

**CO-MOTION: EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH
SKILL TRAINING AND COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS**

By

Rachel M. Hefte

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Committee:

Barbara Swanson
Julie Wilbert
Linda Alton

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To all young people
who have great ideas, energy, enthusiasm and the vision
to make this world a better place.

All youth in our community will have as their right,
opportunities through education and employment at
both the secondary and post-secondary levels to
empower them to shape their own future.

Building Community Toolkit
Innovation Center for Community and
Youth Development, 2001

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

When you picture adolescents in our society, what do you see? Perhaps you see them as students or athletes. Others may see teens hanging out on street corners with colorful hair and tattoos. The media often portrays teenagers as “troublemakers,” misrepresenting those making a smooth transition from childhood to adulthood. Parents and teachers can tell you about many adolescents who are leading positive, productive lives, yet their stories usually do not make the news.

Beyond stereotypes, some youth advocates argue that adults fear teenagers. An English teacher from Ohio read an article about teens and respect (Knapp, 2001) and then wrote a letter in response, “Adults have made it quite clear, in restrictive measures such as curfews, customer limits, mall security guards following every group of teens from store to store, etc., that they are scared of teenagers today” (Gunnerson, 2001, p. 16). Other researchers have concluded that “Most Americans look at today’s teenagers with misgiving and trepidation, viewing them as undisciplined, disrespectful and unfriendly” (Kimball-Baker & Roehlkepartain, 1998, p. 8).

Adults also have different opinions about the role youth can play in our schools and communities. Some remind us that youth are the leaders of tomorrow. While Peter Raducha emphasizes, “Young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow. They are the leaders of today” (Burbidge, 1997, p. 197). Youth, who are consciously aware of their role in society, point to barriers to their participation and leadership. Some claim that they are victims of “adultism” and are not treated as valuable members of their

communities. “Adulthood is the systematic exploitation, mistreatment, and abuse of young people by adults” (Kivel & Creighton, 1997, p. 73). Because of their age, young people report that they are often targets of bias and discrimination. More subtle forms of adulthood include inadequate funding for schools and youth programs, the lack of youth participation in decision-making, and blaming youth for violence, drugs, and bad schools.

As I envisioned a more supportive world for young people, these questions surfaced: What if we adults challenged our stereotypes and preconceptions of teenagers and began to see them as energetic and creative beings? What if we created opportunities for young people to channel their energies to do good things in our schools and communities? What if we suspended our judgments, our doubts and focused on great possibilities? What if we began to mentor young people through their teenage years and empowered them to be involved, gaining the skills they need to be active citizens and leaders in their communities?

Today there are many initiatives that focus on the assets of youth and how they can contribute to their communities. While working with community groups struggling to bring youth into this process, I realized the need for training both adults and youth in methods of integration and involvement. This paradigm shift to valuing youth as equal contributors in our communities will depend on changing our attitudes towards young people. It will depend on our openness to mentor and work side-by-side with youth. It will depend on whether we can share the power. It will depend on whether we take the time to support and empower youth to learn the skills they need to be active citizens.

After conducting youth leadership trainings during the summer of 2000, I wondered how these young adolescents had changed. Did they feel more confident? Did they see themselves as leaders who can change their community? Did they have the skills they need in order to “make a difference?” This capstone will focus on two questions: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence?”

My Story

Thinking of my own journey, I wondered how I gained my “action competence.” Becoming an activist was not a path I consciously chose. In fact, I never thought much about the development of my passion for peace and justice until I was interviewed for the book, The Compassionate Rebel (Berlowe, Janke, & Penshorn, 2002). The interviewer’s questions got me thinking: What influenced me to care about the world around me? What was my ‘ah-ha’ or consciousness-raising story that got me to see the world in a different way? When did I know I had to do something to improve the world? When I reviewed my story, I realized that my path to become a change agent began with early experiences as well as the influence of teachers and mentors.

A closer look at my history reveals why I am so passionate about empowering the next wave of change agents to improve our communities and our larger world. I now understand the importance of my parents, my teachers, and other significant heroes, mentors, and friends. I further realize the significance of integrating what I learned along my journey and the need for support in dealing with challenging issues and feelings. My

family, friends, and teachers have had a positive influence and helped me grow. During my adult years, many amazing mentors have emerged to encourage and empower me to take an active role in my world. Being involved in small groups and organizations helped me to learn the skills to work more effectively with others.

Family and School Influences

I was brought into this world and lived my first 18 years in a conservative community in northwestern Minnesota. While my mother believes that I am blessed for being born on a Sunday, I discovered that I share my birthday (October 2) with Mohandas Ghandi, and this has meaning for me, as my mission in life is to promote peace. The spirit of this world leader, who guided India to independence through non-violent strategies, continues to be a hero; his story is a source of inspiration, keeping me focused on my mission for peace.

I am the second-born in a family of four daughters. While there is a myth that first-born children make better leaders than their later-born siblings (Karnes & Bean, 1995), my sisters and I had similar opportunities. Luckily, adults in my life pointed out my gifts and talents, while others helped to draw out my positive character traits and leadership abilities for my leader/activist journey.

I was fortunate to have parents who served as role models for being active and involved in one's community. While I was growing up, they were leaders in the community and participated in the parent-teacher associations, our local Lutheran church, and other civic organizations. In the early 1960s, my parents also modeled compassion for the larger world by helping to start Operation Bootstrap, a Minnesota non-profit

organization with a goal to help raise funds for the people of Tanzania, Africa, to build their own primary schools. Today, Operation Bootstrap Africa also funds secondary school efforts and the construction of hospitals and clinics in Tanzania as well as in Madagascar, Zimbabwe, and The Gambia.

My father, first trained as a teacher, went on to law school to become a general practice attorney, and later a Minnesota Appeals Court Judge. He stressed honesty and communicated the importance of fairness and justice as he talked about legal issues. My father, very generous with his time, continues to support causes, working on local projects to improve the community. The scales of justice remain a strong image in my mind and continue to jump out for me whenever I see my Libra horoscope icon -- which just happens to be the scales of justice!

My mother, a teacher and writer, has strong opinions and believes in women's rights and women's equality. She let my three sisters and I know that she believes in equal rights and told us we could be anything we wanted to be. Her Christian faith has nurtured her belief that we need to care for the less fortunate. I am thankful for my mother's strong faith, which has influenced my concern and compassion for others. To this day, my mother tells me I can do anything I set my mind to and supports me in reaching my goals.

During 5th and 6th grade I was part of the open-school movement of the 1970s and remember classroom walls being knocked down, and a large open space created in the basement of my elementary school. While this open-school movement was intended to meet the needs of students, the curriculum was primarily independent, individualized

learning. I remember finishing all the packets and boxes of cards very quickly and then sitting at a table, watching other students work and feeling completely bored. What I wanted was active or interactive lessons because I enjoy learning by doing. I could not wait to go home and organize the neighborhood kids and run my own school in the basement of our house. I liked organizing games and projects as well as being involved in things outside of school. Little did I know that what I played as a kid, was a good indicator for later choosing teaching as a career. This playtime was my first chance to practice organizing in my small world and gave me opportunities to test my leadership abilities.

During my elementary school years, I remember how hard I worked on my school subjects. But I did not fit in socially, and I was self-conscious about acne and being overweight. The feelings of being different continued through junior high school, where I searched for a clique where I might belong. During this uncomfortable time, I continued to search for a group where I could be myself. I'm convinced that being teased and feeling different during my growing up years increased my empathy for those who are treated poorly, left out, and discriminated against today in our society.

Joining the swim team, I finally found a community of friends. I loved being in the water, and actually enjoyed swimming three to four hours a day. Though I was not a star swimmer, I served as the team captain during my senior year. My sisters and I were very involved with our swim team. We spoke out to get better media coverage. We researched how much money was being spent on boys' sports compared to girls' sports. My older sister served as a student representative on a human rights committee, which

dealt with issues of equality in sports. That issue later became part of the Title IX law, mandating equal funding and support for girls sports.

My First Project

During my senior year in high school, I was tired of watching videos in my social studies class. When the assignment was given to research a political issue and go to the library, I said to my teacher, "Can I do something else?" I proposed to research the three-way stop sign on the corner of the block where my family lived. I told the teacher that I wanted to conduct a study of how many drivers miss the stop sign, how many appeared confused, how many drivers slam and screech on their brakes, and how many crashes or near crashes occur in a certain time period. With hesitant approval from my teacher, I conducted my first social action project. Granted, I was a biased researcher but an active one. I wanted to improve the safety of my neighborhood, reducing the traffic noise and confusion on our corner.

I sat on top of our carport, observing the traffic on the corner for eight hourly segments at different times of the day. Then I put my data together and made an appointment to visit city hall. I was a bit scared to say the least, but I shared the results of my study and suggested that they change this corner to a 4-way stop. The city official listened politely yet appeared uncomfortable and did not say much. The 3-way stop is still on the same corner today. Without any organizing skills and little support, I attempted to improve the safety of my neighborhood. Perhaps I could have had neighbors sign a petition or presented my study to the city council. Even with my lack of success, I felt good about doing a study and taking the risk of presenting my research to a city

official. The result might have been different if I had been taught the skills to organize a campaign around this community problem. I might also have been successful if supportive adults had been available to coach me through an effective organizing process.

My College Years

My education at a small liberal arts college in Iowa brought me to a deeper level of understanding for questions I had in my life. I studied psychology to gain insight into the behavior and feelings of individuals and groups. I also searched for my place in the world. I did not want to blindly accept the prescriptions of society. I did not like sex role stereotypes and many traditional cultural expectations. As the second child in my family, I felt different. In a way, I wanted to be different. At the same time, I felt this need to prove myself, like I was some kind of underdog trying to be “good enough.” I would come home from college and question conservative beliefs and political assumptions in my family and community. Of course, this created a little conflict!

My religion instructors at college modeled critical thinking from the historical perspective. I also took a required interdisciplinary Paideia class entitled, “Peace, Bread, and Justice” in which three professors and the content of the class changed my life forever. Learning about multi-national corporations, poverty, and injustice in the world was overwhelming on certain days. One day I remember leaving class in tears thinking about the people in Central America. I thought, “These people are working for pennies a day, so that I can buy cheap vegetables, fruit, and chocolate!” Today this phenomenon continues in third-world sweatshops, as young teens work for pennies, sewing clothes for “brand name” corporations, so that corporate executives and stockholders can stuff their

pockets with profits. While many shoppers in the U.S. are thrilled to find t-shirts for less than ten dollars, most are completely unaware of the corporate globalization process that perpetuates hunger, poverty, and inequality.

First Work Experiences

After college, I joined the Lutheran Volunteer Corps and moved to Baltimore, Maryland, to live out the three goals of the program: Live simply, work in a social justice position, and live in an intentional community. Living in community during this year of service was not difficult because I had spent the previous three summers working for Lutheran camp communities and guiding small groups of campers hiking in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming or canoeing through the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in northern Minnesota. Working in my social justice job in downtown Baltimore for a women office workers organization was also a great experience. I was immersed in a multicultural city and, being an idealistic college graduate, I worked hard and soaked up the strategies and approaches of this non-profit organization.

I remember the first day on the job as an organizer. We went out during lunch to protest outside a large company--an employer had been discriminating against female office workers. Even the media showed up, and there I was the first day—on TV! Later, the group sent me to Boston for “organizer training” and I was in heaven. I loved the active learning on the job. I learned to recruit members, brainstorm media messages, and fundraise. I wondered why organizing is not taught in high school and college.

Returning to Minneapolis, I found a job related to my psychology degree as a mental health counselor for adolescents in a local hospital. Living simply and working

part-time hours allowed me to be active in my community and to learn more about organizing for change. One of my roommates, an elementary school teacher and an activist, had been to Africa and Central America. She encouraged me to listen to speakers, attend community meetings, and eventually convinced me to go to Nicaragua to pick coffee with a friendship brigade. I found a co-worker who was also interested, and soon we were registered, accepted, and leaving for a three-week trip to Nicaragua.

Nicaragua and Speaking Out

I visited Nicaragua during the height of the Contra war in February 1987. This was a life-changing experience. The first night on a state farm, living with the rural peasants, we had a “Contra scare” and I got a taste of what it is like to live in a country at war. I also made a startling connection. My own government was furnishing the AK-47s to a ragtag rebel Contra army that was roaming the countryside, killing men, women, and children. I honestly believe that our brigade of volunteers helped to keep the little village safe that night. Families were killed in a nearby village, but the Contras did not want to kill a large group of citizens from the United States. However, Benjamin Linder, a volunteer from Portland, Oregon, was killed by Contras a month later as he worked to help bring electricity to a small, remote village just north of where I picked coffee.

For the next two weeks, we worked alongside the families on the farm, and I was very moved to hear the people speak about their lives and their vision for a democratic society. They spoke about life before Somoza and life after the revolution. What moved me most was how eloquently they spoke from their hearts. When the ABC News crew arrived up on the hillside one afternoon, I will never forget their biased questions to my

fellow brigadistas. The journalists refused to talk directly with the farm workers, even though they had an interpreter who could speak Spanish. They already had the slant of their story all figured out.

Back in the capitol city of Managua, we listened to leaders of non-governmental as well as governmental organizations. They challenged us to go back to the States and speak the truth. They made it very clear that the U.S. government and the media were lying to us to make the Contras look good, and that the U.S. was trying to sabotage their revolution by funneling arms to the Contras. They emphasized that they were not a Communist country and were working very hard to set up a democratic government after living so long under a dictatorship.

I took the challenge of these Nicaraguan leaders very seriously. When I returned to Minnesota, I developed my pictures and set them to music. I created a presentation of the history, politics, and economics of the country to accompany my story and began speaking to schools, churches, and community organizations. Over the span of three years, I spoke to over 2,000 people and I found myself becoming very energized by presenting and answering questions.

I also participated in a non-violent protest at the Honeywell Corporation upon my return from Nicaragua. They were supplying bombs to the Contras and I felt obligated to speak out. I was arrested for trespassing and tried by a jury with six other women, including a Catholic nun. This was an opportunity to speak out as an active citizen. Our group was sentenced to community service, and the whole process was a fantastic civic

learning experience. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in a non-violent protest and the subsequent trial, expressing my values, beliefs, and motivations.

When I returned to my hometown junior high school and shared my Nicaraguan experience, I realized how much I liked talking with young people and being in a classroom. Speaking in front of groups, sharing information and then asking or answering questions came easy for me. My former swim coach (the 7th grade social studies teacher in the classroom that day) commented that I seemed like a “natural born teacher.” I decided to return to school and enter a post-baccalaureate teaching certificate program to obtain my teaching license.

Becoming a Teacher and a Trainer

Teacher training was disappointing. During my two practicums and student teaching I observed a variety of teaching and leadership styles. I remember ineffective teachers who were trying to control and punish their students for not sitting still. Another teacher thought he had all the answers and knew the “right way” to teach. The other memory I took away from these experiences was the negative, sarcastic comments about students and administration in the staff lounges. The overall atmosphere of teachers feeling victimized was not an empowering experience. I was not inspired to enter the teaching profession but I decided to finish the program anyway.

Luckily, because of my interest in citizenship, one of my instructors encouraged me to apply for a “community specialist” position at the Hubert H. Humphrey Forum, a museum program of the University of Minnesota. While this was a temporary teaching position, I worked with creative and energetic people. I had the chance to lead

experiential lessons and facilitate discussions with students. Politics, citizenship, and leadership were topics that inspired me, and I felt energized discussing these issues with students and encouraging them to think about their abilities as leaders.

Another experience that helped move me forward as a teacher leader included a “training for trainers” experience with an initiative called Project CREATE (Conflict Resolution Encourages Affirmation, Tolerance, and Empowerment). Over a three-month period, a group of 12 people met on a weekly basis for an intensive training in conflict resolution skills and peacemaking for school initiatives. I began facilitating workshops with this lively and energetic group of organizers for teachers in schools across the Twin Cities. This renewed my faith in the direction that I had chosen. The fun of working collaboratively with this community of trainers and always utilizing active, experiential learning strategies kept me learning and growing.

An additional experience that supported my growth as a teacher leader was being selected as a participant in a teacher Fulbright to Namibia, South Africa, during the summer of 1995. Augsburg College led this six-week experiential learning and curriculum development project. Being with a group of teachers who were passionate about peace, social justice, and environmental issues created a dynamic learning community. Many of the teachers were leaders in their schools and communities, and this was inspiring for me. I decided to continue as a teacher and press forward to find a place where I could be a leader and share my gifts and passion for learning.

While teaching social studies in private and public schools during the 1990s, I realized the goal to develop active citizens was not happening in my classroom or in any

other classroom as far as I could see. Teaching the required 9th-grade civics curriculum did not turn young people on to politics or encourage them to care about their communities. However, a year after leaving a social studies position in a suburban district, I ran into two former students, who informed me that they were planning a protest at school the next week. They were upset because teachers were being laid off due to budget cuts and their class sizes might increase to more than 35 students. My former students told me they were following the organizing steps we had discussed in class and were calling the media. During the next week, I was watching the evening news, and saw my students -- leading an all school walkout and demonstration, complete with picket signs and media coverage!

Becoming a Facilitator

During the last four years I have worked in the public health field as a health educator and as the Violence Prevention Coordinator for a large suburban county. I had the opportunity to be trained in basic facilitation skills and began to be mentored by one of my instructors. As a result, my leadership capabilities and teaching strategies have greatly improved. The courses I have taken through the local chapter of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) in the Technology of Participation (TOP) have provided me with an excellent base of professional facilitation skills that fit perfectly with my beliefs and philosophy of participatory, grassroots democratic learning and change. (Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2000a)

The reflective discussion method of the ICA (Stanfield, 2002) was developed after World War II by an army chaplain named Joseph Mathews. Dozens of organizers

in grassroot efforts in countries around the world experimented with Mathew's ideas during the 1960s and continued to refine and further develop the ICA methods over the next 30 years. I experienced the benefits of these methods after attending a series of trainings in 1998-1999 and realized they fit with many of today's educational learning theories and the latest brain research. Utilizing the facilitated discussion method, a leader can help people easily process and learn information. The brainstorm methods and action planning methods of the ICA also help create dynamic learning communities and initiatives where people work together and organize positive projects. While the TOP methods are being utilized with adult groups in corporations, small businesses, and in community organizations around the world, young people are less likely to experience these transformational methods in schools and community groups.

The adults involved in the violence prevention coalition I coordinated have benefited greatly from participating and learning the facilitation methods of the ICA. I began to wonder if these methods could help teachers be more effective in their classrooms. Perhaps young people could also benefit from learning these powerful participatory processes. I knew that the National ICA office out Phoenix offered "Youth as Facilitators" training and other groups were having some success transferring these important skills to the younger generation.

I began to involve and utilize youth input and energy for designing and carrying out prevention campaigns. Researchers suggested that youth needed to be trained as peer leaders and could be more effective health educators and promoters than adults. (Noland, 1996). Besides utilizing trained peer leaders, Noland recommends that tobacco

prevention curricula must include skills training. I saw this as a perfect opportunity to write youth training and capacity building into grants and project proposals.

In 1999, I wrote a grant proposal for training youth in skills that would empower them to start and run their own teen centers. After the grant was awarded, a colleague and I worked on designing a training for youth to learn facilitation skills. During the summer of 2000, I was very moved by the success of our two leadership camps for youth. The feedback from school and community members was very positive. I decided that this approach to empower youth had potential.

Since that time, the need for training young people in project organizing and facilitation skills has grown. Some youth are designing their own campaigns as “climate controllers” to reduce bullying in their middle schools; others are learning to run their own teen centers; still others are creating campaigns to counter the advertising of tobacco corporations. Yet, what works best to support youth in becoming active citizens and empowers them to create positive change in their communities remains unclear.

Youth leaders and teachers understand the need for adult support and mentoring, yet rarely identified are specific skills. I continued to question what skills youth need to feel competent and take action. In my public health educator role, I had the opportunity to research and address skill training for violence prevention. However, what works to best support young people in their efforts to become caring, competent, and active citizens in their communities is not fully researched or understood. I believe we can train young people as problem solvers who are skilled and capable of tackling community

problems, whatever their root cause. I decided to conduct my own research to better understand how we educate for democracy.

Many things have influenced me on my journey to become a teacher leader and change agent. My education, both in and outside school walls, woke me up to the realities of world and fueled my passion for peace and justice. Many adults served as mentors and role models, supporting my growth as a leader and an activist. Yet, it was the experiential participation and learning, out in the community that gave me the opportunities to gain the skills and confidence I needed to take action.

This research will examine whether middle-school students see themselves, after working on a community-based project during a four-day training, as leaders who can contribute to their communities. This capstone will also focus on the skills young adolescents need be effective change agents. These two questions guide my research: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence?”

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

When I began my research, I sketched the big picture and brainstormed the concepts that relate to the Co-Motion curriculum as well as the philosophy that helped shape this training-- ideas and principles from the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement. The Co-Motion curriculum (Appendix D) that served as the basis of this research was developed utilizing action and empowerment ideas from *The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change* (Dingerson & Hay, 1998). Youth who helped to plan the first training curriculum during the summer of 2000 liked the idea of creating a “commotion.” The name of the training stuck, fitting the intentional goal to jump-start change in one’s community.

While researching a variety of topics, I could see the connections to my research. Yet, all the theoretical articles on youth development and youth leadership did not specifically focus on empowering youth as leaders and training them in practical civic skills. Even with my frustration, I remained committed to my primary questions: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence?”

For this study, I will utilize the definition of action competence utilized by Jensen & Schnack (1994). Action competence is the ability to plan and carry out an action. To demonstrate action competence, one would be able to understand and identify a problem, brainstorm solutions and then carryout a viable solution.

I was disappointed to learn that there is very little practical research on how to achieve the training goals of this research—increased civic skills and empowered youth leaders. Many educators are discussing the need for better civic education, but skills are briefly mentioned, often without specific skill sets, sample programs or methods to teach them. Youth leadership is defined, discussed, and encouraged, yet the research on what works to empower young leaders is minimal. I set sail into uncharted waters--without a compass. But I realized that if I kept researching and discussing the issues with friends and colleagues, what was most important would become clear. I hoped my research would help shine some light into murky waters.

I also wondered if the curriculum process for this training, including the activities and learning strategies, would help us meet the training goals. Because of my pressing need to better understand what works when training youth, I began this chapter by briefly examining adolescent needs, their role in society, and the best practices for teaching this age group. One of my goals was also to examine the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) methods (Nelson, 2001) to see if their strategies meet the needs of youth and fit with the best practices in teaching.

For the second and third sections of this chapter, I returned to my primary questions and focused on literature related to civic education, and more specifically, civic skills. I discussed the latest ideas regarding youth leadership, including descriptions of programs that develop leadership in youth. Finally, I shared what we know to date (values, principles, sample programs) regarding this new philosophy of Community Youth Development (CYD) and explain the concept of action competence.

Responding to the Needs of Youth

Anytime I prepare to conduct a classroom or training experience, I think about the big picture. From my awareness about unmet needs and problems that youth experience, this training developed. As a social studies teacher, I have also experienced the challenge of working with energetic adolescents. Instinctively I knew that the curriculum, if designed with unique needs of youth in mind, could empower youth to be change agents. My context of understanding grew out of some of the literature shared below that relates to adolescent development, their role in society, and their learning styles.

