

HANDBOOK

A How-To Guide for Adults
on Involving Youth in Community Planning



A PROJECT OF THE CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION



Handbook developed by:

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for Civic Participation**

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Preface

IN THIS SECTION

- How to use this handbook
- Who this handbook is for
- About Youth VOICES and the California Center

Welcome!

Welcome to the *Youth VOICES in Community Design Handbook*, a how-to guide on getting youth involved in local policymaking and community planning. This handbook is in response to hundreds of requests from adults nationwide who want youth involved in shaping their communities. The handbook provides a step-by-step guide to youth engagement and is supported by an extensive online library of articles and activities.

How to Use the Handbook

This resource, *Youth VOICES in Community Design*, has two main parts:

1. This handbook itself – a step-by-step guide to youth engagement;
2. An entire online library with more than 200 pages of additional resources. The online library (www.californiacenter.org/voices) has articles, activities, sample forms – everything you need to get started.



Icons!

The following icons will help you navigate the handbook.



Use your mouse to access this handbook's online library at www.californiacenter.org/voices as well as other relevant internet resources.



Follow these tips to success with your youth engagement project.



Learn by example. These case studies, anecdotes, and quotes help you see the many ways youth can make a difference.



Answer questions presented in this this step-by-step Project Plan to chart your own youth engagement project.



Content marked with this icon is more technical and is targeted specifically to experts in the fields of planning or youth development. You can skip it without missing the point; or read it if you are a person who likes the details.

Who Can Use This Handbook?

The materials in the handbook are designed for a wide range of professionals. Whether you are a city planner wanting input on a community plan, a nonprofit director concerned about traffic congestion, or a youth advisor looking to get students involved with civic affairs, this handbook is for you. The following people will find this handbook helpful:

- People in the field of community planning
- People in local or state government
- Nonprofit advocates
- High school or college teachers



Detailed List of Intended Users

Local government: City commissioners, city managers, current and long-range planning staff, local transit and council of government planners/analysts, and administrators in public works, public health, community outreach, and youth services

State government: Legislators, staffers, analysts, appointed officials, program directors

Private sector: Planning, architectural, and engineering firms, builders, developers

Nonprofit/Education: Community development corporations, teachers, youth organizations, neighborhood associations, advocacy groups, boards of directors

What This Handbook Can Do for You

Many policy professionals want to include youth, but are deterred by logistical challenges, skeptical colleagues, or simply not knowing how to get started. This handbook is organized to provide information and resources, but also to move you through a step-by-step process of establishing your own youth engagement plan. While some of the proposed activities may be conducted with youth of any age, our primary focus is high school students.

The handbook is organized into the following sections:

Chapter 1: Intro to Youth Engagement and Community Planning: Important! Let's get on the same page regarding key terms and central concepts in this handbook.

Chapter 2: Benefits and Challenges of Engaging Youth In Policymaking: Get a heads-up on the joys and hurdles ahead, and develop a rationale for engaging youth.

Chapter 3: Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?: How ready is your organization to share decision-making with youth? Addressing this issue lets you set realistic goals.

Chapter 4: Models of Youth Engagement: Advisory committees? Youth commissions? Teen speakers at hearings? We present several approaches — simple to complex.

Chapter 5: Recruiting Youth: Find the right mix of young people for your project.

Chapter 6: Training! Training! Training!: *Never* send youth in unprepared. This section presents training models for getting youth ready to be involved in policymaking.

Chapter 7: Case Studies of Successful Projects: Eight detailed case studies provide excellent insights into successful youth engagement efforts.

Chapter 8: Conclusion: Final words of advice.

Appendices: Resources including a Project Plan questionnaire and an index of online materials.



Note For Teachers or Youth Directors

These materials can be used comprehensively or as supplements to other classroom, leadership, or advocacy curricula. Don't forget the many additional resources in our online library!



Your Project Plan

If you choose to, you may use this handbook to develop a step-by-step youth engagement project plan. Key questions will pop up throughout the handbook to guide your thinking and direct you to the Project Plan questionnaire on p. 47. Answering these questions can enable you to lay the foundation of your project and develop memos for colleagues, grant proposals, recruitment materials, and other necessary documents.

About Youth VOICES and the California Center

About Youth VOICES

This handbook is part of the Youth VOICES in Community Design program, with VOICES an acronym for:

Vision
Opinions
Investment
Creativity
Engagement
Solutions

The program involves youth in community planning and land use decisions. One component of the program is this handbook, which was developed through teen feedback, a national survey of potential handbook users, adult focus groups, and the input of an external review committee.

In addition to this handbook, the Youth VOICES program has coordinated youth participation in the following planning activities:

- San Diego Association of Government's regional comprehensive plan
- 2002 and 2003 *New Partners for Smart Growth* conferences
- 2002 TALL Order Forum on regional transportation, air and land-use in Sacramento, CA.

About the California Center

Youth VOICES is a new program of the California Center for Civic Participation and Youth Development. Established in 1980, the California Center is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging youth in their communities and the democratic process. Our work is founded on the belief that young people are resources to nurture, not problems to solve.

Through our several programs (including *Capitol Focus*, for which we are best known) we work with hundreds of middle school and high school youth annually from California and nationwide. These young people represent varying income levels, races, and backgrounds. They learn about issues affecting their communities and the democratic process. Along the way they gain balanced knowledge, confidence, and skills necessary to become effective participants in policymaking.

Our work has also focused on preparing and supporting youth who are directly engaged in policy-making processes associated with community planning, pregnancy prevention, comprehensive sexual education, high school reform, health care, and city charter reform. California Center youth:

- Conduct focus groups and surveys
- Testify at hearings
- Conduct press events
- Participate in policy conferences
- Evaluate programs and grant applications
- Participate as board members in planning processes alongside adults

More than 5,000 state and local policymakers, elected officials, campaign consultants, lobbyists, commissioners, professors, journalists and others have volunteered their time as advisors and speakers to youth participating in California Center programs. The California Center's work is supported by over 150 associations and corporations, cities and school districts, and respected philanthropic organizations including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, Carnegie Foundation, and The California Wellness Foundation.

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Some policymaker quotations in this handbook book were reprinted from *Engaging Youth in Policymaking Improves Policies and Youth Outcomes*, a California Center policy brief published in partnership with the Center for Health Improvement. The brief is available online at: www.centerforhealthimprovement.org/doc.asp?id=5303

Handbook Review Committee

The following reviewers generously donated their time and insights:

- Anne Geraghty and Tom Vu, WALK Sacramento
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- Julie Sontag, City of Sacramento Planning Department
- Jaki Walker, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc.
- Risa Wilkerson, Michigan Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports

Intro to Youth Engagement and Community Planning

IN THIS SECTION

- Youth engagement defined
- Community planning defined
- Ideal opportunities for youth engagement (including some you probably never considered!)

What is Youth Engagement?

While some people use the term “youth engagement” broadly to mean any productive teen activities, in this handbook we define youth engagement as efforts to **include youth in decision-making or policymaking**. Examples include:

- City staff visiting a high school for feedback on plans for a new town center
- A county planning commission creating a youth advisory board
- A nonprofit involving teens in environmental advocacy directed at the state legislature
- A regional policy conference on transportation with adults and youth invited



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- 40 Developmental Assets by Search Institute (R-2)
- What Do You Mean by “Youth Development?” (R-3)
- *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth*, a publication of UNESCO; ordering information at www.unesco.org/publications
- *Future 500: Youth Organizing and Activism in the United States*, a guide by the Active Element Foundation; ordering information at www.future500.com

“Youth add a freshness of perspective; they give real life suggestions on how we can improve our world. Some people don’t take youth seriously, but I like to point out that, during the American Revolution, many of our nation’s founders were in their teens or early twenties – including Alexander Hamilton and James Madison.”

– Delaine Eastin, former California Superintendent of Public Instruction

This Handbook’s Community Planning Focus

What Is Community Planning?

“Community planning” is the way people envision the built and natural environments in which we live. While the term community planning sometimes includes all aspects of a community’s future, we focus in this handbook on **how neighborhoods, cities, and regions are developed**. Community planning addresses issues as big as protecting the homes of endangered species and as small as the width of sidewalks. It includes decisions about:

- Locations of houses, apartments, offices, stores, factories, and schools
- How people get around – including freeways, public transit, walkways, and bikepaths
- Provision of parks and recreational facilities
- Protection of open space, habitat, wetlands, farmland, and forests
- How buildings are designed
- Size and placement of streets, sidewalks, and sewers
- Whether the way communities are built creates a sense of safety and connection

Community planning also calls attention to the processes by which these decisions are made, including who participates and how.



Smart Growth Defined

The case studies in this handbook, as well as several documents in the online library, reflect an approach to planning known as “Smart Growth.” Smart Growth focuses on community development that is economically sound, environmentally responsible, and supportive of a high quality of life for all residents. Though the term Smart Growth may be defined in different ways, this handbook assumes a definition based on the following ten principles:

- Creating a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Creating walkable neighborhoods
- Encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration
- Fostering distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place
- Making development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Mixing types of land uses
- Preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
- Providing a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthening and directing development toward existing communities
- Taking advantage of compact building design



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Intro to Smart Growth (SA-20)
- Key Community Planning Concepts and Terminology (SA-23)
- Websites discussing different approaches to community planning: www.smartgrowth.org, www.fundersnetwork.org, www.planning.org, www.smartgrowthamerica.org, www.rppi.org/smartgrowthopposition.html, and www.uli.org

Why Involve Youth In Community Planning?

Community planning impacts almost every aspect of youths’ lives. Most youth cannot drive, so they are significantly affected by past community design decisions that created a culture centered on the automobile. In many communities, limited options for walking and biking not only make it difficult for youth to get around, but they also contribute to poor health. Today’s teens are less physically active than previous generations, and thus are more overweight. Furthermore, pollution, created in part by traffic congestion, contributes to a range of child and youth health problems including asthma.

Even if youths’ lives were not being affected by community design today, teens care about the future. Today’s youth are concerned about issues like open space, recreation areas, community safety, environmental protection, and air quality. They are the policymakers of tomorrow. Engaging them in these issues now encourages sound public policy in the future.

