Youth Participatory Evaluation: An Opportunity to Promote Youth Development and Program Improvement

AUDIO PROBLEMS? LISTEN ON YOUR PHONE:
(866) 740-1260 | CODE: 8315693
Welcome!

Jill Gordon
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Indiana Philanthropy Alliance
jgordon@inphilanthropy.org
Before We Get Started

- All participants are currently muted.
- **Can’t hear us?** CALL (866) 740-1260 | CODE: 8315693
- **ReadyTalk Help Line:** (800) 843-9166 | help@readytalk.com
- Use the chat box to send comments and questions to the presenter.
- Please take our brief survey, which appears at the end of our program.
- Look for our follow-up email containing today’s recording and any added resources.
Today’s Presenters

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Legacy Foundation
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Lori Palen, PhD
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www.rti.org
POP QUIZ!
Which of the following aligns with your organization’s mission or goals?

a) Promoting education and employability
b) Promoting youth voice in communities
c) Building organizational capacity
d) Developing future citizens and leaders
e) Do I have to pick just one?!
Youth Participatory Evaluation

What?
Why?
How?
Youth-Adult Partnerships exist whenever youth and adults collaborate to establish common goals or accomplish shared tasks.

~ Reyhan Reid
Youth Participatory Evaluation engages young people in a process to evaluate programs, organizations, or systems that impact (or are supposed to impact) their lives.
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Youth Participatory Evaluation engages young people in a process to evaluate programs, organizations, or systems that impact (or are supposed to impact) their lives.
Youth Participatory Action Research engages young people in a process to address community issues that impact (or are supposed to impact) their lives.
Youth Participatory Evaluation

engages young people
in a process to evaluate programs, organizations, or systems
that impact (or are supposed to impact) their lives.
Continuum for Youth Participatory Evaluation.
Recipients
How does your organization currently involve youth in evaluation?

a) **Objects** (youth provide data)

b) **Recipients** (adults assign tasks)

c) **Resources** (adults request input)

d) **Partners** (youth collaborate with adults to conduct evaluation)

e) We don’t currently involve youth in evaluation
Benefits

Evaluation skills

Youth
Benefits

Evaluation skills

Voice
Benefits
Evaluation skills
Voice
Self-discovery
Benefits
Evaluation skills
Voice
Self-discovery
Mentoring
Benefits
Improved insights
Benefits

Improved insights
Increased capacity
Benefits
Improved insights
Increased capacity
Staffing pipeline
Benefits
- Improved insights
- Increased capacity
- Staffing pipeline
- Fresh voices
Benefits
Positive experiences with youth
Benefits
Positive experiences with youth
Citizen pipeline
Necessary Conditions for Youth Participatory Evaluation
## Organizational and Community Readiness

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2 The Right Team
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<td>Capacity for teamwork, respect</td>
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<td>Useful knowledge, skills</td>
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3 Clear Roles

Initiating
Recruiting and selecting
Training and supporting
Advocating
3 Clear Roles

Anything else!
3 Clear Roles
4 Training and Support
5 Sustaining Youth Involvement
5 Sustaining Youth Involvement
Sustaining Youth Involvement
5 Necessary Conditions for Youth Participatory Evaluation

Organizational and community readiness
The right team
Clear roles
Training and support
Sustaining youth involvement
Involving Youth at Each Evaluation Stage
Evaluation Planning

Developing logic models, research questions, design, and data collection instruments
Youth Before Our Program

- Trapped in cycle of abuse

Youth During Our Program

- Support group!
- Mentoring!

Youth After Our Program

- Bright future!
- Happy!
- Healthy!
- Med. Svcs.
LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Eventual changes in behavior, health, and well-being

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Features of environment, inclusion/exclusion criteria

INPUTS

Program delivery staff
Materials

OUTPUTS

Activities conducted
Participants reached

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Knowledge and skills learned

INPUTS

Program delivery staff
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EXTERNAL FACTORS

Features of environment, inclusion/exclusion criteria
2. Outline your YPE story, and then **GO!**

Outlining your YPE story

It is critical to outline your YPE story to ensure that you accomplish your goals in the time you have. Here are some questions and examples from YLI’s YPE story that may help you as you outline your own YPE story. On the next page, you can see how YLI outlines their YPE story.

