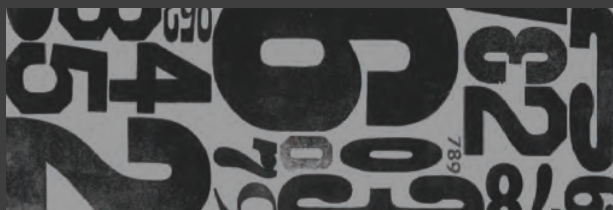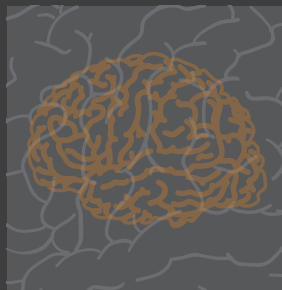2014

The Institute for Community Research's

**YOUTH** PARTICIPATORY

Action Research Curriculum

ADAPTED FOR OREGON

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# PREFACE

## History of curriculum development

The Institute for Community Research (ICR) is an independent nonprofit research center. ICR is committed to creating change through participatory and collaborative research. Its mission is to conduct research in partnership with marginalized communities and the organizations and institutions that serve them to address justice and equity in a diverse world. Participatory action research (PAR) makes it possible for communities to conduct their own research to advocate for change to reduce health, cultural, educational and environmental inequities.

In 1989 ICR began developing youth-led PAR as an approach to positive youth development, service learning, civic engagement and social justice for urban youth. It strives to recognize and build the strengths and skills of youth by researching issues that affect them, and empowering them to use the results to transform individuals, groups and communities.

The National Institute of Mental Health funded the first formal youth PAR curriculum's development in 1998. Five years of summer action research experiences for up to 40 diverse urban youth followed. The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) supported year-round activism through Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) block grants.

In 2000, ICR published the curriculum's first edition. In 2002, ICR received CSAP funding to evaluate the youth PAR approach as an evidence-based prevention strategy. The evaluation incorporated research on substance use issues affecting program youth and actions taken to reduce the structural inequities contributing to them. Results were positive. Youth involvement in changing the structure of youth employment led to improved school attachment, reduced marijuana and alcohol use over time, optimism and collective efficacy. ICR's PAR approach is now being used with diverse urban and peri-urban youth in Connecticut, New York and Michigan after-school programs. ICR is currently expanding use of PAR into public school settings.[1,2,3,4] The curriculum was revised again in 2004 (2nd edition.[5] See ICR website at www.incommunityresearch.org). It is intended for youth workers, educators and social justice activists who want to learn PAR and use it with adolescents. It has also been adapted for use with younger children and adults.

# Youth PAR to promote positive youth development in Oregon

The Adolescent and School Health Program within the Oregon Public Health Division was first introduced to youth PAR as a method to more explicitly embed youth development and youth engagement in what was then known as the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Prevention Plan. First crafted in 1994, the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Prevention Plan is an example of a statewide strategy for young people that was not always crafted **with** young people. While student focus groups had been a way to collect data on youth, youth remained passive information givers rather than active information gatherers. In 2005, as the new state planning process commenced, youth PAR emerged as a method to bring youth into the strategic planning process, while still operating within an evidence-driven public health framework. The Adolescent and School Health Program contracted with Sarah Schulman, founder of Youth Infusion (www.youthinfusion.com), to develop a youth action research curriculum. The initial draft of the curriculum was based on the "Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning Research Handbook and Guide to Facilitating Action Research for Youth."[6]  In-house training was conducted for staff and adult facilitators. Three counties were selected to implement the youth PAR pilot projects. Young people from all three sites independently brainstormed and selected their research question within the broad domain of adolescent sexuality, presented their research findings and recommendations to key stakeholders within each community, and ultimately informed the development of the Oregon Youth Sexual Health Plan. The shift from teen pregnancy prevention to youth sexual health exemplified a greater shift from one of risk reduction to positive youth development that focuses on the physical, social and environmental factors that support all youth in Oregon.
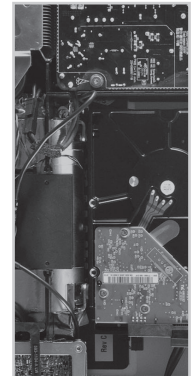
After the initial youth PAR pilot project, several more action research projects used the curriculum in student settings to address health topics from nutrition to mental health and bullying. See "Module 11: Using the data for social change" for brief descriptions of each project.

In 2012, the Adolescent and School Health Program partnered with the Portland State University Regional Research Institute to evaluate the strengths, challenges and lessons learned from past experiences with the youth PAR curriculum. They also revised the curriculum to use action research that incorporates new activities and best practices

supporting authentic youth engagement by county health departments, youth-serving organizations or schools. To accomplish this goal, an assessment of the curriculum was conducted with previous adult facilitators and youth participants. Findings indicated the following:

- The curriculum has potential for positive youth outcomes related to empowerment, sociopolitical development and social change.

- Adult facilitators of the action research process play an essential role in it. Focusing more on developing quality youth-adult partnerships would be beneficial.

- The curriculum must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of various sponsoring organizations that implement the curriculum (such as county health departments, community-based youth serving organizations, or schools).

- Sustained funding was a barrier to implementation of action items beyond an initial presentation.

- Bureaucratic processes (such as organizational rules regarding compensation for youth participants) need to be transparent and flexible to meet the needs of youth participants and the sponsoring organization.

## ADAPTING THE ICR CURRICULUM FOR USE IN OREGON

The Institute for Community Research (ICR) "Participatory Action Research Curriculum for Empowering Youth" was identified as a useful model for our revised curriculum.

With ICR's agreement, we adopted the approach and content of the ICR curriculum, modifying it to accommodate the anticipated needs of users based on our assessment with previous youth participants and adult facilitators. The overall ICR curriculum was shortened to ensure the process would meet the needs of various timeframes, such as one term of school. Longer modules were broken up and additional exercises were kept from our previous curriculum and borrowed from other curricula. We describe this process at the beginning of each of the curriculum modules.

# How to use the curriculum

This curriculum in intended to be used as a tool to support the authentic engagement of young people in decision-making processes that affect their lives, while helping youth-serving organizations integrate youth voice into their work in a meaningful way. The intended audience includes local public health departments, community-based youth-serving organizations, youth advisory boards and schools. It is meant to be adapted and tailored to meet the needs of the sponsoring organization or entity where it is being implemented, the needs of the youth participants, timeframe, and the specific social issue or health topic of interest.

Each module begins with an introduction or overview that sets the stage for each step in the action research process. Sample activities for each module are provided for the adult facilitator to pick and choose from or adapt as needed. Each activity requires the development of learning objectives; materials; developmental, group and community outcomes; time and materials required. More information on many of the topics presented in each of the modules can be found in the "Resources" section.

## MODULE 1

**Promoting positive youth development: youth participatory action research and youth-adult partnerships** provides the adult facilitator with an overview of the positive youth development philosophy and orientation to youth PAR as one means to support healthy adolescent development. It describes youth PAR's roots in social justice, systems thinking and adolescent development. It includes a framework for considering the role of adults as partners and describes the spectrum of choices for establishing youth-adult partnerships.

## MODULE 2

**Laying the foundation of the action research team** provides guidance and activities for use at the beginning of the action research journey. The module is divided into two sections: Section 1 includes activities to lay the foundation of the group's work and support team building, and Section 2 provides activities and guidance for working with diversity and difference within the action research team and the community.

## MODULE 3

**Introduction to youth participatory action research** orients the team to action research and sets the foundation for the process. It draws a distinction between traditional research and action research and introduces research methods using research stations.

## MODULE 4

**Identifying the issue and selecting a research question** walks the team through

a process to identify the issue of interest that youth most want to change (dependent variable), and factors that may affect the issue of interest (independent variables) called "research modeling." The team works through activities to identify and, based on their model, write a set of research questions and hypotheses that will guide the rest of their research process.

## MODULE 5

**Methodologies** build from the research stations' activity and guide the team through a process to select research methods that can best answer the research questions. The list of research methods provided is not exhaustive. If adult facilitators have the expertise and resources needed to innovate with any of these approaches or introduce any other data collection methods not included here, they should feel free to experiment.

## MODULE 6

**Developing a research plan** helps the team develop a blueprint for their entire research topic. The plan outlines timing of activities, getting necessary approval and starting to think about potential stakeholders that would be interested in the research findings. The plan also involves considering who to include in the research process (key informants, focus group candidates, people with power/potential allies who can act in this capacity, teens to be surveyed, where to photograph, etc.).

## MODULE 7

**Developing research instruments** provides activities to help youth create strong assessment methods and suggestions for testing their methods before administration. The adult facilitator will need to select activities and adapt them as necessary based on available research expertise and the methods selected by the research team. We encourage working with partners in the community or graduate research assistants with expertise in the methods the team would like to use.

## MODULE 8

## and MODULE 9

**Data collection and data analysis** provide specific activities and helpful tools to support the data collection and analysis. Adult facilitators must adapt each activity depending on the methods used by the action research team.

## MODULE 10

**Presenting key findings** guides the team through a process to pull together the findings from their data into a presentation or an elevator pitch for community stakeholders. Activities in this module can be used in conjunction with additional action strategies identified in Module 11. Many action research projects conducted in Oregon have used the presentation as a culminating activity for the research project.

**Using the data for social change** helps the team identify what the "action" should be in their action research project. Activities guide the team through a process to identify key stakeholders and different ways to put their research into action. Case studies from previous Oregon youth PAR projects are provided as examples.

**Celebration!** This module serves as a cue to the adult facilitators to ensure that, no matter what the culmination of the project entails, holding the space and time for celebrating the work of the group is absolutely vital.

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# MODULE 1:

Promoting positive youth development: youth participatory action research and youth-adult partnerships

## POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Youth-serving systems in general are increasingly influenced by a positive youth development (PYD) perspective. The use of and interest in PYD approaches for promoting adolescent health and preventing risk behaviors have increased as growing empirical evidence shows that well-designed youth development interventions can lead to positive outcomes.[1] Known under many monikers — such as prevention science, risk and protective factors, developmental assets, and resiliency — PYD is both a theory and philosophy that focuses on building on strengths inherent in all youth, and engaging youth as active participants and decision makers in both personal and community development.[2] PYD emerged as a counter to single-issue prevention strategies (e.g., juvenile crime, alcohol use, teen pregnancy) as research found that many risk behaviors were not only connected to one another, but also with other social and environmental factors.[3] Rather, focusing on key factors — such as confidence/self-efficacy, positive connection to adults and service to community — has been associated with better outcomes for youth now and in the future.[4]
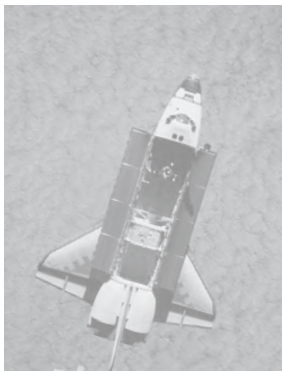
In Oregon, PYD has been conceptualized in a benchmark measure consisting of six measures that cover five components found in mainstream PYD theory. The questions are included in two alternating statewide surveys of youth conducted by the Oregon Health Authority, the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey and Student Wellness Survey. The PYD Benchmark is met when a youth answers five out of the six questions positively (excellent/ very good/good or very much true/pretty much true).

In 2013, approximately 61% of eighth graders and 66% of 11th graders met the PYD Benchmark in Oregon.[†] Analyses of Oregon

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[†] Oregon Healthy Teens Survey, 2013

## COMPONENTS OF THE PYD BENCHMARK

| PYD COMPONENT | QUESTION | ANSWER CHOICES |
|---|---|---|
| **Health (2 questions)** | "In general, would you say your [physical/emotional] health is … ?" | Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor |
| **Confidence** | "I can do most things if I try." | Very much true, pretty much true, a little true, not at all true |
| **Competence** | "I can work out my problems." | Very much true, pretty much true, a little true, not at all true |
| **Connection/ support** | "There is at least one teacher or other adult at my school that really cares about me." | Very much true, pretty much true, a little true, not at all true |
| **Service** | "I volunteer to help others in my community." | Very much true, pretty much true, a little true, not at all true |

Healthy Teens Survey data consistently indicate that meeting the PYD Benchmark is associated with positive outcomes for youth. Youth who meet the PYD Benchmark are:

**LESS likely to:**

- Have used alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana or any illicit drug in the past month;

- Have considered attempting suicide in the past year;

- Have missed school in the past month because they felt it was unsafe;

- Be depressed; and

- Ever have had sexual intercourse.

**MORE likely to:**

- Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables per day;

- Get 60 minutes of physical activity per day;

- Report getting A or B grades in school.

More information on the development and use of the PYD Benchmark can be found at the Adolescent and School Health Program website: www.healthoregon.org/ah.

Supporting PYD often requires a shift from viewing adolescents as troublemakers who exhibit risky behavior to seeing youth as positive change agents, willing and able to contribute to society. Authentic youth engagement strategies and quality youth-adult partnerships are central to shifting the paradigm in which institutions work with youth from "risks" or "vulnerabilities" to "strengths." Youth participatory action research is one viable strategy to authentically engage youth in the systems and structures that affect their lives. Change occurs on many levels during the action-research process. Changes occur at the individual and interpersonal levels as youth work in partnership with other youth and adults to research the issue, forming stronger
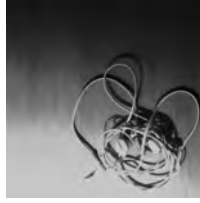
social networks and supportive relationships building up to some form of collective action related to their issue. At the same time, the "action" taken can result in changes within the larger environmental context, such as within schools, neighborhoods or government.

Below, we briefly describe the history of youth participatory action research. Quality youth-adult partnerships are foundational to the theory and practice of PYD, as well as a successful participatory action research initiative. As such, we describe key components of youth-adult partnerships and provide three conceptual frameworks for the spectrum of engagement often seen in youth-adult partnerships.

## HISTORY OF YOUTH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Youth participatory action research (PAR) falls under the umbrella of participatory research models that share a core philosophy of inclusivity. PAR recognizes the value of engaging the research beneficiaries, users and stakeholders in the process. The earliest roots of PAR in the United States can be found in the work of Kurt Lewin who sought for political equity, especially with respect to African American struggles. He promoted action research for community development in the 1940s. PAR approaches emerged during civil rights and rural and urban independence movements in the United States and Canada[5] and countries dominated by colonial orders in Latin America, Africa, Australia/New Zealand and South Asia.[6,7,8] Paulo Freire, a well-known

Brazilian activist and educator, argued that the education of oppressed people must come from their own understanding of their situation, which motivates them to take political action. In this way, education enables both self and community development.[9] PAR represents an effort to place the theories, methods and techniques of science in the hands of those who have been excluded. This raises issues, speaks to power and advocates for change.[10] Participatory research models have become more prominent in public health and other social service areas because of their potential to improve health and eliminate health disparities by bridging gaps between research and practice, addressing social justice, and creating conditions that facilitate people's control over the determinants of their health.[11]

Youth PAR provides an entry for young people into the decision-making processes that affect their lives — whether at school or in their community or government. At the same time, the process provides them with access to new knowledge, capacities and skills. Through facilitated processes of team building, group inquiry and emergent action, it builds positive peer networks, exposes youth to adult role models and mentors, supports civic engagement and social and environmental change efforts, and encourages and offers opportunities for career exploration. Youth PAR is intended to enhance young people's

Given its roots, the common issues addressed, and its emancipatory aim, youth PAR is deeply influenced by a social justice framework. However, guiding a group of young people through processes that critically examine the roles of power, privilege and biases requires a level of knowledge and training that is beyond the scope of this curriculum.

ability to make informed judgments about social and environmental injustices that affect them and their communities, and bring about change in those settings and structures. The topics they select may be critical of school or other institutional policies or of medical or social service system failures. Facilitators should stand behind youth in their work and do their best to help them succeed in improving life for themselves, their peers and their community.

Youth PAR can be applied to a wide range of different topics depending on the concerns of the youth themselves and the mission of the sponsoring organization. Common issues include sexuality, pregnancy and sexual risk,[12] stress and suicidal considerations,[13] violence, guns and bullying,[14] and illegal activities such as hustling or substance use.[15] They also often express interest in unjust school policies ranging from tracking to inappropriate suspension; conflicting policies regarding work, school and day care for young mothers; racism and language and other forms of discrimination;[16] income inequity;[17] unwelcoming environments; and gaps in adequate food supply[18] and service delivery.[19]

## DEFINING YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS (Y-AP)

Youth-adult partnerships (Y-AP) can be a powerful tool for organizational or community change. Y-AP is considered the most central aspect of authentic youth engagement. Y-AP can take many forms, but an authentic partnership has been defined as:

*"Involving youth and adults in responsible, challenging, and collective action that seeks to benefit an organization or larger community. All individuals in the partnership have the opportunity to engage in planning, decision making, and action consistent with their own interests and skill."*[20]

Y-AP is grounded in the principles and values of inclusiveness, skills of community building, and methods of reflective action.[21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28] The goal of Y-AP is to integrate young people into existing forums of decision making that have traditionally been reserved for adults, while also creating new structures for them to influence important decisions. Its primary purpose is to engage groups of young people and adults together in organizational change and community building

over time in such a way that adults support but do not impede youth voice and leadership in action. Not only do adults need to take the perspective of youth into consideration; they must also be willing to use the youths' input to take action individually and with them. Intentional planning, preparation and continued support for both the youth and adult partners are necessary to ensure a meaningful experience.[29]

## TYPES OF YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships between youth and adults can take many forms and vary widely in activities. Youth may form a committee, lobby for a cause, fight for equality, or attend a leadership workshop. Additionally, the extent to which the activities are youth-driven or use authentic engagement can vary. Youth sometimes engage in civic activism or community change without the support of adults. However, when adults are involved in creating youth empowerment, youth-led or youth-adult partnership programs, it is critical for adults to assess the approach they wish to take when working with youth and reflect on carrying out that approach (or modifying it) throughout the process. Several frameworks have been developed to describe the spectrum of engagement often seen in youth-adult partnerships.

*Hart's ladder of youth participation.* Hart describes a typology of youth participation using two major segments — degrees of non-participation and degrees of participation. Non-participation includes manipulation, decoration and tokenism. Degrees of participation describe a range of youth participation from least to most optimal: assigned but informed; consulted and informed; adult-initiated, shared decisions with youth; youth-initiated and directed; and youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults (see Figure 1 on the following page). Hart indicates that youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults may be the most optimal. However, it is most important that youth be given the *choice* to participate in a particular approach. Such an approach should also take into account a youth's development, competency and maturity. The role of the adult is to be sensitive to the youth's needs for collaboration.[30]

*Sutton's three processes of youth participation.* Sutton also presents three major processes of participation that emerged in a national study on youth programs: *social integration, community involvement* and *civic activism.*[31] Social integration processes focus on personal rather than community or social change (see Figure 2 on the following page).

*Spectrum of adult-driven and youth-driven work.* Another way of looking at youth participation processes is along a continuum of how much input, daily decision-making and authority adults and youth have — *youth-driven* and *adult-driven.*[32] The *youth-driven* approach is based on the premise that young people become active participants and learners when they hold the lead. The

goal of this approach is to empower and promote youth leadership development.[33] This approach gives youth more experience in the decision-making process.[34] It is often used in community-based programs where the primary goal is not youth development but community change.[35] The youth-adult partnership-driven process integrates the two frameworks and provides collaborative and mutually respectful work, decision-making and collective change over time.

## Figure 1: Ladder of youth participation[30]

Youth-initiated, shared decisions with youth

Consulted and informed

Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults

Tokenism

Adult-initiated, shared decisions with youth

Decoration

Assigned but informed

Manipulation

**DEGREES OF NON-PARTICIPATION**

**DEGREES OF PARTICIPATION**
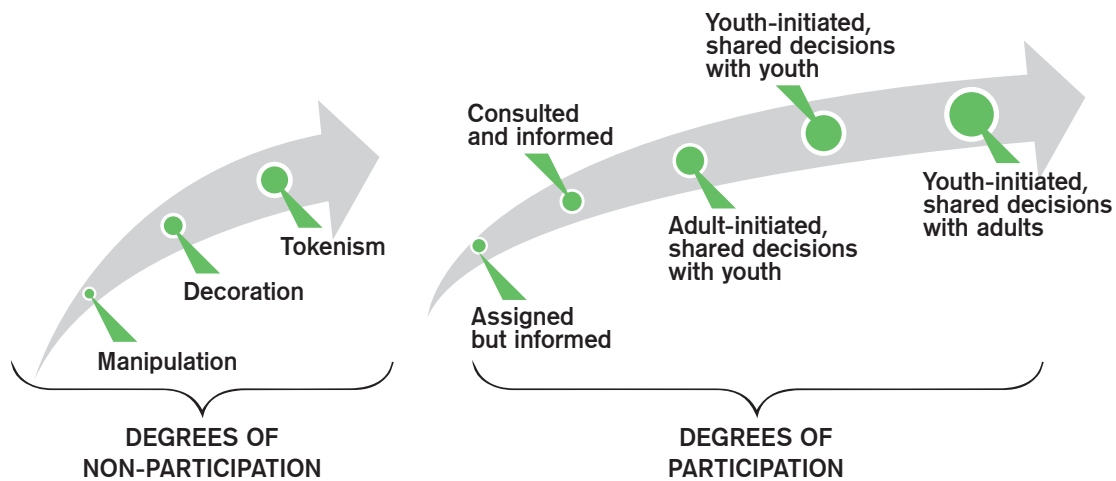
## Figure 2: Three processes of youth participation[31]

**SOCIAL INTEGRATION**
- View youth as contributors to their own development
- Prepare youth to make choices in their lives and be able to participate as citizens

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**
- Engage youth in their communities
- Activities are experiential, hands-on learning opportunities
- Engage youth in critical dialogue, assessment and action about their environment

**CIVIC ACTIVISM/ SOCIAL CHANGE AGENT**
- Combines personal, community and social change
- Involved in direct action or plan that provides youth with opportunities to address inequitable conditions
- Includes processes of working in groups or teams

## Figure 3: Spectrum of adult-driven and youth-driven work[32]

| ADULT-DRIVEN | YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIP-DRIVEN | YOUTH-DRIVEN |
|---|---|---|
| Promotes developmental rationale built on the premise that adults "know best" | Process of youth and adults working together with mutual respect in a collaborative manner | Promotes developmental rationale that is driven on the premise that youth become active participants and learners when they hold the lead |
| | Goal is to integrate youth into existing forum of decision making processes that have traditionally been reserved for adults, and create new structures for them to influence social change | Empowerment and youth development of leadership |
| | Engage groups of youth and adults in collective change and community building over time | |

See the *Resources* section at the end of this curriculum for more information and available training on building quality youth-adult partnerships.

# Activity: What were you like at 15 years old?‡

A successful youth-adult partnership requires that participants grow to understand and relate to one another. When young people and adults gain each others' perspective, their work together is strengthened. Prompting adults to recall themselves at age 15 is a way to break down barriers between generations and create a sense of commonality.

| **Overview** | This exercise is generally most effective as an icebreaker at the start of a meeting. It gives young people a chance to share stories about their life and for adults to recall their own youth. Youth and adults are paired up and given questions to guide their conversations. These two-person conversations segue into a larger group discussion of what facilitates or limits youth-adult partnerships. This activity can also work if there are only one or two adult facilitators for many youth. In this case, invite other adults to the session, or ask them to answer the questions ahead of time. You can write their responses on chart paper and have the youth answer the questions as a group. |
|---|---|
| **Objectives** | • To describe participants' experiences as young people<br>• To identify commonalities between youth and adults<br>• To identify positive characteristics of community involvement for youth and adults |
| **Time** | Approximately 30 minutes |
| **Materials** | You will need a flip chart on which you've written basic information about the workshop (e.g., objectives) and copies of the "What Were You Like at 15 years old?" handout for each participant. |

‡ Adapted from "Learning and leading: a toolkit for youth development and civic activism," Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development, 2004.

| **Facilitation** | Welcome participants to the workshop and review the workshop's objectives. Ask them to think back to when they were 15 years old: to remember the clothes they wore, the people they hung out with, how they felt about the world, and why they felt that way. |
|---|---|

If participants are already well mixed as a group, ask them to pair up with someone they don't know well; if not, ask them to count off by twos, to make sure that people aren't paired with someone they might know. As a final precaution, ask if any pairs are well acquainted, and if so, pair them with others.

Invite the pairs to share with their partner, using the questions on the handout as a guide. It's important that they get to the questions about how adults took part in their communities as youth. Another way to encourage conversation is to ask one person to share for 10 minutes while the other listens, and then switch roles. If participants are 15 or younger, ask them to answer the questions based on their lives now.

Gather as an entire group. Ask the group a series of discussion questions. You may want to use the flip chart to jot down notes from participants' answers.

- What did you have most in common with your partner? What was different?
- Share one of your partner's stories.
- When you were young, how were adults involved in your community?
- When you were young, what kind of community service or community change were you involved in?
- What did you learn from the conversation?
- How can we carry these lessons forward into our work together?

# What Were You Like at 15 Years Old?

In pairs, consider the following questions:

- What was it like being 15 years old?

- Where did you live?

- What did you look like?

- What made you different?

- What was important to you — what did you think about a lot?

- How did you feel?

- Who were the young people who participated actively in the community?

- What were they like?

- What did they do?

- What kept you from participating more actively in the community?

- What could you have done to participate more actively?

- Who were the adults who worked well with young people?

- What were their qualities or characteristics?

- What could adults have done to help you participate more actively?
  *Note:* This is the most important question.

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**Adaptations for Module 2:** The introduction and key terms were adapted from Module 1 of the 2004 ICR curriculum to include language on setting ground rules for the youth PAR process. Two activities were added to those originally included in the 2004 ICR curriculum. The "Tell your story" activity was added from our previous curriculum and the "Gender roles and relationships" activity was adopted from the *Advocates for Youth Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program,* which replaced a similar activity in the ICR curriculum.

