

**John W. Gardner Center
for Youth and Their Communities
at Stanford University**



Youth Engaged in
Leadership & Learning
(Y.E.L.L.)

**A Handbook for Supporting
Community Youth
Researchers**

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in Y.E.L.L.!

Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning (Y.E.L.L.) prepares and supports youth to become knowledgeable and active decision makers in their school and community. Based on the premise that youth have important insights into school and community improvement, this project guides youth through a training process to help them both collect and share relevant data, as well as become partners with adults at the decision making table.

The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities (JGC), began working closely with a collaborative group in a partner Bay Area community in the Fall of 2000 to adopt Y.E.L.L. as a way to gather data on the status of youth from a “youth’s eye” view for a school-based services planning process at a local middle school. The Y.E.L.L. Project in this city was molded to fit the needs of the schools-based services planning committee, while at the same time recognizing the potential for making it an ongoing renewable resource for the the school-based center and the community in future years.

The following sections provide additional background on this pilot project to provide some context to the work, an outline of key components necessary to implementing the project in your area, and a curriculum for working with the youth through sessions that can be molded to fit your specific needs or research questions.

As a result of our pilot year’s work, we found that not only does this process teach students valuable research tools and academic skills, but engages youth in “real-world” problems that matter to them. The project prepares youth to become active participants in developing solutions. Furthermore, this process also introduces adults and policy-makers to the value of developing partnerships with young people in decision making. This project was designed to benefit the community as a whole and youth in particular while at the same time contributing to research and knowledge in the field of youth development.

At the end of this manual, you will find additional resources and information on other youth development efforts that have taken place throughout the country. As you will see, they are varied in goals, scope, and scale. We are excited to share this guide with you as you plan your own youth development efforts. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact the Y.E.L.L. Project at the John W. Gardner Center at (650) 736-2015.

Sincerely,

The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Project Background

This handbook was developed as a result of a pilot Y.E.L.L. Project in a Bay Area community (pseudonym West City) in which a community assessment was performed from a “youth’s eye” view for the planning of a new school-based services center (Safe Spaces Center) at a local middle school (Liberty Middle School). In late November 2001, a group of 14 Liberty 8th grade students began participating in West City’s first Y.E.L.L. Team. As “community youth researchers” (or CYRs), these students joined the Safe Spaces Center Planning Committee (SSCPC) in planning the new family resource center at Liberty Middle School.

The youth received comprehensive training in areas such as community assessment design, data collection and analysis, and advocacy skills. From November to April, they gathered information about the needs, strengths, and activities of their peers by interviewing other youth and observing activities in their neighborhood. Youth were also involved in other data collection efforts using a variety of techniques they had brainstormed. The young people shared these findings with youth and adults and are now planning to work together to build on the school and community strengths they identified.

The youth in this project devoted two afternoons a week from late November to June for the Y.E.L.L. Project, with each session averaging approximately 75 minutes. With the support of the school and policy makers in West City, youth participating in the project were encouraged to identify and pursue questions and issues relevant to youth in the community. Also seeing this as a potentially rewarding employment opportunity for the youth, each participant received a small monthly stipend for their work. Because this was the first year of the project, we kept the scope small and only included youth who attended Liberty Middle School. However it is important to note that the student population at Liberty Middle School represents the various neighborhoods in West City.

Before recruiting the youth and kicking off the program, we had conversations with members of the school board, the city council, and other collaborative decision-making groups in the city. Members of these boards and councils agreed to support this youth development effort and set time aside for youth to share what they learned. More important, the policy makers agreed to work with the youth to determine how to proceed with the lessons learned.

How to Use This Curriculum

It is worth mentioning that this curriculum was not developed when this pilot project began. The session plans included in this handbook were developed as a result of the youth-centered approach with which we carried out this work. Although we developed an outline of the various stages in the process, this curriculum reflects the course that this work took as a result of the ideas and direction that the youth participants decide to take in this project.

In our pilot year, we did not accomplish everything that we had hoped and learned several lessons along the way. This guide is intended to be an example and an outline of a process that took place in one city that can be used as a resource to identify needs or answer a research question of your particular city. A list of lessons learned is included in Section V of this handbook. Some points to keep in mind:

- This curriculum was designed to fit the particular needs of this city and the timeline of the group
- This curriculum is meant to be adjusted according to the particular questions posed by the youth, and the ideas that they develop and articulate during discussions
- The key to using this curriculum is to make sure that adults working with the youth are listening to what youth are saying and not worrying as much about staying with a particular plan
- The activities intend to facilitate the process of eliciting youth voice and creating a group dynamic that makes it comfortable and fun for youth to engage in the process

II. GETTING STARTED

Key Components of Y.E.L.L.

Based on the lessons we have learned, we identified 10 key steps that are critical to a successful Y.E.L.L. Project. These are:

1. Commitment From Community Partners
2. Developing a Team
3. Introducing Y.E.L.L. and Developing Goals
4. Training in Research Methods
5. Data Collection and Analysis
6. Preparing to Share the Data
7. Sharing the Data
8. Youth-Adult Partnerships in Decision Making
9. Project Support
10. Evaluation of Program Outcomes



Commitment From Community Partners

Essential to the development of the Y.E.L.L. Project is gaining commitment from community partners in supporting the effort. A group of potential stakeholders can be convened to provide an overview of what such youth development effort can look like and then gauge commitment from the community to move forward. Community partners in other youth development efforts have included schools, local non-profit organizations, businesses, and government agencies. Community partners then form a committee to play both a coordinating and advisory role to the project.

In its coordinating capacity, this committee is largely responsible for getting the project off the ground, including identifying the necessary resources to implement and sustain the project. Financial commitment of resources should include expenses such as salary for a coordinator, materials and supplies for the youth, and stipends for the community youth researchers.

The group's advisory role also involves making initial decisions regarding what the project will look like, its duration, and identifying other stakeholders who should be invited to participate in the various aspects of the project. Youth should be invited to participate in this process from the beginning. You may begin with youth who may already have experience working with adults in a professional setting or have had contact with the partner organizations, for example, and then bring more youth on board who will become part of the Y.E.L.L. Project team. The group will then develop the design of the team including:

- Identifying the scope of the youth research work
- Identifying the capacity and size of the youth team
- Developing a work plan and time line for carrying out the research, sharing data, and involving youth in decision making



Developing a Team

Once the major decisions of the project have been finalized, the formation of the Y.E.L.L. Team relies on three components: Logistics, Youth Recruitment, and Selection.

Logistics: A convening space for the youth should be identified. Publicity flyers as well as application forms and parent permission forms for youth to participate should be developed. An adult coordinator also needs to be identified to implement the project and work with the advisory committee to identify additional resources.

Youth Recruitment: The advisory committee for your particular group is a potential source for identifying sources of youth recruitment. For example, youth can be recruited from existing youth centers, recreational centers, schools, local “hang-out” places, etc. Presentations should be organized, with youth who may have some insight into the project if possible, to talk about the project and highlight the potential benefits not only to the community through the youth’s work, but to the youth themselves. Our pilot project for example, provided a letter of recommendation as well as a monthly stipend and other incentives along the way. Non-material benefits such as gaining job and research skills or the use of technology, for example, can also be highlighted as benefits to youth.

Selection: The process for selecting community youth researchers is another decision that the advisory committee can determine. A list of criteria for selection should be developed. With our pilot project, we developed a deliberate set of criteria that provided opportunities for a diverse group of youth from different interests, backgrounds, and academic history to participate. For example, all 8th grade youth at the school listened to a presentation and were provided an equal opportunity to apply. Once applications were received, community youth researchers were selected based on the following criteria:

- Passing grades in all classes
- No disciplinary concerns
- Diversity of neighborhoods, interests, ethnic backgrounds and gender balance
- Accurate completion of application
- Schedule availability in attending the sessions
- Impressions from group or individual interviews

Introducing Y.E.L.L. and Developing Goals

An introduction to the concepts embodied in “Youth Engagement in Leadership & Learning” is not only the first step in the advisory group’s process, but also the community youth researchers’ process. *Unit 1: Why We’re Here: Youth and Adults* provides a forum for the youth to become familiar with both the concepts and principles of Y.E.L.L. as well as the process in which they will be involved for the next several weeks or months. It is at this point that if the advisory committee has already determined the scope of the work or the research question(s), these ideas should be introduced to the youth. However, in order for the youth to feel a sense of ownership in the process, the youth should be invited to question the scope and suggest additional goals or outcomes of their work, as well as identifying other groups who they think should receive the data. This unit will guide the group in obtaining background information about the purpose of the project while working with their peers to develop their own goals for the project as well.

Training in Research Methods

Though surveys are the most commonly used tools to conduct community assessments with youth, this curriculum opens the door for youth to identify their own research tools. *In Unit 2: Selecting Our Research Methods*, the youth become familiar with various social science research methods and are encouraged to develop their own. In addition, they are engaged in thinking critically about the potential benefits and drawbacks to using these tools. Particular attention here is paid to both training the youth in these methods, but also providing constant support and feedback in helping them feel equipped and confident in using these tools. Based on the youth’s interests, as well as the project’s resource capacity, the youth then begin using these tools to answer their research questions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Once the youth have identified the research methods they want to use, the next task is to actually begin to collect the data. *Unit 3: Collecting and Analyzing the Data* takes you through 3 methods that members of our pilot group used: surveys, interviews, and videotapping as examples of the data collection process. Special attention in this area is paid to providing feedback and support to youth as they encounter challenges and questions in their data collection work. Once the data is collected, the youth and adults then work together to analyze the data.

Preparing to Share the Data

At this point, the youth will begin to make decisions about which data is relevant to whom, what findings are the most important to report, and what recommendations should be developed based on the findings. As will be shown in *Unit 4: Preparing to Share What We Learned*, youth begin to develop various presentation skills (which can also be developed throughout the sessions). Attention and time is dedicated to practicing for their presentations and youth feeling comfortable and confident in their ability to share what they have learned during the past several weeks or months with others

Sharing the Data

By this time, the youth and adults have identified the audiences to which they want to share the data and have tailored their presentations to their particular audiences. The youth determine how they want to share the data, whether it be oral presentations, announcements, flyers, or even reports based on their work. After sharing the data, special attention is given for the youth to share and debrief about their experiences in sharing the data with others before moving forward. This is done at the end of each presentation as described in *Unit 5: Sharing our Findings and Recommendations*.

Youth-Adult Partnerships in Decision Making

After the youth make their presentations and share their findings, clear steps should have been developed between the youth and the adult decision makers to define the next steps that the youth and adults will take as a result of the data being shared. Throughout the process, the advisory committee and the youth should discuss the role that youth will play in the decision making process and identify avenues for youth to stay involved after the actual data collecting phase ends. For example, youth can serve, initially or at an identified stage in the process, as youth representatives for the advisory committee. Other youth could potentially serve on the boards of the existing community partners' organizations, or the youth may be supported in starting an organization or committee of their own. The possibilities are endless!

It is also important to note that from the very beginning, while the youth are learning skills to support them in working with adults, adults should be preparing to work with youth. Therefore, every meeting planned where youth are encouraged to attend should be organized appropriately. Adults should receive training about how to work with youth so that youth's and adults' experiences are both positive and effective. Resources for this work are included at the end of this handbook.

Project Support

As mentioned before, project support is vital to the continuity of the project. Not only is financial support needed, but human and in-kind as well. Volunteers or part-time staff should be enlisted to support the youth as they work in smaller groups. Support is needed for materials such as tape recorders, tapes, school supplies, snacks, and youth stipends. If transportation is a major issue, costs for covering this aspect need to be arranged from the beginning. While human support is essential, the quality of this support should also be taken into consideration. Adults or teens working with the youth should have appropriate training and experience in working with youth. Furthermore, they should make a commitment to participate in the project for its duration. A sense of consistency in the group will allow youth to feel important and that they are being taken seriously enough to work with them to see the project through.

Evaluation of Program Outcomes

Developing a set of youth development outcomes in addition to other outcomes is important for two key purposes. Of most importance, developing a set of youth development outcomes for the participants can serve as a useful guide to staff in continuing to focus the purpose of the project on the youth. We want the youth to have the most rewarding experience possible personally, while also working to benefit the community. Developing a set of key youth development outcomes and indicators of success can be important in aligning the project's activities with what will be most beneficial to the youth. This process can also serve as its own evaluation tool in order to improve the work from year and share key lessons learned with others.

A second purpose, which is a challenge in many community youth development efforts, is that of sustainability of the project. Close documentation and evaluation of the project can provide concrete data and support to seek continued funding for this or other youth development work. By showing that there are multiple beneficiaries of this project (individual community youth researchers, youth in the community, and the community overall, for example) as well as the quality of the information gathered may help the project gain credibility and support from funders in the future.

Obviously, there are far more components involved in such project that have not been outlined here due to the specific nature of your work. Others may be needed based on your own work. The purpose of outlining these components is to share what we have found to be some of the more common and critical ones that with adequate planning, can play an important and positive role in the success of such project.

UNIT

1

Why We're Here: Youth and Adults Together

This unit introduces the community youth researchers to the philosophy of Y.E.L.L. and outlines the goals for the project. Youth will:

- *Become familiar with the goals of Y.E.L.L.*
- *Get to know other members of the team*
- *Make team decisions about how the group will work together*
- *Review background data about their city and how decisions are made*
- *Become members of a local governance committee as they prepare to conduct their community research*

Session 1

Who Are We and What Do We Want to Ask Youth?

Goal: To introduce the youth to one another and to group leaders. To create the foundations for a group that will work well together and trust one another. To introduce the group to the purpose of Y.E.L.L.

Materials: Snacks, pens, paper, flip chart, markers, butcher paper, push pins, string, large map of the city, folder for each student with notebook paper, session schedule, “Expectations for Y.E.L.L.” worksheet (attached).

Welcome and Review of Y.E.L.L. (10 minutes)

Welcome the youth. Youth will go around the room and introduce each other, sharing an adjective that starts with the first letter of their name (for example, Enthusiastic Eddie, or Funny Felicia). Take time to “warm up” the group. See if people can remember other people’s names or the adjectives. It’s important to keep in mind that the youth might not all be familiar with one another, and we will need to work to build a sense that they are part of one group who will be working together for a long time.

Explain that the goal of today is to help define the project. We hope to leave here today with some ideas about what kinds of questions the youth want to ask about or learn. Present to the group a perspective on the scope of the project and help them envision the purpose of their participation and commitment.

Explain that they are there because they have expressed interest in improving opportunities for youth at Liberty Middle School and West City. We also have talked to some of the decision makers in their city, members of the City Council and other folks who make policies, and they have agreed to listen to what they say and what they have learned through this project. They will be setting up times in the spring when youth will have an opportunity to present the lessons they learned and share ideas with the adults about what should be done with the data.

We also have a shorter-term goal. There are folks who are trying to get some money to put more resources into the school. We have the opportunity to let them know what kinds of things might be most helpful for them and their peers. What are the things that are missing that they’d want to see? How could the organizations and places in the community help out?

We have an audience for what they will be finding out and teaching us. They should think of themselves as teaching the adults in their city about what youth need and want. So starting today, we are going to go through different steps in the process of gathering the information necessary to be good teachers.

The first step is developing our topic or subject area as the focus. We are going to provide some boundaries, but pretty much they will take the lead on making the decisions as a group. Answer questions they have at this point.

Warm-Up Activity, Where Are We Now? (15 minutes)

What is the bigger question that as Community Youth Researchers (CYR’s) we are working to answer? One question for example, could be something like “How do we make the community better for youth?” The group leaders should develop a visual roadmap on butcher paper or poster board that outlines each of the steps in the process that the CYR’s will be involved in. For example, the first stop on the roadmap would be getting to know the group. The second stop could be developing a question to pursue, the third stop deciding on methods, then training on those methods, then collecting data, analyzing data, summarizing data and presenting data with the final stops including references to future work with adults in the city.

Ask the youth to take turns reading the stops on the roadmap aloud. This will help clarify the project to them.

Mapping Your Home (10 minutes)

Using a large map of West City, put a big pin where their school is located or the place where the sessions are being convened. Ask the youth to come up one at a time and put a pin where they live and connect a piece of colored string from their home to the meeting place. In the end, we can see the pattern from the string, which should be an interesting way to have a discussion about the pattern they see.

If time does not permit, this activity can be bumped and used as a warm-up on another day. The purpose of this activity is to illustrate where the youth live in relation to Liberty Middle School. It can help them visualize the diversity of experiences and perspectives that they are bringing to this project. (It is also helpful to somehow label the pins with the youth's names so they can know which pin is theirs in relation to the others in the group).

Create A Map Activity (25 minutes)

Create small groups of 3 and ask the youth to draw a picture of their community (preferably, the youth should be divided according to their neighborhoods so they can share some perspectives on their most proximal experiences within the community). After each group has drawn a map of the community, they can share it with the larger group and talk about how they have different perspectives. They should note what kinds of things they included and also what kinds of things were omitted. Why?

While the youth are talking about their maps and where they live, the adults in the room should be taking note of what is present and absent in their drawings and perhaps pose questions about similarities and differences between their maps, prompting the youth to think about their needs.

Brainstorm About Needs, Concerns, and Changes (10 minutes)

This activity is actually the main goal of this session, so keep a careful watch on time to make sure it doesn't get lost. The map activity should be a natural lead into the conversation about what is missing from the community, what their concerns are, and what they want to find out from their peers about their experiences and opportunities for them in the community. The idea here is to facilitate a brainstorming session with the youth about what kinds of information they want to gather. What are the questions they want to ask their peers? What kinds of topics are of interest/concern to them? What kinds of questions do they think will help them make improvements in their community?

Come prepared with some questions formulated to serve as a guide to help the youth with the process of thinking just in case they are stumped.

- How do youth your age spend their time after school?
- Where do students from your middle school go if they need help?
- What kinds of things do you wish you had in your neighborhood?

