



Community Benefit Projects: A Youth Development Strategy to Increase Participation

Forms of Young Adult Participation

Choosing: Young people can choose which activities they wish to participate in and how they wish to participate.

Decision-Making: Young people can meet regularly to plan future programs or community activities.

Assessing: Young people can “map” their communities or engage in program evaluation activities.

Communicating: Young people can regularly present the program to outsiders: tours, talks to community audiences, presentations to funders.

Benefits to Youth/Young Adults

- ✓ Promotes a rich cultural diversity within the program
- ✓ Promotes choice and opportunity toward achievement of participants’ full potential
- ✓ Ensures that programs have relevance and flexibility to all young people
- ✓ Increases the likelihood that all forms of discrimination are challenged and unacceptable, and a sense of membership is promoted
- ✓ Encourages young people to stay in the program—program retention rates increase

Benefits to Youth Workers

- ✓ Youth participation keeps adults engaged, and thus makes their job more satisfying
- ✓ Youth workers are more likely to be successful when they utilize strategies of youth participation
- ✓ Youth are more likely to respect youth workers, which helps build trust between staff and participants

Presented by the Youth Development Institute, January 2014