For all these reasons, **this publication advocates inclusive planning processes that educate and involve youth in community design.**



Specific Planning and Design Policies That Impact Youth

Suburban, urban, and rural youth may be impacted by community design in different ways, although there is certainly overlap:

- Examples of policies influencing *suburban* youth include zoning laws requiring segregated land uses, development standards that encourage sprawling and disconnected neighborhoods, and a priority on freeways over public transit.
- Policies more likely to impact youth in the *urban* core include the location of transit lines, tax incentives to encourage in-fill development, and access to recreation and open space.
- Young people in *rural* areas are more likely to be affected by policies such as urban service boundaries, low-density zoning, and growth moratoriums.

In any of these cases, youth can speak first-hand about the effects of development decisions and bring diverse perspectives about what teens desire in a community.

Community Problems Youth Can Help Solve

Youth involvement in community planning might be sparked by conditions connected to how an area has been, or will be, developed, such as:

- An abandoned building or empty lot
- Lack of sidewalks and/or trees to protect pedestrians
- Too many residents who don't get enough exercise
- Traffic congestion and air pollution
- Lack of affordable housing
- Rapid community growth
- Too few areas for recreation, such as skate-parks or basketball courts



Community Planning Decisions Youth Can Influence

By including youth in meetings, hearings, conferences, informal policy discussions, or strategic advocacy efforts you can meaningfully address a wide range of land use planning and development issues. Youth perspectives can be especially valuable when:

- Determining the location and design of schools or parks
- Any significant changes are made to neighborhood zoning
- Designs are reviewed for new development projects
- Transportation plans or public transit routes are planned or revised, especially those affecting pedestrians and bicyclists
- Neighborhood redevelopment is undertaken
- Water/sewer decisions impact community growth
- Community and general plans are updated
- Growth-related ordinances, policies, or ballot measures are considered



Can Youth Really Understand Planning?

Picture this hypothetical, but realistic scenario.

A teen calls the city planning office to ask what is going on with the empty lot near his house. The planner responds, "That parcel is a brownfield site with tremendous potential for redevelopment, but it is currently zoned for light industrial. Right now, the city is reviewing the EIR for a high-density mixed-use project for the location that would require a zoning variance, but if approved the project would be a great example of infill and Smart Growth."

The teen smiles because despite all the jargon he knows just what the planner is talking about. He is part of a community program that had devoted a recent Saturday to learning the ins and outs of community planning. He requests a copy of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and asks when the project will appear on the planning commission agenda. Now he's ready to get together with his peers and take action.

Once his group assesses the proposed project, their goals might include:

- *Supporting or opposing the development*
- *Influencing its design or features, such as the types of stores, apartments, parks, etc.*

Planning can be a highly technical field, with many complexities and a vocabulary all its own. Is all this too much for young people? It doesn't have to be. Though there is the potential for teens to be overwhelmed, most can quickly pick up on key information if it is presented in a clear and engaging way. This handbook (and its online library) can get you started!

Benefits and Challenges of Engaging Youth In Policymaking

IN THIS SECTION

- Reasons to engage youth in policymaking
 - How it improves your work
 - Common roadblocks
-

Some people get nervous hearing the words “youth” and “policymaking” in the same sentence. Others have simply never thought of including young people in public decisions. Whether trying to convince yourself, funders, or skeptical colleagues about the value of including youth, it is important to understand the many reasons youth participation in policymaking is a good idea. This chapter addresses those reasons, plus some common challenges.

Why Engage Youth in Policymaking?

How Adults Benefit

You Get New Ideas and Perspectives

Youth provide adults with ideas and perspectives that otherwise might not be considered. Public policies – particularly those affecting teens – become stronger and more on-target when youth are consulted. Whether considering local ordinances, the implementation of government programs, or other community priorities, youth bring different insights and viewpoints to the table. Thus, policymaking becomes stronger and more reflective of community needs.

Bottom line: Policies or community plans should never be set without consulting the populations affected – including youth.

You Strengthen Public Support for Proposed Policies

When any citizens, including youth, are involved in setting new policies, the likelihood increases that the general public will support those policies. The more open and inclusive the process, the more trust people will have in the outcomes.

You Break Down Generational Barriers

When youth and adults work together constructively, existing fears and stereotypes about one another fall away, producing benefits for both parties.

You Improve Civic Participation by Local Adults

Youth who participate in policymaking become role models for adults. By including youth, you encourage other segments of the community – including relatives and neighbors – to get interested and active.

You Gain Inspiration

Youth concerned about their future will inspire adults in policymaking to work harder to resolve differences and make progress towards common goals.



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- *Youth in Decision-Making: A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations*, by researchers at University of Wisconsin. Available at www.theinnovationcenter.org.



Why Three Governments Engaged Youth In Planning

To Create a Better Place For Youth

In 1999, then Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, Idaho set the goal of “making Boise the best place in the nation to be young.” He appointed youth to the Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and nine other local advisory bodies. Using the Search Institute’s 40 developmental assets as a guide, the city of Boise committed itself to engaging, empowering, and learning from its youth.

To Improve Relationships Between Youth and Adults

In Hampton, Virginia the city maintains two permanent paid positions in the planning department for high school students. The decision strengthens relationships between youth and city officials and it gives youth an official voice within city government.

To Expand Awareness About Planning

In 1997, then Maryland Governor Parris Glendening set a goal to educate the public (including youth) about Smart Growth concepts. His office began hosting a yearly conference on environmental and planning issues for high school students, inviting youth from every school district statewide.

See *Chapter 7: Case Studies of Successful Projects* for more detailed information on these three efforts.

How Youth Benefit From Policymaking

Youth Grow Developmentally

Engaging youth in policymaking is an important youth development strategy that helps them grow into healthy, confident, well-rounded individuals and community leaders. (This positive outcome takes place across the board – sparking growth in struggling teens *and* star students.)

Youth Grow Academically

Youth engagement activities build critical thinking, public speaking, writing, and other skills that boost academic performance and workforce preparation.

Youth Become Lifelong Civic Leaders

Youth who have a foundation in civic engagement are much more likely to be responsible voters, local leaders, and future policymakers.

“Civic engagement should be a priority in every person's mind. It's important to get people involved in the democratic process at an early age, helping them build practical skills to be better able to participate throughout their lives.”

– Ramona Mullahey, author, American Planning Association (APA) report *Youth in Community Planning*

Common Challenges

While thoughtful project planning will enable you to avoid many roadblocks, it helps to be aware of common challenges. Awareness helps you be proactive to prevent obstacles from developing.

Lack of Organizational Support

If the decision-makers in your agency are not really behind youth engagement, or if they are unwilling to commit financial resources, you will want to address this problem before launching your project. Ways to combat skepticism include:

- Talking to your colleagues directly to learn their concerns
- Developing a well reasoned rationale that addresses those concerns
- Documenting successful efforts by similar organizations or agencies
- Providing your colleagues with first-hand exposure to committed youth, either through a focus group or just observing teens working on another project; seeing youth in action often converts skeptics into strong supporters

See *Chapter 3: Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?* for more information on gauging and strengthening organizational support.

“Anytime you do things a new way—like bring teenagers into an adult meeting—people are a little uncomfortable. But after the second or third time, people get over their discomfort and focus on the benefits.”

– Caroline Roberts, California Department of Education School Health Connections



See the following Web resource or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- The Ideal Community (SA-15), a simple, no-cost activity enabling skeptics to observe the power of youth engagement

Under-Investment of Time and Resources

When youth engagement efforts fail (or are not as successful as hoped), the cause often lies with adults not investing enough time or money. For instance, developing a youth advisory council without allocating enough staff time to support it can lead to inconsistent involvement by youth who need direction and encouragement.

See *Chapter 3: Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?* for suggestions on realistic engagement plans that match your resources, as well as links to sample budgets with staffing.

Unclear Roles and Objectives

When a youth engagement project lacks clear objectives and tasks, or if those items are not clearly communicated, youth can become frustrated and/or unmotivated. Youth can also get aggravated if the adult and youth roles are not well defined (who makes what decisions, to what degree is power shared, etc.).



From the start, make sure there is a shared understanding of what’s expected in terms of time, outcomes, division of responsibilities, youth roles, etc. Make sure your adults are equally clear on these issues!

See *Chapter 3: Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?* for a power-sharing framework you can use to help set youth and adult roles.

Poor Logistics

Engaging youth requires attention to meeting times, locations, and transportation.



- Try not to plan meetings during school hours since youth often cannot miss class.
- Remember that many youth cannot drive. Either make arrangements to give youth rides, or select meeting locations that are accessible through public transportation. (If applicable, consider offering transit maps and vouchers.)



Flawed Recruitment

Another challenge you may face is finding students to participate. Although your field may be exciting to you, it may not immediately interest high school students. A few suggestions include:

- Frame the issues so that youth see how the topics relate to their lives.
- Market your opportunity with youth-friendly materials.
- Contact the right people – those that see youth everyday (i.e., teachers, youth directors).
- Do not just recruit the “hot shot” straight-A youth. Average or struggling students often bring excellent insights and frequently have untapped potential.

See *Chapter 5: Recruiting Youth* for involvement in detailed guidelines and resources.

Under-Prepared Youth

When youth do not receive effective training, poor outcomes might include teens being visibly bored in meetings, conducting ineffective lobbying efforts, or holding chaotic public events. For youth to be effective, they require basic training in the policymaking process, knowledge of the issues being undertaken, and the skills to communicate their ideas.

See *Chapter 6: Training! Training! Training!* for several educational “modules” to get youth ready for involvement in public decision-making.

The Perception That Adults Manipulate Youth

Youth perspectives may be discounted when youth are perceived to be (or actually are) manipulated by adults promoting their own political or policy agenda. Avoid this perception by making sure youth understand the pros and cons of the issues.

Training aside, the best way to avoid the perception that adults manipulate youth is to not do it! Make it OK for youth to disagree with you!

“With only a year on the board, you can’t change the world. But you can make a difference on a few issues you care about and, in some way, your voice will always be there.”

– Erika Goncalves, age 18, former member California Board of Education



Youth Included in Illinois Planning Process

Recognizing that adults tend to marginalize youth input on "adult" topics, the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) took extra steps to ensure youth voices were heard in its 30-year regional planning process. At a workshop for 850 community stakeholders, efforts were made to include high school students at each of the 72 tables where discussions took place. In addition, small group facilitators were instructed to make sure the adults didn't dominate and that participants were respectful of the young peoples' opinions. In addition, when NIPC staff realized they had scheduled smaller community workshops at times and locations that made it difficult for youth to attend, they added a new workshop specifically for students. More than 60 young people attended. For more information on NIPC's regional planning process, visit www.nipc.org/cg.