As part of the Minnesota Adolescent Health Action Plan project, 395 youth participated in focus groups during 1999 and identified the top ten problems for youth and recommended solutions (Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health & the Minnesota Department of Health, 2000). Youth reported that they are struggling with stress, depression, drugs, schools, parent and family issues, sexual activity and pregnancy, violence, and racism. These Minnesota youth also identified the lack of activities for youth and the “stereotypes about youth and the lack of respect for youth” (p. 3) as problems.

Youth suggested we could solve these problems by creating better connections between youth and adults, “promoting a positive image of teens,” increasing adult partnership with teens in addressing youth issues, and to “support and strengthen the opportunities for teens to become actively involved in their community” (Teipel, 1999, p. 5). Respect for teens and opportunities for youth leadership were highlighted as the

students' first and second recommendations. Their fourth and fifth recommendations included "improve the role and presence of adults in the lives of teens," and "ensure that schools meet the educational needs of teens" (Konopka Institute & Minnesota Department of Health, 2000, p. 3). The authors concluded that the input from youth was "intriguing and challenging" (Konopka, 2001). Indeed, without effective resources and programs, involving youth to help solve youth problems in schools and communities may be challenging.

Victor La Cerva (1996), in his book *Pathways to Peace* also laments the support structures for our children that have disintegrated over the last 20 years. These include less extended family support, more media influence, large schools that are more impersonal, the loss of community neighborhoods and the stereotype that "youth are seen as problems, rather than resources" (p. 46).

Gisela Konopka, a pioneer in the youth development field, advocates opportunities to support the healthy development of our youth (Konopka Institute, 2001). Dr. Konopka believes that youth need to:

- ◆ Participate as citizens, members of a household, and responsible members of society
- ◆ Gain experience in decision making
- ◆ Interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging
- ◆ Have time to reflect on self in relation to others
- ◆ Discuss conflicting values and formulate their own value system
- ◆ Experiment with their own identity, with relationships to others, with ideas
- ◆ Develop a feeling of accountability

- ◆ Cultivate a capacity to enjoy life
- ◆ Participate in the creative arts, to learn self-expression and communicate deep feelings from within.

These essential elements, first outlined over 25 years ago, are still relevant today. Youth need to participate and be a part of the decision-making that affects their lives and their community. Belonging and feeling connected to other youth and adults is also important. Reflecting on one's own experience, values, and accountability/responsibility are also emphasized by many parents and teachers today.

During the last four years, the Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health at the University of Minnesota has disseminated research and best practices to youth workers and educators. To better meet the needs of youth, the Konopka Institute emphasizes a comprehensive public health approach, implementing strategies at all levels of influence—individual, family, school and community (Konopka Institute, 2001). There are four “C’s” that help youth develop: Competence, Connection, Character, and Confidence. The outcomes envisioned for this project include increased leadership confidence and action competence. Connecting with supportive adults was also a goal of this capstone project. The Konopka Institute recommends that communities engage youth so they can experience belonging, closeness with peers and adults, gain experience in decision-making and build competence.

The above research points to the reality of youth being stereotyped as problems or troublemakers. I believe that the media perpetuates this negative image and this creates fear and mistrust of youth in our society. The sad result is that youth are not seen as

valuable resources or partners in their schools or communities. In this climate of non-acceptance, it is not surprising that many youth grow up without the skills and confidence they need to be active in their communities.

To fully understand the changing role of youth, it is important to understand adolescence (Hine, 1999). Before the 1920s and the birth of the modern high school, hardly anyone thought of adolescents as a defined group. Young people were simply children until they took on adult roles. Bess Keller (2000) believes that the emergence of the term adolescence gave adults a repository for their strong feelings about the teenage years. She suggests that one of the solutions to meet the needs of teenagers is “sustained, meaningful contact with adults. Without the chance to work alongside adults—in jobs or helping with child rearing—teenagers often find them (adults) distant, and their own long period of dependency galling” (p. 40).

The fear of young people and the lack of understanding regarding adolescent development are two barriers. However, critically examining the roles of youth in our society offers some insight for what we need to do to raise awareness and better meet the needs of youth. In the *Building Community* tool kit (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development /National 4-H Council, 2001, p. 20), a spectrum of roles and attitudes regarding youth is presented:

The Spectrum of Attitudes

Youth as Objects	Youth as Recipients	Youth as Resources	Youth as Partners
To	For		With

The left end of this spectrum, youth are seen as objects. Adults exercise total control over youth. Programs and activities are provided to youth. Adults do not consider the needs of youth or what might be developmentally appropriate. This view of children stems from a long history of adult attitudes where children are seen as property to dominate and control (Cress & Berlowe, 1995). Tragically, this attitude has also justified and perpetuated child abuse for centuries.

The next attitude on the spectrum is “youth as recipients.” Based on what the adult thinks would be best for the youth, the adult determines the remedies or solutions, and evaluates the outcomes, with little youth input. Examples of these programs include prescribed curriculums and after-school programs where adults decide what activities are best for youth.

When youth are perceived as “resources,” then youth begin to get involved in the planning, and implementing of a project or initiative. In this scenario, programs and activities are for and with youth. Service learning is an example of this approach.

Finally, there is the new paradigm, which the authors of the *Building Community* tool kit are promoting: youth-adult partnerships. When youth are partners, adults share decision-making. Adults need to be willing to share their power and responsibility. The authors stress, “young people must have an equal role with adults in both the development of opportunities for young people as well as in the development of the communities where they live as a whole” (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development & the National 4-H Council, 2001, p. 15). Programs and activities are planned, implemented and evaluated with youth. The authors also note that both youth

and adults will need skill building. Other barriers (lack of resources, control issues, resistance to change) can also prevent adults from involving youth and developing equal partnerships with youth.

The Search Institute (2000), a major institution promoting youth development, also recommends that youth need sustained relationships with adults. However, their promotional materials reveal that their approach is primarily one of seeing youth as recipients of adult programs. Titles of sample promotional materials include: “62 things you can do for youth,” and “Giving kids what they need to succeed.” The presumption is that adults have failed to cultivate assets for youth and therefore adults need to get involved or start a local youth asset committee to help provide “what youth need.”

Julia Burgess (2000b) of the Center for Community Change in Washington, D.C., emphasizes the partnership potential of youth and adults by writing, “too often families, community, and public institutions fail to recognize and harness the tremendous energy and commitment of young people to make positive social change” (p, 27). Burgess strongly recommends that community groups engage and involve youth in their work. She then challenges groups to go beyond viewing youth as resources: “Young people will need to be integrated into the overall community development work of an organization” (p. 28).

Looking at the role of youth in our society and adolescent needs, it is clear that youth want adults to be present and involved in their lives. Many times youth communicate just the opposite message, yet they need support and want to work with adults. The images, stereotypes, and poor treatment of young people are problems that

need solutions. Youth are not treated as valuable members of their communities. Many adults are unaware of the subtle “adultism” that affects youth. According to Kivel and Creighton (1997), “Adultism is the systematic exploitation, mistreatment, and abuse of young people by adults” (p. 73). Subtle forms of adultism include inadequate funding for schools and youth programs, the lack of youth participation in decision-making, and blaming youth for violence, drugs, and bad schools.

Minnesota teens (Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health & the Minnesota Department of Health, 2000) recommend we promote positive images of young people and increase adult partnerships with teens to address youth issues. The Konopka Institute (2001) emphasizes that youth need to participate as citizens and gain experience in decision making. The “Spectrum of Attitudes” (Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development & the National 4-H Council, 2001, p. 20) provides an evaluation tool to examine the role youth are currently playing in our schools and communities. The spectrum challenges adults to share power and work with youth as partners.

The above research and discussion about adolescent development emphasizes the need to counteract the negative attitudes towards youth and provide more opportunities for adolescents to get involved in community efforts in partnership with adults.

Curriculum Research

Many schools and individual teachers are searching for new ways to include participatory learning in the curricula. While many educators understand the latest

research that promotes brain-based learning and utilizing different learning styles, it is not always easy to implement new learning strategies and lessons.

To improve civic education, educators recommend participatory learning. Active learning methods have been shown to be the most effective and most likely to produce active citizens (Richardson, 1993). I wanted to make improvements and additions to the Co-Motion training based on best practices. My intuition was that the methods of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) fit with some of the latest strategies being recommended by teacher leaders. I reviewed learning styles and brain-based learning recommendations in preparation for comparing and evaluating our strategies.

Learning styles offer insight on how individuals learn best. Gregorc (1985) describes the four styles as Concrete Sequential, Abstract Sequential, Abstract Random, and Concrete Random. According to facilitators Watts and Walker (1999), it is important “to develop and facilitate activities that foster inclusive participation by discovering how different people prefer to participate when in a group” (p. 11). When planning a training, one can design activities to meet the needs of the random learners and then activities for the more sequentially oriented learners, as people usually fall into one of the two sub groups. Clear directions, knowing the facts, and utilizing orderly processes helps to meet the needs of sequential learners. Random styles enjoy making sense of many ideas and then discussing their emotional attachments, relationships and memories.

Brain-based learning also offers insight for the facilitator. In general, brain-based learning suggests that learning by doing is more effective. An environment that offers

feedback as well as challenge--yet helps people feel safe and secure works best

(McGrath, 1999). Caine and Caine (1999) on their web site discuss the 12 principles for brain-based learning:

- The brain is a living system (memory and emotion influence each other)
- The brain/mind is social
- The search for meaning is innate
- The search for meaning occurs through patterning
- Emotions are critical to patterning
- Every brain simultaneously perceives and creates parts and wholes
- Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception
- Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes
- We have at least two ways of organizing memory
- Learning is developmental
- Complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat
- Every brain is uniquely organized

McGrath (1999) argues that the current “factory model” of education in place in many of today’s schools is not consistent with how our the human brain/mind learns. To improve learning experiences, teachers need to create curriculum that is contextual or grounded in real-world experiences. Encouraging students to solve real-world problems in settings outside the classroom works best. Ideally, curricula based on brain-based research includes activities that are collaborative (students work in teams), when students are involved in making decisions about method and content, and where students are

empowered to construct their own meanings of their experiences. The learning theory of constructivism has the most in common with brain-based learning according to McGrath (1999).

Civic Education

Based on my experience as a social studies teacher, I believe the core mission of social studies curricula is to promote democratic citizenship. While there is broad consensus to empower youth to be competent and responsible citizens, there are indications that we are failing in our efforts towards this mission. How do we motivate students to care about their communities and the larger world and then support them to get involved in civic affairs?

Part of the problem may be a narrow definition and understanding of citizenship. Melissa Bass reflects on the meaning of citizenship in her article, "Citizenship and Young People's Role in Public Life" (1997). The legal definition emphasizes that we are born with citizenship and all the rights and privileges that citizenship entails in a particular country. In a broader sense, many people in the U.S. today think of citizenship in terms of patriotism, but citizenship is much more than allegiance to one's country. With rights one also has responsibilities. Yet, responsibilities are not stressed enough in civics classes or in our communities. A broader, more dynamic definition of citizenship needs to be emphasized and modeled. Bass recommends that we discuss citizenship outside of civics class to understand the expanded definition that includes collective action or the "rule by the people" as part of our democratic beliefs. She believes that the "dynamic

practice of citizenship is our best hope for creating the kind of world in which we want to live” (p. 204).

In the National Education Goals Report, researchers concluded that high school students have only a superficial and elementary knowledge of civics (National Educational Goals Panel, 1998). In response to this report, some educators concluded, “This lack of understanding may inhibit students’ motivation to participate in civic activities” (Kim, Parks, & Beckerman, 1996, p. 171). In addition, the Institute for Social Research conducts an annual survey of high school seniors on the topic of democracy and since 1975, over 17,000 students have responded. The results indicate that almost half the seniors surveyed report that they agree or mostly agree with the statement, “I feel I can do very little to change the way the world works” (Lappe & DuBois, 1994, p. 202).

An historical look at civic education approaches and available curricula emphasizes the need to transform civic education. In *Education for Citizen Action*, Newmann (1975) argued that we have failed to properly educate citizens for active participation in our democracy. Newmann observed that citizenship curricula pays little or no attention to action research or to developing skills in persuasion and organization. He stressed that citizenship education has been preoccupied with academic disciplines, the political structure of government, social problems, critical thinking, inquiry, and democratic values. The weakness of this content approach is that it assumes that knowledge is all that is required for effective citizen participation. It also assumes that people are born with or just naturally acquire citizenship skills.

When I taught civics to 9th graders during 1997, I realized that the curricula for civics continued to focus on understanding how our government works. In the *We the People* textbook (Budziszewski & Pauline, 1989), the role of the citizen is addressed, but only within the limits of voting, participation in a political party, or volunteering. When teaching with this book as the curriculum guide, I added materials and lessons that dealt with ways to change the system, how one deals with conflict, and protesting skills.

Looking for more progressive ideas, I found a series of 17 lessons by John Minkler (1996) in his *Active Citizenship* curriculum. Minkler encourages reflection on U.S. civic values and provides good ideas for integrating problem-solving and researching political issues to the civics curricula. Issue or project-based curriculum is a step in the right direction, but more attention to skill building is needed.

A curriculum that focuses more specifically on skill building was created by the 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System: *Public Adventures: An Active Citizenship Curriculum for Youth* (Bass, 1999). This series of lessons includes reflections on key citizenship concepts, as well as a step-by-step process to build a working group, pick a project, and then carry out an action plan. This curriculum was designed for middle-school youth with specific life skills spelled out for each lesson.

The lack of skill-based curriculum indicates there is not enough movement and support to build civic skills in the classroom. However, when youth are involved with 4-H projects or community initiatives, they may have a chance to learn and practice civic skills. Whether in the classroom or in the community, I believe there is a great need to improve civic education by including skill-based activities.

I searched for more recent articles and work by civic educators to provide structure and solutions for systematic change. Many commentators discuss civic education and reflect on the shortcomings and failures of citizenship education. Other educators point to the statistics of “low voter turnout, sharply declining participation in social and civic organizations or the rampant distrust of government and other institutions” (Tyack, 1997).

I discovered many articles where civic leaders reflect on the demise of civic engagement. Christopher Gates (2000) of the National Civic League believes that the political process is broken and that citizens are angry, not uninformed or apathetic. To get youth more involved he proposes that “we have to invent new language...when young people get lectured about what they’re supposed to do in a democracy, it doesn’t work at all” (p. 115).

Cowan (1997) agrees that the real problem is politics, and defends “twentysomething” advocacy groups, arguing that young people are not the problems. “Young people have taken a bad rap for our civic disengagement. We’re all fed up with politics as usual” (p. 196). Cowan and his colleagues organized youth on college campuses from 1992-1995, and he believes we have to shift people’s consciousness—one by one, community by community. The blame game must end, according to Cowan, stressing that it is time to organize, not agonize. Representative Matt Dunne (1997) also defends young people in his commentary stating that despite political frustration, young people “might not stay in the angry malaise stage for long. New skills have allowed us to leapfrog our elders to leadership positions” (p. 259).

In the above discussion, only Dunne mentions skills that have led to gains in leadership positions. Most reflections on civic education lack concrete ideas and strategies for change. A few civic educators, however, have begun to evaluate programs and recently developed key elements or characteristics as guidelines for developing effective programs. During the 1990s, there has been a rapid increase of interest in civic education and the development of international networks of civic educators. The United States joined with leaders from 52 other nations after a conference in 1995 to form Civitas International (2002, About Civitas, History and mission section, para. 6).

Charles Quigley (2000), the Executive Director of the Center for Civic Education in California, admits that despite extensive efforts, “there has not been universal success in any country (including the U.S.)...for achieving (civic) goals for all students” (p. 7). The three interrelated goals or components of civic education include knowledge, skills, and virtues. According to Quigley (2000, p. 7), there is unanimity among authors of national case studies that civic education should be:

- based on important content that crosses disciplines
 - participative
 - interactive
 - related to life
 - conducted in a non-authoritarian environment
 - cognizant of the challenges of social diversity
 - constructed with the parents, the community, and non-governmental organizations as well as the school

These six positive trends have been identified by civic educators around the world and have the possibility of transforming civic education. Many of the above trends relate to this research---active, participatory learning and the development of skills and civic virtues through cooperative learning activities that address real-life community issues.

Ralph Nader (1992) has also been an out-spoken proponent of active citizenship for many years. He promotes civic youth involvement by stressing that civic education is a right (spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). In addition, active civic education prepares students to carry out their responsibilities, which need not be seen as a duty, but more as “a delight to be savored” (p. 212). Nader argues that “civics courses often teach only dry, abstract theories...failing to translate the abstractions into concrete training for action” (p. 213). He suggests that instructors teach citizenship by using the community as a natural laboratory, “Students need to learn how to communicate effectively through the media, how to conduct investigative research to advocate their cause, and how to petition their government to bring about change” (p. 213).

Some educators and youth leaders are doing just what Nader is suggesting. Barbara Lewis (1991) of Salt Lake City, Utah encouraged her students to tackle the problem of a hazardous waste dump near their school. After her students successfully lobbied the state legislature to change the law, Lewis wrote a book entitled, *The Kid's Guide to Social Action*. In Pennsylvania, school and community groups collaborated to start the “Kids Around Town” program (Rappoport & Kletzien, 1996). Youth meet local government officials, select an issue to explore, research the issue, propose a solution and

then take action. This program for elementary and middle-school students is successful because the projects are “pupil selected, discovery-oriented, hands-on and interdisciplinary” (p. 29).

Vontz and Nixon (1999) advocate their program entitled “We the People...Project Citizen” for middle-school students. Arguing that content-based civic education is not sufficient to promote democratic citizenship, the authors discuss why the program has spread to 38 states. Students examine real problems in their school or communities and then analyze possible solutions. Then they create an action plan and present their findings in a public forum. The skills that the 10-15 year olds have an opportunity to practice include critical thinking, dialogue and debate, negotiation, tolerance, decision-making, and civic action.

Harry Boyte (2001) and his colleagues at the Humphrey Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota have created a similar program entitled “Project Public Achievement.” To promote community-based projects, teams of young people—ranging from elementary through high school student—work over the school year on public issues they choose. These youth teams are coached by young adults (college students or adult leaders of local programs or institutions) who help them develop achievable goals and learn political skills and concepts. During the 2000-2001 school year, the program worked with 1800 young people, in 44 sites located in seven communities, with 300 coaches.

Boyte (1991) was clear from the conception of his program that the projects were not community service. Service projects/programs that use personal growth as their main selling point “do not teach the political skills that are needed to work effectively toward

solving society's problems: public judgement, the collaborative exercise of power, conflict resolution, negotiation, bargaining, and holding oneself and others accountable" (p. 766). In a more recent article, Boyte and Skelton (1997) emphasize the idea of creating "public work" (creation of public goods of lasting value) as key to their projects. Examples of successful youth projects include building a playground, creating a community garden, and youth starting their own cafeteria in their alternative school. A guidebook entitled, *Making the Rules* (Bass, 1994) demonstrates that the program does educate youth in the concepts of democracy and citizenship. Public skills are also identified for each lesson, including team building, evaluating meetings, listening, mapping environments, creating strategies and evaluating them.

I wondered if the adult mentors for the Public Achievement program have mastered civic skills so they can train and model these skills for students as they work together on their projects. In the coaches guide for Public Achievement, a list of 30 public skills are listed (Erlandson & Hildreth, 1997, p. 21), yet the skills are not thoroughly explained. The authors state that "a discussion about how to develop each of these skills is beyond the scope of this guidebook" (p. 20). While this project is on the right track--having youth learn about politics and citizenship through actively engaging in their own communities--the training of adults in effective strategies and the progression of skill building for youth remains unclear.

Melissa Bass (1997) also reflects on young people's role in public life by reminding readers that volunteering or youth service does not necessarily constitute civic education and practice. If youth service is approached from a public work perspective, it

solves common problems and creates public products that benefit the community. Key ingredients of this approach include collaborative work with adults as partners, young people exercising power, making a commitment, and youth being held accountable for the work they agree to do.

How then do we educate citizens for action? Lappe and DuBois (1994) stress that we need to teach the concepts and practical arts (skills) of democratic public life. “Like sports or the art of dance, we learn the arts of a ‘living democracy’ by doing them and by reflecting on our doing” (p. 238). The authors outline ten democratic arts/skills. They recognize the limitation of their list by concluding, “we can’t give you, in this one book, a detailed step-by-step training manual. But we can help you understand the importance of each art in your life” (p. 238). Lappe and DuBois then proceed to explain the first four individual arts (one-on-one skills) in more detail: active listening, creative conflict, mediation, and negotiation. The six group skills are then described with examples: political imagination, public judgment, celebration and appreciation, evaluation and reflection, and mentoring.

In the content of the “Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of the Educational Progress,” John Patrick (1997) outlines the key components for civic education: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions. Skills enable students to learn and apply civic knowledge in the many and varied roles of citizens:

These skills help citizens identify, describe, explain, and analyze information and arguments, as well as evaluate, take, and defend positions on public issues.

Participatory skills enable citizens to monitor and influence public and civic life

by working with others, clearly articulating ideas and interests, building coalitions, negotiating compromises, and managing conflicts. (p. 4)

With new trends and guidelines being debated, it appears that civic education advocates are beginning to raise awareness of the need to teach and practice civic skills.

Activists and other educators remain concerned about the decline of civic participation in the United States. The very health of our democratic society depends on our ability to instill in youth the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for active, informed citizenship. The community programs described above do indicate some attention to skill building. While what strategies work to promote citizenship skills remains unclear, educators have begun to share programs that include skill building and offer guidelines for curriculum or project development.

Leadership

**“Leadership is best when the people say,
‘We have done this ourselves’.”
--Lao Tzu**

When we think of leadership, we often think of one person who leads while others follow. The definition of “leader” in the American Heritage Dictionary (1994, p. 474) states that a leader is one who (a) guides or directs (b) to influence, induce or c) to be ahead or be a head of. I believe a leader cannot be defined that simply and the concept of leadership has expanded, especially in the last ten years. Even with this new discussion, a leader is often visualized as one in authority or someone who has particular traits or personal qualities.

Linda Lambert (1998) challenges educators to view leadership as a verb instead of a noun, “by considering the processes, activities and relationships in which people engage, rather than as the individual in a specific role” (p. 18). Lambert’s definition of leadership is considered “constructivist” and viewed as a reciprocal process among adults in the school (Lambert, Walder, Zimmerman, Cooper, Gardner, and Slack, 1995). Shared inquiry is important to identify problems and all participants can lead, working together to improve the school or teaching strategies.

While leadership theory and practice may be evolving for adults, what is happening with youth leadership? While searching for literature and curriculum on the topic of youth leadership, I found an old curriculum, *Leadership Education: Developing Skills for Youth* (Richardson & Feldhausen, 1984). While the concepts addressed appear important, the definition and discussion of leadership is conservative—leadership is defined as “personality,” as a form of persuasion, as a power relationship or “initiating action and maintaining structure” (pp. 4-5).

In contrast, Francis Karnes and Suzanne Bean (1995) developed *Leadership for Students*, a guide for students to address leadership concepts. Instead of telling the reader what leadership is all about, the authors encourage youth and adults to explore the concept of leadership. Student quotes in the book indicate that youth have some expanding definitions of leadership. One 11-year-old boy wrote, “Leadership is guiding and showing the way for other people, to get people to cooperate and do things together” (p. 26). A 17-year-old girl said, “Leadership is the ability to take on the challenge of improving the school, attitude of peers, and one’s inclination to be a leader. A leader is a

representative. His or her job is to best represent the people that elected him or her as their voice” (p. 28). While the authors examine positive and negative aspects of leadership and ask youth to list their abilities, I believe there is not enough attention to skill building and leadership processes that are inclusive and participatory.