# MODULE 2:
## Laying the foundation of the action research team

### INTRODUCTION

Module 2 is designed to lay the foundation for conducting a group or collective action research project. Developing positive group dynamics is important for the success of any group, and is true for action researchers as well. An important piece of the action research process is providing the support and space for youth to learn about themselves, and how to work together in a group to achieve a goal. Once the group has learned to work together and respect and accepts the assets and contributions of others, the group's goals become relevant to all of its members and everyone has a stake in the outcome.

While it is not necessary to do every activity in this module, it is important to touch on each of these topics before beginning the more serious tasks outlined in the rest of the curriculum.

Module 2 contains two sections:

1. **Section 1: Building relationships** includes introductory activities and icebreakers as well as interactive activities designed to build group identity.

Activities are divided into six topical units including:

a. Introductions;

b. Cooperation;

c. Group problem solving;

d. Trust;

e. Self-esteem; and

f. Group identity

2. **Section 2: Working with diversity and differences** allows the individual to reflect more deeply on their identity and place within groups, specifically within the current working group. This exploration includes:

a. Culture and ethnicity;

b. Gender differences;

c. Sexuality;

d. Issues of age discrimination.

There are many, many other great activities that you can substitute for this section. See the *Resources* section for a list of sources from which you can download activities related to group building, social justice and health-related topics.

**PUTTING IT TO PRACTICE: Depending on the policies of your organization, action researchers may need to fill out a medical release form, gain parental consent, or provide releases for use of photos/videos or transportation. Have participants complete and return necessary forms prior to the first meeting, or have them on hand at the first group meeting. Sample forms can be found in the *Resources* section at the end of this curriculum.**

# Section 1: Building relationships and a learning community

## KEY TERMS

**Setting ground rules.** Creating a space that allows youth to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, beliefs and experiences is vital to the success of an action research project. Setting and agreeing on ground rules that will guide the group is a first step to creating this space; it is recommended at the first meeting. You can start with a few common ground rules and ask the youth participants to add their own. Examples include:

- There are no stupid questions.

- Avoid side conversations when someone is speaking to the group.

- Step up, step back.

- Use "I" statements when speaking.

- Be willing to share your ideas and experiences with others, even though you may feel your ideas are different.

- Be accountable to the team — if you say you will do something, do it!

- Give each other the benefit of the doubt.

- Everything discussed during the session is confidential. This includes sharing others' experiences with people outside the group verbally or in writing. Be mindful of sharing others' ideas or experiences within the group; ask permission before sharing.

**Group building** includes a variety of exercises that build group trust and affiliation. Any similar exercises can be substituted to accomplish the same purposes. And they can be introduced at any time throughout the curriculum. They are also especially useful at the end of the day or when youth work teams are tired and restless. Facilitators will decide how many activities are necessary and at what time to introduce them. Youth also enjoy inventing these activities. Programs can build up a library that can be drawn on at any time.

Facilitators should consider adding the following to group building:

a. Self-assessments that allow youth to identify their primary work and communications styles and discuss them in a group;

b. Exercises that involve youth working as teams in the development of group norms and rules that can be posted and referred to as a form of self-monitoring; and

c. Group process assessments so that working groups can evaluate how they are working as a group.

**Working with diversity and differences,** Section 2, includes exercises to help youth examine aspects of their own identity that relate to culture/race/ethnicity, intelligences, intergenerational differences and gender. These are all important areas that should be addressed early on in the program, and whenever issues arise around them. They are important because:

- Adolescence is a time when youth are exploring these aspects of identity.

- Identity is constructed, and youth need a safe space to explore together their own and each others' identities.

- Youth are growing up in a socially complex world where differences are best negotiated when they are openly discussed. These exercises help youth to do this.

- Youth learn in many different ways.

There are many different activities that can address intergenerational, sexual, gender, ethnic and intelligence-related aspects of identity. We have provided some examples that can help to begin the dialogue. Multi-dimensional role plays that require youth to negotiate differences and reflect on their own beliefs, approaches, learning styles and behaviors in relation to others' are helpful in enabling youth to synthesize their ideas.

# Section 1, Unit 1: Introductions to members

It is important for youth to get to know one another in a non-threatening environment. These introductory activities are only appropriate at the beginning of the project cycle and only if the youth do not know each other already, and after the group has set and agreed upon ground rules. The number of activities you choose to conduct in this category may depend in part on how different from one another youth within the group perceive themselves to be. For example, mixed ethnic or geographically diverse youth may need to spend more time on these activities in order to begin dispelling myths about one another and also in order to begin seeing the ways in which they are alike. **Section 2: Working with diversity and differences** will provide more activities to accomplish this objective.

# Activity 1: Tell your story

| **Materials** | An open area to arrange chairs in a circle |
|---|---|

| **Time** | 30 minutes approximately one week before first meeting, and 30 minutes (or more) at first meeting |
|---|---|

| **Preparation** | This activity works best if the facilitator meets one-on-one with each participant before the first meeting of the group, giving each participant time to prepare. |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation** | About a week before the first meeting of the action research team, meet with the group or each individual member. Briefly introduce the philosophy of action research — the process of observing, making sense of, critiquing and ultimately improving our school, neighborhood or community. As a member of the action research team, youth play a vital role in gathering information that will help address issues important to them. We (adults) have a lot to learn from youth and their ideas, observations and perspectives give us powerful insight.<br><br>*Suggested openers:* So, what do you think? What do you have to say? And what do you want for your life, for your family, for your community? Give us a glimpse of WHO you are. |
|---|---|

| **Assignment** | Use photos, music, art, writing, dance or acting to tell us your story. If you're someone who likes to talk, you can tell us your story in your own words. If you're someone who loves art, tell us your story in drawing or pictures. If you're a music fan, write a song or compile a mixed CD of who you are. Just be original. Be you. There's only one rule: **Be honest with yourself.** What makes you certifiably and uniquely you?<br><br>You will have five minutes at the next session to introduce us to YOU. It's **your** time. |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: As the wild wind blows/Thunder!

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| **Materials** | An open area to arrange chairs in a circle |

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| **Time** | 10 minutes (or longer) |

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|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

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| **Facilitation** | Have participants arrange chairs in a circle with plenty of room in between them. There should be one fewer chair than there are people playing the game. One person starts off being "it" in the center of the circle. That person says, "The wild wind blows …" and then fills in the blank. For example, someone may say "… anyone who's wearing white socks." Then anyone in the group who is wearing white socks has to get up and sit in another chair in the circle. The statement that the person makes must be true of themselves as well (i.e., the person must be wearing white socks if they use that as their example). The person who is it must find a chair as well, and no one can sit in a chair that was immediately to their right or their left. The person who ends up without a chair is "it" next and makes the next "The wild wind blows …" statement. If the person who is it cannot think of anything to say, he or she can also call "Thunder!" and everyone in the circle must get up and find another seat. (This is called "Thunder!" because of the noise of everyone's feet as they run to find another chair.)<br><br>This exercise can be geared toward more serious questions to help the group learn about each other, such as "anyone who speaks another language," "anyone who has a job" or "anyone who plans on going to college." The activity can also be used to ask opinion questions, or just to have fun and ask light-hearted questions about what people in the group like to do in their free time, or what they had for breakfast that morning. If you are trying to direct the game in a more serious tone, make sure to indicate that to the group ahead of time and give them several suggestions of questions you have in mind before you start the game. |

# Activity 3: Who am I?

| **Materials** | Scrap paper ● Tape ● Pens/pencils |
|---|---|

| **Time** | 20 minutes |
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| **Preparation** | Write the names of people or characters on individual pieces of paper. The names may be of real or fictional characters, living or dead. Don't let the group see the names ahead of time. |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation** | Tape one paper on the back of each participant. You can either have the participants pair up, or let people mingle around the group and ask each other questions to try to figure out "Who am I?" Youth can only ask questions that have yes or no answers such as "Am I a real person?"; "Am I a man or a woman?"; or "Am I on television?". |
|---|---|

# Activity 4: Skittles

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| **Materials** | Candy such as Skittles; M&Ms will work as well, although they will melt more in your hands than Skittles (you may also want to pass out napkins for people to put their candy on). |

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|---|---|
| **Time** | Depends on the number of people in your group: 1–1½ minutes per person |

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|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

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|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Pass around the bag of Skittles with the instruction to take as many as they would like, but not to eat any until you say it's OK. Once all the group has taken their candies, tell them that they have to tell the group something about themselves for every candy they have taken. Once they have said one thing for each piece, they can eat their candy. You can also play a variation on the game by assigning questions to particular colors of Skittles. For example: |

## SKITTLES GAME

**Purple**
- My favorite book is …
- The things I like most about myself is …
- I wish I were, or could be …

**Red**
- My favorite holiday is …
- My best friend's name is …
- If I could travel anywhere in the world, I would go to …

**Orange**
- My favorite food is …
- After school or work, I like to …
- My favorite color is …

**Green**
- My favorite music is …
- If I could change the world to make it a better place, I would change …
- In my spare time I like to …

**Yellow**
- My favorite TV show is …
- If I could change something about myself, I would change …
- My favorite subject in school was or is …

# Activity 5: Name game

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|---|---|
| **Materials** | None |

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|---|---|
| **Time** | 15 minutes (more or less depending on the size of the group) |

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|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

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|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | There are many variations of this game, which is used for groups of people who don't know each other well. The game is best used during the first meeting. The easiest way to conduct the activity is to arrange the group in a circle and start off with one person saying their name out loud. The next person says their name and then the name of the person next to them. The third person must say their own name, the name of the person next to them and then the name of the first person. The pattern continues until all the people in the circle have gone around the circle and recited people's names. This obviously becomes more and more difficult as there are more names to remember. |
| | You can also run this activity with variations such as associating an animal, a fruit or a geographic location with names. In this way, each person would say, "My name is Angel Anaconda," "My name is Bob Banana," or "My name is Cleo and I'm from Colorado." Another variation is to associate a movement with your name. The group must be standing in a circle for this activity, preferably with open space in the middle of the circle. After each person says their name they perform some action, like shooting a basketball, spinning in a circle or jumping in the air. In each version, each person has to repeat the words and/or actions of the people who have gone before him/her. These variations may make the activity easier or more difficult — for some people it becomes an extra thing to remember, while others may find that the association makes it easier to remember things. |

# Activity 6: Best friend

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|---|---|
| **Materials** | None |

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| **Time** | 2 or 3 minutes per person in the group |

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| **Preparation** | None |

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| **Facilitation** | Have members sit in a circle and introduce the person sitting next to them to the rest of the group, even though they may have never met. The person should start by saying, "This is my best friend Rob," and then say at least three things about the person, such as, "He was the third man to land on the moon. He is 95 years old and he has a pet alligator." Once the person has been introduced by their "friend" they introduce themselves to the group, telling people the truth about who they are. Then they introduce the person next to them by making up things about the person. This continues until everyone in the group has had a chance to introduce both someone else as well as themselves. |

# Activity 7: Peer Bingo

| **Materials** | "Peer Bingo" handout • Pens or pencils |
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| **Time** | 15–20 minutes |
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| **Preparation** | Copy "Peer Bingo" handouts. |
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| **Facilitation** | Pass out a bingo sheet to each person in the group. Instruct them to walk around the room and try to find someone who matches the description in each box. They cannot have the same name twice in the same row. The first person to fill in all the boxes in a line should yell "bingo!" Have that person recreate the line with the people who signed their names and have the person introduce each person in the line by the attribute on the sheet. |
| --- | --- |

# Human Bingo

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| has been to a sleepover | likes to cook | is an artist or writer | has received an award for a sport or improvement | loves to argue, just for the victory |
| was born in another country | has sung in public (other than at school) | has visited another state | was born in the same month as I was | has a step parent |
| has a best friend | likes to talk on the phone | has the same first and last initials as I do | is the oldest of her/his siblings | has done volunteer work |
| likes to roller skate | was named after a family member | likes school | likes to go shopping | loves to play sports |
| considers herself/himself bilingual | has a pet | likes to read | has the same favorite color(s) as I do | has a grandparent living at home |

# Section 1, Unit 2: Cooperation

These activities show the necessity of cooperating with others in order to get a task done. In addition, the group learns that different people come to a situation with different strengths that can be used to create the most appropriate solutions.

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## Activity 1: Puzzle piece game

| **Materials** | Construction paper shapes **or** Lincoln Logs or other types of construction sets (if using the alternative facilitation) |
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| **Time** | 10 minutes |
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| **Preparation** | Cut pieces of construction paper or card stock into about 10 different shapes to create a puzzle. You will need a puzzle for each team of three to four participants. Using different colors of paper will help you avoid getting pieces from different puzzles mixed up. |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation** | Divide the group into teams of three to four and pass out a puzzle to each team. Give the instruction that each team must assemble its puzzle without speaking to members of the other teams. The object is to be the first team to finish assembling its puzzle. An alternative to this game is to use Lincoln Logs or similar construction sets. Again, the teams of three to four cannot speak to each other; this time, teams are instructed to build a tower as high as possible within a two-minute time limit using the materials provided. You may think of your own variations on this concept as well. |
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## Section 1, Unit 2

# Activity 2: Starburst shuffle

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|---|---|
| **Materials** | Envelopes ● Candies that are wrapped and are different colors; Starbursts work well in this game |

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|---|---|
| **Time** | 20 minutes |

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|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

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|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Gather the Starbursts and the envelopes. Put one of each color Starburst into each envelope (make enough envelopes for everyone in your group). |

Make questions for each flavored Starburst. (It helps to copy the questions onto the same colored paper of the Starburst to keep track of them.)
These could include:

1. What's your favorite subject in school?
2. What's your favorite animal?
3. What's your favorite tradition/holiday?
4. What's your favorite place to travel?
5. Who is your role model?
6. What's your favorite sport?
7. What is your goal for the future?

Next, you give each person an envelope with the eight different colored Starbursts in it. Everyone should get up and start trading Starbursts. The object is to get all the same color of Starbursts in your envelope, but both people must answer the question assigned to that color before making the exchange.

*For example:* I am collecting raspberry chew Starbursts and I will give you one cherry chew for one raspberry chew. Before we trade, I must answer the cherry question: "What is your goal for the future?" Answer: "To become a lawyer." You must answer the raspberry question: "What's your favorite sport?" Answer: "Soccer." The first person to collect all of the same color Starbursts wins the game. The main object of the game is to have everyone interacting with one another and to find out a little more about each other. People can eat the Starbursts at the end of the game.

# Activity 3: Hula hoop

| Materials | Hula hoop |
|---|---|

| Time | 5 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have the group form a circle and join hands. Two people start the game by locking their hands through the hoop and passing the hoop around the circle. People will have to pass the hoop over their heads and then step out of the hoop to pass it on to the next person. This is hard to do on your own and is easier to do when the people on either side help to pass it on. The hoop has to get completely around the circle without anyone breaking the circle by letting go of each other's hands. |
|---|---|

# Section 1, Unit 3: Group problem solving

The purpose of action research is to effect change in an area of importance. Practicing negotiation skills is a critical step in adolescent development, and necessary to conduct an action research project.

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# Activity 1: Human knot

| **Materials** | None |
|---|---|

| **Time** | This game can take as little as a few or up to 10 minutes. Sometimes the group will get stuck and give up, then try the game a second time. |
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| **Preparation** | None |
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| **Facilitation** | If your group is very large you can divide into two groups. There should be at least six and not more than 10 people in a group. Have the group stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder, facing the center. Ask participants to extend their hands in front of them and to first hold right hands and then left hands with other people in the circle. Everyone must grab the hands of two different people and they cannot grab the hands of the person who is standing next to them. The object of the game is to get untangled and to end up in a full circle again, without ever breaking the circle by letting go of each other's hands. It is best to let the group negotiate this activity themselves, without guidance from any outsiders. People's personalities come out in this activity; some people will naturally show leadership and direct others. This is a great team-building activity because all members of the circle are integral to the final outcome. |
|---|---|
| | *Note:* Girls who are wearing skirts or dresses should not participate in this activity, because there is a lot of climbing over arms that happens during the game. |

# Activity 2: Circle to circle

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Hula hoop |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 10–15 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

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|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Ask the group (15–30) to form a hand-in-hand circle. Place two hula hoops together between two people (resting on their grasped hands). See how quickly the participants in the circle can cause the hoops to travel around the circle (over the people) in the opposite directions, through each other (i.e., hoop through hoop) and back to the originating point.

It's interesting to see what the group's response is when you ask, "Who won?" after both hoops have circled the circle. It takes some thought to realize that the entire group is working as a team. NO LOSERS. NO WINNERS. |

# Section 1, Unit 4: Trust

Trust means being able to depend on one another in a given situation. There are many levels of trust and this curriculum does not attempt to build trust between participants on all levels. However, when working as a team, members need to trust that everyone is taking full responsibility for the work of the team and that the personal space (includes personal stories or issues shared within the group and to individual members of the group) of the team and its members is held in confidence.

# Activity 1: Blindfold tour

| Materials | Blindfolds for half of the group |
|---|---|

| Time | 15 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have the group split into partners and have one partner blindfold the other. The person who is not blindfolded should spin his/her partner around and then take the person on a "tour" of the space they are in. The facilitator should stress the seriousness of this activity and monitor closely so that no one gets hurt. Once the person is done giving the "tour", the partners should switch roles and repeat the activity. Have the partners talk about what the experience of having to depend on the other person was like. |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: Apples and oranges

| Materials | A large enough space to make a circle with all of the members of your group |
|---|---|

| Time | 5 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have all the participants get in a circle and join hands. Have the participants alternate calling out either "apple" or "orange" around the circle. There must be an even number of people to do this activity so that no two "apples" or "oranges" are next to each other. The more people that are in the circle, the better this activity works. Next, ask the apples to slowly lean forward while the oranges slowly lean backward, being sure to continue holding hands tightly. People need to lean slowly and carefully, and when leaning as far as they can, should be depending on the support of the people on either side to keep their balance. Have everyone come back to an upright position; then have the groups switch positions. This time, have the apples lean backwards while the oranges lean forward. It is amazing how this activity works. Though it does not seem like people would be able to maintain their positions, when the activity is done carefully, it works very well. This activity demonstrates the power of people working together to achieve something that would not be possible alone. |
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# Activity 3: People in my life

| Materials | None |
|---|---|

| Time | 1–2 minutes per person in the group |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have each participant in the group take a turn sharing a brief story about the person in their life who has had the most positive influence on them. Some participants may not want to share the person's name. This is fine, but it is important to talk about why that person has had a positive influence on them and to describe how that influence has affected them. You may also have participants do this in partners so that it isn't so intimidating for people to share personal information. |
|---|---|

# Section 1, Unit 5: Self-esteem

If all group members are expected to contribute fully to the goals and outcomes of the project, they need to be able to feel safe and valued within the context of the project. Building on the individual's self-esteem through group bonding activities will improve the quality and quantity of each person's participation. If everyone feels they and what they have to offer are valued, they will be able not only to give more, but in the end will take more away from the experience of working to achieve a group goal.

# Activity 1: Pat my back

| Materials | Paper ● Pens/pencils ● Tape |
|---|---|

| Time | 15 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have members tape a plain piece of paper on each person in the group's back. Then have each person in the group write one positive thing about every other person in the group on the paper on their backs. After everyone's paper is filled out, they can take it off their back and read it. Then have the members of the group share what was written on their paper and talk about what they think about the positive things that were said about them. If you have the time and resources, it is nice to collect all the sheets and type up each one in a nice font with a border to give to each person to save, or post in your meeting room. |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: Alphabet game

| Materials | Paper ● Pens/pencils |
|---|---|

| Time | 10 to 20 minutes, depending on which option you choose for facilitation |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | This game can be played in different ways, depending on the amount of time you want to spend on it. The idea is to get participants to identify positive things about themselves beginning with certain letters. You can ask people to use the whole alphabet, or to use the letters of their first, first and last, or first, middle and last names. Pass out blank paper and have the group write vertically the letters you want them to use. Then list a word next to each letter. Once you have given people enough time to list one attribute or characteristic for each letter, have each member of the group share their list with the group. |
|---|---|

# Section 1, Unit 6: Group identity activities

If all group members are expected to contribute fully to the goals and outcomes of the project, they need to be able to feel safe and valued within the context of the project. Building on the individual's self-esteem through group bonding activities will improve the quality and quantity of each person's participation. If everyone feels they and what they have to offer are valued, they will be able not only to give more, but in the end will take more away from the experience of working to achieve a group goal.

| Materials | Scrap paper ● Poster board ● Markers ● Pencils and pens |
|---|---|

| Time | 1 hour, 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Assign the group the task of coming up with a group identity. Begin by developing a name for the group. It is important to facilitate this activity carefully in order to get the input of all group members. The name should reflect the identities and values of the individuals in the group, but it should also represent some ideas about how the group will work together. Encourage the group to combine ideas and build upon the contributions of others. One way to do this is to combine a short name with a longer slogan or to develop an acronym that represents many concepts. This process is important because it will set the tone for the working relationship that the group will develop. While adults can share ideas, it is important not to dominate the process and to encourage and welcome all the contributions that individuals make. |
|---|---|
| | Once the group has brainstormed a name, members can develop a logo and slogan (if they haven't already) that they can draw on a poster, as well as poems, a rap or jingle. During this part of the activity, have people split into groups of two or three according to which activities they want to do. If someone is, for example, writing a poem, they may work alone, though |

# Group identity activities, continued

| Facilitation | you should try to encourage teens to work in teams or small groups. This is a time for teens to share their individual strengths and skills and to demonstrate their creativity. Again, remember that this activity will set the tone for the project and people should feel they are an integral and important part of the overall product and process. If members of your group are bilingual, encourage them to contribute ideas in both languages and to translate poems and slogans into their other languages. |
|---|---|
| | Once completed, you can post the group's work around the meeting room to reinforce the messages and values deemed important by the group. If it is possible, have group members share their posters, poems and group name with other youth or adults affiliated with your program. If this is not possible, it is a good idea to incorporate a presentation of this group identity activity into any presentation of research results that you might have. |

# Section 2: Working with diversity and differences

Many different types of diversity will be found within your group. The activities in Section 2 are designed to get people talking about the differences that exists within the group and to use those differences to enrich the project. Since the action research project is based on a group definition of the problem and a group approach to defining a solution, it is important that all members feel valued and respected. The teenage years are a stage when youth are trying to find their place in their community and society based on who they are and where they come from. It is important to encourage them to look at their identity in a positive way and help them to appreciate their own strengths as well as the strengths of others. Understanding that differences are not obstacles will not only help them operate in this group setting, but also in their future endeavors. Through these activities, youth will be encouraged to recognize and appreciate their uniqueness as strengths.

The activities in this section will develop positive communication around topics that are sometimes difficult to discuss. As a facilitator, you may feel uncomfortable with some of the activities in this section, but it is very important to model for the group that it is OK to talk about difference and that difference can be a positive thing. It may help you to have additional adult support to implement these activities, since they may bring up sensitive issues that may require individual conversations with people in your group.

Topics that are addressed in this unit include:

- Cultural and ethnic diversity;
- Gender differences; and
- Different expressions of sexuality.

You can choose activities that are most relevant to the youth you are working with, the mission of your organization, or the topic area the youth action research team will be undertaking. Activities that discuss difference based on age are recommended for all groups in order to maximize the communication among adult staff and volunteers and the young people in your group. Participatory action research with teens is based around the idea that teens are the experts on problems affecting them. The activities around age are designed to discuss assumptions adults make about youth and vice-versa so that youth feel empowered to express their opinions and beliefs and gain the confidence to challenge adults when they feel they are not being respected.