Poor Retention

Some organizations have a hard time *keeping* youth involved. Addressing the challenges above typically corrects many retention problems. Plus, ongoing support and training is essential. If staffing limitations make it hard to adequately support youth, consider asking adult board members/commissioners to serve as "mentors" to the youth.



Your Project Plan

The Project Plan Worksheet on p. 47 provides a framework for you to begin answering the following questions. Thinking through these issues will help you develop a youth engagement project plan of your own:

- Why do you want to engage youth in decision-making? What prompted your interest in youth engagement? Was it a problem (such as a lack of local bike lanes), a circumstance (such as consideration of new ordinance), or an individual (such as a new mayor)?
- How would youth engagement strengthen your work?
- In what ways would youth benefit from a youth engagement project associated with your organization?
- What challenges might you face? Any initial ideas for overcoming them?

Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?

IN THIS SECTION

- Youth-adult power continuum
- Gauging your organization’s readiness for youth engagement
- Resources to improve readiness

You learned in the previous section that a lack of organizational support often sabotages youth engagement efforts. Organizational support includes time, money, and staff who want youth involved. In this section you will assess your organization’s readiness for youth engagement and learn how to make it stronger. We will encourage you to set realistic, workable goals, not overly ambitious plans that have little chance of actually happening.



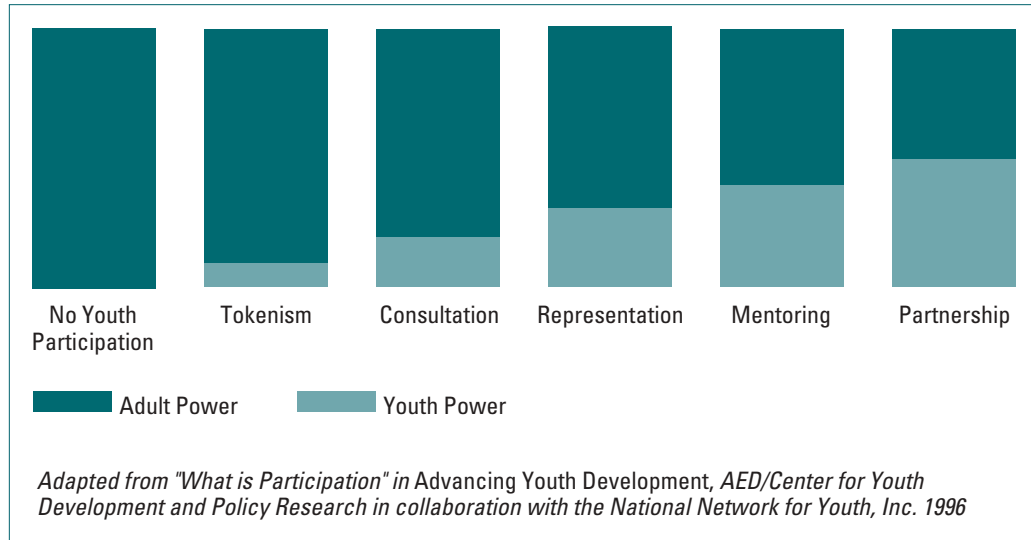
Throughout this handbook we use the term “organization” to mean the place where you work – whether that be a government agency, city council, nonprofit organization, or business.

Power-Sharing

In assessing your readiness to engage youth, one of the first things you will determine is your organization’s willingness to share decision-making powers. Some organizations are uncomfortable with the idea; for others, sharing power with youth (including voting rights) is a natural step.

Power Continuum Table

The following table presents a range of ways to make decisions and divide power.



Power Continuum Details

- **No youth participation:** Unchallenged authority of adults.
- **Tokenism:** Adults set the agenda and make all the decisions. One or two young people may be included, but often without training and without a promise that their suggestions will be taken.
- **Consultation:** Adults seek advice from young people, but on terms set by adults.
- **Representation:** A select number of young people are put forward as representing their peers, usually via a committee system and with varying degrees of accountability.
- **Mentoring:** Adults provide encouragement and impart skills/values to help a young person achieve success.
- **Partnership:** Young people and adults set the agenda together, decide on issues and activities, and have joint accountability and shared responsibility.



See the following Web resource or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Building Youth-Adult Partnerships (R-10)

Which Is Right For Your Organization?

Only your organization can decide which approach is right for you. Obviously “tokenism” is not the place to start, but based on your organization’s climate and resources, you may not be ready for true “partnership.” The important thing is for your organization to decide in advance the nature of the youth-adult relationship.



Avoid False Expectations

Don't set youth up for frustration by creating unrealistic expectations. Make clear from the outset how much authority youth will have. If "consultation" is the best your organization can do, communicate that fact from the beginning.

Organizational Attitudes

- How deep is your own commitment to youth engagement?
- What about other decision-makers in your organization (staff and board)?
- Are these adults willing to provide ongoing support for youth?
- Where do you think your organization falls now on the Power Continuum chart? Where would you like to be?
- How does your organization's place on the Power Continuum influence your ideas for youth engagement projects?

See *Chapter 4: Models of Youth Engagement* for a range of projects, small to large.

Time and Money

Engaging youth will cost money. Depending on the scale of your project, budgets can range from \$500 to \$50,000. Our online library offers sample budgets for a range of small to large projects. Youth engagement is an investment and should be viewed as such. Evaluate how much staff time can be committed to coordinating and supporting youth engagement. How much money can be made available for direct expenses (photocopying, refreshments, renting meeting space)? Can you devote staff time to fundraising or grant-writing? What expenses can be offset with volunteers or in-kind support?



Save Some Money!

Conserve money and staff time by using the templates, program activities, and sample agendas in the Youth VOICES online library. Don't reinvent the wheel!



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Fundraising Resources (R-7)
- How To Get Product Donation (R-8)
- Sample Youth Engagement Budgets (AD-1)

Community Partners – Get Some!

Partnerships with other organizations can greatly shape your strategy. Youth engagement projects often include collaborations between schools, community organizations, or government entities. Partnerships let you pool financial and staff resources, enacting projects that might not otherwise be possible.

For example, a city commission could partner with a government class at the local high school, as well as a local youth organization, to train and recruit teens for a youth advisory committee. You cannot go wrong by tapping into the knowledge and experiences of others in your community.



Multi-Organization Partnership Serves 8,000 Youth

The City of Toronto Planning and Development Department partnered with other city departments, the Toronto Board of Education, and several youth organizations to involve nearly 8,000 young people in the preparation of a new plan for the central area of the city. The Board of Education involved teachers in developing a classroom curriculum, and the youth organizations recruited homeless youth to participate. In addition to a report for planners, the project led to the creation of a Young People's Advisory Board to provide an ongoing forum for youth involvement in city government.

For more information on this 1990 project, see *Youth Participation in Community Planning*, available through the APA Book Service at www.planning.org.

Source: Youth Participation in Community Planning, APA Planning Advisory Service, 1999.



Your Project Plan

The Project Plan questionnaire on p. 47 presents several issues to consider when assessing your organization's readiness for youth engagement.

- In general, what are the attitudes of you and your colleagues regarding engaging youth in policymaking? (Supportive? Unsure? Skeptical?)
- At this time, where do you think your organization is on the Power Continuum Table? Where would you like to be? How will you get there?
- What staff resources can your organization devote to a youth engagement project?
- What financial resources currently exist for a youth engagement project?
- What fundraising options exist? (Foundations, government agencies, local corporations?)
- With whom might you partner to run the project? (Youth organizations, schools?)

Models of Youth Engagement

IN THIS SECTION

- Types of youth engagement activities: small, medium, and large
- Success stories

Throughout the country youth engagement efforts are gaining acceptance and taking shape. Youth are changing the way city planners and leaders look at communities. Teens are doing everything from making national recommendations on city planning – as they did at the 2003 *New Partners for Smart Growth Conference* – to working locally as city planners in Hampton, Virginia. In cities from Annapolis to San Francisco, youth are learning community planning principles and are speaking up about how their communities should look, feel, and function.



Youth as Project Planners

In Sacramento, CA consultants charged with revising a community plan conducted a workshop with students at Burbank High School to garner feedback about youth needs and preferences regarding the types of development around new light rail stations.

In Oakland, CA students at McClymonds High School spent a semester creating a new design for a deteriorating park near their school. They presented their plan for a “History Park” in a public meeting at City Hall. The plan was subsequently endorsed by Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, a nonprofit that generates funding and support for city parks.

See *Chapter 7: Case Studies of Successful Projects* for more information.

Types of Youth Engagement Activities

Youth engagement is limited only by the scope of your imagination. Below are some common approaches relating to policymaking. These activities can be done singly or in combination.



See the following Web resource or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Youth Engagement Approaches In Detail (R-4)

Small-Scale Youth Engagement Projects (No Power-Sharing)

These small-scale efforts provide ways for organizations to get their feet wet. They do not cost much, nor do they require institutional change in terms of youth decision-making.

- Classroom presentations to gather feedback on any public issue
- Holding a youth focus group on a public issue
- Simulation activities on community design or other public issues



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Ideal Community Activity (SA-15)
- About Focus Groups: What, Why, and How (SA-5)
- Planning A Focus Group: The Details (SA-6)
- Envision Smart Growth: A Design Simulation Activity (SA-21)
- *Youth Planning Charrettes*, an APA resource. Ordering information at www.planning.org.
- *Youth Power Guide: How to Make Your Community Better*, a book with 24 youth engagement activities. Ordering information at: www.umassextension.org.

Mid-Tier Projects (Minimal Power-Sharing)

These projects require more planning and money but, like the examples above, do not create permanent programs with long-term power-sharing. They require staffing and training of youth.

- Community surveys or other needs assessments
- Conferences: either youth conferences or inviting youth delegations to adult policy conferences
- Campaigns: either advocacy or media campaigns can be made stronger by youth participation
- Inviting youth to participate in hearings and public meetings
- Youth-led evaluation of programs or awareness campaigns



Avoid Conference “Yes-sayers”

For conferences, hearings, or other ‘adult’ events, make sure the youth know you want *their* opinions, not just what they think adults want to hear.