Researchers at Stanford University (Roach, Wyman, Brookes, Chavez, Heath, and Valdes, 1999) report results from a decade-long study of young people in underserved and at-risk communities that were identified and promoted as leaders within out-of-school youth organizations. They stress that the emerging view of youth leadership differs from the established measures and leadership theories drawn from adults. First of all, the authors admit, “we know little about how young people define and initiate leadership among themselves” (p.13). Field notes, audio-recordings, interviews, and daily logs of activities kept by selected youth provided the data for this study. Whereas experience and maturity count for adults looking at leadership, young people appeared to value wisdom in spontaneity. Another difference is the value that adults place on inner knowledge, whereas youth develop knowledge that is “gained by observing and acting in place with on-going assessment” (p. 17). Rotating roles and shared leadership was also a common observation made by researchers. One young person stressed “I don’t see our group of friends as having one leader...we’re all leaders” (p. 18).

While many practitioners continue to feel that youth leadership training is a worthwhile endeavor, Roach, et al. (1999) warn that such programs are often based on “implicit unexamined ideas about how young people develop leadership traits and what being a leader entails” (p. 16). They suggest that youth are more interested in creating

rotating leadership within their groups than in creating individual leaders. “Special course contexts for enabling motivation, skill-building, and practice for leadership need to resemble the conditions that young people create within their own peer activities” (p. 13). In conclusion, the Stanford researchers suggest group projects that will benefit others and where youth see themselves in positions of leadership. “Educators can best advance leadership programs for students by finding ways for young people in groups to commit to work that will bear benefit for others and be judged by tough criteria” (p. 13).

Leaders in the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement are also embracing new definitions of youth leadership. In the spring issue of the *CYD Journal*, editor John Terry (2001) challenges the reader to “shed the old definition of leadership, in which a hierarchical, two-tier system exists containing leaders and followers---and in which leaders have the solutions” (p. 5). He suggests we embrace Meg Wheatley’s (2001) leadership definition in her article, “Restoring hope to the future through critical education of leaders.” She states that her “Four Directions” circle program has a “rather revolutionary definition of leader: We believe that a leader is anyone who wants to help at this time” (p. 16). Indeed, leadership is not reserved for a few and anyone that wants to help has the potential step into a leadership role. CYD advocates stress that every young person can be a leader.

Empowering the leadership potential of young people needs to be a priority, yet it appears that we lack enough information to build solid research-based theories for youth leadership. Youth patterns point to a more constructivist leadership definition—and this would be one of the best ways to set up a leadership training. Youth can explore and

define leadership themselves, within the context of a project or training. Until more research reveals best practices, we will have to design programs based on adolescent development theory, learning theories and have youth provide valuable input. I believe the CYD philosophy offers the most effective youth development and leadership ideas to date. I discuss the CYD paradigm shift and key elements of its philosophy in the next section.

Community Youth Development

Hughes and Curnan (2000) describe the development of the Community Youth Development (CYD) philosophy during the early 1990s. Discussions started on a small scale with activists, youth workers in neighborhoods, pioneers in youth development, educators working on school reform, as well as radicals in the health prevention field. Then the National Network for Youth brought some of these visionary people and their ideas together. What emerged was a strong belief that “young people have strengths, regardless of their life situations, and they should have basic rights in our society, including the right to make decisions about their lives” (p. 9). Also inherent in this new paradigm is that youth belong in families and communities, rather than in institutions. Another assumption is that youth need to be involved in their own development and that of their community—in partnership with adults—to make use of their talents and increase their investment in community life.

The CYD philosophy was built upon the knowledge, experience, and perspective of people from a diversity of disciplines—“those who see across boundaries, whether they be geographic, cultural, academic, practice, or policy” (Hughes and Curnan, 2000, p.

9). I have also noticed that CYD proponents are people who are very concerned about social justice and peace issues. The authors explain further, “CYD is essentially a paradigm shift. The CYD approach holds an appreciative, holistic, relational worldview, rooted in justice and compassion” (p. 10). The key principles of the CYD philosophy include:

- creating a culture of respect and partnership
- creating a just and compassionate society
- creating safe space
- creating a culture of appreciation
- transferring practical, usable skills
- being conscious stewards of relationships, and
- finding and living one’s true calling

In a creative brochure developed by the National 4-H Council (2001) in collaboration with the University of Minnesota Extension, the common values of CYD, merging the best efforts of Youth Development and Community Development, are outlined: participatory decision-making, equality, freedom, justice, individual value, positive development, and responsibility. The results of our Co-Motion training in a rural community during 2000 are described in the brochure as an example of CYD being implemented as part of prevention work.

While CYD proponents have spelled out values and key principles that can serve as a framework for action, there are barriers to implementing CYD. Specific methods and strategies have not been spelled out. Hughes and Curnan (2000) admit “the

transformation of CYD principles into action has been spotty, for principles alone don't sufficiently convey what people need to know to fully grasp the approach" (p. 11).

While some youth organizations are carrying out service learning projects, youth-led projects, or developing community-based programs, their approaches or strategies do not always fit the model of CYD. Many CYD theorists criticize service learning because youth often do not choose or design their own projects. Adults may be present, but youth voice and choice, as well as youth-adult partnerships are absent.

Burgess (2000a) highlights eight programs that are community-based and involve youth. Two programs fit the CYD model by building youth-adult partnerships and working on community-based projects. The Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) in Providence, Rhode Island, has a campaign to bring together youth and adults—START—Students and Parents Taking Action for a Real Tomorrow. The focus of the campaign is to ensure more accountability to quality education from the Providence public school system. In Durham, North Carolina, a program entitled "El Centro Hispano" provides services, leadership development, and advocacy for the Latino community. Youth and adults work together around the issues of immigration, education, and housing conditions.

In Phoenix, Arizona, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) has successfully supported a CYD project (Miller, 2001). The "Neighborhood Academy" program, a 12-week training program, has been implemented four times since 1997 in collaboration with the Machan Elementary School and the Machan Healthy Community Partnership, a neighborhood coalition. The goal is to train youth and adults in ICA group facilitation

methods and build strong, long-lasting youth-adult partnerships. Organizers of the project note that over 50 youth and adults have been trained so far, with many of the participants now training and empowering others. The involvement of parents and volunteers at the school has increased and the school received a \$125,000 grant to support their community programs.

Finn and Checkoway (1998) also share examples of youth involved with community-based initiatives across the U.S. Yet youth-adult partnership, a key component of CYD, is often missing. There is a range of involvement—from youth serving on community governing boards to youth running drop-in centers without constant adult supervision. The authors stress that capacity building is important, especially in programs like Youth Action Program (YAP) of East Harlem. However, what type of capacity building and skill training is not addressed. The authors conclude, “these initiatives have benefited from a view of leadership as a process, where each participant can develop skills and build confidence as he or she contributes to the organization over time” (p. 342). While the authors share some successful youth programs, they continue to discuss youth as resources, instead of youth as partners.

Action Competence

Action competence is a concept related to CYD, but not specifically discussed or promoted by the movement at this time. I picked up this concept at a conference or while researching, yet could not find my original source. When I searched for educators and researchers that have used the term in this country, I came up empty handed. Finally, I searched broader and found that international educators and researchers in countries like

Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Denmark utilize this benchmark quite frequently.

So what is action competence? At the University of Toronto, Stathakos and Anderson (2001) describe “Empowerment and Action Competence” for a school health promotion program as, “health promoting schools improve young people’s abilities to take action, cope and generate change. It provides a setting within which they, working with their teachers and others, can gain a sense of achievement” (Guiding principles for health promotion section, para. 3).

Other citations focus on action competence as related to taking action for the environment and to build a sustainable society. Fien (1998) from England suggests that our aim should be to develop the civic or action competencies that can enable all students and institutions to play a role in the transition to a sustainable society. Jensen and Schnaak(1994) of Denmark explain that action competence is the ability to identify problems, make decisions on possible solutions, and finally plan and carry out actions for solutions. Harper (1999) discusses action competence at length and concludes, “For the growing number of international conferences and civil society organizations calling for youth participation, action competence has become essential...to ensure this competency, a critical thinking pedagogy is required” (Definitions, para. 2).

For this study, I utilized the definition of Jensen and Schnack (1994): action competence is the ability to plan and carry out an action. To demonstrate action competence, one would be able to understand and identify a problem, brainstorm solutions and then carry out a viable solution.

Summary

In this chapter I shared the underlying needs of youth and the need to change the image and role of youth in our communities. Best practices for curriculum design were also reviewed to guide the planning for the training curriculum. The primary concepts related to my research questions were also explored. The state of civic education in our country and the need to teach civic skills was revealed by the literature. Looking at youth leadership, we know that some youth have leadership skills, but we do not understand the youth leadership development process. Research suggests that youth ideas about leadership may differ from many adult theories and concepts.

At this time, adolescent development theory, learning theories, and leadership studies all point to youth working in groups on community-based projects as the best approach to help build leadership skills and confidence. Finally, community youth development and action competence are defined and described for the reader to better understand these ideals that are driving this research. In the next chapter, the context for this training and the methods utilized to collect and analyze data are described in detail.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

In the last chapter, I reviewed literature related to citizenship education, youth leadership, and community youth development (CYD). My study focused on the development of civic skills and youth leadership in middle-school youth during a training for a community project. Positive youth development and skill building are two key principles in the CYD movement (Hughes & Curnan, 2000).

Drawing from the best practices in research, I modified a youth leadership curriculum I developed in collaboration with a colleague in the summer of 2000. For this study, I developed an evaluation component to identify how middle-school youth have changed after a four-day, 16-hour, summer day camp experience. The focus of my evaluation centers on two key questions: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence?” I hope that this focus on leadership and skill building will help inform future planning and design of community youth development trainings and workshops.

I collected and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data for this study. The quantitative data was gathered through a pre/post survey to measure any changes that students self-reported about their skills and their ideas and perceptions of leadership. Qualitative data included student comments and adult evaluations, collected on the final day of the training. To evaluate the curriculum, I also collected documents produced as a result of the training (discussion documentation, group action plans, and anecdotal

evidence) to examine how effectively participants were able to work together and practice their skills. Community members who attended the final presentation offered qualitative data that was not part of original plan for data collection (one letter of congratulations, and articles from local community newspapers).

Besides being an evaluator for this study, I was also a curriculum planner, facilitator, and coach, working with both youth and adults who attended the four-day training. Because of my multiple roles I cannot be considered an unbiased researcher. I was an enthusiastic trainer during the four-day camp and had a vested interest in the results of the evaluation. While an outside evaluator might have provided a more objective view of the process and results, I was able to collect data easily, develop rapport, and communicate with participants. By collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, from both youth and adults, I attempted to minimize the bias inherent in action research. According to Anderson (1998), evaluations are most effective when there is someone within the project that is convinced of the merits of the evaluation and champions its dissemination. I hope to utilize the results of this small study to enhance my work with youth and community groups and to help grow the movement of community youth development.

Events That Led to This Study

My personal story in chapter one reveals my skill evolvment and leadership development through many jobs and learning experiences. This capstone research examined how 12 middle-school youth see their leadership role in their communities and skill development changes after one, sixteen-hour training.

The idea for this study surfaced after many years of facilitating conflict resolution trainings, researching best practices in violence prevention, and then serving as a grant manager for teachers and community leaders carrying out violence prevention projects. Youth involvement and leadership development were not only being recommended in research (Pittman, 2000) but also successfully demonstrated by some teachers and community people I was observing and supporting.

As I supported youth efforts, I noticed that the important topic of sustainable youth involvement, group capacity building, and skill development was left out of strategic or action plans. As a trainer and facilitator, I knew that effective organizing and facilitation techniques were available, yet many people do not have access to training in these skills.

I gained some amazing group process skills during 1998-1999 through courses in the Technology of Participation (TOP) offered by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (Institute of Cultural Affairs Minnesota, 2001). I promoted facilitation skill building and offered workshops to build the capacity of the adult community members involved with the violence prevention coalition I coordinated. Participatory discussions, brainstorming, and democratic decision-making processes worked, and I became dedicated to empowering other groups to have the same success.

In the summer of 2000, I attended a professional facilitators conference, "The Millennium Connection." (Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2000b) in Denver, Colorado. Here I learned about community youth development and the groups, both nationally and internationally, that are trying to create organizations and projects which embrace the

concept of youth and adults working in partnership to improve their communities. The work to overcome the barriers to this new paradigm challenged me to think of ways to empower youth and educate adults. In discussions at the conference, I stressed the need for skill development for both youth and adults.

Later that summer, I had the chance to offer the first Co-Motion trainings to young people in two communities of a large suburban county. Twenty students took part in two, four-day “mini-camps.” The youth in both communities practiced facilitation and communication skills and created action plans to help start their own teen centers. The camps were well received and the informal evaluations indicated that skill building within the context of planning a community project worked well.

A challenge while organizing these trainings was getting adults to commit to a week of training with the youth. While many adults attended the final presentations, most of them, were unable to commit to spending four days with youth, learning skills and creating plans to improve their community. Following both trainings, youth and adult advisors began to work on their action plans. One group of youth organized quickly and within three months they had opened their after-school teen center that offered homework help, games, activities, as well as service learning opportunities in the community. The camp experience had served as a jump-start for their teen center project.

Tobacco Prevention

When major tobacco corporations were taken to court in the late 1990s, many of the settlements provided funding to counteract the advertising and targeting of young people. Minnesota non-profits, community agencies, and public health departments

proposed projects that included youth input and involvement. The public health department where I worked on violence prevention initiatives received a large tobacco prevention grant that required youth involvement. The Tobacco Prevention Coordinator recruited youth and adults on board to work on tobacco prevention.

While the grant language included the intention to mentor and train youth on how to approach and communicate with businesses, the strategies to build skills for all aspects of organizing and facilitating the projects was not spelled out. We brainstormed ways to help train and prepare youth and adults for prevention work. It became clear that middle-school youth need specific skills. I offered to modify the leadership trainings that I had conducted with my mentor the summer before. The four-day summer camp strategy was chosen to train youth in the skills they need to carry out campaigns and also to get adult advisors involved and excited about tobacco prevention. The need for tobacco prevention and a description of the setting and youth involved follows.

Setting and Participants

The day camp took place in a large suburban, partly rural county in the metro area of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. As a tobacco grant for this fourth largest county stated, the county had an estimated youth population of 46,292, ages 12 through 17 years (Anoka County, 2000). The county also had a slightly higher percentage of students in grades 6, 9, and 12 who report smoking than Minnesota's youth as a whole. In this county, 44% of the 12th graders, 31% of the 9th graders and 8% of the 6th graders reported using cigarettes in the 1998 Minnesota Student Survey (Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 1999). Comparable figures for the entire state of

Minnesota are 42%, 30%, and 7%. The Minnesota Student Survey results show that smoking rates increased for the students who took the survey in 9th and 12th grades. Many young people begin smoking during middle school. Heavy smoking rates are also a problem for this county. The 1998 Minnesota Student Survey showed that 1.2% of the 6th graders, 10% of the 9th graders, and 19% of the 12th graders report smoking a half-pack or more per day. This county is tied with one other county for the highest smoking rate for 9th graders in Minnesota.

The larger tobacco prevention campaign from which this research stems involves five middle-schools located in four school districts in the county. The five schools have a student population of over 5,600. Students (and advisors) who attended this four-day training were self-selected and represented one of the five middle-schools. A total of 13 females and three males, ages 13-15, participated in the training. All students were entering the 7th or 8th grade for the fall of 2001.

Seven adult advisors (six females, one male) started the week of training, with one female advisor dropping out after Tuesday. Students volunteered to attend the four-day camp and adult advisors were paid for their participation. Two county staff working on tobacco prevention and two other adults from other community organizations (also involved in this tobacco initiative) assisted with and participated in parts of the training.

A primary goal of the larger tobacco prevention grant, awarded to this suburban community health department, includes getting youth involved in the planning and implementation of grant activities. The overall goal is to reduce tobacco use by 30% by

the year 2005. The larger saturation campaign for which the youth need skills to help carry out activities the following six strategies:

1. reducing exposure to environmental smoke
2. restricting advertising and promotion of tobacco products
3. promoting alternative media initiatives
4. reducing youth access to tobacco products
5. participating in coordinated school-based initiatives
6. providing tobacco reduction and cessation services

Many layers of the community were envisioned as part of this effort: neighborhoods, businesses, churches, youth organizations, law enforcement, cities and other groups and organizations, which impact those students in a mapped geographic area around each of the five middle schools. Given that planners envisioned a number of community partners would participate in the larger tobacco prevention campaign, it became clear that middle-school youth would need to learn and practice communication and presentation skills in order to effectively carry out the larger campaign. Youth also need skills in organizing and facilitating their own action plans. This information was helpful for the planning of the training curriculum as well as the design of the evaluation materials.

Context for This Study

The four-day Co-Motion “mini-camp” curriculum was designed in collaboration with my mentor, a facilitator for the Institute for Cultural Affairs, Minnesota. During the summer of 2000, we had pre-tested our leadership curriculum in two communities located in the same county. The experiential activities were modified to fit the needs of

this tobacco prevention skill training. The numbers of students and adults participating increased and organizing participants by groups was important for planning. Five groups of youth, each representing a different middle-school in the county attended the day camp. We recruited one to two adult advisors for each middle-school group.

The Tobacco Prevention Coordinator for the county also contributed to the planning process by informing us of her goals for the week and telling us about the prior involvement of each school with tobacco prevention as well as the knowledge and the skills of youth scheduled to participate. The curriculum was designed with rational objectives (concrete learning goals) and experiential objectives (the experience we hoped to create for the participants). Empowering youth leaders in each community and creating positive change were two experiences we wanted to create. For the rational goals, we looked at the skills that we would discuss, model, and practice. The skills we emphasized fit under the categories of communication skills, group/teamwork skills, and action planning skills.

Primary resources utilized to design the curriculum training included John McKnight's model of community asset building in his book *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) and the discussion, brainstorm, and planning methods of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (Nelson, 2001). Other key resources and materials utilized in the planning and preparation for the day camp included: *Building Community: A Tool Kit for Youth and Adults* by the Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development (2001) and *The Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change* (Dingerson & Hay, 1998).

Methods

I collected quantitative data through a pre/post survey and qualitative data from adult and youth participants in a final evaluation. Participants also generated other qualitative data through discussions that were documented and group action plans designed by each middle-school team. The survey was designed to measure changes that students self-report in regards to their skills as well as their ideas and perception of leadership. To obtain other perspectives about student changes, I had adult advisors and tobacco staff from the county and community organizations, who also participated in the four-day camp, complete an evaluation form. Community members who attended the final presentation offered other qualitative (anecdotal feedback) with letters and articles that were printed in community newspapers.

Data collection. For the quantitative (pre-post) survey, I created 18 statements utilizing a five-point Likert scale to collect changes in the adolescents' self-perceptions of their leadership roles, opportunities for involvement, and their civic skills. "Constructing a questionnaire is a good way to sharpen what you really need to know and it will greatly facilitate the data analysis phase of the research" (Anderson, 1998, p. 170). I designed my own questionnaire because it is the most practical, according to Anderson and "easy to respond to, straightforward to analyze, and sufficient for most needs" (p. 174).

Creating my own survey also made sense when I learned that there is lack of assessment technology available to measure leadership adequately in children and youth (Oakland, Falkenberg, & Oakland, 1996).

Because I was interested in how the participants' views and opinions might change, the Likert scale appeared to be a good choice. It is important to note that Likert scale surveys do not ask direct questions. Instead, a participant responds to statements on a five-point scale. For each statement, respondents choose a number from one (don't agree) to five (strongly agree). According to Anderson, "Likert scales provide an excellent means of gathering opinions and attitudes" (p. 175).

Anderson (1998) recommends that the researcher follow six steps for the design of a questionnaire: determine your questions, draft the questions, sequence the items, design the questionnaire, pilot-test and revise, and then develop a strategy for data collection and analysis. I drafted statements based on leadership roles and opportunities for involvement, as well as for the specific skills we practiced during the training. I received feedback on the survey from a Hamline instructor during a Research Forum class, and I revised some statements. Each question is a short, present tense statement of one individual thought/feeling about the community or the individual self, related to either leadership roles or civic skills (Appendix A).

Keeping in mind the rules that Anderson outlines in his book (1998), I kept the statements simple, short, and in the present tense. I chose words carefully and avoided double negatives and universals such as always and never. Finally, during a similar training two weeks prior to this study, I tested the statements on a group of middle-school and high-school youth that participated in a similar training. Small revisions of sentence structure and word choice were made after the field test.

While my questions were not tested and validated by repeated research, they are simple statements written in a way that middle-school students can understand and respond. The 1998 Minnesota Student Survey (Minnesota Department of Children, Families, & Learning, 1999) and “An Asset Checklist” by the Search Institute (1997) gave me ideas for creating statements about leadership and skills.

At the end of the survey I attached four qualitative open-ended questions/sentence stems because I wanted to know, from youth-- in their own words--what they gained from the experience. The questions (Appendix A) were written in a logical questioning process, a four- level discussion/focused conversation method of the Institute for Cultural Affairs: perception, response, interpretation, and decision (Stanfield, 1997).

One question was written for each category of the focused conversation process-- in the order of how the brain works as a whole-system (Appendix D). Initially, we take in our reality through our senses, so asking participants what they remember and will take away from the week framed the first question. The rationale for the second question is the participants’ personal response (authentic feelings and emotions) which I believe is important to the evaluation of the training. Stanfield (1997, p. 24) stresses, “internal data from feelings, emotions and associations are just as real as the externally observable data and must be considered seriously in making decisions.” The third question was interpretive for each participant: and related to the personal meaning of the training. Did the participant discover any of his or her own talents and skills?

Finally, the fourth question was decisional and sought to find out how the training might affect individual lives and actions. Considering next steps and what actions might

occur as a result of an experience is essential, according to Nelson (2001, p. 12), “If we do not decide future implications for action, our reflection is stuck on viewing internal responses or theoretical implications, which never connect back to the world.

Application of learning is the final stage of processing.”

A second source of data for this study is the qualitative evaluation (Appendix B) completed by the adult advisors at the end of the week. They responded to four questions about their experience of the training, as well as five questions about changes they observed in the youth. The questions or sentence stems were constructed utilizing the same question format discussed above, the four-level focused conversation method also utilized in the student survey and throughout the training.

The third type of data collection was the actual documents of the participants’ work. The vision of the whole group, the discussion documentation and action plans created by each middle-school group were typed up for all participants and shared with the guests who attended the final community presentation on Thursday afternoon. The training curriculum includes the ICA process (Nelson, 2001) of documenting all data from group discussions and brainstorming, as well as small group work, which for this study included action plans from each of the five middle schools. When utilizing ICA methods, it is standard practice to document the work of the group, without a facilitator interpreting or paraphrasing any words, and the data includes all ideas shared.

According to Merriam (1998), document data produced as part of a qualitative study is objective and “can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated” (p. 126). While some data may appear fragmentary and not fit the exact

questions of the research, the products produced are grounded in the training experience and may help the reader to understand the curriculum and the effectiveness of the training. Finally, community documents in the form of newspaper articles highlighting the day camp experience and a letter from a community leader will be used to triangulate the data.