Use a flip chart to jot down all the brainstorm information. We will use this information to help design the activities for the next session.

Closing (5 minutes)

At the end of this first session, we will hopefully come to an agreement about the general research question of the project. So we will conclude with agreements from each CYR to be an active participant and to be committed to all stages of the process. This is our opportunity to give them a long-term perspective on the project that can now seem a little more grounded with a specific topic to pursue. You

can also use this as an opportunity to explain how payment will work, and perhaps talk about expectations for the group. You may be limited in time, so you may have to start the next session off with a discussion of expectations for the group. Go around and ask the group to say one word about how their day was today.

Also, you may want to take some time during this first session to explain the “rituals” of the sessions. For example, each session will start with some kind of warm up activity and end with some kind of closing or check out. We don’t want to just rush out at the end, instead we want to check back in and see how we are doing before we leave. Also, explain that each session will have a plan or an agenda that we will review at the beginning of the session so that they youth can always know what to expect, but they can always give us feedback if they have suggestions for alternative ways to work on our goals.

Take-Home Task

The purpose of this task is to encourage youth to reflect on their experiences today at this session and think more about the ideas that they brainstormed.

1. Think about the questions we brainstormed as a group and try to come up with a few more questions that are interesting to you.
2. Come up with at least 3 rules that members of the Y.E.L.L. team should follow. These rules can have something to do with responsibilities to the group and to the project.
3. Complete the form in your folder that asks what you expect from the project. Questions?

Worksheet

Expectations for Y.E.L.L.

(Youth Engaged in Leadership & Learning)

Please return by the next session.



1. What do you think it will be like to be part of the Y.E.L.L. project this year?
2. What kinds of things do you expect will happen?
3. What kinds of things do you hope to learn?
4. Is there anything you are worried about?
5. What part of the program are you most excited about?

Session 2

How Will We Work Together?

Goal: To review rules and norms of the group. For members of the group to learn more about each other. To find out what the youth’s expectations are of the project. To develop a focus for the research question they will pursue.

Materials: snacks, markers, flip chart, butcher paper, “Group Agreements” (sample as a reference attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Name Game) (5 minutes)

Ask all the youth to go around and say their names out loud. Then, tell them that they are no longer allowed to talk. Ask them to line up in alphabetical order according to their names. After they are in the line, ask them again to say their names. Repeat the activity if necessary.

Review Rules and Norms (15 minutes)

Take some time to explain to the youth that they will be sharing the different rules that they came up with in order to develop a “group agreement.” This means that as a group, they are going to decide what the rules of behavior are when they are in the session. Collect the rules and norms that the youth wrote for their take-home task. Read them aloud and ask for a volunteer to list them on the board. Emphasize that they don’t need to spell everything right or get everything down, just the basic facts. This way no one has to feel self-conscious about the rule they developed. Take some time to discuss what these rules mean; see if there are other rules that they develop. Make sure different points of importance have been covered such as:

- Treating each other with respect
- Respecting differences of opinion
- Policies for absences
- Consequences for breaking rules
- Making mistakes is okay

Suggest that they create a contract for them to sign at the next session based on these rules.

Review Group Expectations Sheet (10 minutes)

Ask the youth to take out their expectation sheets (their assignment from the previous session). Distribute envelopes for each youth and ask them to place the worksheet with their name in the envelope. Let them know that we are doing this so they can think about what they want to get out of the project. We will be looking at them too so we can do our best to meet their expectations and talk about what we expect from each other. Explain that we will type these up and share with them as a basis to check in on how things are going periodically. *By putting their worksheet in an envelope with their name on it, it can be possible to share their thoughts with the youth later in the year—as if they are getting mail from themselves reminding them of their expectations at the beginning of the project.*

Review Brainstorm (20 minutes)

Collect their sample research questions and write them on the board (alongside the questions from the previous session). Take time to review the kinds of questions they develop and discuss how to come up with a focus. Should they try to take on a few of these questions? Which ones seem to be the most important ones? Come in with ideas for possible ways to focus. Based on their brainstorm from the previous session, there may be a few possible themes they could pursue. See how the discussion goes.

By the end of this discussion, they should have at least one broad research question with some subsets of questions that they may use later on to address specific areas through the methods they will choose or as possible interview questions.

Next Steps (10 minutes)

Explain to them (remind them) that they have a few invitations in the spring for presentations in the community. Announce that at the next session we will talk more in depth about who makes different kinds of decisions in West City so that they can better develop ideas about who should hear their information. They will also learn about the information that the city already has so they can see what else they would like to explore.

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Review with the youth that they have one task in preparation for the discussion at the next session. They should come up with a list of who they want to make sure hears what they learn and why. You want them to think about a real audience and an authentic goal for their efforts. This will be a lead into the discussion about decision making at the next session.

Closing (10 minutes)

Before leaving, ask the youth if they have any questions since a lot was covered that day. Also, remind them that they will be asked to sign their group contract at the next session. Go around the room and ask them to say less than 3 words to describe what they're looking forward to about the project.

Sample

Liberty Y.E.L.L. Team Group Agreements

December 7, 2001

I, _____ agree to the following group agreements for the duration of the Liberty Y.E.L.L. Project from December 2001 to June 2002.

1. Attend every session, unless I have an emergency or am ill. If I cannot attend, I will call Maria at XXX-XXXX or email her at xyz@xyz.edu before each session. I also hold myself responsible for making up any missed work before the next session by calling Maria or another community youth researcher. If I am receiving community service credit, I understand that 2 hours will be deducted for missed assignments and 1 ½ hours for each session missed, and I still must make up the missing assignments by the following session.

Consequences for paid CYRs for not calling or submitting work on time are:

1st time- warning

2nd time – lose \$5

3rd time – lose \$10

2. Be responsible in my work and my behavior
3. Be involved in all Y.E.L.L. activities and give my full participation
4. Pay attention to each other and listen when someone else is talking
5. Respect everyone's ideas even if I disagree (no putdowns or debates)
6. Refrain from using foul language unless I'm illustrating a point
7. Get along with others by working well and communicating with others
8. Everything that is said in this room is kept in this room
9. Be a hard worker and try my best
10. Have fun!

Signature, Community Youth Researcher

Signature, Director, Y.E.L.L. Project

Session 3

What Do We Already Know About West City?

Goal: To introduce the youth to data that is already available about West City. To have a conversation about who makes decisions in West City and what data will have the greatest impact.

Materials: snacks, butcher paper, maps, reports, and current data of West City, paper, pencils, “Decision Making in West City” handout, “What is the SPCC?” worksheet (attached).

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Checking Out What’s Out There) (15 minutes)

Put census maps, reports, or any other local data or brochures of youth-serving agencies around the room. Give the youth a blank sheet of paper and ask them to draw a vertical line down the middle of the page creating 2 columns. Explain that they should look around at all of the information that is in the room. In one column on their page they should list the kind of information they see. In the other column, write down their impressions about that data they saw (Did they know about that? Is it surprising?). Have the group look around the room for approximately 5 minutes, and then discuss their observations for the next 10 minutes.

How Decisions Are Made in West City and By Whom? (15 minutes)

After this activity, distribute the decision making chart of West City describing the major institutions and organizations that make decisions for and about youth in West City. Explain how the chart shows some (maybe not all the people) involved who make decisions about youth in West City. Who is shown? Who isn’t? Give an example of having to make a decision. How does one make one? Well, you need information. In the case of all these decision makers in their city, they need information on which to base their decisions. Some of the data they just looked at around the room is the kind of information that adults use to make decisions about youth. So in addition to what adult decision makers already have, the CYRs can play an important role in either getting more details on some of this information, disproving or validating it, or seeing where there isn’t any in a particular area.

What Kind of Information Do We Want to Share and With Whom? (30 minutes)

Review the various institutions, answering questions along the way. Ask the youth what they think those organizations do or what kinds of decisions they make, clarifying or correcting points along the way. At this point, the research question, as well as other sub questions that were developed should be brought back. The conversation can move along these questions:

- What kind of information do we need to gather to get them to listen to us?
- What format should that information come in?
- Who do we want to report to in the end?

Next Steps (10 minutes)

Summarize that along the way, they may change their minds about who their audience should be and this is okay as they began doing the actual work. Talk specifically about the adult decision making work they will be working most closely with: the Safe Spaces Center Planning Committee (SSCPC) and how this is a group that already would like their involvement in deciding what the new center should include.

Take-Home Task

Their task for today is to do some more research about the SSCPC. This will provide more information about the group to which their data will be going to most directly. Distribute worksheet. Preview that they will be deciding what tools they want to use to find out the answers to their questions at the next session. Ask youth to read and sign group agreements and keep a copy for themselves.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask them to go around and say one thing they're looking forward to when they get home today.

Worksheet



What is the Safe Spaces Center Planning Committee?

Pair up with another CYR and find out what the SSCPC is.

You can talk to people at school, ask your parents, look at flyers and newsletters sent home from school, or even search the internet at this address: _____

Then answer the following questions:

What is the SSCPC?

Who is involved?

What does it try to do?

For whom?

Where did you look and where did you find this information?

UNIT

2

Selecting Our Research Methods

This unit introduces the community youth researchers to various research methods they can apply to answer their research question. This unit prepares youth to:

- *Learn about various social science research methods*
- *Engage in critical thinking about the pros and cons of using these methods*
- *Gain training and confidence in using these various research tools*
- *Apply these newly developed skills to answer their research question*

Session 4

How Will We Find Out What Youth Think?

Goal: To continue developing trust within the group. To explore possible methodologies. Choose methods.

Materials: snacks, markers, butcher paper, paper, pens, Polaroid Camera, tape recorders with batteries, blank tapes, youth sample survey (attached), sample interview questions (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Silent Birthday) (10 minutes)

Ask the youth to stand up. Ask them to arrange themselves in a line from oldest to youngest, but they are not allowed to talk. They can make signals, nod, etc., but nothing else. Once they feel they are in order from youngest to oldest (including month, day, and year), ask them to go down the line and say their birthday. (Jot these down and use them to recognize birthdays as they come along).

Brainstorm Methods (10 minutes)

Revisit the question that the youth developed: “How do we make our community better for youth?” As a group, talk about the different tools they could use to address their question. Write all their ideas up on butcher paper. How would they find out what other people in their school or neighborhood think? Encourage them to be creative, to think about how students would react to different approaches, and what kinds of things they could do with the information they gather.

Explain that we are going to introduce them to some methods of collecting information (some of which they may have come up with already). At the end of the session, we will agree on the methods we want to use. Depending on how the whole group discussion has been going, it may be a good idea to break into pairs and ask them to brainstorm together and write down some of their ideas. This may be a way to avoid having some of the students drown out the others. This could help us make sure that more of their opinions are represented.

Point out to the youth that you could not read their minds and know which ideas they were going to come up with, so the plan for today is based on some of the things they said in their interviews with group leaders before the project started. Some of the ideas that they brainstormed are not among those in the activity planned for the session, but that’s okay. Make sure to include their ideas in the final discussion today when they take time to evaluate the pros and cons of different methods. Make sure to acknowledge the significance of their contributions and to explain that you will come back to those ideas at the end of today’s session.

Methods Round-Robin (30 minutes)

The goal here is to expose the youth to the different methods they can use and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each method in relation to their specific questions.

Split up into groups of less than 5 youth. Create a round robin activity where the youth go from station to station. At each station, they engage in one of the methods. For example, at Station 1 they are given a survey to take; at Station 2 they are given a Polaroid camera and asked to take pictures and create captions and a narrative; at Station 3 they are interviewed; at Station 4 they are members of a round table discussion; at Station 5 they are asked to write a journal entry. (Stations 4 and 5 might be reserved for older youth.) The stations will give the youth the experience of being on the “receiving end” of the method. The goal is for them to consider the kind of information and the value of the information that a particular method can offer. This session is not meant to train them in that method.

Discussion (15 minutes)

After the groups have visited each station, have a conversation about the different methods. Ask the youth for general feedback: What did they like best? What did they like least? What kind of information did they get from the different methods? What is the value of the different kinds of methods? What did it feel like to actually be interviewed? What kinds of methods might be best for their particular question? You can put up a chart similar to the one below, to begin that conversation. At the end of today’s session, the group should agree on 2 or 3 methods to use to gather information. (If you have a sense from interviews with the youth that they are interested in interviewing and video documentation, plan those as the first methods on which to focus, and then expand into other methods).

| Method | What type of information is this good for? | Example? | Pros? | Cons? |
|---------------|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Interview | | | | |
| Survey | | | | |
| Photo Essay | | | | |
| Journal | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

Closing (10 minutes)

Go around the room and get a “pulse” of what methods interest the youth. Explain that they will first all learn one method together, but then we will split up into groups, depending on their interests, and they will work on the method of their choice. For their take-home task, ask them to think about what method they would be interested in pursuing, and to bring back some more pros and cons about the methods that were discussed during this session.

(Attached are sample questions that can be used for the round-robin—a sample survey and a sample interview protocol. These samples should be adjusted, adapted, edited, etc. We just provided various questions that could be used. We tried not to include the exact kinds of questions that youth would want to use, but rather a model of the kinds of information that could be gathered. This is why the topics in these samples focus more on school experiences rather than a community perspective that the Y.E.L.L. project is taking on. We did not want the youth to feel that there is already a protocol set for them to use. They will be actively engaged in the process of creating, designing and developing the protocol. This activity is meant to expose them to the limitations and advantages of different data collection techniques using parallel subject areas).

Sample

Y.E.L.L.
Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning

School Experiences Survey
Fall 2001



Name:

Age:

Female

Male

(Check One)

Y.E.L.L. Sessions – Unit 2

For each statement circle a number that describes how true it is for you, using the scale below.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not True of me | | Somewhat True of me | | Very True of me |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel like I belong in this school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am happier when I am at school than when I am not at school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I feel bored at school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I do not feel like I am important at this school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Most of the time, being in school puts me in a good mood. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| When I am in a bad mood, I find it hard to concentrate on my schoolwork. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I feel like I matter in this school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I feel like teachers in this school respect my opinion. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please continue using this scale:

| | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not | | Somewhat | | Very |
| True of me | | True of me | | True of me |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| School often makes me feel bad. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel like teachers in this school really care about students as individuals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| I like school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel good in school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|-----------|---|------------------|
| | Almost Never | | Sometimes | | Almost Always |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| When you have a personal problem in school, how often can you depend on your teachers to help you out? | | | | | |

These questions are about how interesting and challenging the activities were that you did last week – after school and on the weekend. (If you did not do one activity, you may skip the questions about how interesting that activity was.).

| | | How interesting was this activity? | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | | Very interesting | Sort of interesting | Not very interesting | Not at all interesting |
| a | Homework or studying | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| b | Community Service or Volunteer work | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| c | Organized sports (class or team after school or weekends) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| d | Art, music, dance, or drama class or lesson | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| e | Parties, dances or trips planned by community programs or centers | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| f | Religious activities (like going to church) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| g | Watching television (including videos) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| h | Reading other than schoolwork | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| i | Hanging out with friends (talking, playing games, going to the mall) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| J | After-school tutoring | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe their backgrounds or ethnic groups. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two or more groups. The next set of questions is about your and your parents’ ethnicity or ethnic group.

My ethnicity is (PLEASE WRITE IN A NUMBER FROM LIST BELOW):

1 = American Indian

2 = Asian or Asian-American

3 = Black or African-American not Hispanic

4 = Hispanic or Latino or Mexican-American

5 = Pacific Islander

6 = White, Caucasian, European,
Anglo-American not Hispanic

7 = Mixed; parents from two or
more different groups

8 = Other (write in):

My father’s ethnicity is (USE NUMBERS ABOVE):

My mother’s ethnicity is (USE NUMBERS ABOVE):

Thank you for your help☺

Sample

Interview Questions

Question 1. Tell me what it's like in your school.

Follow up questions:

- How would you describe your school to a new student?
- What are your classes like? What kinds of things do you do in them?
- What are your teachers like? What's your relationship like with them? Do you talk to them about stuff?
- How do you feel about how you did in school this past year?
- Do you have a favorite class? Why is it your favorite?
- Is there a class you really don't like? Why?
- Is school important to you? What about it is important?
- How would you describe yourself when you're at school?
- Do you like being at school?
- How do kids treat each other at school? In classes vs. out of class?

Question 2. Tell me what your neighborhood is like.

Follow up questions:

- What is it like to grow up in your neighborhood?
- Where is it in relation to the your school?
- Do people look out for each other?
- Is there stuff for kids your age to do?
- Are there places you like to go to hang out? What about places you know you should avoid?
- Are there adults who you hang out with or spend time with?
- Do you have a special role or reputation in your neighborhood?

Miscellaneous

Is there anything that I didn't ask you about that you'd like to add about any of these topics?

Session 5

What Method Should We Use First?

Goal: Continue exploring methods. Finalize initial method.

Materials: snacks, butcher paper, markers, clipboard, tape recorders and batteries, cassette tapes, pens, brainstormed questions on what to ask youth from a previous session, “Brainstorming Methods (sample attached as a reference), “Journal Entry” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Big Wind Blows) (10 minutes)

Set up chairs in a circle, one less chair than the number of players. Have one person stand in the middle of the circle. This person will announce, “The big wind blows for anyone who has....” They can fill in the blank with any kind of experience, trait, relation, etc. For instance, “The big wind blows for anyone who has traveled to Los Angeles.” Then all of the group members who have traveled to Los Angeles must get up and switch places without selecting the chairs on either side of them. The person without a chair goes to the center of the circle. Once the group has done this a few times, review the scheduled plan for the session.

Finish Brainstorming Methods and Reviewing Pros and Cons (40 minutes)

Ask youth if they came up with more pros and cons for the different methods. Review the methods that we began discussing last session and again emphasize that we are looking to identify tools that would best help them answer the bigger question, “How do we make our community better for youth?” This activity will help the youth decide later which 3 methods to select for their own research.

