

Can You Hear Me Now? Historical References to Youth Involvement and Strategies for Successful Youth Engagement



Presenters:

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Facilitator:

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Nothing About us Without Us!



Polling Question...

We'd like to know who's on the webinar?

Overview

The Webinar will start with a historical perspective on the overall youth movement, highlighting key influencing organizations, including Youth 'N Action!, one of the first SOC youth leadership organizations from Washington State.

The Webinar will then discuss the importance and impact that youth voice has, and will end with an overview current youth organizations and projects that are leading the way for youth voice and choice of the future!

Historical Perspective

- * 1874 – Mary Ellen Wilson
- * 1960s-1970s – Theory begins identifying childhood and adolescence as important and unique developmental periods
- * <1981 – IFCO – Youth participants at International Conference; 1988 Youth Track

Historical Perspective

- * 1989 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - * Habashi (2010) – three dimensions of the Human Development Index (HDI) of 2008: life expectancy, educational index, and GDP
- * 1990's – Positive Youth Development
 - * Karen Pittman
 - * To, For, With
- * 2000's – Youth involvement programs, policy, and research

National Perspective

- * Youth involvement has been developing simultaneously across various systems at different times
- * 4-H
- * Child Welfare: National Resource Center for Youth Development, Foster Club, Foster Care Alumni of America
- * Systems of Care: youth-guided principle, youth groups, Youth MOVE National, Youth 'N Action

Polling Question...

Why Did Dinosaurs Become Extinct?





Youth 'N Action!



Youth 'N Action is a Statewide youth advocacy program housed within the Evidence Based Practice Institute at the University of Washington. Youth 'N Action brings youth voice to public policy. Through leadership and peer support Youth N Action empowers at risk youth ages 14-24 to make positive differences in their lives, communities and systems that serve youth.



Nothing About Us Without Us!

This familiar battle cry is true for the youth in Youth 'N Action, MY LIFE, YOUTH POWER, YOUTH MOVE and many other youth organizations across the nation. We have moved forward! We fully participate in revolutionizing the mental health care system by reducing stigma and advocating for youth empowerment.



Positive Youth Development – *In order to enrich the system through youth involvement, we must enrich the lives of the youth we involve*

The positive youth development (PYD) approach is a way of thinking, living, and acting as individuals and as a community. As adults and youth, we should expect more from young people and provide them with opportunities to give more and become more.

“Youth involvement In Systems of Care: A Guide to Empowerment” - Eva Dech, Mike Friedman, Rachel Freed, Bianca Jay, Stephanie Lane M.S.W, and Dally Sanchez.

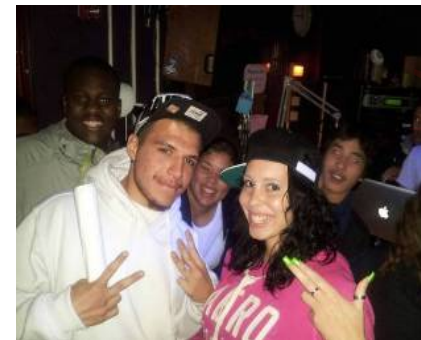


Youth 'N Action - Leadership Meetings

Bi Monthly All Regional Networks

Meeting Topics Include: Youth Advocacy Opportunities, Regional Activities, Training Development, Program Development, Leadership Training, Special Guests, Special Topics such as:

Youth Peer Support, Leadership and Advocacy – Radio Show – *State of the Youth (not union) 2012* (FAB-5 Radio KUPS 90.1)



Speakers Bureau



Speak Out Against Stigma

Youth share their stories with policy makers, service providers, community members and other youth in order to reduce stigma and provide education around issues that affect youth

Activities

- * Presentations
- * Youth Panels
- * Digital Story Telling
- * Legislative Testimonies
- * Sharing Personal Stories
- * Work Shops
- * Attend Policy and Planning Meetings



Artistic Expression Youth 'N Action Drama Team



Life is Not a Game

Powerful dramatic presentations on the issues that affect youth and youth in transition.



