environment

- Increase number of competent, caring teachers

An "indicator" measures the progress toward a desired outcome. An "outcome" is the desired result. The 58 critical indicators, and therefore, the 10 top priority indicators measure change toward six preferred outcomes: Aloha Spirit; Safe, Nurturing Social Environment; Healthy Natural Environment; Educated Citizens; Thriving, Diverse Sustainable Economy; Civic Vitality.

Another phase in the process includes developing neighborhood, county, state, and private sector indicators. Ke Ala Hoku is currently working with select pilot communities to develop ways for communities to develop their own sets of indicators, analyze existing data for accuracy and usability, and target action plans. A Hawaii senate resolution passed in 1998 remands a review and report to the 1999 legislature on the status of incorporating the Ke Ala Hoku process of benchmarking into the state's financial and functional plans that comprise the Hawaii State Plan. Although state departments are working with Ke Ala Hoku in refining applicable indicators by measuring the impact of policies on achieving state plan goals, there has been no formal incorporation of the benchmarking system in state plans as yet.

Ke Ala Hóku Critical Indicators Report 1999

Reduce Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use

Indicators	Tracking change	1994	1995	1996	1997	2005	2010
1. Acute drinking (binge drinking)–percent of adults having 5 or more drinks on an occasion, 1 or more times in the past month[1]	worse	15.0	30.5			15.0	14.0
2. Chronic drinking–percent of adults who report having 60 or more drinks a month (an average of 2 or more drinks a day)[2]	no change		9.8			3.5	3.3
3. Percent of high school students who smoked a whole cigarette before age 13[3]	better		28.0		26.0	25.0	20.0
4. Percent of high school students who smoked 1 or more cigarettes in the past 30 days[3]	better		32.4		29.0	25.0	20.0
5. Percent of high school students who smoked marijuana in the past 30 days[3]	worse		24.0		32.0	28.0	25.0
6. Percent of high school students who had first drink of alcohol before age 13[3]	worse		34.0		40.0	35.0	30.0
7. Percent of high school students who had at least 1 drink of alcohol on 1 or more of the last 30 days[3]	no change		40.9		40.0	35.0	30.0
8. Medical risk factors of pregnant women[4]				*			
Alcohol use	no change	1.4				1.0	0.7
Tobacco use	no change	9.6				9.0	8.5
Drug use	no change	1.0				9.0	8.5

Explanation

Drug and alcohol abuse are significantly linked to social and health problems. Alcohol is a major contributing factor in approximately half of all homicides, suicides, and motor vehicle crashes, which are the leading causes of death and disability among young people. Alcohol-related traffic accidents cause serious injury and permanent disability and rank as the leading cause of spinal cord injury among adolescents and young adults. Heavy drinking among youth has been linked to physical fights, destruction of property, academic and job problems, and trouble with law enforcement authorities.

Tobacco is considered the chief preventable cause of death in the United States, accounting for more than one of every five deaths. Smoking causes heart disease; cancers of the lung, larynx, mouth, esophagus, and bladder; stroke; and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Smoking is also related to poor academic performance and the use of alcohol and other drugs. The fact that more than one million youth start smoking regularly each year costs the health care system millions (and perhaps billions) of dollars in preventable medical expenditures during their lifetimes.

In essence, Ke Ala Hoku serves as a management tool for reallocating resources to higher priority items and monitoring progress towards the desired outcomes. It is an accountability mechanism for state and county efforts, which can link community planning at the neighborhood level to the statewide strategic planning goals and help direct community action and policy making on key issues. It is a vehicle for nurturing youth leadership in community benchmarking that attempts to create a genuine partnership between adults and youth.

Ke Ala Hoku Youth Steering Committee

Adult and youth steering committees were formed early in the process to help monitor the project. All the adult partners and youth work together on the overall projects of Ke Ala Hoku, such as the ongoing community forums to develop statewide indicators at the neighborhood level. On special projects, such as the youth summit in October 1998, the Millennium Young People's Congress in October 1999, or the statewide art contest on the Children's Vision, Youth Steering Committee members participate on topic of interest to them. Adult partners volunteer to help mentor the development and implementation of the projects. These efforts involve partnering with other youth service programs, such as the Girls Scouts, Department of Parks and Recreation (city and county), YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Hawaii Youth Services Network, which provide both support from other adults and youth.