If the youth did not have time to complete their rotation of exploring methods in the last session, then this is also an opportunity to finish that piece and discuss the pros and cons of each method. Have the entire group discuss their experiences with the different methods, their opinions of their effectiveness, and other options for gathering data.

Next Steps (15 minutes)

Ask the group if they agree to begin with interviews since that is what most of them expressed before during the recruitment process. Inform the group that they will use three methods this year for collection because of time constraints and other reasons that may apply (such as the number of staff we could devote to each method). Therefore, they must come to a decision about which method to select. After they begin training in the first method, they will create a tally sheet for the various methods and select the top three after some discussion.

Take-Home Task

Before starting to ask what other youth think about their community, explain that we should also take time to find out what the youth in the project think is needed in the community. This can help them develop some ideas as they revise their interview questions, but it can also help them distinguish between their own ideas and what they will be hearing from other youth. Both views are important, but they need to make sure that their own thoughts are not causing them to ask leading questions. Also, they should begin to revise the questions on the sheet with questions they previously brainstormed so they can use them to practice interviewing at the next session.

Closing (10)

Close the session with a particular question that will let the youth find out more about each other. For example, they can go around the circle and answer, “What is one thing that you truly like doing?” Or “If something happened that would make your day today, what would that be?”

Sample

Brainstorming on Our Methods



| Method | Type of information this is good for | ☺ Pros | ☹ Cons |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Surveys | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What they like and dislike What they need or don't need What youth already know The basic idea of how people feel about things Information that will help teachers understand what we want Information about what the person needs especially for them, no one else | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to understand Easy to refer back to answers Can see what they like and don't like Can feel free to write anything Can write more about what you think and don't have to "say it" Can find out what more youth think Having cartoons makes it fun | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers might change depending on the person's mood that day Question might be understood differently than the way you planned People may not complete it or do it at all Some might think it's too long If you include a number scale, people can't write down specific things If you have multiple choice answers, you can't give your answer Some questions might not be specific enough CYR needs to carry more supplies It might take too much time to do |
| Interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding out their reactions to things Find out their points of view Find out youth's interests Finding out how and what they think about the community Finding out how things can be changed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get to hear their emotions through their voice (tone) You know exactly what they said There is more room to ask specific questions and get specific answers There is room to explain if someone doesn't understand the question CYRs learn how to interview people CYRs get to listen instead of writing it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They may be influenced by their friends in their answers They might say what they think they should answer Might act silly because it's being recorded They might be too shy to answer Can't record person's expression (face) They might not want others to know they answered questions that way (confidentiality) The recorder might not work the way you want it to (can't hear voice, record over, too much noise, erased tape, broken recorder) |
| Photo Essays | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding out stuff "behind the scene" Examples or "proof" you can see about the condition of the community Showing what youth don't want and why Pointing out things others may not see Show what happens in real life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You get to use a camera A picture's worth 1,000 words You can capture the moment Camera is portable Shows people what's going on Helps people picture things and get them on your side to help the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can only take a picture of one spot in time Quality of camera or photo might not be good Would need to ask for permission and some people might say "no" Issue of privacy |

| Method | Type of information this is good for | ☺ Pros | ☹ Cons |
|---------------|---|---|--|
| Videotaping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finding out their reactions to things ▪ Finding out how things can be changed ▪ Finding out how and what they think about the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can see people’s reactions ▪ Can see what the person looks like and their points of view | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People may be shy ▪ People might act silly ▪ Having enough video cameras ▪ CYRs haven’t practiced it so there might be other cons we don’t know about (same for round table and observations) |
| Round Table | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finding out similarities and differences between people living in the same neighborhood ▪ Find out what things people agree and disagree on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can interview groups in the same neighborhood or grade more easily ▪ Can see where people disagree and give them a chance to talk about it with each other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finding a time when everyone can do it ▪ Might be hard to find a group where people are different (from different neighborhoods) and bring them all together ▪ People might feel uncomfortable talking to a group of people you don’t know ▪ Some might think it’s boring |
| Observations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Find out how people really behave in their neighborhood and school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can see how people really are naturally ▪ Can see action, things people do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People might think you’re “spying” or “intruding” –would need to ask for permission |

Worksheet

Journal Entry

Return by the next session. ☺

Please answer the following questions:

What do you think youth in the community need? How do you know this? Why do you think it's a need?

You may answer this question on this sheet or type it on another sheet of paper if you like. Please write at least two paragraphs.

Session 6

How Do We Interview People?

Goal: Begin training in interview methods. Determine what makes a good interview.

Materials: snacks, butcher paper, flip chart, markers, pens, paper, tape recorders with batteries, cassette tapes, post-it notes, script for “bad interview demonstration”, clipboards, list of previously brainstormed interview questions

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Community Needs Round Robin) (10 minutes)

Welcome youth and ask them to take out the task sheets from the previous session where they talk about what the community needs. Distribute post-it notes and ask them to write each of the needs they identified on a separate post it note. Put up a sheet of butcher paper. Ask the youth to stand up and post the the needs that they wrote down—they should try to cluster their ideas with similar ones from other youth. Have a brief discussion. What were the most common needs? Least? Explain that we will revisit this to see how on the mark we were about what youth will say.

Interview Workshop: Peer Interviews (15 minutes)

Introduce the workshop goals and share that they will be doing more “hands on” stuff today.

Workshop Goals:

- Youth learn and practice three essential interviewing skills: asking open-ended questions, listening and responding, and reporting truthfully.
- Youth gain self-confidence as interviewers.

Peer Interviews

1. Explain purpose of the activity: “To learn and practice interview skills”.
2. Explain that we will start by interviewing each other to practice and also to get to know each other better.
3. What questions would you want to ask to find out more about your colleagues? (2 minute brainstorm. Add these questions to previous list of brainstormed questions)
4. Choose partners and take turns interviewing each other. Be prepared to report back to the group with a few things you learned. (3 minutes for each interview)
5. Report back: Person's name and one thing you learned about him or her (no more than 1 minute each for reporting back).
6. Discuss: How was it interviewing? Have you done it before? (Communicate the idea that they already have lots of experience and skills on which to rely)

Demonstrating Poor Interviewing Skills (10 minutes)

1. Ask for a volunteer to be interviewed
2. A group leader interviews one of the students using pre-written questions. Her or she purposefully doesn't do a good job. For example, he or she doesn't make eye contact, doesn't listen to what is said, doesn't respond with appropriate follow-up questions, asks leading questions instead of open-ended ones, etc.
3. What was wrong with that interview? Discuss.
4. What are some principles of a good interview? Discuss and record.
5. Closure: “We want to emphasize two skills: 1) Ask open-ended questions and 2) listen and respond. Each of the next activities should help teach these two skills.

Asking Open-Ended Questions (15 minutes)

1. Explain that one of our goals is to be open-minded.
2. Sometimes questions are open-minded, sometimes they are leading.
3. Let's evaluate the following questions. For each one, decide whether or not it is too leading. If it is, revise it to make it more open-ended.

Examples:

Don't you think that school is a waste of time?

Don't you love it when the teachers take youth on field trips?

How would you describe your neighborhood?

Listen and Respond (5 minutes)

1. Group interview: The purpose of this exercise is for youth to practice, as a group, the skill of listening and responding to questions. A group leader asks for a volunteer to ask the first question (It could be "What do you think of your city?" or "What are your hobbies?").
2. Then the group leader asks the other youth to go around in a circle asking follow up questions based on what she or he says. Because they don't have a script, this exercise requires them to listen and respond to what was said.

Continuing to Develop Questions (15 minutes)

While the group is still in a circle, revisit the list of interview questions. Revise and discuss.

Take-Home Task

Explain that their task for the next session is to fine tune these questions and see if they will make sense to ask other youth. They can practice by interviewing a sibling, parent, or relative but don't have to write down the responses. Instead they should reflect on what worked and what questions could be improved. Explain that as a group they will test out the questions again at the next session.

Closing (5 minutes)

Let youth know what a great job they did today. Answer any remaining questions or concerns they have about the project in general or the work they have done.

Session 7

How Can We Improve Our Interview Skills?

Goal: Continue working on the interview skills presented in the previous session. Practice interviews for real data collection.

Materials: snacks, butcher paper, flip chart, pens, clipboards, paper, tape recorders with batteries, cassette tapes, revised set of interview questions (sample attached as a reference), “Feedback Form” worksheet (attached), “Steps to a Good Interview” handout (attached), “Peer Interview Reflection” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up (Commonalities) (10 minutes)

Ask youth to get into pairs with someone who they do not know very well. Ask them to make a list of things, which they have in common (neighborhood, personality trait, experience, ability, etc.). After a few minutes, go around the room, and ask them to share with the group their most surprising commonality. (At some point during the first few sessions, come up with a list of warm-up activities and distribute to the youth. Ask them to sign up to lead a warm-up activity for a different day (either from the list provided or they can make up their own. Make yourself available to answer any clarification questions they have so they feel prepared to lead the activity).

Questions and Practice (55 minutes)

1. Explain that they are going to practice interviewing to give the youth an opportunity to put all the pieces together. To make it real, also want to explain how to get consent (permission) and do all the other important details.
2. Go over “Steps to a Good Interview” handout.
3. In the next activity, they will practice interviewing others about the topic the group came up with to focus on for the project. Ask youth to take out the interview questions they’ve revised.
4. Large group breaks into pairs. Youth take turns interviewing each other and give feedback (using feedback form).

After the youth try out the interview with the peers, come back to the whole group and have a discussion about the interview process. It is important to know how comfortable they felt conducting the interview and to know if they would change the protocol after trying it out with their partner. How can the group make the interview script better? Did it feel like you were getting the answers you were hoping for? How can the group improve the questions?

It is important for the youth to record the gender and ethnicity of the person they interview. Rather than tell them to write this down, try to see if your discussions about the protocol may lead to the group agreeing that one of the questions should be about ethnicity. The group may have expressed interest in knowing how different “groups” in the community think, or where different groups hang out and spend their time. So this is a great way suggest that the youth find out with what group their interviewee identifies. This can also wait until the next session when youth come back to the group and share their experiences interviewing 2 people for practice. You can then ask them questions about those people and discuss whom to target for interviews. If they are fluent in a language other than English, such as Spanish, youth should feel comfortable interviewing peers in Spanish if they wish.

In order to practice for the real thing, interviewers must ask for permission on tape before beginning interview. This is our way of getting consent.

Closing (10 minutes)

Have a group circle where everyone gives each other “props (compliments, praise, thanks for their work today, etc.). Only the person holding an object like a tennis ball or even a marker can give props. One youth gives “props” to another and throws her/him the ball. Then that person gives someone else “props” and throws them the ball and so on until everyone gets a turn.

Take-Home Task

Try to interview 2 peers at the school before the next session. They should come to the session prepared to talk about their experiences and share their notes. Remind them to go through all the interview steps including writing notes to themselves afterward about how they thought the interview went and what kinds of things they learned from the person. They should also think about ways they might want to improve the protocol after talking to these 2 people. At the next session, we will take time to figure out how to get the most out of the interviews. So these first 2 interviews should be thought of as practice. By the end of the next session, we can develop the best questions possible!

Worksheet

Feedback Form

The purpose of this sheet is to help you give feedback to each other so that we can all become better interviewers.

Name of interviewer:

Name of observer:

While observing the interview, please write yes or no for each of the following questions.

___ Was permission asked for and recorded?

___ Did the interviewer check to see if the tape was working?

___ Is the interviewer's tone friendly?

___ Does the interviewer make eye contact?

___ Does the interviewer ask follow up questions?

___ Does the interviewer thank the respondent?

Please answer the following questions and explain to the interviewer:

In general, what did the interviewer do well?

What was your favorite question?

How can the interviewer improve?

Which question did you like the least?

Sample

Middle School Interview Questions

1. What grade are you in?
2. How old are you?
3. What kinds of things do you like to do?
4. What are your friends like?
5. How do you spend your time? Where?
6. What is school like for you?
7. What kinds of things do you do at home?
8. What do you want for your future?
9. How do you feel about your neighborhood?
10. What kind of activities do you want in your community?
11. What is your dream of the perfect community?
12. Do you want help with anything in your life? Where? What kind?

Worksheet

Steps to a Good Interview

- 1) Make sure that you are prepared. Do you have...
 - a. Your interview questions?
 - b. A tape recorder and blank tapes?
 - c. Batteries?
 - d. A notepad and a pen?
 - e. A quiet place to do the interview?
- 2) Ask for Permission.
 - a. For example: "Hi, would you mind if I interviewed you about...?"
 - b. If the person says no, then you should ask someone else. If the person says yes, then you should ask for permission to tape record the interview: "Do you mind if I tape record your interview?"
 - c. If the person gives permission, then you should tape record their permission. "Hi, my name is _____, and I give permission for you to tape record this interview."
 - d. Check to see that the tape recorder works by playing it back and listening to it.
- 3) Do the Interview.
 - a. Ask open-ended questions. For example, it is always better to ask, "Can you please describe what it's like in your neighborhood?", rather than "Don't you think that your neighborhood is _____?".
 - b. Make eye contact.
 - c. Ask follow up questions. It's okay to make up your own questions along the way, in order to follow up on something that was said.
- 4) End the Interview
 - a. Say thanks! "Thank you very much for being interviewed. What you've said is very helpful for us."
 - b. Label the tape. Write the date, your name, and the initials of the person you interviewed.
- 5) Reflect on the interview
 - a. What did you learn from the interview? You can either write this down or record your own thoughts into the tape. (Be sure to do this immediately following the interview).
- 6) Respect confidentiality!
 - a. No one is allowed to listen to the tape or hear about the interview except you and the group of community youth researchers.
- 7) Turn in tape and notes at the next meeting (at the latest).

Session 8

What Do We Want to Do Over Break?

Winter Break Celebration!

Goal: Assess efforts to practice and set goals for a task that they might accomplish over the December break. Take a little time to celebrate the upcoming break!

Materials: snacks, gift packs for CYRs (including disposable camera, construction paper, markers, colored pencils, crayons, card, glue stick, and a congratulations card), “Collage” Task (sample attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (10 minutes)

Ask youth to pick a partner that they don’t know very well. Writing and talking are not allowed. Players need to relay whatever they feel is important about themselves to their partners. They can act and use body language to express this. After the time is up, ask each person to verbalize to the group her or his partner’s description. Their partners are now allowed to correct any discrepancies.

Feedback on Interviews (20 minutes)

Have a discussion about how the interviews went this time around by following a similar line of questioning from the previous session. Review the peer interview reflection worksheet.

Gifts from Staff (10 minutes)

Provide each CYR with a little gift package. The package will include a disposable camera, a glue stick, construction paper, a pack of crayons, markers or colored pencils and of course a card congratulating them on their work thus far and wishing them a wonderful break. An extra little treat such as candy or chocolate adds a nice touch.

What Kinds of Things to Do with the Cameras (10 minutes)

As a group, talk about the different things they can do with the cameras in relation to the question they are trying to address for the mapping project. For example, they could take pictures of certain places in their neighborhood that they think exemplify a particular need or characteristic. They could take pictures of important people to them in their community. Your suggestions can be more helpful once their topic is defined.

Goals Over Break (10 minutes)

Discuss the option for youth to conduct more interviews over break if they wish. Provide them with extra tapes if they want and if they think they will have access to other youth their age during the break. Make arrangements for them to drop off tapes or their photo film so that they don’t get lost over the break!

Time remaining should be spent with music in the background and some snacks.

Collect labeled interview tapes before the end of the session to transcribe over the break.

Sample

PHOTO COLLAGE



Due the Session After Break

Task: (Based on what question we came up with in session)

Options for developing your film:

- If you will develop the film yourself, please bring the original receipt on Thursday, January 4th so you can get your money back that day.

Or

- If you would like María to develop the film for you, you must call her by Wednesday, December 20 so she can pick up your film at your house that Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. María will then drop your photos off at your home on Friday, December 29 so you can put your collage together before our next session.

HAPPY PHOTO-TAKING! ☺

Unit 3

Data Collection and Analysis

In this unit, the community youth researchers will begin collecting data and analyzing it in preparation for their presentations. Special attention is paid to:

- *Reflecting on the CYRs own experiences as data*
- *Collecting and analyzing first round of data gathered as a group*
- *Identifying additional methodologies to use for their research questions*
- *Working in small groups to carry out their data collection and bring back to the group*

Session 9

What Did We Learn About Our Neighborhoods? Share Photos!

Goal: Regroup and review the purpose of Y.E.L.L. Discuss information gathered over the break. Set goals for the coming months.

Materials: snacks, clipboards, markers, post-it notes, flip chart, paper, “Reviewing Collages” worksheet (attached), interview transcripts, “Reviewing Transcripts” worksheet (attached), “Report Warm-Up” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Check In On Winter Break) (15 minutes)

Spend a little more time than usual with a group building activity on this day. Regrouping and recreating the trust within the group will be important.

Chairs will be facing each other in 2 concentric circles. Each person will take a seat. They will ask the person in front of them the following question: 1. What did you do over the break? After the first question is asked, everyone who is sitting in the inner circle will shift one chair to the right. Now they have a new partner and a new question is posed to the group 2. What are you looking forward to next year? After they discuss the second question, the inner circle shifts one chair to the right again and answers the third question: 3. Tell me something about you that I don’t know.

Share Collages (20 minutes)

The main activity will be to share the pictures they took and present them to the group.

The youth will be asked to put their pictures up on the wall, and then have other youth walk around in shifts. A group of 3 will be asked to stand in front of their pictures, and the rest of the group will walk around and get to ask them questions and look at their presentation. You can give youth a clipboard and paper with some guiding questions that they can complete as they walk around, or you can keep this more free and open ended. Either way, the group leaders need to write down and document themes in the pictures and contrasts across the pictures. Also, even if the youth don’t write these things down, you can have a conversation about the similarities and differences in their representations. The discussion should serve as a reminder of what the whole project is about: We want to be sharing perspectives about the community and here is an example of how differently individual youth see things, how differently they experience the community of West City, and how important it is for people to hear how it is different and what we should do about it. This is then a good lead into the other goal for the session: to discuss the short and long-term goals for the group.