Data analysis. Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data described above, I evaluated the Co-Motion training curriculum. In analyzing the survey data, I compared the Likert scale responses (1-5) for each participant by entering the data in a one-page chart, which enabled me to easily compare pre- and post-numbers (Appendix A). I examined changes for each individual as well as looked at separate questions, looking for increase, decrease, or no change (same) patterns for the entire group of respondents. For evaluation purposes, I focused on three questions that had to do with leadership roles:

- #1 I am a valued member of my community.
- #3 I know there are things I can do to make a difference in my community.
- #5 I have leadership skills to help improve my community.

Five skill questions were examined closely because they directly relate to skills covered in the training:

- #9 I know how to plan for and create a successful meeting.
- #12 I know how to brainstorm and choose a community project to work on.
- #13 I know how to create and action plan and assign tasks to group members.
- #15 I feel comfortable presenting information and speaking in front of a group.
- #16 I know how to promote and create publicity/media coverage for a project.

The above questions were chosen because they might provide some insights into the primary questions of this research: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence?”

To evaluate the youth responses to qualitative questions and sentence stems, I charted all their data and sorted into groups of similar types of responses. For the adult evaluations (Appendix B), I tabulated responses to four of the nine questions. I coded and categorized similar types of responses to see if there were patterns of ideas and feedback. Adults were asked about their own experience during the four-day training and they were asked to share changes they observed in specific youth during the week. The adult perspective, as participant and observer, added rich qualitative data to this study.

Finally, other qualitative data was analyzed to see if it provided additional evidence that rational and experiential objectives for the week were achieved. With the focus on skill building, I sorted the qualitative data from the youth and adults into skill categories and compared adult and youth responses. Placing other responses and community comments in leadership and strategy categories also helped to evaluate the curriculum.

Summary

In this chapter I shared the context out of which this research evolved and my methods of data collection and analysis. My experience facilitating conflict resolution trainings as well as my violence prevention research provided me with the knowledge and awareness regarding the growing involvement of youth in prevention initiatives.

During the summer of 2000, my colleague and I trained youth in facilitation and organizing skills to empower their efforts to start their own teen centers. What was missing for those initial trainings was a systematic way to collect and analyze data for evaluation. This study was an attempt to begin a more systematic evaluation process for the Co-Motion training.

With the tobacco grant initiative providing the opportunity to train middle-school youth and adults and my new awareness of Community Youth Development (CYD), I enthusiastically prepared for the training and the evaluation of the curriculum. I designed a pre- and post-survey (Appendix A) to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from youth. I also designed a final evaluation questionnaire for the adults (Appendix B) who participated in the training.

While the quantitative survey method was designed to measure attitude changes in the youth participants, the qualitative data collected helped to evaluate the curriculum and offer concrete ideas for improving activities for future trainings. The qualitative data included not only open-ended responses from youth and adults, but also documents from small and large group activities and discussions during the training.

Due to the rich diversity of comments from youth and adults, as well as the quantitative survey, I was able to evaluate the training by triangulating the data. In the next chapter, I share the results of the data collection and analyze the results to see if the Co-Motion Camp was effective in teaching leadership skills to middle-school youth and increasing their action competence.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

In this chapter I present the data related to my capstone questions: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after an experiential leadership training? What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire “action competence.” I also present information about the development of the leadership curriculum as well as describe the implementation, including adjustments and changes made to the agenda.

The results of the pre- and post-surveys completed by the youth are included in this chapter and patterns or insights gained from the data. By examining the evaluations completed by adults, and other qualitative data generated during the week, I provide different perspectives and feedback for the Co-Motion curriculum. Finally, I compare the results of my data to the values and outcomes proposed by advocates of Community Youth Development (Hughes & Curnan, 2000). This experiential training was based on best practices of teaching, leadership development, and recommendations of the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement. By integrating ideas from diverse disciplines with effective facilitation methods, a creative Co-Motion training was strengthened and implemented.

Curriculum Development

The curriculum utilized for this study was designed in collaboration with my facilitation mentor during the summer of 2000. For this training conducted during the

summer of 2001, we made minor changes in the curriculum to fit the needs of a larger group of participants representing five middle schools (Appendix D).

We also adapted the curriculum to welcome and include the adult advisors who committed to work through the week as partners with the middle-school students. Adult leaders were asked to lead community building activities as well as tobacco information sessions to demonstrate that shared leadership is possible.

To fit the needs and schedules of busy middle-school students during August, the camp was conducted each day from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The half-day format set in the middle of the day worked well, and included an hour lunch for socializing and cooperative games. Sixteen seventh and eighth graders started the week and 12 completed the training on Thursday with a public presentation to community leaders and parents.

Our rational goal (Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2000a, p. 14) for the four-day week was to increase the leadership skills of the youth involved. In addition, we wanted to get enough action planning completed that each of the five middle-school groups (both youth and adults) would have a good start on their fall projects. For the experiential objective of this training, we hoped to increase the action competence of the youth. We created learning opportunities for both youth and adults so that by the end of the week they would feel motivated and empowered to work on the tobacco initiative.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) methods of focused conversation, brainstorming, and action planning provided the backbone of the curriculum for this training (Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2000a, p. 2). During the pilot Co-Motion camps

during the summer of 2000, I observed that middle-school youth had the ability to learn the basic skills of the ICA techniques and planning methods. The philosophy of utilizing all voices, emphasizing teamwork, and moving through the process with an orderly way of thinking and reflection guided the curriculum planning process (Nelson, 2001).

We scheduled each day with a similar flow of activities. Mornings were dedicated to sharing and digesting content. We discussed topics such as teamwork, effective meetings, leadership, and tobacco information. (Two topics were dropped due to time constraints or scheduling--an activity and discussion on "personal power or group power," and a local graphic artist speaking about graphics and publicity.) After lunch, the youth practiced the skills needed to carry out an effective anti-tobacco campaign. All the skill work was done through activities and planning that needed to take place to get each middle-school project initiated. All youth and adult participants had the opportunity to share ideas and help shape the overall county campaign, and contribute to the action plan they wanted to carry out at their schools.

To create community and help build the teams of youth and adults from the five schools, each morning included energizer activities and the "question of the day" discussion opener. To insure every participant got their his or her voice warmed up and "in the mix" for the day, we had each participant share a response to a simple question that either related to their personal life or to the topics being discussed. For example, one morning, we asked participants to share who was their hero and why.

After lunch we engaged participants in a cooperative activity and then a focused lesson to empower the group for the afternoon sessions. During one post-lunch session,

the students listened to a story of a teenager (Waldman, 2000) who had attended a leadership conference and got involved in TREND (Turning Resources and Energy in New Directions), an organization with opportunities for leadership, community involvement and drug-free fun. On another day, students volunteered to role-play a script part for a story about youth in Massachusetts who had organized their own successful tobacco project: “Smoke Free Generation: A two-year Campaign that refused to be snuffed out” (Lesko, 1992).

Implementation

A description of major activities for each training day (Appendix D) follows for the reader to get a picture of what occurred during this curriculum process. Quotes in this section are from youth and adult participants as recorded in my journal notes to help recall the training activities. Though not a formal part of the data collection, comments and discussions help the reader understand the curriculum implementation.

Monday. The theme for the day centered on teamwork and building community. Defining and understanding the tobacco issues and problems in their local communities were also part of the agenda. The skill competencies were working as a team and including ideas from every person. Each middle-school group built a sculpture at their table with a variety of art/recycled objects. In a large group the participants reflected on their creations, which included both positive images of “youth taking a stand,” as well as symbols of the dark side of tobacco—images representing those who had died as a result of their smoking habits. One creative group designed a statue depicting the tobacco industry and then performed an original rap song for their presentation to the group.

Utilizing the focused conversation method (Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2000, p. 11) I asked the whole group questions regarding what happened while building their sculpture, how they felt during the process, and their evaluation of how well they worked together as a group.

The second major learning activity on Monday included a structured asset mapping process (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993) for each middle-school community represented. Each group drew their community boundaries and landmarks, and then placed stickers that corresponded to the 16 questions we designed (Appendix E). For example, the students clearly identified safe places (purple dots) and unsafe areas (red dots) in the community. Students also placed green dots for locations that are smoke-free and black dots for places that are “smokey” in the community.

Each group presented their map to the larger group and answered questions from participants. When asked what they saw in common among the five community maps, one youth said, “There are a lot of black dots, and in many places there isn’t supposed to be smoking.” Another student focused in on the schools and noticed, “we have black dots at every school!” Adults appeared to experience some new insights as they listened to the youth descriptions and locations of drug use in their individual communities. Background information and statistics on the state of tobacco use in the county and the goals of the tobacco initiative were also shared with participants.

Tuesday. The theme of the day was creating a vision for a tobacco-free county and creating an action plan for each middle-school community. The competencies for Tuesday were primarily group skills: working effectively together (including group

expectations), clarifying a vision, reaching consensus, and designing an action plan. During the last hour of Monday's activities, participants had cut out pictures from magazines that fit with their vision of a healthy, tobacco-free community. Tuesday morning, after the review of the first day's highlights, the whole group clustered the pictures, named the clusters, and provided words to describe their vision categories (Appendix F).

A reflection discussion after the visioning process revealed the power of the process. One advisor noticed that the adults kept trying to interpret the youth input and then she spoke loudly, scolding the other adults, "We are changing what the youth said--- just use their words!" After the vision process was completed, another advisor said, "I feel empowered just going through the process."

The action planning process then began with the whole group describing the anticipated "victory" of working towards their vision. What would be happening in communities across the county if this initiative were successful with reducing tobacco use? As a reality check, we walked the group through the process of looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the middle-school teams. Finally, they all talked about the potential benefits and dangers that might result from working in their communities on tobacco issues.

On Tuesday afternoon, we explained the action planning process and handed out an action planning grid (Appendix G), so each group could design an action plan for their school. For three of the five groups, the idea surfaced to plan a kick-off event. The two other groups focused on plans to recruit new members for their tobacco initiative. This

common approach made it easier for the co-facilitator and I to roam from group to group, coaching them through the process of brainstorming event details and organizing tasks. Our instructions to the groups were to work cooperatively and insure that every person has an opportunity to share his or her ideas. We did not instruct each group to pick a youth facilitator for the process, so adults emerged as leaders/facilitators of the process.

One middle-school group had a difficult time starting the action planning process in their small group. The barrier was the adult advisor. She was adamant that they did not need to follow the process, because it “doesn’t make any sense, it’s all planned.” The Tobacco Prevention Coordinator then conferenced with this particular advisor and provided more background to the county’s initiative and the rationale for each group to include student input. Then the group was able to start brainstorming and planning.

Going through action planning once does not insure individuals can repeat the process. This first practice appeared frustrating to some and for others, an energizing process. Working as a group and walking through action planning steps exposed the participants to an orderly process—a process they indicated they wanted to learn more about.

Wednesday. The theme for the day was practicing skills and preparing for a public presentation. Brainstorming, action planning, talking to adults (creating and utilizing a phone script), and presentation skills were the focus for the day. To help promote their tobacco campaigns, the participants were aware they needed to educate and inform adults about their vision and the action plans they created during Co-Motion Camp. The youth agreed to plan and host a public presentation for community leaders

and parents. (Public presentations in two other communities during the summer of 2000 had worked well when youth presented their ideas for their teen centers.) To prepare for the presentation, participants practiced brainstorming event details and then as a large group, did action planning for a second time.

The same planning steps were utilized to prepare for the presentation. What would a successful event look like? (Describe what the victory looked like, sounded like, and felt like.) Then each group reviewed its strengths and weaknesses, and what benefits and dangers there might be from having a hosting a presentation. During the brainstorming of the action plan, adults and students alike had to be prompted to think of all the details that would insure a successful event. Task groups were formed from the categories of actions created by the group.

After lunch, utilizing phone scripts they had each designed using their own words, the youth began to call and invite school officials, mayors, council persons, and county representatives to attend their Thursday afternoon presentation. Youth had a chance to practice their scripts on family members as well. While some youth needed coaching and encouragement to make the phone invitations, others just picked up the phone and their excitement and confidence seem to increase with each RSVP. While youth calling adults is not a common practice in our culture, it is an important skill and as some advisors noted, “a positive, risk-taking experience.”

Next on the agenda was a carousel brainstorm (where youth and adults walked from question to question— written on large chart papers spread around the room) and shared their ideas and drawings for a countywide tobacco prevention logo and slogan.

After the group discussed all the drawing and ideas, the youth began to work in their task groups to prepare for the presentation. Adults were also available to help youth write scripts or outlines for their speaking parts in the presentation. Youth were encouraged to practice their parts. Middle-school group was instructed to share their action plan, and make sure that each person had a part in the presentation.

Thursday. The focus for the day was to empower everyone to be a leader and present and celebrate the successes of the training. The major skill competencies included the public relation skills of welcoming community members, introducing others, and presentation skills.

In the morning, the large group brainstormed ways that youth have power, including the talents or contributions young people bring to each community. The action planning steps were reviewed to see how much organizing had been completed the afternoon before. Then the task groups went to work preparing for the afternoon celebration and the arrival of the guests. Some youth created new visuals, others set up the chairs in a community circle, while still others practiced their skits or what they were going to share with the guests.

A review of the week occurred just before lunch. A discussion, utilizing reflective questions, got the youth and adults to think about the activities of the week, the highlights, the frustrations, and what new things they learned. Participants were also asked to think about next steps that they needed to take to get started on their action plans following the training. After lunch, the post-survey was completed by the youth while adults filled out a final evaluation.

The community presentation was the highlight of the week for many youth and adults. The energy in the room was one of anticipation, music was playing, and school principals, city mayors, and even the County Sheriff were greeted by youth as they arrived. A number of parents, siblings, and friends joined the crowd. Thirty-five community representatives and family members attended the presentation.

The program covered the purpose of the leadership camp, an overview of the county tobacco grant initiative, and then youth described what they learned and worked on each day of the training. The youth utilized colorful visuals, told stories, and even role-played their interpretation of what a “bad meeting” and what a “good meeting” looks and sounds like. The adults could relate to the experiences portrayed and there was much laughter in response to the skit.

The final part of the presentation focused on the five middle-school groups. The groups presented their action plans for how to reduce tobacco use at their schools and in the communities near their schools. The community members asked a number of questions following the presentation, and then the treat table was quickly set up and everyone had a chance to make their own ice cream sundaes. With so many community members in attendance, youth felt empowered, and the final event was a special celebration to honor the work completed by youth and adults.

Youth Survey Data

A survey of 18 statements (on a Likert scale of 1 to 5) and four open-ended questions was designed for the evaluation. The statements focused on the leadership concepts and skills covered in the training. The results (Appendix A) from the survey are

interesting, but do not paint a clear picture of significant change for the youth after a four-day training experience. While 16 middle-school youth took the pre-survey, just 12 were present on the final day to complete the post-survey. Ten out of the 12 students discussed in the analysis are females, 2 respondents were males (one other male attended only the first two days). In my data analysis, I decided to focus on eight statements of the total 18 statements on each survey. I focused on three questions that had to do with leadership roles and five leadership skill questions because they were related to the primary questions of this research. The following lists include the eight selected statements. Three questions that had to do with leadership roles:

- #1 I am a valued member of my community.
- #3 I know there are things I can do to make a difference in my community.
- #5 I have leadership skills to help improve my community.

Five skill questions were examined closely because they relate to skills covered in the training:

- #9 I know how to plan for and create a successful meeting.
- #12 I know how to brainstorm and choose a community project to work on.
- #13 I know how to create an action plan and assign tasks to group members.
- #15 I feel comfortable presenting information and speaking in front of a group.
- #16 I know how to promote and create publicity/media coverage for a project.

Overall, examining the change patterns, it is clear that a majority of the students' responses stayed the same or decreased. Comparing pre- and post-surveys, 104 statements of the total 218 statements (12 students responded to 18 statements each) were

answered with the same number ratings. When asked about their leadership and skill abilities, 44 of the 218 statements resulted in decrease ratings. Three students responded with less confidence (on five to eight of the statements) at the end of the week. It is possible that some students may have realized that they have more to learn before they feel confident as leaders.

For the Likert ratings that increased, the number of statements with this pattern is small, a total of 28% (63 of the total 218 questions examined). Three particular statements (#1, #9, #15) had approximately 50% of the respondents increase their ratings on the post-survey. These statements may point to some strengths of the week. “I am a valued member of my community,” was statement #1 and related to the concept of action competence. Seven students felt more valued at end of the week. Overall, 11 of the 12 respondents answered with a “4” or a “5” (strongly agree) on the post-survey, indicating that the students may have been involved and connected in their communities before this training.

Statement #9 has to do with effective meetings: “I know how to plan for and create a successful meeting.” Six students increased their self-ratings in the post-survey. Examining the level of the numbers for the post-survey, once again, 11 out of the 12 respondents answered confidently with a “4” or “5.” For statement #15, students were asked to respond to, “I feel comfortable presenting information and speaking in front of a group.” Six youth marked that they felt some increased confidence at the end of the week. (It is important to note here, that youth responded to this statement before they

made their presentation to the community. If the survey had been administered after the final presentation, more youth may have marked an increase of confidence.)

Other leadership statements selected for analysis that relate to my research questions included #3, “I know there are things I can do to make a difference in my community,” and #5, “I have leadership skills to help improve my community.” No significant increase patterns were identified, yet the pattern of youth responding pre and post with the same high numbers (either “4-4” or “5-5”) indicates that these participants may already be involved in leadership positions and feel they have skills to make a difference. Results may have been different if at-risk youth who are not involved or disconnected from their communities had completed the same survey.

I focused on three statements related to skill competencies:

#12 I know how to brainstorm and choose a community project to work on.

#13 I know how to create an action plan and assign tasks to group members.

16. I know how to promote and create publicity/media coverage for a project.

None of the above statements, which relate to the skills practiced, showed any significant improvement. This is not surprising because youth during a four-day training did not have enough time to practice the skills and thoroughly understand the processes to feel completely confident.

In the final step of analysis for the survey, I examined the self-ratings for individual youth. I tabulated the numbers that increased, decreased, and the self-ratings that stayed the same for the pre-and post-surveys for all 12 youth. I also looked for any patterns, particularly in the statements I focused on for this analysis. Five students

increased their self-ratings. Three youth answered more positively on 7 questions. Two other youth increased their ratings on the post-survey for 9 and 10 questions, respectively. Examining these youth with my focus questions did not reveal any patterns. For all youth that increased their self-ratings, a majority responded with just one number higher on the post-survey, compared to the pre-survey, indicating small amounts of change.

The youth also answered qualitative, open-ended questions and sentence stems at the end of the survey. This data revealed, in their own words, their thoughts about Co-Motion Camp.

The first sentence stem was “Two ideas I’ll take away from this week include...” The responses before the week began included general goals of learning more about tobacco, leadership and working as a team. This makes sense because the youth had been told that the broad concepts would be the focus of the training. One youth anticipated the outcome as “learning to be a better leader,” while another mentioned “community involvement,” while still another questioned, “What am I to do for my community?” The post-survey responses included more specific skills: teamwork, listening, brainstorming, and “how to start a project.” One youth wrote that “teamwork is best—two heads is better than one.” Another respondent said she would take away the concepts of “good and bad meetings, and how to start a project.” Two others embraced the power of participatory idea sharing. One youth stressed that it is important to “listen to other people’s ideas,” while the other youth said, “everyone should share their ideas.”

To see how youth responded to the variety of training activities, we asked, “What was the most exciting about the week? The most frustrating?” In the pre-survey the youth anticipated the exciting things would be meeting other people, working with other schools, and having fun. Two frustrating things youth had already experienced on the first day were “getting up in the morning” and “leaving home.” Youth also anticipated that they would be frustrated by “sitting” and experiencing “more difficult things.” At the end of the week, in their post-survey, the youth reported that the most exciting parts of the week had included meeting people, having fun, skits, sculptures, and making the presentations. The things that most frustrated the youth included: action planning, phoning, sitting, doing surveys, and when “everybody talked at once,” or “when my group left.”

To identify the leadership gifts and the skills the youth perceive they have to offer, the survey asked, “The strengths that I bring to this group include...” In the pre-survey, the youth listed “smarts” and “knowledge” as well as other personal qualities and values: humor, kindness, having an open mind, being helpful, and empathy. Other strengths they bring to a group included “saying my ideas for the group,” and “sharing my opinion,” and having the “courage to actually talk about smoking and how I feel about it.”

In the post-survey, the strengths listed by many youth appeared surprisingly similar to the pre-survey. While a few youth were more specific and listed skills, such as listening, social skills and “presenting in front of a large group,” many others answered with more personal qualities: creativity, kindness, love and “being outgoing.” In

retrospect, the question should have specifically asked what skills youth believe they bring to the group. With a question that had focused on skills, the youth may have revealed more about what they learned during the week.

Finally, the youth were asked to describe, “Something in my community I wish to change...” In the pre-survey, one youth wished that “people to be more committed” while another youth shared her frustration that “no one seems to want to change sometimes.” Still another said, “I want the mean, rude, dumb boys to move.” One altruistic youth said she wished to change “helping others and have more supportive people to help others.” Because of the tobacco focus of this skill-building training, most youth focused on changing the amount of tobacco use in the community for their answers, both pre- and post-survey. Post-survey responses included: “to stop smoking in restaurants,” and “to see no smoking,” or to “stop the smoking in schools.” Two youth wanted to work on a different topic, exclaiming that they needed a teen center!

Adult Evaluations

Adults working in partnership with youth is a key element of the Community Youth Development movement. Because adults (both advisors and tobacco staff) worked side-by-side with youth during the entire week, they had a unique perspective and I wanted to capture their insights on how the youth had changed during the week. I developed nine questions (Appendix B) based on the focused conversation method of the ICA (2000a, p. 11). Four questions asked them about their experience, while the other 5 questions asked them to reflect on the youth they observed. The adults shared some

significant observations related to the questions of whether youth had changed in their leadership roles, gained skills, or appeared to have developed action competence.

Eight adults (six advisors and two tobacco campaign staff) completed the qualitative evaluation after lunch on Thursday. As I examined and categorized their responses, I focused on five questions (Appendix B) that relate to the primary questions of my research:

- The leadership principles & skills I remember being addressed this week include:
- What leadership roles and skills did youth get to practice this week?
- Which activities engaged the youth? Which activities did not engage?
- New information, methods, insights I will take away from this week include:
- Discuss specific youth and the changes you observed in them during the week:

Two questions on the adult evaluation were similar: “The leadership principles and skills addressed this week...” and “What leadership roles and skills did youth get to practice this week?” Grouping the answers to the above two questions provided a broad, diverse list of values, skills, and techniques utilized during the training. Adult advisors were obviously very attentive to the processes and the strategies utilized.

Communication skills, including introducing self, listening, calling community leaders, and presentation skills, were mentioned most often (16 examples listed). The term “action planning” or the steps of action planning (setting goals, envisioning victory, brainstorming, organizing, planning, and scheduling) was the next largest category (15 examples listed). The data shared by adults showed that the focus was on skills and the practicing of skills—which was the objective goal of the curriculum.

The next large category of responses I grouped under “values” (13 examples). I was surprised by this emphasis, as we did not consciously teach or discuss risk taking, patience, respect, assertiveness, kindness, encouragement, how to have fun, positive attitudes and responsibility. Perhaps this is the “role-modeling” mentioned by another respondent. Role-modeling values can be a strategy, but not one that teacher trainers often reflect upon or consciously plan.