Since its inception in 1995, youth on the steering committee have served two-year terms. Members are drawn from throughout the state, from both schools and service organizations. The selection process is open to young people, ages 13 to 18 years old. Youth fill out an application form and are selected by their peers. The maximum size for the Youth Steering Committee is 30 members. A limited number of college-level internships are available.

Accomplishments

The youth serve not as advocates but as conveners of other youth groups. Their task is to look at data and information on what communities need to make informed decisions about youth issues. They have made presentations to the Hawaii State Legislature and community leaders that have galvanized efforts via a legislated resolution that encourages public and private agencies to use outcomes as a basis for policy, program, and budget development relevant to improving the well-being of children, youth, and families in Hawaii.

Ke Ala Hoku youth also worked with the board of education on school safety projects, developed Vision Day Action projects to promote the Ke Ala Hoku benchmarking process, and participated in environmental service work projects. They develop their own projects and have been invited to participate in a variety of strategic projects, such as the international Millennium People's Congress, planned for Hawaii in 1999, as well as in strategic partnerships, such as with the USA National Center for Rescue Mission Planet Earth, a world organization that builds partnerships and collaborations for young people implementing environmental action and sustainable development issues in communities. For example, the youth of the Ke Ala Hoku Steering Committee developed their own peer-to-peer survey on violence and drug use in the schools. Designed, implemented, and analyzed by youth, its format combines graphic symbols with minimal narrative using the local vernacular language (Pidgin) along with traditional survey questions to encourage a broad-based response of all students. Survey results were presented to the board, and the Department of Education, and other interested groups.

A statewide community workshop on safety included a facilitated process to clarify the issues, causes, and effects, and to suggest a course of

action. Key speakers were Alan Atkisson, a founder of Sustainable Seattle, and Kara Palmer, formerly the executive director of Sustainable Seattle, a nationally recognized leader in the community benchmarking movement. Youth Steering Committee members were involved in a YouthMapping process sponsored by the Aloha United Way and the Hawaii Community Foundation. By canvassing neighborhoods, block-by-block, youth surveyed the formal and informal resources available in the community for them and their peers, identified those that were useful to them, and where gaps existed. The evolving map is a dynamic and positive process for changing youth perspectives of themselves and their community, and is itself a resource. At the same time, the YouthMapping process fosters healthy relationships between youth and adults, as well as valuable life skills such as effective communication, team building, presentation, and information gathering.

Na `Opio O Ke Ala Hoku is a youth grant-making program established in Spring 1996 and funded by the Hawaii Community Foundation, with the Ke Ala Hoku Youth Steering Committee serving as the advisory board for the fund. The purpose is for youth to distribute grants to youth programs that target and promote the indicators and to encourage youth volunteerism. The fund has grown to more than $500,000, and more than $67,000 in grants have been awarded to 32 nonprofits and schools. Awards have funded gardens, youth peer education, environmental clean-up, and a variety of service programs.

During the summer of 1998, a new Ke Ala Hoku Youth Steering Committee took over, as former members graduated high school and moved on. Two major projects were undertaken. The first was the first Youth Summit held in Hawaii on October 10, 1998. Funded by a $10,000 grant from the Ronald McDonald House Charities, the youth summit focused on improving the effectiveness of youth volunteerism across the state. Youth oversaw all aspects of designing, planning, and implementing the summit. More than 260 young people and adults attended the all-day program that included a service fair with 23 agencies and workshops on intergenerational guidelines, community benchmarking, and community service.

The second project is the International Millennium Young People's Congress, October 22-30, 1999, which will include representatives from more than 150 countries, including the U.S. The purpose of the project is to forge a global vision, indicators, and action strategy for sustainability in the twenty-first century. Sponsored by Peace Child International, a nonprofit based in London, England, and endorsed by the United Nations, the congress will bring together 1,000 youth ages 15 to 18 as a follow-up to the Rio Earth Summit Agenda 21 held in 1992, which mobilized youth in 120 countries. Ke Ala Hoku will train the Millennium Youth Stewards in collaboration with the Youth for Environmental Services (YES), who will host the congress in Hawaii.