Goal Setting (20 minutes)

Safe Space Center Grant Due

- We need to provide the Safe Spaces Center Planning Committee with our initial report. Explain to the youth what kinds of materials the group needs and discuss what we can offer to help with the report. Point out that this is just an interim assessment and summary of what we have learned so far and by no means the end of our work. We are just getting started! But we can help these folks out with the grant by sharing with them what we’ve learned so far and explaining to the grant folks what we are planning to do. So the next few sessions are going to be spent thinking hard about what we have learned and what we are still hoping to find out by the end of the school year. So the next 2 sessions will be dedicated to writing a report. We will have to analyze the interviews, look at transcripts, and summarize important points.

Community Meeting

- Part of the process in applying for the Safe Spaces grant also involves a community meeting. The planning committee has invited parents and residents from West City to an evening at Liberty Middle School that will include entertainment, dinner, child care and, most important, an opportunity to talk about their concerns. The entire Y.E.L.L. team has been invited to help out at the meeting. As CYR's the youth are seen as leaders in the community. They won't be expected to do a presentation, but it may be a good idea to bring the maps and photo collages to share. Instead of a presentation, the youth may be asked to join in certain discussion groups with the adults. Be sure to encourage the youth to voice their opinions. Most likely, the youth will not have attended this type of meeting before. It is necessary to ensure them that this will be a friendly introduction to being in meetings with other adults. Discuss with the youth other possibilities for what they would like their level of involvement to be.

Safe Spaces Planning Meetings

- Explain that as we mentioned before, we will be asking for youth members to attend Safe Spaces Planning meetings in order share what we're doing in the sessions and begin planning for the center. We have a sheet that outlines the commitments (once or twice per month after school). What we are hoping is that by attending these meetings, we can learn a little bit more about what it is like to make decisions about resources in the community and can gain some insight into the decision making process. Most important, these folks get to hear from youth early on in the process and not just at the end of the year when youth give their presentations. We are hoping to work as partners, the adults and the youth together. This will take time because we have to learn new skills for that (both the youth and the adults). So the plan right now is to do this gradually. At the end of this month, a group of 3 or 4 youth, who are interested, can start coming to the meetings with two of the adult group leaders. We will take time to prepare youth for the meeting and make sure that after the meetings we talk about what happened. At first we all might be a little shy and just want to observe what they do, but gradually we are hoping that youth will feel like they can share their opinions, offer advice, and feel like a part of the team there.
- If they are interested or have questions, they should ask after the session. Is there anyone who thinks they might be interested? *Note: Although it is not reflected in this curriculum, once the youth are selected, they should receive an orientation and ongoing support for their involvement on the planning committee. After each meeting, they should report to the larger group what was discussed and answer any questions they have. Prior to each meeting, the group should have a conversation about what should be reported back to the planning committee or any questions they have. Remind the youth that although they have representatives, they are all welcome to attend these meetings as well.*

Explain Long Term Goals:

Data Collection Using Additional Methods

- We have thus far only really relied on interviews and some photo essays. There are other methods that we came up with and other resources that we can use for presenting what we have learned (i.e. GIS mapping resources). Some of us may want to continue to interview more people, while others may want to work more with video cameras, or journal writing or other kinds of methods. We could try to put a survey together or conduct some observations in different neighborhoods. So as a group we need to decide which methods to pursue to get deeper into the issues that are important.

Presentations to Policy Makers in the Community

- At the end of the school year, we will be making presentations to those audiences you have identified and key people who need to know this information.
- We will take a lot of time preparing and practicing presentations to make sure you all feel comfortable and ready to share what you have learned and teach the important lessons.

Discussion (15 minutes)

Discuss these goals and see what they think. Revise as needed. Post the goals up and ask them to walk around and post comments on post-it notes if they like.

Take-Home Task

Youth will be provided with envelopes including the following:

- *An individualized task checklist, listing missing assignments to be completed by a certain date.
- *Report Warm-Up worksheet (for youth to think about short-term and long-term goals)
- *Worksheet for reviewing transcribed interviews
- *An additional interview from another CYR

(CYRs who had not yet submitted interviews will be given two from other youth)

Review each sheet with the youth and answer questions.

Closing (5 minutes)

Explain that a lot of material was covered today and thank them for their patience. Let them know that at the next session, we will talk about what they found in their transcripts and ask them to call if they have any questions. For the closing, ask them to say one word about how they're feeling at the end of the session.

Remind youth interested in being on the planning committee to ask the staff. You may end the session early so that those who are interested don't leave late and have problems getting home.

**Please note, that the specific timeline for an interim report reflects the particular needs of our supporting agency/organization. Although you may not experience similar deadlines for feedback from the youth, it is important to keep in mind that there may be requests for your youth to attend community meetings of different sorts. We decided to include these lesson plans so that others could be prepared in case the need arises. However, if these sessions are not relevant to your particular work, then just use the time to feel less rushed with the other activities and discussions.*

Worksheet

Community Collages Community Collages

After looking at someone else's collage and having a conversation with that person, answer the following questions for each collage:

1. Where in West City were the pictures taken? (What neighborhood?)
2. If there are people in the photographs, how are they related to the community youth researcher who took the pictures? (Are they friends, family, or perhaps just random people?)
3. What grabs your attention? What is the most interesting thing to you about the photographs?
4. What did you LEARN from looking at this collage? Did you learn anything about West City?

Worksheet

Reading Transcripts

Due by Next Session

ON THIS PAGE PLEASE WRITE NOTES ABOUT THE TRANSCRIPT YOU ARE READING

Your notes might include:

- A quote that taught you something important
- A quote that surprised you
- A quote that was different from what you expected the person to say
- Ideas from the interview that you think are important to share with others
- Lessons you learned from reading this interview

IBM-FILE NAME: _____

-
-
-
-
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-
-
-

Worksheet

Report Warm-Up

Due by Next Session

What have you learned so far about what your peers think about their neighborhoods or their community?

From your interviews and your experiences up to this point as a community youth researcher, what do you think is important to share with decision makers in the community?

In general, what do you think is important for others to know about your experiences as a community youth researcher up to this point?

Now imagine it is the end of the school year already. What kind of information do you expect you will be able to share?

What kind of product would you want to share? (How would you like to present your information? How would you like to communicate the lessons you want to teach others about what you have learned?)

Session 10

What Do Youth From Liberty Middle School Think?

Goal: Analyze the data youth have collected. Prepare to share data for grant deadline.

Materials: snacks, outline for the report, interview transcripts, butcher paper, markers, paper, pens, disks

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Focus and Count) (10 minutes)

The group tries to count to ten. It seems easy, but the trick is that there are a few rules: 1 person cannot simply count 1, 2, 3, 4, -- the youth just shout out a number, and if no one else said the number at the same time, someone then tries to shout out the next number, until they reach 10. They are not allowed to plan a pattern or a system for counting. If two or more youth shout out the same number, the round starts again (a nice activity for them to transition and focus into the session). This game requires patience. Groups rarely get past 4 on their first few tries. It's okay if they don't get to 10.

Review of Community Collages (20 minutes)

If there wasn't enough time for all the youth to share their collages (or they turned the task in late), go around the room and view everyone's collages. Reflect as a whole group or break into smaller groups.

Review Report Warm-Up Activity (20 minutes)

Ask the youth to get into pairs first with someone they don't know that well. Have them discuss the Report Warm-Up activity with their partner. Report back to the whole group, while one youth records their ideas on sheets of butcher paper.

Summarizing and Reflecting on Interviews (15 minutes)

Youth will spend time today summarizing and reflecting on the transcribed interviews they have received.

(After the youth turn in their interview tapes, we paid someone to transcribe their interviews—their interviews were relatively short, so the person was able to transcribe the interviews relatively quickly).

First they will need to spend some time writing a journal entry about what they have learned so far. What kind of information have they learned? What kinds of skills have they learned?

Then we will have a whole group discussion about how to summarize information from a transcript. We will go through one together and try to pick out the important points that seem to be the most relevant for their research question.

In pairs or groups of 3, they will need to summarize information they learned from the interviews. Each group of CYRs will get some interviews to summarize. We plan on using the computer lab for this session so they can type their summaries directly into a Word document. It will be particularly important for there to be adults, college students, or volunteers helping out at this session. Each group, ideally, should be supervised by an adult to guide them through the process of drawing out the information from the interviews that are important for the summary.

Next Steps and Closing (10 minutes)

We recognize that this is a lot of work to ask of the youth, so 2 full sessions will be devoted to the summaries. Plus, we will ask them to try to take some transcripts home to summarize before the next session. During this session, we need to make sure that they understand how to summarize these ideas and have adult guidance in this process so they can try some on their own. This is a challenging task so make sure to leave room at the end for group “props”.

Session 11

How Do We Share This Information with the Planning Committee?

Goal: Analyze the data youth have collected. Prepare report.

Materials: snacks, outline for report posted in the room, interview transcripts, extra adults, disks, butcher paper, markers, youth letter for grant application (sample attached as a reference)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (10 minutes)

Ask each young person to go around the room and say something that happened recently that brought a smile to her or his face.

Round Robin: Reviewing Transcribed Interviews (45)

The youth will spend 10 minutes at each of the following stations:

1. Introduction to the youth's section of the Report
2. Youth's views of school
3. Youth's views of home
4. Youth's views of neighborhood and community

Here is where it can be very helpful to have an adult at each station if possible. At the introduction station, the youth need to brainstorm ideas for how to explain who they are as a group and how they gathered information. At the other stations, youth will write down information they learned from the transcripts they read. On another sheet at these stations, they will describe their own views. Discourage them from using one-word answers. Ask them to elaborate and give examples if they have any. At the end, ask the youth to pick one station and summarize all of the information the the group listed. Work on synthesizing these thoughts in a brief report. The group facilitators will include another piece in the report about the process as well.

Discuss Next Steps (15 minutes)

Review with the group that the rest of the project will include workshops on other methods of data collection, as well as more time with analysis and oral presentation skills. Once the deadline for submitting the grant application has passed, we will be able to focus on more data collection and going into more depth with the data analysis as well as being creative with ways of representing and communicating the various youth perspectives. Our next deadlines for presentation and data sharing have been set for the end of the school year.

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Share with the group that they have worked very hard today, so there will be no take-home task. (If there isn't some pressing task to be done, feel free to give a youth a break and let them know that they are appreciated and supported.)

Sample

Liberty Youth Engaged in Leadership & Learning Project (Y.E.L.L)

Dear Application Committee,

We are the Community Youth Researchers from Liberty Middle School. We have been involved with the Y.E.L.L. Project since November 30th. As Community Youth Researchers, CYRs for short, we go into our community and interview different types of people to see what our community needs to make it a better place. We have also observed what we have in our community, so it can be improved upon.

What we have found out was the youth want low cost community centers, a clean, safe, and well-watched community. The youth we have interviewed want people to talk to, and centers where they could go when they are having problems. The youth we interviewed want places with low cost because when they want to go to a recreation center to have fun they charge an entrance fee. The recreation centers also charge to play the games they have. In particular the Liberty students want their school to be more fun, interactive, and exciting.

In the next few months we will gather information, write a report on our findings, then present them to the community. Therefore, we will make West City a better place for youth. In conclusion, we hope that this will make the community better and have less illegal activity. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. We hope you will support our efforts.

Sincerely,

The Liberty Y.E.L.L. Team

Community Youth Researcher signatures on reverse side.

Session 12

How Do We Prepare for the Safe Spaces Community Meeting?

Goal: To prepare for the CYRs' first public introduction and participation in the Safe Spaces community meeting.

Materials: snacks, copy of agenda with CYR roles (sample attached as a reference), previously completed Safe Spaces Research worksheets, "Review of the Safe Spaces Meeting" worksheet (attached), individual notes to CYRs, schedule for next 8 sessions.

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (A Name Game) (15 minutes)

Each person will introduce him or herself in a circle and add an action to his or her name. (for example, a person says her names and then taps her head with her hand 3 times). After everyone participates, the youth will be asked to go around the room and try saying everyone's names and action in the group.

Check In On Community Meeting (5 minutes)

Review purpose of the community meeting. Check again if all CYRs will be attending.

Review Agenda and Roles for the Meeting (15 minutes)

Answer any other questions the youth have about this, concerns, etc. Review the Safe Spaces Research worksheets distributed earlier and see if they have a clear sense of what this committee is about.

Next Steps (15 minutes)

Distribute the schedule for the next 6 sessions. (Every 6 or 8 sessions, for example, distribute a calendar for the youth with session times and special events, CYR birthdays, etc. Or better yet, you can provide the youth with a planner at the beginning of the year and go over how to use it so they can begin scheduling meetings, sessions, and learning how to manage their time.

Distribute list of tasks that are still missing. (Every pay period, share a short note on their progress, "props" and feedback, and remind them of work that may still be outstanding.)

Take-Home Task

Since the community meeting will be held that week, let them know that we will end the session early. The only task they will have can be completed immediately following the meeting where they should reflect on the meeting so they can share back with the group.

Closing (5 minutes)

Go around the room and ask them to say one thing that they are worried will happen at the meeting. Discuss possible ways they can feel better about that.

Remind the youth that the agency/collaborative director will be coming by to visit. (She is technically their employer). Let them know that she will sit in and participate and ask them if they have any questions and concerns. Let them know that it might be a good idea to develop a visitor policy as more people come to know about them.

Sample

Safe Spaces Community Meeting Agenda

- 6:30-6:45** **Arrival (door prizes, sign in)**
Mapping activity (parents map where they live on large map)
CYRs greet outside
CYRs help with signing-in
CYRs help with mapping activity
CYRs help with distributing interpretation devices
- 6:45-7:00** **Welcome/Introductions**
Purpose of meeting
Overview of current planning and quick introduction of CYRs
CYRS come to the front of the room (all)
Parent experiences from other Safe Spaces sites
CYRs continue helping with sign in
CYRs listen to introduction (all)
- 7:00-7:20** **Brainstorming Activity**
Adults move around the room and answer questions on the wall (English and Spanish)
Pairs of CYRs stand next to each question and help with writing, interpretation, and getting materials. (All split up in pairs)
- 7:20-7:55** **Group Discussion**
Adults break into groups to talk about one of the questions or another relevant question
Identify a recorder
CYRs help participants break out in groups (all)
- 7:55-8:15** **Report Back to Large Group**
- 8:15-8:30** **Next Steps** (develop ways parents can continue to be involved, such as having a list of possibly one day and one evening sign-up to attend a group tour of a Safe Spaces site).
Close and thank you
CYRs help participants sign up parents to visit other sites
CYRs thank participants for coming (all)
CYRs help clean-up (all)

Session 13

How Did the Community Meeting Go?

How is Y.E.L.L. Going?

Goal: To debrief on the community meeting. For the CYRs to share their experiences with the Y.E.L.L. project so far.

Materials: snacks, post-it notes, guiding questions handout, CYR treasure hunt (attached), butcher paper, tape, pencils, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (15 minutes)

Welcome the youth to the session. Introduce new adult group assistant and the agency/collaborative director (their employer). Create a space for the youth to ask questions of the guests.

Treasure Hunt

Ask everyone to participate in the Human Treasure Hunt Activity. Everyone should go around the room and find another person who matches some of the facts on their sheet, but without repeating the names.

Review Community Meeting (20 minutes)

Ask youth to review their reflections from the community meeting. Discuss.

Group Check-In (20 minutes)

This activity will be an opportunity for the youth to share some feedback about their experiences up to this point in a way that will be anonymous. Give each person at least 6 post-its and ask them to answer the following questions, providing at least 2 answers to each question but they can take as many post-its as they like. (They should provide one answer per post it). These three questions should be written on butcher paper in different places around the room, so the youth physically post their response under the appropriate question.

1. What has been challenging about being a CYR?
2. What would you like more help or review on?
3. What did you like about being a CYR?

Discuss the responses after the youth have posted their answers. Talk with the youth about their ideas for addressing the concerns or questions they have about the project so far.

Next Steps (5 minutes)

Revisit the idea of having a visitor policy. Possibly discuss this at the next session.

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Revisit the youth's expectations from the first few sessions. Now that they have had a chance to go through one method, let them know we want to make sure that we do the best we can in meeting their expectations as they continue with the project. Ask them to answer the following questions and bring them back to the next session:

- What kinds of changes would you like to make in the community
- What did you think you would be able to accomplish as a CYR (Be specific and give examples)

Closing (15 minutes)

Ask the guests and the youth to go around and say one thing they learned about the group today.

Sample

Youth Community Researcher Treasure Hunt!

Go around the room and have a person sign the box that applies to them.

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Born in the same month as you: | Has same number of siblings as you: | Speaks more than one language: | Has performed on stage somewhere: | Was born outside of California: |
| Plays a musical instrument: | Wears glasses (or contacts): | Plays on a sports team: | Has volunteered in the community: (doing what?) | Has the same favorite TV show: |
| Has the same favorite food: | Has visited a country outside the U.S.: (where?) | Can name all 7 dwarves: (What are their names?) | Has been to Disney World: | Dressed up for Halloween: (as what?) |

Session 14

How Are We Doing on Group Agreements?

How Do We Develop a Visitor Policy?

Goal: To review the group agreements and hold CYRs accountable to each other. To begin developing a visitor policy for the group

Materials: snacks, markers, flip chart, “Visitor Policy Brainstorm” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Two Truths and a Lie) (15 minutes)

Everyone sits in a circle. Each person will have a chance to make three statements about themselves. Two of these will be true, and one will be false. The other youth must guess which of the three is false.

Review Group Agreements (15 minutes)

Revisit consequences with the CYRs. What happens when someone reaches 3 warnings? More than once? What do we do when you do not attend other activities besides the sessions? Discuss whether revisions or additions should be made to the agreements.