Regarding youth in conferences and meetings:

“When we undertook a 30-year regional planning process, we made sure to include youth. Their ideas were so much more imaginative than the adults. Sometimes adults get overly weighed down by realities. Youth bring tremendous hope into discussions of the future.”

– Hubert Morgan, Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission

“Youth really ground the issues. They keep adults from getting too wrapped up in the theoretical aspects of policy and remind us why we are really here.”

– Conference organizer Maura Keaney of *i.e.Communications*



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Needs Assessments 101: Different Types and Why They Are Important (SA-1)
- Sample Agendas for Youth Prep Sessions: 1/2, 1, and 2 days (AD-9)
- *Youth Participation in Community Planning*, an APA book; order at www.planning.org
- *Kids as Planners*, a service learning book by Kids Consortium; available online at: www.kidsconsortium.org/book_newsletters.html
- *Youth REP, Step by Step: An Introduction to Youth-Led Research and Evaluation*, a Youth in Focus publication; ordering information at: www.youthinfocus.net



Seattle Organization a Leader in Youth Engagement

The Seattle Youth Involvement Network (SYIN) collaborated with the Seattle Planning Department to train young people to survey other youth about the city's comprehensive plan. The youth prepared the survey, did the surveying, compiled a report, and presented it to city officials. SYIN is a nonprofit organization that offers technical assistance to youth, serves as a clearinghouse on youth programs, builds coalitions, and raises awareness of contributions by young people. Youth serve on SYIN's board, and a youth-facilitated leadership council broadens youth participation in the organization's decision-making. For more information, see www.seattleyouth.org/ or the APA resource *Youth Participation in Community Planning*.

Youth Use Video to Educate Citizens

As part of the Orton Family Foundation's Community Video Program, students at Phillips Middle School in Maine worked with a team of adult community leaders to identify issues and resources most important to Phillips. The students developed a video that caused citizens to recognize the needs of their community and also open their eyes to its many assets. Learn more about the Community Video Program at www.orton.org/projects/communityVideo.asp, or purchase a manual on producing a community video: *Lights, Camera, Community Video*. Ordering information at www.planning.org.

Students Weigh in on Future of Fenway Park

Woodrow Wilson Middle School students in Boston, as part of the Citizen Schools apprenticeship program, researched whether the Red Sox should renovate Fenway Park or replace it with a new stadium. They studied how a new stadium would affect the Fenway neighborhood, local businesses, the city of Boston, and Red Sox fans. The students compiled their research and made recommendations to a community panel. View their PowerPoint presentation at www.citizenschools.org/Wow/wow-list.cfm.

Advanced Projects (Meaningful Power-Sharing)

These types of projects are considered ideal, in that they create a permanent platform for youth to participate in community decision-making. Rather than a one-time program or conference, these programs are ongoing. The downside is that they often involve fewer youth than the mid-tier examples in the previous section.

- Establishing a youth advisory board or commission
- Creating youth seats on existing boards and commissions
- Launching a policy “fellowship” enabling students to learn about and provide input on current community decisions



Massachusetts Youth Map Out Community Needs

Since 1999, the YouthPower project in South Holyoke, Massachusetts has enabled young people to make long-lasting, city-wide impacts by supporting:

- Youth participation in the city's master plan process
- The creation of a City Youth Commission
- A mini-grant program to fund community improvement projects
- Three annual youth summits

All those efforts were informed by YouthPower's "Youth Vision Map," a visual presentation of 24 youth priorities for the community's development. The Youth Vision Map provides a blueprint of teen concerns for youth and adult policymakers. YouthPower is a project of the El Arco Iris Youth and Community Arts Center. For more information visit www.accessholyoke.org/elarco.htm and www.youthtaskforce.org/holyokeyouthcommission.html



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- California Center Training Module 8: Meetings and Facilitation
- Arthur R. Marshall Fellowship, a three-semester program that engages South Florida young adults in community planning and the education of their younger peers; information at: www.pinejog.org/WebPages/MarshallFellowship.htm
- *Young Active Citizens*, developed by Youth Leadership Institute, available at www.yli.org
- *Youth as Trustees*, a Community Partnerships with Youth publication on training teens to serve on boards; ordering information at www.cpyinc.org/index.htm



Mix Them Up!

Your project could focus on a *single* activity, such as:

- Installing a youth representative on the City Planning Commission
- Holding a one-time youth conference on a selected issue

By contrast, your project could include a *combination* of activities, like

- Creating a youth advisory board to the planning commission, which then conducts a series of youth forums, which leads to policy recommendations to the city council at a televised hearing. Projects like this, with a continuum of activities, often include an initial group of youth, followed by a new group the next semester, which then feeds another – each building on the previous group's efforts.

Determining Youths' Role in Project Selection

Too often the level of adult-defined structure in youth engagement projects exists at the extremes.

- Some adult advisors provide *too much* structure, determining every step along the way. They pick every activity, prescribe how it should be run, and expect youth to share the same perspectives and priorities as they do. This approach turns youth into little more than puppets and can frustrate many to the point of poor participation or quitting altogether.
- On the other hand, youth can end up equally frustrated if adult advisors provide *too little* guidance and support. Youth have less experience than adults and need some direction.

Choosing Activities For Youth or Letting Them Decide?

As you develop your project goals and activities it is essential to make clear which decisions will be made *before* the youth are recruited versus which will be made *afterward* by the youth themselves. In most circumstances a balance is best. For example:

- Your program model might ask youth to develop policy recommendations to present at a planning commission hearing, which would be a pre-determined program activity chosen by you, the adult. Your model could then give the youth freedom to select a second advocacy activity of their choosing.
- Or, youth could be recruited to increase awareness about a pressing issue (say, bike lanes) but be given the freedom to decide how to best accomplish that goal (i.e., poster campaign, press releases, or youth presentations).

You also need to be open to changing course along the way. For example, say your project had the initial goal of park renovation, but the youth make it clear that the issue of homeless people living in the park must be addressed first. In this situation, you may need to revise your project goals to include the youths' priorities.

Starter List

When asking youth to select own their advocacy or governance activities, we suggest providing a list of possible activities. Starting from scratch can be frustrating for both youth and adults.

See the following Web resource or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Making Group Decisions (SA-29)





Youth Learning About and Shaping Policy

Below are short youth engagement examples relating to community design. Detailed case studies on each of these projects begin on p. 35.

Maryland Youth Summit on the Environment

From 1997-2002, the State of Maryland hosted large summits to educate and gain feedback from high school students about environment and smart growth.

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

Youth from across the nation participated in this national conference, then completed small projects in their communities.

Model Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission created this yearlong program for students to learn about regional issues and provide policy recommendations.



Your Project Plan

Use the Project Plan questionnaire beginning on p. 47 to record:

- What youth engagement models most appeal to you?
- Which models do you think are realistic for your organization at this time?
- What role will youth have in selecting your project framework, or in selecting activities within that framework?

Recruiting Youth

IN THIS SECTION

- The right mix of youth for your project
- Tapping other adults to nominate youth

OK, so you've decided what kind of youth engagement project to do, and now you need the youth! Recruitment is not easy – especially for people who don't work with teens every day – so give yourself enough time to do it right. A well-designed recruitment effort helps avoid the pitfalls of not enough applicants or low retention. There are plenty of youth out there who will jump at these opportunities; you just have to know how to reach them! This chapter outlines key suggestions for recruiting youth.

Key Recruitment Strategies

Target a Cross-Section of Youth

When recruiting youth, it is important to market the opportunity to a wide range of students, including those from different ethnic, socio-economic, and academic backgrounds. Try to mirror the diversity of your community.



Do not just recruit academic achievers or traditional youth leaders (student council reps, club presidents, etc.). Average or struggling students often bring more relevant personal experiences. Many have not been given the chance to explore their potential. Remember to mention your desire for academic diversity in your recruitment materials; otherwise your hoped-for mix of participants may not be reflected in your pool of applicants.



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Step-By-Step Guide To Youth Recruitment (AD-2)
- Sample Recruitment Letters (AD-3)
- Sample Youth Recruitment Flyer (AD-4)
- Sample Nomination Forms (AD-5)
- Sample Rejection Letter (AD-7)

Partner With Other Organizations and Schools

Recruit youth through other community organizations, such as schools, churches/mosques/temples, social services providers, parks and recreation departments, elected officials, or even local businesses. Whenever possible, send your information to staff members who work directly with youth. For example, if you are recruiting through schools, don't limit your materials to the principals; include also counselors, teachers, and coordinators of special programs.

Use Adult Nominators

One way to increase the number of applications you receive, as well as the involvement of supportive adults, is by asking adults to nominate youth. This process pulls in students as well as the organizations with which they are affiliated. In addition, adult nominators often spot students who would be good participants, but who might not necessarily apply on their own.



We recommend coupling your adult nomination with a youth essay or application form so that the youth play an active role in their application process.

Clearly Describe the Project, Emphasizing Benefits to Youth

Make sure your recruitment materials specify the project's goals and expectations in straightforward, youth-friendly language. Explain what your project is, why it is important, and what benefits youth will receive (a chance to make a difference, a stipend, opportunities to meet elected officials, reference for college applications, etc.). Remember to indicate how many hours a week/month it will take and what level of commitment you expect.



If your local schools require volunteer hours for graduation, make sure to promote your project in ways that help participants meet those requirements.

In your adult nomination materials, make sure to discuss what qualities you seek in youth participants including their interests, age, skills or knowledge. Remember to mention the desire for diversity in race, income, and academic performance.

Use Youth Editors

Ask a couple of teens to review your recruitment materials before distributing them. They can tell you if the materials are youth-friendly and appealing.



Consider Offering a Stipend

Many youth engagement projects offer modest stipends to participants. Depending on your budget, the stipend could be as small as \$50 a semester or as large as a regular hourly wage. A few reasons to consider offering a stipend include:

- To broaden the economic diversity of your participants (many low-income youth must work, so program stipends give them a way to meet family obligations without flipping burgers)
- To communicate to youth that you value their time, just as you value adults' time
- To help cover out-of-pocket costs like meals or transportation
- To make your program more attractive to potential applicants

Be Persistent

Do not be discouraged if you don't immediately get a flood of applications. Expect that you will follow up your recruitment announcements with phone calls to each person on your mailing or email list. Be prepared to resend (electronically or by regular mail) materials as needed.