SAN FRANCISCO: THE YOUTH COMMISSION

The Youth Commission was established in November 1995 through a proposition approved by the voters of San Francisco. Its purpose is to advise the Board of Supervisors and the mayor on issues relating to children and youth. The commission operates under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors and is a program item in the board's budget. The Youth Commission consists of 17 voting members between the ages of 12 and 23 years at the time of appointment. It is a youth-run and youth-led organization providing a voice for youth in city government. Youth learn leadership and decision-making skills, invaluable experience about city government, and ways to empower others.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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www.ci.sf.ca.us/youth_commission

Membership

Each member of the board and the mayor appoints one member to the commission. The mayor appoints an additional five members from under-represented communities to ensure the commission represents the diversity of the city. Commission members are selected who, according to Article VI, Sec. 4.123(a) of the city charter, "have an understanding of the needs of young people in San Francisco, or experience with children and youth programs or youth organizations, or involvement with school or community activities." Representation reflects the diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of the City and County of San Francisco.

Mission

The main objective of the commission is to act as a bridge between the youth of San Francisco and the formal political arena. Its purpose is to collect all information relevant to advising the board and mayor on the impacts of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets on the children and youth of San Francisco. The commission reviews for comment and recommendations on any matter that primarily affects children and youth prior to the Board of Supervisors taking final action.

The commission's duties and functions are to:

• Identify concerns and needs of children and youth; examine existing social, economic, educational, and recreational programs for children and youth; develop and propose plans that support or improve these programs; and make recommendations to the mayor and the Board of Supervisors.

• Identify the unmet needs of San Francisco's children and youth through personal contact with these young people, school officials, church leaders, and others; and hold public forums in which both youth and adults are encouraged to participate.

• Elicit the interest, support, and mutual cooperation of private groups and citywide neighborhood planning efforts for children, youth, and families that initiate and sponsor recommendations that address the social, economic, educational, and recreational needs of children and youth in San Francisco. Advise the mayor and Board of Supervisors about how such recommendations could be coordinated in the community to eliminate duplication in cost and effort.

• Advise about available sources of governmental and private funding for youth programs.

• Submit recommendations to the mayor and Board of Supervisors about juvenile crime prevention, job opportunities for youth, recreational activities for teenagers, opportunities for effective participation by youth in the governmental process, and changes in city and county regulations that are necessary to improve the social, economic, educational, and recreational advantages of children and youth.

• Respond to requests for comments and recommendations on matters referred to the commission by officers, departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and advisory committees of the City and County of San Francisco.

Accomplishments

Since its inception, the commission has developed various partnerships and collaborations with community-based organizations throughout the City of San Francisco. As part of their outreach to youth, the commission

meets monthly in the community at a variety of venues: schools, youth-serving agencies, and juvenile hall. Youth commissioners have initiated all the projects and task forces and taken the lead in all matters, including hiring staff (including the director) to budget managing. Their knowledge of government has been shaped by on-the-job experiences.

In May 1997, the Youth Commission sponsored a youth-focused, youth-run, and youth-led conference along with the Mayor's Office of Children, Youth, and Their Families (MYOCYF). The Youth Empowerment Conference, developed and organized by and for young people, attracted more than 1,300 youth and service providers. The objectives were to:

- highlight successful youth leaders and give them a public forum, educate and inspire participants with a variety of resources and networking opportunities;

- provide input to the Mayor's Five-Year Children and Youth Plan and increase youth participation in city government policy development and planning;

- develop new youth leadership; and

- empower the young people in San Francisco.

The Youth Empowerment Agenda focused on youth-initiated projects in the community, youth on government/community planning and review boards, and neighborhood-based youth councils and leadership.