The category of leadership had ten examples. This concept was one addressed throughout the week. The adults understood the new emphasis on shared leadership when they responded with “there can be lots of leaders in a group,” or “positive leaders can also follow.” The leadership philosophy of including everyone’s ideas (both from youth and adults) was evident in comments such as “youth having their opinions count” or the importance of “sharing ideas and giving input.”

While we did spend the first day focused on team building and later in the week emphasized skills needed to work as an effective group and plan meetings, only five responses fit in the category of teamwork and meetings. Lastly, four adults mentioned decision-making, but did not specify the creative ways we guided groups to consensus. We modeled consensus methods, but did not have the time to reflect and discuss the different ways that groups can creatively reach consensus.

For the second question, adults were asked what engaged the youth. One adult summed up her thoughts in one short, simple answer, “all of the active things.” The most active strategies listed by other adult respondents included energizers/warm-ups, games, skits, and the sculpture activity. Action planning steps, though not as physically active,

were also listed by adult respondents. The steps included brainstorming, planning in teams, visioning, and discussion in small groups. More specifically “choosing groups’ own plan,” and “choosing own volunteer positions” were listed as engaging. Phone calls and presenting to adults were also highlighted as particularly engaging for the middle-school youth.

Parts of the agenda that did not engage youth, according to the adult respondents, were “adults talking too much” or when youth felt “talked at” instead of being part of a dialogue or discussion. Two adult advisors thought that action planning was too difficult to do at the end of the day. Another advisor did not understand the action planning and wrote, “what is the need?”

The third question asked what new information, methods, or insights they will take away from the week. Responses fit in three categories: leadership ideas, skills, and strategies. Under the leadership category, Adult B realized the importance of “letting kids come up with ideas and do their own work.” Adult D had the insight that “youth lead youth” and that adults need to “let youth be empowered by other youth” and “let ideas from youth speak for themselves, without adult interpretation.”

Other adult respondents emphasized the steps of action planning and working in groups. One adult realized that there are “great ways to take kids through a process,” while another advisor took away “some new ways to teach kids to work together.” Four adults mentioned different training strategies that they viewed as effective: use of lots of visuals, post-its, the use of the “bulletin board” (actually a large sticky cloth that allows

one to place ideas up for all to see and move around data as needed). Other ideas related to community building, including the use of introduction discussion questions and games.

For the fourth and final question, adults described youth and the changes they observed in them during the week. Five adults made general observations, while the other three identified specific youth. By the end of the week, youth “spoke their minds,” were “more energetic” and “some learned to speak loud and clear,” according to Adult A. Adult B noticed that kids looked more confident as they went through the week and quiet kids were raising their hands. Adult G noticed “insecurities were dissolved” and “leadership roles changed and were strengthened.” Another advisor (Adult F) commented on the youth-adult partnerships, “I really got to know these youth in a different way.”

The adults observed that four youth in particular (Y7, Y10, Y15, and Y16) exhibited changes in their leadership role and skill abilities. Adult D shared that Youth 7 “started week shy, quiet and took a back seat to the action.” By the end of the week, this student was “comfortable with voicing her ideas and empowered to be a leader.” Adult C noticed that Youth 10 “seemed to discover her ability to have passion for a topic and realizes she can do something about it at her school.”

Two adults identified Youth 15. Adult H reported that at the beginning of the week, she appeared “quiet and unassertive” yet “emerged as a real leader, volunteers readily, asserts her opinion, agrees to compromise, but still champions her idea.” Adult C commented on both Youth 15 and 16, saying they both appeared, “skeptical about the camp at the beginning of the week, but really engaged and participated in lots of activities

by the end of the week.” The diversity and quality of the comments from youth and adults provides rich feedback for the curriculum process and demonstrates that the leadership roles for some youth --four in particular--shifted during the week.

Other Qualitative Data

As explained in Chapter 3, it is standard practice when utilizing ICA methods to document data generated by a group and any reflection notes on the data. When the work of a group is documented and distributed, then the results can be further analyzed and utilized. When the youth and adults presented their work and ideas to community members on the final day of the training, a packet of information and samples of work completed by the group was passed out to the guests. (Appendix F) Some of this data is significant for showing the thinking, creativity and depth of work that the group completed. I will briefly discuss the vision chart, the documentation from two large-group discussions (regarding leadership and youth-adult partnerships), and the action plans (Appendix G) created by each middle-school group.

Creating a vision for the countywide tobacco campaign was key for uniting the middle-school efforts and creating a commitment towards the goal of reducing tobacco use by 30% by 2005. Participants cut pictures out of magazines, clustered the pictures, created phrases to describe the clusters of pictures, and then titled the categories. This process often creates excitement and enthusiasm in participants to work towards the vision created. The seven categories of focus towards their “Practical Vision towards 2006” (Appendix H) included:

*Tobacco–Free Kids

- *Fun Alternatives to Smoking
- *Our Bodies: Smoke-Free Zone
- *More Activities, More Sports
- *Parent Support and Role Modeling
- *Clean Air, Clean Environment

By creating a vision, a key initial step of action planning, the youth and adults appeared more engaged and committed to work on tobacco issues in the county.

Documentation of two discussions (Appendix F) provides some interesting data because the group highlighted some new thoughts about leadership and youth-adult partnerships. After individual brainstorming and small group discussions, the whole group listed characteristics of leaders. While some of the characteristics are more traditional (hard worker, independent, positive and nice), other descriptions point to an expanded, more progressive definition of leadership—the ability to motivate, work together, cooperate, role model, find strengths, and delegate.

For the discussion of youth-adult partnerships, the youth responded positively to the question, “How has this been going for us?” Youth emphasized that “we’ve gotten along” and that “grown-ups don’t take over.” Youth also liked it when adults “worked to get everyone’s idea in.” The adults had a mix of feelings, including the responses, “It is hard—we are used to running the show!” and “It’s hard to wait for the answers from the youth!” On a positive note, other adults said they were impressed with the youth leadership and it was “easy to let kids take over and do it!” Another adult was also impressed and added, “Kids aren’t saying no!”

To evaluate the action plans created by each of the five middle-school groups, I created a chart to compare the details of their work, as well as the factors that influenced the depth and quality of their plans (Appendix G). Schools A and B completed their charts with organizing detail and described the victory of each task group. Both groups set the goal of creating a special event in the fall to recruit new members for their anti-tobacco effort.

Schools C, D, and E created action plans that also focused on getting other students involved, yet they were partially complete. For these three groups, the “victory,” or successful completion of their action plan, was not spelled out. Some organizing detail for task groups was missing. For School C, their big event was envisioned four months into the school year. Schools D and E did not identify target dates or the date the action plan would be completed.

What factors influenced the ability of youth to complete the action planning grids? By comparing the level of adult support, numbers of youth in each group, and the nature of the group, the key ingredients for this type of action planning process became clear to me. It seemed that quantity of participants was a factor. More youth and more supportive adults in a group appeared to make a difference. Prior experience of a group working together may have also made it easier to complete the action planning. Two of the three most complete plans had two or three adults in their group. Schools A, B, and D each had an existing anti-tobacco group operating at their school prior to this training. School E started the week as a group of three youth and one adult advisor, but two of the youth and the advisor dropped out. As a result, one youth continued to attend the training

as the sole participant from this community and worked with other youth and was mentored by other adults.

How successful were these groups at carrying out their plans? Six months after the training, I interviewed the county Tobacco Prevention Coordinator to see if the middle-school groups had implemented their action plans. Four of the five middle-school groups carried out their action plans (Schools A, B, C, and E). These youth initiatives were successful in recruiting new students and building their teams. School D did not carry out the plan, according to the Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, because of conflicts of philosophy about working with youth on the tobacco issues: “the adults were not open to youth input and tried to control the process.” The county discontinued their work with this anti-tobacco group in the fall of 2001.

Finally, the anecdotal data of local newspaper coverage and a letter from a community leader (Appendix I) provide some positive affirmations for the adult trainers and the work of the participants. Four community newspapers covered the presentation event. Headlines captured the unique focus of the week: “Co-Motion Camps get teens in action,” and “Making some co-motion,” and “Youth learn leadership through camp.” Three of the articles featured pictures of the youth presenting or the audience applauding the middle-school students. The county Tobacco Prevention Coordinator was quoted praising the adult and youth participants and concluded, “Parents and community leaders who listened to the final reports were very impressed with the ideas and energy these kids have for improving their community.” She added, “I’m especially pleased to see the level of skill developed during the Co-Motion Camp.” The County Sheriff also sent in a

letter of congratulations to say he was impressed by the program, the “focused message,” and the “passion among the children to end tobacco use.” He also wrote, “I believe that training the students to become leaders among their peers is a great step in getting the anti-tobacco message out to the kids in their schools.”

Synthesis of Data

In this final section, I bring together the wealth of data described above, then synthesize and summarize the findings. First, I examine the effectiveness of the curriculum and the skills that were modeled, addressed and practiced during the week. Second, I evaluate the leadership roles and action competencies that appeared to change during the week.

The curriculum utilized for the training was a unique blend of leadership activities and the action planning methods of the ICA, adapted for middle-school youth and adult advisors. We also developed this day camp experience as a youth-adult partnership training that modeled the key principles (Hughes & Curnan, 2000) of the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement. The key principles include creating a culture of respect and partnership, creating a just and compassionate society, creating safe space, creating a culture of appreciation, transferring practical, usable skills, being conscious stewards of relationships, and finding and living one’s true calling. Examining the data revealed that we did pay attention to the environment, the curriculum, and the interactions between youth, adults, and community members—who then demonstrated many of these ideals.

Both youth and adults responded positively to the active learning strategies of the training and efforts to build community. Youth shared that they liked meeting people, working in groups, and presenting to others. The adults also noticed that youth were more engaged with “the active things,” like group projects, games, and skits. The action planning was also engaging when youth got to share their own ideas and choose their own projects and volunteer positions. Adults also benefited from participating in partnership with youth, learning that youth have ideas, energy, and we can “let kids do their own work.” Adult evaluations also revealed that they liked the visual, active ways to document discussions, share ideas, and work through a step-by-step planning process.

Overall, examining qualitative data regarding the curriculum, the activities and strategies chosen appeared to have helped create a safe space, connections between individuals (conscious relationships), and built a culture of respect, appreciation and partnership between the youth and adults. (The participants that dropped out at the beginning of the week did so primarily because of scheduling conflicts.) The project-based curriculum also helped to focus participants and cultivated an increase of energy and commitment as the week progressed. However, two youth and one adult from one community felt uncomfortable and thought the training was too fast-paced, perhaps indicating that they were not prepared for the activities and project work.

Another way to evaluate the curriculum is to look at all the data that focused on skill building. Did youth gain skills that will help them to be confident leaders? The survey results are inconclusive. As noted earlier, many youth rated themselves high (4's and 5's) when responding to skill statements both on the pre- and post-surveys. The

youth may already have had a skill base, but middle-school youth can also overestimate their abilities. Some of the decrease, (20%), in ratings also points to the possibility that after the training, the youth realized they have more to learn. Two statements, one on effective meetings (#9), and another on presenting and speaking in front of a group (#15), were both rated higher in the post-survey by half of the respondents, indicating some self-reported improvement in these skill areas.

The four-days of skill building during the process of action planning was positively reflected in the comments from both the adult participants and the community members. In the adult responses, skills were mentioned most often. Brainstorming, planning in teams, phone calls and presenting to adults were seen as useful skills for youth to demonstrate. The fact that four of the five middle-school initiatives did successfully carry out their action plans can also be seen as an indication that some transfer or application of skills took place.

The final presentation was also a successful demonstration of the skills that youth had practiced during the camp. This celebration was a highlight for youth, and the adults praised the passion and courage they observed. The goal was to train middle-school youth in practical skills, but there was not enough time to adequately practice the skills addressed during four-days. Mastery of the skills would involve more training and repetition. Adult advisors, however, were very attentive to the skills that were utilized and saw the value of consciously practicing communication skills, team building, meeting skills, and action planning techniques and strategies.

While the leadership statements on the survey did not indicate any significant improvement, the youth and adult comments provided a wealth of data. Youth emphasized again and again that they like participatory idea sharing, emphasizing that everyone should share their ideas. In the discussions about leadership and youth-adult partnerships, youth also shared that they like it when “grown-ups don’t take over,” while the adults said, “It’s really hard to wait for the answers from the youth!” One adult realized that youth can influence other youth and believes that we need to “let youth be empowered by other youth.”

This is the challenge for youth-adult partnerships---it is not easy to change the old patterns of the adult seeing him or herself as the sole leader and using power to push ideas, instead of empowering youth. While the patterns of adults being in control of a group may not change for these middle-school initiatives, at least both youth and adults got to experience the dynamic synchronicity of equal participation and shared leadership during this training.

The definition of leadership also appeared to expand for both youth and adults during the week. During the discussion about leadership characteristics, ideas of cooperation, listening to others, and finding strengths in others seemed appealing to the participants. Later, adults shared that they liked the emphasis on “positive leaders can also follow,” and “there can be lots of leaders in a group.”

Youth and adults were also thinking of the qualities and values that leaders possess when they listed strengths: positive attitude, kindness, love, creativity, being respectful, giving encouragement, and being responsible. While I was looking for

strengths in leadership skills, the focus on leadership qualities was enlightening and reminded me of the values behind the topics and strategies utilized during the week.

What we were modeling spoke louder than our words.

Adult participants also described how they saw leadership abilities change during the week, as well as identifying specific individuals who seemed to benefit from the week. In general, more youth were speaking up, sharing their ideas and appeared more confident. One adult wrote, “insecurities were dissolved and leadership roles changed and were strengthened.” This is a very strong statement that indicates to me that the environment was conducive for the youth to take risks and that the curriculum strategies worked, even in the short span of a sixteen-hour training.

Four youth were significantly changed, according to the adult evaluations. Youth 7 started the week as “shy, quiet, and took a back seat to the action.” She ended the week, “voicing her ideas and empowered to be a leader,” wrote one adult. The survey responses from Youth 7 also displayed increased ratings—seven statements were rated higher on the post-survey, and four of these statements were in the leadership section of the survey. In her response to the open-end questions, Youth 7 said she brings leadership skills and her “talent of creativity” to the group process. It appears that her perceived role as a leader did change and adults noticed this leadership competence as well.

Youth 10 was identified as discovering her passion for a topic and that she now “realizes she can do something about it at her school.” Youth 10 increased her self-ratings on the post-survey for 9 of the 18 statements, for both leadership perceptions and skills. In her post-survey comments, Youth 10 said she was committed to changing

“smoking in the schools,” compared to her idea of reducing “the littering” in her pre-survey. Her new emphasis on the anti-tobacco campaign in the post-survey reflects a focused commitment.

Youth 15 was also changed during the week, according to two adult respondents. Starting the week as “quiet and unassertive,” she “emerged as a real leader.” New skills she displayed included volunteering, asserting her opinion, and yet “agrees to compromise, but still champions her idea.” For the survey, Youth 15 rated a majority of the statements the same (15 of 18 statements) on the post-survey. Youth 15 also responded with similar comments on the open-ended question regarding her strengths. For the pre-survey, she said she had the “courage to actually talk about smoking,” while in the post-survey, she said her “social skills” are the strengths she brings to the group.

Youth 16 started the week skeptical and ended the week “engaged.” This youth responded with less confidence (decrease ratings for 8 statements) on the post-survey, and marked only four statements higher (all in the skill part of the survey). This may be a specific example of the overconfident youth ending the week a bit more realistic about evaluating his leadership role and skills. Youth 16 answered in the post-survey open-ended comments that his “leadership and the ability to stand up in front of a group” were his strengths.

While not all youth may have benefited as much as the four youth described above, it appears that some insights and discoveries may have sparked change--far beyond the evaluation of this study. One of the benefits of this training appeared to be in discovering a new meaning of leadership that is inclusive of oneself and all members of a

group. At the end of the week, there also appeared to be a new awareness of participatory group processes and the skills needed to effectively work together. While I cannot conclude that the training “transferred practical, usable skills,” we introduced and practiced a diversity of communication, facilitation and organizing skills. On-going training and support is needed for youth and adults to master skills to work together in an empowering and participatory way.

In summary, did the action competence of the youth increase? If action competence is the ability to identify a problem, become committed to the solution of that problem, and take action, then it appears that the majority of the youth did display action competence during the week. They were engaged and carried out the activities and work of the week. The groups also demonstrated that they could repeat some of the skills in the months that followed, with four of the five middle-school groups successfully completing their action plans.

Empowering youth and building their confidence as leaders appeared to be an essential pre-requisite discovered in this training. Youth do not always see their power, skills, and talents in this adult-dominated world. For the youth involved in this training, their self-perceptions of their leadership roles and abilities appeared to shift. Discussing leadership helped youth to identify their qualities and the values that make someone a successful leader. The participatory processes also helped youth to experience the power of their ideas, their energy, and their risk taking abilities that enabled them to talk with adults and present to groups of people. Seeing oneself as a leader and having the

confidence to take a leadership role may be an important ingredient for action competence.

To promote action competence and civic leadership, I believe that project-based learning is the most effective. This training addressed a real problem (youth smoking), demonstrated practical skills, and helped to empower youth and adults. The success of the curriculum was due to the ICA action planning methods, as well as incorporating the best practices of working with youth, based on brain research and learning theory. This county initiative is a real important project in a challenging setting, and it appears that both youth and adults have been empowered for action competence. Continued support and on-going training for the middle-school groups is needed to meet the county goal of reducing tobacco use by 30% by the year 2005.

In this chapter, the data results have been shared, synthesized and analyzed. In the next chapter I will discuss my experience completing this capstone, as well as look at the larger picture of civic skill development, whether in the context of traditional schooling or in community settings. I will also make recommendations to improve youth leadership development in our communities and make recommendations related to the emerging field of Community Youth Development (CYD).

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Introduction

In this final chapter I reflect on my experience planning, implementing and evaluating this capstone project. I share some of my personal conclusions and make recommendations to improve opportunities for youth to be empowered as leaders and trained in skills to be active citizens in our communities. In this chapter, I also share my “action competence model” (Appendix J), a synthesis of the topics and results of this research.

My study focused on training middle-school youth to be change agents in their communities to help reduce tobacco use as part of a larger county tobacco initiative. Youth and adult advisors from five middle-schools were trained in skills and strategies during a sixteen-hour day camp experience during the summer of 2001. My evaluation centered on two important questions: How do adolescents perceive their leadership role and civic skills in their community after experiential leadership training? and What are the essential ingredients that youth need to acquire action competence?

This capstone project was a great opportunity to write about what I’ve been focusing on in my work, what I have learned, and make new connections between theory and practice. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to conduct this research and partner with other talented adults to meet the needs of youth and challenge them to be leaders and change agents. While the research and writing process was not always a smooth sailing experience, my focus on this new paradigm of community youth

development (CYD) has brought me to new depths of understanding and has inspired me to continue on this journey to empower youth in the context of community-based projects.

Beginning the Journey

**When it comes to social change,
There is a part for young people to play.
They will tread where adults won't tread.**

**David Burfoot
United Nations Development Programme
Millennium Connection Conference, 2000**

During the very hot summer of 2000, I attended a conference in Denver, Colorado, entitled “The Millennium Connection: Shaping Profound Societal Change.” That experience was really the start of my capstone journey. I was interested in social justice, social change, and leadership before this time, yet something shifted at this conference. This new concept called Community Youth Development (CYD) got me excited about bringing my skills and interests together to support a new movement.

My life experiences and on-the-job training tied into this new philosophy. I had studied psychology, worked with at-risk youth, and was trained as a teacher, but I was a disillusioned social studies teacher. I had become a teacher because I wanted to work to prevent some of the problems I had seen in treatment and shelter settings. I wanted to teach psychology and empower youth with skills. Mandated curriculum and 168 students shuffling in and out of my classroom every day did not allow me to teach what I wanted. My creativity and enthusiasm were almost snuffed out.

Luckily, I had become involved in conflict resolution training with other local professionals and kept myself updated on the latest progressive teaching and educational ideas. I did not lose hope. When the opportunity surfaced to work as a health educator coordinating a county violence prevention program, I took the new job. I became empowered by professional facilitation techniques and then coordinated capacity building trainings and workshops for the adults that I worked with on prevention efforts.

As youth were brought into the prevention initiatives in the county, my teacher training and facilitation skills merged to design a leadership and skill training for youth: Co-Motion Camp. The two initial camps during the summer of 2000, designed to prepare youth to start their own teen centers, were very exciting. I was empowering youth to be to do real projects in their community--to be change agents. When the opportunity surfaced to train youth to be organizers and facilitators for tobacco prevention, I instantly knew it was the perfect topic, a way to do active research for my capstone study.

My capstone research was also an opportunity to design a more formal evaluation of the Co-Motion Camp curriculum. I wanted know how students changed after the 16-hour training. If my goal was to empower youth with action competence, then I needed to look at the skills needed to create change. I also knew that self-perception of one's role and leadership ability had something to do with creating change.

Youth are not necessarily seen as leaders nor empowered to be leaders in our communities. I had to keep this in mind. I also knew from my own experience as a youth leader and teacher that specific skill development was not the focus of curriculum

or trainings. I was setting sail on uncharted waters, and I had a feeling the journey would be windy and wavy. I would have to work to stay on course.

Looking for Research

The literature review process was one of the most difficult parts of navigating my journey. I am a big-picture person and wanted to find research related to the Co-Motion curriculum I had already utilized. I suspected that research would support the focus and strategies of the training. I found much theoretical discussion on youth development and youth initiatives, but research on skill development and youth leadership strategies were hard to find. I then got off course and found myself stranded on an island of service learning research. Luckily, I realized that this was a related youth development strategy, but not my focus. I also searched for information on civic education and was disappointed to find that while some educators emphasize the need to build civic skills, very little experiential curriculum or research exists on this important topic. It appeared that if youth learn civic skills, they do so through experience in community projects and programs.

I sorted my research into categories, and then placed the categories in a logical order to see if they would help answer my questions. The topics addressed by the research were broad and they did not all directly relate to the questions of this research. However, I realized that the need for the CYD philosophy grew out of these different disciplines and perspectives. The needs of youth are not being met (adolescent research) and the role of youth in society is not empowering (adultism). While traditional education is trying to create more active, experiential curriculum, most students learn

about government structure and policy, but do not have the opportunities to learn skills and be involved in their communities (civic education). While some students learn skills in community programs (leadership programs, school civic programs, service learning, etc), there is a more comprehensive model: Community Youth Development (CYD).

The problems addressed in the above research categories all point to the need for CYD. Perhaps this is why the original group of people who developed the principles of the CYD philosophy came from diverse backgrounds (Hughes & Curnan, 2000). My understanding of youth and the principles of the CYD approach deepened. The lack of respect and inclusion of youth in our society (adultism) has contributed to youth dis-empowerment. Youth want a have a role in improving their own lives and addressing problems in their communities.

The background understanding of adolescent development and role of youth in our society is a helpful first step. I spent the remainder of my research time focusing on the primary topics related to the questions of this research: youth leadership, skill development, and the guiding principles of Community Youth Development (CYD).

Action Competence Model

After completing much of the work on this capstone, I realized that key concepts in the focus questions of this research were connected and dependent upon each other: leadership, skill building, and action competence. While many factors may influence action competence, this training demonstrated the power of youth-adult partnerships and skill building to help promote action competence (Appendix I). This theory is based on my research data and my conclusions after the 16-hour training.

