

WHY SHOULD WE BOTHER?

Purpose: To have participants realize the importance of working in partnership with adults.

Materials: Handout: “Who Benefits From Youth Participation Programs?”

Time: 10 minutes

Procedure:

We have looked at our relationships with adults in a couple of different ways. We have role-played pieces in which the adult assumed that the young person had done something wrong. We tried to figure out how we could turn that around to the positive. We also tried to come up with some of the benefits that adults bring; and to examine what it is we find challenging. In the next few minutes we are going to look a little deeper into why we should try to preserve and promote partnerships. We, as young people, have extraordinary things to contribute to this world today. By working together and including adults, there is nothing that can't be accomplished. Let's think for just a moment about how our working in partnership can help.”

For each of the following items (organizations, communities, youth, and adults), have them brainstorm for a moment or two, putting their responses on newsprint.

“Organizations....

Communities....

Youth - ourselves.... what type of things would be valuable to you in developing relationships with adults?

Leader's Notes

Make sure there is plenty of pause time between each of the four pieces:

- Organizations
- Communities
- Youth
- Adults

Adults.... What is it that we bring to this relationship that can help the adults?"

“On the handout you are receiving you will see that these benefits are itemized. Obviously this includes some of the same ones that you came up with, those you saw as benefits, and others that you thought of that are not listed.”

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some of the key thoughts, feelings or words that jump out at you about this list?
2. What does this list say about the role of youth in programs?
3. How might you share this information with young people you know? How about adults?
4. What will you take from this workshop that you will use in the future?

Leader's Notes

WHO BENEFITS FROM YOUTH PARTICIPATION PROGRAMS?

ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations that involve young people derive the following benefits:

- ▲ Young people's fresh ideas unshackled by "the way things have always been done," a new and unique perspective on decision-making, including specific information about young people's needs, interests and responses to existing services.
- ▲ A better client perspective on data analysis and planning because young people can acquire data that may be unavailable to adults.
- ▲ More effective outreach for young people. Since youth can get the message out and recruit or refer youth to needed programs, organizations can effectively provide important information to their peers (e.g., information about AIDS prevention).
- ▲ An additional human resource with youth volunteers sharing work responsibilities. Some worn-out services can be brought back to life with youth's enthusiasm and creativity.
- ▲ Better acceptance of decisions by young people because they are involved in the decision-making process.
- ▲ Revitalization by youth's contributions in partnership with the skills and experiences of adult professionals.

COMMUNITIES

Communities that involve young people benefit in these ways:

- ▲ More current active contributing community members.
- ▲ Pool of future leaders with skills, experiences and commitment
- ▲ Insights on how to identify and meet the needs of young citizens.
- ▲ A reduction in negative youth activities.
- ▲ Infusion of new energy from young people that builds positive community spirit
- ▲ New youth role models demonstrate that there are real opportunities for advancement, self-fulfillment, and social justice in their world.

YOUTH

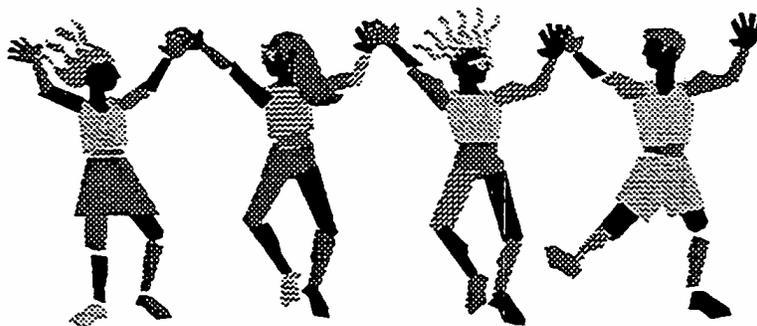
Young people who are involved in organizations and communities benefit in these ways:

- ▲ Positive status and stature in the community.
- ▲ Increased self-esteem and broader career choices.
- ▲ New skills and community leadership experiences.
- ▲ A better understanding of diversity.
- ▲ Sense of self-discipline and ability to manage their lives.
- ▲ Better appreciation for the multiple roles adults play, such as coach, supporter and mentor.

ADULTS

Adults who form partnerships with young people benefit in these ways:

- ▲ Valuable human resources to help them in their work. Adults are relieved of the need to be responsible for everything.
- ▲ Enhanced sensitivity to the needs of youth so that they can plan programs and activities accordingly.
- ▲ Real appreciation for the creative energy that young people contribute to make programs successful.
- ▲ Positive view of young people.
- ▲ A better understanding of diversity.



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