Save your recruitment materials in a format you can easily email (like Word or PDF). You will be glad you did when dozens of people lose the first copy you sent. (Note: emailed applications should not replace flyers or information sent by regular mail. Instead they are just one more tool.)

Sign On the Dotted Line

Once youth are selected for your project, have each sign a contract agreeing to the terms of the commitment (how long, what hours, youth and adult responsibilities, etc.).



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Sample Program Contract For Youth (AD-6)
- Sample Rule Sheet for Overnight Programs (AD-14)

Plan to Re-Recruit

If your project is ongoing, you will have to replace and retrain youth since participants will graduate or move on to other phases of their lives.



Your Project Plan

The recruitment section of the Project Plan questionnaire on p. 49 encourages you to give careful thought to your recruitment strategy. Questions include:

- What mix of youth will you seek to recruit (age, race, academic performance, etc.)?
- How will you find youth? Will you tap into other organizations to get the word out? Which ones?
- Will you offer a stipend? How much?
- Will you use adult nominators?
- Will you have a selection committee review applications? If so, who might be on it?
- How will you inform any applicants who are not selected for your project? Are there other ways the project might engage these youth later? Are there other programs to which you can refer them?

Training! Training! Training!

IN THIS SECTION

- Why youth **must** receive training
- Turnkey strategies for providing youth with the training they need

Would you loan your car to a youth who hadn't taken driver's ed? Would you send a teen who didn't know the rules into a football game? No. Either example might set the teen up for failure. In the same way, young people must receive training before they can effectively participate in public policy or decision-making.

The reason for this preparation is that youth need time to build the knowledge and confidence needed to make informed opinions. You might be surprised how quickly teens grasp sophisticated topics; even a few hours of instruction can make a huge difference.

What If Youth Don't Receive Good Preparation?

- Youth may not be able to contribute if they do not know the jargon or political context of a particular issue or cause.
- Youth may feel frustrated or speak out of turn if they do not understand the government process (how decisions are made, the roles of particular commissions or boards, rules-of-order, etc.).
- Youth may not be able to defend their opinions if they do not know all sides of the issue.

In the face of poor preparation, youth can become embarrassed or unwilling to participate, and policymakers may doubt the value of youth input.

No Puppets Here!

If youth advocate a position *make sure* they understand all sides of the issue. Involved youth must understand opposing viewpoints and be able to defend their own positions when asked tough questions; otherwise they look like puppets manipulated by their adult advisors.



Developing a Training Plan

It is critical to think through the knowledge and skills youth will need in order to be effective. Will they need expertise in a particular issue (say, transportation)? Writing skills? Government 101?

Skills Before or After?



Think through what youth need to know *before* starting a project versus what they will learn *through the process*. This distinction influences your recruitment and training strategies. For example, say your project will involve several youth-led presentations. You don't have to recruit a team of riveting spokespeople (since you can hold workshops on public speaking), but you might recruit youth who are sufficiently outgoing that they are willing to speak publicly.

Ideally, your project composition should include different activities drawing on different skills (speakers, writers, organizers, team-builders). That way you can recruit a diverse group of teens.

Note: The more time you invest in training, the broader the pool of youth able to participate.

Tips For Successful Youth Trainings

Your training can be organized any number of ways: a half-day, a weekend retreat, one day a month, or after school throughout a semester. Regardless the structure, remember a few things:

1. Avoid school hours or school conflicts (such as SAT exams, homecoming, spring break).
2. Make sure your training is not just a series of talking heads. Include plenty of activities.
3. Include youth as co-facilitators as much as possible.
4. Don't start *too* early in the morning, and always serve food, preferably something healthy.



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Designing a Youth Training Program (AD-8)
- Links to other youth engagement publications and web sites (including resources on asset-mapping, and service learning) (R-5, R-6).

“Civics classes just don't provide the information students need to feel engaged in the process. Even if teachers were able to provide more information, this type of knowledge comes best by doing it, not just reading a book.”

– California State Senator John Vasconcellos

Online Training Modules: Knowledge

Feeling overwhelmed? Not to worry. The California Center brings more than 20 years of experience in developing training materials, program agendas, parent permission slips – you name it! In our online library (www.californiacenter.org/voices), you will find several training modules to choose from.



Step 1: We suggest selecting at least one activity from each of the following modules:

- Connecting To Community (Training Module 1)
- Teambuilding (Training Module 2)
- Understanding Government and Policy (Training Module 3)
- Community Design (Training Module 4)

Step 2: If your project involves policy recommendations or developing a platform, tap into the activities in Training Module 5.

Step 3: Select from the skills-based Training Modules 6-10 (advocacy, public speaking, etc.) that best fit your project.

Training Module 1: Connecting to Community

This module focuses on learning about the community, its strengths, and its needs. This training process includes identifying one's own beliefs and researching the viewpoints of others.



Don't Work in a Vacuum!

At the California Center, *every project* includes some type of needs assessment for participants to learn what other people in their community think. This need can be met via surveys, focus groups, canvassing, or interviews. These activities help participants become better informed, enable them to form their own opinions, and give weight to any future policy recommendations they develop.



See the following Web resources or pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Needs Assessments 101: Different Types and Why They Are Important (SA-1)
- About Surveys: Why Do One and How (SA-2)
- Sample Survey and Tally Sheet (SA-3)
- Survey Review Worksheet (SA-4)
- About Focus Groups (SA-5)
- Planning a Focus Group (SA-6)
- About Canvassing (SA-12)
- Hot Issue Brainstorm (SA-13)

Training Module 2: Teamwork

This module will help students get to know each other and work as a team. It will enable them to build mutual respect and understanding.



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Interview Introduction Game (SA-9)
- Community Profiles (SA-10)
- Icebreakers and Teambuilding Activities (SA-11)

Training Module 3: Government and Public Policy

This module overviews the role of public policy in youths' lives, how state and local governments work, and state and federal processes.



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- A Day in the Life: An Intro to Public Policy (SA-14)
- The Ideal Community (SA-15)
- From Idea to Law (SA-16)
- Types of City Government (SA-17)
- *Active Citizenship Today*, a Close Up Foundation curriculum; order at www.closeup.org

Training Module 4: Community Planning

This module introduces the community planning process including different perspectives on Smart Growth principles and hypothetical community planning scenarios.



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Interview a Planning Expert Worksheet and Report (SA-7 and SA-8)
- Intro to Smart Growth: an Interactive Discussion (SA-20)
- Envision Smart Growth: a Design Simulation Activity (SA-21)
- Community Planning Pictionary (SA-22)
- Key Community Planning Concepts and Terminology (SA-23)
- Planning Jargon Jeopardy Game (SA-24)
- You the Advocate: a Community Planning Campaign Game (SA-25)
- The Role of Information and Technology in Planning (SA-26)
- The Life of an Empty Lot: Understanding Land Use Planning Processes (SA-19)

Training Module 5: Developing Group Priorities

If your project will include any kind of advocacy or policy recommendations, use this module to come to agreement on a “platform” or set of shared beliefs on your issue.



See the following Web resources on pg. 53 for a complete index of the online library:

- Developing a Platform (SA-27)
- Making Group Decisions (SA-29)
- Win-Win Resolutions to Disagreements (R-11)

Online Training Modules: Skills

The following modules all relate to skills-building. Depending on the nature of your project, the youth participants will require different skills. Select the modules that fit your project:

- Event Planning (Module 6)
- Media and Publicity (Module 7)
- Meetings and Facilitation (Module 8)
- Public Speaking (Module 9)
- Advocacy and Education (Module 10)

Training Module 6: Event Planning

This module guides you through choosing, planning, and conducting public events, such as conferences, community work days, rallies, etc.

- Brainstorm an Event (SA-30)
- How To Plan an Agenda (SA-31)
- Create a Project Action Plan (SA-28)

Training Module 7: Media and Publicity

This module provides guidelines for media outreach, along with sample PSAs, press releases, media advisories, editorials, letters to the editor, and posters.

- Creating the Perfect Poster (SA-32)
- Editorials and Letters to the Editor: How-To, Samples, and Activity (SA-33)
- Press Releases/Advisories: How-To, Samples, and Activity (SA-34)

Training Module 8: Meetings and Facilitation

If youth will be attending or planning meetings of any kind, this unit will help you to introduce them to the structure of formal and informal meetings. It includes an introduction to meeting formats, such as those used by planning commissions or city councils, as well as meeting facilitation.

- How to be a Facilitator (SA-35)
- Meeting Preparation Tips (SA-36)
- Meetings Parliamentary Style (SA-37)
- Attend a Meeting Activity (SA-38)
- What's in a Meeting: Basic Structure (SA-40)
- Meeting Ground Rules Brainstorm (SA-39)

Training Module 9: Public Speaking

Use these fun activities to build youths' skills and confidence for speaking in front of groups.

- Public Speaking Intro (SA-41)
- Make a Speech! (SA-42)

Training Module 10: Advocacy and Education

Youth working on community planning issues often become advocates and educators. This module zeroes in on preparing youth to work with elected officials and government representatives.

- Tips for Effective Advocacy (SA-44)
- Mock Advocacy Activity (SA-45)
- How to Use Petitions (SA-46)
- Launching a Letter/Email Campaign (SA-47)



Your Project Plan

The Project Plan questionnaire beginning on p. 47 enables you to think through the knowledge and skills youth will need for your project.

- What knowledge, characteristics, or interests should youth know have before they are recruited for your project? What can they learn afterward, through your training?
- How might you structure your training (one day, weekend retreat, semester?)
- Which of the California Center training modules are suitable for your project?
- Are there other organizations in your community that might help with your training?

Case Studies of Successful Projects

IN THIS SECTION

- Eight communities' experiences with youth engagement
- Examples of what works!

Learning by example is often the best way to educate yourself. This section presents eight very different community planning case studies. Note that every circumstance is unique; some projects have nearly unlimited resources and others next to none. Featured projects include:

1. Youth on city commissions in Boise, Idaho
2. City youth planners in Hampton, Virginia
3. Maryland Youth Summit on the Environment
4. Youth delegates to the national *New Partners for Smart Growth Conference*
5. Regional youth board in Atlanta
6. Y-PLAN service learning projects in the San Francisco area
7. SANDAG Youth Ambassador project in San Diego
8. Youth Design workshop for South Sacramento community plan

Additional case studies will be made available online as new projects are completed. Please submit your own by emailing voices@californiacenter.org!