Empowered youth leadership. The Co-Motion training approach, utilizing active learning strategies with adult advisors working in each group helped to empower youth for leadership and skill building. The research literature emphasized that youth want and need the presence of adults in their lives. Minnesota youth suggested that we can solve youth problems by creating better connections between youth and adults (Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health & the Minnesota Department of Health, 2000). By building community between youth and adults, the negative attitudes towards youth can be diminished. By working together on issues, both youth and adults promote a more positive image of adolescents and increase respect. Some of the adult comments during the discussion on youth-adult partnerships in this training revealed that they noticed the energy and interest of the youth. One adult exclaimed, “Kids aren’t saying no!” Two other adults said they were “impressed” with the leadership. Other comments from adults revealed that working together was “hard, we are used to running the show,” yet youth liked the idea that “grown-ups don’t take over,” and “we worked to get everyone’s ideas in.”

While the results from the Likert scale statements on leadership were not conclusive, adults commented on observing more confidence and enthusiasm in youth at the end of the week. The Stanford University longitudinal research (Roach, et. al., 1999) on youth leadership suggested the “most promising work” is to develop leadership within youth groups and bring “group projects to excellent outcomes” (p. 13). This study confirmed the strategy of facilitating groups of youth working on community-based projects. Adults serving as partners and coaches within each planning group was an

additional element we introduced and this needs to be the focus of future research to determine whether it is an empowering factor. Having the youth construct their own definitions of leadership during the week also fit with this research, as youth appear to have different ideas about leadership and we know very little about how leadership develops among young people.

Discussing leadership concepts may have helped youth realize they can be leaders, yet being encouraged and coached by adults appeared to create the safety for practicing skills and carrying out the action planning. During the Co-Motion training, creating youth-adult partnerships gave youth the opportunity to participate on an equal level, as concerned citizens on a community project and be part of the decision-making process. Our experiential objective for the training was to increase action competence during a youth-adult training. Research literature emphasizes that youth want this connection with adults and a chance to be involved with real-life community projects to make a difference.

Skill building. Building teamwork skills was emphasized during the Co-Motion camp. Working effectively together, including ideas from every member and knowing how to facilitate an effective meeting are important skills. Participants also practiced brainstorming and action planning skills. What approaches encouraged these skills during the training?

Active learning in groups is an approach based both on brain research and best practices of working with middle school youth. Even though the research (McGrath, 1999; Caine & Caine, 1999; Gregorc, 1985) on brain-based learning and learning styles

was a short sailing jaunt, the information affirmed my intuition that the ICA methods work beautifully to train youth. The methods are active, participatory, and often involve group work. The more active learning styles of energetic youth are met because the methods involve utilizing visuals and constructive methods to build practical data from the knowledge and the wisdom of the participants. The methods are inherently engaging as participants try to construct meaning of the products they produce. The brain looks at the whole and its parts, and tries to create patterns, exactly what we instinctively want to do to make sense of the world (Caine & Caine, 1999). The attention to the environment, relationships, and including feelings in discussions and reflections was also appealing to the youth and adults (ICA, 2000a). These strategies, used regularly in adult facilitation trainings, engaged middle school youth and their advisors during the training.

I also researched civic education research and curricula to see if teachers have created strategies for building civic skills. While some researchers are talking about the need for civic skills (Quigley, 2000; Patrick, 1997; Nader, 1992), civic education primarily remains focused on content, theories, and civic values. The research on civic skills was disappointing and did not help in the planning of this training. While skills are finally being emphasized, how to teach and practice civic skills remains unclear. It is good that trends and recommendations are being shared, yet much research and curriculum development is needed to fill this gap in our current civic education practices.

Some good middle school civic education programs (Rappoport & Kletzien, 1996; Vontz & Nixon, 1999; Boyte, 2001) were identified in my research that connect youth with their communities, yet the outcomes from these programs have not been

evaluated. Unfortunately, we do not know if youth are inspired to be leaders and active citizens by these programs, or whether they have gained skills they can utilize as adults. The programs appear successful, yet the involvement of adults and the training in specific skills and strategies were not fully explained.

The facilitation and planning methods of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (2000a) were key for the skill building goal for the Co-Motion training. The methods were designed to be active, participatory and are based on democratic processes and values. The methods, with some creative work, can be adapted for youth. I was unable to locate action research with adults or youth on the methods, even though I contacted the leaders of both ICA Canada and ICA here in the U.S. The feedback from participants on the step-by-step processes and the visual documentation of discussions and brainstorming, revealed the power of the methods. When asked what ideas they would take with them, three adults mentioned the “planning process,” and one adult said, “these are great ways to take kids through a process—using lots of visuals.”

Did the youth gain mastery of the skills that were practiced during the four-day training? In this short amount of time, the transfer of skills was minimal, yet the exposure to these specific skills (communication skills, teamwork skills, and group planning skills) will hopefully increase the interest in further training in democratic facilitation methods. Besides the new insight into participatory group processes, the concept of leadership did appear to shift during the week for both youth and adults. More specifically, participants realized that there was something special about adults and youth working together in an environment that stressed utilizing ideas from every person.

Action Competence. The research on action competence was brief, but affirmed my questions for this research and the strategies selected. I did not understand the breadth of discussion and the definitions written by researchers around the world until after the training. I knew I wanted participants to feel competent in taking action and believed they would need skills to be able to take action. For this research, I focused on the question, What are the essential ingredients that you need to acquire “action competence?”

The steps of action competence in the definition by Jensen and Schnack (1994) include: understand a problem, brainstorm solutions, and pick an action. These action steps fit exactly ICA processes of action planning. We covered each of these steps during the training. We took time to understand the tobacco problem, we brainstormed solutions and then each middle-school group created an action plan. Carrying out the action planning skills may seem like the three key factors, yet I believe there are other elements that influence one’s ability to take action. Being in community, experiencing the benefits of teamwork, and receiving support were also important ingredients. For this training, I believe it was the adult presence and support in each middle school group that helped to empower the youth to take on leadership roles. This partnership of support created the safety to practice skills and take action on a selected project.

Did the youth exhibit action competence during the week and/or during the following week? Looking at the qualitative results of the action planning (Appendix G), the youth did display action competence during the week, and later, four of the five

groups demonstrated that they were able to follow through with the action plan they had proposed.

After analyzing the results, I created a "Model of Action Competence for Youth"(Appendix J) to emphasize the two key ingredients that I see as essential in building action competence. With many youth being excluded from decision-making and leadership opportunities today, empowerment is the initial step. We need to bring youth into our adult circles and then coach, mentor and work side-by-side. Youth-adult

partnerships can empower youth leadership. While it is not easy to get adults to share power and decision-making, it is important for building a more democratic society.

Skill building is the next ingredient. As the above discussion above reveals, I have a strong preference for utilizing ICA methods. While there are other facilitation processes available, the ICA methods fit with the best practices of teaching and utilizing different learning styles, as well as the latest information from brain research.

Finally, action competence can best be mastered through community-based projects. This research was conducted in the context of working on a community health issue (tobacco), and the participants were motivated to do something about the problem. While workshops often have participants discuss hypothetical issues and even learn from simulations, I argue the best learning occurs while people work on real-life issues that affect their individual lives, families, or communities.

It appears that teaching youth skills in the context of a community project in collaboration with adults may be the best formula of all. However, we cannot just put youth and adults together in a room and tell them to design and carry out a project.

Building community, adult-youth relationships, and learning step-by-step action planning skills created project success and action competence in this study.

Community Youth Development

The philosophy of Community Youth Development (CYD) was important for the planning and development of this training. The key principles of this new paradigm served as ideals to guide the planning. While it is difficult to evaluate all the key elements of this philosophy, I believe this training created a safe environment, a culture of respect and partnership, and worked to build “practical, usable skills” (Hughes & Curnan, 2000, p. 8). The movement at this time does not address action competence. Yet, to reach the goals of justice and “finding one’s true calling,” two other principles of this philosophy, CYD advocates may be interested in promoting action competence. I believe that the Co-Motion curriculum is a good example of a CYD program with the emphasis on youth-adult partnerships and skill building.

What are the implications of this study? My research suggests that skill training is the missing key ingredient in many youth programs today. In schools, skills building for active citizenship is usually absent from the curriculum. As educators, we need to better understand civic skills and identify strategies for teaching these skills that work. Once we have looked at different skills and methods, then effective programs can be designed. What I realized from this short training is that there is not enough time to effectively teach and transfer skills during a four-day camp. For community and youth groups, on-going training and mentoring for six months to a year would insure skill development and the success of a community initiative.

Recommendations

As parents, educators and youth workers, I believe that we can better harness the energy and creativity of youth. I recommend that we begin to train young people in civic skills between the ages of 10-12 years of age. When they reach middle-school age, more advanced skills can be taught through project-based learning. Ideally parents and community members could participate as partners. If that is not possible, then youth-led projects may still work with teachers and other adults serving as facilitators and coaches. Youth leadership during high school can also be cultivated, allowing youth to choose their own community-based projects to research, and then implement those projects in partnership with community groups and other adult volunteers.

While the CYD model emphasizes youth-adult partnerships, these partnerships can only succeed if both the youth and the adults are trained in participatory group methods. These include developing shared awareness of the problem, consensus building, and action planning. The ICA methods, while designed originally for adults, are also easy to learn and useful for young people. Nationally, the ICA offers a 3-day training for youth facilitators. This “Youth as Facilitative Leaders” training could be strengthened if the youth/adult teams trained received follow-up training or coaching for six months to a year, following the 3-day training.

In the school settings, school-change efforts would benefit from including youth input and involvement. I also recommend that schools begin to train teachers and youth in participatory democratic methods so they can experience success with identifying their

problems and brainstorming solutions. There is much power in democratic, participatory methods—and local and national trainers enjoy empowering others with these skills.

I look forward further integrating the ICA skills into my teaching, training and facilitative practice. I hope to focus on the power of youth, training them to be dynamic change agents in their own schools and communities. I will also add my energies to strengthening the new CYD movement, both nationally and internationally. I also see opportunities to train and support my activist colleagues in the social change movements in effective communication, organizing and facilitative methods. Skill building is needed to increase the effectiveness of the peace movement, the environmental movement and other sustainability efforts. The world's needs are calling for empowered youth-adult teams. The time is now.

It is also time for a youth movement. In our history, the civil rights movement and the women's rights movement increased participation and respect of people of color and women in our society. Now it is time for youth to rise up with their adult allies to take their rightful place as active and respected members and citizens in our communities.

Appendix A

- **Youth Leadership Survey**
- **Likert Scale Survey (Pre-Post Numbers)**
- **Youth Survey Questions and Responses**

Number# _____

Youth Leadership Survey

Instructions: This survey is designed to collect information about leadership roles and skills in your community. Please read each statement and quickly provide your answer on a scale of 1 (Don't Agree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Your answers are anonymous.

Leadership Role

1. I am a valued member of my community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. I feel connected to people who live or work in my community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. I know there are things I can do to make a difference in my community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. I have opportunities to be a leader in my community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. I have leadership skills to help improve my community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I know several adults in my community who encourage and support me.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Leadership Skills

7. I know how to identify needs (weaknesses) of my community.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 8. I know how to identify the assets (resources) of my community.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 9. I know how to plan for and create a successful meeting.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 10. I feel the opportunity to share my ideas in a group is important.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 11. I believe everyone needs a chance to share his or her ideas before making a group decision.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 12. I know how to brainstorm and choose a community project to work on.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5
 13. I know how to create an action plan and assign tasks to group members.
 Don't Agree 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree 5

14. I feel comfortable talking to adults and asking them to support a project.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

15. I feel comfortable presenting information and speaking in front of a group.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

16. I know how to promote and create publicity/media coverage for a project.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

17. I believe clear goals and a vision are important for changing one's community.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

18. I understand that evaluating your action steps and the efforts of your group is an important part of organizing a successful project.

Don't Agree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Open-ended Questions

Please write your response to the questions below:

Two ideas I'll take away from this week include...

What is the most exciting part of this week? The most frustrating?

The strengths (gifts and talents) that I bring to a group include...

Something in my community I wish to change...

**Youth Leadership Survey
Likert Scale Responses – 18 questions
Tobacco Co-Motion Camp
August 6 –9, 2001**

Appendix A

?	①	2	③	4	⑤	6	7	8	⑨	10	11	⑫	⑬	14	⑮	⑯	17	18
Youth																		
Y1	4-4	4-5	4-4	4-3	4-4	4-4	4-4	4-5	4-4	4-3	4-4	4-5	4-4	4-4	4-4	4-4	4-5	4-5
Y2	3-4	4-3	4-4	4-3	3-4	4-4	3-3	4-4	3-5	5-4	2-3	4-4	3-4	4-4	3-4	4-3	3-5	4-4
Y3	3-5	4-5	3-4	4-4	5-4	5-2	3-3	4-3	4-5	3-3	4-5	4-5	4-5	5-1	4-5	5-4	4-4	4-4
Y4	3-5	4-4	5-4	4-5	5-5	5-5	4-4	5-5	5-5	4-5	5-4	5-5	4.5-4.5	5-4	5-5	5-5	5-5	4.5-5
Y5	4-4	5-4	5-4	5-5	5-5	5-4	5-4	5-4	4-4	5-5	5-5	5-4	5-5	5-4	5-5	4-4	5-5	5-4
Y6	3-4	3-3	4-4	3-3	4-3	2-2	4-3	3-3	3-3	4-5	4-5	4-4	3-3	3-3	3-4	3-3	4-4	4-3
Y7	4-5	4-5	5-5	4-5	4-5	5-5	2-4	3-5	5-4	5-5	5-5	5-5	4-4	3-5	4-3	4-3	5-4	3-5
Y8	3	3	4	5	4	5	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	3	4	4
Y9	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	2	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3
Y10	4-5	3-4	5-5	3-5	4-4	5-5	3-4	3-4	3-4	4-5	3-5	5-5	4-4	4-4	5-5	5-5	4-5	5-5
Y11	5-4	4-3	5-5	2-1	4-5	5-5	3-4	3-3	4-5	5-5	4-5	3-5	4-5	5-5	2-5	5-4	5-5	5-5
Y12	5	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	5	5	4	3	2	4	5	5
Y13	2	1	4	3	4	2	2	3	2	3	4	5	1	4	2	2	5	4
Y14																		
Y15	4-4	4-4	5-5	3-4	4-4	5-5	4-4	5-4	4-4	5-5	5-5	4-4	4-4	5-5	4-5	4-4	5-5	4-4
Y16	4-4	3-2	4-4	4-3	5-5	5-4	4-2	3-2	1-4	1-5	5-5	4-3	3-5	5-4	5-5	1-3	5-4	4-4
Y17	1-3	2-3	3-4	2-3	2-3	3-3	2-3	3-2	3-4	3-5	5-5	3-3	3-3	2-2	4-5	2-3	3-3	5-3

↑⑦ ↑5 ↑2 ↑5 ↑4 ↑∅ ↑4 ↑3 ↑⑥ ↑5 ↑5 ↑3 ↑4 ↑1 ↑⑥ ↑2 ↑3 ↑3

Pre-test administered August 6 (Pre test # on the left)

Post-test administered August 9 (Post test # on the right)

↑ Increase between pre-post

R. Hefte, Co-Motion Empowering Youth Through Skill Training and Community-based Projects

Youth Survey Questions and Responses
Tobacco Co-Motion Camp
August 6 – 9, 2001

Appendix A
page 1

Pre-questions administered August 6
Post-questions administered August 9

Eval ?	Two Ideas I'll take away this week include:		The most exciting part of this week? The most frustrating?		The strengths that I bring to this group include...		Something in my community I wish to change...	
Youth	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1	Tobacco	Teamwork, listening	Meeting people	Consulting with people	Smart	Listening and talking	Everything	Schools
2	Better listener, better leadership skills	Brainstorm, listening skills						All the smoking
3	How to be a better leader	Listening to other people's ideas and to do teamwork	Art work	Presentation	Knowledge	To work together	People to be more committed	I wish to change most of the people
4	Community involvement, leadership skills	Always be independent and don't follow; leadership helps	I can't wait to work with other schools; not knowing everyone is hard	Best parts were the skits When we did action planning, got frustrated	Leadership fun, listening skills	Leadership fun, help, enjoyment, happiness and good morals	No one seems to want to change sometimes	I want a teen center for Andover
5	How to change something big, i.e. Big Tobacco	Leadership and confidence	I think talking to people, I love to talk to groups	Speaking to people; Frustrating: phoning and event plan	Speaking in front of people, humor and open mind	I get up and speak in front of a large group, my ideas, my voice, humor	Going to restaurants with non-smoking sections	We need a teen center!
6	Tobacco companies are targeting us, and that people actually smoke	Talking about tobacco use, and adults targeting us	Going to Co-Motion camp to make a difference; Frustrating – getting up in the morning	Sculptures and skits; Frustrating : action plan	Saying my ideas for the group	Ideas, and I listen really good	Change that gas stations sell tobacco products	To stop smoking in restaurants
7	That you need to share everyone's ideas before choosing	Teamwork is best – two heads is better than one	Meeting new people	Presentations Frustrating – my group left	Being able to share my ideas	Creativity, leadership skills		See no smoking
8	Helping ideas learning to be a leader		Knowing we are trying to help people having fun; Frustrating – more difficult things		I am more open with ideas, like to share my opinion		The polluting, there is way too much	

R. Hefte, Co-Motion Empowering Youth Through Skill Training and Community-based Projects

**Youth Survey Questions and Responses
Tobacco Co-Motion Camp
August 6 – 9, 2001**

Appendix A
page 2

Pre-questions administered August 6
Post-questions administered August 9

Eval ?	Two Ideas I'll take away this week include:		The most exciting part of this week? The most frustrating?		The strengths that I bring to this group include...		Something in my community I wish to change...	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
9	To help others to be a leader		Getting to know all of these people		Nice helpful and supportive		Helping others and have more supportive people to help others	
10	Tobacco and Smoking	Talking and questions	Games and meeting people. being with friends	Skits Frustrating: agreeing	Picking up litter in the community	Kindness and love	Littering	Smoking in schools
11	What am I to do for my community. How I can get people to stop smoking	No Smoking?	Frustrating: getting up early	Meeting people; Frustrating: surveys		Strong opinion		?
12	?		?		Talk, art, sports		I want the mean, rude, dumb boys to move	
13	Don't know		?		Humor, kindness, empathy, communication		All chemical weapons gone	
15	Being part of a group to learn about non-smoking and how bad smoking is	Talking and inviting to a meeting – new people	Getting to know a lot of different people Frustrating: sitting around	Seeing and meeting new people	Courage to actually talk about smoking and what I feel about it.	The social skills I have	The amount of people smoking	The use of tobacco
16	To learn about smoking and teach other kids.	Good & bad meetings and how to start a project	Having fun Frustrating: being bored and sitting a lot	Having fun Frustrating: Sitting a long time	Talk about how I feel, have the courage to talk out loud	Leadership and ability to stand up in front of a group	Nobody smokes or does drugs	No kids smoking
17	Never using tobacco and the reasons why not to	Everyone should share their ideas, and I can be in a group that helps my community	Getting away from home	Skits Frustrating: everyone talking at once	Friendliness	Outgoing, creative, happy	Using, tobacco, drugs and alcohol	The use of Tobacco!

R. Hefte. Co-Motion Empowering Youth Through Skill Training and Community-based Projects

Appendix B

- **Adult Evaluation**
- **Adult Evaluation Responses**

(Note: Please complete both sides!)

1. What leadership roles and skills did the youth get to practice this week?

3. Which activities did not engage the youth?

5. What do you see as the next steps to support the leadership abilities of the youth?

**CO-MOTION CAMP
ADULT EVALUATION**

(Note: Please complete both sides!)

Your Experience:

1. The leadership principles and skills I remember being addressed this week include...

2. After this week, when I think about working with youth on tobacco issues I feel...

3. New information, methods and/or insights I'll take away from this week include,,,

4. What further training and/or support do you need as an adult advisor and/or mentor?

Please provide your contact info, if it is ok to contact you for further information.

THANKS

Name

Organization

Address

Phone

Email

Adult Evaluation Responses
Tobacco Co-Motion Camp- August 6-9, 2001
Adult Evaluation Administered August 9th.

Appendix B. 1 of 2

ORID EVAL ?	A. The leadership principles and skills I remember being addressed this week include: B. What leadership roles and skills did youth get to practice this week?	Which activities engaged or did not engage the youth:	New information methods or insights I will take away from this week include:	Discuss specific youth and the changes you observed in them during the week:
Adult 1	A. communication, listening skills, risk taking, being effective with goals, B. Communication, values identification, risk taking, patience, listening	<u>Engage:</u> energizers, action planning, brainstorming. <u>Not engaging-</u> the grant piece—needed more visuals	Great ways to take kids through a process—using lots of visuals	youth facilitating more, some learned to speak loud and clear, more energetic, kids spoke their minds.
Adult 2	A. How to introduce yourself, work in group, how to organize, action plan, how to have fun, B. Making decisions, choices, working in small groups, speaking in front of large groups, planning big events, calling community leaders.	<u>Engage:</u> All of the active things	Some new ways to teach kids to work together, importance of letting kids come up with ideas and do their own work	quiet kids raising hands, lots of joking, laughter, kids looked more confident as they went through the week
Adult 3	A. Lead by example, there can be lots of leaders in a group, B. Sharing ideas and giving input, making decisions, presentation skills	<u>Engage:</u> skits, planning in teams, team building, phone calls, presentation to adults	Youth are excited about adult involvement. Action planning is useful with youth	#15 & #16—skeptical at beg of week, really engaged and lots of action by end of week, #10—seemed to discover ability to have passion, realizes she can do
Adult 4	A. Asset mapping, action planning, effective communication, teamwork, B. Teamwork, decision making, event planning, presenting	<u>Engage:</u> skits, discussions, planning. <u>Not engage:</u> listening to adults talk, being talked at & not to	Insight that youth lead youth; adults need to let youth be empowered by other youth, let ideas from youth speak for themselves, without adult interpretation	#7—started week shy, quiet and took a back seat to the action. End of week—comfortable with voicing her ideas, empowered to be a leader

Adult Evaluation Responses
Tobacco Co-Motion Camp- August 6-9, 2001

Adult Evaluation Administered August 9th. Appendix B. 2 of 2

ORID EVAL ?	A. The leadership principles and skills I remember being addressed this week include: B. What leadership roles and skills did youth get to practice this week?	Which activities engaged or did not engage the youth:	New information methods or insights I will take away from this week include:	Discuss specific youth and the changes you observed in them during the week:
Adult 5	A. What is a leader?; How to conduct a meeting, B. Leading, communication, role plays, discussion skills, group involvement	<u>Engage</u> : Games--discussion in small groups; when leaders/facilitators talked too much	Incorporating games, introduction questions	Being able to keep an open mind; Not always needing their idea to be the one chosen; opening up and expressing ideas important to them
Adult 6	A. Role modeling, communication, listening, respect, assertiveness, kindness, team building, brainstorming, organizing, scheduling. B. Same as above	<u>Engage</u> : games, skits, vision; <u>Not engage</u> : reading from a pre-written skit	steps of planning, games	I really got to know these youth in a different way. Positive actions
Adult 7	A. Listen, encourage, organized, planning, learn and grow, responsible, develop leadership in others, risk takers, positive also can follow. B. Decision making, planning, listening, following, standing up, speaking out, positive attitudes, responsibilities.	<u>Engage</u> : skits, check ins, feedback, sculpture activity, planning the program, presenting. <u>Not engage</u> : actual planning. Unable to understand or or ask "What is need?"	Hands-on post-its worked, ideas, action activities, use of "bulliten board"	Leadership roles changed and were strengthened, Insecurities dissolved
Adult 8	A. Planning processes, envision victory before planning, having their opinions count. B. Having their opinions count	<u>Engage</u> : Getting to choose volunteer positions, planning: own groups plan, co-motion plan of the logo design. <u>Not engage</u> : planning toward end of the day	Use of planning process	#15--quiet and unassertive, has emerged as a real leader, volunteers readily, asserts her opinion, agrees to compromise, but still champions her idea.