Youth 'N Action Fitness Team 2012

Fitness for Mental Health and Cultivating Resiliency

- * Youth 'N Action established a fitness team for youth leaders to engage in healthy activities on a weekly basis.
- * Fitness team leaders trained for 5 months in cross-fit and completed a 5K Mud obstacle course...

Warrior Dash



Advocate for Opportunities to Partner, Collaborate and Create!



Youth and Family Peer Counseling Curriculum Development Work Group

- Created Washington State's First Youth and Family Peer Counseling Training Manual
- Workgroup comprised of Youth, Families, Providers and System Partners
- Holds true to the value "Nothing about us without us"



Establish Partnerships with other youth serving organizations to expand your work NOT reinvent the wheel – No compete!

We are better united than divided – Youth Involvement does not work in silos



YNA has many partners which helps us not duplicate youth advocacy efforts. An example is Unleash the Brilliance (UTB) which provides youth advocates a way to share their stories and provide peer support in Truancy Workshops for Youth and Families



Polling Question – Where is your community on the ladder of participation?

Ladder of Youth Participation

Maximum Youth Involvement/Youth As Partners

Ladder of Youth Voice



8. Youth/Adult Equity
7. Completely Youth-Driven
6. Youth/Adult Equality
5. Youth Consulted
4. Youth Informed
3. Tokenism
2. Decoration
1. Manipulation



Assessment

- * Inventory of Adult Attitudes and Behaviors: Instrument for examining youth adult partnerships
- * Loftquist and Miller, 1989
- * Assesses level of attitude toward youth
 - * Objects – ‘to’
 - * Recipients – ‘for’
 - * Resources – ‘with’
- * Can be used for assessing person or organization
- * Google ‘Inventory of Adult Attitudes and Behaviors’ – it’s available online!

Knowing the Value of Youth Voice

- * It is crucial that Federal, State and local systems that serve youth, understand the value of youth voice and invest resources in developing, maintaining and sustaining youth involvement.
- * Our latest advocacy effort is to get Washington State Officials to understand youth voice is not just there when the system needs it, it is here to stay and it is apart of our system.



Polling Question

Are there activities that are happening in your community that are about youth without youth???



Address the Elephant in the Room!

*Where is the youth?! –
“Nothing about us
without us”*

*How can we get them
involved?*

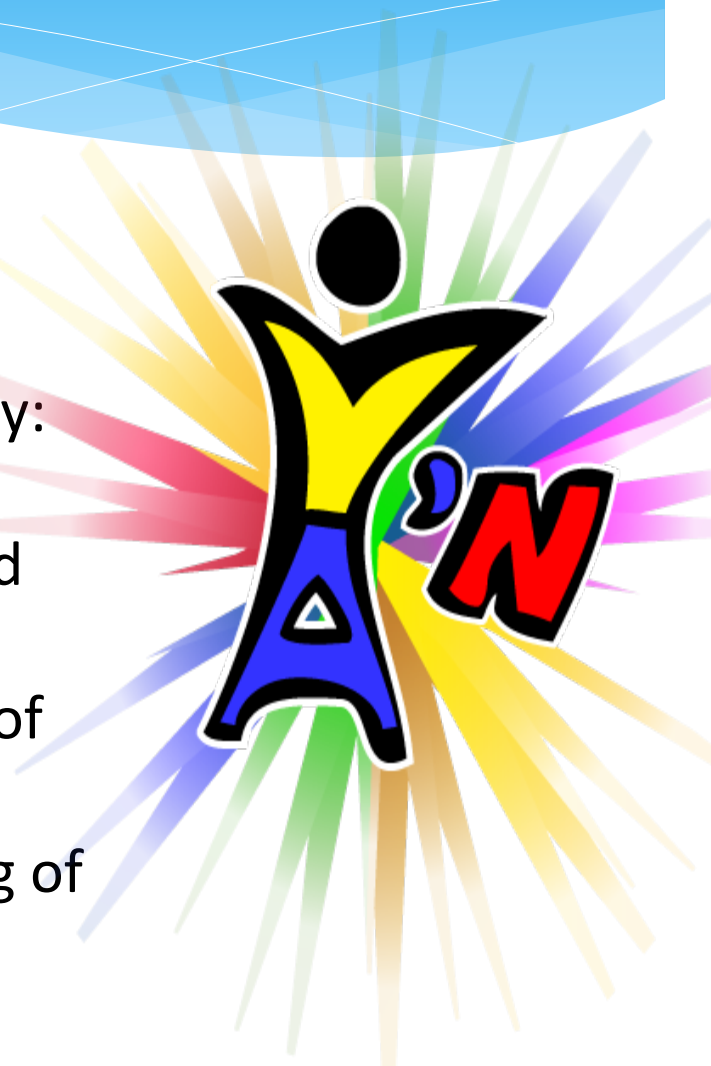
*What kind of Support
do we need to
provide?*