Revisiting Group Decision Making (15 minutes)

Remind the youth that in developing the group agreements, they agreed to make changes based on a consensus model, where everyone would need to be present. How have we been making other decisions as a group? Have they worked? Emphasize that as they collect more data, they will have to make more decisions about how to use it. Discuss what model will work best for the group. What is the most useful model for making group accountability decisions? Provide some possible options. What do we do if we can't agree on the recommendations, for example?

Visitor Policy and Next Steps (10 minutes)

Introduce the issue that since they have done such a great job so far, and their report has been developed, more and more people are interested in meeting them and visiting sessions. Remind them that they will be making presentations in a couple of months so these visitors can also wait until then to hear them, and we want to make sure that visits do not negatively affect their experience

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet for them to start thinking about how they want to handle visitors and bring back to the next session for final agreement. Questions?

Preview of Next Session (10 minutes)

Also ask them to come prepared to review their feedback notes on their first round of interviews again. We will look at those again in the next session to help them “fine tune” in preparation for their upcoming second round of interviews.

Worksheet

Visitor Policy Brainstorm



As more people become interested in your work as a Community Youth Researcher, our team is also receiving more requests to visit the sessions. They include people who would like to fund projects like ours, such as teachers, parents, other students your age, college students, educators, various decision makers, and others. Knowing that all these people will have the opportunity to listen to your presentations later on in the spring, please share your thoughts on what your policy for visitors would be. Come prepared to share your answers so you can develop a policy at the next session.

1. What do you think about having visitors coming to the sessions? Why?
2. What would you like to know about a potential visitor before they came to a session?
3. What would you like the visitor to know about you before coming to a session?
4. How would you like the sessions to run if a visitor was present? (Is there anything that should be done differently? Anything that you would do differently?)
5. What would you expect from the visitors during the session? (What would their role be? Would you have any ground rules for them?)

Session 15

What Should the Visitor Policy Say? What Other Interview Skills Should We Know?

Goal: For the youth to develop a visitor policy. To continue developing their interviewing skills and conduct a second round of interviews.

Materials: snacks, “Visitor Policy” sample (attached), copies of latest interview questions, butcher paper, markers, tape, tape recorders with batteries, extra cassette tapes

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Name Game) (15 minutes)

Each youth goes around and says how they got their name or where it came from.

Develop Visitor Policy (20 minutes)

The youth will take the worksheet out from the previous session and break out into pairs with someone they haven’t worked with before in the session to review their brainstorming on developing a visitor policy. They will then share their thoughts about their views on having visitors, expectations they have of them, and things they want to know about them before coming. The youth then come back together and discuss what the policy should look like. Ask for a volunteer to type up the document and bring it back at the next session for final approval.

More Interview Skills (25 minutes)

Review interview skills not covered before. (These skills may come up after the youth went through their first round of interviews, for example how to make the person being interviewed feel more comfortable). They can talk about strategies for recruiting interview candidates and what qualities and characteristics they might they look for. What should they do if someone says no? Remind them to be gentle and not forceful, to be respectful, to offer to show the questions so that the person can see that they are not threatening. Come up, as a group, with different phrases that might help explain why it is helpful to talk to the person. Perhaps, avoid calling it an interview--- say, “I am working on a project that will make our community better for kids our age—or for Liberty Middle School students, and I was wondering if you would be willing to talk to me about what kind of things you might want” That might be a less threatening introduction. The next step after that might be for the youth to revise their interview questions and include suggestions for follow up questions they can ask.

If time allows, ask for 2 volunteers to try out the updated interview protocol in a “fish bowl” format. That means that 2 youth would be willing to sit in the middle of the circle, and one will interview the other while the rest of the group observes. At the end of the interview, the youth in the outside circle can give feedback. After they give feedback, the 2 volunteers can talk about how it felt to do the interview and as a group see if there are any more revisions to the questions that they think need to happen.

Take-Home Task (10 minutes)

Ask the youth to conduct 2 more interviews or more if they like. (We learned that 2 over a couple of days was a reasonable request.)

Closing (5 minutes)

Go around the room and see if the youth have any more pressing questions or concerns before they go out and do another round of interviews.

Sample

Y.E.L.L. Team Visitor Agreement Form

I, _____ agree to the following visitor agreement for the duration of my
(please print name)

visit with the Liberty Y.E.L.L. Team. As a visitor I must adhere to the following:

1. The CYRs would enjoy it if you told them about yourself and where you came from. This may include your name, occupation, and reason or interest for attending the session or anything else you want to tell the group. If you will be taking notes, please let us know what you will be taking notes on at the beginning of the session.
2. I have come to the session with some prior knowledge of what the Y.E.L.L. Project is. You do not need to know a great deal about the project but enough so you can participate with us.
3. Please pay attention to the CYRs and their discussions.
4. Respect the youth's ideas. In many cases the students are merely stating their opinions. The CYRs promote a sense of community and open discussion during the sessions.
5. We would like for you to participate in the session
6. Relax and enjoy yourself!

With my signature, I hereby agreed to follow these guidelines.

Visitor Signature

Date of Visit

Session 16

How Did the Interviews Go?

What Else Do We Need to Know Before Starting a New Method?

Goal: To finalize the visitor policy. To reflect on the second round of interviews. To conduct additional community background research before selecting new methods.

Materials: snacks, clipboard, recorders, cassette tapes, butcher paper, poster board, markers, glue sticks, old magazines, copies of visitor policy draft, Finding Community Resources Worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Group Activity (Group Collage) (15 minutes)

Divide the group into groups of at least 3. Give them a pile of old magazines, some glue, and poster board and ask them to design a poster that expresses something of each of the group members. Encourage them to explore both things they have in common and differences.

Finalize Visitor Policy (5 minutes)

Distribute the final draft of the visitor policy and make changes as suggested.

Reflecting on Second Round of Interviews (30 minutes)

Collect the tapes from the second round to have them transcribed. Review more lessons learned and feedback that occurred from the second round of interviews. Split the youth into 3 groups for a round robin. At each station, there will be an adults and a different question to address on butcher paper for future reference. At station 1, they should answer the question, “What is something good/positive about your interview experience?” At station 2, they should answer the questions, “What is something you wish you had done differently?” and “What was something that was challenging for you?” At station 3, they should answer the question, “What are the different things you learned from the people you talked to?”

Next Steps (10 minutes)

Discuss with the group that in order to move on to the next method, there seems to be some more background research about West City that needs to be done about what resources are already out there for youth and their families. Ask them what they think about that. Do they think most youth know where there are things for youth to do or seek help?

Take-Home Task (10 minutes)

For the next session, ask the youth to do some research about what resources are out there currently for youth. What can they find out from looking in the phonebook and on the web? Asking their friends and neighbors? *(Another approach to identifying community resources for youth is to extend the process and work with youth to interview youth agencies they have identified on the services they provides and “assess” how youth friendly they are or answer other questions youth may have about those services.)*

Closing (5 minutes)

Do a brief brainstorming with the group on possible ways they can go about finding out what resources are available to start getting some information when they get home.

Worksheet

Finding Youth Resources

Find out about as many resources that exist for youth in your neighborhood as you can.

| Name of agency/place | Address | Services offered | Age group | How did you find it? |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|

Now find out about as many resources for youth as you can in West City.

| Name of agency/place | Address | Services offered | Age group | How did you find it? |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|

Session 17

What Resources Did We Find in Our Neighborhood? What Should We Do Next?

Goal: To learn about other community youth resources the CYRs identified in their neighborhoods. To begin thinking about the next method to use.

Materials: snacks, “Brainstorming Our Next Method” worksheet (attached), paper, markers or pens, butcher paper, copies of “Methods Pros and Cons” handout

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Back to Back) (15 minutes)

Give each person a couple of blank pieces of paper and a marker or pen. Ask the youth to find a partner and sit down back to back. (They can sit on the floor.) Each person in the pair is to draw a picture on his or her sheet of paper. Here comes the complicated part: One person in the pair then becomes the designated “draw-er.” The other person in the pair is responsible for giving directions. Sitting back to back (and therefore unable to see the other person’s sheet of paper), the “draw-er” must follow their partner’s directions and try to draw the picture that their partner drew. The goal is for the draw-er to successfully draw the same picture that his or her partner drew. This requires very good directions! They then switch roles, so each person in the pair has a chance to be the draw-er and the person who gives the instructions. Afterwards, they should see how accurate they were and then as a group discuss their experiences. What was difficult about this activity?

Some lessons to learn from this: What you say may not always be interpreted the way you meant it to be. We have to recognize that we have ideas in our minds, and we are learning a lot but it is a whole other story to communicate ideas effectively to others. Keep this in mind when we get ready to plan presentations and share what we are learning. We have to be very clear.

Sharing Out About Resources in Your Neighborhood (35 minutes)

Each pair will be asked to share what they learned about the resources in their neighborhood. As each pair is talking, the rest of the group should be given particular things to pay attention to. First, each pair should answer the following questions:

1. What kinds of resources are there for youth in your neighborhood?
2. How did you go about finding this information? Was it easy or hard?
3. Do you think youth use/go to these places? Why or why not?

While one pair is presenting, the rest of the group should be listening and noting:

1. Did they ever hear of these places? Anyone they know who has been there?
2. Do they have similar or different information?

Begin Process of Selecting Next Method (15 minutes)

Begin this piece with a review of what we wanted to find out through this process. What kinds of information do we think is important to share with the community? This discussion actually serves as the description of the job assignment too, so hopefully time will not be an issue. Distribute the “Methods Pros and Cons” handout they worked on in a previous session. See if their ideas have changed since then. Would they like to add anything? Any methods they would add? Any pros or cons they would add?

Take-Home Task and Closing (10 minutes)

Distribute the “Brainstorming Our Next Method” worksheet for the youth to think about what method they want to do next and why. For the closing, go around the room and ask each youth what their favorite place to “hang out” is in West City.

Session 18

What Methods Did You Select? How Will We Work Together?

Goal: To find out from the youth what methods they want to use in order to prepare the appropriate training. To discuss how they will work together.

Materials: snacks, 10 pieces of wrapped candy per youth, bandanas for each team, items to gift wrap, wrapping paper, scissor and tape for each team, bows and ribbons, butcher paper, markers, pens, paper

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Candy Throw) (10 minutes)

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Give each person 10 pieces of wrapped candy. Tell the group they may not eat any of the candy until the end of the game. One person starts the game by telling the group something unique he or she has accomplished. Anyone in the group who has NOT done the same thing must toss a piece of candy at this person. Continue by going around the circle until everyone has had a turn. At the end of the game, everyone can eat the candy they collected.

Sign Up for Methods (25 minutes)

Go through each of the potential methods and have youth raise their hands if they want to sign up for that particular method. As students are raising their hands, ask them to sit together in a group according to their method of choice. (All video folks sit together, all survey folks, all interview folks etc.). As a group, they should share with each other the reasons why they selected this particular method. They should each write down what they hope to learn by being trained in this method, what do they think will be the challenges, what do they hope we will teach them and prepare them to overcome? (List these questions on the board for everyone to see.) Hear back from the youth about what methods they want to use, and their reasons why. We can then explain that now that we have heard from them, we will take time to come up with the strategies and the resources to match their interests and come back at the next session prepared to begin the training. Ask the youth if this is okay.

Working as a Team: All Tied Up (25 minutes)

In the meantime, remind the youth that we need to work together. We will be working in smaller groups on different methods and sharing resources; we also may be working in teams on different assignments. The goal of this next activity is to work as a team while your wrists are tied together. Split the youth up into pairs

Once you have selected the groups, tie their wrists together. If there are 3 people in a group, then one person will have their right wrist tied to one person and their left wrist tied to the other group member. Tell the groups that they are to wrap the gifts; that is their task. If you want you can make it a contest between the groups to see who can get done the fastest and the neatest.

Afterwards you can have a discussion:

- Did everyone in the group help to get the task done?
- What happened when someone didn't help?
- Do you ever feel like you are "tied up" with someone else when you are working with him or her and trying to get a job done? If so, why and how do you deal with this feeling?

Next Steps, Take-Home Task, and Closing (15 minutes)

Review with the youth that they will begin working in small groups at the next session. No take-home task this day. Distribute remaining candy.

Session 19

What Do We Want to Learn With Our Next Method?

Goal: For youth to develop the goals and specific strategies for their different methods. For example, the survey group needs to develop their questions; the interview group needs to develop a new set of questions or build on previous ones; the video group needs to devise a plan for videotaping

Materials: snacks, nametags, pens, flip chart, markers, butcher paper, sample survey as a reference, copies of previously developed interview questions, one adult for each method group

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Guess Who) (15 minutes)

Hand out nametags and ask each youth to write down his/her name on their own tag. Collect all the tags, mix them up, and put one tag on each person's back without letting them know whose name you are placing on their back. Each person must mingle with the other youth and ask them "yes and no" questions to try to find out whose name they have on their back.

Summary: Was that a pretty easy activity? Do you think you could have done that back in November? This activity follows the message that was communicated to the youth at the last session. We have been learning a lot about each other these past few months, and now we are going to split into smaller groups, but we are still one big group, which is here to help each other. Today we are going to work mainly in the smaller groups to help make the plans for collecting information using that particular method. During the next session, we can try out our ideas with one another and give each other feedback.

Begin Working with Your Method Group (40 minutes)

Youth will meet with their method group. (This is an example of the process in West City, so your groups may look different or you may decide to take the youth through another method as a whole group). The adult group leaders should split up according to the group they are interested in working with (survey, interview or videotape). The goal for next session is for the group to start talking about the specific questions they want to answer with their method.

Survey Group

This group needs to talk about what topics they want to learn about, perhaps encourage them that if they want to know in general what youth want, what they think about their neighborhood in general and their school, they should also ask questions about their opinions of the things that already exist (the resources that they shared in an earlier session). In the time that you have with the small group, ask them to articulate and agree upon the type of information they want to learn from the surveys.

The second part of the conversation with the small group should focus on question development. There are certain principles they should follow when finalizing their questions. Make sure the question is only asking the respondent to answer 1 question. This means that you can't put too many ideas into one question on the survey. A good question may be "How safe do you feel at school?" 1=unsafe to 5=safe. A bad question would be "How safe do you feel when you are at school and when you are at home?" Ask the youth to brainstorm their questions before giving them feedback on how focused they are or not. This will allow you to see what they are trying to ask, and then you can work to refine the questions with them. As a group, they should agree upon a limit to the number of questions and try to agree on how many questions they will ask in the different categories. They should also consider the kinds of background information they want to include. (The respondents do not have to put their names on it, but they should record their age, gender, school and neighborhood, and ethnicity.) Is there background information they would want included? Remind the youth that they can include some open-ended questions. Not all of the

questions have to be multiple choice or on a scale. Make sure they understand the concept of a scale. What kinds of questions should they answer with multiple choice vs. a scale vs. open ended?

Their task: To come up with preliminary questions for their survey. They can meet as a group before the next session and come up with a sample survey.

Interview Group

This group needs to revisit the goals of the interview. Do they want to ask the same questions again and ask more youth? Or do they want to try to push more on some of the topics? For example, do they want to know more about what kinds of resources their peers want and need? Do they want their peers to describe their neighborhoods to them? Do they want their opinions about West City in general? Do they want to know their opinions about what kinds of things they wish they had at school and in their neighborhood? What kinds of questions could they ask to help them learn that information? What are good follow up questions? It seems from all of the discussion of West City CYRs, they really want to help link youth to resources they need and are willing to convince folks that some new resources need to be created. They seem to be excited to play the role of designing something new and bringing it to the community—but they have to find out what that thing should be. Ask them to think of ways that they can ask that. Although you want the youth to develop questions and direct the information collection process, it is okay to suggest some good questions that might help them achieve their goals as long as both you and they feel that they have veto power and that they feel that they have a choice about whether or not to accept your input.

With that established, the youth should be encouraged to ask their peers to talk about where they go to hang out and if they wish they had other places to go. What about when they need help with school? Where do they go? Do they wish they had other places? What would they look like? What about when they need other kinds of help? Do they ever need help with health stuff, like doctor stuff? Where do they go? What about help with more personal stuff? Where would you go? Do you have any friends who need help? Do they ever complain that they have nowhere to go? If Liberty Middle School offered some services for families and youth, would you go there? What kind of stuff do you think Liberty Middle School should provide? The youth can even ask about some of the specific places that were discussed in previous sessions. Do they ever hang out at community recreation centers? Why or why not? See what the youth think about some of these suggestions.

Their task: To come up with new interview questions and some good probes. They can meet as a group before the next session.

Video Group

This group needs to agree on what kinds of things they want to record. What do they want to show in the video? Do they want to record different places in the city? Do they want to record different neighborhoods (are all of the neighborhoods represented in this group)? They may need to collaborate with a youth in one of the other groups to have them escort them through their neighborhood. They can use the video camera to share their own perspectives on their neighborhoods, or to make comparisons across neighborhoods. They can use the video camera to videotape interviews with people.

The purpose of the discussion is to answer questions like: What should these interviews be about? Should they ask them about the same questions they asked using the cassette tape? Or should they refine those questions? The group needs to agree on what lessons they want to learn and how they are going to use the videotape to gather the information they need. Also, if there is time, they need to talk about the possibility of sharing the camera. How would they do this? Would they rotate the camera or meet as a group between sessions and help each other out? What do they think?

Their task: To come up with a broad question they want to answer using video.

Next Steps (15 minutes)

Go over their job assignments in the small group. If more time is available, each group can check in with others on what their particular task will be.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask the youth to stand in a circle and make eye contact with each person in the group; only after they have made eye contact with each person, can they sit down (but still be available for others to make eye contact with them). This is one way to bring the group together before leaving.

Session 20

What Does the Group Think of Our Ideas?

Goal: To create a pilot survey, a pilot interview protocol and a videotaping plan. To test out ideas and instruments with each other and give each other feedback. To prepare youth to test out their ideas over several days.