Appendix C

- **Permission Letter for Youth Participants**
- **Permission Letter for Adult Participants**

July 30, 2001

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:

During the week of August 6th through the 9th, your child has registered to be involved in a leadership training experience. We are excited about the activities to build community and the leadership skills that we will practice. We also hope that your son or daughter will learn more about their school and be inspired to take an active role in positive projects to improve his/her community.

I am currently in a Master's program in Education at Hamline University and will graduate next May. I am busy designing and writing a research paper in order to meet graduation requirements. The focus of my research is youth leadership and development. During the last four years, I served as the Violence Prevention Coordinator for Anoka County and have been involved in a number of health education initiatives. I am also a licensed secondary social studies teacher.

The purpose of this letter is to request your parental/guardian permission for your child to participate in my study. If granted permission, your child will complete two written surveys on the topic of leadership. Information collected will not include names and addresses. I will also include in my paper some samples of youth artwork, writing, brainstorm data, informal comments and camp photos. The results will be shared with Anoka County. Information collected will remain anonymous.

Thank you for your support for this important project. I look forward to our summer camp experience! If you have any questions, please phone me at 763-323-6129.

_____ has permission to be involved in Rachel Hefte's research project for Hamline University.

Signature _____ Date _____

July 30, 2001

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian:

During the week of August 6th through the 9th, you have registered to be involved in a leadership training experience. We are excited about the activities to build community and the leadership skills that we will practice. I hope that this experience will enhance the prevention efforts at your school and you'll be inspired to continue your work with youth to improve your school and community.

I am currently in a Master's program in Education at Hamline University and will graduate next May. I am busy designing and writing a research paper in order to meet graduation requirements. The focus of my research is youth leadership and development. During the last four years, I served as the Violence Prevention Coordinator for Anoka County and have been involved in a number of health education initiatives. I am also a licensed secondary social studies teacher.

The purpose of this letter is to request your consent for participation in my study. If granted permission, your observations and comments will be utilized to help evaluate the leadership training experience. Information collected will not include names and addresses. I will also include in my paper some samples of youth artwork, writing, brainstorm data, informal comments and camp photos. The results will be shared with Anoka County. Information collected will remain anonymous.

Thank you for your support for this important project. I look forward to our summer camp experience! If you have any questions, please phone me at 763-323-6129.

I, _____ give permission to Rachel Hefte to include me in her project for Hamline University.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D

- **Curriculum Plan- Training Overview**
- **Team Handout**
- **Leadership Handout**
- **What is Power? (Handout)**
- **Fun-Effective Meetings Handout**
- **Institute of Cultural Affairs Methods**

Curriculum Plan- Training Overview
Tobacco Co-Motion Training, August 6-9, 2001

Rational Objective: Increase leadership skills and complete action plans.	Experiential Objective: 1. Empower youth leaders 2. Build action competence for positive change
---	--

Monday Issues and Vision Clarified	Tuesday Directions selected, Action Plan is completed	Wednesday Public Event planned, public relations skill crafted	Thursday Public presentation, Next Steps
A.M. • Community Building • Week Overview • Creative School-team "Sculptures" images of safe and healthy environments • Reflections on sculptures • Community Asset Mapping by school teams	A.M. • Community Building • Meeting Ground-Rules • Tobacco Education piece • Select tobacco project/ direction for this first phase • Tobacco Campaign ACTION PLAN - Victory Brainstorm	A.M. • Community Building • Effective Meetings • Preparation for Presentations • Brainstorm a. Presentation skills/ elements needed b. Invitation/ phone script c. Key/ strategic invitees d. Role play phone call In school teams, 5 phones- invitations made	A.M. • Community Building • Review week • Action Plan completion • Rehearse presentation • Final Survey
P.M. • Hero Story • Reports of Asset Mapping • Grants Overview • Personal story telling • VISION creation	P.M. • Action Plan continued: - Current Reality - Action Plan for each middle school - Action Plan Calendar with timeline	P.M. • Hero Story • Focus Activity • Song-Story-Symbol-Logo • Dance workshop • Groups: - Presentation preparation - T-shirt or poster preparation	P.M. • Public Presentation • Celebration • Documentation / Certificate presentation

Working as a

T. E. A. M.

When I think of a team I see....



Being part of a team makes me feel...

Why would working as a team be more effective?

To make our team work best together, I suggest...

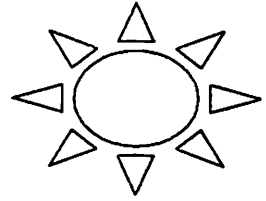


Together Everyone Achieves More!

Each and every one of us

Can be a

LEADER!



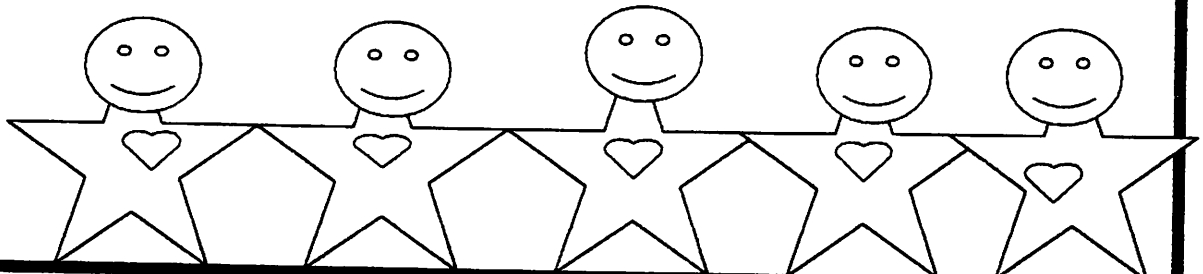
My definition of leadership....

Two other people define leadership as...

1.

2.

The positive characteristics of leadership include:



WHAT IS POWER?

In a traditional sense and concepts from the dictionary definition:

Power is having access to information, wealth, and resources to make change. Power stems from authority, influence and the ability to do or act.

For the 21st century, we can now define power in a new way to improve our world:

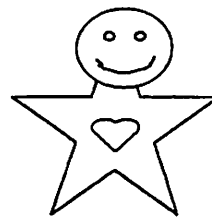
Group Power is having access to knowledge & resources and using organizing skills, relationships, & effective strategies to create change.

Power- Traditional View	Power- New View- <u>Group Power</u> (redefined!) – organize power as a <u>group</u>
Definition—Power is having access to: ✓ Information ✓ wealth and ✓ resources ✓ to make changes.	Definition- Power as having access to: ✓ values ✓ knowledge ✓ resources and or ✓ using organizing skills, ✓ relationships and ✓ effective strategies to ✓ to make change in your community.
External Power	Internal Power
Top-Down Power	Collective Power
Power Over	Power With
What are traditional sources of power?	What are new sources of power?
Paper Document Money Networks of Wealth/Power Private Property Land Title Position Title Professional Appearance	Internet Consumer Choices Organizing Many People Stewardship Environmental Values Internal Values/ Authority Inner Confidence Organizing Skills Effective Strategies for Change

Fun Effective Meetings

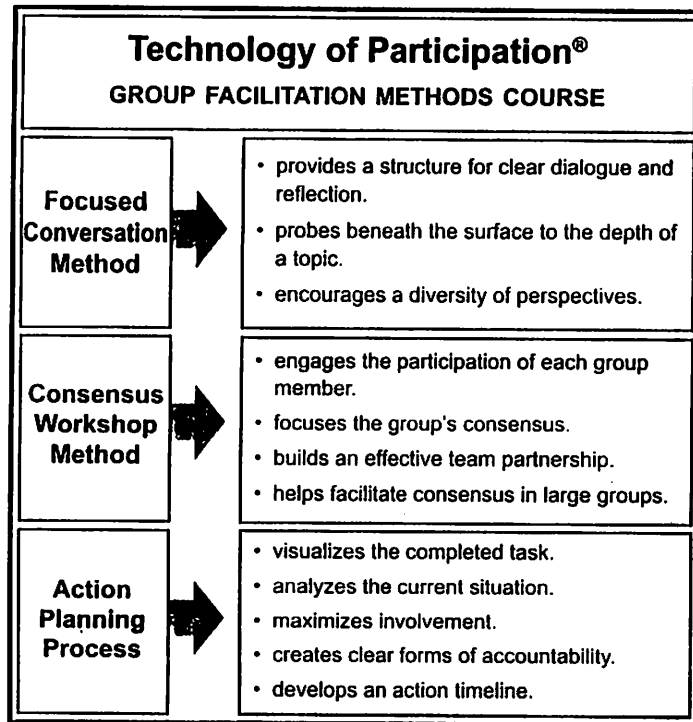
8 Key Steps

1. Take time to plan with others and write an agenda.
2. Build community with check-ins and review agenda and expectations.
3. Interactive idea sharing- and discussion works! (Pair share, small groups, role playing, cooperative project, etc.)
4. Carefully craft a brainstorm question then sort and name data.
5. Choose a project.
6. Create an action plan with a timeline.
7. Check-outs for evaluation.
8. Review Assignments and check plan, date for next meeting.



Course Overview

This manual provides guidelines for learning basic ToP® group facilitation methods. The methods have been tested and refined in work with groups, communities and organizations around the world in settings ranging from the village to the boardroom.



The ToP® FOCUSED CONVERSATION METHOD provides a setting and a context for meaningful communication. It is used to facilitate group conversations and discussions which allow members of the group to share diverse perspectives in a non-confrontational manner. Using this method can help people in a group share insights and creativity around a common topic, issue or experience. It creates an opportunity for people to broaden their perspectives. It may also reveal the existing level of consensus within the group.

The ToP® CONSENSUS WORKSHOP METHOD is used to facilitate group consensus-based decisions that respect the diversity of perspectives within the group, inspire individual action and move the group toward joint resolve and action. It does this within the short time of forty-five minutes to two hours. Individual participation is honored by focusing on the insight within each idea. The Consensus Workshop creates consciousness about new relationships between data and acknowledges the level of the group's consensus at any given moment.

The ToP® ACTION PLANNING PROCESS is an approach to short-term planning of an event or project that already has group agreement or consensus. This facilitation process clarifies and delineates the task, and aligns the creativity, capabilities, interests and resources of the group. The group decides necessary actions, roles and responsibilities; the process builds group trust, support, enthusiasm and consensus. An implementation timeline is created to accomplish actions and coordinate assignments. Action Planning uses both the ToP® Focused Conversation and the Consensus Workshop Methods.

These methods can be used in an infinite number of situations. When creatively combined and adapted, these methods serve as powerful tools for any size group to think and work together creatively and productively.

Focused Conversation Method Overview

Notes

Topic: The focus or subject of the conversation. It sets the boundaries of the conversation.

Rational Aim: The intent or practical goal of the conversation. It guides the collective thinking process and determines the direction of the conversation.

Experiential Aim: The inner impact of the conversation. It affects the mood of the group and sets the tone of the communication between participants.

Opening: To set the stage for the conversation & introduce the topic



Objective Level Questions:

To engage the five senses (sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch)

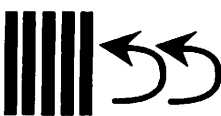
- Invites inclusive participation
- Gets out the facts and objective data



Reflective Level Questions:

To elicit and acknowledge imaginative, intuitive, and emotional responses

- Acknowledges emotions, memories, and initial associations
- Invites participants to use their imagination



Interpretive Level Questions:

To elicit the sharing of experiences and individual meaning

- Builds collective consciousness and shared awareness within the group
- Identifies available options and possibilities



Decisional Level Questions:

To develop depth level collective opinions or resolve that may lead to future action

- Draws out the deeper meaning from participants
- Makes conversation meaningful and relevant to the future
- Exposes individual and group choice

Closing: To confirm the individual's or group's opinion or resolve

Your intents for each level:

The opening phrase together with the bulleted points to the left indicate the generic intents for each level.

You may find it helpful to write your own specific intents. When particular questions you have planned don't seem to be working, glance at the intents for clues to additional questions.

Writing intents for each level helps choose effective questions.

CONSENSUS WORKSHOP METHOD OVERVIEW

Workshop Question: Is a question to which the workshop content & product are a response.

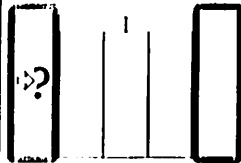
RATIONAL AIM

What the group needs to *KNOW* – the product or decision

EXPERIENTIAL AIM

How the group needs to *BE* different by the end of the workshop

CONTEXT

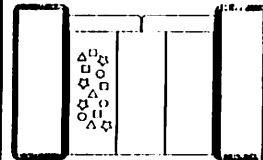


Set the Stage

1. State the purpose or aim of the workshop.
2. Clarify the workshop question.
3. Briefly outline the process and time frame.
4. Lead the group in talking about the topic for a few minutes using a short Focused Conversation.

See page 33.
[3-10 minutes]

BRAINSTORM

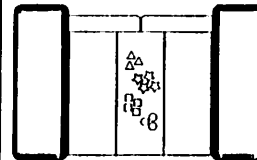


Generate New Ideas

1. Individually list answers to the workshop question.
2. Select important ideas and write on cards individually or in teams.
3. Pass up first round of cards.

See page 34.
[5-15 minutes]

GROUP

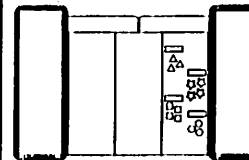


Form New Relationships

1. Form 4-6 pairs that clearly go together.
2. Ask for cards that are different and develop clusters.
3. Quickly give each cluster a 1-2 word tag.
4. Mark remaining cards with tag and pass up.

See page 35.
[7-20 minutes]

NAME

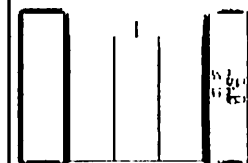


Discern the Consensus

1. Talk through the largest cluster first.
2. Give the cluster a 3-5 word name or title which answers the workshop question.
3. Repeat for the remaining clusters.

See page 36.
[10-30 minutes]

RESOLVE



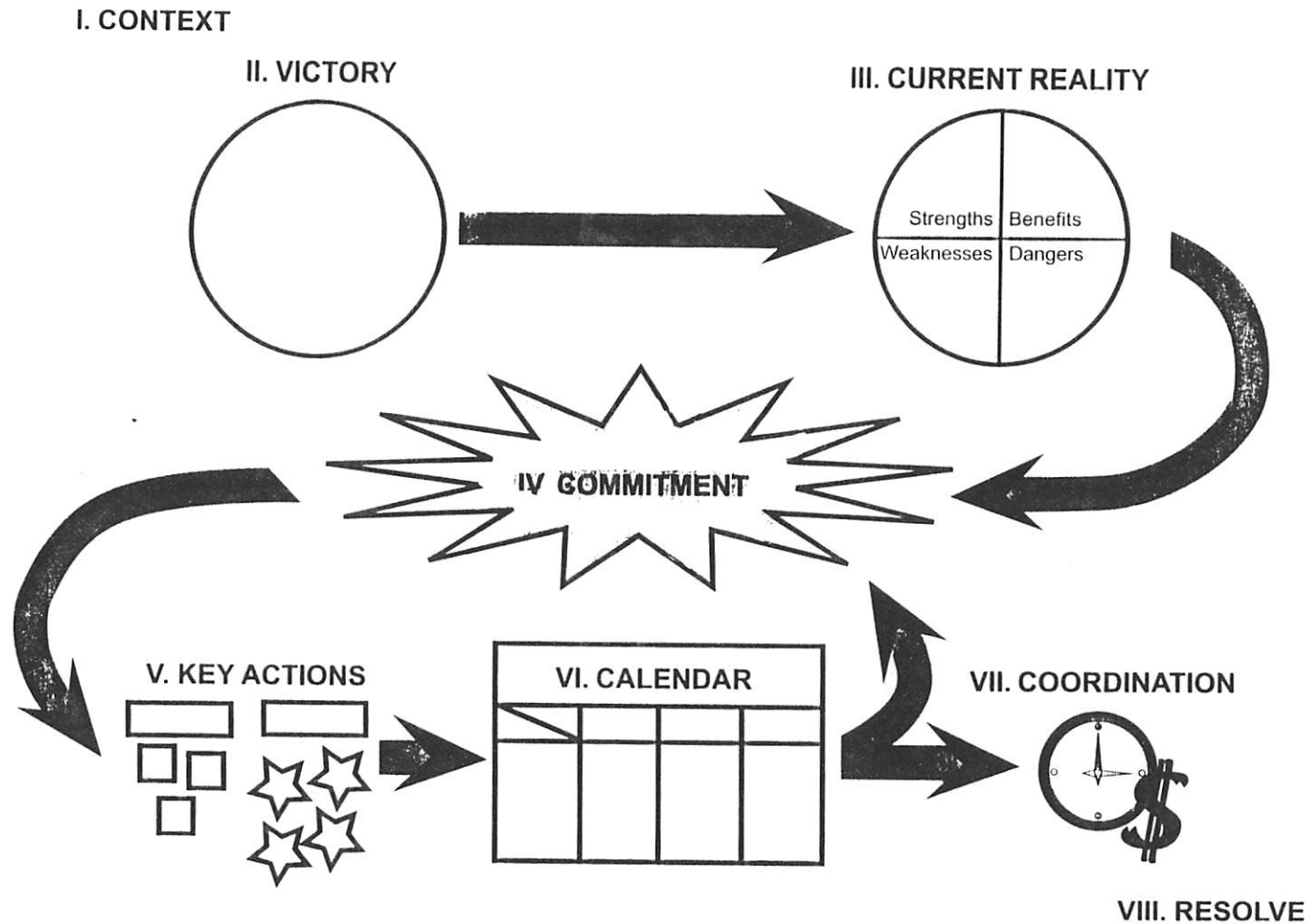
Confirm the Resolve

1. Focus the group on this consensus by reading all the title cards.
2. Discuss the significance of the consensus.
3. Create a chart or visual image to hold the consensus (optional).
4. Discuss next steps and implications.

See page 37.
[5-15 minutes]

These times represent from 30 - 90 minutes.

Action Planning Process Structure ~ 8 Critical Parts



- What's the Scoop on Tobacco?
- Warm-up for Asset Mapping
- Asset Mapping Questions

Appendix F

What's the Scoop on Tobacco?

Data

Who are the people in my life (friends, family, etc.) that smoke?

Where do you see tobacco advertising?

Where are adults smoking? Where do kids smoke?

Reactions

When I'm around someone who smokes I feel....

What is it like for people who are trying to quit smoking?

When I see advertising for smoking I feel...

When I think about large Tobacco corporations getting rich off kids I feel...

Interpretations

Some consequences for people who smoke include...

What information or life experiences might influence people not to smoke?

If tobacco addiction shortens a person's life, why do smokers keep smoking?

Decisions/ Action

What can youth and adults do to prevent teenagers from starting to smoke?

What can we do help people quit smoking?

If people quit smoking, what new opportunities or resources could they use to improve their life?

Warm Up for Asset Mapping

(Think of places within your school or surrounding community)

1. Where do you spend your time after school and/or during the summer
2. Where do other kids hang out?
3. What restaurants and fast food places do you go to with family and friends?
4. What movie theaters and shopping areas do you frequent?
5. What gas stations and/or convenience stores are closest to school?
6. Describe the places where youth go to smoke.
7. At which school sporting events do you see people (youth and adults) smoking?
8. At which businesses (stores, service offices, gas stations, etc. do you see tobacco advertising?

Asset Mapping Questions

Drawing

1. Draw your school (complex) including buildings, athletic fields, etc. and make it big.
2. Draw the main roads that go by your school
3. Draw the businesses near your school (see questions 3 to 5 on discussion sheet).
4. Draw your house and any other home where you hang out (1 to 2 other houses per student.)

Dotting (Each student can put stickers on the map)

5. Where do I feel like I belong?   Any Smiley Face
6. Where do I feel I don't belong?  Light Blue
7. Where do I feel safe?  Purple
8. Where do I feel unsafe?  Red
9. Where do I have fun?   Fun in the Sun
10. Where do I feel bored?  Dark Blue
11. Where is a good place to connect with adults (name the adult)!  Hand  Super Hero
12. Where is a place where adults are not paying attention to kids?  Busy Bees  Bee

13. What places are smoke-free?



Green

14. What places are "smokey?" (people are using tobacco)



Black

15. What places are alcohol / drug free?



Stars

16. Where are places that kids go to drink and do other drugs?



Orange

Appendix F

- **Packet of Information and Samples of Work Completed by the Group**
- **Co-Motion Camp Brochure (Passed out to Guests)**

Co-MOTION



Camp!



Anoka County Tobacco prevention group



Tobacco Prevention

Anoka County Aims to Reduce Youth Tobacco Use

The Challenge

Smoking has become a community norm in Anoka County. One in three residents smokes. Youth in the county report seeing it everywhere they go. Because of this, they have the perception that everyone smokes.

According to the most recent Community Health Assessment conducted by the county, 81 percent of Anoka County adult residents surveyed identified underage smoking as the most pressing problem.

Through community cooperation Anoka County hopes to reduce tobacco use.

Tobacco Endowment

As a result of the 1998 out-of-court settlement in the state's lawsuit against tobacco companies, Anoka County was awarded a \$195,818 grant. The money will be used to implement a youth tobacco prevention project.

Grant Details

The grant will initially focus on five middle schools in four school districts. The effort will be directed at the community and will include the students in these schools, their families, neighborhoods, businesses, churches, law enforcement, youth organizations and other groups and organizations which impact those students.

Community Tobacco Prevention Committee

A collaborative effort of community partners, including youth, is what is guiding the grant and its implementation. The committee meets for two hours every month to discuss happenings related to the grant.

Goals of the Prevention Campaign

- Reduce exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
- Promote media initiatives
- Integrate with the statewide Target Market campaign
- Restrict advertising and promotion of tobacco products
- Provide tobacco reduction and cessation services
- Participate in coordinated school-based prevention initiatives

Anoka County
Community Health and
Environmental Services



*For more information
please contact
Jo Tollefson @
763-422-7037
or Rachel Clafin @
763-422-7282*

WHAT IS CO-MOTION?*

It's learning how to tackle a problem in your community through activism and mobilization.

CO— Collaboratively
Collectively
Community

MOTION— Mobilizing your community
Movement forward
Moving place or position
The power of movement

You can become a spark in your community, whether for one issue or as part of a lasting improvement effort. Co-Motion helps you learn how to:

- ✓ Collaborate with others to identify and analyze a problem
- ✓ Envision and research a solution
- ✓ Understand effective actions/strategies
- ✓ Plan a fun and effective meeting
- ✓ Find allies and organize your larger group
- ✓ Design an action plan and choose strategies for your campaign
- ✓ Create a message
- ✓ Talk to individuals/groups to find common interests
- ✓ Mobilize your community
- ✓ Meet your goals/objectives and win your campaign!