# Section 2, Unit 1: Culture and ethnicity

# Activity 1: Circle of differences

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will begin to explore the different ways they and others identify themselves. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Copies of "Circle of differences" handout  •  Flip chart  •  Markers |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 20 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make copies of the "Circle of differences" handout. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Pass out the circle of differences handout to each person. Ask them to list around the circle all of the ways that people in the group may identify themselves. Give them about five minutes to do this. In a circle already drawn on the flip chart, ask group members to list the things they have on their sheets. After they are done, add some things they may have missed (social status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, etc.). |
| | Explain that these are all different things that might make up one's identity. The fact that everyone has a different circle is what makes us diverse. Valuing diversity includes recognizing, respecting, accepting, appreciating and using the unique characteristics, talents and contributions of all individuals. Explain that we are going to talk about some of these things in more detail in the following activities. |

# Circle of Differences
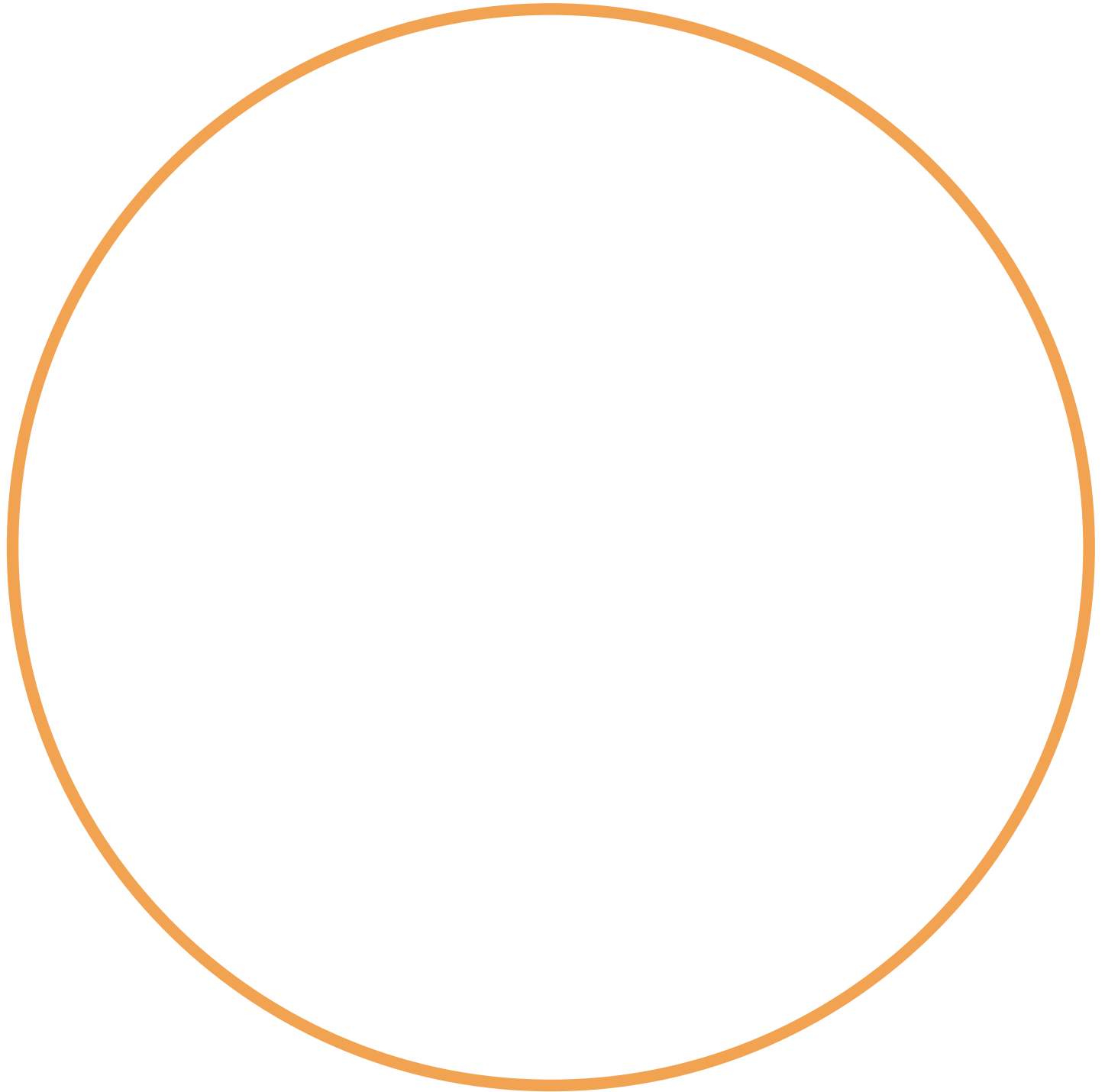
# Activity 2: What is culture?

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will learn the definition of culture and discuss the importance of being sensitive to cultural difference. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Flip chart ● Markers |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 40 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | It may help to move the discussion by being able to offer a personal story that illustrates the importance of being sensitive to cultural difference. The incident need not have happened to you, but could be something you witnessed or something that happened to a friend. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Facilitate a discussion about cultural difference and respect for culture. If your group is a diverse one, you will have no trouble finding issues to discuss as long as you set a tone of openness and mutual respect. Use the following questions as a guide: |

1. What is culture? What culture(s) do you identify with? (Culture is made up of behavior, beliefs, values, traditions, rituals, customs and communication that are shared by a group of people, place or time.)

2. What does respecting someone's culture look like?

3. Does anyone have a story of when they were treated in a way that was insensitive or insulting to their culture? What happened? How did you feel? What did you do?

4. Why is it important to respect and be open to everyone's cultural values? (Explain that you are going to complete a group project where all members of the group have input. People may have different experiences and perspectives based on their cultural background. All members of the group will need to show respect for difference in order to successfully complete a joint project.)

# Activity 3: Stereotyping

| **Learning objective** | Youth will recognize how stereotypes encourage discrimination. |
|---|---|

| **Materials** | Flip chart ● Markers |
|---|---|

| **Time** | 45 minutes |
|---|---|

| **Preparation** | This activity must be carefully facilitated. Youth may feel uncomfortable about stereotypes, so it must be stressed that participants are only contributing to the list, but they do not necessarily believe those stereotypes. It helps to have participants list stereotypes about their own cultures. When participants bring up names used for different ethnic groups, ask them to explain the messages the names convey about the ethnic group. It may be helpful to come up with some stereotypes for each ethnic group beforehand to use as an example and to help break the ice. |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation** | List these headings — **African-American, European-American, Latino and Asian** — on separate pages of the flip charts. Have the group think of all the stereotypes they can come up with for each. Let them list for a few minutes for each group. |
|---|---|
| | Go through each list and discuss. Are these lists accurate descriptions of the cultures? How do the lists make them feel? Are some stereotypes worse than others? Where did they come from? What about jokes? Discuss how stereotypes, names and jokes are harmful. This means telling jokes, calling names and using stereotypes themselves; it also means not confronting others when they do these things. Discuss how they perpetuate racism, prejudice and reinforce cultural insensitivity. |

# Activity 4: What do you know or what have you heard?*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Chart paper, tape, markers, and wall space or other surfaces to which newsprint may be taped. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 20–30 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Before the presentation, label the top of each sheet of chart paper with the name of a different type of person or group. Try to include a variety of dimensions of diversity. Examples may include Women, Men, Teenagers, African American Males, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Catholics, Christians, Jews, Arabs, Moslems, Amish People, Wealthy People, Poor People, The Homeless, People on Welfare, People With a Physical Challenge, Californians, Southerners, People 75 Years and Older, People Who Live in the Country, and People Who Live in the City.

Fold each sheet and tape the sheets on the walls or other surfaces in a manner that does not reveal the label. Leave enough space between them so that small groups can form around each sheet. You may choose to introduce this activity with a brief discussion about culture and its impact on our behavior. Be sure to point out that culture is something we begin learning as very young children, that the rules of our culture are often not written but are learned from those around us, and that as children we generally accept these rules without question.

Tell participants you want to engage them in an activity called "What do you know or what have you heard?" Begin unfolding the posted newsprint sheets so that the labels are revealed. Tell each participant to circulate around the room to each sheet of newsprint and, with a marker, write one thing that they either "know" or that they have heard about the people or group identified by the label. Emphasize that what they write can be something that they know or something they have heard.

Allow enough time for each participant to add a thought to each list. Then invite participants to take a few minutes to observe the completed lists. |

# Activity 4: What do you know or what have you heard?, continued

<table>
<tr><td>**Discussion**</td><td>

Ask participants the following questions:

- What do many of the comments we have written on the lists represent?

- Are they all true?

- Where did they come from? (Responses might include parents, friends, teachers, books, the media and others.)

Lead a discussion about stereotypes and the fact that we become conditioned to think about stereotypes on an almost automatic basis when we see or hear about someone whose background is different from our own.

We all use stereotypes at one point or another. The important thing is that we begin to become more conscious of the fact that we are often thinking "on automatic." We must stop to ask ourselves if what we are thinking is a fact or a stereotype.

</td></tr>
</table>

* Adapted from Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults from Pennsylvania State University, 2008

# Section 2, Unit 2: Gender differences

## Activity 1: Gender roles and relationships[+]

| Learning objective | Youth will examine how gender roles affect relationships. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Gender Role Case Studies |
|---|---|

| Time | 40 to 50 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Choose case studies from the Gender Role Case Studies, or substitute your own if they are more appropriate. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | 1. Explain to teens that stereotypes about gender roles can affect our relationships. Explain that this activity will explore situations where gender roles and stereotypes might affect teens' goals, decisions and relationships. |
|---|---|
| | 2. Divide participants into small groups and go over instructions for the activity: Each small group will receive a case study involving issues of gender roles. Work to resolve your case study, then prepare to present your solution. You will have 10 minutes. When you present your solution, others can challenge it while you defend it. Be sure to have convincing reasons to back up your solution. |
| | 3. When time is up, ask for a volunteer to present the case study and its solution. Then invite any challenges. Arguments are OK as long as the group sticks to the ground rules. Allow "debate" to go on for two or three minutes, assisting either side as appropriate, before moving on to another small group. Repeat the process until the entire group discusses and debates all case studies. |
| | 4. Conclude the activity using the discussion points on the next page. |

**Discussion**

1. Is it easy or hard to look at male and female roles in a new and nontraditional way? Why or why not?

2. How do men or women accept changes in traditional gender roles? Why?

3. What are some of the ways changing gender roles have affected relationships between men and women in a) social settings, b) families, and c) the workplace?

4. Would your parents reach the same or different solutions?

5. Which case study was the most difficult? Why?

6. If you could make one change in men's gender roles, what would it be? In women's roles, what would it be?

**Gender role case studies**

1. Travis is about to ask Michelle out for the first time when she walks over to him and says, "Travis, there's a new movie in town and I really want to see it. I was hoping you would go with me. Are you busy Saturday night?" Travis has no plans, and he was hoping to take Michelle to the movie, but he wants to do the asking. He thinks he'll say he's busy. What can Travis say or do?

2. Charlene has been offered a special grant to apprentice with a master plumber after graduation. She's excited, and she rushes to tell John. They've been planning to get married in the fall, and this way, she'll be able to start earning good money. John is very quiet after Charlene tells him. Finally, he says, "I don't think I can marry a plumber, Charlene. You're going to have to make a choice — me or being a plumber." What might Charlene do?

3. Sam wants to buy a doll for his nephew's birthday, but his friend, José, says, "No way!" Sam explains that dolls help teach little boys to take care of someone and be loving, but José argues that they just teach boys to be sissies. Sam feels strongly about his position, but he's concerned about what José might say to their friends. What might Sam do?

## Activity 1: Gender roles and relationships, continued

<table>
<tr>
<td>

**Gender role case studies, continued**

</td>
<td>

4. Serena and Fernando have been going out for months, and things have been good between them. Her parents approve of him, and the word is out around school that she is his girl. However, lately Fernando has been putting a lot of pressure on Serena for more than she is ready to share. When she says, "No," he says that it's her place as a woman to please him. What can Serena say to him?

5. Shaudra and Malcolm are arguing about their sister, Patricia, and her husband, Robert. Shaundra has recently noticed lots of bruises on Patricia's arms and shoulders, and this weekend she had a black eye. Malcolm says Patricia has been too "uppity" lately and their brother-in-law is trying to show her who's boss. Shaundra looks at Malcolm and shakes her head. She doesn't think violence is ever an answer. What might Shaundra say?

6. Keisha has decided to have sexual intercourse with her boyfriend, Tony. She says they really love each other. She stops at the drugstore to buy condoms, and her friend Tanya says, "Girls can't buy condoms! That's a guy's business to do." What might Keisha say and do?

7. Susan and Michael have been going together for almost a year. Michael always pays for everything and makes most of the decisions about where to go and what to do. In Susan's health class, they talked about girls paying for dates and having some say about a couple's plans. Both Susan and Michael have part-time jobs and earn very little money, so pooling their funds seems to make sense to Susan; but Michael is furious at the idea. He says she doesn't think he is man enough to pay for her. What might Susan say to Michael?

</td>
</tr>
</table>

## Section 3, Unit 2: Sexuality

# Activity 1: Terms of sexuality

| Learning objective | Youth will have a shared language around terms used to define sexual identity. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Flip chart ● Markers ● Copies of sexuality terms sheet |
|---|---|

| Time | 20 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | List the sexuality terms below on a flip chart. Read over the definitions of terms provided ahead of time and be sure that you feel comfortable describing and discussing each term. Choose the terms that are most meaningful for your participants. Discussing sexuality is complex, and definitions of terms can vary greatly depending on the background of the youth you are working with or where you live. The point to get across here is that sexuality and gender are different constructs that have multiple dimensions, and that the terms evolve and are not clearly defined. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Sexuality terms for flip chart: |
|---|---|

| Sex | Lesbian | Transgender |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | Gay | Transvestite |
| Sexuality | Heterosexism | Questioning |
| Queer | Straight | Sexual minority |
| Heterosexual | Bisexual | Homophobia |
| Homosexual | Transsexual | |

● Ask the group to try to define the terms (listed above), which you have previously written on the flip chart.

● Pass out copies of the definitions.

● Express that these terms have different meaning based on a person's age, background and even location in the country. It's important to understand the meaning and context of words before engaging in a discussion about them.

## Section 3, Unit 2

## Activity 1: Terms of sexuality, continued

<table>
<tr><td>**Definitions**</td><td>

**Sex:** The biological, external features of being male or female

**Gender:** Used to describe how people feel about their identity, whether they feel like they are a man or a woman inside

**Sexuality:** The way people express their sexuality, which does not have to be based on biological sex or gender

**Queer:** a) Historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people; b) A term that has been embraced and reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality "norms"

**Heterosexual:** A person who is attracted to people of the opposite sex

**Homosexual:** A person who is attracted to people of the same sex

**Lesbian:** A woman who is sexually attracted to other women

**Gay:** A man who is sexually attracted to other men

**Heterosexism:** Discriminating against other people based on the expression of their sexuality

**Straight:** A person who is attracted to people of the opposite sex

**Bisexual:** A person who is attracted to people of both sexes

**Trans sexual:** A person who has a surgical procedure to alter his or her biological sex

**Trans gender:** A person who does not identify with the sex she or he was assigned at birth

**Transvestite:** A person who dresses like a member of the opposite sex

**Questioning:** This term is most often used to refer to young people who are exploring their sexuality and have not yet committed themselves to a particular orientation

**Additional resources can be found at the Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Resource Center (SMYRC):**
www.pdxqcenter.org/programs/youth-programs/smyrc/

</td></tr>
</table>

# Section 4, Unit 2: Communication across the ages

# Activity 1: Youth/adult stereotypes

| Learning objective | Youth will understand the assumptions that people make based on age. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Scrap paper ● Pencils or pens ● Flip charts ● Markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | <ul><li>Split participants into a group of adult staff and groups of four to five youth. If you are working by yourself, it might help to create a list beforehand with the input of other adults and tell the group that you have done so.</li><li>Ask the adult group to list stereotypes of youth.</li><li>Ask the youth groups to list stereotypes of adults.</li><li>Once the groups have finished their lists, reconvene to share and discuss the lists.</li><li>Facilitate a discussion based on the following questions:<br>1. What kinds of assumptions do adults and youth make about each other?<br>2. Where do these assumptions come from?<br>3. How do these assumptions get in the way of youth and adults understanding each other?<br>4. What problems are caused by these assumptions?<br>5. Do you think these assumptions are mostly true or mostly untrue?<br>6. Why do youth and adults have such different perspectives on things?</li></ul> |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: Offieville Town Meeting

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will examine why people make assumptions about each other based on age. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Copies of "Offieville Town Meeting Policy" ● Adult and teen roles ● Name tags for roles |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 1 hour |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Copy, cut and fold name tags for role play. ● Copy roles for participants and Offieville Town Meeting handouts. ● Read Offieville Town Policy. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | ● Pass out Offieville Town Policy. |

● Assign roles to the youth in your group. Based on the number of young people you have in your group, you will have to select the appropriate number of roles so that there is a balance between youth-friendly and youth-hostile opinions. If you have adults participating in the group, it is good to assign them to youth roles.

● Acting as the mayor of Offieville, facilitate a discussion around the adoption of the Offieville Town Policy. Begin by reading the policy and explaining that everyone has come together to debate and decide whether the policy should be adopted. Next, ask all members of the group to introduce themselves (as the role they are playing) and encourage all participants to take part in the discussion. After about 20 minutes of discussion, stop the role play and give people a chance to debrief from the activity using the following questions:

1. How did it feel playing the role that you were assigned?

2. Was it difficult or easy to play the role?

3. What did you base your role on?

4. Did anything in the town meeting remind you of real-life situations you have experienced?

**Adaptations for Module 3:** The majority of Section 1 was added from our previous curriculum, except for the "Action Research Is …" handout, which came from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 2, Unit 1). Section 2, "Research Stations" was adapted from the ICR curriculum (Module 3). Minor adaptations were made to the research station activities to make them more specific to Oregon, and the number of research methods was limited to four. Other research methods described in the 2004 ICR curriculum include elicitation techniques (i.e., pile sorting). In the ICR curriculum, ecological modeling is discussed in conjunction with hypothesis development (Module 3, Units 1 and 2). We split these into two sections. We introduce the concept of ecological modeling  in Section 3, and return  to research modeling and hypothesis development in Module 4, Unit 2. Section 4, Internet Searches, was adapted to include sources of health-related information and Oregon-specific data.

# MODULE 3:
## Introduction to youth participatory action research

**OVERVIEW**

Your action research team is ready to begin the research process! Begin by reminding group members what action research is. Describe that they are here to ask the questions that interest them, to go out in the community and find out the answers to their questions, to make sense of what others say, to suggest ways to improve their communities, and then to act!

This module introduces youth to concepts that are critical to the rest of the curriculum. These concepts are:

- A social issue must be considered from the different perspectives of the actors involved in it. No single actor has all the answers or the correct explanation.

- Social problems that affect youth are complex, not simple.

- The explanation for a social problem is not always obvious. The best way to understand is to collect more information.

- Youth are affected by and can affect social systems, organizations and policies that play a role in their lives.

- Observational and listening skills are fundamental to all social research.

- The best way to teach these concepts is through interactive experiences and group games or role plays.

- Ways to collect information are observational, face-to-face, through the eyes of a camera, and by finding existing information in libraries, in newspapers and on the Internet.

This module presents a variety of tools for exploring these concepts that can be adapted, shortened or condensed, or substituted for another similar activity. We recommend that the section's order stay the same because it represents a logical sequence for introducing these concepts.

**PUTTING IT TO PRACTICE: Depending on the funding organization (i.e., health department, university) or the organization within which the youth are situated (i.e., school, nonprofit or community program), the action research process may have to go through an institutional review board (IRB) for approval. Check with your organization early in the process to find out the requirements. See the Resources section for more details.**

# Section 1: Why do research?

# Activity 1: What is research?

| Learning objective | Youth will articulate what research is and define the research process. They will compare and contrast "action research" from "traditional research." |
|---|---|

| Materials | Chart paper • Markers • "The Scientific Method" handout • "What Is Action Research?" handout • "Ethical Principles in Action Research" handout |
|---|---|

| Time | Approximately 1 hour |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | • Ask the youth to brainstorm what the word "research" means. Weave into the brainstorm: Research is a systematic investigation to establish facts; a thorough inquiry into a topic of interest. Systematic means that there is an order and a set way in which research is done. There are rules that must be followed. One set of rules is known as the scientific method. The scientific method includes a) observing and identifying a problem; b) formulating a question; c) developing a hypothesis; d) making a prediction; e) testing that prediction; f) forming a conclusion. |
|---|---|
| | • Describe the difference between quantitative and qualitative research, and clarify that the scientific method does not always necessarily apply when conducting qualitative research. |
| | • Place youth in pairs and pass out "The Scientific Method" handouts. Once youth have read and completed the first sheet, announce that you will be holding a contest. You will announce an observation and the first team to run that observation through the scientific process will win a prize. **Example of an observation:** Girls who play sports are less likely to be depressed than girls who do not play sports. |

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## Activity 1: What is research?, continued

<table>
<tr>
<td>**Facilitation continued**</td>
<td>

● Debrief answers to "The Scientific Method" example. Then, review the "What Is Action Research?" handout. Discuss the differences between "traditional research" and "action research." How would the pairs' scientific process look different through the lens of action research?

As you review the "Ethical Principles in Action Research" handout, tell youth it is important to protect any human subject during the research process. You could also ask youth to complete a free online training from the National Institutes of Health on human subject protection. It is available at http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php.

</td>
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</table>

# The Scientific Method

**OBSERVE.** Researchers take note of the world around them. They see, hear and even smell their surroundings and are curious about what's happening.
**Example:** *Lately, I see a lot more homeless people on my way home from school.*

**QUESTION.** Researchers raise questions about what goes on around them. They begin their questions with words such as "what," "why" and "how many."
**Example:** *How many homeless people live in our city this year versus last year?*

**HYPOTHESIZE.** Researchers come up with a possible answer to their questions: a testable explanation for what was observed.
**Example:** *There has been an increase in the number of homeless people over the last year because government programs have been giving less money to the poor.*

**PREDICT.** The researcher takes the hypothesis and comes up with a plausible scenario. What are the expected results if the hypothesis is true?
**Example:** *If the government increased the amount of money for the poor, there would be fewer homeless people.*

**TEST.** The researcher performs an experiment or gathers usable information (data) from surveys, interviews and documents.
**Example:** *You poll the three largest homeless shelters in your city to calculate the number of homeless people over the last year; you interview a group of homeless people to understand the reasons for their situation.*

**CONCLUDE.** What do the data say? Do they support your prediction? Or do they indicate that your prediction is false?

**ACT.** In action research, the researcher figures out what to do with the data. Who should know about the data? And knowing what you now know, how could you improve your community?

# The Scientific Method, continued

| OBSERVE | |
| --- | --- |

| QUESTION | |
| --- | --- |

| HYPOTHESIZE | |
| --- | --- |

| PREDICT | |
| --- | --- |

| TEST | |
| --- | --- |

| CONCLUDE | |
| --- | --- |

| ACT | |
| --- | --- |

# What Is Action Research?
## Compare/Contrast

|  | ACTION RESEARCH | TRADITIONAL RESEARCH |
|---|---|---|
| **PURPOSE** | To answer a research question, educate and effect social change. | To answer a research question. |
| **EXPERTISE** | Comes from the "subjects." | Comes from the researchers. |
| **AUDIENCE** | The community of which the subjects and researchers are a part. | For scientific, academic and/or professional communities. |
| **METHODS** | Observation, document collection, interviews, focus groups, surveys, journals. | Observation, document collection, interviews, focus groups, surveys, journals. |

# What Is Action Research?, continued

- Figuring out the PROBLEM together — people experience things differently and may see different things as the problem.

- Getting more INFORMATION about the problem AS A GROUP — when everyone looks at things from their unique perspectives, you get a better, more accurate picture.

- PUTTING the information TOGETHER and judging it to see if it makes sense.

- Deciding WHERE you want to MAKE A DIFFERENCE, and where you will be able to make a difference (with individuals, in families, in schools, in systems such as health care, among friends and peers, etc.).

- USING the information TO MAKE SOMETHING BETTER — advocacy works better in a group; a crowd of voices is louder than one person shouting alone.

- EVALUATING the information together to see what the next steps are.

**THE BETTER THE RESEARCH … THE BETTER THE ACTION!!!**

# Ethical Principles in Action Research

All the information in this handout has been adapted from *How It's Done: An Invitation to Social Research*, by Emily Stier Adler and Roger Clark, 2nd Edition, 2003.

## Ethical principles at a glance:

- Protect research participants from harm.
- Get informed consent.
- Be sure research participants have not been pressured into volunteering.
- Collect data anonymously and/or keep data confidential.
- Submit research proposal for review.
- Provide accurate research findings.
- Consider research responsibility to the greater community.
- Maximize benefits and minimize risks.

If you have any questions regarding these ethical principles, please ask. There is also a website for the American Sociological Association you can use as a guide at www.asanet.org; look under "Ethics."

## Ethics: Do no harm

- Always keep ethics on your radar when you develop and conduct research.
- Be a critical thinker. Consider that harm can occur in several different ways; i.e., emotionally, physically, psychologically, socially, legally and financially.
- Be sensitive, but be realistic. It is difficult to design research where there is absolutely no risk to the participant.
- Realize: Ethics cannot be scientifically determined. We must use our best judgment in order to be objective about any risk to participants.
- Don't do it alone. You must review your research plan with qualified individuals or an institutional review board before beginning research. **IMPORTANT!**

# Section 2: Research stations

## INTRODUCTION

"Research stations" is a concept to introduce youth to four examples of the different methods they can use to gather information about their chosen topic. You can adapt, add to or remove methods based on your expertise, needs and time. If at all possible, it will be helpful if you can get additional support to run this session; small groups work better to engage youth in the methods, and more leaders ensure you have expertise in the methods represented. Graduate student interns, teachers, university professors or local evaluation professionals (such as epidemiologists) can be great resources for this section. In addition, it does take some time to prepare for each station; if you can divide this preparation with at least one or two other facilitators, it will greatly lighten your load.

If you have time and capacity, you can tie the research station exercise to a theme. Another option, if you know the research topic/question the group will focus on, is to center the research stations on that issue. The activity may also be simplified by limiting the number of methods you introduce to the youth. However, it is important to convey the idea that different data collection methods can be useful for gathering different types of information.

# Activity 1: Research stations

| Learning objective | Youth will be able to describe the benefits and drawbacks of four methods of research that can be used to gather information. This activity has two steps: a) An introduction; b) The actual research stations. These steps are described in detail below. |
|---|---|

## STEP 1. Introduction

| Materials | "Research Stations" handout ● Pens or pencils |
|---|---|

| Time | 10 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Photocopy "Research Stations" handout. Prepare rotation schedule, if appropriate. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Explain that this activity will introduce different methods that may be used to gather information about an issue or a problem. If you are working with more than one facilitator on this activity, break the larger group into smaller groups and explain how the rotation pattern will work. Pass out the "Research Stations" handout and inform group members that they will get information at each of the stations to solve the following dilemma (which is written on the top of the handout). Remind them to take notes at each of the stations so they have information at the end on which to base their decision. |
|---|---|

# Research Stations

Take notes on each of the following research methodologies as you move through the research stations.

| MAPPING | |
|---|---|

| VISUAL DOCUMENTATION (e.g., PhotoVoice) | |
|---|---|

| SURVEY | |
|---|---|

| INTERVIEWING | |
|---|---|

# Activity 1: Research stations, continued

## STEP 2. Research stations

### STATION 1: MAPPING

| Materials | Access to the Internet |
|---|---|

| Time | 20 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | To tailor this activity for your local area:<br>• Find the addresses of movie theaters in your area.<br>• Find several possible sites for building a new movie theater and record the addresses of the sites. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Describe mapping and its uses. Mapping is used:<br>  1. To locate items or people in space and in relationship to one another;<br>  2. To look at the physical environment of places or items;<br>  3. To understand resource distribution;<br>  4. To analyze groupings, intersections or boundaries;<br>  5. To analyze the distance between points.<br><br>Discuss the availability of computer software, known as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), that allows people to create interactive maps and use mapping for data analysis. At this station, youth will use GIS technology for the mapping site you choose (i.e., Google Maps). This technology can also be used to map different types of locations to determine their proximity to each other and other sites.<br><br>Have youth map the following locations from a predetermined location such as their school or the place where you are meeting. |
|---|---|

**STEP 2. continued**

| Facilitation continued | Adjust as necessary for your community, the nearest: |
|---|---|

- Grocery store;
- Public transportation stop;
- Park;
- College/university;
- Highway/interstate;
- Hospital;
- Farm or local food producer.