1. What do you want to learn?
   
   YLI wanted to assess the quality of their program as well as how they could improve their program.

2. How much time do you have?
   
   YLI had a full program year (i.e., September-May) to accomplish their learning goals.

3. What evaluation tools will you use?
   
   YLI chose to use the Youth Program Quality Assessment tool to help them accomplish their learning goals. The Youth Program Quality Assessment tool is a validated instrument designed to measure the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs. It is an observational evaluation tool, meaning that the YPE team observed various parts of YLI’s programs and took detailed notes about what they saw.

4. When do you need to begin collecting data so that you have time to analyze your data and make recommendations?
   
   YLI collected their data in March, entered and analyzed it in April, and made recommendations based on their findings in May (which is when their program ends). You may want to plan more time than you think you need to collect and analyze data.

5. What will your YPE team have to do to prepare to collect data? What will you have to learn?
   
   In addition to determining their values and how they would work together, in preparation for collecting data, YLI’s YPE team reviewed their previous YPE work and YLI’s standard evaluations, learned about evaluation and why it’s done, received training to do the YPGA, and practiced observing and taking notes for the YPGA.

6. Considering your answer to question 5, when will you have to bring your YPE team together and start your YPE work?
   
   In order to begin collecting data in March (so they could analyze their data and make recommendations by the end of May), YLI brought their YPE team together in November of the previous year—four months before they started collecting data.
Recruitment

Identifying and inviting research participants
Data Collection

Gathering responses from research participants
Fun!! Horrid
Fun!!

Horrid

Meh.
Fun!!

Horrid

Candies
EVALUATION SCRAPBOOK

Please tear and paste magazine pictures to represent your responses to the following question:

What was your favorite part of this program?
EVALUATION SCRAPBOOK

Please tear and paste magazine pictures to represent your responses to the following question:
What was your favorite part of this program?
Analysis and Interpretation

Making sense of the data
What patterns or themes do you see?

Are there any surprises?

Are there any interesting quotes?
Reporting

Sharing results with people who can use them
Appendix 5: Report Template

1. Introduction to Your Community Project
   - What is the focus of your project?
   - Who are the participants?

2. What is the Purpose of Your Community Project?
   - What are the complex societal issues you are addressing? Why are they so important?
   - Who is affected or most involved in these issues?
   - What is interesting or challenging about these issues, and why do they have meaning or relevance for you?

3. Your Community Project’s Story
   - What were the main questions your project and its evaluation were asking?
   - What outcomes were the project designed to achieve?
   - What types of information did you collect to answer these questions?

4. Making an Impact
   - Describe each of your methods (interviews, focus groups, existing data, surveys, observations) and which questions they helped answer.
   - Why did you choose these methods?
   - How often were these methods used?
   - Why did you choose these specific people to gather data from?

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation
   - How was the data analyzed and summarized (for example, responses were tallied by hand, themes were identified by the number of responses given, a computer program was used to tally the responses)?
   - When was the data analyzed and summarized (for example, a pre-test and a post-test were given before the start of the project and at the conclusion. In addition, participants were asked to keep a diary of all the fruits and vegetables they ate each week).
   - Who participated in the analysis and summary (for example, if a youth member from our group with help from an adult community leader)?
   - How often did you meet with others to review the data?

6. Community Project Findings
   - What were the most important things you discovered during your evaluation?
   - You can organize these findings around your original questions. In other words, these are the questions we were trying to answer and here is what we found.
   - Try not to interpret the data; explain it, or make any conclusions until step 7.

