

Understanding Contexts of Youth-Adult Partnership: Call notes (Dec. 9, 2011)

****Agenda items for next call in January**

- 1) Understanding partnership: What do we want to understand better? (carried over)
-Partnership dimensions (Stoney, Nish, Linda)
- 2) National Conference on Positive Youth Development, May 10-11, Halifax (Isabelle)
- 3) Other suggestions?

1) Introductions:

Present: Kim C. and Zhen (YMCA), Maria and Isabelle (Heartwood), Marla (City of Kitchener), Mark (WLU), Sue O'Neill (John Howard, NB), Stoney and Nish (Students Commission), Gord (UVic), Robin and Kim (Ministry of Child and Family Development), Moffat (Regional Multicultural Youth Council)

Regrets: Linda R-K (Brock), Susan R. (St. Thomas), Patti M. (St. Thomas More), Dave F. and Barb (YOUCAN), Brittany (Boys&Girls Club ON)

****Update:** We have met with approximately half of the groups about timeline, workplan, budget, hiring, etc. as needed and will be connecting with the rest of the groups shortly.

2) Youth-adult partnerships (YAPs): Results from the survey so far

See: www.studentscommission.ca/yap/results_01_e.php

Youth and adults working together towards a common goal. They have clear roles, share/balance power, open communication, and build professional and personal relationships. The relationship is characterized by reciprocity and mutuality: sharing learning, mutual and equally valued contributions, mutual benefits and mutual respect. In these relationships partners demonstrate trust and avoid assumptions about each other. Professionalism looks different in YAPs; it is characterized by honesty, vulnerability and willingness to be challenged.

Action: Nish will put up results from other questions on the website

Action: Share entry survey with other team members as they join the project (all teams)

3) Sharing learning, transparency and accountability: How can we share notes?

Knowledge exchange:

- Useful to have notes on the website about themes that are emerging
- Whole idea of knowledge transfer - we all benefit from each others' process, having a way to share between projects will be beneficial
- Use social media tools so partners can post (e.g. Yammer.com, Facebook group is useful and easy to engage youth)

Protection of privacy and sensitivity:

- Everyone needs to know before a call that they may be recorded and how it will be used
- Caution around having youth dialogue public - maybe initials, but not names
- Could have a private section until we agree it can be public, trying to balance privacy and transparency. However, when it's private, need a password, so it is less used.

Action: Develop a privacy and information sharing policy/document to guide how we make knowledge contributions (Nish and anyone else interested)

Action: Nish will connect with Isabelle (re: Facebook)

4) What is different about partnerships vs. other relationships? Sharing conversations and knowledge

- What changes in an employer-employee relationship or a student-supervisor relationship when you introduce a youth-adult partnership approach (both youth and adult perspectives)?
- What are the processes you are using that are similar or different from other typical employer-employee/student-supervisor situations (e.g. decision-making processes, hiring processes, etc)?
- What did your hiring process look like? Who was involved? Who did you hire and why? What are the things that you considered?
- How can we document this relationship?

Kitchener team: youth team has been meeting since mid-Oct. and are doing training and assessment of how the City of Kitchener is engaging youth. In order to take the focus off of me, youth are leading the meetings, but they look to me, direct questions to me as the employer. What's worked for others?

-May change naturally on its own

-Invited youth to facilitate the meetings

-We are collaborative, and have received a lot of feedback from young people about the training, we play games and share personal check-ins, get to direct action

-If it's meetings around decision-making - don't even be there at the meeting, then they let you know about the decision

-Consciously make sure that everything that comes out of my mouth is a question, the kinds of questions you ask can role model skills youth are wanting to learn (e.g. critical thinking) but you share as a question and makes it clear that adults are at the table because they want to learn too.

-Give space, but also youth are asking for learning and support, it's a balance

-Have conversations around and articulate the various roles and activities, and who might have a skill set that may be a good fit

-Asking what young people want adult roles to be in different situations/activities

-It's a default dynamic, but we've come up with terms of reference, I become a devil's advocate to challenge those default dynamics, process is always evolving

-Partnership conversation: 2-way street (John Heron?, Peter Reason), recognizing different contributions (what they feel they can contribute?), with conscious attention given to roles and contributions that youth were making, they began to defer to each other

-Ensure intentional conversation is on the agenda and gets reviewed from time to time

-With principles and values, revisiting core frameworks, space, it's the living and breathing of them, and frequency of them that works

Action: Share ideas across teams and ways for documenting relationships

5) YMCA Exchanges: Kim Charteris

-Exchange between 2 centres, quicker if they are already 'twinned'. Youth spend 1 week in one community and another week in the other community. Considered a cultural exchange. Could be a way for youth co-researchers to meet and work with other teams.

-Age range funded by Heritage: 12-17 years.

-Applications in by March 1st. The later you wait, the lower on the list so Jan/early Feb would be ideal.

-Internal fundraising (food, activities). Done as a hosting, hosted in a home, can do communal hostings.

Action: Kim will send out applications

6) National Conference on Positive Youth Development: St. Mary's University, Halifax, NS (May 10-11, 2012)

Isabelle (Heartwood): If there is funding within this project for a national gathering of all the partners, we invite you all to Halifax to join us to at the National Conference on Positive Youth Development happening in Halifax from May 10-11, 2011.

For more info on the conference:

<http://www.lionsquest.ca/section.asp?catid=139&subid=172&pageid=139>

We could do a pre-conference program all of us together just focusing on this project.

Action: Discuss on upcoming call in January