Have youth discuss how the distance to each location affects their community and their health and brainstorm what could be conveyed through mapping in their project.

### STATION 2: VISUAL DOCUMENTATION

| Materials | Pictures ● PhotoVoice resources (see the Resources section) |
|---|---|

| Time | 20 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Have photos of neighborhood buildings, or have youth take photos of their neighborhoods prior to the research station activity. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | |
|---|---|

- Introduce the method of visual documentation, describing the ability to record and observe in a visual manner. This method allows close examination of a chosen physical environment. It can be used alone as a research method or with other methods to provide context to more quantitative research. Visual documentation can be used to collect/present data, describe a context, convey a message or tell a story.
- Show example photographs from local neighborhoods or assessment projects or have the youth participants bring in pictures they take from their neighborhood or school. Have the group discuss:
  - » What does the picture convey? What message do you think the photographer is trying to get across?
  - » What sort of information can you gather from a photo that you can't from the other research methodologies?

# Research Station 2: Visual Documentation

Visual documentation is one method used to gather information about a subject. This technique can help you look closely at your surroundings in different ways and observe things critically and systematically. Visual documentation offers a way to analyze communities from many different perspectives. Its accuracy and detail allow researchers to identify and objectively judge the subject being studied. There are two general types of visual information: still pictures (photographs) and moving pictures (film or videotape). A still picture freezes a moment in time in order to gather data while a moving picture adds context and depth of understanding to the information being collected. While different interpretations can be made by different people, visual documentation provides a very precise and detailed record from which you can draw meaning. However, you also must be careful when working with visual data because while the visual image offers a permanent record of fact, it offers it only from a particular perspective. It is possible to leave out crucial details that lead the researcher to an entirely different conclusion than if the image had been created differently.

You can think about visual documentation as having three different purposes:

1. **To collect and present data:** For example, you could take a picture of the front of each school building in your town. This would show people the approximate age, condition and architecture of each building.

2. **To describe context:** You could also take pictures of the surroundings of the schools to describe the types of neighborhoods in which the schools are located and nearby places, such as stores, businesses or playgrounds.

3. **To convey messages:** You could also take pictures of graffiti, cigarette butts and litter on the school property if you want to convey a negative message about the school. If you want to convey a positive message, you could take pictures of flowers in front of the school, or of students laughing and socializing in front of the school.

If you decide to use visual documentation in your research project, try to keep in mind which of the three purposes you are trying to accomplish. While the first one is the only true research method, the second and third may be used to enrich data you have collected using other methods.

# Section 2

## STEP 2. continued

### STATION 3: SURVEYS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | • Flip chart/markers<br>• "Introduction to Surveys" handout<br>• Sample surveys (such as the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey, available at http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/Surveys/OregonHealthyTeens/Pages/index.aspx)<br>Optional: A computer with Internet access. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 20 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make copies of and review "Introduction to Surveys" handout. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Discuss different types of survey questions described in the handout, as well as advantages and disadvantages to conducting surveys. Be sure to emphasize the importance of anonymity and confidentiality when conducting survey research.<br><br>Have group members think about the type of information they would want from people to inform where to develop a movie theater. Have them draft sample questions to get that information.<br><br>Optional: If you have access to a computer with Internet access, have the youth go to www.surveymonkey.com (or another online survey development tool your institution may have access to) and have them develop a short survey to share with their team. Have them develop questions that use each type of survey question format (open-ended, forced-choice, Likert Scale, etc.). |

**See the *Resources section* for more resources related to survey development.**

# Research Station 3: Introduction to Surveys

## WHAT IS A SURVEY?

A survey or questionnaire is a written set of questions used to gather information on a particular topic. A survey is one of the quickest ways to obtain information from a large number of people. Through surveying, researchers can make general statements about what people do, think and believe about different things. For example, 33% of Oregon 11th-graders reported never having drunk alcohol.◊ Surveys can be done using paper and pencil, or via the Internet. There are free online survey resources through sites such as Survey Monkey. Online surveys are great because they allow participants to skip questions based on what they answer; data can also be quickly analyzed.

## ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY ARE KEY!

Surveys are often conducted anonymously and confidentially. In an anonymous survey, the respondent, or the person taking the survey, does not put his/her name anywhere on the survey form. In this way, no one would be able to tell how anyone answered the questions. A confidential survey is one in which an individual's responses are not shared with anyone but are pooled together with all of the other respondents. Using both of these techniques ensures those taking the survey that they cannot be tracked and enables them to be more honest with their responses.

## HOW TO CONSTRUCT QUESTIONS

There are many components that go into a survey to ensure that the actual research questions are being addressed. Researchers must attempt to ask questions in a language that is understandable to the population being studied. It is important to pilot test the survey on a mock population (one that shares the same characteristics as the study population) to work out any wording or format problems.

Depending on your research objective, survey questions can be asked in different ways.

**Open-ended questions** allow respondents to write their individual response to a question. This type of question gives researchers more specific insight into how the respondent truly feels about the question and also helps to decrease data misinterpretation. However,

◊ Oregon Healthy Teens Survey, 2013. Available at http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/Surveys/OregonHealthyTeens/results/Pages/Results2013.aspx.

# Research Station 3: Surveying, continued

it is difficult to synthesize open-ended questions because each response is unique. An example of an open-ended question is, "Describe your qualifications for a point guard."

**Forced-choice** questions require respondents to choose from already determined answers. This enables researchers to make much easier and cleaner comparisons among their sample population. Examples of different types of forced-choice answers are yes/no or true/false questions, checklists, ranks and scales.

**Problems with surveys:**

- People may understand questions differently;

- People may be forced into an unnatural or wrong response;

- People cannot qualify or explain their answers;

- People may feel they have answered the question already in an earlier part of the questionnaire;

- Nothing can be changed in the questionnaire once it is completed.

**Guidelines for constructing survey questions:**

- Make sure the questions will make sense to the respondents.

- Aim to make questions concrete and specific.

- Avoid biased words and phrases. Be careful not to use words that are emotionally charged and unfairly influence people's responses.

- Check your own biases. Try not to put your own personal beliefs or ideas into the development of your survey questions.

- Do not get too personal. Attempt to ask personal information in the least emotional way. Forced-choice responses are generally preferred for very sensitive questions because they do not specifically identify the respondent and appear less personal.

- Each question should have just one thought. Do not use questions in which a respondent's truthful answer could be both "yes" and "no" at the same time.

- Remember cultural differences when constructing questions. A word or phrase in one culture may not mean the same thing or even be used in another culture. Terminology is important when attempting to extract specific information from your population.

# Section 2

## STEP 2. continued

### STATION 4: INTERVIEWING

| Materials | Flip chart/markers ● "Types of Interviews" handout |
|---|---|

| Time | 20 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Make copies of and review the "Types of Interviews" handout. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Discuss different means of interviewing, including unstructured and semi-structured interviews and focus groups, using the "Types of Interviews" handout. Have the youth develop a sample question for each of the different types of interviews. Then, have group members participate in a mock focus group (facilitated by the adult ally) around the topic of your or their choosing. It is best to come prepared with a list of potential questions to get the group started. |
|---|---|

# Research Station 4: Types of Interviews

Interviews can be conducted in many different ways. In general, there are two types of interviews: individual and group interviews, which are called focus groups. Interviews can give you a lot of information about how people feel about a subject, but they are time-consuming because you can only talk to one person at a time, or in the case of a focus group, a small group of people. With a survey it would be easy to say, "100 high school students thought there was too much violence in their schools." It would take the same amount of time for one person to take a survey as for 100 people to take it.

If you were interviewing people to find out this information, it would take you quite a while, even if you conducted focus groups. However, if you used individual or group interviews, you would be able to get a lot of details that you would miss in a survey. For example, you would be able to ask people to tell stories about episodes of violence in their schools and to discuss their schools' individual policies — formal and informal — toward violence.

Interviewing can take many forms, but one easy way to think about it is that interviewing can be **unstructured** or **semi-structured**.

**Unstructured interviews** use questions that are broad in scope. The questions are not predetermined, which means the interviewer develops the questions as the interview is occurring. An unstructured interview is most useful if you are exploring something new and don't quite know specifically what to ask.

**Semi-structured interviews** use questions that are predetermined and specific and the interviewer does not have to make up questions on the spot during the interview. Semi-structured interviews are most useful when you want to focus on a specific topic and ask questions about it, whereas unstructured interviews are used to determine what your topic might be. Semi-structured interviews are also useful when you want to obtain different opinions from a number of people on the same subject matter but you don't want to predetermine their choice of answer.

**Focus group interviews** are interviews conducted with small groups of people — usually six to eight. As with one-on-one interviews, you have the flexibility to determine whether you use an unstructured or semi-structured focus group format. If you are exploring a general topic area with the group in order to understand it better, you will want to use an unstructured interview format without predetermined questions. If you want to explore a topic more systematically, you must use a semi-structured interview format with predetermined open-ended questions.

# Section 3: Levels of influence and ecological modeling

# Activity 1: Creating an ecological model

| Learning objective | Youth will categorize influences on behavior in order to conceptualize an ecological model. |
|---|---|

## STEP 1. Ecological modeling

| Materials | Pens or pencils ● Large bull's-eye drawn on chart paper ● Copies of "Ecological Model" handout ● Tape |
|---|---|

| Time | 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Make enough copies of the "Ecological Modeling" handouts (one blank, one example) for each participant or for each pair if they are working together. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | ● Tell youth that our behavior is influenced by many things in the world around us.<br>● Have youth write the word "self" in the center of the bull's-eye and "the world" as the outermost circle.<br>● Pick a topic, such as whether or not someone drinks alcohol, eats fruits and vegetables, gets 60 minutes of physical activity, etc. You will explore the different levels of influence on this topic.<br>● Have youth throw out different influences and where they fall on the bull's eye.<br>● Using the examples provided by the youth, come to a consensus on the labels for the different layers of the model and compare to the ecological model provided. What is different? Are there pieces they missed? |
|---|---|

# Ecological Modeling

# The Ecological Model



**PUBLIC POLICY**
National, State, local laws

**COMMUNITY**
Relationships among organizations

**ORGANIZATIONAL**
Organizations, social institutions

**INTERPERSONAL**
Family, friends, social networks

**INDIVIDUAL**
Knowledge, attitudes, skills
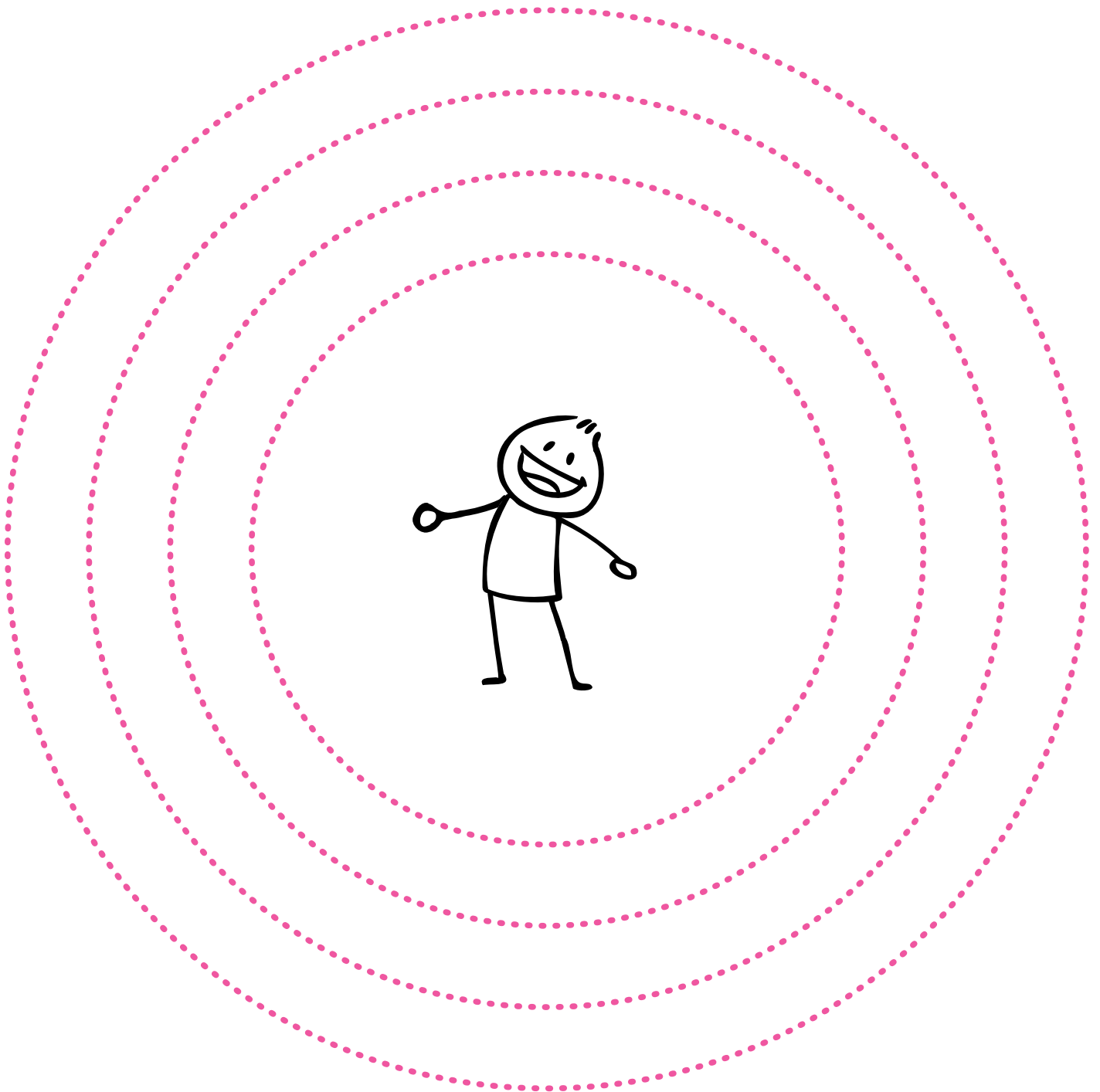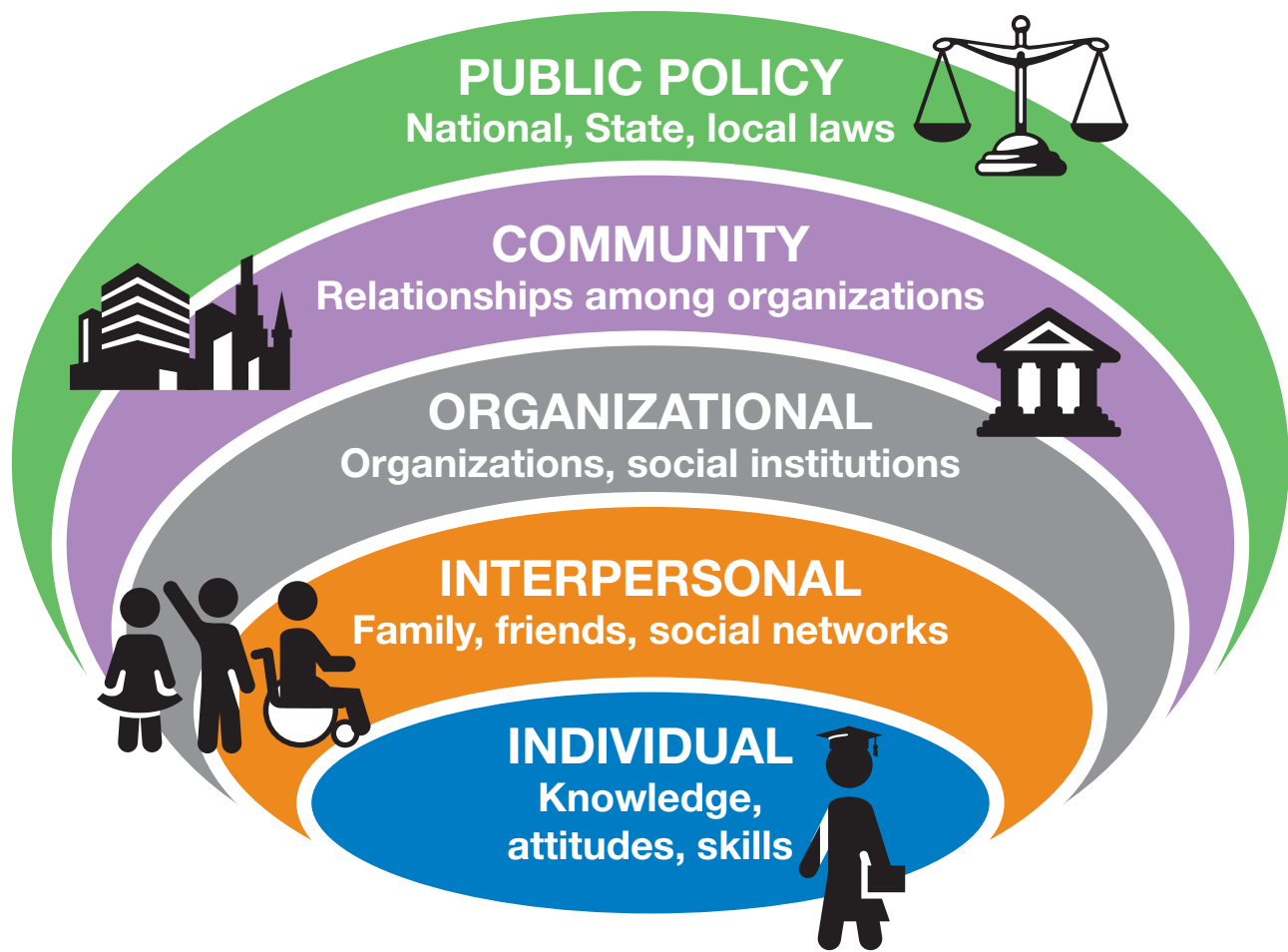
# Section 4: Internet and literature search

## Activity 1: Surfing the Net for information

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will be able to:<br>● Explain how to access basic information about the Internet.<br>● Describe how to navigate the Internet to find information.<br>● Descibe safety issues related to using the Internet. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Access to the Internet ● "Internet Scavenger Hunt" handout ● Optional: Prizes for cyber scavenger hunt ● You may find it helpful to use Internet guides designed for youth that are referenced at the end of this module. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 60 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | ● You should adjust the time and content of this activity to the needs of your group. Most youth are already very Internet savvy, but discussing safety on the Internet and how to find "gold standard" resources and literature on a topic are important topics to cover.<br>● Secure a room with computers and Internet access. Ideally, each young person should have his or her own computer or share with only one other person. Young people can get easily bored during this activity if they are not able to work hands-on with the computer. One source for borrowing a computer training room may be a local school or university.<br>● It is best if the room has a projector hooked up to the instructor's computer. This way the youth can see what you are doing on the screen and follow along on their own computers.<br>● Shortly before you facilitate this activity, make sure to check all the websites you want youth to visit to make sure they are still accessible. Websites often change URLs or shut down completely. At the end of the module you will find a list of websites that are good places to find information on a variety of topics. Add your favorites to the list as well! |

# Section 4

## Activity 1: Surfing the Net for information, continued

**PART 1**

**Safety issues on Internet use**  /  15 minutes

You should take some time to discuss security issues related to using the Internet. Let the group know that email is not totally private and is more like sending a post card through the mail rather than a letter in a sealed envelope. There are also dangers in downloading programs, games, etc. from websites onto computers either at a work site or at home. By doing this it is possible to get a virus that can destroy software, delete files or damage your operating system. If you are using computers onsite for this project, you should set rules and protocols around downloading software. Stress that youth should never give out personal or identifying information over the Internet. Let them know that some people prey on children and teenagers by pretending to be someone they are not and getting personal information about the youth. Under no circumstances should participants give out telephone numbers or addresses.

**PART 2**

**Cyber Scavenger Hunt**  /  45 minutes

- Hand out a scavenger hunt sheet to all youth. Instruct them to find as many answers as they can to the questions on the sheet. Youth may either work individually or in teams depending on the number of computers available to you. Some of the young people in your group may have more experience than others. Teaming people so they can teach each other helps facilitate this activity; however, it is important that everyone has the opportunity to have hands-on time on the computer. Make sure that youth who are more comfortable navigating the Internet give others a chance to learn as well. You can offer prizes to those who get the most answers to make the activity more fun and competitive. Make sure to walk around and answer questions that young people might have.

- Approximately 10 minutes before it is time to go, have each person or team share how many answers they have found. Go through each question and have the youth tell you the answer and how they found it. If you are in a room with a projector, you can actually have the youth navigate to the answer so that all group members can watch and follow along on their own computers. Ask the youth what process they used to decide what website to use for their answer.

# Internet Scavenger Hunt

## Below are eight questions:

Find the answer on your own or by using the hints provided.

Write down the site you use to find the answer. Have fun!!!

1. How many counties are in Oregon?

2. What is the largest county in Oregon (in square miles)?

3. What are the populations for Burundi, India, Denmark, the United States and Peru?

4. Find a five-star French restaurant (go for the most expensive category) in Los Angeles (within 25 miles of the city).

5. What are the top three causes of death among youth (ages 12–19)?

6. How many Oregonians use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)? What is another name for SNAP?

7. What is the most popular website (by number of hits) this week?

8. Who is the youngest person to have won the Nobel Peace Prize?

# Section 4

# Activity 2: Finding information

## STEP 1. Introduction

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will be able to determine how to find and collect existing information on a topic of interest. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Access to the Internet ● Printer or thumb drive (save onto and print later) ● "Searching the Literature" handout ● You may find it helpful to use the Internet guides designed for youth that are referenced at the end of this module. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 60 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | ● Review and make copies of "Searching the Literature" handout.<br>● List sites that may be helpful in providing information to your group, especially if you have already selected your topic.<br>● Secure a room with computers and Internet access. Ideally, each young person should have his or her own computer or share with only one other person. Young people can get easily bored during this activity if they are not able to work hands-on with the computer. One source for borrowing a computer training room may be a local school or university.<br>● It is best if the room has a projector hooked up to the instructor's computer. This way the youth can see what you are doing on the screen and follow along on their own computers.<br>● Shortly before you facilitate this activity, make sure to check all the websites you want youth to visit to make sure they are still accessible. Websites often change URLs or shut down completely. You may want to develop your own list of websites that you'd like your group to explore. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Review the information on the handout with the group. After discussing each term and answering any questions, have youth work in teams. If you are doing this activity for practice on literature searches, you might select a fun topic that youth are interested in, or have them select one on their own. If the search |

Activity 2: Finding information, continued

| **Facilitation continued** | is directly related to the project, group members should decide what areas they need to research and have different individuals or teams be responsible for different pieces. Instruct them to print out important citations they find; or, if you are in a facility where you do not have access to printing, save the citations to a flash drive and print them at a later time. |
| --- | --- |

**3**

# Searching the Literature

**Literature:** Written information (books, articles, etc.).

**Literature search:** Finding written information on your topic.

**Query terms:** Words related to your topic that you use to find information.

>   **For example:** If my topic is on teens, I could use "teenagers" or "adolescents".

**Literature search results:** A list of the articles and books on your topic, usually with the title, author, year, a short description and a source.

**Limits:** These help you narrow down the number of results you get:

- **Language:** English? Spanish? Pig Latin?
- **Study groups:** Human? Animal? Martian?
- **Age:** 0–9 years old? 13–17 years old? More than 100 years old?
- **Gender:** Male? Female?
- **Year/date:** Recent (usually the last five years)? Long ago (1952)? Or a range (2000–2010)?
- **Publication types:** Books? Comic books? Journals? A journal is like an educational magazine focused on a specific topic.
- **Journal browser:** Helps you look for journals on a certain topic.

## HOW TO GET LITERATURE ON YOUR TOPIC:

1. Figure out what you want to get information on (your topic and variables).
2. Go to the website you want to search.
3. Make a list of words related to your topic (your query terms).
4. Enter your query terms.
5. Enter any limits.
6. Do your search.
7. Look over the titles and descriptions in the results.
8. Keep the ones that look useful!

# Searching the Literature, continued

**INTERNET LITERATURE SEARCH**

Google Scholar: http://scholar.google.com/

Oregon Public Health Division: http://public.health.oregon.gov/Pages/Home.aspx

Oregon Healthy Teens Survey: http://public.health.oregon.gov/BirthDeathCertificates/Surveys/
OregonHealthyTeens/Pages/index.aspx

Oregon Addictions and Mental Health Division: www.oregon.gov/OHA/amh/Pages/index.aspx

Pubmed: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

American Medical Association Journals: www.ama-assn.org/scipub.htm

National Institutes of Health: www.nih.gov

National Institute of Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA): www.samhsa.gov

**Adaptations for Module 4:** The "Identifying the issue" activity in Unit 1 was adapted from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 3, Unit 1) by including materials from our previous curriculum, namely the "What Makes a Good Research Question?" handout.

# MODULE 4:
## Identifying the issue and selecting a research question

### INTRODUCTION

The direction of an action research process is guided by its focus — the thing that needs to be improved or changed in the community, with peers, or in classrooms or school settings. Thus a key step in beginning the action research process is identifying the focus of the project or the problem that is to be solved. We have found that young people of all ages can be very clear and systematic about identifying a focus for their work, agreeing on it, narrowing it down, defining the changes they would like to see, and then refining it so that it can be researched.

Teens have selected a number of different kinds of problems or foci for their work, for example, "sex at an early age," "dropping out of school," "public attitudes toward legalizing drugs," "preventing peer pressure" or "racial/cultural discrimination in their school." They think of these things as concerns, things to be changed or problems that they would like to do something about. It is important to guide them to think about a problem that they can do something about, when they are doing action research.