*How do we educate
them and get them up
to speed?*



Adultism

Adultism is the addiction to the attitudes, ideas, beliefs, and actions of adults. It is a major concept in the organization of society: Adultism prevails in every sector, including government, education, social services, and families. It's defeat is often seen as a bad thing, as adults are generally only capable of seeing their own abilities as those that are truly *needed* to the function and well-being of our world.



SOME of the things we advocate for..and against:

FOR

- * Youth Rights
- * Dignity and Respect
- * Youth and Adult Partnerships
- * Positive Youth Development
- * Age of consent
- * Voter registration in schools
- * Inclusion of youth in all policy and service level decisions that affect lives.

AGAINST

- * Adultism
- * Behavior Modification Camps
- * Age discrimination
- * Being incarcerated for not committing a crime (BECCA BILL)
- * Exclusion of youth in the decision making that affects their lives



Youth Need YOU!

Similar to the adult consumer movement the youth movement is always evolving and while we have developed respectful meaningful relationships with family organizations there is still a piece of the advocacy puzzle missing.

We need adult advocates to educate us about the mental health recovery movement and mentor us to take their place when the time comes



Moving Forward

We were able to provide many excellent examples of how youth are involved in WA State the battle to sustain and expand youth involvement is ongoing...



State and federal support to family and youth organizations is crucial to their survival.

Numerous studies (e.g., Koroloff & Briggs, 1996; Federation of Families, 2003; Hoagwood et al., 2010) have documented the challenge faced by family and youth advocacy organizations in sustaining funding.

Research shows that few survive without state and federal support.



Challenges

- * Youth and Family organizations often dissolve when grants end
- * Youth and Family organizations often get cut first when the gov't has to implement budget cuts
- * System progress will regress if youth and family voice is not substantiated and considered an integral part of system reform



Perhaps the most important point is to understand the impact youth involvement has on youth

During the “State of the Youth 2012” Leadership meeting youth stated: “youth advocacy and peer support programs....”

- * Give youth an outlet to think positively
- * Help with self-discovery
- * Meet youth where they are at and help them go places
- * Give youth healthy relationships
- * Keep youth out of trouble
- * Promote self-worth
- * Reduce Stigma – youth do not have to feel alone or ashamed of what they are going through
- * Bring positive qualities out of youth
- * Show people that youth are not products of their environment – that they can be better
- * Provide structure and a positive place to grow
- * Give youth something to be a part of and proud of
- * Empower youth to take charge of their recovery
- * Help youth help others ... so they are more able to help themselves



Technical Assistance



Areas of Expertise:

Youth Engagement
Youth Peer Support
Youth Involvement
Youth & Family Partnerships
Youth & Provider Partnerships
Youth Involvement in Systems of Care
Youth Leadership Development
Digital Story Telling
Youth Driven Program Development
Youth Driven Evaluation

If you want to get more information on youth involvement or start your own youth organization please contact us and we can help!

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Contact us

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Questions?