Materials: snacks, flip chart, butcher paper, markers, pens, paper, copy machine, youth survey (sample attached as reference)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Behavior Modification) (15 minutes)

Ask 2 youth to leave the room. Once they are out of range, the rest of the group decides on a pose or an action they want the subjects to copy. It can be standing on one foot, kneeling together, giving each other a high five, something not too difficult. Then, the two youth return and have to attempt to replicate it. The audience can give them hints by clapping loudly or softly, by cheering or booing, or by making a high or low hum, whichever fits the noise limits of the location.

Meeting in Small Groups to Share Assignments (10 minutes)

Each small group will meet and go over their assignments and prepare to share their ideas with the larger group to get feedback.

- **Survey Group** - as a small group, they will present the adult with their questions. Identify a place to quickly make copies for the other youth. They should talk about what they want feedback on from the larger group.
- **Interview Group**- they should also go over their questions and talk about what they want feedback on from the group. Photocopy the questions.
- **Video Group** - they should also share their plans with the adult and talk about what they hope to get feedback on from the group.

Testing out Ideas For Each Method (30 minutes)

- **Survey Group** – they should have the rest of the group take their survey and then hear what they think. What did they like about the survey? Are there questions they would change or add?
- **Interview Group** – they might want to select a youth not in their interview group to interview in the fishbowl method (They sit in the middle of the circle while the rest of the youth look and observe). After the interview, the rest of the youth should share what they thought of the interview. Did they like particular questions? Are there questions they would change or add? Where there follow up opportunities missed?
- **Video Group** – they will present their ideas to the group

Meeting Back with the Small Group (15 minutes)

In the smaller groups again, they should debrief about the feedback they got and make adjustments in their questions or plans. Share with them their next task:

- **Survey Group** – photocopy surveys and agree on number of pilot surveys they aim to have completed by the next session
- **Interview Group** – agree on the number of additional interviews to complete
- **Video Group** – agree on how they are going to share the resources to videotape and what they plan to accomplish by the next session

Closing (5 minutes)

Go around the room and ask a closing check-out question about how they're feeling that day.

Sample

Y.E.L.L. Project Survey

Please take this survey seriously and answer each question honestly. Thank you.

1. How old are you? _____
 2. What grade are you in _____
 3. How many brothers/sisters do you have? _____
 4. What school do you go to? _____
 5. Where do you live by? _____ Example: I live near Jack in the Box on Whirlwind Road
-

Circle one

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| 6. Do you like your neighborhood? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 7. Do you live near friends from school? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 8. Is there anything amusing in your neighborhood for kids? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 9. Are there gangs in your neighborhood? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 10. Do you like your home life? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 11. Do you have an allowance? If so, how much? _____ | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 12. Do you have a hard time with transportation? | Yes | No | Sort of |
| 13. Do you like going to school? | Yes | No | Sort of |

If yes, why? _____

Please state your answer

14. What is your hobby? _____

15. Are you in a club or organization? If yes, which one?

16. How long have you lived in West City? _____

Please answer the following question.

29. What is your favorite fast food restaurant? _____ Why? _____

30. Do you have any information that might be useful for improving our community?

Please return to your teacher by Wednesday, March 14 afternoon at the latest.

Thank you for your time.

Session 21

How Is Our Data Collection Going?

Goals: To reflect on data collection efforts and progress

Materials: snacks, butcher paper, markers, tape

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Group Check In) (10 minutes)

Youth should describe how they feel and share if they were a candy bar, which would they be and why.

Small Group Reflections (15 minutes)

Each group will meet and reflect on their data collection efforts during the past week.

- **Survey Group** – they should prepare to present to the rest of the youth how their survey-piloting task went in order to finalize their survey. They should take time here to request feedback from the adult leader working with the group.
- **Interview Group** – they will also reflect on their successes and obstacles with their additional interviews. Provide some questions to guide the discussion that can include: What did you learn from your interviews? Did the people you interviewed tell you anything that surprised you? Was it easier to conduct an interview this time? Why or why not? What kinds of challenges did you face? What would you do differently next time? What are the most important things that you heard? What kinds of things do you think are important to share with others?
- **Video Group** – share with each other what they learned about the different neighborhoods they recorded. Ask the group questions such as: What did you learn about the different neighborhoods when you went out to videotape with others? What kinds of things surprised you? What kinds of things did you videotape that you think will be important to share with others? Why? What were the challenges or difficulties of videotaping? What would you do differently next time or how could you overcome obstacles next time?

It is important to note that much of the work is now happening outside of the sessions, and the time during session is spent regrouping, focusing, planning and sharing progress with the other small groups.

Survey Group Reports Out (30 minutes)

Bring the youth back into the circle and ask them to share their reflections and how their data collection efforts went. This can be a time for the survey group to pilot the survey with the youth in the group. The group can then answer feedback questions such as: Are the questions easy to understand? Is the length of the survey reasonable? Do you think the survey is going to provide valuable information? Are there questions you would add or delete? How might the survey questions add to the information we are learning from the interviews and videos?

Next Steps (10 minutes)

Based on the feedback the youth gave each other, the youth agree on their task prior to the next session.

Closing (10 minutes)

Youth go around and give each other “props”, for example, based on what they liked about their ideas for data collection within their groups.

Session 22

Group Check In: How Are We Doing?

Goal: For staff to interview/talk with youth individually about their involvement. To reflect on the data collected to date and check in on where we are in the process.

Materials: snacks, computers (such as in a computer lab setting), “Reflections on Data Collection” worksheets by method (attached), interview protocol, cassette tape with batteries, blank tapes

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Group Check In) (10 minutes)

Everyone should go around and name 1 positive thing and 1 not-so positive thing that happened to them today (doesn't have to have happened at school). If they are having trouble thinking of something from the day, say that they can consider things that have happened over the past week.

Reintroduce Interviews (10 minutes)

Remind the youth that some of the group leaders are going to interview them in order help us learn about their experiences and perspectives. Spend a little time going over the consent form (giving permission to interview them individually) and the purpose of the interviews. Ask youth if they have any questions. Explain to them that today, when they are not being interviewed, they have 4 tasks they can work on. The goal is to accomplish these things by the end of the next session.

Community Youth Researcher Interviews (45 minutes)

Group leaders will each interview 2 CYRs separately or together (depending on time). (These interviews can also be used to document youth development progress and outcomes which can be used later for evaluation or learning purposes). One adult will be in the computer lab supervising the rest of the youth who will be working on the following (in any order they want).

Task 1: Web research on potential audiences for their data presentations in the next couple of months

Task 2: Continue to give feedback to the survey group

Task 3: Reflect on data collection efforts—a worksheet will be provided with guiding questions for each method. These are the same as the ones answered in the previous session, but can be shared again if there wasn't enough time before or the groups didn't capture all the feedback.

Task 4: Web research for other information about West City they could use in their presentations

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Collect any completed work and ask youth to finish those tasks not completed during the session.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask youth to share one thing they learned about West City as they conducted their Internet research.

Worksheet

Reflections from Methods

Survey Group

1. Do you think this survey is going to provide valuable information? Why or why not?
2. Are there questions you would add or delete or change? Which ones?
3. How might the survey questions add to the information we are learning from the interviews and videos?

Interview Group

1. What did you learn from your interviews?
2. Did the people you interviewed tell you anything that surprised you?
3. Was it easier to conduct the interviews this time? Why or why not?
4. What was difficult about doing the interviews and what would you do differently next time?
5. What are the most important things that you heard?
6. What kinds of things do you think are important to share with others?

Video Group

1. What did you learn about the different neighborhoods when you went out to videotape with others?
2. What kinds of things surprised you?
3. What kinds of things did you videotape that you think will be important to share with others? Why?
4. What were the challenges or difficulties of videotaping?
5. What would you do differently next time, or how could you improve upon this method?

Session 23

How Are the Different Research Methods Coming Along? What Else Is There to Be Done?

Goal: For staff to continue interviewing the youth and finish up any more data collection before analysis.

Materials: snacks, pens, paper, interview protocol for youth, tape recorders with batteries, cassette tapes

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Focus and Count) (10 minutes)

Repeat “Focus and Count” activity mentioned previously (trying to count to 10 as a group). This can warm up the youth to focus on the independent work they will be doing during the session. Are they doing this task with ease or are they not listening to each other? Discuss what they can do to focus on the work of today.

Interviews/Independent Work (60 minutes)

Interviews: If the interviews were not completed at the last session, this would be a time to continue.

Independent Work: In the meantime, other youth should continue finishing up their tasks (reflections, audience research, survey feedback). If the survey group is done, they should make a list of youth who have submitted the feedback sheets to them and start going over them to finish revising their survey. Then they should make a list of items they need from the adult partners to plan for distribution of the surveys.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask youth to complete any outstanding work by the next session since that is when missing tasks will be reviewed and money will get deducted from their checks. Give a brief preview of what they will be doing next week (preparing youth to work with adults, begin data analysis, finish up surveys).

Take-Home Tasks

Complete any unfinished work, including pilot surveys.

Session 24

How Do We Prepare Our Data for Next Week's Analysis?

Goal: To begin organizing the data in order to prepare for analysis

Materials: snacks, paper, pens, data for each method

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Free Writing Activity) (10 minutes)

Start off with a “free write” activity. Ask the youth to write for 2 minutes about anything. The only rule is that they cannot lift their pen for the whole 2 minutes. They do not have to share what they wrote unless they want to do so.

Small Groups (45 minutes)

In their small groups, the youth should work on “pre-analyzing” activities according to their group’s method. Each group will have one adult group leader.

- **Survey Group** - the survey group is actually a step behind because they do not have data yet. The goal for the survey group today is to revise their survey. One group leader will bring a laptop. After revising their survey, they should agree on their plan for distributing the surveys. They have the option of having some teachers hand them out in class (teachers have agreed).
- **Interview Group** – this group should start to think about what they are looking for in the transcripts. We can provide a handout with some guiding questions or they can work to develop some questions that might help them organize the information from the different interviews. For example, what strategy should they use for reading the transcripts? Should everyone read their own transcripts and look to see what kinds of things people said about what they wanted in their neighborhoods? Should someone keep notes to keep track of the different kinds of comments so they could see which comments were similar and different from one another?
- **Video Group** - today they will be dealing mostly with the pictures they took to supplement the video footage. They should look at the pictures and come up with captions for the pictures. In addition, they should think about how they would sort and organize the pictures. What is important to show from their pictures? What is a logical story that the pictures tell?

Reporting Back and Check Out (20 minutes)

Each group should take no more than 5 minutes to share with the rest of the youth what they accomplished today. Other members of the group can ask questions or provide feedback.

Session 25

What Are the Next Stages of Analysis?

Goal: For the youth to continue the beginning stages of the analysis.

Materials: snacks, tape, pens, paper, nametags, survey cover letter (sample attached as a reference)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Celebrity Backs) (10 minutes)

Each person in the group writes down the name of a famous person (has to be someone that they think everyone in the room will be familiar with) and tape one name on each person's back. Ask the youth to go around asking yes and no questions to find out who is on their back (They did this activity before but with other youth's names on their backs, so this might be a little more challenging and getting them into a "questioning" mode).

Continue Group Work (55 minutes)

Each group should begin to analyze their data, except for the survey group.

- **Survey Group** – this group should have their plan for distribution in place and could begin writing a cover letter describing how long the survey will take to complete, what it's for, and where to return it. They should have some returned by the next session.
- **Interview Group** – one way to analyze the interview data is to code it using a computer software program. We don't have access to it at the site, so we can share with the youth that we have developed a way for them to "code" the information so that they can put it into categories themselves and make it easier to summarize. The youth should go through their interview transcripts and begin categorizing parts of the interviews into the following categories: Neighborhood (N), School (S), Home (H), and Miscellaneous (M). They can take an index card and summarize the point with the category name on top. Then they will sort all the cards into different categories.
- **Video Group** – this group should make a list of all the scenes they have shot and discuss anything else they would like to video tape before going through the editing process.

Closing (10 minutes)

Each youth goes around the room and says what she or he is looking forward to over the weekend.

Sample

Liberty Y.E.L.L. Project

Date: _____

Dear _____

The Liberty Y.E.L.L. Community Youth Researchers are writing to ask for your help in having your students take this survey. We have designed this survey to find out what Liberty students need and want at school and in the community. We think this an important social studies activity that will help us learn about our community.

We have piloted the survey and it should take no more than 5 minutes.
The surveys will remain anonymous.

- Please asked your students to complete the survey during your class today, Tuesday, or Wednesday of this week.
- Please return them to Ms. Acri's box no later than Wednesday, March 14 after school.

We will present our results to you in May.

If you have any questions, please talk to use Wednesday or Monday after school before our sessions.

Thank you for your support!

Session 26

What Other Data Analysis Do We Need to Do?

Goal: To begin/continue with data organization and analysis

Materials: snacks, paper plates, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Human Bridge) (10 minutes)

Objective: For each person to contribute his/her strengths to the group. Give the group a stack of paper plates and few black markers. The group should have enough paper plates to make a stepping stone bridge across the room. Don't tell the group that they will be making a bridge. Simply ask them to each take a paper plate and write down one of their own strengths, attributes or talents on it. Tell them that they can do this on more than one paper plate if they feel they have more than one strength. After the youth feel that they have written down as many strengths as they have, tell them they must use the paper plates to make a bridge across the room. When building the bridge and when crossing the room, the only plates that the group can use are the ones with strengths written down on them. At no time may anyone's feet touch the floor. If the group needs to add more plates to the bridge, people must write down more strengths on more plates and add them to the bridge. At the end, you can see if anyone thinks that there were strengths that youth did not write down that others felt they should have.

Continue Organizing/Analyzing Data in Groups (45 minutes)

(Make sure to share with survey group how proud and impressed we all are with their hard work, and improvement with the revisions of the survey since they may feel they are behind because not all their surveys have been returned yet.

- **Survey Group** - start looking through the surveys that have been turned in and discuss a plan for analysis. Start looking at some of the open-ended responses and maybe write them on index cards to help sort them and organize them.
- **Interview Group** – this group can go through the transcripts using the approach from the last session that seemed to be working: coding the surveys by neighborhood, school, home, and miscellaneous results.
- **Video Group** – the video group should begin putting captions to their pictures and begin viewing the material for their video. They should come up with some guiding questions to ask the other youth in the group for feedback about what should be included.

Report Back (10 minutes)

Each group will take 2 minutes to report back and share what they've accomplished in the session. The video group should share some of their video material and get feedback on the group about what is important to include.

Wrap-Up and Closing (10 minutes)

Each person should go around and say one positive thing about their day today (it could be something good from the session or from school). If you have time, ask the youth to write down something they are worried about (this may be appropriate as we approach the presentations), and they can write down as many things on different sheets of paper. They don't put their names on it. They pass them up to you and you read them out loud. Discuss the worry, but when you are done, crumple up the piece of paper into a

ball and you collect a bunch of balls. When you are done sharing everyone's worry, you all have a big "snowball fight" with the paper balls!

Session 27

Check In: Where Are We In the Analysis Process? Who Should Know About this Data?

Goal: For the youth to continue analyzing the data they have collected.

Materials: snacks, returned surveys, list of crazy sentences, blank paper, interview transcripts, index cards, index box, video group photos and captions, pencils, “Presentation Audience” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Crazy Sentence) (10 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to practice listening skills. Prior to the activity, make up a dozen or so sentences that are complete and correct but make them crazy and random. Then write each sentence on a small sheet of paper. (Sample sentences: my prom date had a large tattoo, big bird is my idol, the blue cow swam over the moon, it is good to eat spiders and caterpillars for breakfast, rubber bands stick to the ceiling on Christmas day.)

Place 2 chairs in front of the group. Ask for 2 volunteers and ask them to sit in the chairs in front of the group. The two players must read the sentence to themselves and then engage in a conversation. Each player attempts to state his or her sentence in the course of the conversation. The object is to slip in the sentence without anyone guessing what it is. You may wish to give them a topic to start with such as fishing, buying shoes, or anything else that has nothing to do with the sentences. Also give them a one or two minute time limit to slip their sentences in during the conversation. After the time limit, ask the rest of the group to guess what the crazy sentences were and whoever guesses correctly is given the opportunity to play the game for the next round.

Continue Analyzing Data in Small Groups (55 minutes)

- **Survey Group** – these are only some suggestion on how the group may want to proceed.
- Number any surveys that still need to be numbered. Then split the surveys up in 3 sections by grade. Ask the youth to run through the surveys for a few minutes and jot down any trends they see. We can also tell the youth that because we don’t know how much time we’ll have to enter all the survey data, are there any particular questions they definitely want answered?
- *(In our pilot project, we encountered a mixed blessing. Of 1000 surveys distributed, we received back approximately 850. We did not expect such a significant response rate, so we had to develop other strategies to enter the data. Whenever possible, involve the youth as much as is feasible in this piece. Whatever the group can’t do because of time can be better spend by identifying someone to enter the data and conduct some analyses.)*
- **Interview Group** – once the group has coded all the interview transcripts into categories, they can begin putting them into categories and begin summarizing their findings. They can also review the survey questions and see if any of their interview responses shed more light on some of the survey questions that were asked.
- **Video Group** – once the youth have a sense of all the footage they have available, they should begin making decisions about how they want to organize their video based on their research question. They should identify the various “pieces” the video will include so they can put their “story” together.

Take-Home Task and Closing (10 minutes)

Remind the youth that in a previous session, they began discussing who should know about their data. Distribute the “Presentation Audience” worksheet and ask the youth to complete it by the next session so we can discuss it as a group.

Session 28

What Are the Final Steps of Our Data Analysis?

Goal: To complete their data analysis in preparation to organize the presentations

Materials: snacks, tape recorders, “Findings and Recommendations” guide sheet for interview group, markers, flip chart, butcher paper, pens

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Group Check-In) (10 minutes)

Let the youth know that we want to recognize their hard work these past few weeks, so next week, we will take a break from the analysis and work on other orders of business. We’ll try to make sure that next week we have a less stressful session. Ask them what kind of snacks they would like during the “Stress Release” Session. Go around and ask the youth to say two words that describe how their day has been today (these are always good to include at the beginning, especially of a challenging session, to get a sense of how the group is feeling that day).