Sometimes teens are interested in doing basic research — they have a basic question they would like to answer — for example, what is the relationship between self-esteem and sexual behavior (behavior, initiation, frequency, use of protection, pregnancy). In this case they would select a focus for study but not for change.

In this curriculum we encourage selecting a focus for change because both the process of getting the information they need and planning the process of change are empowering experiences for youth and for the adults working with them.

### FIGURING OUT THE CAUSES AND/OR INFLUENCES

In order to figure out how to change or improve something, youth need to identify and discover for themselves what is causing the problem. So the next step for youth is to figure out what they think are the causes of the problem they want to fix or improve. As they begin to list the hunches they have about causes, they can also think about how these causes or influences can be changed to make a difference in the outcome they would like to see. The research can also include finding out about how other people (for example, their peers) think things can be changed to make a difference, and to what extent these changes would work.

## Section 1: Issue identification —
## the dependent variable domain

# Activity 1: Identifying the issue

| Learning objective | Youth will identify the issue of interest to be researched, also known as the dependent variable (DV). |
|---|---|
| Time | Varies greatly. This process takes quite a long time, so use your judgment about the scheduling of breaks. If you see the group getting restless or losing interest, take a break for 10 minutes or so. Let the group know that this is the most challenging part of the project, but that it is important to work through it as a group because it will set the tone for the whole project. In addition, you may decide to split the steps between two sessions. |

## STEP 1. Deciding what the research topic will be

| Materials | "What Makes a Good Research Question?" handout ● Optional: Relevant data (e.g., Oregon Healthy Teens or Student Wellness Survey results) ● Scrap paper ● Pens or pencils |
|---|---|
| Time | 20 minutes |
| Preparation | None |
| Facilitation | Let the participants know that you are about to decide, as a group, what the topic for research will be. It is important for everyone to participate in this activity so they can have a say in the project, which the group will be working on for the remainder of its time together. |

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ➤

# Section 1

## Activity 1: Identifying the issue, continued

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation continued** | Start by walking the group through the "What Makes a Good Research Question?" handout. Discuss that answerable questions only address one idea:<br>• They look at relationships and not causes and effects.<br>• They are clear and concise.<br>• They can be easily understood.<br>• They are manageable to answer in a couple of months.<br><br>Present the question to the group and have youth write down three answers individually on a piece of paper. Your question can be very general, such as "What are some issues that are important to teens?" or can be more tailored to the purposes of your program or funding requirements, such as "What are some health issues that are important to teens?" or "What are some education issues that are important to teens?" It is important to keep the question as open as possible so that teens can come to an issue that is truly theirs to research, rather than adults telling them what the problem is. This is crucial to establishing youth ownership of the project and getting teens invested in the process of research. Note that you can use Oregon Healthy Teens or Student Wellness Survey data or other school or community assessments to help the group identify priority issues. |

# What Makes a Good Research Question?

Example of the kind of question to write in the 'Your Question' box: *Where do teens struggling with emotional or mental health issues turn to in our school for support?*

| | EXAMPLE QUESTION | YOUR QUESTION |
|---|---|---|
| **What do you think the question is asking?** | The question is trying to figure out what sorts of people, services, agencies teens see as resources when they're struggling with depression. Do they even feel they have supports to begin with? | |
| **Do you understand all of the words or phrases used?** | What does the question mean by "support"? What about "emotional or mental health issues" — what exactly does that mean? | |
| **Does the question only look at one issue, topic, idea?** | Yes, school supports for teens with emotional or mental health issues. | |
| **Is the question about a specific group of people (age, gender, races, sexual orientation, etc.)?** | Yes, this question is looking only at teens with social and emotional health issues — although, couldn't that be all teens? | |
| **How important is this question to my community?** | A lot of teens struggle with emotional issues and may experience depression, so it's important to know what's out there, and what's missing. | |

## STEP 2. Suggesting research topics

| Materials | Flip chart and markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 25 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Ask the participants to share one of the topics identified on their list. Go around the room, listing each topic, exactly as they are said, on a flip chart. Once you have gotten a contribution from everyone in the room, ask people to share any other topics that have not yet been listed. Next take a few minutes to try to combine any topics together. Ask for suggestions from the group and make sure that whoever thought of the initial suggestions agrees with the way it is being renamed or incorporated into a broader category, to ensure that no one's thoughts or ideas are lost. |
|---|---|

## STEP 3. Selecting the research topics

| Materials | "Identification of the Issue" handout ● Pens or pencils |
|---|---|

| Time | 25 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Make copies of the "Identification of the Issue" handout — two per team of two. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Once you have a list of topics that everyone agrees on, split the group into teams of two. Have each team select the two topics it feels are the most important from the list. Have the team fill out the handout "Identification of the Issue" for each item they choose. |
|---|---|

# Identification of the Issue

Please select the two issues that your group thinks are the most important to teens and answer the following questions:

1. What is the issue?

2. Why is it an issue?

3. List the people affected by this issue.

4. Why do you think this issue is serious enough to research?

5. What could be some problems with doing this research?

6. What could be some benefits of doing this research?

Activity 1: Identifying the issue, continued

## STEP 4. Refining the selections

| Materials | Flip chart and markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Have each team present the two topics chosen, explaining to the rest of the group why the team members think the issues they chose are the most important. Once a topic has been chosen, have any other team who chose it report on it as well, so that you can have a running record of each topic selected. Once all the groups have shared their selections, create a new listing of the topics chosen by teams in Step 3. |
|---|---|

## STEP 5. Defining a research question

| Materials | Flip chart and markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 45 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | The final step is to negotiate and decide on a topic for research. There may be choices that seem fairly obvious because a majority of people selected them. The facilitator should try to get the group to think about how easy or difficult it will be to research certain topics. There also may be relationships between items on the list that the facilitator should point out. |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation continued** | It is recommended that each group work on one topic/problem even if it is difficult to get resolution or agreement within the group, because: |
|---|---|

It is recommended that each group work on one topic/problem even if it is difficult to get resolution or agreement within the group, because:

- It builds group identity.
- There are more people to work on different facets of the problem.
- It doesn't split the staff between two projects.
- It is easier to schedule learning activities.
- It is much easier to identify enough key adults for youth to interview if there is only one topic to consider.

If the group can't come to agreement through discussion, voting can work. Ways to vote are:

- Hands up for one versus the other topic;
- Written secret vote.

Youth generally find it more important to work with their peers than to compete over topics and are satisfied with the resolution no matter what process is used to arrive at it.

A useful way to deal with disagreement in the group is to show how a topic members want to include may be an important part of the research model as an independent rather than a dependent variable. In other words, it can be a cause of the problem rather than the problem itself. This means that to change the problem, the cause itself has to be changed or improved.

Once the group has come to a decision on the final research questions, congratulate everyone! Thank everyone for their openness, honesty and willingness to work together. They have just completed the most important step of their action research journey!

## Section 2: Research modeling and hypothesis development

# Activity 1: Horizontal modeling and the independent variable domains

| Learning objective | Youth will identify the factors (independent variables or IV) that influence the chosen topic (dependent variables or DV) and develop hypotheses about the relationships between them. |
|---|---|

| Materials | "Factors Influencing the Issue" handout ● Pens or pencils ● Flip chart and markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 45 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Photocopy "Factors Influencing the Issue" handout. |
|---|---|

## STEP 1.

| Facilitation | Explain that there are a number of things that influence the issue they have selected to research. The next activity will determine what these factors are and will help the group to develop a model that will guide the rest of their project. Divide the group into smaller groups of three to five and have each group fill out the "Factors Influencing the Issue" handout. |
|---|---|

# Factors Influencing the Issue

Your task is to brainstorm a list of things that you think influence _____ (the issue). Make sure each cause is clearly different from the others. Make sure you know exactly what you are talking about when you list a cause. Put the reasons why each of the causes is important in the second column.

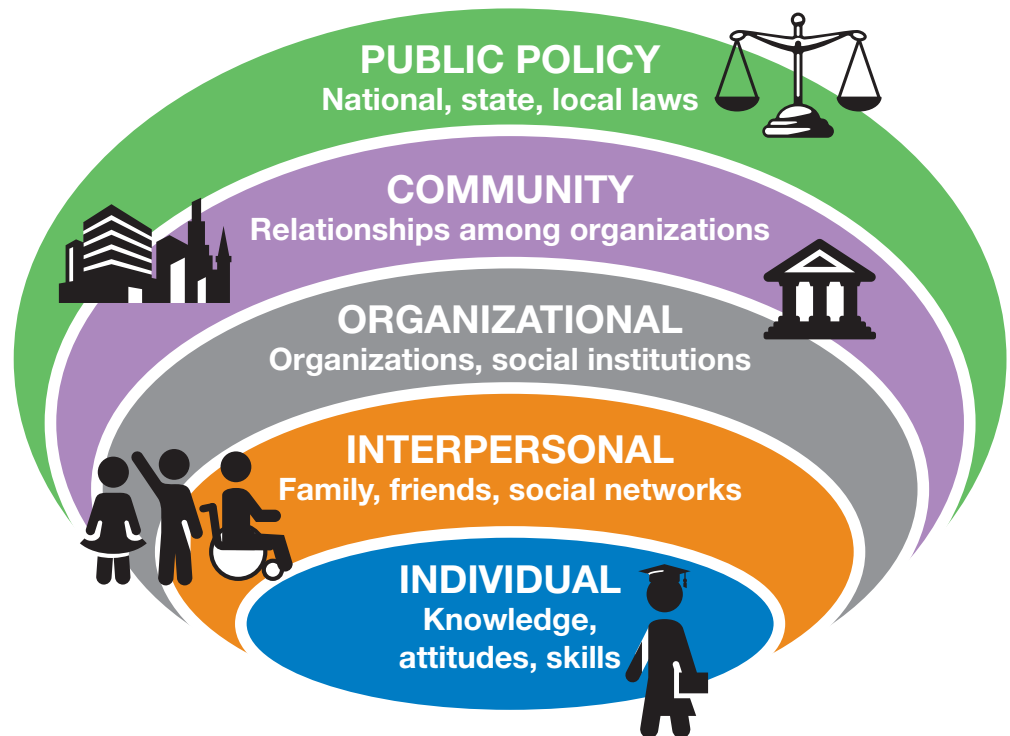| LIST EACH CAUSE (AND DEFINE IT IN A BOX BELOW) | REASONS/EXPLANATION FOR THE CAUSE |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |

## STEP 2.

List all of the independent variables identified on a flip chart and talk with the group to identify the most important three to five items. Depending on the time, staff and youth resources you have, it is best to keep the model as simple as possible. Youth may identify a dozen or more things that influence the dependent variable, but have them eliminate some based on importance. Have the group decide on a hypothesis, or the way that each independent variable influences the dependent variable.

Remind the group to think "ecologically." That is, consider the following model introduced in Module 3.

**THE ECOLOGICAL MODEL**



**PUBLIC POLICY**
National, state, local laws

**COMMUNITY**
Relationships among organizations

**ORGANIZATIONAL**
Organizations, social institutions

**INTERPERSONAL**
Family, friends, social networks

**INDIVIDUAL**
Knowledge, attitudes, skills

# Section 2

## Activity 1: Horizontal modeling and the independent variable domains, continued

### STEP 3.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Once you have finalized your research model, you should have youth reproduce it and place it on the wall of your meeting room. Use construction paper cut into a square (dependent variable), circles (independent variable domains) and strips (hypotheses of the relationships between the two). **Make sure that youth write the words in marker and so it is large enough to be read from anywhere in your meeting room. You will find that you need to refer to it frequently during the rest of the project.** Below is an example of a research model: |
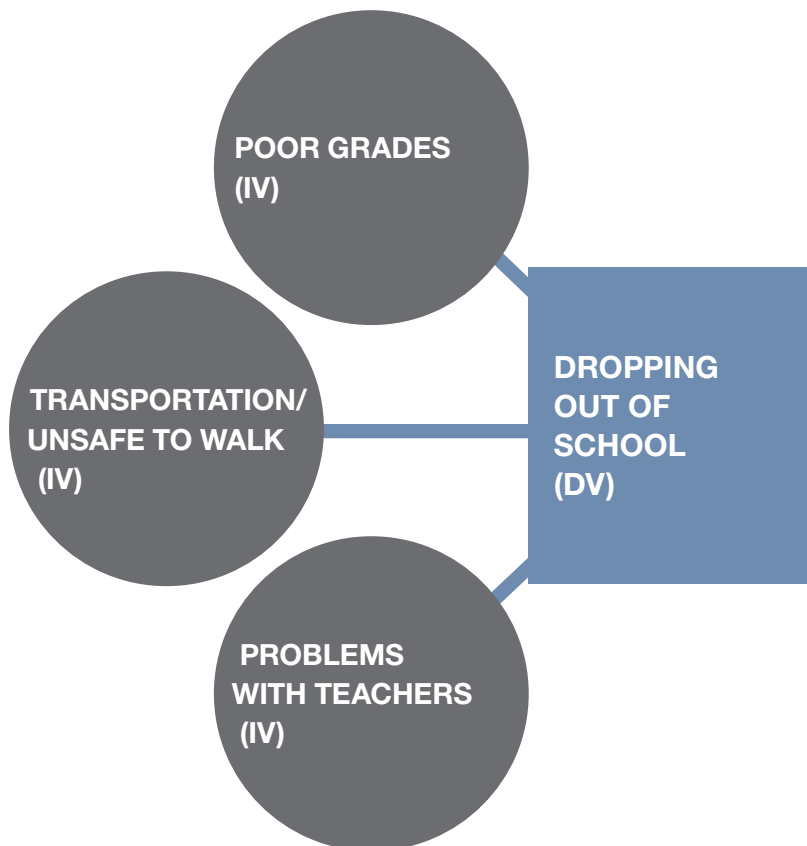
**Adaptations for Module 5:** Activity 1, "Selecting research methods" was adapted from our previous curriculum. However, the "Approaches to data collection" handout was taken from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 4).
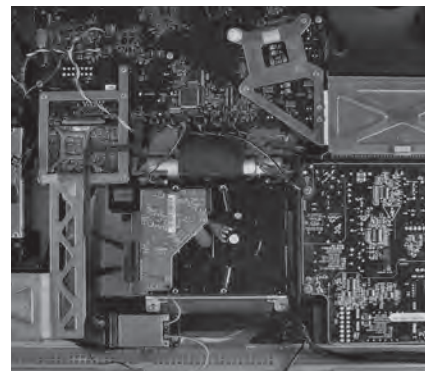
# MODULE 5:
## Methodologies

### KEY TERMS

**Methods.** At this point, youth in your group have been introduced to four research methodologies: interviewing, geographic mapping, visual documentation and survey. This list of methods is not exhaustive; if you have expertise in another method (such as PhotoVoice), add it to the list! The number and complexity of the methods used in a PAR project depend on the resources of the program, including:

- Number of participants;

- Number of staff;

- Skills and expertise of staff;

- Availability of software programs for analysis (e.g., Anthropac, Excel, SPSS, GIS, etc.).

Graduate students provide an excellent resource for enhancing the research skills available to programs.

# Activity 1: Selecting research methods

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Team will compare the pros and cons of each research method and determine the best methods for their research project. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Flip chart paper ● Tape ● TV/VCR ● Methods Chart (blank) and completed "Methods Chart" handout ● "Which Method Works Best for Me?" handout ● The group's research question ● "Approaches to Data Collection" handout ● Optional: Research methodology samples, e.g., interview transcript or audio/video tape, focus group video clip, OHT survey, video/photo documentary |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 60 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | ● Ask youth to recall the research methods they learned about earlier in the project. Write each method at the top of a piece of flip chart paper and tape these on a wall. Have they heard of other methods? |
| | ● You may do this as a large group or break into groups of two for "pair-and-share." Give youth the blank "Methods Chart" handout. Set various methodology samples throughout the room. Assign each group a methodology station to review or have each group go to each methodology station. Review the sample methodologies and fill out the chart for their assigned methods. If you did this in pair-and-share groups, reconvene and have each pair present their part of the Methods Chart. An adult should record information on the flip chart paper and solicit additional comments from other participants. Use the "Approaches to Data Collection" handout as a tool to help fill in pros/cons if the group gets stuck. |
| | Selecting a method for the action research question: |
| | ● Ask youth to put their research question through the "Which Method Works Best for Me?" handout. This can be done as a large group or in small groups. |
| | ● Review the results of this activity with the youth. Help guide them through the process of selecting an appropriate methodology for their research question. |

# Methods Chart

| | WHAT TYPE OF INFO IS THIS GOOD FOR? | PROS | CONS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SURVEY** | | | |
| **INTERVIEW** | | | |
| **FOCUS GROUP** | | | |
| **MAPPING** | | | |
| **VISUAL DOCU-MENTATION (e.g., PhotoVoice)** | | | |
| **OTHER** | | | |

# Which Method Works Best for Me?

| | [What] info would this method provide? | [Who] would I talk to? (target audience) | [What] sub-questions would I ask to try to answer my larger research question? | [What] is good about this method? | [What] is bad about this method? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SURVEY | | | | | |
| INTERVIEW | | | | | |
| FOCUS GROUP | | | | | |
| MAPPING | | | | | |
| VISUAL DOCU-MENTATION (e.g., Photo-Voice) | | | | | |

# Approaches to Data Collection

| DATA COLLECTION METHOD | USES | EXAMPLES OF USES | PROS | CONS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SURVEY | Find out how a lot of people (30 or more) think or act, based on what they say. | Ask peers to answer a 25-minute self-assessment on sources and their experience of peer pressure. Example: Oregon Healthy Teens Survey | Can get a lot of information from a lot of people quickly. Cheaper and less time. Can be anonymous and confidential. | Collection is more impersonal and doesn't build relationships. Takes time to develop a good survey. |
| INTERVIEW | Learn how a small number of key people think and what they say they do. | Ask the principal, superintendent and PE teacher about the barriers to getting enough physical activity in the school day. | Allows for relationship-building and a deeper understanding of the issue. | Time-consuming. Not anonymous or confidential. |
| FOCUS GROUP | Similar to an interview, but done with a small group of people. | Talk to five peers about why they choose to/choose not to eat school lunch. | Allows for more rich data on an issue; builds relationships. Participants can build off of and learn from one another. | Time-consuming analysis. Not anonymous or confidential. |

# Approaches to Data Collection, continued

| DATA COLLECTION METHOD | USES | EXAMPLES OF USES | PROS | CONS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAPPING | Identify patterns in the way people, sites, activities or events are spatially organized. | Locate the number of liquor stores in your neighborhood compared to other neighborhoods. | Conveys complex data visually; has an immediate impact. | Some data are difficult to map. You have to have accurate ways of getting the information to map; some mapping software can be difficult to use without training. |
| VISUAL DOCU-MENTATION | Targeted photographs tell a story that can explain more than words sometimes can. Photographs capture things that interviewing and observations can't see. | You want to illustrate how the built environment (physical space/ environment) in your community affects safety and your ability to be physically active. Example: Oregon Youth Photo Contest | Gives a visual representation of what you want to say. Pictures can be used in different ways to tell different stories. Youth like to take pictures. Using disposable cameras (or youth cell phones) can reduce costs. | Only represents one moment in time. To be useful as data, researchers must know what pictures to take and when and where. Some people don't like to have their pictures taken. Pictures need interpretation. |
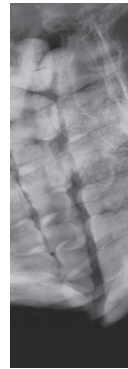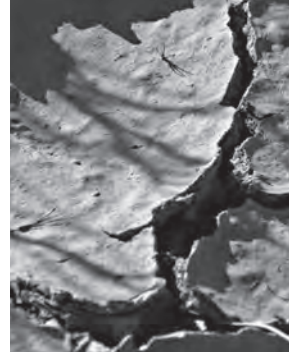
# MODULE 6:
## Developing a research plan

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will develop a comprehensive research plan for the action research topic. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | "My Research Plan" handout ● Form examples:<br>● "Interview Consent Form" (Parents/Guardians)<br>● "Survey Consent Form"<br>● "Interview Consent Form" (Interviewee)<br>● "Interview Consent Form" (18 years and older)<br>● "Participant Screening Sheet"<br>● "Focus Groups" form |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 60 minutes (or more) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Writing the research plan:<br>● Pass out the "Research Plan" handout. Explain to the youth that the plan will be the blueprint of their entire research project. Review each component's description. Thinking about the whole process ahead of time will help the youth prepare.<br>● Ask the youth to work alone or with their fellow research teammates to fill out the plan. Have mentors available to help guide students through this process. |

# Section 1: Goal and objectives

### GOAL

The goal describes the overall accomplishment of the activity. This is your research question. What do you want to get out of your research? Here are some examples:

- To determine if there is a correlation between depression and involvement in addictive behaviors, such as gambling;
- To assess whether high school students think mental health services in their schools are meeting their needs;
- To obtain suggestions for how to diminish the stigma that might be associated with seeking help for mental health issues;
- To explore how a teenager's peers and family support system influences his or her experience of emotional or mental health issues.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S)

Specific objectives are the individual components that contribute to achieving the goal. Objectives detail the kinds of information you are aiming to collect and will provide guidance for the types of questions you will be asking.

For example, if your goal is "to explore how a teenager's peer and family support system influences his or her experience of emotional or mental health issues," your specific objectives could include:

- To gather demographic information (age, gender);
- To determine where teens go for support and what's good and bad about different sources of support;
- To determine what sorts of emotional or mental health issues they experience;
- To determine whether the types of emotional or mental health issues they're experiencing influence who they turn to for support.

What are the specific objectives for your research?

# Section 2: Target audience

The target audience is the type of person you want to participate in your research. Define the audience's characteristics, such as gender, age, grade, race and ethnicity, school, community, and profession. Have they taken certain classes or participated in certain activities? You may want to reach different target audiences with different methods, e.g., youth with surveys, adults with one-on-one interviews.

For example, the target audience could be defined as:

- 15- to 17-year-olds;
- Male and female;
- African American, White, Latino and Native American;
- Attending high school.

Another target audience could be defined as:

- 10th-graders;
- Male and female;
- African American, White, Latino and Native American;
- Have used school-based health services.

# Section 3: Methodology

Include a short description of the research method(s) you will use to gather information. Will you be conducting focus groups, one-on-one interviews, a written survey or some other type of research method?

## A. LOCATION AND TIME

Where will you conduct the research?
When will you conduct the research?

## B. APPROVAL PROCESS

The approval process varies for each research project. It depends on the research question, target audience and community in which you're planning to conduct your research.

Securing approval can take a lot of time and set back the best laid plans. START EARLY. The approval process will vary depending on the organization you work for, or the research setting (i.e., schools). Review the approval process at the end of this section to consider the issues involved with securing approval.

In the Oregon Youth Action Research pilot, youth who were focusing on students from their schools went directly to their school principals to request permission. They brought a letter on school letterhead (see "Youth Action Research Guide") from the adult facilitator explaining the action research project. Typically, they also submitted their research instruments (e.g., survey or interview guide). Some principals gave approval right away and did not require parental consent from youth willing to participate in the research.

Institutional review board (IRB) approval is usually required when the research subjects are subjected to physical exams or research of a highly personal nature. The approval process can be lengthy and is not advised for the general types of research the action research youth will be conducting.

Universities and institutions of higher learning usually require the IRB process for all human research. If you have one or more graduate student interns working with you on the project, be sure to check if they need IRB approval through their institution.

## C. INFORMED CONSENT

Does the research require parental consent of the youth participant or just informed consent of the research participant? See sample consent forms at the end of this module from an action research project focusing on student mental health in a school. It is common to obtain signed, written, informed consent statements from research participants.

If the participants are under the age of 18 years old, consent from the parent or guardian is expected. If parental consent is needed, allow time for this process. Parental consent is when the parents are notified about an activity involving their child and asked to give their permission to participate (see examples 1 and 2).

An "opt-out" parental consent form is the easiest way to approach parental consent. Youth distribute the form to their parents

| Size of sample or sub-sample | Margin of error |
|---|---|
| 50 | 14.0 |
| 75 | 11.4 |
| 100 | 9.8 |
| 200 | 6.9 |
| 300 | 5.7 |
| 400 | 4.9 |
| 500 | 4.4 |
| 600 | 4.0 |
| 700 | 3.7 |
| 800 | 3.5 |
| 900 | 3.3 |
| 1,000 | 3.1 |

and only have to get parental signature and return the form if parents do not want their child to participate.

## D. SAMPLE SIZE

How many surveys, interviews or focus groups will you complete? Keep in mind the amount of time survey data entry or transcribing interviews or focus group transcripts can take. Adult research mentors can advise on appropriate sample size given the time constraints of the project.

For quantitative surveys, deciding on the sample size can be influenced by the size of the error. As you can see in the table, there isn't that much of an advantage of a sample size of 1,000 surveys (+/- 3.1%) versus 500 (+/- 4.4%) at the 95% confidence level. However, there is a big difference in the margin of error on 50 surveys (+/- 14%) versus 200 (+/- 6.9%). The "95% confidence level" is a statistical way of saying that you are confident that the true average of the information you are reporting falls within the reported range 95% of the time. For example, a sample size of 200 would give you a margin of error at +/- 6.9% at the 95% confidence level. That means that the responses to your survey could be up or down as much as 7%. So, if you surveyed 200 teenagers and 20% of them said they are depressed, the answer could range between 13% and 27%. If you surveyed 50 teenagers and 20% of them said they had sex, the answer could range between 6% and 34%, since the margin of error is +/- 14%.

## E. RECRUITMENT/IMPLEMENTATION

How will you recruit target audience members to participate in the research? If the research is to be conducted in school, will certain classes be targeted? Do all students in the selected classes meet the target audience characteristics? Are the teachers willing to provide time for the research activities?