7. Community Project Conclusions and Recommendations
   - In this section, you can tell the audience more about what the evaluation information means to you. What conclusions have you drawn from the data and why?
   - You can also note your recommendations for sustaining your project’s impact in the future. (For example, who will continue the project as it now operates? Will some parts of the project need to be added? Where will the money come from to support the project?)
Application

Using evaluation to promote change
ACTION PLANNING OUTLINE

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER __
Describe your group’s goal or the overall improvement you want to make. This is what you decided on in your “So What” discussion. (Fill out one outline for each recommendation.)

ACTION STEPS
List the steps that are needed to make your recommendation happen. Write each action step as a specific, practical statement. Always start with an active verb. For example, a good action step might be written like this: “Invite two new youths to each board meeting.” On the other hand, a not so good action step might say: “We need more youths on the board.”

Now it’s time to get down to details and plan exactly how to step into action. Complete one of these worksheets for each action step you propose.

ACTION STEP __

WHAT COULD BE TOUCHED WHAT COULD HELP

WHAT will we do?

WHO will make it happen? WHO will check on progress?

HOW OFTEN will we check on progress? WHEN will we complete it?

Youth and Adult Leaders for Program Excellence
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3. Make a plan for program improvement

After you have analyzed your data, it is important to make a detailed program improvement plan so that your YPE efforts result in real change for your program. For each part of your program that you wish to improve, each of these questions should be answered in detail:

1. Based on your YPE findings, which parts of your program should be improved?
   Based on their YPE findings, YLI’s YPE team wanted to improve how volunteers give feedback to youth. They recommended that volunteers use specific, non-evaluative language when giving feedback to YLI’s youth participants. For example, volunteers should say something like, “That was a helpful contribution to the conversation because you incorporated your personal experience,” instead of, “Great contribution!” This is a youth program quality best practice.

2. What did your data say about why this part of your program should be improved? What data is the recommendation responding to?
   Based on YLI’s YPE data, their volunteers were not consistently using specific, non-evaluative language when giving feedback. Often this feedback was non-specific or evaluative, (e.g., “Good job!”).

3. How will this recommendation improve your program?
   When will this improvement be accomplished?
   Based on this recommendation, YLI’s YPE team made the goal that volunteers will be aware of this youth program quality best practice and consistently use it within three months of their new program year.

4. What specific steps will you take to improve this part of your program?
   YLI’s YPE team decided that a program staff person will conduct a workshop for volunteers about using specific, non-evaluative language and how to incorporate this best practice when they’re at YLI.

5. Who is responsible for ensuring that these steps are taken and that they are resulting in the improvement you expected to see?
   To ensure this goal is met, a specific YLI staff person was tasked with developing and giving the workshop, as well as assessing whether volunteers are incorporating these best practices.

6. How will you assess whether you accomplished the improvement?
   As part of their plan, YLI’s YPE team specified that YLI program staff will meet one month after the workshop and discuss their informal observations of whether volunteers are incorporating this best practice while at YLI. Based on this conversation, future action steps will be developed, if necessary, to ensure that this best practice is occurring.
Let’s chat!

What is one action your organization could take to increase youth voice in evaluation?
1. YPE benefits everyone.

2. We know the conditions that promote success.

3. You can involve youth at every stage.

4. You’re not alone!
Thank you!

lpalen@rti.org
Maranda Fishback
Community Engagement Coordinator
Legacy Foundation
www.legacyfdn.org
A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR COMMUNITY
WHAT IS ON THE TABLE?

Legacy Foundation’s *On the Table* initiative brings people together on one day to break bread and engage in conversation about ways to improve communities across Lake County, Indiana.

- Anyone 12 or older is welcome to host or participate in a conversation and conversations can be private or open to the public.
- Individuals and groups host a single table or multiple tables of 6-10 people in their home, church, office, classroom, library branch, or neighborhood coffee shop.
- During the conversation, people come together for a conversation over a meal or snack. Guests discuss community challenges and brainstorm actionable solutions. Conversations typically last 45 minutes to an hour. At the end of the conversation participants are asked to take a brief and confidential survey to help us capture the topics and ideas discussed.
- All materials are provided to the host including: host toolkit, conversation prompt cards, notetaking template, invitation template, sign in sheets, and paper copy surveys for each guest.
ENGAGING YOUTH IN ON THE TABLE

Youth were invited to participate in On the Table in 2017, but we made a real push for youth participation in 2018.