The all-day conference, attended by more than 1,200 young people, included workshops with topics addressing such issues as anti-violence, policy and advocacy, entrepreneurship, young women's issues, juvenile justice, drugs and alcohol, HIV and AIDS, lesbian and gay youth, peer resources, gardening internships, and how adults can play a supportive role in guiding young people to positions of leadership. Other conference activities included a resource fair, featuring more than 70 youth-serving organizations, neighborhood networking sessions, and an evening empowerment jam and a music industry network exhibition featuring local professionals who could speak to young people interested in a career in the music industry. A youth survey and a youth needs assessment developed by the Youth Commission and MYOCYF was distributed at the conference. The second Youth Empowerment Conference was held May 22, 1999, and attracted more than 500 participants. It featured workshops on numerous topics, including service learning, dating violence, tobacco myths and facts, housing and homelessness, issues related to children ages 1 through 5, youth empowerment, sexual health, and youth legal rights.

Youth commissioners helped plan the 1998 Mayor's Children and Youth Summit sponsored by MYOCYF. The purpose of the summit was to develop a long-term strategy to make San Francisco more responsive to the needs of children, youth, and families. Commissioners also participated in the six community summits held at schools in different neighborhoods throughout the city. The commission also evaluated the Children's Services Plan, which is the annual plan for implementing the San Francisco Children's Fund. The fund, established in 1991, requires the city to set aside a portion of tax revenues for funding children's services until the year 2002. Commissioners assisted the mayor's office in the development of Youth Works, a new youth employment program, to ensure that youth have a voice in planning and participating in the program. Youth Works matches job-ready youth with trained career mentors in any of the 65 city departments. Other projects included:
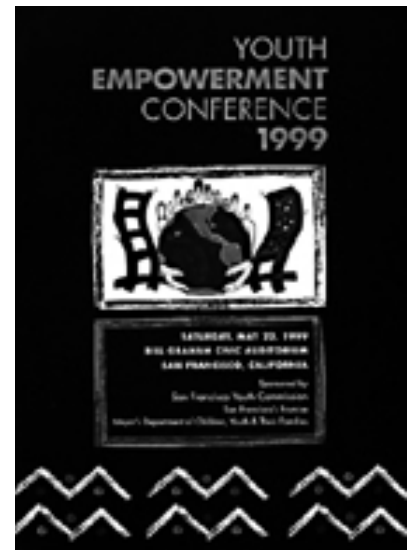
- developing Youth Line, a call-in telephone and online service for young people to learn about services and resources in the community from their own peers;

- testifying before the Board of Supervisors;

- helping to plan skateboard parks in the city; and

- participating in various trainings and public forums.

The Youth Commission has helped create two tasks forces: the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Queer (LGBTQQ) Youth Task Force and the Sexual Assault Against Girls and Young Women Task Force. LGBTQQ Youth Task Force, established in summer 1998, is the result of a hearing held by the Youth Commission and the Human Rights Commission in fall 1996 to examine the needs of LGBTQQ youth in San Francisco. Six of the 15 voting members are appointed by the Youth Commission, with three members appointed by the Human Rights Commission, five members by the Board of Supervisors, and one member appointed by the mayor. The task force includes six nonvoting members representing city departments and the San Francisco Unified School District. The mission is to develop a plan for specific city departments to implement based on recommendations from the 1996 Human Rights Commission hearing concerning the needs of LGBTQQ youth. Current projects include development of legislation to mandate sensitivity training for all employees or volunteers who work directly with youth and whose agencies receive money from the city, and development of an emergency shelter for LGBTQQ youth.

The Task Force on Sexual Assault of Girls and Young Women is composed of an Adult Advisory Council and a Young Women's Council. The Young Women's Council consists of young women between the ages of 9 and 24. The task force assesses, evaluates, and reports on prevention and intervention services available in San Francisco and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning possible changes in service needs. As a youth-led and youth-developed task force, the Adult Advisory Council members, who represent city departments and community organizations, serve as mentors and resources for the Young Women's Council. It is an opportunity to improve services as well as to develop leadership skills. The Sexual Assault Task Force is working with the For Girls Coalition to help them apply for a TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) grant to provide sexual assault training for young women.