CASE STUDY 1

Youth on City Commissions in Boise, Idaho

In 1999, with the goal of “making Boise the best place in the nation to be young,” former mayor Brent Coles appointed 11 youth as unpaid members of city boards and commissions. Using the Search Institute’s 40 developmental assets (available online) as a guide, the city of Boise committed itself to engaging, empowering and learning from its youth.

Currently, 12 youth ages 15-22 serve one-year terms on ten different city boards and commissions, including the Housing Authority, Public Works Commission, Parks and Recreation, Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee, the Design Review Board, Library Board, the Historic Preservation Commission, Arts Commission, and the Healthy Community*Healthy Youth (HC*HY) Executive Committee. The youth have full voting rights on all except the Library Board and the Housing Authority (on which youth voting is prohibited by state law). The mayor’s office stresses that even when youth roles are only advisory, their opinions are highly valued.

“Adult members benefit from the fresh perspective,” says Matt McCarter, Executive Director of HC*HY, a coalition of youth service organizations housed in the mayor’s office. McCarter cautions others considering a youth commission program: “If city leadership and board members do not see value in youth perspectives, it is not time to move forward with an effort like this.”

An important aspect of having youth on boards is preparation. Training both the new youth appointees and the adults on the boards and commissions helps ensure success. The training, staffed by HC*HY employees and others, includes information on the roles of boards and commissions as well as local government processes. In addition, youth learn information specific to the responsibilities of each board. Ongoing support is provided through mentoring relationships that pair students with adult members and through quarterly gatherings of all youth members to discuss their experiences.

HC*HY also tries to highlight the work of each youth board member in the local newspaper, which doubles as a way to get the word out to other youth about the opportunity to serve. For more information visit: www.cityofboise.org/parks/activities_programs/hchy.

“If it is clear youth will be encouraged and listened to, and preparations are well thought out, you are set up for success... Having youth on boards and commissions has been a rewarding experience for everyone involved. Youth feel their voice is valued and that they have an impact on city decisions. Adult members benefit from the fresh perspective, optimism, and enthusiasm youth bring to the table.”

– Matt McCarter, Executive Director, HC*HY

CASE STUDY 2

Hampton, Virginia Employs Youth as Planners

After a 1997 community-mapping project in which youth in Hampton, Virginia identified local issues affecting teens, the city made huge strides to involve local youth in planning its future.

The city of Hampton created two part-time positions for teens in the City Planning Department. In this ongoing program, the teens are hired to work 15 hours a week for a two year-term and are responsible for overseeing the youth component of the city's comprehensive plan. Thus far the youth planners have prioritized the following key issues: “youth-friendly” spaces and businesses, transportation, employment, and caring youth-adult relationships.

The youth planners join other planners and the City Council at meetings, where they make monthly planning presentations about youth-related issues. So far, the youth planners have:

- Developed a handbook (at the request of the City Council) to help business owners and officials become more “youth friendly”
- Worked with the local transit agency to research transportation options for teenagers, gathering input from young people on a new light rail system and other initiatives, as well as transit costs and teens' access to it
- Consulted regularly with the parks/recreation department providing information, ideas for events, or acting as a partner in park events
- Gathered information from peers through monthly public meetings with the Hampton Youth Commission where the planners often facilitate brainstorming activities and surveys



Additional information on the youth planners in Hampton is available in an article at the Project for Public Space website: www.pps.org/tcb/youth_planners.htm

"With a hard job like this, expectations are higher than if you're flipping hamburgers, and we don't have college degrees in this field. But still, our co-workers are open to how we adjust and get our work done, which is really helpful when you're unsure of things."

– Teenager Kathryn Price, who worked as a Youth Planner in 2000-2001

CASE STUDY 3

Maryland Youth Summit on the Environment

In 1997, then Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening announced the creation of the Governor's Office of Smart Growth with the goal of educating the public about Smart Growth. One important segment of the public was youth. While Smart Growth curriculum in all schools was ideal, it was not immediately possible, so the Governor's office decided to 'start small' by hosting a yearly conference aimed at high school students from every school district in the state. Four conferences were held between 1998 and 2002.

"If we want to change land use patterns we need to change the way we think about it. In order to do that we may need to go through a generational change, and make sure tomorrows leaders are educated."

– John Frece, former Communications Director of the Governor's Office of Smart Growth

The first conference, *A Generation Ahead*, introduced broad planning and environmental issues to almost 1,000 youth. A major lesson learned with this first conference was that spring is not the best time to introduce new concepts, as it left little time for follow-up in the classroom. The second annual conference was held in the fall and focused exclusively on Smart Growth, the third on transportation, and the fourth on the Chesapeake Bay.

At each summit, students discussed the impacts of sprawling development, the health of the Chesapeake Bay, air quality, transit, and other environmental and transportation issues. The format varied each year but included plenary and small group sessions based on geography. The conferences enabled students to learn from, and share opinions with, planning professionals.

As a result of these conferences and the support of local governments and private agencies, the State of Maryland was able to introduce Smart Growth curriculum entitled *Where Do We Grow From Here?* as a way to reach more students. Each conference's cost was \$35,000-\$50,000 (including facility, transportation, and staff) with funds raised from sponsorships and local foundations.

Due to a change in administration, the Governor's Office of Smart Growth was recently dissolved and many of its functions integrated into other state departments. However, the state of Kentucky is replicating their model, teaching Smart Growth concepts to its youth. For more information on Maryland's program, see:



- Governor's Office of Smart Growth: www.smartgrowth.state.md.us/index.htm
- *Where Do We Grow From Here??:* www.dnr.state.md.us/education/growfromhere/home.htm
- Kentucky Smart Growth Initiative: <http://smartgrowth.ky.gov>

CASE STUDY 4

Youth Delegation to National Smart Growth Conference

In January 2003, 31 high school students from 30 communities nationwide were chosen to attend the 2nd annual *New Partners for Smart Growth Conference* in New Orleans. The participants were nominated by local government officials, schools, and community organizations. They represented communities ranging from rural towns to gated suburbs to inner-city housing projects.

Before arriving in New Orleans, the youth surveyed their peers and interviewed community planning professionals. At the conference, the students were supervised and supported by a staff of graduate students and young professionals. The teens spent the first day and a half in a youth-only orientation to introduce them to Smart Growth concepts and local government processes. Many of the materials used in this orientation are available in this handbook's online library.

The youth used the information they gathered in their communities, along with the knowledge they received in the youth prep workshops, to develop an issue platform. Then they participated as workshop speakers and participants along with the 700 planners and Smart Growth professionals in attendance. The youth platform included the development of mixed-use neighborhoods that combat sprawl, reliable and accessible public transportation, pedestrian-friendly streets, diverse mixed-income neighborhoods, and education and youth engagement around Smart Growth.

After the conference, each youth conducted a follow-up activity in her/his community. The projects ranged from public presentations to advocating youth participation in planning.



Youth-Led Projects

Following the Smart Growth conference, the youth took action locally. For example:

Johnathan McClure, 17, wrote the cover article, "Building a Walkable City," for the Spring 2003 issue of *North Dakota Geographic Alliance Magazine*. The article promoted a more walkable Minot (his hometown) by opposing sprawl pattern development, encouraging side-walk building and mixed-use development, and advancing a plan for better mass transit.

Lizzie Velasquez, 16, coordinated a youth forum to introduce Smart Growth and livable community concepts to teens in Stanislaus County (CA). She created a hypothetical city out of Monopoly houses that showed the difference between "smart and dumb growth." The forum was part of a larger conference for youth on environmental justice.

Lee Wells, 18, promoted youth viewpoints on Smart Growth as a speaker at a meeting of state and local leaders in Louisville, KY. He also arranged for a spokesperson from the local transit authority to speak at his high school about a local light rail initiative and related transit oriented development. Due to the presentation, the advanced composition class chose to make light rail the topic of their persuasive writing assignment.

Funding for the youth delegation, which cost approximately \$30,000 in transportation, staffing, and lodging, was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Local Government Commission, the APA, and local sponsors.



For more information on this project, contact Jim Muldavin, Executive Director of the California Center, at muldavin@californiacenter.org. Or visit www.californiacenter.org.



Youth Speak Out

When asked what the youth learned at the *New Partners for Smart Growth Conference* they answered...

"I have a reinforced belief that young leaders *do* want to make a difference in our communities. The conference helped me be a better leader."

– Nick Gallagher, 16, Jackson, MI

"I learned how to speak with adults on an equal level... We shared similar opinions on certain issues about community planning. I am now more aware than ever about the structure and development of a community."

– Kamille Go, 15, Issaquah, WA

"Ever since the Smart Growth conference I have been exposed to different ideas and they have given me inspiration to share these unique ideas with other people. I now have a different outlook on my community and I want my children to live in a society depicted by Smart Growth."

– Alba Barragan, 17, El Sobrante, CA

CASE STUDY 5

Regional Youth Board in Atlanta

Can you imagine a region with walkable neighborhoods and lush landscapes? How about communities with mixed-use development and multiple transportation choices? For about 50 high school students a year in the Atlanta region, it's their vision for the future.

The Model Atlanta Regional Commission (MARC) is a project that involves youth in planning Atlanta's future. It is a joint effort of the Atlanta Regional Commission (the official planning agency for the ten-county Atlanta region) and the State YMCA of Georgia (Y clubs).

Each February since 1998, sophomores and juniors are selected for the coming year to represent each of the region's 10 counties. They are chosen based on variety of factors including academic achievement, extracurricular activities, level of interest, a written essay, and recommendations.

Over the course of a school year the youth learn about issues affecting Atlanta, including transportation, air quality, human services, land use, and water as well as the structure and function of a regional planning board. Once the students have a grasp of the issues, they split into committees and draft possible solutions to the region's challenges. At their final meeting the youth commissioners present and vote on the resolutions they have created in order to create a stronger region. The resolutions are then presented to the official Atlanta Regional Commission for consideration.

“The MARC program has given students like me a great way to get involved and make a difference in our regional community as well as an opportunity to voice our opinions on issues that are important to us as teens.”

