Youth Empowerment as a Framework for Creating Community Change

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Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

September 23, 2015 (10:15 – 11:45am)
Attendees will be able to:

1. Identify the research surrounding effective strategies for youth-led programming.

2. Summarize two evidence-based frameworks that support youth-led programming.

3. Conceptualize a youth-led program utilizing the Youth Empowerment Conceptual Framework (Holden et al., 2004) and the Strategic Prevention Framework (SAMHSA).
Why Youth-Led Programming?

- YLP represents a sound investment through meaningful youth involvement in community prevention efforts.
- YLP has been viewed as a substance abuse prevention program.
- YLP is a comprehensive approach to addressing the emotional and behavioral health of youth and young adults.
Communicating the Value of YLP

- How do we communicate the value of our work to the people we need to support us?
- How can we garner legitimacy and support for YLP?
- How can we purposefully and intentionally structure YLP so that they get to outcomes?
Ohio’s Current Youth-Led Initiatives

We implemented the SPF and found:

- **(Capacity):** Workforce development needed
- **(Evaluation):** Lack of outcomes tracking
- **(Planning):** YLP not operationalized
- **(Sustainability):** Disconnect among YLP
- **(Capacity):** Science of YLP
To create an evidence-informed framework for youth-led programming in Ohio that is evaluable and sustainable.
Young people will collectively engage in a planning process to create and implement a strategic plan that uses evidence-based strategies to create community-level change.
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Change on Three Levels

ADULT GUIDED:
1. Individual
2. Group

YOUTH LED:
3. Community

In our process, we identified:

- Parallels to community coalition work
- Capacity among Ohio’s prevention workforce to do this type of work
- Use of a planning process specific to substance abuse prevention (Strategic Prevention Framework)
Community Change

1. Is the SPF the answer?
2. What is the goal?

Young people will collectively engage in a planning process to create and implement a strategic plan that uses evidence-based strategies to create community-level change.
Pilot Project: OYLPN Youth Council
1. How were the young people able to create their own plan for community-level change?

2. How can we empower young people to become agents of change in their communities?

3. How can we develop capacity within young people to engage in this work?

4. Is the SPF “alone” enough?
“Innovative youth development and social justice strategy that trains young people in community organizing and advocacy, and assists them in employing those skills to alter power relations and create meaningful institutional change in their communities.”

(Funder’s Collaborative on Youth Organizing, 2009)
THE OHIO YOUTH-LED PREVENTION NETWORK
ADULT LEADER SUMMIT

Creating Opportunities for Youth to Lead:
THE CRITICAL ROLE OF ADULT ALLIES

December 5, 2014
2014 Adult Leader Summit

THE OHIO YOUTH-LED PREVENTION NETWORK
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Individual Goals

Youth members:

- have knowledge of effective prevention strategies (e.g. CSAP strategies)
- believe in their own ability to create community change
- demonstrate leadership skills
- demonstrate an ability to work with others to create change
Group members:

- Develop close relationships with each other
- Remain committed to the youth council
- Engage in collective decision making
- Believe they can work together to create change
- Feel proud to be a part of the youth council
Figure 1. Youth empowerment conceptual framework.

Holden et al., 2004
Empowerment

The process by which individuals gain influence of events and outcomes of importance to them. (Rappaport, 1984)
“Prevention has begun moving away from preventing something negative from happening to a new paradigm, which emphasizes the need to promote positive youth development via youth empowerment.”

(Kim et al., 1998, p. 5)
Youth Empowerment

- Views youth as a resource rather than a collection of problems
- Focuses on fostering support via developmentally appropriate experiences and resources
- Provides a means for youth to develop a stable, positive identity by providing them an opportunity to participate in a variety of roles that allow them to experiment and better define their identity.

Cahill & Pitts (1997); Chinman & Linney (1998); Rappaport et al. (1984); Zimmerman (1990, 1995, 2000)
Youth Empowerment

- Building young people’s skills so they can participate in social and political affairs that are important to them.
  - Key: Allowing authentic opportunities for youth to participate in decision-making
- As a result, youth feel like they are able to influence the social and political systems that affect their lives.
Figure 1. Youth empowerment conceptual framework.
Key Points

- The Youth Empowerment Conceptual Framework (Holden et al., 2004) is NOT a "model for YLP."
- The Holden Model IS a framework to conceptualize YLP so that it can be evaluated.
- The Holden Model gives us a mechanism to show what YLP looks like in practice.
If the **overarching goal** for your YLP is that young people will engage in a planning process to create and implement a strategic plan that uses evidence-based strategies to create community-level change ... ... what **evidence-informed frameworks** can we use to get to that goal?
1. Strategic Prevention Framework (SAMHSA)
2. Youth Empowerment Conceptual Framework (YECF; Holden et al., 2004)
Two Underpinning Frameworks