Audiences for Youth Presentations (15 minutes)

Before breaking into groups, a staff member will lead a conversation about the audience for their presentations. The youth should take their worksheets out and share their lists of folks they think should be invited and discuss why. Someone should record these lists on butcher paper so the whole group can see. They should decide how many presentations they should do, and therefore decide if they should have some presentations involve a combination of audiences. The group should share their ideas for how to invite people. As for a volunteer to make arrangements to set up the presentation with the particular audience. After the session, ask another adult leader to work with the youth on how to request to attend their meeting, ask for available dates, and briefly explain what the purpose of their presentation is (Ideally, the organization will have already been introduced to the project and will be familiar with it by the time the youth make logistical arrangements for making the presentation.)

Finish Analyzing Data in Groups (40 minutes)

- **Survey Group** – if the youth are entering the survey data themselves, see where they are in the process. If an outside party will run the analyses, the group leader will introduce them to the idea of the questions they can come up with when they want to understand the significance of their data. For example, in addition to telling teachers and policy makers about what all 800 or so kids think, they can break down their questions by age, by gender by neighborhood. They can see if kids who like school also like their neighborhood. Or if kids have something to do in their neighborhood, do they like their neighborhood better? Or if they don’t have transportation problems, do they like their neighborhood better? During this time, they should think then about what kinds of correlation questions they want to ask or how they would like the analyses presented to them. (Distinguish between correlation and causality.)
- **Interview Group** – this group will continue to go through the index cards and summarize their findings by categories: neighborhood, school, home, and miscellaneous. They can answer questions like: What are some patterns they see? What are the common things their peers are saying about neighborhood, school, and home? If time allow, they can also start to think about recommendations they may have.

- **Video Group** – review with the group that the video has two purposes: 1) the video is a product of their own that describes what youth need in their community and what they like about it but it also 2) is an important tool to support the findings of the survey and interview group. They should be talking to these two groups to see how their video can be used in the presentations to connect with the other data.

Closing (10 minutes)

Go around the room and ask each youth to say one word (without repeating) of what they want the stress release day to look like. Answer any other questions they have before the next session.

Session 29

Is There Any Last-Minute Work Before Preparing for Presentations?

Goal: For the youth to finish the data analysis in order to develop recommendations for their presentations

Materials: snacks, relevant materials for each method group, flip chart, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Guessing Game) (10 minutes)

The facilitator will begin with a story about going on a picnic and taking something. Each youth will then go around the room and name an item. The facilitator will then tell the youth whether or not he or she can bring that item, based on the secret rule that the facilitator makes up. Then, the youth guess what the rule is (for example, you can only bring an item that's name begins with a "u".)

Group Check-In of Data Analysis (55 minutes)

- **Survey Group** – the youth should have received some preliminary analyses from their data so far. The youth should review their data, ask clarifying questions, and request additional analyses based on what they looked at today.
- **Interview Group** – the interview group should take one last look at their list of findings and see if they make sense. For example, it will be difficult to say how many youth had a common sentiment, so it is okay if they say things like “Most youth thought that...” or “Fewer youth thought that....”. Their data will be supplemented by the survey data as well. If they have time, they can go into developing recommendations. Be sure to ask them to list their own recommendations based on the findings separate from what the interviewees themselves are recommending for their school and community.
- **Video Group** – the group should make any final decisions about the organization of their video before going to get it edited. Make transportation arrangements with the youth if they will participate in an editing session with a video company or a lab.

Take-Home Task and Closing (10 minutes)

The take-home task for the survey group will be to continue reviewing the data analyses and begin summarizing and highlighting some findings they think are important. The interview group should do the same from their list of findings. The video group will be taking a few hours this week to edit their video. Go around the room and ask them to say one word about how they're feeling about making their presentations.

Session 30

Stress Release Day!

Goal: For the youth to take a break from their work before preparing for their presentations

Materials: snacks, pictictionary cards, butcher paper, markers, light posterboard, scissors, glue, magazines, neighborhood photos (they already have the photos)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (“Props” Circle) (15 minutes)

Begin the session with a “props” circle as before in light of all their recent data analysis work.

Pictionary Race (20 minutes)

This is high action, rip roaring, fun pictionary game - fun for all ages!

One person sits in the middle of the room (or outside area) with a list of about 20 pictionary words. The group is split into two teams, with one team on one side of the room and one on the other. Each group must send a representative into the middle so they can get the word that they have to draw for the group. Then they run back to the group and draw. Once the group has guessed the word, they send another representative to the middle. This is a race to see who can get through the list first!

Making a Collage of Your Neighborhood (30 minutes)

Ask the youth to get in groups with other youth who live in their neighborhood. Use magazine pictures and photos that the youth previously took of their neighborhoods to create the collages on poster board. (These can be used as display boards when youth go out and make presentations)

Wrap-Up and Closing (10 minutes)

Explain to the youth the plan for the next session. Solicit feedback.

- **Survey Group** – will continue developing a list of findings and recommendations based on their surveys
- **Interview Group** – will come ready to share their findings and preliminary recommendations
- **Video Group**- will come back ready to share their edited video

We will also have an update on the different presentation dates so they can put them in their planner. Ask if there are any more questions. Are they ready to come back with the above?

Session 31

What Might Our Recommendations Look Like?

Goal: To begin developing recommendations for the different audiences to which they will be presenting

Materials: snacks, collages, glue, magazines, scissors, materials for each method group

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Continue Working on Neighborhood Collages) (20 minutes)

Start with a few minutes to work on the collage some more.

Update on Youth Presentations (10 minutes)

The youth who were responsible for scheduling the presentations will share back on the available dates and ask the youth to include these in their calendars. Answer any questions they may have about transportation, arrival time, etc.

Sharing the Video Group Video (10 minutes)

Ask the video group to present their completed video. Youth can give the group feedback or let them know how it connects to the other data their group has available.

Finish Developing Recommendations in Small Groups (20 minutes)

- **Survey Group** – this group should continue developing their recommendations since they may need more time to go through all the data.
- **Interview and Video Groups** – these groups can meet together and discuss the different recommendations and see how they fit in with the video.

Next Steps (10 minutes)

Remind the group that the next session is very important. Everyone will be sharing back with the whole group so we can start figuring out how to put the pieces together. Everyone should think about what they want to share. The next session will be half sharing and half identifying what the pieces of the presentations should look.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask the youth to go around the room and say one thing they are proud of contributing to the group so far.

UNIT

4

Preparing To Share What We Learned

This unit helps the youth prepare to share the data they collected through presentations. Here, youth will:

- *Reflect on their data collection and analysis process*
- *Finish developing recommendations relevant to their particular audiences*
- *Develop presentation skills necessary to share their data with city decision makers and other community members*

Session 32

What Have We Learned Together From the Data We Collected?

Goals: To share their progress and think about how to connect their data in organizing their presentations

Materials: snacks, data, pens, paper, flip chart, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (20 Questions) (10 minutes)

Start with a quick warm-up activity: play 20 questions or some kind of game that gets the youth into an inquisitive mode since they will be asking questions later on during the session. One person could volunteer to think up a person, place, or thing, and the rest of the group can ask “yes or no” questions until they figure out the answer. Depending on the time, the person who guessed the right answer could think up the next thing for the group to try to guess.

Meet in Small Groups (10 minutes)

During this time, the youth should get into groups and think about what they have learned from the data so far. Emphasize that they might not think they have much, but if we take a few minutes, they’ll realize how much they really do have to share with others. Let them know that each group will have about 10 minutes to present to the rest of the youth. In their presentations they should answer:

- What have you learned so far?
- What kind of information do you still need to support your goals?
- What kind of information do you think the other groups might be able to provide to help you out?

Sharing with Whole Group and Q & A’s (30 minutes)

Each group will have 10 minutes of spotlight. During this time, they can share their lessons learned as well as talk to the group about what they hope to accomplish for the presentation (next steps for them). The rest of the youth will then be given a chance to ask questions. They can ask a clarifying question or an interpretive question. The other youth will also be able to offer suggestions and talk about how their data might complement, support, or challenge the data from the group that is presenting.

One person will play the role of timekeeper. Explain to the youth that this is good practice for their presentations.

Meet in Small Groups (10 minutes)

After all of the groups present, the youth should return to their small groups with their group leaders. In these groups, they should review the feedback they got from the other members of the group and discuss plans for how to accomplish their goals during the upcoming sessions.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask each person to come up with 3-5 sentences about themselves. Let them know that these will be used in presentations and reports to let people know a little bit more about them. If there is something really personal they don’t want to share, then advise them not to include it since everybody will see it.

Session 33

How Do We Best Plan For Future Presentations?

Goal: To conceptualize the upcoming presentations

Materials: snacks, data, flip chart, butcher paper, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Sharing Bios) (10 minute)

Ask the youth to take out the bios they worked on as their take-home task and trade with another youth. Then ask the youth to go around in a circle and read the person's bio without saying their name. See if the youth can guess who the person is. The group can check each other to see if the bio is appropriate and provide feedback they may want to include.

Thinking Ahead (10 minutes)

Talk to the youth about the need to make decisions about what data to share and decisions about which presentations they want to participate in. Explain that the goal of today and the next session will be to try to pull out what is essential from the data. Then, we will need to shift gears and start thinking about putting the presentation together. At the end of today's session, we will spend a little time talking about future sessions in more detail.

Working in Small Groups (40 minutes)

- **Survey Group** - the survey group should make final decisions about what kind of data they should include in their presentations. What format should be developed for each audience? What data is relevant to one group but not another?
- **Interview Group** – this group should also begin sorting their findings and recommendations by audience. What information do the teachers need to know, but not the City Council, for example?
- **Video Group** – since we have been told that the presentations should be kept to 20 minutes, how will the youth present the video if this itself is 10 minutes long? How do they want to share it?

Preview Next Session (5 minutes)

Share with the youth that the next step in their work will be to decide what their presentations will look like, what final data they will include, how they will organize the presentation, and what materials they will need.

Take-Home Task and Closing (5 minutes)

Ask youth to revise their bios and be ready to turn them in at the next session. Do a check-in with the youth to see how they're feeling about making the presentations. Are they nervous? Excited?

Session 34

How Should We Organize Our Presentations?

Goal: To begin putting the pieces together for the presentations, considering the different audiences.

Materials: snacks, paper, writing utensils, flip chart, markers, butcher paper, data, results

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Snow Ball Fight) (10 minutes)

Start the session with a “snow ball fight” (this may have been done before, but it is okay to do it again). Give each youth a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Explain that they should write down on the piece of paper one thought they have about the upcoming presentations. It could be a worry, a concern, a fear—or something positive too. They should not put their name on the paper. After they have written their thoughts/concerns/fears etc., they should crumple up the paper into a ball. These balls are now their “snow balls” and they can throw the snowballs to each other until the facilitator thinks it’s time for the snowball fight to end. Then they can go around the room and pick up the snowballs. There are 2 options: 1. the adult facilitator can read some of them aloud or 2., the youth can read aloud the snowballs they pick up.

Small Groups According to Audience (45 minutes)

The youth will be split into 3 groups. Each group will have a representative from the video, survey, and interview group. Each group will work together to agree on the findings and recommendations that should be shared with their specific audience. Group 1 will work on the findings and recommendations to share with the Liberty Middle School teachers, Group 2 will work on the presentation for the School Board and Group 3 will work on the presentation for the City Council. The idea will be to consolidate ideas from their method group brainstorming from previous sessions.

At the same time, 3 other youth will work on the introduction to the presentation. The goal for this group is to write 3 different potential introductions (for each of the 3 audiences). The youth can come up with a standard introduction and then decide how it will be different for each audience.

Sharing Back (15 minutes)

The youth should come back together as a group and share the findings and recommendations they have developed by audience. If there is time, they should provide feedback on post-it notes for each one. If there isn’t, it can be continued at the next session.

Closing (5 minutes)

Give a preview of the next session. We will give each other feedback on the findings and recommendations, choose the media and materials we want to use for the presentations, and begin typing and compiling the PowerPoint presentation. Questions? Ask the youth to think of suggestions and changes they would make from what they saw today. Go around the room and ask one of the youth to come up with a “check-out” question for everyone to answer.

Session 35

What Else Do We Need for the Presentations?

Goal: For the youth to begin working on the visual/media aspects of the presentation

Materials: snacks, butcher paper from the last session, computer with PowerPoint software, posters, glues, scissors, flip chart, markers, candy

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (“Props” Circle) (10 minutes)

Start off with the “props” circle. Anyone who wants to can take the “props” pen and give a compliment to another youth or adult staff member. Bring candy so each youth can give another something after giving props. (Candy also helps to see who hasn't gotten props yet.)

Share Back (20 minutes)

The butcher paper from last session will be posted around the room. The groups will have a chance to share back their decisions about findings and recommendations for the different audiences. The youth should be encouraged to give each other feedback, make suggestions about additions, revisions, phrasing, and types of materials/props, they should develop, etc.

Decision Points:

1. Present by method vs. present by common findings?
2. Vote on template for PowerPoint (print out or display on a screen, different power point templates for them to choose from)

Putting it Together (35 minutes)

Ask the youth to split up into 3 groups:

- **Group 1: PowerPoint Design** – this group will take the PowerPoint template that was decided and will type the introductions, findings, and recommendations for each audience. Once they type it all in, they should focus mainly on the first presentation, which in this case is to the City Council.
- **Group 2: Charts and Supporting Documents** – this group will make a list of the types of charts, graphs, and supporting information that was listed by each of the audiences. Once they make a rough list of each audience again, they should spend the rest of the time particularly on the City Council presentation. They'll probably have to talk back and forth with the PowerPoint group about which charts they want included within the slide and/or blown up into posters/handouts.
- **Group 3: Visual Displays** – this group will discuss and list the visual displays they want. For example, do they want an exhibit at the beginning or end? Is there any previous work they want displayed or duplicated for distribution in handouts? They can then move to make neighborhood posters based on pictures and captions the video group developed. If they have time, they can start editing the bios and putting them into one document.

Closing (10 minutes)

Review with the youth the enormous amount of progress they have made in these past sessions. Explain that in the next couple of sessions, they will have a chance to see what all the pieces look like together,

and we can start practicing. Ask youth to go around and say what they're looking forward to doing in the next couple of days.

Session 36

How Do We Deliver a Presentation?

Goals: For the youth to finish putting the pieces together for their presentations and start practicing

Materials: snacks, VCR and multimedia equipment, draft of PowerPoint slides, dry erase markers, overheads, surveys, and interviews

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Revisiting Snowball Fight) (10 minutes)

Review some of the worries that the youth listed in their previous snowball fights. Let them know that in the next few sessions, we will be working on developing different presentation skills and practicing so that they are prepared and feel confident about making them. Ask them if there is anything we can do right away in particular to support them.

Public Speaking (15 minutes)

A staff member will present a short 30-second speech in 2 ways: One way, he or she will just read from his or her script and not make eye contact; the second way, he or she will lose his or her place and forget what he or she wants to say. The youth will spend time evaluating the person's public speaking skills. Then as a group, they will brainstorm a list of good public speaking skills that they should strive for when presenting. (Instead of giving them a list of skills, you will see that they already know a lot of these and it will make them feel good to recognize that they know many of them already. A handout can be developed as a supplement after they do their brainstorming, if necessary.)

City Council Presentation Group Practice (45 minutes)

This is a time for the youth who will be presenting to the City Council to practice their presentations. Because there may be several presentations, not all the youth need to be present at all of them. The adult facilitator can go over the slides with the youth and make final modifications. The notes pages should be printed out and decisions should be made about who is going to present what part, including the video. The take-home task for this group is to develop a script for their part.

While this is going on, another adult should work with the other youth to get started on the next presentation or finish developing the visual materials for the group. You can explain at the beginning that it is okay to work on the presentation that you may not be attending. We are all one group!

Closing (5 minutes)

Each youth should say something positive about today's session. If they don't have anything positive, then they should throw out a suggestion of what could make it better.

Session 37

How Can We Make Our Presentations The Best They Can Be?

Goal: To begin practicing for the presentations and give each other feedback

Materials: snacks, writing utensils, presentation scripts, PowerPoint slides, flip chart, butcher paper, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Props Circle) (10 minutes)

Start off with the “props” circle. Anyone who wants to can take the “props” pen and give a compliment to another youth or staff member. (or ask the youth to suggest a warm up..)

City Council Group Practice Presentation (50 minutes)

Before the City Council Group presents, revisit with the group what it means to give feedback. Ask the youth to pay attention to particular things. For example, is the information clear? Is it relevant to that audience? Is there anything that should be added or deleted? Is the presenter using good presentation skills? Remind the youth that a good way to share feedback is to start off with saying something that they did well. Then they could ask a question about something or comment on some aspect of the presentation. For anything they point out, they should give a suggestion to make it better. Explain that it doesn't count to just say what you don't like. You have to also contribute by suggesting what could be done about it.

Ask the youth to begin the presentation. Leave time for feedback and discussion.

Closing (15 minutes)

Go over any logistical issues with the City Council group. Check in with the youth who are working on other presentations and see where they are in the process. For the closing, ask each youth to say something that they know about the City Council. (This will give you a sense about how much they know about their audience and if you need to take time to talk about the details about who they're going to present to further.)

Session 38

Are There Any Last Minute Questions Before the City Hall Presentation?

Goal: To do a final run-through practice for the City Council presentation at City Hall (youth not presenting will not attend session this day)(this session takes place at City Hall)

Materials: equipment for the presentation, youth scripts, PowerPoint Presentation, “Y.E.L.L. Reflection” worksheet (attached)

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Group Check In) (5 minutes)

Go around and ask the youth what they think happens in the City Hall Chambers. Ask the youth to go around and introduce themselves to the City Hall staff member who will provide an orientation to what the meeting will look like, who will be there, etc.