Another project is the Youth Initiated Project (YIP), which empowers young people in the San Francisco community by providing needed support to turn project ideas into action. Young people with creative community solutions apply to YIP, partner with an adult ally, and may access YIP staff training or technical assistance for their application. A review board, comprised of a majority of young people, selects the projects to provide funding support. YIP is a collaborative venture of the Youth Commission, the Youth Leadership Institute, Linking San Francisco, and the San Francisco Volunteer Center, and is funded in part by the Mayor's Office of Children, Youth, and Their Families.

Since the first funding cycle in summer 1998, YIP has given an estimated $100,000 to 50 youth-led organizations in three funding rounds. Ninety-three groups of young people have applied to YIP for a total request of $250,000. Specific neighborhoods are targeted for potential funding, selected for criteria like number of young people in the neighborhood, diversity of youth, and the amount of violence in the community. Youth projects funded include camping trips for urban kids, poetry nights, youth

microbusiness, training on the justice system for young women, oral histories with seniors, an arts publication, and bilingual workshops.

According to ex-Commissioner Kent Khounsombath, formerly Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs, a number of key elements help a community create a policy-making youth commission like San Francisco's.

- Adults need to give power to young people.

- Youth advocates are vital to lobby for establishing a youth commission.

- Networking and coalition building are critical tools for developing the platform for a youth commission.

Once a youth commission is established, it is necessary to:

- build a constituency;

- institute accountability

- establish a solid working relationship with the adult decision makers

- change the perception of youth by example

- leverage resources

- be sensitive to the political environment

- create opportunities for other youth in government

- provide ways for business to support youth

- network with the community to define youth issues; and

- bridge the political gap between youth and government**.**

TORONTO: THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ADVISORY BOARD

In 1991, encouraged by the success of the Kidsviews project (see Part 2 of this report), which was considered a key component of the Cityplan '91 review, and by the interest generated by the initiative, the Toronto Planning and Development Department recommended to the city council that a young people's advisory board be established. The board would be a living classroom for first-hand experience in learning planning and political realities, and would serve as a catalyst for creative problem solving. City Hall would become more accessible and at the same time benefit from fresh, new viewpoints. The board would be modeled after similar programs in Seattle and Edmonton.

The Toronto City Council directed the Healthy City office to set up a young people's advisory board, targeted to young people ages 12 to 24. In 1992, the board was initially established as a two-year pilot program to advise the council "on issues pertaining to youth in Toronto and advocate for the rights of young people at the municipal level."

Membership

 "Youth" is defined by the City of Toronto as continuing "up to age 24." To ensure adequate representation to reflect the broad range of youth interests and the socioeconomic and ethno-racial backgrounds, board membership includes the following:

- One youth active in a community group

- Two youth in care

- Two street youth

- Two working youth

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The advocate for the Young People's Advisory Board is:

Councillor Olivia Chow
Children and Youth Advocate
Council Members Offices
2d Floor
100 Queen Street, W.
Suite C50
Toronto M5H 2N2
416-392-4044
416-392-4120 (fax)

- Four youth from the secondary schools

- One youth from a grade 7 and 8 school

- Two youth from a post-secondary institution

- one representative from the Toronto Area School Councils (TASC)

- one youth worker

- one (or more) staff person(s) from any city department in Toronto

The same system that applies to all committees set up in the City of Toronto applies to establishing the board: a person interested in the Youth Board applies and a selection committee of youth and other members select and interview participants. To supplement the diverse views fostered by the make-up of the board, surveys are used, on an ongoing basis, to solicit concerns and comments from elementary schools (grades 6 and below), grades 7 and 8, high schools, and postsecondary institutions (e.g., colleges, technical institutes, etc.).

Structure and Procedures of Operation

The key issue identified during the inception of the Young People's Advisory Board was the need to place the board within the City of Toronto's organizational structure to ensure the appropriate linkages between the board and council and the various department programs subsumed in city government. The Healthy City Project, with its three priority areas--equity, environment, and economy--was the logical umbrella. It was well-positioned within the government structure in the chief administrative office. And the types of issues addressed by the Healthy City initiative are the issues identified as specific youth concerns.