– Jessica Camp, a 2000-01 MARC participant

Over the last five years the MARC program has developed solutions to challenges facing the Atlanta region. Solutions included:

- An incentive plan for students to carpool in order to combat air pollution
- Creating community centers to serve as central gathering spaces that nurture neighborhoods



For more information visit www.atlantaregional.com/communitybuilding/leadership/marc.html.

CASE STUDY 6

Y-PLAN, San Francisco Bay Area, CA

In 1993 the University of California, Berkeley launched Y-PLAN (Youth – Plan, Learn, Act, Now), a program to expose high school students in the San Francisco Bay Area to urban planning and design. The program was the brainchild of graduate students in the university's Department of City & Regional Planning.

Y-PLAN is a ten-week workshop that integrates planning and community development issues with California's tenth and eleventh grade English and Social Studies curriculum, bringing planning to life in the classroom.

Each fall, UC professor Deborah McKoy identifies “real-world” clients in nearby cities with planning needs. Each spring, graduate students (through a semester-long course) bring the project(s) into the classrooms of one or two local high schools, where students spend two days a week learning the fundamentals of community design and project planning. It culminates with the development of a proposal students present to City Hall officials.

For example, the 2003 Y-PLAN participants from McClymonds High School in Oakland, CA chose to focus on a deteriorating park near their campus. Over the course of one semester, the students created a new design for a History Park and presented their plan at Oakland City Hall. Their vision for the park was adopted by The Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation. The San Francisco Foundation provided a grant to hire professional designers to work with the youth and develop their ideas into a final design that will be sent out to bid. At the time of this writing, The Friends and local businesses were working to raise funds to build the revamped park.

According to Dr. McKoy the program “makes the invisible practice of community change visible” to urban youth. It also exposes planning professionals to the power of youth engagement. The program is supported by grants from the UC Office of the President’s UC-Links program and the Interactive University Project.



- For more information about Y-PLAN or its projects, visit <http://dcrp.ced.berkeley.edu/Misc/YPlan/yplanhome.htm>.
- To access the APA’s Kids and Community web site, which provides articles used by Y-PLAN, visit www.planning.org/kidsandcommunity/.

CASE STUDY 7

Youth Ambassadors in San Diego

In the fall of 2003 the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) created the Youth Ambassadors project as a part of its community outreach efforts surrounding the development of its Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). The RCP defines a shared vision of the future of San Diego, including regional land use and transportation policies. SANDAG sought to bring the perspectives and enthusiasm of young people into the development of this important document, asking a diverse group of 16 high school students from different communities in the county to be featured speakers at a series of five community workshops focused on the RCP.

In a short amount of time, and with only a limited amount of effort, SANDAG generated a strong level of interest in the Youth Ambassador opportunity. Over the course of a month, the project was publicized through emails and phone calls to youth organizations including the Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA’s, and the Urban League, as well through SANDAG’s list-serve of elected officials and community stakeholders.

While SANDAG originally planned to select six Youth Ambassadors, a greater than expected response prompted them to accept 16 applicants. The students assembled for a Saturday half-day orientation where they learned about the regional planning process, considered youth priorities for San Diego, and developed short presentations they would later give at the SANDAG community workshops on the RCP.

Each youth was required to speak at one of five three-hour workshops. In each case, their presentations opened the meetings and thus set the context for subsequent discussions. After their presentations, the Youth Ambassadors joined other community stakeholders in further discussions of regional issues.

The community workshops, each attended by 50-100 people, allowed residents to discuss specific steps that should be taken to achieve a shared vision for the region. They examined goals and policy objectives in the areas of transportation, housing, urban form, public facilities, economic prosperity, and environmental protection. Feedback from the workshops was incorporated into a draft of the RCP, which was released in December 2003. The plan reflects several of the Youth Ambassadors priorities, including the desire for more walkable communities, an emphasis on reducing air pollution, and the preservation of wetlands and marine ecosystems.

The youth were provided \$50 stipends for their time, which they received after submitting a feedback form about their experience. The cost for the project was \$2,000, which included youth stipends, a pizza lunch, and fees to a consultant (the California Center) hired to coordinate recruitment and the orientation session. (*Many of the materials used for the recruitment and the orientation are available in this handbook's online library: www.californiacenter.org/voices.)*

“I think that SANDAG is doing a great thing by reaching out to students because of the impact participation has on a young person. Being a part of this project, I feel like I can make something happen, and that feeling is hard to get when you are just in high school. I have learned that there are people and organizations out there that realize the importance of getting youth opinions in their meetings and decisions.”

– SANDAG Youth Ambassador Ariane Salvador, age 16

“I have learned a tremendous amount about regional planning and all the considerations that must go into it. My perspective on what it takes to run a city and keep it beneficial for its inhabitants has grown immensely. I have a much greater understanding of San Diego and what needs to be done in order to keep it a great place to live.”

– SANDAG Youth Ambassador Erin Bala, age 17

CASE STUDY 8

Revising a Community Plan in the High School Classroom

In 2002 the City of Sacramento Planning Department took their outreach into a high school, gaining the valuable perspectives of young people. Seeking input on the revision of the South Sacramento Community Plan, planners held a workshop in the classroom of teacher Denny Hopson.

Planners visited Luther Burbank High School on two consecutive days, spending 45 minutes each day with Mr. Hopson's 12th grade government class. Prior to the arrival of the planning staff, students were presented with "brainteaser" questions related to their vision for the future of South Sacramento, an aging inner-ring suburban area with pockets of poverty and a decaying infrastructure. When the planning staff arrived, students were introduced to the community planning process and concepts, and then they participated in an activity called "Community Heartbeats." Using maps and stickers, the youth identified gathering places and other key locations in their community, discussing the area's weaknesses and opportunities. Students emphasized the need for affordable housing, improved safety, and increased entertainment uses. Many said they felt no stigma with using public transit and would be likely to utilize planned improvements. Planners discussed the history of the area with students, talking about how the layout of their community had changed with the rise of the automobile. On the second day, discussion focused on the students' ideas for developing land surrounding a new light rail line. A software program called "PLACE³S" was used to help students visualize how different ideas for development might change their current community. Planners entered ideas on the spot, allowing students to instantly see the impact of suggested changes.

Jaki Walker, who managed public outreach for the South Sacramento Community Plan, reported that many of the student ideas eventually made it into the final recommendations. Walker also noted that this youth engagement activity required relatively little cost and effort. The planners were able to use the same materials and techniques developed for community workshops targeting adults. We didn't have any problems with youths' comprehension or interest level." The youth workshop had the added value of students encouraging their parents to get involved with the community plan. This was especially valuable in reaching immigrant parents with limited English, a group the planners were challenged to engage.

For information visit: www.cityofsacramento.org/planning/longrange/airport-meadowview.pdf.

"When we think about public input, we need to consider the needs of young people and think of them as a stakeholder group. When we are talking about 20 or 30 years into the future, we are really planning their environment."

-- Jaki Walker, Senior Planner, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Inc.

Conclusion

Clearly, youth have an important role to play in community design. The decisions we make now impact the lives of today's youth, their children, and their grandchildren. Therefore basic principles of fairness dictate that they should be involved in community decisions. However, even without an ethical imperative, youth should be included in community design because *it simply results in improved public policy*. Good public policy creates better cities, healthier states, and a stronger nation. It also develops youth as future leaders.

Parting Recommendations

Every locality has different resources and challenges, so we hesitate to close this handbook with a heavy-handed list of “you shoulds.” However, the following benchmarks provide a starting point for communities, regardless their resources:

- Strive to include youth anytime your locality makes major community planning decisions.
- When deciding which stakeholders to invite to the table, remember to include youth.
- Definitely include youth in decision-making about facilities or parks that serve them.
- Remember that there is a range of ways to include teens, from one-time focus groups to permanent youth advisory boards.
- Don't be afraid to ask for feedback along the way; youth will tell you what's going well and how to make it better.
- *Please* don't let youth engagement in your community fizzle out as just an idea – translate those ideas into action!

Call On Us!

The California Center staff welcomes opportunities to help you, whether you are just getting started or are a seasoned pro. We provide technical assistance to local governments, community organizations, regional coalitions, state agencies, and national organizations. Feel free to contact us any time.

Contact:

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Online library: www.californiacenter.org/voices

Share Your Ideas Online!

The Youth VOICES online library is a living resource where new materials can be added all the time. If you have youth engagement activities, samples, or case studies, please email voices@californiacenter.org for guidelines on how to share your work.

Together, we can see young people meaningfully engaged in community planning – nationwide!

“Whether problem-solving or decision-making, go the extra distance to get the opinions of youth, to include youth in committees and think tanks, and bring us to the table as voting equals. We youth are as much a part of the community as anyone else; all we ask is to be included. Stop trying to manage us and start trying to work with us. I promise you will not be disappointed. We are your new partners. ”

– Brandon Kitay, age 17, West Palm Beach, FL

Project Plan

These questions provide a step-by-step process for planning your own youth engagement projects. If you choose to type up these answers, you will have the start on a concept paper for your boss, grant proposals for funders, or recruitment flyers for teens. These questions appeared throughout the handbook at the end of chapter. Here, they are provided together for your convenience. These questions are also provided in worksheet form in the online library (R-1).

Step 1: Get Started

Corresponds with Chapter 2: Benefits and Challenges of Engaging Youth In Policymaking

1. Why do you want to engage youth in decision-making? What prompted your interest in youth engagement? Was it a problem (such as a lack of local bike lanes), a circumstance (such as consideration of new ordinance), or an individual (such as a new mayor)?
2. How would youth engagement strengthen your work?
3. How would youth benefit from an engagement project associated with your organization?
4. What challenges might you face? Any initial ideas for overcoming them?

Step 2: Assess Your Organization's Readiness

Corresponds with *Chapter 3: Are You Ready For Youth Engagement?*

5. What are the attitudes of you and your colleagues regarding engaging youth in policymaking?
6. At this time, where do you think your organization is on the Power Continuum Table? Where would you like to be? How will you get there?
7. What staff resources can your organization devote to a youth engagement project?
8. What financial resources currently exist for a youth engagement project? What fundraising options exist? (Foundations, government agencies, local corporations?)
9. With whom might you partner to run the project? (Youth organizations, schools?)