Review Logistics (15 minutes)

The City Hall staff member will review the logistics for the presentation with the youth. She/he will let the youth know where the A/V equipment is and where they should stand to make their presentations. He/she can review where people will be sitting and to whom they should direct their presentation.

Run Through Presentation (25 minutes)

Each youth will go up to the podium and go over their part of the presentation. The rest of the group will give feedback.

Closing (10 minutes)

Once the youth feel comfortable about their presentation, the group should thank the staff member and arrange to meet the council members if possible.

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Ask the youth to complete the Y.E.L.L. reflection to think about the presentation. If they have any questions or concerns about it before the presentation date, ask them to call one of the adult staff members or another youth.

On the way home, treat the youth to ice cream or a treat (since they are technically “working” today while the other youth have the day off. Let them know their work and time are appreciated).

Worksheet

Y.E.L.L. Reflection

This is a reflection piece in preparation for your upcoming presentations to the City Council.

What are you most looking forward to about the presentation?

What are you least looking forward to about the presentation?

How do you think that the City Council will respond to the youth presentation?

Which of the three presentations will have the biggest impact on youth in West City? Why do you think so?

Unit 5

Sharing Our Findings and Recommendations

In this unit, the youth share their findings with the audiences they identified. Special attention is paid to the youth:

- *Reflecting on their presentations*
- *Developing follow up steps to their recommendations*
- *Identifying next steps for their involvement*

Session 39

How Did the City Council Presentation Go?

Goals: For the City Council presenters to reflect on their experience and revisit questions regarding decision making in West City

Materials: snacks, posters for warm-up questions, “Next Steps for Involvement” worksheet (attached)

Start out with cupcakes for snacks to celebrate the awarding of the Safe Spaces grant!

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Self-reflection) (10 minutes)

Post different sets of questions for a) those who are doing upcoming presentations, and b) those who made the City Council presentations.

Upcoming Presenters:

Which presentations will you be making? (School Board, Liberty Middle School teachers, or both)

What are you most looking forward to about your presentation?

What are you least looking forward to about the presentation?

What do you hope will come out of your presentation(s)?

City Council Presenters (in addition to their reflection questions):

What stood out to you about the presentation yesterday? What did you notice?

How did you feel about the response from the City Council members to your presentation?

Main Activity: Discussion (60 minutes)

To start out, ask if yesterday’s presenters could give highlights of last night to the youth who weren’t there. Let’s try and go from start to finish, and let’s see if everyone who presented can add something. Who’d like to start?

Now let’s reflect a bit about the experience. (This part is more open-ended depending on what comes up in the highlights. Some questions are directed at reflecting on last night, others are meant to include the youth who weren’t there as well.)

How did you feel about your presentation?

What were some things that you noticed about the City Council?

How did you feel about the response from the City Council?

What do you think the next steps should be?

Of the different presentations you will make this spring, which is most important to you? Why? (This is a question everyone can answer.)

Now that you have made your recommendations and seen part of the meeting, what do you think will happen? How do you think decisions are made in West City? (revisiting an earlier conversation)

How can youth influence decision making about issues that affect your lives?

Take-Home Task (5 minutes)

Preview: Next session, you’ll be asked to think about what role you might want to play in affecting issues that affect youth after this phase of the project officially ends. Ask the youth to complete the “Next Steps for Involvement” worksheet by the next session.

Closing (5 minutes)

Ask the youth to go around and say one thing they learned today regarding the City Council presentation.

Worksheet

Next Steps for Involvement

Name _____

School Attending Next Year: _____

At this point, we would like to know from you whether you might be interested in continuing to be involved in the project in some way. There are many different possibilities for you to stay involved. (You can either be compensated through a stipend or community service!) It's up to you! Please take a moment to think about this and answer the questions below. We know you have an exciting year ahead and may not totally know your schedule yet, but just do the best you can. **By answering these questions, you are not committed to participate. We just want to know what you're thinking right now and the staff will follow up with you individually in the next couple of weeks.**

Do you plan to continue living in West City? _____

Please circle the kinds of things you might want to be involved for the next school year. (Choose as many as you like.)

Be a Y.E.L.L. evaluator

Meet 1 or 2 days in the early summer and share what worked in the project, what didn't etc.

Be a youth representative

Serve on a committee (community/city) that works to meet the needs you found through the project (probably once per month).

Be a youth ambassador

Be available to talk about Y.E.L.L. to other youth, make presentations on what Y.E.L.L. is, and what you found in your research. (1-8 times a year, depending on your availability, time, and interest).

Be an involved West City youth

Be connected to community organizations/groups in your own neighborhood to work on the needs found in your research.

Be a mentor

Serve as a mentor for next year's project (probably Mondays and Wednesdays after school). This could involve just mentoring another youth or also doing some more research in your neighborhood or school if you like.

Be a Liberty Middle School Safe Spaces Planning Team Representative

Serve on the Liberty Middle Safe Spaces Planning Team to begin putting the different services for the center together. (This would probably require a meeting every other week).

I want to continue being involved but I'm not sure how.

I'd like to talk about it more with a staff member.

I have a different idea about what I'd like to do. (Is there a special project you would like to lead? Work with a certain community group? Do some research on your own with our support? Anything goes!) How much time could you dedicate to this?

Thanks for the memories but I do not wish to continue any kind of involvement next year.

Please provide reason.

Sessions 40-46

What Are Our Next Steps?

How Do We Prepare for Our Other Presentations

Goal: To review with the youth their interest in future involvement. To prepare for the remaining scheduled presentations

Materials: snacks, materials from previous work in preparation for presentations

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (Group Check In) (5 minutes)

Ask the youth to around the room and say one good quality about her/himself and an example of when it was useful.

Future Involvement and Interviews (15 minutes)

Collect the future involvement interest task sheets from the youth. Mention that we will follow up individually and answer any questions they have. Let them know we will be interviewing them individually as before to see how the project is going for them.

Preparing for Next Presentation (45 minutes)

Sessions 40-46 follow a similar format as the preparation for the City Council presentation. As the next group prepares for their presentation, another group can begin working on the following one. Special attention should be given to supporting the youth in feeling confident in the skills they learned and deciding what the next steps should be in following up with their recommendations.

Closing Activity (10 minutes)

Ask the youth to go around and say one sound that they hate hearing and one that they like.

Session 47

How Are We Feeling Now?

Goals: For the youth to reflect on their work over the past several months and begin working on the next steps of their involvement

Materials: snacks, flip chart, butcher paper, markers

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (“Props” Circle) (10 minutes)

Welcome the group and introduce the “props circle”. Review that they’ve done this before, but this will take a different twist. Give each person 15 small pieces of paper. Ask them to write some “props” to each person on a separate sheet. We will take these props and put them in a small box for each youth to be distributed next session.

Evaluation Activity (35 minutes)

Remind the youth of the last evaluation activity we did earlier in the year. As this phase of the project comes to a close, explain that we would like to do this again to share new knowledge and recommendations for next year, just as they have done for their presentations.

Put up the following questions up and distribute markers for youth to answer the following questions. List at least:

- 2 things you enjoyed about Y.E.L.L.
- 2 things that were challenging about Y.E.L.L.
- 2 things you learned about your community
- 2 things you learned about yourself
- 2 thing you learned about the team
- 2 things you would change about Y.E.L.L. for next year
- 2 things you would like to keep the same

Have a discussion about the answers. During this time, staff members can also finish conducting interviews with the youth on the next steps for their involvement.

Next Steps (5 minutes)

Remind the youth that the next session will be the last official session before youth move on to take work on in various leadership capacities. Set a time a month from now for them to get together and begin meeting periodically to share lessons learned and experiences (or more often if necessary).

Closing (15 minutes)

Ask the youth to pick an object in the room. Then ask the group: “If, (said object) could talk, what would it say about our group?” Each person goes around and answers the question, ending with the director of the project giving big “props” to the group.

Ask the youth to bring music for the last session.

Session 48

Celebration!

Goals: For the youth to celebrate their accomplishments and appreciate each other

Materials: checks, letters of recommendation, certificates, “props” boxes, camera, music, cake

Welcome and Warm-Up Activity (To Be Decided by Youth) (10 minutes)

One of the youth will lead a warm-up activity

Youth Mapping Celebration (60 minutes)

Ask everyone to go around and give “props” to someone in the group. Staff goes around and gives each youth props.

Have staff stand and do a congratulations ceremony, where they give each youth their letter of recommendation, check, and “props” box.

Congratulate each other and take group photos.

Closing Activity (10 minutes)

Go around the room and thank someone else in the room.

Distribute contact information for youth to continue to be in touch with each other.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

The following is a series of lessons we learned from our pilot work in developing the Y.E.L.L. Project. We hope sharing these lessons serves useful as you carry on your own youth development work. Considering that each community is different, some will undoubtedly be more applicable than others.

On Getting the Project Off the Ground

Create Investment in Youth Development In the Schools and the Community: Often times, it is challenging to mobilize multiple partners to work together to support youth development efforts. One barrier is a hesitation among various sectors to collaborate. Individuals such as teachers or leaders of different organizations may be difficult to engage in the process because of the growing demands on them. Here it is important to provide clarity and a clear goal of the effort, as well as benefits and supports for their involvement. Strive to become joint owners of the process. Take time to have meaningful conversations with a range of individuals and organizations to highlight the importance of youth development. It is critical to generate support for this work from the outset. Identify other stakeholders within organizations to be your cheerleaders.

Identify Allies for Recruitment: This process can be a challenge. As with other stakeholders, be clear about how the young people can benefit from the process and highlight what they can contribute. A monthly stipend may not be a huge compensation, but it can let the youth know that you recognize and value their time and commitment. If other youth involvement efforts are already taking place, involve other youth in the outreach and selection process. Identify key people who youth trust to share your excitement for this project.

Get the Youth There: One of the most important tasks in getting the project off the ground is getting them in the door the first day. Make sure that all barriers to participation have been eliminated, such as providing transportation, setting appropriate meeting times and days, ensuring they are all able to cash their checks, etc.

On Coordinating the Sessions

Be Clear About Everything: As seen in Unit 1, developing a set of agreements by which the group will abide is important in creating an atmosphere of respect and clearly understood expectations. Similarly, though the youth drive the process, there are some clear goals that can be shared with the group at the beginning to outline the various stages of the process. On a daily basis, each plan for the day should be reviewed at the beginning of the session and youth should be asked for feedback on revisions. Giving a preview of the next session can also be shared with the group, which can provide room for youth to let you know whether they are ready to move on to this phase or not. Any tasks or worksheets should build on what took place during the session. If it is a new concept, it should be clear enough for the youth to do without major difficulty. Go over the worksheet and ask if they have any questions throughout.

Have People in the Room! Having the support of various adults in the room who participate in the session on a regular basis is key. Involving a consistent group of adults helps youth develop relationships with other adults or older youth who know that their purpose for being there is to support the youth. Having more people in the room also allows the group to address youth's diverse needs and interests.

Working With Youth With Different Skills: Because the Y.E.L.L. team represented a diverse group of students, we came to recognize that we had youth with different skills and motivations in the group.

Some students were very vocal and excelled academically, carrying those qualities over to the sessions. Student who were struggling in school were equally excited about being a member of the team, but weren't as confident in their abilities and were more easily distracted or frustrated. It is helpful to keep your eyes open and consider reasons why students may not be engaged in a particular task. Ask them what you can do to support them instead of asking why they didn't complete a task. Follow-up phone calls with the youth, their parents, and teachers can let the adults know what else is going on in the young person's life and provide ideas on how to better support them. Another strategy that helped elicit various youth's voices was to have a blend of activities, some written, others oral, small groups, large groups, so that youth could voice their opinions in the ways they felt most comfortable. Coordinate schedules with teachers to avoid scheduling major deadlines at the same time whenever possible. Involving parents in the sessions and attending presentations can also help make the youth feel more supported and gets them involved too!

Embed Leadership Opportunities Wherever Possible: Whether it is leading a group activity, serving as time keeper or serving on a board committee, try to embed leadership opportunities of different scales for youth within the sessions. Youth can begin by serving in a "support" role for the group, for example, by taking notes or recording the group process. Once they feel comfortable, they can later move on to other responsibilities, such as coordinating portions of a session, sharing information between groups, and eventually working with adults in other decision making processes. Explore ways to make various tasks meaningful leadership opportunities.

Make Take-Home Tasks Meaningful: In our pilot work, we found that providing youth with worksheets to think about their work was useful for several reasons. First, a brightly colored worksheet reminded youth of the tasks that needed to be returned by the next session. Also, the youth were able to use these sheets as references in group discussions. These worksheets could also be collected later and also serve as youth data for the process. However, it is important to make sure that the task is followed up with at the next session and that the youth see that the efforts of their work are put to use. That way they will see that it is not just "homework" for "homework's" sake, but an important contribution to the work.

Expect the Data Analysis to Take Time: As in the case with any research project, there never seems to be enough time. The limited length of each session may not provide enough time to complete all the data analysis even in several sessions. It is important to understand and be patient with the various types of learning at play. First, the youth are becoming familiar with the process of collecting and analyzing data. Second, they are also trying to analyze the data and sort through it in addition to their own thoughts about the findings. Depending on your organization's capacity, various software tools can facilitate this process, but it can also make it very demanding in terms of time. Just remember to be patient with the process and the key findings and recommendations will begin to surface. Enlist the support of adults in the community experienced with data analysis who can work with the youth.

Assess Your Technological Capacity: Various levels of technical expertise and equipment will be needed to carry out the youth research. Some basic tools will include tape recorders, computers and video cameras. However, in some situations, they may be hard to come by. For presentations, projectors may be required. As mentioned previously, the data analysis may need the software and expertise of experienced adults. Identify your needs in the planning process and contact local business or organizations who may be able to provide this support.

On Keeping Youth Engaged

Agree That Youth Will Drive the Process: In order for the youth to feel connected to their work, they need to be both the owners and drivers of the process. This is where flexibility comes in. Although you can use a session plan as a guide, be flexible with the direction in which the youth want to take the work. There is a tension here, because the adult coordinator serves both the role of “employer” and also “group facilitator.” It is important that the roles and responsibilities of each be outlined with the youth from the beginning. For example, youth are expected to abide by their group agreements to complete tasks for example, but they should have the final decision in making decision points about which direction their research should take or what feedback to accept. The adults are there to support them in making sound decisions. Let the youth know that feedback for facilitators is always welcome, but it needs to be accompanied with concrete suggestions for how facilitators could improve (a “suggestion box” can also be set up to make it anonymous).

Create a Comfort Zone: No space can be “completely safe” when it comes to youth expressing their feelings about the world around them. However, various steps can be taken to ensure that we know where in the comfort zone spectrum youth fall. Creating a comfort level among the group that involves respect is critical. Youth can at least have some guarantees, for example, that people outside of the project will not show up uninvited. This can be assured by the development of a visitor policy, for example.

Include Team-Building Activities Whenever Possible: As you will have noted in the curriculum, almost every session includes a team-building activity at the beginning and a closing “check-out” at the end. The initial warm-up activities are oriented toward the youth getting to know each other and building trust among the group. If these sessions are held after school, it also sets a positive, high-energy tone for the rest of the session. The closing activities may be short and depending on the question asked, may serve as session evaluations and a check-in on what the group has learned or how they are feeling. Spend a few more minutes in the warm-up activities after holidays or major breaks between sessions for the youth to regroup.

Develop Youth-Adult Partnerships From the Start: Begin working with adults from the beginning to identify what kind of data they need, how they will be prepared to address the youth recommendations, and how they will create opportunities for youth to partner with adults as decision makers. This will ensure that the youth understand that there is a process in place in which to direct their efforts and a place at the table for them to make decisions that affect youth.

Reflect On and Evaluate the Work: Reflection on the process along the way through various lenses is important to assess what improvements need to be made. Careful documentation of staff lessons as well as youth lessons can serve as important references in improving the project and continuing to provide a positive and productive experience for everyone involved. Some ideas include videotaping each session, interviewing the youth periodically, keeping staff session reflections, or reviewing community youth researchers’ work progress.

Take Time to Celebrate: Whether it be a young person’s birthday, a presentation, or a school achievement, be sure to take the time and celebrate achievements of whatever scope and magnitude. The youth will appreciate the fact that you recognize these achievements and value all aspects of who they are. If in a check-in activity you notice that youth feel worn-out, come up with an activity that requires moving around and take more time with it – even if it pushes some of the tasks to the following session.

REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This is just a preliminary list, as you give us feedback on this curriculum, please share with us other resources that may have been helpful to you, so we can add them to our list.

Fiore, K., Honig, M., KID POWER (1997). Working with Young People as Partners: A Guide for Healthy Start Sites.

Jones, Alanna (1999). Team –Building activities for every group. Rec Room Publishing, WA.

Community Youth Mapping

<http://www.aed.org/us/cyd/cym/cym.html>

Community Youth Mapping is a project of the Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Youth Mapping involves young people, who gather information by locating and documenting in a given locality. “These young people canvass neighborhoods block-by-block, in search of the programs, services, opportunities and caring adults available to them and their peers. In essence, ‘Youth Mappers’ become local ethnographers—asking and answering questions—by providing from a youth-oriented perspective, insight into the communities in which they live, the culture of which they are a part, and the young people with whom they interact.”

Public/Private Ventures

<http://www.ppv.org/>

Has a very helpful website which includes links, newsletters, research and access to all of their work with community development. A good source for help with youth-adult partnerships. An important resource for us in helping us conceptualize the youth-adult preparation.

Youth On Board

<http://www.youthonboard.org/>

A good example of ways to involve youth in community decision making, and efforts toward changing attitudes toward youth. Have guidebooks and ideas for working on the youth-adult partnership piece.

For a broader selection of websites please visit

<http://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/resources/links.shtml>