The staff in the Healthy City office serves as the general information resource on the City of Toronto and its bureaucracy, keeping the Young People's Advisory Board members current on the issues related to the board's priorities being addressed via the council process. At the same time, the staff works with the board to identify the opportunities for board input into the political process. Healthy City staff also link the advisory board to the appropriate department or committee for board issues that are not being addressed through the council approval process, which helps to pull together the required information and other resources to work with the board. Consequently, the corporate director, Healthy City Project, through the Healthy City office, is responsible for managing the board, with the accountability for ensuring the board's success shared throughout city government.

Accomplishments

Toronto's Young People's Advisory Board serves as an innovative way of fostering responsible citizenship and civic participation and awareness and as an effective youth forum that spans across Canada. The board has taken leadership in facilitating speak-out events and forums to identify youth issues and to empower youth with the skills and confidence to make themselves heard in critical areas such as youth unemployment, homelessness, affordable education, violence, and youth empowerment. Youth Power Speak Out is a workshop series designed to empower young people to create change at the municipal level.

Board members have also developed partnerships, made presentations, facilitated workshops, participated in conferences, and helped to raise funds to promote and galvanize the community around addressing these issues.

In anticipation of the formation of the "Megacity," the youth board, along with other youth organizations that support youth in decision making, created workshops to mobilize young citizens for the elections for the new city council. These workshops explored the impact of the changing political environment on young people's lives and the importance of using the power of youth to participate in the political system and mobilizing other youth to vote. The workshops help youth practice skills and techniques in public speaking as a tool for communicating youth perspectives to others.

Ange Valentini, former co-chair of the board, described the latest urban phenomenon in Toronto: Squeegee Kids (young people who offer to wash the windows of automobiles at major city intersections).

> We found a diverse group of youth from different backgrounds and with varying degrees of education. However, there were several striking similarities among the people we interviewed. All of them viewed "squeegeeing" as a form of employment. They all believed that squeegeeing was their only alternative to begging . . . . The young people we spoke with were taking responsibility for initiating a positive change in their lives. . . . We need innovation and new solutions.

On January 1, 1998, the amalgamation of the City of Toronto with six other municipalities created a new unified City of Toronto, the fifth largest city in North America. Created by the Ontario government through legislation, this new governmental entity extends the youth board's outreach.

TYPAB no longer exists. A new system has emerged. To bring the youth initiatives from the six municipalities together, the mayor appointed a Children and Youth Committee with a youth advocate position filled by a local councillor. The 35-member Children and Youth Action Committee (CYAC), made up of City Council members, school trustees, and community representatives who work with children, is the vehicle for focusing a coordinated approach on the well-being of children and youth in Toronto. Chaired by the Children and Youth Advocate, CYAC's mandate is to develop a civic Strategy for Children that invests in children as a top priority and promotes and coordinates the cooperation of the various sectors that provide services to children and families.

To represent the voice of young people, a Youth Cabinet was established. Members reflect the diverse ethnic and geographical makeup of the new city. The Cabinet reports to CYAC and has a core group of youth that serve as a steering committee. Membership on the Youth Cabinet is open to all youth ages 15-24. The Cabinet continues to lobby councillors on policy issues, conducts protests, and develops initiatives and projects, such as youth assemblies, newsletters, and a website.

REFLECTIONS

In each of these communities, young people involve themselves in intergenerational partnerships. The perception is that there is a degree of mutual respect and shared responsibility. This reflects Hart's eighth rung of the ladder of participation; namely, these programs involve child-initiated, shared decisions with adults. Young people involved in these programs have shown the confidence and competence to directly participate with adults in shaping policies that affect their lives and others in the community. Adults view youth as resources with information to direct public problem solving. Intergenerational partnerships are instrumental in building the civic infrastructure, or the ability to work together to mobilize resources for a common purpose.

Although these youth initiatives operate in institutional settings, there are notable differences in organizational structure. Both San Francisco

and Toronto formalized and, therefore, legitimized the role of youth par-
ticipation in governance. They recognize that public policy benefits from
the input of young people. By placing the Youth Commission under the
jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors, San Francisco has ensured the
long-term viability and credibility of the youth voice in the political arena.
The demise of TYPAB shows the impact that a changing political environ-
ment can have on a Youth Advisory Board not strategically positioned
and, therefore, left vulnerable. The partnership in Ke Ala Hoku specifically
integrates business with the non-profit world, creating a less structured,
perhaps, more fluid youth participation initiative. However, its approach
to policy making via benchmarking community priorities towards a vision
of the future anchors the youth initiative in a potent and ongoing role in
public decision making.