If you will be surveying whole classrooms (i.e., homerooms) talk with the teachers to determine the best way to distribute the surveys. A teacher might be willing to hand out and collect for you. If not, you will need to go to the class and tell the students what you are doing, pass out the survey, and collect the completed surveys. You will need to think about what to say.

# Module 6: Developing a research plan, continued

For surveys, it helps to be detail-oriented and organized. One way to keep track of different surveys (i.e., schools, gender, language) is to color-code the surveys so that each group gets a different color. Label a large manila envelope for the completed surveys.

If you are interested in talking with a specific group of people who share certain criteria, you will need to ask them a few questions to see if they qualify before participating in your research. See the sample recruitment form in the "Youth Action Research Guide." Remember to over-recruit for focus groups. For example, if you want each group to have eight to 10 participants, over-recruit for each group by two to four participants, due to no-shows.

## F. DATA ANALYSIS

How will the data be analyzed? If doing a survey, what data entry package will be used (e.g., SPSS)? Who will set up the data entry program? Who will enter the data? Ideally, an experienced mentor can take on these tasks.

For focus groups, have a facilitator and a note taker, and audio tape each group. Unless exceptional notes are taken, each group should be transcribed.

## VI. TIMELINE

Create a timeline of all activities that need to be completed. Be sure to assign people to tasks. For example:

| Deadline | Who | Tasks |
|----------|-----|-------|
| 10/02/14 | Oscar | Research tool development |
| 10/30/14 | Kathy & Oscar | Approvals/ consent |
| 11/17/14 | Oscar | Recruitment/ implementation |
| 12/08/14 | Oscar | Data entry/ analysis |
| 12/15/14 | Oscar | Draft report |
| 1/12/15 | Oscar | Final report/ presentation |
| 3/30/15 | Oscar | Destroy tapes |

## VII. STAKEHOLDERS: WHO SHOULD KNOW?

Start thinking now about who will want to hear your final results. Brainstorm with the whole group: **WHO** should know about our results? Who in our district, in our schools, and in our community would be interested in the results? Make a list of these people in the research plan. Youth will go through a more in-depth exercise regarding stakeholders later in the project.

As you think ahead about your presentation, consider taking photos along the way to document your activities and make the presentation more interesting.

# My Research Plan

## I. Goal and objectives

**GOAL**

**OBJECTIVE(S)**

## II. Target audience

## III. Methodology

**DESCRIPTION**

**SAMPLE SIZE**

**LOCATION AND TIME**

# My Research Plan, continued

## III. Methodology, continued

### APPROVAL PROCESS

### INFORMED CONSENT

### RECRUITMENT

### IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

## VI. Timeline

| Deadline | Who | Tasks |
|---|---|---|
| | | Research tool development |
| | | Approvals/consent |
| | | Recruitment/implementation |
| | | Data entry/analysis |
| | | Draft report |
| | | Final report/presentation |

# Example 1: Interview Consent Form

TO:      Parents/Guardians

DATE:    October 1, 2014

RE:      Permission for student interviews

Your teenager has been asked to participate in an interview being conducted by a peer who is participating in the Youth Action Research Team to study student experiences with mental health issues and services. The interview will last less than 30 minutes.

During the discussion, your teenager will be asked to share his/her own experiences with mental health issues and services. Ultimately, we hope to use the information from this study to improve how mental health needs of students are addressed in the North Clackamas School District. The interview will be audio-taped, but all information will be kept confidential. No information about your child will be revealed on an individual basis.

Participation is voluntary. If you agree to your teenager's participation, please sign and have your teen return this form to the student researcher.

If you have any questions, please contact Joe Smith at 503.555.5555 x555

I grant permission for my teenager, _____ , to participate in the group discussion.                    (name)

_____      _____
Parent/guardian signature                Date

_____      _____
Teen signature                      Date

# Example 2: Survey Consent Form

## Youth Action Research Team Project

**MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND SERVICES**

- This is a very important survey and your answers are very valuable. We need honest answers from you, so we can understand what local teens think and so we can improve the mental health of teens.

- This survey asks questions about your mental health, services/programs here at school and other behaviors. Your answers are confidential. Your name will not be on the survey.

- Completing this survey is voluntary.

- Some questions may not apply to you, but please do your best to answer each one. If you do not want to answer a specific question, you do not have to.

The surveys and procedures for the survey have been explained to me. I know that participation is voluntary, and I can end the survey at any time.

I, _____

*Print your first and last name (please print clearly)*

Check one:    ☐ **Agree** to complete the survey.

☐ **Do not agree** to complete the survey.

You may contact _____ , at _____ , if you have questions about
the research.              (name)                    (phone number)

# Example 3: Interview Consent Form

## Youth Action Research Team Project

**MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND SERVICES**

- This is a very important interview and your answers are very valuable. We need honest answers from you, so we can understand what local teens think and so we can improve the mental health of teens.

- This interview asks questions about your emotional/mental health and different places you go to and people you talk to for support. Your answers are confidential. Your name will not be asked in this interview.

- Completing this interview is voluntary.

- Some questions may not apply to you, but please do your best to answer each one. If you do not want to answer a specific question, you do not have to.

The interview and procedures for the interview have been explained to me. I know that participation is voluntary, and I can end the interview at any time.

I, _____

*Print your first and last name (please print clearly)*

Check one:   ☐ **Agree** to complete the survey.

☐ **Do not agree** to complete the survey.

You may contact _____ , at _____ , if you have questions about
the research.            (name)                    (phone number)

# Example 4: Interview Consent Form
## (for people 18 years old and older)

I'm working on a project called action research. It is sponsored through *[insert sponsoring agency/organization here]*. I am gathering data about teens and emotional/mental health.

Would you be willing to answer a few questions? I will be tape recording, unless you are uncomfortable with that. The tape is just to help me better remember your answers.

This is a very important interview and your answers are valuable. We need honest answers from you, so we can understand what teens think and so we can improve services and supports for them when they're experiencing emotional or mental health issues.

We will be reporting this data back to the *[insert sponsoring agency/organization here]*. They will use this data in their action plan to improve adolescent mental health.

Your answers are confidential. Your name will not be asked in this interview.

You are able to end this interview at any point.

Please sign this release stating that you understand this interview is voluntary and you can end the interview at any time.

Name:_____  Date:_____

# Example 5: Participant Screening Sheet

Hello, my name is _____ and I am working on a research project to recruit students to share their ideas about emotional and mental health. I have a few questions to determine if you would be eligible.

1. What grade are you in?

    ☐ 10th grade ☞ Continue

    ☐ Anything else ☞ Thank you, but you are not eligible to participate.

2. Have you used health services at your school in the past year?

    ☐ Yes ☞ Continue

    ☐ No ☞ Thank you, but you are not eligible to participate.

We are planning to hold a small group discussion about teen emotional and mental health in our school. The discussion is for research purposes ONLY so we will not be trying to sell you anything. These discussions are usually interesting and fun for those who take part and are very helpful for researchers to develop improved services and supports for teens. The discussion will take about 1 ½ hours and you will be given $25 for your participation.

Are you able to participate?     ☐ Yes     ☐ No

The group for males will be on: (Month/Date) at the (location) from (time) to (time)

The group for females will be on: (Month/Date) at the (location) from (time) to (time)

Could you tell me your name and phone number so I can remind you with a phone call before the discussion? **[Record on attached sheet.]**

If you have any questions, please call (your name and phone number)

Thank you very much!

# Example 6: Focus Groups

Date:_____ Location:_____

1.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

2.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

3.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

4.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

5.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

6.  Name: _____

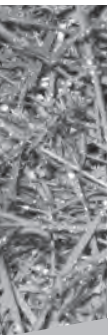    Phone #: _____

7.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

8.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

9.  Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

10. Name: _____

    Phone #: _____

**Adaptations for Module 7:** The introduction to Module 7 was adapted from our previous curriculum. The facilitation guidance, handouts, and activities related to each of the four research methods described in the curriculum were taken from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 4, Units 1, 2, 4, and 5).

# MODULE 7:
## Developing research instruments

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will develop the research instruments(s) to be used in the action research project. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Completed research plans ● Handouts on various methods |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Varies widely — may need to spread this task over two sessions |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | **Research instruments** |

● Based on their research plan(s), youth can develop their research instruments. We have provided additional detailed information and activities to help develop instruments for interviews, focus groups, surveys, geographic mapping and visual documentation. Adult mentors should provide feedback and guidance when appropriate.

● If youth are doing individual or small group research projects, encourage them to consider teaming up with another group and developing their research instrument together. This can expedite the data collection and entry process.

● Once youth have a first draft of their instruments, it is very important to review all questions to ensure their relevance to the research. Remind youth that we tend to want to ask too many questions, which translates into more time for the research participant, more time for data entry and more time for analysis.

● To review an instrument, go through each question and ask if it addresses one of the research objectives in their research plan. If it does not answer a research objective, youth should consider removing it from the instrument or revising it. It is best to do this exercise in a small or large group, not individually.

**Facilitation continued**

**Pretest research instruments**

- Explain to the youth that pretesting their research instrument means testing it in advance with members of the target audience to make sure the instrument makes sense and to work out any other kinks. This is especially important for surveys.

- For example, if youth are conducting a self-administered written survey, select five members of the target audience to take the survey. Work with each person individually. Give each person the survey and explain that this is a test run of the survey. Ask them to fill out the survey and to mark anything that is confusing. Once the person has completed the survey, take it and review every survey question with the participant, asking if anything was confusing. The youth researcher should be reviewing the completed survey to make sure questions were filled out correctly. Based on the feedback from the pretest, revise the final survey.

- To pretest one-on-one interview or focus group discussion guides, run through the questions with a couple members of the target audience. Are they responding the way you had hoped? If not, revise the questions or add probes to make sure you are asking the right questions.

- Assign the pretest as homework. Ask youth to come to the next session with their pretest completed and with suggested revisions to their research instrument.

- Revise the research instruments as needed.

- Final drafts of research instruments must be approved by the youth action research adult facilitator and researcher.

- If youth are conducting their research in schools, consider showing the final instrument to the school principal, as a courtesy; he or she may have already requested this when youth asked for approval to conduct the research in school.

# Section 1: Interviewing and focus groups

**SKILLS DEVELOPED
THROUGH INTERVIEWING**

- Developing ideas by conceptualizing a topic;

- Deconstructing a concept by developing a list of related subtopics to guide the interview;

- Strengthening writing skills through writing the list of concepts and responses as well as recording, transcribing and writing about interviews;

- Communications skills — questioning clearly, listening, staying on topic;

- Organizing and classifying written information;

- Summarizing and synthesizing information.

## INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEWING

Interviewing is an approach to the collection of information that is used to understand people's life experiences or knowledge through an open conversation between the research participant and the researcher. Through interviews, a researcher can ask respondents their views and opinions about specific topics of interest. Interviews are generally "open-ended." This means that the researcher asks the questions to guide the interview and people answering the questions are free to respond in whatever way they wish, as long as they associate it with the topic. This freedom to answer is what makes interviewing different from surveying. Keeping people

focused and on-topic is the most challenging aspect of the interview.

Researchers can interview anyone they believe has something to tell about the topic of interest.

If, for example, you are interested in knowing more about the issue of youth dropping out of school, you could interview teachers, young people or members of the Board of Education to learn about their perspectives, opinions and experiences on this issue. These people could be chosen for interviews because they have certain expertise, experience or knowledge about youth dropouts. Or you could interview young people who have dropped out of school about the circumstances that led to their decision to leave.

Interviews can be conducted in several different ways. This unit will cover two types of interviews: in-depth interviews and focus groups.

**In-depth interviews** are one-on-one interviews using open-ended questions. The topic to be covered is determined prior to conducting the interview. In-depth interviews are exploratory in nature because they are used to understand more about a topic. There are two types of in-depth interviews this unit will cover — the unstructured in-depth interview and the semi-structured in-depth interview. They can be conducted one-on-one, or in a group setting.

- Unstructured in-depth interviews use questions that are broad in scope. The questions are not predetermined, which means that the interviewer develops the questions as the interview is occurring. An unstructured in-depth interview is most useful if you are exploring something new and don't quite know specifically what to ask.

- Semi-structured in-depth interviews use questions that are predetermined and specific. Therefore, the interviewer does not have to make up the questions on the spot during the interview. However, the respondent is free to answer as he or she wishes. Semi-structured interviews are most useful when you want to focus on a specific topic or independent variable domain and ask questions specific to that domain. Unstructured interviews are used to determine your independent variable domains (see Module 4, Identifying the Issue, for a description of domains). Semi-structured interviews are also useful when you want to obtain different opinions from a number of people about the same subject matter but you don't want to predetermine their choice of answer.

### FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS (FOCUS GROUPS)

Focus groups are interviews conducted with small groups of people — usually approximately six to 10. As with one-on-one interviews, with focus groups you have the flexibility to determine the questions before or during the group discussion. Your choice will depend on the purpose of the interview. If you are exploring a general topic with the group in order to understand the characteristics of your topic or domain better, you will want to use an unstructured interview format without predetermined questions. If you want to explore a domain more systematically, you must use a semi-structured interview format with predetermined open-ended questions. These semi-structured group interviews are useful when you want to obtain different opinions from a number of people on the same subject but you don't want to predetermine their answers. It is more difficult to keep a group on track with a completely open-ended interview format. Most people who conduct focus groups organize them by using a semi-structured interview format.

### SELECTING AN INTERVIEW

After you choose a topic and before you choose the type of interview you will use, you must determine if you have the proper resources, person-power, equipment and time to conduct your choice. The Interview Selection Guide handout will help you to make these decisions. Under each type of interview, look at each category listed (when to use, who, skills needed, and resources). Check off the items that you have available for the research project. By doing so, you

can determine which method is appropriate and feasible. For example, if you have only a small number of respondents available to you, you may not be able to conduct focus groups. Unstructured one-on-one interviews or semi-structured interviews may be more suitable for your needs. On the other hand, if you do not have sufficient time to conduct several one-on-one interviews (unstructured or semi-structured) but have access to four or five people who can meet at the same time, conducting focus groups with larger numbers of people may be the best choice for you.

Please make sure you review the chart before you discuss interview choices with your researchers. Then review the options with the youth researchers. Once you have reviewed the chart and assessed your needs (resources, person-power, equipment and time), you can select the method that is most appropriate for your project.

# Interviewing Selection Guide

| | IN-DEPTH | SEMI-STRUCTURED | FOCUS GROUP |
|---|---|---|---|
| **DEFINITION** | • Open-ended<br>• Exploratory<br>• One-on-one<br>• Topic predetermined (broad)<br>• Questions not predetermined | • Open-ended<br>• Exploratory within defined domains<br>• One-on-one<br>• Topic predetermined<br>• Questions predetermined | • Open-ended<br>• Exploratory<br>• With small groups<br>• Topic predetermined<br>• Questions can be predetermined or not |
| **WHEN TO USE** | • To discover information about domains<br>• To generate ideas for a model or project<br>• To find research questions | • When want to see various answers people give to same question<br>• To build an instrument<br>• For intra-group variation | • To build instrument<br>• To generate ideas<br>• Discover information about domains<br>• Intragroup variation |
| **WHO** | • People with expertise, or experience or knowledge about the topic<br>• Can be people with different views on the topic | • Necessary to interview more than one person on the topic<br>• People interviewed need to be similar | • People within group should share at least one characteristic (i.e., age, gender) but may have different views about the same topic<br>• 6–10 people per group |
| **SKILLS NEEDED** | • Listening<br>• Communication<br>• Manners<br>• Openness to diversity (all aspects: culture, opinions, etc.)<br>• Comfortable asking questions<br>• Non-judgmental<br>• Probing<br>• Able to write notes quickly<br>• Able to create questions on the spot (think quickly on their feet) | • Listening<br>• Communication<br>• Manners<br>• Openness to diversity (all aspects: culture, opinions, etc.)<br>• Comfortable asking questions<br>• Non-judgmental<br>• Probing<br>• Able to write notes quickly | • Listening<br>• Communication<br>• Manners<br>• Openness to diversity (all aspects: culture, opinions, etc.)<br>• Comfortable asking questions<br>• Non-judgmental<br>• Probing<br>• Able to write notes quickly<br>• Group facilitation skills (manage group, keep group focused on topic, keep discussion going by asking next question, establish ground rules, manage conflict) |

# Interviewing Selection Guide, continued

## Resources

| | IN-DEPTH | SEMI-STRUCTURED | FOCUS GROUP |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TIME** | 30–60 minutes per interview | 30–60 minutes per interview | 60–90 minutes per focus group |
| **EQUIPMENT** | ● Tape recorder<br>● Notepaper<br>● Computer/typewriter | ● Tape recorder<br>● Notepaper<br>● Computer/typewriter<br>● Questions | ● Tape recorder<br>● Notepaper<br>● Computer/typewriter<br>● Questions<br>● Meeting place |
| **WHO** | ● Interviewer | ● Interviewer | ● Interviewer<br>● Recorder |

# Section 2: Survey development

## INTRODUCTION

Survey research is a method of collecting very specific quantitative data from a large number of respondents. By quantitative, we mean closed-ended questions that produce easily coded numerical responses.

Survey research is useful for the following reasons:

- It answers the question "how many" by identifying the "distribution" of a variable or "fact" in a group of youth or adults; e.g., how many young people between the ages of 13 years old and 19 years old smoke?
- It answers the question "who" by identifying the characteristics of those who do or believe something — e.g., smokers. A survey, if constructed well, can tell you whether smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to be older or younger, female or male, wealthier or less wealthy, urban or suburban.
- It answers the question, "What causes or influences something?" e.g., survey data can tell you whether you are more likely to smoke if your friends smoke. From this you can infer that friends influence or cause you to smoke.
- It answers the question, "What are the consequences of something?" e.g., survey data can tell you whether smokers are more likely to suffer from asthma attacks or colds.

We try to collect survey data from a representative sample of individuals, usually more than 60. If we can say that our sample is like the general population of individuals, then we can say that what applies to the people in our survey also applies to all other people like them. We do the best we can to identify people for our survey who represent the general population, but sometimes we can't do this. So we describe how people entered our survey and let the readers decide for themselves. Most youth surveys can't obtain statistically representative samples. Some surveys can obtain 100% of the people in a group, known as a census. For your purposes, you should get at least 30 surveys completed to be confident that your results will be meaningful.

Survey data use statistics to demonstrate any connections between domains in the research model. They also provide statistical support for hypotheses.

Youth tend to be concrete in their thinking. They don't always think of all of the dimensions or components of a problem. Creating a good survey forces young people to think about all the specific parts of the problem they want to study. Also, survey distribution and collection provide a convenient means of creating ties within the community of respondents for two reasons: usually surveying involves negotiating agreement to do the survey in the first place, and it is a face-to-face process that strengthens relationships.

# Activity 1: Survey sampling

| Learning objective | Youth will be able to:<br><br>● Describe the concept of sampling;<br><br>● Choose a population with whom they can conduct their survey that is appropriate to the dependent and independent domains;<br><br>● Determine sample size for administration of the survey. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Flip chart ● Markers |
|---|---|

| Time | 15 to 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Cut out and copy a variety of surveys from magazines or other surveys, such as the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Explain the purpose of sampling: to interview the appropriate population based on size and other categories determined to be important to the study. Briefly cover the statistical necessity of having a minimum number of respondents in order to achieve some degree of reliability. Separate into small groups and give each group a survey from a magazine. Have each group determine the topic of the survey and the targeted sample based on the readership of the magazine and other information given with the survey. (Categories to include could be age, education, gender, occupation and others to be determined upon examination of the surveys to be used.) Choose the sample for the model-based survey according to the desired categories. |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: Types of information

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will examine the types of information that can be gathered using a survey: knowledge, attitude, behavior and demographics. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Flip chart ● Markers ● "Types of Information that Can Be Gathered from Surveys" handout |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 15 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make copies of the "Types of Information that Can Be Gathered from Surveys" handout. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Distribute the handouts. Have the group provide examples and review of questions designed to elicit each type of information. |

# Types of Information that Can Be Gathered from Surveys

**Demographic:** Relating to the individual's background and population characteristics.

**Example:** What is your ethnicity?

**Knowledge:** Questions that usually have a correct response and are used to test what the individual knows about a topic.

**Example:** *Who was the first president of the United States?*

**Attitude:** Asks for the individual's opinion on a topic.

**Example:** *Do you think 16-year-olds should be allowed to drive?*

**Behavior:** Asks about things the individual has participated in or plans to do.

**Example:** *Have you ever been in a fight?*

**Beliefs:** Asks whether the individual believes that something should happen.

**Example:** *Do you believe that people can take some responsibility for their health?*

## Section 2

# Activity 3: Formatting questions

| Learning objective | Youth will compare the different formats available when designing questions based on vertically modeled items. |
|---|---|

| Materials | "Survey Question Reference Sheet" handout |
|---|---|

| Time | 15 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Make copies of "Survey Question Reference Sheet" handout and learn the formats by reviewing the sheet or constructing your own questions. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Review the section of the reference sheet on question formatting with the group, then have the group provide examples of each question format. |
|---|---|

# Survey Question Reference Sheet

## 1. Multiple choice

Several possible answers (usually three or more) are provided.

Sometimes only one answer should be marked; at other times, mark all that are relevant.

*Example:* Ethnicity (please check one):

| | |
|---|---|
| _____ White | _____ Asian/Pacific Islander |
| _____ African American | _____ American Indian |
| _____ Caribbean/West Indian | _____ Alaska Native |
| _____ Hispanic/Latino | _____ Other |

## 2. Dichotomous

Similar to multiple choice but only two opposite answers are provided: (Yes/No; True/False)

*Example:* Thomas Jefferson was the first president of the United States. ____ True ____ False

## 3. Likert and frequency scales

A range of options (usually five) is provided. The range can be most to least, most often to least often, etc.

*Example:* Sixteen-year-olds should be allowed to drive (please circle one).

| Strongly agree | Agree | No opinion | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## 4. Rating

The question is answered on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is the highest or best, and 10 is the lowest or least. A definition is provided for the two ends of the continuum, 1 and 10.

*Example:* How mature do you think 16-year-olds are?

Not at all mature   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10   Very mature

## 5. Ranking

A list is organized by the respondent in order of importance (or a similar category).

*Example:* Please rank the following in order of importance to you. 1 is the most important and 5 is the least important. Use each number only once and fill in all the blanks.

| | |
|---|---|
| _____ Finishing school | _____ Being wealthy |
| _____ Getting a job | _____ Being famous |
| _____ Having fun | |

# Survey Question Reference Sheet, continued

**6. Open-ended**

A space is provided so the individual can write in a response. For a survey, this question should take no more than one or two words to answer.

*Example:* What was the main reason you got into a fight? _____

_____

The responses to questions like this are summarized when all the surveys are in. Either they are categorized into a set of general numerical responses, or they are used descriptively.

**7. Vignettes**

A scenario, scene, event or dilemma is posed and questions are asked about it.
The questions can follow any of the above formats.

*Example:* You and several friends drive to a party together. At the party one of your girlfriends sees a boy she likes from school. You notice this boy drinking beer and doing shots all night. Your friend tells you the boy is going to give her a ride home. Do you ... (choose one):

_____ Try to stop her from going with him

_____ Tell someone

_____ Stay at the party, minding your own business

_____ Go with your friend

# Section 3: Geographic mapping

## SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH MAPPING

- Conceptualizing a topic;

- Developing an understanding of the relationship between social events, people and "things" or artifacts and the locations where they are found;

- Developing an understanding of the spatial relationships among these things and space;

- Generating hypotheses about these relationships;

- Writing about the relationships;

- Interview-based communications skills: questioning clearly, listening, scaffolding ideas, staying on topic;

- Conducting secondary (library, Internet, etc.) research to test hypotheses;

- Summarizing and synthesizing information;

- Public presentation skills: discussing what youth learned with the group.

## INTRODUCTION TO MAPPING

Geographic or spatial mapping is a useful tool for exploring the relationships between designated geographic areas and the objects, persons and sites located within them. Spatial mapping helps youth explore how they understand, use and conceptualize their physical environment (e.g., a neighborhood, park or school) and how that environment enables or limits behavior. Spatial mapping involves creating visual representations, usually on paper, of the relationships between areas, objects and people. In general, spatial or geographic maps have scale, measurable proportions and dimensions.

Researchers can choose to place people, places or activities on preexisting maps with accurate proportions. They can also make their own maps when they are involved in observations. Computer programs, such as ARCview (ESRI), offer youth the possibility of generating spatially accurate maps of any already mapped area (a cluster of towns, a city, a neighborhood or a group of blocks in a neighborhood). Computer programs also make it possible to map new locations that are not part of the United States census, e.g., a classroom, a park, a street corner or a building.

Mapmakers can draw activities, people and places in geographic space with the help of people they are interviewing, and then interview them about what happens in those locations, how people in those locations are related to one another, and how the locations might be related to one another socially or through activities or people.

There are two things required for mapping: any surface that can be organized into spaces that have different social meanings; and the concepts, items or things that can be mapped onto them.

## GOALS OF MAPPING

### Goal 1: To generate hypotheses about the location of persons, items or sites in space

The primary goal of spatial mapping methods is to enable youth to raise questions and generate hypotheses about the reasons why events, persons and "things" or artifacts can be found in spatial clusters and why clusters might occur together. For example, why do liquor stores, old liquor bottles, liquor advertising and parties where underage youth use alcohol happen in the same geographic space?

These questions, hunches and hypotheses can lead to psychological, social, economic and political explanations for the presence and relationships of things. For example, locating liquor stores on a map can show that they cluster in certain neighborhoods but not others. The difference allows youth to question why this pattern is occurring, and to use other forms of data collection to find the answers. Youth have mapped the locations of cigarette butts, peer pressure in schools, the locations of clubs and other sites that promote sex at an early age; they have discussed the implications of this information.