Step 3: Decide Which Approach Is Right For You

Corresponds with *Chapter 4: Models of Youth Engagement*

Note: We suggest also reviewing *Chapter 7: Case Studies of Successful Projects*.

10. Which youth engagement models most appeal to you? Why?
11. Based on your answers in Step 2 (staff, funding, colleagues), which models do you think are realistic for your organization at this time?
12. What role will youth have in selecting your project framework (or in selecting activities within that framework)?

Step 4: Decide How to Recruit Youth

Corresponds with *Chapter 5: Recruiting Youth*

13. What mix of youth will you seek to recruit (age, race, academic performance, etc.)?
14. How will you find youth? Will you tap other organizations to get the word out? Which ones?
15. Will you offer a stipend? How much?
16. Will you use adult nominators?
17. Will you have a selection committee review applications? If so, who might be on it?
18. How will you inform any applicants who are not selected for your project? Are there other ways the project might engage these youth later? Are there other programs to which you can refer them?

Step 5: Decide How to Train the Youth

Corresponds with *Chapter 6: Training! Training! Training!*

19. What knowledge, characteristics, or interests should youth know have before they are recruited for your project?
20. What can they learn after being recruited, through training you will provide?
21. How might you structure your training (one day, a weekend retreat, throughout a semester?)
22. Which of the California Center training modules are suitable for your project?
23. Are there other organizations in your community that might help with your training?

Step 6: Set a Timeline

By this point, you probably have a rough idea of how long your project planning will take. It helps to put your timeline on paper. Remember to build in extra time, since unforeseen things always come up.

Phase 1: Assessing and Gathering Resources

Depending on your situation and your proposed project, this phase might take a month or a year. Consider how much time you will need to build support among colleagues and superiors, how long it will take to build a network of partner organizations (if appropriate), and how long to raise funds (if necessary).



Funding takes time:

Corporate grants are often decided upon in a couple of months; foundation grants typically take about 6 months; government grants 8-10 months or more. Remember, you can always start with small projects that cost little or nothing.

ACTIVITY	PROJECTED DATES/LENGTH OF TIME
Start date	
Building internal support	
Recruiting organizational partners	
Identify existing resources that might let you avoid fundraising	
Fundraising, if needed	

Phase 2: Project Planning and Recruitment



Once your internal support, partners, and funding are squared away, you can start actually planning the details of the project. In most cases, recruitment takes longer than expected. It is best to give yourself 1-3 months for recruitment, depending on the announcement and selection approaches you have chosen.

ACTIVITY	PROJECTED DATES/LENGTH OF TIME
Finalizing project model	
Planning and researching youth training agenda	
Developing recruitment materials (with application deadline)	
Getting the word out (mailings, posting flyers, etc.)	
Extended recruitment period (in case you don't get enough applications the first time)	
Selection process (will take longer if you are selecting via committee or interviews)	

Phase 3: Project Implementation

We cannot predict your project implementation activities since every project is different. Use the blank lines to record activities and times appropriate to your project.

ACTIVITY	PROJECTED DATES/LENGTH OF TIME

Phase 4: Evaluate, Sustain the Project, or Maybe Wrap Up

If your project centers on an event, it will have an end date. If you are establishing a permanent youth commission, the project will not end but may have a natural cycle when you can evaluate, revise the model, and go again. Try to predict what will be right for you, but give yourself the freedom to be flexible:

ACTIVITY	PROJECTED DATES/LENGTH OF TIME
Evaluating the project	
Celebrating accomplishments	
Planning the next phase, including possibly growing or expanding	
Recruiting new youth (if applicable)	
Renewing funding (if applicable)	
Archiving materials so your project can be replicated in future (if it is ending)	

Index of Online Library



There are two ways to locate materials in the online library, located at www.californiacenter.org/voices:

By Topic or Training Module Name:

This method is how documents are listed in this index. See Chapter 7 for instructions on using the various youth Training Modules.

By Category:

All documents are coded with a reference number, such as AD-1:

- **Administrative Aids (AD)** are time-saving samples of recruitment materials, agendas, release forms, budgets, and much more.
- **Resources (R)** are articles to support youth engagement. This section includes materials on youth development, fund raising, and how to find other youth engagement publications.
- **Student Activities (SA)** are training and teambuilding materials for youth. More than 40 fun and engaging activities are provided to build knowledge and skills in public policy, smart growth, advocacy, running meetings, and many other topics.

Note: Some resources appear under more than one heading.

Advocacy and Education (Training Module 10)

Online Library:

Tips for Effective Advocacy (SA-44)

Mock Advocacy Activity (SA-45)

How to Use Petitions (SA-46)

Launching a Letter/Email Campaign (SA-47)

Community Planning (Training Module 4)

Handbook References:

What Is Community Planning?, p. 2
Why Involve Youth In Community Planning?, p. 3
Chapter 7: Case Studies of Successful Projects, p. 35

Online Library:

Intro to Smart Growth: An Interactive Discussion (SA-20)
Envision Smart Growth: A Design Simulation Activity (SA-21)
Community Planning Pictionary (SA-22)
Key Community Planning Concepts and Terminology (SA-23)
Planning Jargon Jeopardy Game (SA-24)
You the Advocate: A Community Planning Campaign Game (SA-25)
Interview a Planning Expert Worksheet (SA-7)
Interview an Expert Report Form (SA-8)
The Life of an Empty Lot: Understanding Land Use Planning (SA-19)
The Role of Information and Technology in Planning (SA-26)
Web Resources on Youth and Smart Growth (R-6)

Connecting Youth To Their Communities (Training Module 1)

Handbook References:

Don't Work in a Vacuum!, p. 31
No Puppets Here!, p. 29

Online Library:

Needs Assessments 101: Different Types and Why They Are Important (SA-1)
About Surveys: Why Do One and How (SA-2)
Sample Survey and Tally Sheet (SA-3)
Sample Survey Review Worksheet (SA-4)
About Focus Groups: What, Why, and How (SA-5)
Planning a Focus Group: The Details (SA-6)
About Canvassing (SA-12)
Hot Issue Brainstorm (SA-13)

Event Planning (Training Module 6)

Online Library:

Brainstorm an Event (SA-30)
How To Plan an Event Agenda (SA-31)
Create a Project Action Plan (SA-28)

Funding

Handbook References:

Avoiding an Under-Investment of Time and Resources, p. 10
Funding takes time:, p. 50

Online Library:

Fundraising Resources (R-7)
How To Get Product Donation (R-8)
Sample Project Budgets (AD-1)

Government and Public Policy (Training Module 3)

Online Library:

A Day in the Life: An Intro to Public Policy (SA-14)
The Ideal Community (SA-15)
From Idea to Law (SA-16)
Types of City Government (SA-17)
Identifying Stakeholders and Decision-Makers (SA-18)

Group Priorities (Training Module 5)

Online Library:

Developing a Platform (SA-27)
Making Group Decisions (SA-29)
Win-Win Resolutions to Disagreements (R-11)

Media and Publicity (Training Module 7)

Online Library:

Creating the Perfect Poster (SA-32)

Press Releases/Advisories: How-To, Samples, and Activity (SA-34)

Editorials/Letters to the Editor: How-To, Samples, and Activity (SA-33)

Meetings, Facilitation, Serving on Boards (Training Module 8)

Online Library:

How to Be a Facilitator (SA-35)

Meeting Preparation Tips (SA-36)

Meetings Parliamentary Style (SA-37)

Attend a Meeting Activity (SA-38)

What's in a Meeting: Basic Structure (SA-40)

Meeting Ground Rules Brainstorm (SA-39)

Mentoring Youth on Boards on Commissions (R-9)

Public Speaking (Training Module 9)

Online Library:

Public Speaking Intro (SA-41)

Make a Speech! (SA-42)

Issue Ad Activity (SA-43)

Recruitment of Youth

Handbook References

Chapter 5: Recruiting Youth, p. 25

Online Library

Step-By-Step Guide To Youth Recruitment (AD-2)

Sample Recruitment Letters (AD-3)

Sample Youth Recruitment Flyer (AD-4)

Sample Project Contract for Youth (AD-6)

Sample Youth Nomination Forms (AD-5)

Sample Rejection Letter (AD-7)

Samples

Sample Medical Release/Emergency Contact (AD-13)
Sample Photo Release Form (AD-15)
Sample Program Contract for Youth (AD-6)
Sample Program Rule Sheet For Overnight Programs (AD-14)
Sample Program Staff Application (AD-12)
Sample Recruitment Letters (AD-3)
Sample Rejection Letter (AD-7)
Sample Speaker Invite (AD-16)
Sample Youth Nomination Forms (AD-5)
Sample Youth Recruitment Flyer (AD-4)

Smart Growth

See “Community Planning”

Surveys, Focus Groups, Canvassing

See “Connecting Youth To Their Communities”

Teamwork Among Youth (Training Module 2)

Online Library:

Interview Introduction Game (SA-9)
Community Profiles (SA-10)
Icebreakers and Teambuilding Activities (SA-11)

Training Youth

Handbook References:

Chapter 6: Training! Training! Training!, p. 29

Online Library:

Sample Agendas For Youth Prep Sessions: 1/2, 1, and 2 days (AD-9)
Designing a Youth Training Program (AD-8)
Tips for Integrating Experts in a Youth Training (AD-11)

See training modules on these topics:

Advocacy and Education
Connecting Youth To Their Communities
Community Planning
Event Planning
Group Priorities
Government and Public Policy
Media and Publicity
Meetings and Facilitation
Public Speaking
Teamwork

Youth Development

Handbook References:

What is Youth Engagement?, p. 1
Youth and Adult Power-Sharing, p. 13

Online Library:

40 Developmental Assets by Search Institute (R-2)
What Do You Mean by “Youth Development”? (R-3)
Building Youth-Adult Partnerships (R-10)

Youth Engagement in Policymaking

Handbook References:

Chapter 4: Models of Youth Engagement, p. 17

Online Library:

Youth Engagement Approaches in Detail: (R-4)
Descriptions of Other Youth Engagement Publications (R-5)

Misc. Resources

Project Plan Worksheet (R-1)
Worksheet for Workshop Selection (SA-48)
Workshop Notes Form (SA-49)

CALIFORNIA
C E N T E R
FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION
AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Handbook developed by:

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for Civic Participation**

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American
Planning
Association