Part 5

Conclusions

We have considered several approaches to involving young people in the community planning and decision-making process. These examples varied in the degree of genuine participation by the children and youth.

The common approach was an adult-initiated activity (Hart 1992) with varying degrees of shared decision making with the young constituents. The Seattle Young People's Project is the only clear example what has become an evolving youth-initiated and directed organization. The fact that the organization is a significant voice in the community may be attributable to the environment of the City of Seattle, which by the sheer number of youth empowerment groups in place, appears to have established a culture of youth participation.

Some of the cultural limitations to young people's participation at the decision-making level are:

- a lack of interest by adults in the input of children or youth;

- an expectation that young people do not have the same competence in communicating as adults and, therefore, may be ignored, or must be directed or controlled;

- the difference in realities between adolescents and adults;

- the projections by adults of their fears and uncertainty upon children; and

- a lack of understanding of how young people process information during their different stages of development.

The quality of the feedback received as a result of these types of initiatives confirms the wealth of fresh ideas and the many practical suggestions that young people have to offer. There is obviously much to learn from the young. Their contributions should be viewed within the lens of age-specific differences in the way they perceive the world and their intelligence. As children evolve from infancy to adolescence, each phase of their development and growth is reflected in the unique voice that they contribute to the public dialogue. Every effort must be made to make the connections with the young: providing them with a more active voice and role in our communities, including them, hearing them, and actually acting upon what they share, and most of all, allowing them to contribute to the best of their ability. When given the opportunity, young people will assume the greater responsibility that comes with a greater voice.

Futurist Charles Johnston points out that "the pace of change today means children walk in realities their parents have never experienced and

often have a hard time imagining." He suggests that we need to appreciate the gifts that youth have to offer, especially as they address the unique challenges and uncertain times that confront us. We must forge opportunities for young people to attain civic competence, so they can help tackle the issues that test our nation's resolve. Educator George Woods puts it succinctly when he states that

> We need young people engaged as democratic citizens. . .(who) will have the ability to use academic skills to make a difference in the world; a sense of the importance and value of their contribution to their community; a commitment to fundamental democratic values such as equity, justice, and cooperation; and the self-confidence tempered with empathy that it takes to act on behalf of the common good.

Frances Moore Lappé and Paul Martin Du Bois concur:

> We become full citizens by doing. . . . We become full citizens by engaging with others, defining our own interests while we uncover their interests. We become full citizens as we gain confidence --- confidence that we do have something important to contribute. . . . "

In recent years, we, as a nation, have confronted the uncertainty and uneasiness over the growth of the new global economy. Much of what is occurring today in our society is undermining our sense of community: downsizing, re-engineered jobs, the growing disparities between winners and losers in the marketplace. In *Habits of the Heart*, the authors assert:

> We are facing trends that threaten our basic sense of solidarity with others: solidarity with those near to us (loyalty to neighbors, colleagues at work, fellow townsfolk), nominally in situations very different from our own, those of other nations. Yet this solidarity—this sense of connection, shared fate, mutual responsibility, community—is more critical now than ever. It is solidarity, trust, mutual responsibility that allows human communities to deal with threats and take advantage of opportunities. How can we strengthen these endangered capacities, which are first of all cultural capacities to think in certain ways

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The following resources provide a wealth of ideas for developing community planning projects and activities to involve children and youth. Most of them are available through APA Planners Bookstore in Chicago, 312-431-9100, or the American Institute of Architecture Bookstore in Washington, D.C.

APA *Resources* Newsletter. A quarterly publication for anyone interested in teaching children about planning. Each issue highlights exemplary programs in both formal and informal educational settings. Besides traditional planning, the newsletter covers resources and programs in environmental education, historic preservation, design, architecture, archaeology, and a variety of facets of the built environment. Selected articles can be found online at www.planing.org, or call 312-431-9100.