### Goal 2: To present data in a visually interesting way

Maps are also an excellent way of presenting spatial information in visually interesting ways. The items overlaid on a map can be represented graphically (e.g., youth can devise ways of representing groups of youth or symbols for stores, clubs or billboards). Related graphs, words and quotes and other materials can be located on maps to help interpret the map. Maps can be printed on plastic transparencies and these transparencies can be overlaid to show the relationships among items, people and places (e.g., the locations of piles of cigarette butts, small grocery stores, schools, and routes children follow to go to and from school).

### Goal 3: To gain computer, mathematical/computational and visual-association skills geographic mapping requires:

- A research question to guide mapping activities (scientific thinking);

- Identification of "things" or cultural domains to be mapped (an analytic skill);

- The ability to locate these things on an existing or computer-generated map;

- The ability to create the computerized map if one does not exist;

- Familiarity with new computer programs.

- An understanding of quantitative data (e.g., number of arrests for drug use, or mean per capita income) in forms that show differences across space (e.g., across neighborhoods), and make inter-spatial comparisons possible.

By linking perceptions, interpretation, cognitive transformations and creativity, mapping will sharpen young people's inquiry

skills and promote higher order thinking. In the process of using mapping, youth will gain new computational and communication skills as well as develop group consciousness about the possibilities and constraints in their environments. Mapping will help youth confirm their hunches about their world, challenge some of their assumptions, recognize new patterns, make new connections, visualize the unknown, and communicate and negotiate meaning.

## Types of maps and when to use them

| TYPE OF MAP | WHEN TO USE | ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **PREEXISTING PAPER CITY/ NEIGHBORHOOD MAP** | To locate a small number of large items | • Can be obtained in larger or smaller formats<br>• Easily carried in the field<br>• Cheap and easy to get, buy or have contributed | • One size only<br>• Desired components can't be enlarged or abstracted |
| **MAP YOU DRAW YOURSELF** | To get a quick picture of the relationships among people, things and places in the location you are observing | • Inexpensive and flexible<br>• Easily used in the field<br>• Can be used as the basis for interviewing and monitoring change<br>• You can situate whatever you want on it | • Less permanent<br>• Not in accurate proportion |
| **MAP YOU COMPUTERIZE YOURSELF** | • To create a permanent record<br>• To learn mapping skills<br>• To create base for overlaying new data | • Youth learn to use GIS system<br>• Can overlay any new data anytime<br>• Good for illustrating unusual geographic areas | • Must have the GIS program<br>• Time-consuming to learn the GIS program<br>• Useful only if data are available for overlays |

# Section 4: Visual documentation

## INTRODUCTION

Visual documentation through the use of still and moving images is one method youth can use to gather information about their community. This technique helps them look closely at their surroundings in different ways and observe them critically and systematically

Visual documentation offers a way to analyze communities from many different perspectives. Its accuracy and detail allow researchers to identify and objectively make judgments on the subject being studied. A still record freezes a moment in time in order to gather data while a moving record adds context and a depth of understanding to the information being collected.

While different interpretations can be made by the investigator, visual documentation provides a more precise and detailed record from which meaning can be drawn.

The purpose of this method is for young people to learn how visual images can be used in three ways:

1. To collect and present data;

2. To describe context; and

3. To convey messages.

The first can be looked at as a quantitative approach, whereas the latter two are more qualitative. Youth will also explore and understand the benefits and drawbacks of visual documentation as a research tool. The visual image offers a permanent record of fact; however, it offers it only from a particular perspective. It is possible to leave out crucial details that lead the researcher to an entirely different conclusion than if the image had been created differently. This method also helps youth learn about bias in visual representation and to discuss issues of media manipulation. By creating their own still and video images, youth learn how meaning can be created and conveyed visually.

We have provided several activities to help youth learn more about visual documentation. Select the activity or activities that best meet the needs of your group.

# Activity 1: Peep this

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will examine images critically. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Close-up pictures (explained below) ● Pens/pencils ● Scrap paper ● Optional: Provide small prizes for the winning group. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 20 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | This activity uses close-up pictures of various objects that the participant must identify. Several companies produce versions of this activity, including "Eyeball Benders" from Games Magazine (www.gamesmagazine-online.com). You could also make your own! |
| | The facilitator should copy a set of the puzzles for each group. The best copies to use are color, but if finances are an issue, very clear black and white copies will work. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Count off the students into groups of three or four. Each group gets a set of four puzzle sheets, scrap paper and pencils. Explain to the students that the images are close-up pictures of objects, and they have to figure out what the objects are. They can write down their answers on the scrap paper. Go through the sheets and ask the groups what they had for answers. The group who figures out the set of puzzles first is the winner and receives prizes. Explain to group members that the purpose of the activity is for them to look closely at images in preparation for using visual documentation in their research projects. |

# Activity 2: Photo album

| Learning objective | Youth will compare three ways of using visual documentation as a research tool. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Photographs or pictures from magazines ● Notebooks ● Glue ● Pens/pencils |
|---|---|

| Time | 30 minutes |
|---|---|

| Preparation | Before the activity, the facilitator should gather several pictures that fit into the three approaches to visual documentation: |
|---|---|

1. Gathering data (pictures of people, objects, animals, etc.);

2. Describing the context or environment around something (pictures of places, homes, scenery, etc.); and

3. Telling a story or conveying a message (pictures of activities, events, etc.). They can be from magazines, or you can use your own photos.

Prepare a model photo album as a guide for the group. Select a theme for your photo album and pictures (from the magazines) to go with the theme. Separate the pictures into groups that describe various aspects of the theme within the three visual documentation methods as described in the module on research stations. Glue these pictures into a notebook (your photo album) and write notes under the pictures (e.g., day two of the sacred ritual, eating traditional meal, etc.). Use your imagination and have fun. Getting your "photo album" together shouldn't take more than an hour.

*Example:* A photo album of your trip to another planet. In the gathering data section there might be pictures of the people who went on the trip, things they bought there or life forms that live there. In the describing the context or environment section, there might be pictures of trees, water or places where the inhabitants live. In the conveying a message section, there might be pictures of people gathered around a fire and people jumping into water (telling the story of a ritual on the planet).

| **Facilitation** | Split the youth into groups of two or three. Pass out the notebooks, glue, pencils and a pile of pictures to each group. Review the three approaches to using visual documentation. Youth were introduced to these in the research stations module, so they should be fairly familiar with them. Instruct them to create a photo album around some theme, using pictures from the three ways of visual documentation. |
|---|---|
| | When they are finished, each group can present its theme and photo album to the others. Make sure to ask questions as the group presents: How many males are in the pictures? How many females? How many are youth? Adults? What do their homes look like? What types of personalities are shown in the pictures? What activities are taking place? |
| | Explain that they will be using these approaches to collect information for their research topics. |

# Activity 3: Show and tell

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will compare and critique local and professional pictures and discuss political perspectives, media manipulation and bias. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | "Manipulation of Images" handout ● Pictures from books, magazines, newspapers ● Pens/pencils |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 30 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | The facilitator should select a few pictures from various books, magazines or newspapers that can be analyzed by youth. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Break the group into pairs and pass out a couple of pictures, paper and pencils to each pair. The facilitator should first model the activity by showing the pictures he or she chose and answering the following questions, which youth will then answer on the handout.<br><br>Have the group(s) write answers to the following questions:<br>● What do you see in the pictures?<br>● What things stand out to you?<br>● What feelings do you get from the images? Is there a theme or message being conveyed?<br>● How does using photography limit the ability to convey this message? Are any of the images biased? How?<br><br>Discuss media manipulation. How do the media manipulate images? Have images of their communities or of adolescents been manipulated? Have they seen examples on television or in the newspaper? |

# Manipulation of Images

Answer the following questions based on your pictures:

1. What do you see in the pictures?

2. What things stand out to you?

3. What feelings do you get from the images?

4. Is there a theme or message being conveyed?

5. How does using photography limit the ability to convey this message?

6. Are any of the images biased? How?

# Activity 4: Movie critic

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will examine visual representation in film, including bias and manipulation. |

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|---|---|
| **Materials** | Computer/DVD player and TV ● Films and/or documentaries |

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|---|---|
| **Time** | 30 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | The facilitator should select documentaries that youth may find interesting and meaningful. Media can be obtained from the Internet, a local public or university library, or a video store. Choosing both domestic and international examples will provide you with very different perspectives and images. View the video and select a five-minute clip from each video to show the group. It is important to view the clips a few times in preparation for the discussion. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Show the clip to the group. Ask the group the following questions: Who constructed these images? What are they trying to convey? Who are the target audiences? How would the images change with someone else making the video? What feelings do you get? Do you sense any bias or manipulation? Repeat the process for each clip. |
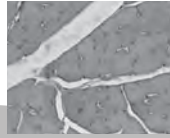
**Adaptations for Module 8:** The facilitation guidance for Module 8 comes from our previous curriculum. Guidance on data collection is provided in the 2004 ICR curriculum, though it is not portrayed in a stand-alone module.

# MODULE 8:
## Data collection

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will implement research instruments. Check in with youth regarding their data collection process. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **TIme** | Varies depending on what methodologies the group is using |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Research plans ● Supplies given type of research methodology (see Data collection section on the next page) ● "Survey Tally Sheet" handout |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Check in with team members and get an overall status report.<br>Here are some sample questions:<br>● How many youth are ready to collect data?<br>● For those who are not, what needs to be done?<br>● What things are making folks nervous?<br>● What things are exciting them? |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Determine who is going to photocopy all the paper copies you need (e.g., consent forms, surveys, tally sheets). Remember, one way to keep track of different surveys (i.e., schools, gender, language) is to color-code the surveys so that each group gets a different color. |

## Data collection

| LOGISTICS | Depending on the research method selected, preparation will vary. Here is a checklist of things you might need: |
| --- | --- |

**Surveys:**
- Copies of consent forms, surveys;
- Boxes of pencils;
- Envelopes for completed consent forms/surveys;
- "Survey Tally Sheet" for completed surveys. If you are distributing in different locations over several days, this form will help you keep track of your completed surveys. Once you reach your predetermined goal, you are finished.

**Focus groups:**
- Copies of consent forms;
- Focus group discussion guide;
- Tape recorders (2), batteries, audiocassette tapes;
- Name tags/cards;
- Marker pens;
- Notepads and pens.

**Interviews:**
- Copies of consent forms;
- Interview guide;
- Tape recorder, batteries, audiocassette tapes;
- Notepads and pens.

Because the point of the session is to help youth collect data, customize the agenda as needed (e.g., some adult mentors may need to physically take youth to their data collection sites; others may need to help youth approach school principals or teachers, and still others may need to gather equipment, etc.).

**PRACTICE**

Group youth using similar methodologies together as a support team. Have them practice introducing their surveys to each other or asking their interview questions.

Here is an example of how youth might introduce their survey:

*Hi. My name is_____. I am part of the youth action research team and we designed this survey. The results of the survey will make sure the mental health needs of teens at [_____] are addressed. The survey is anonymous, so don't write your name on it. It is voluntary, so you may stop taking it anytime. Your input is important and we greatly appreciate your participation in this survey. Please read each question carefully and answer all questions honestly. I will collect the surveys when you are finished. Thank you.*

**CHECK IN**

Set up a check-in system to ensure youth are getting what they need and receiving troubleshooting advice as needed. Encourage youth to use their peer support system as well as the adult mentors.

# Survey Tally Sheet

| | DATE | | | | | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MALE | | | | | | |
| FEMALE | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | | |

**Adaptations for Module 9:** The facilitation guidance for Section 1 "Analyzing the data" was adapted from our original curriculum. The introduction to the module, facilitation guidance and activities that describe the process to analyze data from each of the four research methods introduced in Section 1, Units 1 through 4 were taken from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 4). Section 2, Unit 1 "Interpreting the results" was adapted from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 5, Unit 3). Module 5 of the 2004 ICR curriculum also includes two units on data triangulation and integration. These concepts were not included in our adaptation for brevity.

# MODULE 9:
## Data analysis

### INTRODUCTION

Data analysis is really about putting the whole picture together. To do this, we begin by considering the information we have on each of the main domains in the research model. The information related to each domain can come from data collected through any means chosen by the research team — e.g., from interviewing, surveying, photographing or any other data collection technique. We look at all the information we have to see if it tells us a story about that domain.

This module is broken into two sections. **Section 1** focuses on the analysis of the research methods used by the action research team. The guided facilitation will need to be adjusted based on the methods used by your group and the data analysis expertise that is available. We provide several activities to guide the analysis of in-depth interviews, focus groups, geographic mapping and visual documentation. Add additional activities for any other methods used by your group.

**Section 2** of this module focuses on bringing all the pieces together, and interpreting the findings from all data sources. It will be important to have the group's research model and research plan during this phase; they serve as key grounding documents for the group.

Putting it to practice: Because the analysis process can be isolating (each student works alone on his/her question), make sure you check in with students during the week about their progress. One-on-one sessions may be necessary to help guide students. Adult mentors need to keep in close contact.

# Section 1: Analyzing the data

| Learning objective | Youth will analyze methods and organize their data. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Again, materials vary depending on the research methods used. See specific analysis activities for guidance. |
|---|---|

| Time | Time varies depending on the research methods used. See specified analysis activities for guidance. |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Debrief data collection. Guide a 15-minute discussion about the data collection experience, including these questions: |
|---|---|

- What went well? What did not work?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew earlier?
- How could we improve the process?
- What questions do you have?

**Making sense of the data**

- Explain that data processing means looking for patterns, abnormalities, and the most interesting, relevant tidbits. It means carefully reading through — sometimes over and over — what you've got until you figure out what it means.

- Guide the group members through the following analysis activities, based on the research methods they used for their project. Adapt as necessary and add activities for other methods.

# Section 1, Unit 1: Focus group interviewing — analysis

# Activity 1: Transcribing: Preparing the focus groups for analysis

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will describe how to record and store data gathered from focus groups. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Transcribing machine or tape recorder ● Computer ● Optional: Download a free program called EZ-Text, developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Use it to enter data from semi-structured interviews and prepare them for analysis. This program can be found on the CDC website with a manual of instructions for use at ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Software/eztext/ezsetup.exe. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Approximately three hours for an hour-long focus group |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | None |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Focus groups should be transcribed by the youth with the help of an adult facilitator. This is tedious work so some incentives (humor, snacks, breaks) are useful. If you don't have access to transcribing  machines and need to use tape recorders,  it is helpful to have youth work in pairs so that one person can operate the tape player while the other one types up the focus group content. The data could be entered into a program such as EZ-Text, a software program in the public domain that can be downloaded from the Centers for Disease Control website. EZ-Text allows you to set up the entry screens so that each question is listed, and the responses for each question can be entered into the screen and stored with the question. The program calls up the questions and prints all the answers below each question. This makes analysis easy. |
| | Youth can also prepare a boilerplate with the interview questions and each youth can enter the focus group content on the computer. Then the answers to each question can be compiled by hand by cutting and taping together the hard copy, or cutting and pasting them together with Word. |

# Activity 2: Identifying themes

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will develop analytic skills to uncover themes and interpret focus group data. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Copies of typed focus group/s ● Flip chart ● Paper for recording results of discussion |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Between 30 minutes and three hours, depending on how much material is to be reviewed and how many people review it |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make sure all focus groups are typed and copies are made for all participants. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | The data to be extracted from the focus groups can be of two kinds. These include: |

The data to be extracted from the focus groups can be of two kinds. These include:

1. Finding patterns and themes from the focus groups about the domains in the model; or

2. Finding quotes that illustrate points related to the study's hypotheses or the model's domains

A theme or pattern is identified when it appears in at least two different points, made by two — and preferably more — people in the focus group. . Have all youth read all the materials and look for ideas or themes that appear more than once. They can highlight themes with different colored highlighters as they read. Each youth's theme ideas can be listed on the flip chart. The participants can demonstrate a theme by reading out loud the quotes where it is mentioned. The adult facilitator writes the first several themes, and then can ask if any youth wants to volunteer for this role. Youth negotiate where there are duplicates to arrive at a final list by consensus. Highlighted materials are saved to refer to when quotes are needed to illustrate the themes. Youth can prepare a final list of themes with one or two quotes for each. Make sure to save the focus group transcriptions in case you need to refer to them.

# Section 1, Unit 2: In-depth interview — analysis

# Activity 1: Transcribing — Preparing the interviews for analysis

| Learning objective | Youth will describe how to record and store data gathered from interviewing. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Transcription machine or tape recorder ● Computer ● Optional: Download a free program called EZ-Text, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Use it to enter data from semi-structured interviews and prepare them for analysis. This program can be found on the CDC website with a manual of instructions for use at ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Software/eztext/ezsetup.exe. |
|---|---|

| Time | Between 90 minutes and three hours depending on the length of the interviews — it usually takes youth about three times as long to transcribe as the actual length of the interview. |
|---|---|

| Preparation | None |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | Usually there will be more than one semi-structured taped or handwritten interview. If individuals are interviewed there may be eight to 10. Taped interviews should be transcribed by the youth with the help of a facilitator. This is tedious work so some incentives (humor, snacks, breaks) are useful. If you don't have access to transcribing machines and need to use tape recorders, it is helpful to have youth work in pairs so that one person can operate the tape player while the other one types up the interview content. |
|---|---|
| | The data can be entered into a program such as EZ-Text, a software program in the public domain that can be downloaded from the CDC website. EZ-Text allows you to set up the entry screens so that each question is listed, and the responses for each question can be entered into the screen and stored with the question. The program calls up the questions and prints all the |

## Section 1, Unit 2

Activity 1: Transcribing — Preparing the interviews for analysis, continued

| **Facilitation continued** | answers below each question. This makes it easy for analysis. Another option is for youth to prepare a boilerplate with the interview questions and each youth enter one or two full interviews on the computer. The answers to each question can then be compiled by hand by cutting and taping together the hard copy, or cutting and pasting the answers together with Microsoft Word. |
|---|---|

# Activity 2: Identifying themes

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will develop analysis skills to uncover themes and interpret interview data. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Copies of typed interviews ● Flip chart ● Paper for recording results of discussion |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Between 30 minutes and three hours, depending on how much material is to be reviewed and how many people review it |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make sure all interviews are typed and copies are made for all participants. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | The data to be extracted from the interviews can be of two kinds. These include: |

1. Finding patterns and themes from the interviews about the model's domains; or

2. Finding quotes that illustrate points related to the study's hypotheses or the model's domains.

A theme or pattern is identified when it independently appears in at least two — and preferably more — interviews. Have all youth read all the materials and look for ideas or themes that appear more than once. They can highlight themes with different colored highlighters as they read. List each youth's theme ideas on the flip chart.

The participants can demonstrate a theme by reading out loud the quotes where it is mentioned. The adult facilitator writes the first several themes and then asks if any youth wants to volunteer for this role. Youth negotiate duplicates and arrive at a final list by consensus. Highlighted materials are saved to refer to when quotes are needed to illustrate the themes. Youth can prepare a final list of themes with one or two quotes for each. Make sure to save the interviews in case you need to refer to them.

# Section 1, Unit 3: Geographic mapping — analysis
## Activity: Analyzing and interpreting mapped data

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will demonstrate how to use mapped data and to relate it to a research model. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Hard copy of maps with data included on them ● 8½" x 11" transparencies OR computerized GIS program (such as ArcView) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Mapped data are visual — you can see the data represented on a map. Maps represent space — neighborhoods, cities, states, continents, classrooms, streets, gyms, etc. |

The data overlaid on a map should vary across space. For example, if your data show that 99% of all students use one area of a local park, this information only tells you that:
- All students use this area.
- No students use other areas.

This is not very useful information unless you can compare it to something else. The information would be more useful if the map showed that different percentages of students use different parts of the park. Then you could ask: Which students use one part versus another? Why do more use one part versus another? What else is going on in the park in these areas that would explain this difference? How can we find out?

Visual data are generally used to examine or to locate patterns, trends and/ or relationships. Data can be used to compare the concentration of one item with another (e.g., where kids hang out and where drugs are sold). It could plot collected data against secondary information (e.g., number of households in poverty) in order to examine relationships. It could examine the relationship between youth populations and resources available in a community. The concentration of types of students within different places in a school building could be analyzed. Information can be mapped to show changes in a community and/or the use of space over time.

# Section 1, Unit 4: Visual documentation — analysis

## Activity: Reading the pictures

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will apply the visual data to see how it relates to the research model and where more or different information needs to be collected. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | The research model ● Flip chart ● Markers ● Scrap paper ● Pens/pencils ● Poster board ● Markers ● Rubber cement or other materials as needed to mount and present pictures |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | 45 minutes |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | It is a good idea to look over the pictures/videos ahead of time to get an idea how they can creatively fit into and supplement the project model. Most of this work should be done by the group, but you should be familiar enough with the photos/videos to help the group make connections. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Work through the pictures with group members so they can apply the pictures to the different components and hypotheses represented in their project model. After the group has organized the pictures to fit with the model, have group members develop some creative and stimulating way to display the pictures that conveys the appropriate meaning. This may involve developing a script that accompanies the pictures and sequencing them in a particular way. Let the young people be creative in their representations in order to convey all of the thinking behind the images they've captured. |

# Section 2, Unit 1: Interpreting the results

## Activity: What are the data saying?

| **Materials** | Research model and research plan ● Analyzed research methods ● "Results Interpretation Guide Example" handout ● Chart paper ● Markers |
|---|---|

| **Time** | One hour |
|---|---|

| **Facilitation** | Congratulate the group on analyzing the data. Now, for the moment group members have been working toward … interpreting their research findings!<br><br>Youth should examine the model and results and question anything they don't understand in it. They can question adults or one another. Youth should write down their interpretation of relationships among the model's components and the results. Use the "Results Interpretation Guide."<br><br>Youth should then, with guided facilitation, discuss in small (between four and six youth) groups or in the large/whole group what they think the results mean.<br><br>Adult staff should facilitate this discussion by asking the following:<br>● Do you agree with the results displayed for each domain? What are those results? Is anything missing? Should anything else be on the display? Should anything be removed?<br>● What do you think is the relationship between the first domain and the dependent domain? What is the relationship between each of the summary points in the first domain and the dependent domain?<br>● Is there any relationship between the first domain and the dependent domain? You can use the example here of the first domain (drugs) and the second (violence). Do we have any data to tell us if there is a relationship? What about the next domain? And the next. |
|---|---|

- What do you think these relationships mean? What would you say is the main result of this work? What do the results from the independent domains (violence, drugs, pregnancy, loss, etc.) tell us about what causes stress?
- What do the results tell us in each of the domains about what we can do about the problem we chose (the dependent domain)?

DRUGS

VIOLENCE

PREGNANCY

STRESS
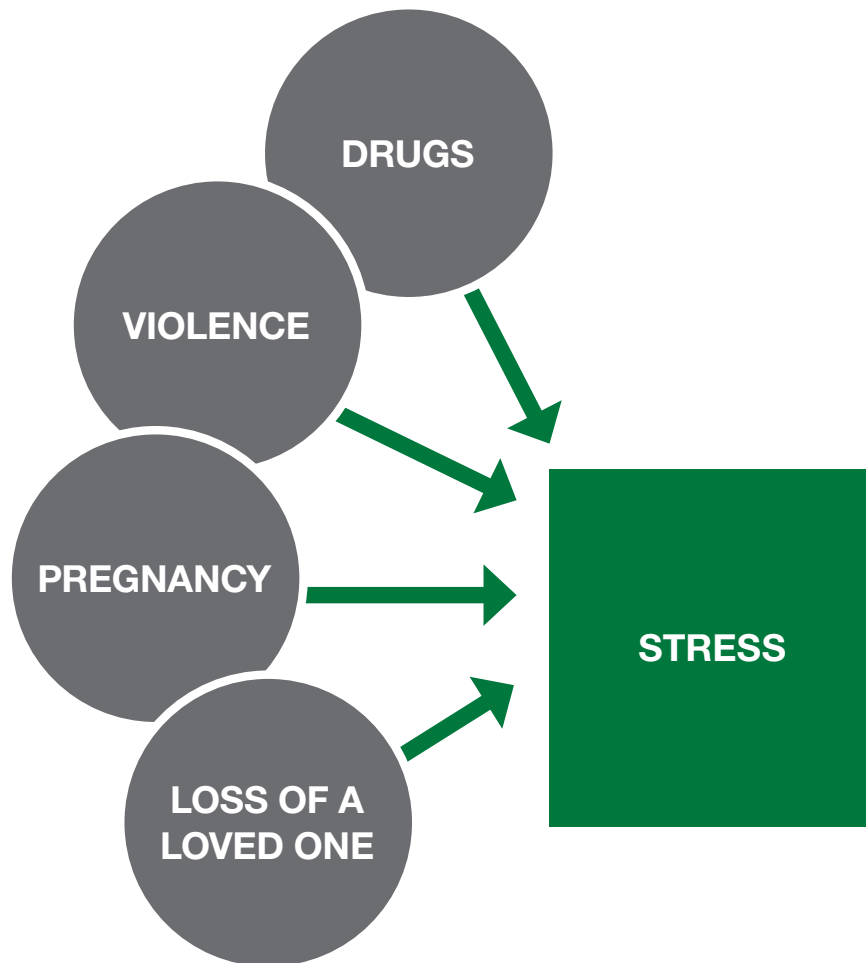
LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

# Results Interpretation Guide Example

The guide uses the example of the research model where stress is the problem **(dependent variable domain)** and drugs, violence, sex and loss of a loved one are the causes of the problem **(independent variable domains)**. For another project you can just substitute whatever independent and dependent domains you have included in your research model.

**DOMAIN 1.** What do the results mean? What do they tell you about drug use and stress? What do they tell you about what you can do to prevent drug use?

**DOMAIN 2.** What do the results mean? What do they tell you about violence and stress? What do they tell you about violence and drugs? What do they tell you about what you can do to prevent violence/drug use and stress?

**DOMAIN 3.** What do the results mean? What do they tell you about sex? What do they tell you about sex and stress? What do they tell you about violence and sex? What about drugs and sex? What do they tell about how you can prevent drug use, sex risk and violence? About preventing stress related to these?