The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services funds the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG).
Two Underpinning Frameworks

From YECF:
• Structure and group processes by which adult allies promote and assist YP in developing the necessary 21st Century Learning Skills to carry out community change

From the SPF:
• Structure for which adult allies support and assist YP in planning and implementing an evidence-based strategy to create community change


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OYLPN Worked Example (YECF)
## OYLPN Worked Example (SPF)

**Ohio Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF): Strategic Plan Map**

**Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network Youth Council**

### Problem Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Logic Model</th>
<th>Intervening Variable(s)</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Demonstrating Capacity Inputs: Human / Material Resources</th>
<th>Theory of Action</th>
<th>Time Line Specific Activities for each Strategy</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Results of Activities</th>
<th>Shorter-Term Outcomes (2 years)</th>
<th>Longer-Term Outcomes (5 years)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are Ohio youth that are at risk for depression and suicide. The Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network (OYLPN) Youth Council believes that youth can play a role in creating nurturing environments for all Ohio youth.</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge about MH (signs, symptoms, etc.)</td>
<td>We have selected two CQP strategic information dissemination strategies (i.e., newsletter, parent's night) and environmental strategies (i.e., social media/PSA).</td>
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**Environmental Strategies:**

1. Have a significant social media presence (assuring one specifically related to suicide prevention) leading up to the April event. The majority youth rally will create awareness. Youth will promote Mental Health awareness through various media outlets through the hashtag "Be Aware."
2. Promote awareness through PSA. The PSA aired leading up to the April event. We Are The Majority youth rally will be presented at the rally.

**Information Dissemination:**

1. Create and host a parent's night event.
2. Create and disseminate a monthly newsletter.

**Budget:**

- CPA Funding
- Total Budget: TBD
- In-kind: TBD

**Vendor(s)/Sub-contractors:**

- Speaker for Parent Night Videographer for PSA

**Services provided to the project to deliver sessions and materials to the target audiences:**

- Speaker and workshop facilitator at the April event. The majority youth rally will be presented at the rally.

**Materials:**

- Informational, positive statistics which would be obtained from the adult council and local health centers.
- Stories for parents' night, and workshops for WATM rally to promote mental health social media messaging.

**Travel:**

- To Columbia for monthly meetings.
- Travel to promote PSA.

**Youth Council to travel to Charlotte, Ohio for Parent Night**

**Other:**

- Personal experience stories

**Context:**

- OYLPN AC has created a logic model and strategic plan. The YC created their plan to work in synchronicity with the AC logic model and strategic plan.
- Traditionally the WATM campaign has focused on highlighting a majority of youth do not abuse substances. Based on data and research, MH and substance abuse are related. Due to the finding, the OYLPN YC has decided to supplement the WATM campaign with a MH campaign.
- YC is working towards finding data to measure variables.

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14.1% of HS students report seriously considering attempting suicide during the past 12 months: Data Source [CDC, YRBS, 2012] (Accessed 2013)

1.1% of HS students in Ohio report attempting suicide one or more times during the past 12 months: Data Source [CDC, YRBS, 2012] (Accessed 2013)

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**Increase awareness of mental health. Encourage competency within parents, teachers, and educators. Increased knowledge on the signs of mental health issues. Increased knowledge within parents regarding teen mental health. Increased knowledge of the current resources available to address teen mental health. Increase the knowledge of the correlation between mental health and substance abuse.**

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**Increase in % of HS students in Ohio report feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months.**

**Decrease in % of HS students report seriously considering attempting suicide during the past 12 months.**

**Decrease in % of HS students in Ohio report attempting suicide one or more times during the past 12 months.**
Reflecting on SFY15

The goal of the SFY15 work was to create an evidence-informed framework for youth-led programming in Ohio (√) that is evaluable (√) and sustainable (time will tell).
Identifying and Developing Champions

- Is it worth it?
- Will it work?
- Can I do it?

Adult Allies as Champions
SAVE THE DATE

THE OHIO YOUTH-LED PREVENTION NETWORK
ADULT LEADER SUMMIT

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH TO LEAD:
BUILDING SKILLS TO PRODUCE COMMUNITY CHANGE

REGISTRATION $40
Final day to register November 24th

Friday, December 4, 2015
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
The Conference Center at OCLC
6600 Kilgour Place, Dublin, OH 43017-3395

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Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network
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Twitter: @BeTheMajority
Pinterest: InTheMajority
Instagram: bethemajority
References


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