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433. GIS: Assessing Your Needs and Choosing a System. Lyna L. Wiggins and Steven P. French. August 1991. 28pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

434. Personnel Practices in Planning Offices. Carolyn M. R. Kennedy. August 1991. 24pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

435. Electromagnetic Fields and Land-Use Controls. Louis Slesin, Matthew Connelly, and David Bergman. December 1991. 20pp. $26; PAS subscribers $13.

437. Airport Noise Regulations. Vince Papsidero. May 1992. 16pp. $26; PAS subscribers $13.

438. Innovative Tools for Historic Preservation. Marya Morris. September 1992. 44pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

440. Staying Inside the Lines: Urban Growth Boundaries. V. Gail Easley. November 1992. 32pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

441. Affordable Housing: Proactive and Reactive Planning Strategies. S. Mark White. December 1992. 76pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

442. Capital Improvements Programs: Linking Budgeting and Planning. Robert A. Bowyer. January 1993. 56pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

443. Selecting and Retaining a Planning Consultant: RFQs, RFPs, Contracts, and Project Management. Eric Damian Kelly. February 1993. 44pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

444. Industrial Performance Standards for a New Century. James Schwab. March 1993. 68pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

445. Manufactured Housing Site Development Guide. Welford Sanders. April 1993. 46pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

446. Tree Conservation Ordinances: Land-Use Regulations Go Green. Christopher Duerksen with Suzanne Richman. August 1993. 108pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

447. Planning, Growth, and Public Facilities: A Primer for Local Officials. Eric Damian Kelly. September 1993. 32pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

448/449. The Transportation/Land Use Connection. Terry Moore and Paul Thorsnes. January 1994. 140pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

450. Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan. Bradford White and Richard Roddewig. March 1994. 58pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

451. Planning for an Aging Society. Deborah A. Howe, Nancy J. Chapman, and Sharon A. Baggett. April 1994. 64pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

452. Saving Face: How Corporate Franchise Design Can Respect Community Identity. Ronald Lee Fleming. June 1994. 72pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

453. Presentation Graphics. Richard Langendorf. January 1995. 80pp. $30; PAS subscribers $15.

454. Design Review. Mark L. Hinshaw. February 1995. 34pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

455. Neighborhood-Based Planning: Five Case Studies. Wendelyn A. Martz. March 1995. 34pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

456. Traffic Calming. Cynthia L. Hoyle. July 1995. 28pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

457/458. A Guide to Wellhead Protection. Jon Witten and Scott Horsley with Sanjay Jeer and Erin K. Flanagan. August 1995. 104pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

459. Bicycle Facility Planning. Suzan Anderson Pinsof and Terri Musser. October 1995. 44pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

460. Preparing a Conventional Zoning Ordinance. Charles A. Lerable. December 1995. 61pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

461. Performance Standards in Growth Management. Douglas Porter, ed. January 1996. 44pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

462/463 Modernizing State Planning Statutes: The Growing Smart^{SM} Working Papers. Volume 1. March 1996. 190pp. $24; PAS subscribers $12.

464. Planners' Salaries and Employment Trends. Marya Morris. July 1996. 25pp. $28; PAS subscribers $14.

465. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances and Transportation Management. S. Mark White. August 1996. 80pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

466. Planning for Hillside Development. Robert B. Olshansky. November 1996. 50pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

467. A Planners Guide to Sustainable Development. Kevin J. Krizek and Joe Power. December 1996. 66pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

468. Creating Transit-Supportive Land-Use Regulations. Marya Morris, ed. December 1996. 76pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

469. Gambling, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation. Christopher Chadbourne, Philip Walker, and Mark Wolfe. March 1997. 56pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

470/471. Habitat Protection Planning: Where the Wild Things Are. Christopher J. Duerksen, Donald L. Elliott, N. Thompson Hobbs, Erin Johnson, and James R. Miller. May 1997. 82pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

472. Converting Storefronts to Housing: An Illustrated Guide. July 1997. 88pp. $34; PAS subscribers $17.

473. Subdivision Design in Flood Hazard Areas. Marya Morris. September 1997. 62pp. $32; PAS subscribers $16.

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