**DOMAIN 4.** What do the results mean? What do they tell you about pregnancy? What about pregnancy and stress? What about pregnancy, violence, drug use and sex? What do the results say about how to reduce or prevent all of these?
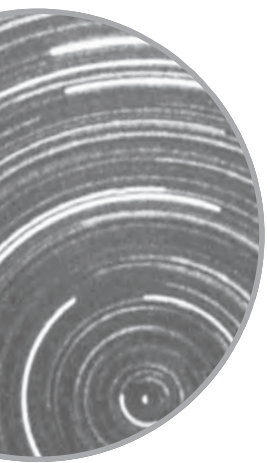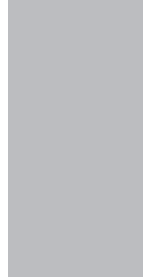
**Adaptations for Module 10:** The facilitation guidance and activities in Module 10 were adapted from our previous curriculum, in place of a similar activity in the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 5, Unit 3, Activity 2) that describes the process of preparing for a presentation.

# MODULE 10:
## Presenting key findings

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will develop a presentation summarizing the key findings of their research. Youth will determine to which stakeholders they should present their key findings and practice presenting. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Flip chart paper and markers ● A computer with PowerPoint ● Handouts: |

- Completed "Research Model" and "Research Plan" (from Module 3)
- "Elevator Pitch"
- "Stakeholder Chart"
- "Oral Presentations: Do's and Don'ts"
- "10 Tips for Successfully Making a Presentation"
- "Teach-back Critique Form"
- "So what? Presenting action research findings"

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Two hours or longer |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Key findings: |

- Now that the research has been completed, remind the youth that we need to identify the key findings and share them with people in the community. We need to identify stakeholders to whom we will present the findings, and we need to create a presentation of the research. This will be an important step for the next module, "Using the data for social change."
- Review the research findings as a group. If the youth did their research in small groups or individually, ask them to present their findings.
- Pose a question to the whole group: What are the most important or key findings? Pass out the "Elevator Pitch" handout and encourage youth to narrow down their findings to the top five key findings.
- Reconvene the larger group and have each youth (or project group) share their "Elevator Pitch" handouts. Record them on the flip chart paper. Open the floor for questions from other youth and the adult mentors.
- Once all youth have shared their bottom line, have the youth identify common themes.

| Facilitation continued | • What did we collectively learn? Are there some common truths we uncovered? What do all of our key findings mean when put together? If we had to tell someone what we found out as a group, what might we say? Record ideas on flip chart paper. |
|---|---|

## Stakeholders: Who should know?

• Shift the discussion to the stakeholders. Pass out the "Stakeholder chart." Ask youth to refer to the initial list of stakeholders they brainstormed when they were developing their research plans. Do another brainstorm with the whole group: **WHO** should know about our results? Who in their state, in their schools, and in their local communities would be interested in the results? Keep this list as it will be used in the next module, too.

• Ask all stakeholders these questions (record on flip chart):

  1. Why are they stakeholders?

  2. What do they need to know about your research?

  3. What can they do with your findings? What can they help change?

• Determine who is responsible for contacting each stakeholder to schedule a presentation (youth and/or adult mentor).

• If presentations have already been scheduled, announce the date or pass out on a card for youth as a reminder. Develop a "Presentation Master Calendar" and encourage youth to attend all of their peers' presentations.

## Developing the presentation

• Now that you have brainstormed the key findings and the stakeholders, you can create your PowerPoint presentation. As a warm-up discussion, ask youth to share in a large discussion the qualities of teaching they don't like. They will most likely have much to say that will reinforce the qualities of good teaching and presentation skills.

## Developing the presentation, continued

- Have the group review the elements of a good presentation titled "Oral Presentations: Do's and Don'ts" and "So what? Presenting action research findings" handouts.
- Key elements to include in your presentation (refer to your research plan):
  1. Who you are;
  2. Goal and objectives;
  3. Target audience;
  4. Methodology (survey, interview, sample size, etc.);
  5. Key findings;
  6. Call to action — what do you want the stakeholder to do about the research?

## Practice the presentation

- Give youth the opportunity to present before the whole group as a test run before the real deal.
- Let youth know it's OK to make mistakes and the test run will help improve their presentation.
- To provide feedback, you may videotape the presentation, use the "Teach-back Critique Form" or have a more informal session. Ask the youth to constructively critique their peer's presentation by asking what worked well and what things could they change.

## Final session celebration

- The action research team has worked hard. Now it's time to party. Have youth brainstorm ideas for celebrations. Set the date.

# Elevator Pitch

## Key Findings Worksheet

What are your five most important research findings?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What's the bottom line? If you had 20 seconds — the time it takes to go up 20 flights in an elevator — to explain your research and what you discovered, what would you say?

# Stakeholder Chart

| STAKEHOLDER GROUP | WHY IS THIS GROUP A STAKEHOLDER? | WHAT DOES THIS GROUP NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH? | WHAT CAN THE GROUP DO WITH YOUR FINDINGS? WHAT CAN THEY HELP *CHANGE*? |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# Oral Presentations: Do's and Don'ts

1. Be organized! The more organized and focused your presentation is, the more relaxed you'll feel.

2. Breathe! (It helps you relax.)

3. Don't try to cover too much material. Remember you might only have a few minutes.

4. Do speak clearly, slowly and at an appropriate level for your audience.

5. Use vocabulary that is appropriate for your audience. If you use new vocabulary, make sure you explain it and write it on the board.

6. Do make eye contact with all members of your audience.

7. Do move around.

8. Do use hand gestures.

9. Do allow the audience to ask questions at the end of your presentation.

10. Don't read your presentation. You can use short notes, but reading a presentation is unnatural; also, it makes it very difficult for your audience to follow.

11. Do practice your presentation with a partner or in front of the mirror.

12. Do remember to thank your audience and introduce the next speaker.

# 10 Tips for Successfully Making a Presentation

**(THE BASICS OF PRESENTING WITH A COMPUTER)**

1. Begin by introducing yourself. Display your title page — including the title, your name and the date — as you introduce yourself.

2. Use no more than three slides per minute.

3. Stand to the right of the screen. People read from left to right and their eyes should go from you — the speaker, to the screen — the visual message.

4. Maintain eye contact with your audience; avoid turning your back to the audience, at all costs.

5. Don't fidget.

6. Use clear language to state your point.

7. Never read your presentation. Talk extemporaneously and support your talk with anecdotes or examples to amplify or clarify your point.

8. Distribute printed copies of the presentation for note taking.

9. Create an appropriate ending by summarizing the main points, making recommendations or providing options.

10. Make good use of your time — don't hurry.

This lesson was created to support the AT&T/UCLA Initiatives for 21st Century Literacies. Determining Authority and Accuracy was created by Sharon Sutton.

# HANDOUT

## Teach-back Critique Form

**Presenter's name:**

_____

**Module/lesson:**

_____

**Eye contact:**


**Voice:**


**Body language:**


**Clarity of instructions:**


**Interactions with participants:**


**What engaged me:**


**Other comments/questions:**


**Observer's name:** _____

Adapted from Rocky Mountain Centers
for Health Promotion

# So what? Presenting Action Research Findings

## I. Introduction and methodology (five minutes of presentation)

a.  Who did the research?

b.  What we wanted to know (revised research question(s))

c.  How we developed the questions and survey/interview/focus group

d.  Who/how/when we surveyed

## II. Results and discussion (15 minutes of presentation)

a.  Demographics (present this information in some way)

b.  Can we answer our research question? If so, what is the answer?
    How do we know this?

c.  Results for each question (or do you want to just do summary/highlights?)

d.  Findings summary/highlights

# So what?, continued

## III. Limitations (five minutes of presentation)

a.  Are the results generalizable to the entire school population of the targeted high school? To all teenagers? If not, why?

  - Because of our method, who did we exclude?
  - Did we get a randomized sample?
  - Did we get a representative sample for gender, grade, race/ethnicity?

b.  Were any of our questions flawed? Is there anything about our research question that was flawed or impossible to answer?

c.  Is there anything about our process or results that could have been improved? Did the process bring up follow-up questions?

d.  What biases do we bring to the process or results?

e.  What can we NOT say from our results? Can we conclude anything?

## IV. Recommendations and next steps (five minutes of presentation)

a.  What steps do we recommend policymakers take? (These steps need to be logical steps based on what is included in this presentation.)

b.  What are the next research steps based on what we learned from either the process or results? (These steps need to be logical steps based on what is included in this presentation.)

**Adaptations for Module 11:** The introduction, facilitation guidance, and activities were taken from the 2004 ICR curriculum (Module 6). The only adaptations made to the original ICR module was the inclusion of Oregon-specific case studies that detail previous youth PAR projects, using our previous curriculum.

# MODULE 11:
## Using the data for social change

### INTRODUCTION

It's time for the action in action research. Not only does this component bring the project to life for the youth on the action research team, it also builds important real-life skills as youth design and carry out their action plan. This component of youth action research also increases community attachment. By investigating issues in their neighborhoods or schools, young people show a concern for the health of those communities. During this activity, young people are able to create positive, visible and measurable change by applying their research results.

For the purposes of this curriculum, the methods for applying youth action research results are organized in grid format with three objectives:

1. The development of educational materials;

2. Advocacy and policy change; and

3. The development of intervention strategies.

These can fall into three modes of presentation: written, verbal and visual. (See "Using the Data for Change" handout at the end of this module.)

Educational materials, for example, can be directed toward adults, adolescents or children. Information can be disseminated

through brochures that convey research findings or through the Internet. Educational materials may take the form of peer education sessions or public service announcements played over local radio stations. Young people may host a public forum at which they present their research results. Such a forum could be presented in a community, university or school setting.

Dissemination for educational purposes may also take a visual format. Posters are one example and may include hand-drawn art, computer-generated art or photographic collages. Other examples of visual presentations are videos, postcard mailers, or the production of graphs and charts incorporated into newsletters, brochures or verbal presentations.

Research results may be used for advocacy purposes and to leverage policy change. In a written format, this may include an editorial written for a daily city or town newspaper or a weekly community paper. A verbal presentation may occur at a city council meeting, a school board meeting, or other policymaking body where research may be presented in order to advocate for some positive change. Results of research may also

be presented visually as an advocacy tool. Posters or mailers may be used as part of a persuasive campaign to influence public opinion on issues related to research.

Finally, action research results may be applied in the development of intervention strategies. In a written format, this may take the form of a manual or guide for adults working with youth to offer guidance on dealing with particular issues. Research results may be used for program planning and grant development. Verbal use of results may include the identification of key phrases and slogans for education campaigns; other verbal uses include problem-solving sessions with teachers, police or other concerned adults. Visual presentations may include the performance of plays, skits or role-plays that raise important issues identified through the research.

A table highlighting key outcomes from several action research projects in Oregon can be found at the end of this module.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFULLY APPLYING RESEARCH RESULTS

Now is the time to apply the unique skills and talents of your group. There may be young people who are interested in art, theatre and/or performing. Many activities lend themselves to a division of labor where youth can put their unique talents to use. For example, if you are planning a community education forum, there are numerous tasks involved including site logistics, setup, invitations, acting as emcee, making verbal presentations of research results and creating visual aids. Youth should be central in planning and carrying out all of the details involved in such an event. Other projects may involve soliciting financial sponsorship from local businesses, letter writing, computer art and design, or other activities in which members show proficiency. There are usually ways to integrate all members of the group so each plays a central role in the success of the overall use and application of results. Youth also learn, develop and refine new skills. For example, they may practice their written and verbal presentation skills, including writing for a particular audience such as policymakers, youth, community members or universities.

Young people also learn numerous real-life lessons about negotiating bureaucracy, hosting public events and communicating with the media. They are able to network with new people and are exposed to new environments and career opportunities. The most important skill youth build is confidence in their ability to assess their environments and map appropriate means for action. Working as a team helps young people learn to negotiate, to share responsibility, and to learn from and support each other. Sharing the success of a final project helps build positive peer affiliations as the group bonds around a commitment to positive community change.

## YOUTH ACTION RESEARCH CASE STUDIES FROM OREGON

**New Urban High School** youth researched how students in their school reacted to and dealt with stressful life situations. Data were gathered through interviews and findings were shared at a school assembly. Educational pamphlets with healthy options for dealing with stress were given to the student body.

**Roosevelt High School** youth researched the barriers to eating school breakfast and school lunch among students and staff. The students conducted a survey of staff and students, performed three focus groups and key informant interviews with teachers, lunch staff and state-level nutrition experts. Findings were presented to school administrators and state public health professionals. The team proposed a set of low-to-no-cost policy changes that could increase the level of participation in school breakfast/lunch including:

- Altering the bell schedule to give students more time to eat school-provided breakfasts;

- Allowing students to eat breakfast in their first-period class after breakfast has been served;

- Using and increasing the school garden at Roosevelt to supplement the school lunch menu;

- Addressing student attitudes and perceptions about school food by conducting taste-tests in the cafeteria, and having a school-wide contest to develop a brand image for school food;

- Increasing effective communication between school administration/staff and food service staff to ensure the kitchen has an accurate count of students coming to lunch to reduce waste, and also to ensure sack lunches can be made for students going on field trips;

- Increasing promotion of local foods used in school breakfasts and lunches either through branding or other means.

**School-Based Health Center Youth Advisory Councils** from three high schools in Clackamas County conducted action research projects on topics relevant to their school communities. Each action research project is briefly described below.

**Bullying:** Students asked "How are students being affected by bullying?" The team conducted surveys of the student body. Key findings were presented to school administration. The team implemented a campaign to increase the awareness of the impact of bullying and had more than 700 students sign a pledge to not be bystanders.

**Stress:** Students asked "How do students cope with stress?" The team conducted student surveys to determine the major stressors facing their peers and what students usually do to cope with stress. Action strategies included raising awareness about the resources for help at the high school (such as the School-Based Health Center) and a campaign to stop stigma associated with asking for help.

**Peer influence:** Students asked "How do peers influence behavior?" The team

conducted student surveys to see what influenced student behavior in their school. The team found that friends and family were the most influential people for students, and that many students had friends who used alcohol or drugs or were sexually active. Action strategies included gaining administrative support for a peer mentoring program for younger students.

High school students from **Deschutes, Jackson and Multnomah counties** worked with adult allies from two health departments (Jackson and Multnomah) and a Planned Parenthood affiliate (Deschutes) to conduct action research projects related to youth sexual health. The findings were used to help develop a state plan to promote comprehensive youth sexual health. Each team developed their own research questions and methodologies (surveys, interviews and focus groups). Across all three sites, youth explored the difference between what students were being taught in school that did not align with Oregon Comprehensive Sexuality Education laws (ORS 339.455). Young people wanted to have more information about relationships, rather than just the mechanics of sex and sexuality. They were interested in exploring issues such as gender roles and stereotypes, body image, sexual orientation and domestic violence. Recommendations were developed for school, community, and state leaders.
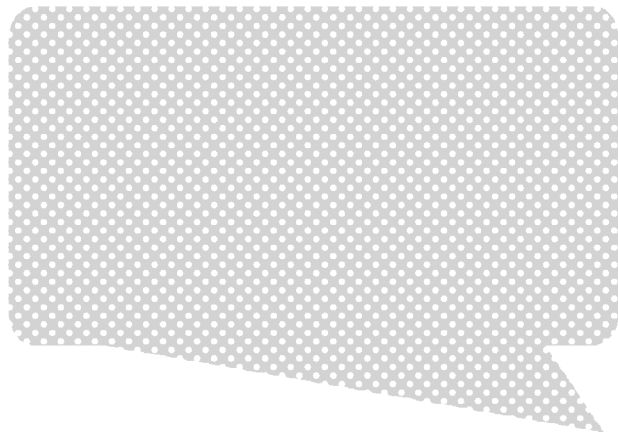
At the school level:

- Greater peer-to-peer outreach, incorporating action research into health classes and curricula;
- Increased oversight of sex education by the local school board.

At the community level:

- Increased engagement with religious groups;
- Parental health classes;
- More forums for community members to listen to and talk with youth.

At the state level:

- Enhanced youth-led professional development for teachers;
- Greater visibility of the state's existing sex education standards;
- Enhanced access to youth-friendly family planning services.

# Activity: Planning for action

| | |
|---|---|
| **Learning objective** | Youth will apply research findings to determine how to make positive change in a situation or condition. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Materials** | Will vary according to activity planned, but should include:<br>• Research model and research plan;<br>• Stakeholder chart and/or list of stakeholders;<br>• List of key findings or PowerPoint presentation;<br>• "Using the Data for Change" handout |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | Will vary according to activity planned. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Preparation** | Make copies of both the blank and filled-in "Using the Data for Change" handout. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Facilitation** | Pass out the blank "Using the Data for Change" handout to the group. Explain the format of the grid and then go through each category, discussing with the group the following questions:<br><br>1. Who needs to hear the information we have collected? What is the best way to get the information to them?<br><br>2. Which strategies would work well to disseminate the information collected to the targeted audience?<br><br>3. What is the final result we are seeking? What change do we want to see as the outcome of our action/dissemination?<br><br>4. Do we have any special skills or talents within the group to use in this part of the project?<br><br>5. Do we have access to any resources (recording studio, an auditorium, etc.) we could use in this part of the project?<br><br>Have the group brainstorm to fill in a chart with their ideas. Once they have finished, pass out in the filled-in chart. Have the group compare the two charts to see if there are any ideas the members have missed any ideas they might want to consider for their project. Once the group has finished its listing, go through the list together and determine which of the ideas are possible according to the time, financial and human available resources. |

# Using the Data for Change

|  | WRITTEN | VERBAL | VISUAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS | | | |
| ADVOCACY AND POLICY CHANGE | | | |
| DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES | | | |

# Example: Using the Data for Change

| | WRITTEN | VERBAL | VISUAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS** | ● Curricular materials<br>● Educational activity books for children<br>● Informational brochures<br>● Independent newsletters<br>● Dissemination of findings through Internet | ● Peer education sessions<br>● Awareness campaigns<br>● Public forums | ● Educational posters<br>● Educational videos<br>● Postcard mailers<br>● Production of graphs and charts |
| **ADVOCACY AND POLICY CHANGE** | ● Editorial article for local newspaper, community newspaper | ● Presentation to city council, school board, other policy-making bodies | ● Persuasive campaign to influence public opinion |
| **DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES** | ● Manual/guide for adults working with young people on a particular issue<br>● Program planning, grant development | ● Identify key phrases, slogans for educational campaigns<br>● Problem-solving sessions with police, teachers, other adults | ● Performance of plays, skits, role plays |
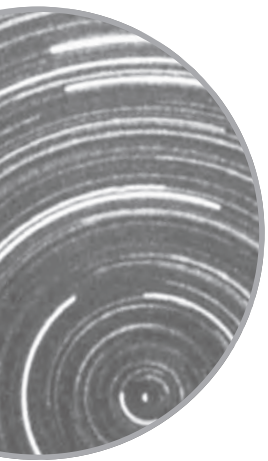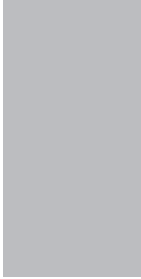
# MODULE 12:

## Celebration!

| Learning objective | Youth celebrate the end of their action research project and reflect on their accomplishments, challenges and all of the hard work they have done. |
|---|---|

| Materials | Varies |
|---|---|

| Time | Varies |
|---|---|

| Facilitation | It is critically important that the youth action research team celebrates the work of the team and brings the project to a close. |
|---|---|

Solicit ideas from the group regarding how they want to celebrate. The celebration can be as simple as providing each participant with a certificate of completion to an all-out party with food, games and prizes. This will depend greatly on the time and resources available to your group.

At the very least, ask youth to reflect on the process:
- What did they learn?
- What part was the most challenging? What part was the most fun?
- What was surprising?
- Did the project meet their expectations?

If you have any project evaluation forms or surveys, be sure to administer them at this time.

# Resources

## General resources related to YPAR, PYD and youth-adult partnerships

**"The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development."** Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development.

*www.4-h.org/about youth-development-research/positive-youth-development-study/*

**"Being Y-AP Savvy: A Primer on Creating & Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships."** Shepherd Zeldin & Jessica Collura.
*www.fyi.uwex.edu/youthadultpartnership/files/2011/02/YAP-Savvy12.pdf*

**"City of Portland Youth Engagement Manual."** City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Youth Planning Program.
*www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/436057*

**Multnomah Youth Commission:** The MYC is the official youth policy body for Multnomah County and the City of Portland.

In addition to policy work, the MYC conducts presentations around building quality youth-adult partnerships.
*web.multco.us/multnomah-youth-commission*

**Forum for Youth Investment:** Find a wealth of resources, tools and publications related to positive youth development and youth engagement.
*www.forumfyi.org*

**Advocates for Youth:** Find a range of tools for working with youth, with an emphasis on sexual health.
*www.advocatesforyouth.org*

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health:** Find a comprehensive range of federal resources on positive youth development.
*www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/publications/positive_youth_development.html*

## Data sources

**OREGON DATA SOURCES**

**Oregon Healthy Teens Survey:**
*www.public.health.oregon.gov/BIRTHDEATHCERTIFICATES/SURVEYS/OREGONHEALTHYTEENS/Pages/index.aspx*

**Student Wellness Survey:**

*www.oregon.gov/oha/amh/pages/student-wellness/index.aspx*

**NATIONAL DATA SOURCES**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**
*www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth*

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:**
*www.samhsa.gov*

**Healthy People 2020:**
*www.healthypeople.gov/2020/
topicsobjectives2020*

**Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health:**
*www.hhs.gov/ash/oah*

**Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health:**
*www.childhealthdata.org/learn/NSCH*

# Research process and methodologies

**Community Tool Box:** Find a wealth of toolkits, how-to's and resources for working in the community ranging from building and maintaining partnerships and advocating for change.
*ctb.ku.edu/en/toolkits*

Toolkits and resources related to data collection including focus groups, surveys, interviews, mapping, PhotoVoice and many more.
*ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/
assessing-community-needs-and-resources*

**ETR:** Find resources for evaluating, creating logic models and developing tools (such as surveys, interviews and assessments).
*www.etr.org/solutions/evaluation/*

**National Institute of Health, Protecting Human Research Participants:** This free online training provides basic information related to the protection of human subjects in research.
*www.phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php*

# Example 1: ACTION RESEARCH Project

## Student Medical Information

Name _____ Sex _____

Address _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Age _____ Birth date _____

Parent's name _____ Phone (home) _____

Parent's work phone _____

Other person to contact _____ Phone _____

Doctor _____ Phone _____

Address _____ ZIP_____

Insurance ☐ Yes ☐ No Group no. _____

Name of company_____ I.D#: _____

Name of insured parent _____

Does student have any special medical problems? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain:

_____

_____

**Is student taking any medication?**
(Medication includes non-prescription drugs such as aspirin.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify: _____

**Is student allergic to any drugs?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify: _____

**Is student allergic to insect bites?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, does student have an insect bite kit for emergencies?

☐ Yes ☐ No

_____      _____
Signature of parent/guardian      Date

_____      _____
Signature of student      Date

# Example 2: ACTION RESEARCH Project

## Research Member Contract

I, _____ agree to do the following:

1. Assume the role of action researcher: develop research questions about my community, figure out how best to answer the questions, make sense of the information gathered, make recommendations for the community, and act on what was learned.

2. Make a two-plus hour commitment each week, including attendance at every session, unless I have an emergency or I'm sick.

3. If I am unable to attend, contact _____ before the meeting time. I will arrange a meeting with my mentor to discuss the work that was completed without me.

4. Gain approval to conduct my research.

5. Take responsibility for my work and my behavior.

6. Listen to what others have to say.

7. Give my very best.

8. Speak up if I don't understand something or if I'm unhappy.

9. Have fun!

10. Follow principles and ground rules established by the group.

11. Participate in at least one community presentation.

12. Receive $250 upon completion of the project.


_____          _____
Member signature                          Date

# Example 3: ACTION RESEARCH Project

## Parent Consent

Your student has been selected to participate in an ACTION RESEARCH Project.

- **ACTION RESEARCH** is the process of observing, making sense of, critiquing and ultimately improving our neighborhoods and communities.

- Through **ACTION RESEARCH**, an important community issue is studied for the purpose of understanding, education and creating positive change.

**Student role**

As a member of the ACTION RESEARCH Team, your student will play a vital role in gathering information that will help to better address the mental health needs of youth in your school and community.

**Time commitment**

Students are required to participate in:

- A two-hour meeting each week (non-school hours)

- Necessary time required to gain approval to conduct research

- Necessary time required to collect, analyze and present data.

If you have questions, please contact _____.

Thank you for supporting your student in this valuable project.

Sincerely,

_____          _____
Parent/guardian signature                          Date

# Example 4: ACTION RESEARCH Project

## Photo/Video Release Form

This project may be featured in promotional events, news articles, yearbook photos, etc. for the excellent work teenagers are doing. By signing this form, I am consenting to be filmed, videotaped or recorded and authorize _____ (name of school district) to use these materials as follows:

- Still photographs
- Videotapes and/or films
- Audiotape (voice) recordings
- Use of my name
- Other (specify) _____

The above materials may be used in:

- Health department education programs
- Scientific and professional publications
- Public mass media such as newspapers television and radio
- Other (specify) _____

_____
Name of teen member

_____
Signature of parent/guardian

_____
Date

# Example 5: ACTION RESEARCH Project

## Parent/Guardian Transportation Authorization

**Permission is granted by the undersigned parent or guardian for** _____
(student name/please print) to travel to assigned location to participate in the **ACTION
RESEARCH** Project.

I understand that a _____ (school district) employee may transport my child to
and from designated meetings or events. _____ (School district) employees follow
the Oregon State Statute for background checks and fingerprinting.

_____
Parent name (printed)

_____
Signature of parent/guardian

_____
Date

# Acknowledgments
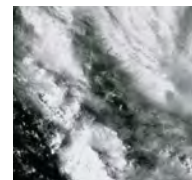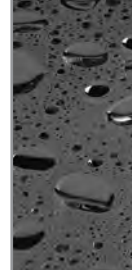
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