Youth Conversation Hosts Included:

- 6 School Corporations
- Church Youth Groups
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Lake County Parks Department

Approximately 800 youth participated in On the Table in 2018
Overall, youth participants have a largely positive outlook on their community:

- 70% are more hopeful than worried about the future of their community.
- 73% feel that their community is changing for the better.
- 78% think the area where they live has a strong sense of community.
- 67% think residents have shared goals for the community.
- 69% feel that their community provides opportunities for everyone.

### Three Most Important Issues Facing Youth that I Would Like My Community to Address

- **Drug use/addiction**: 45%
- **Violence and gangs**: 37%
- **Bullying**: 32%
- **Jobs for teens**: 31%
- **Quality of schools**: 27%
- **Racism and discrimination**: 23%
- **After-school activities**: 20%
- **Lack of parent involvement**: 20%
- **Hungry families**: 17%
- **Teen pregnancy**: 16%
- **LGBTQ issues**: 14%
- **Treatment of immigrants**: 10%
- **Dating violence**: 8%
Youth participants are optimistic about effecting change

- 75% believe they can have an impact in making their community a better place to live

- Youth 15 and older express more interest in volunteering with youth from different parts of Lake County, while those under age 15 are more interested in volunteering with their family
IMPLEMENTING ON THE TABLE WITH YOUR YOUTH PARTNERS

1. Identify who you anticipate becoming a conversation host. Will conversations include only youth or will adults be participating as well?
2. Develop purpose and goals for having conversations.
3. What materials/resources will you be providing the hosts: Conversation prompts, Notetaking templates, etc.
4. Will you be asking participates to take a survey or collect conversation notes? Who will analyze this data and information?
5. Conduct outreach to register hosts
6. Distribute materials to registered hosts
7. HAVE CONVERSATIONS!
8. Collect survey or notes from hosts
9. Work with data analyst to develop usable data tools/reports
10. Push data results out to the community – NOT just hosts and participants

Future Resource: onthetablenetwork.com
THANK YOU!

Mfishback@legacyfdn.org
Christopher J. McConnell
Parks and Recreation Superintendent
City of Westfield
www.westfield.in.gov/
Asa Bales Playground Replacement Project

A Lesson in Youth Engagement
THE WHY...

- Current playground was 20 years old
- Had seen a decrease in use
- Saw an increase in damage
- Saw an increase in vandalism
- Required more frequent inspections
- Resulted in removal of more and more components
- Resulted in higher levels of maintenance
THE WHAT...

- RFP published
- On site Bidders meeting
- Question and answer period
- Proposals Due
- Scoring of Proposals narrowing to top three
- Public Meeting #1
- Public Meeting #2
- Bid Awarded
THE WHO...

- Westfield Middle School- Student Government
  - 30 Seventh Graders
  - 30 Eighth Graders
  - Representing 1250 total students
THE HOW...

- Contacted the Teacher Representatives
- Meeting #1 - The Setup
- Meeting #2 - Proposal presentation
- The Vote
- Color Selection Vote
- Construction Updates
- The Ribbon Cutting
THE OUTCOMES...

- Student Learning
- Student Community Pride
- Student Ownership
- Continued City/ WWS Engagement
- Increased Use
- Decreased Maintenance
- Decreased Damage
- Decreased Vandalism
THE OUTCOMES...

- Awarded IPRA Excellence in Resource Improvement Award
- Featured in the Westfield Current:
- Featured on WISH-TV8
THANK YOU!

cmcconnell@westfield.in.gov
PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY

It will appear at the end of today’s webinar.

LOOK FOR OUR EMAIL

We will send you our recording and any handouts.