Co-Motion Terms:

Activist: The person who is committed to vigorous action or involvement as a means of achieving social and/or political goals.

Activism: The doctrine or practice of vigorous action or involvement as a means of achieving social and/or political goals.

Mobilization: To assemble and/ or bring people together, prepare for action.

Organizer: Someone who concentrates on the method as well as the result. Understands the process of pulling ideas and people together to help work for social change. Organizing means engaging in systematic campaigns to influence institutions that affect our lives from day to day.

* The idea for *Co-Motion Camp* was sparked by the book, Co/Motion: Guide to Youth Led Social Change (Alliance for Justice, 2000 P Street, NW, Suite 712, Washington D.C. 20006; 202-822-6070). The concepts and skills from this book are the basis of the activities and workshops created by staff of the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department.

THE RESULTS OF SEVERAL OF OUR CONVERSATIONS!**Monday : Co-Motion (what are other words that come to mind?)**

<i>"Co"</i>	<i>"Motion"</i>
• Communication • Cocoa • Cool • Community • Computer • Collecting	• Moving • Motivation • Motor • Motivate • Momentum • Movement • Mentors

Tuesday: A Leader has these characteristics:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive • Independent • Nice • Good listeners • The ability to motivate • Work together • Cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting others • Responsibility • Represent others • Role model • Be yourself • Hard Worker • Find strengths (delegate) |
|--|---|

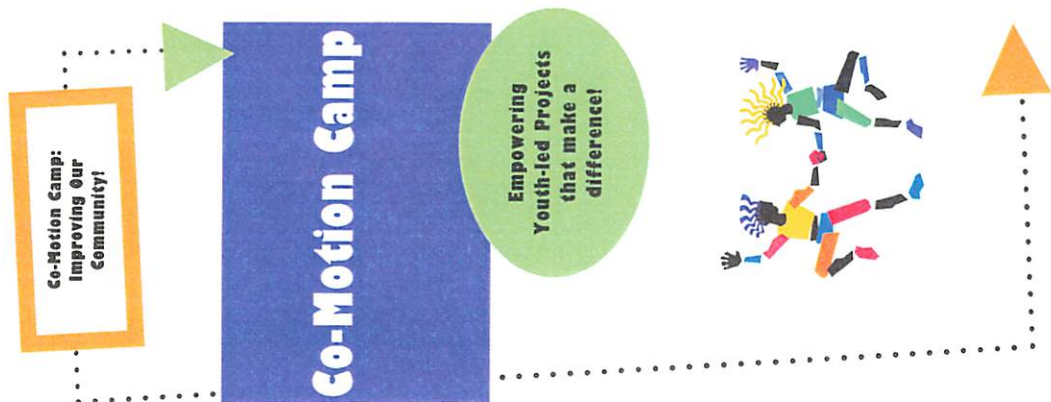
Wednesday: Youth-Adult partnerships, "How has this been going for us?"**For the youth:**

- Grown-ups don't take over
- We've gotten along
- People from different schools got to know different people
- Worked to get everyone's idea in!

For the adults:

- It's hard - we are used to running the show!
- It's hard to wait for the answer from the youth!
- Really easy to let kids take over and do it! I was impressed!
- Real impressed with the leadership - kids aren't saying no!

Anoka County Tobacco Prevention: Our "Practical" Vision towards 2006						
TOBACCO-FREE KIDS	FUN ALTERNATIVES TO SMOKING	OUR BODIES: SMOKE-FREE ZONE	WE WON! (OVER BIG TOBACCO)	MORE ACTIVITIES, MORE SPORTS	PARENT SUPPORT AND ROLE MODELING	CLEAN AIR, CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
Individual captions for the montages for each category:						
• Keep our kids smoke free! This is what our world would look like if it was smoke less! Happy! • Happy and healthy life style • Enjoying life • Freedom targeted • Protect our future! • Celebrating life! •	• Happiness • Fun in the Sun • Spend your money on fun, not taboos. • Long and healthy life. • Save money for vacations, don't spent it on cigarettes!	• Healthy • Strong minds saying no! • Real winners don't smoke • Smoke-free health life • These bodies are a smoke-free zone.	• Look how far we have come! • Is this really how you picture yourself? Is this really cool? • Tobacco company's beat you! • Fight back!	• This is what you are if you don't smoke. • It helps you to not be a smoker. • We can succeed.	• Staying together, and being smoke free • Good choices! • Thinking for yourself! • What if you had never started? • It's cool not to smoke!	• We want Anoka County to be butt-free! • Clean environment • The light at the end of the tunnel. • Clean air, clean ground.



Co-Motion Camp: Improving our Community!

Anoka County Community Health and
Environmental Services
Government Center, 6th Floor
2100 3rd Avenue
Anoka, MN 55303



New Energy
From your ideas!

Youth that attended Co-Motion camp during the summer of 2000 defined . . .

CO - MOTION

Collaborative Cohorts . . .

Collectively working to create a Co-Motion to
awaken adults and youth to important issues in
the community.

Supporting people to become Motivated
to take action and Move forward while . . .

Mobilizing all people together to create
a difference in their community!

Co-Motion Camp!

Creating Youth-led projects that work!

Many community building and prevention ideas have been identified by youth and adults in Anoka County communities during the last three years. Some communities are organizing:

- ◆ After-school activities
- ◆ Teen centers
- ◆ Campaigns to prevent tobacco use
- ◆ Service learning opportunities

Engaging youth as partners and leaders was identified as the first step. Training and coaching youth is the creative approach behind Co-Motion Camp, which was developed during the summer of 2000 to help build the facilitation and leadership skills so youth can be effective "change agents" in our communities.



Your journey will last four days . . . And impact your Community for years!

Each Day:

9:30-11:30: Fun learning around leadership and organizing skills. Interactive approaches, experiential learning.

11:30-12:15: Lunch and fun

12:15-2:30: Group projects using new skills to work on your projects.

Session One: My Role in Our Community Team Building

Community Asset mapping. The power and role of youth. Identify community needs and issues you want to work on.

Session Two: Creating a Vision

Brainstorming solutions to issues and problems. Planning and hosting effective meetings and events. How to create an action plan.



Communication skills are key to getting projects done!

Session Three: Communicating your message, building your group

Organizing skills to find your allies and create your story and message. Choosing effective communication tools and public relations strategies for your campaign.

Session Four: Strategies for the Future

Explore a variety of creative strategies to build and sustain momentum of your campaign. Revisit your action plan and timeline. Host a community presentation . . . And then celebrate!

Register by checking your mini-camp choice by returning the enclosed registration form to:

_____ Pete Yelle (763-795-5129)
July 30-August 2nd
Focus: Spring Lake Park's
Panther Den Teen Center

_____ Rachel Claflin (763-422-7282)
August 6th-9th
Focus: Tobacco Prevention

_____ Carla Pederson (763-753-7159)
August 20th-24th
Focus: St. Francis Teen Center



4 DAYS OF FUN!!

*If you are 12-17 years old---
we want you!*

Co-Motion Camp: Improving Our Community!

Co-Motion Camp is a project of the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department. This Project is made possible through a grant from the MN Department of Public Safety, Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention, with support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs.

Appendix G

- **Evaluation of Action Plans**
- **Middle-School Action Plans (5 total)**

Evaluation of Action Plans

Action Planning- August 7, 2001
Events- Fall of 2001

Middle School	Level of Plan Completion	Adult Advisors, Numbers for Support	Youth, number in Planning Group	Nature of (Tobacco) School Group	Results During Fall of 2001
School A	Complete	3 Advisors	3 Youth	Existing group	Completed Event
School B	Complete	1 Advisor	3 Youth	Existing group	Completed Events (3 meetings then Pizza party)
School C	Partially Complete	2 Advisors	3 Youth	New Group	Completed Event
School D	Partially Complete	1 Advisor	3 Youth	Existing Group	No Event
School E	Partially Complete	No Advisor	1 youth	New Group	Completed Event

R. Hefte, Co-Motion: Empowering Youth Through Skill Training and Community-based Projects

School:

A

Project: Recruit New STATUS members for BIG group!

Project Objective:

Form school wide group

Task Group	Time Frame			Victory
Initial Planning	• STATUS meeting tells other applicants • Money	• Predict outcome of activities	• Sign up for STATUS forum • Talk to admin	First 3 weeks: Planned Event Money Admin & Staff Support
Promotions	• Make posters • School paper that goes to parents	• Monitor • Get materisl for posters • The room	• Ads in halls • Stickers, posters, buttons	Late September, early October: Get announcements, advertising posters, home base contact done!
Activity	• Plan activities • Reserve rooms	• Set up creas, 10+ clusters	• Clean up crew, 10 kids, custodian	Mid-October: Successful turnoutGreat set up and cleaning too!
Materials	• Donations of food • Time that works best • DJ's, CD's	• Get donations • Talk to peers about joining	• Greeters, welcome committee • Balloons & favors	Before the Event Who,where, doing what!

School:**B****Project: Recruit Jr. TATU members****Project Objective:****Recruit 6th and 7th Graders to assist tobacco prevention**

Task Group	Time Frame	Victory
Space	• Cafetorium or Oak View room or 8th Gr Resource Center	OV room or cafeteria
Activity	• Invite 6, 7 and 8th graders interested in tobacco prevention to be part of a large group that works with TATU on special projects • I.D. which students to invite • Decide what these students will do • Choose some activities for meeting • Ice Cream treats	Lots of people signed up
Supplies	• Ice Cream • Decide what supplies we will need	ICA Cream Filled out info sheet
Administrative	• Who will supervise? • Which TATU members will be there? • Who will come up with the activities for 6th and 7th graders and who will present • Who will get permission for using the space?	Event went smoothly

School:

C

Project: Get ourselves known and get other students involved!

Project Objective:

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT OUR NEW GROUP

Task Group	Time Frame			Victory
Promotions group	• <u>By Sept 16</u> • Write up reason for group • Set up meeting dates • Meet August 22! 10 a.m. • come up with logo, slogan	<u>By Oct 15</u> • Getting kids to help • Find staff to support us • Write mission statement • Newspaper article	<u>By Nov 15</u>	HOLIDAY 4 MONTH CELEBRATION
Space	• Meeting space • Location reservations			
Activities	• Kick off meetings	• All school project with prides • Sponsor a Rip It Out event		MEDIA COVERAGE
Supplies	• Get posters • Make posters, • food supplies • music	• Shirts		

School: D				
Project: BUTT-OUT BASH				
Project Objective:				
GET STUDENTS INVOLVED IN TOBACCO PREVENTION!				
Task Group	Time Frame			Victory
Approval	• Get space for bash • Talk to Meskey	• Ask Meskey • Set up meeting time and data	• Get gym	
Promotion	• Develop promo materials • Newspaper	• Mission statement for group • Meet with church members • Posters for school	• Get sponsors	
Donations	• POD • Food	• Cake • Pop	• Food donations • Beverage Donations •	
Activities - Fun!	• Games • Stramers	• Decorations • Prizes	• Costumes • Balloons • Music • CD's	

School:**E*****Project: KICK OFF PARTY Sept 18, 2001*****Project Objective:*****Kids to sign uyp for smoke-free group***

Task Group	Time Frame			Victory
Administrative	• Pick a date • Talk to APT	• Reserve rooms	• Talk to area businesses	
Promotive	• Make flyers • Give 001 flyers	• Write newsletters	• Notice on TV monitor in school	
Activities	• Find music • Sell food • Info on tobacco, tobacdco pledge	• Games • People sign a tobacco free pledge • Drawing for movie ticket	• Buy food • Key chain for signing tobacco free pledge	
Set up/clean up crew	• Set up • Clean up	• Buy decorations		

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Appendix H
Practical Vision Towards 2006

Anoka County Tobacco Prevention: Our "Practical" Vision towards 2006						
TOBACCO-FREE KIDS	FUN ALTERNATIVES TO SMOKING	OUR BODIES: SMOKE-FREE ZONE	WE WON! (OVER BIG TOBACCO)	MORE ACTIVITIES, MORE SPORTS	PARENT SUPPORT AND ROLE MODELING	CLEAN AIR, CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
Individual captions for the montages for each category:						
• Keep our kids smoke free! This is what our world would look like if it was smoke less! Happy! • Happy and healthy life style • Enjoying life • Freedom targeted • Protect our future! • Celebrating life! •	• Happiness • Fun in the Sun • Spend your money on fun, not taboos. • Long and healthy life. • Save money for vacations, don't spent it on cigarettes!	• Healthy • Strong minds saying no! • Real winners don't smoke • Smoke-free health life • These bodies are a smoke-free zone.	• Look how far we have come! • Is this really how you picture yourself? Is this really cool? • Tobacco company's beat you! • Fight back!	• This is what you are if you don't smoke. • It helps you to not be a smoker. • We can succeed.	• Staying together, and being smoke free • Good choices! • Thinking for yourself! • What if you had never started? • It's cool not to smoke!	• We want Anoka County to be <i>butt-free</i>! • Clean environment • The light at the end of the tunnel. • Clean air, clean ground.

Appendix I

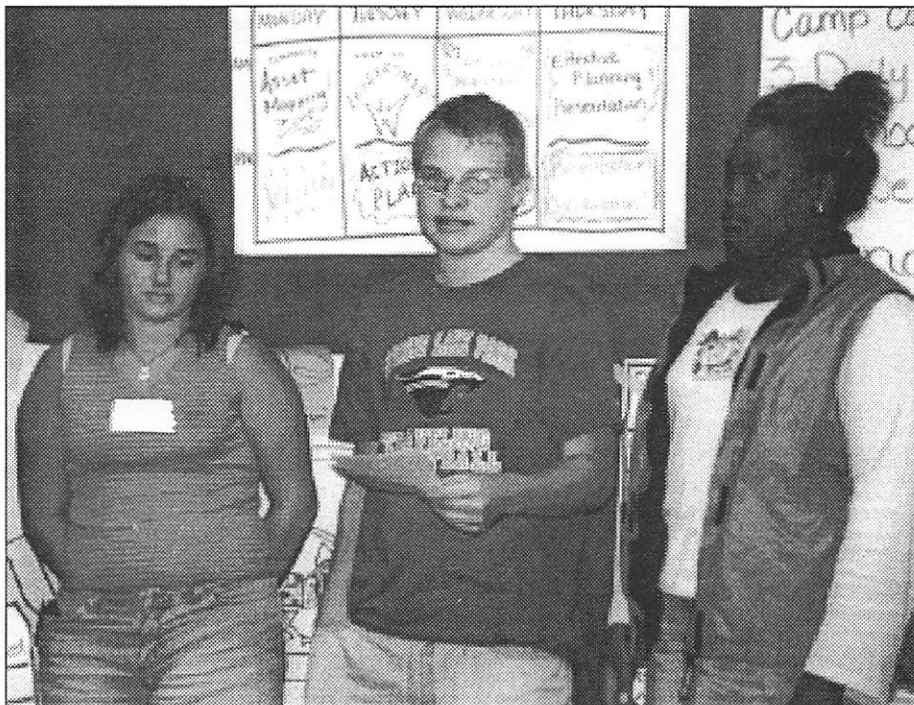
- **Anecdotal Data of Local Newspaper Coverage**
- **Letter from a Community Leader**

Community

Anoka County Union

Making some co-motion

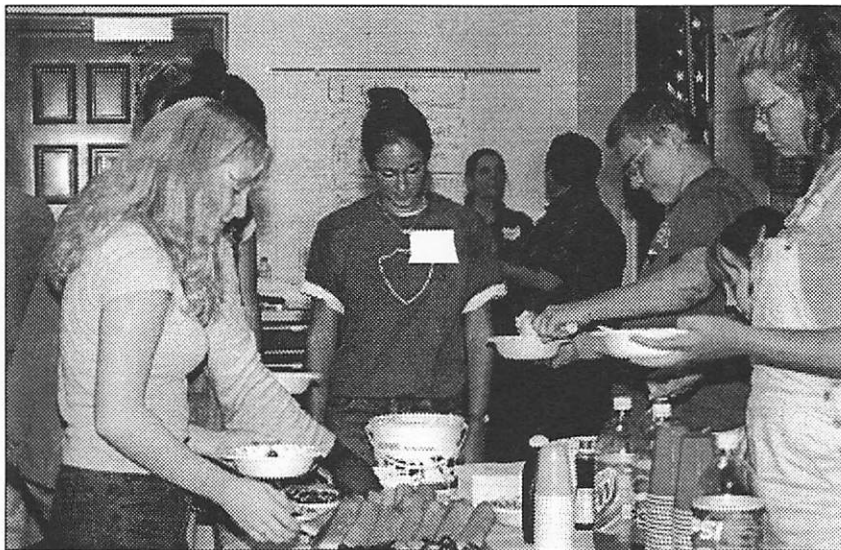
Many students learned how to create youth-led projects during a week long camp. Aug. 6-9 students from Oak View, Westwood, Sandburg, Centennial and St. Francis middle schools participated in Co-Motion Camp. Students learned about leadership and organizing skills and brainstormed ideas on how to make their schools tobacco free. This event was a project of the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department and made possible through a grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention, with support from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office of Justice Program. (Photos by Jennifer Kivioja)



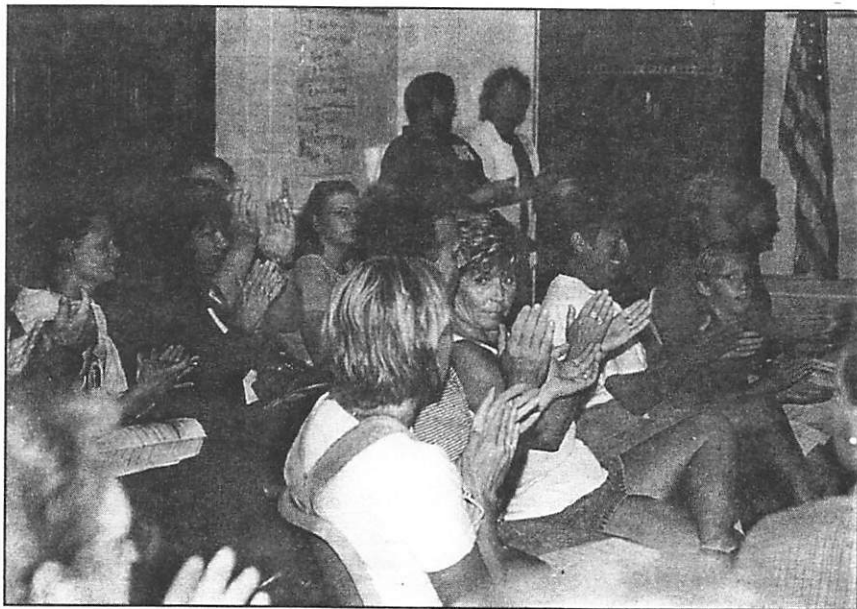
Middle School students, discuss their plan on how they want make their school and campus tobacco free.



During the Co-Motion Camp middle school students created signs about staying tobacco free.



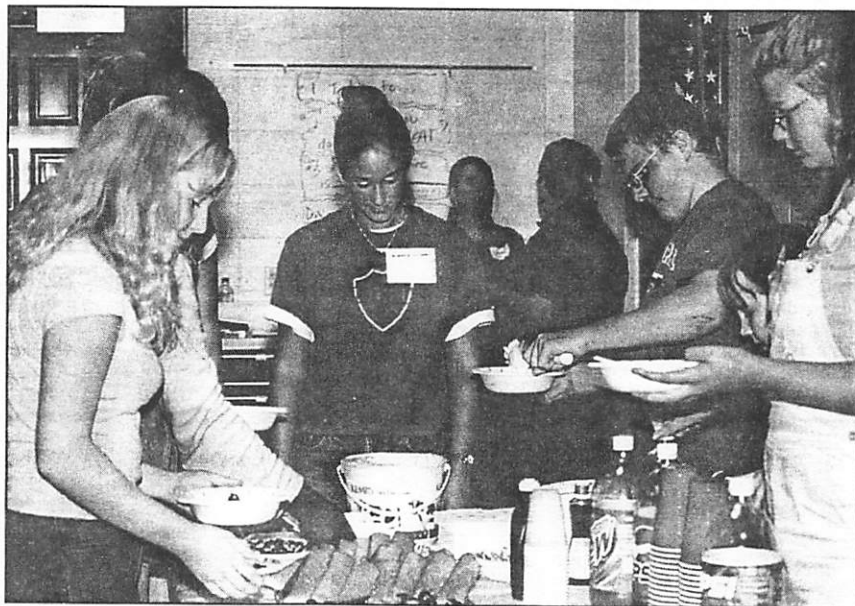
At the end of the Co-Motion Camp, students mingle with adults as they all enjoyed the coolness of make your own ice cream sundaes.



Youth-led projects

Many students learned how to create youth-led projects during a week long camp. Aug. 6-9 students from middle schools participated in Co-Motion Camp. Students learned about leadership and organizing skills and brainstormed ideas on how to make their schools tobacco free. This event was a project of the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department and made possible through a grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention, with support from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office of Justice Program. During the Co-Motion Camp middle school students created signs about staying tobacco free. Above: Many parents, school and other officials applaud the middle school students for their presentation of how they plan to tackle tobacco use in their schools and on school grounds. Below: At the end of the camp, students mingle with adults as they all enjoyed the coolness of make your own ice cream sundaes.

Photos by Jennifer Kivioja



Youth learn leadership through camp

Students from Centennial, Oakview and Sandburg Middle Schools made presentations on Aug. 9 to parents and community leaders on ideas for improving the community. The youth-led ideas were developed during a 4-day Co-Motion Camp held Aug. 6-9 sponsored by the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department.

Co-Motion Camps are being held during the summer of 2001 to help youth 12- to 17-years-old develop their leadership skills and choose effective strategies for positive community change. One Co-Motion Camp is also focused on motivating youth to become tobacco free.

"The adults who worked with the Co-Motion Camp participants, and the parents and community leaders who listened to final reports, were very impressed with the ideas and energy these kids have for improving their community," said Rachel Claflin, Anoka County Community Health Department Tobacco Prevention Coordinator.

According to Claflin, camp participants identified community needs and the issues they want to work on. They created a plan of action, decided upon the most effective communications tools and developed measurable goals, particularly for their home schools. "I'm especially pleased to see the level of skill developed during the Co-Motion Camps," said Claflin. "These are tomorrow's leaders."

For more information on Co-Motion activities and Anoka County tobacco prevention projects, contact Rachel Claflin, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, at 763-422-7282.

Just Press 8/21/01



St. Francis, (standing, right) was one of 18 students to make presentations on August 9 to parents and community leaders on ideas for improving the community. The youth-led ideas were developed during a 4-day Co-Motion Camp held August 6-9 that was sponsored by the Anoka County Community Health and Environmental Services Department.

Submitted photo

Co-Motion Camps get teens in action

Co-Motion Camps were held this summer to help youth ages 12-17 develop leadership skills and choose effective strategies for positive community change. One Co-Motion Camp also focused on motivating youth to become tobacco free.

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Members of the audience on August 9 included Anoka County Sheriff Larry Podany, Anoka Mayor Bjorn Skogquist, parents and other community residents. According to Claflin, having Co-Motion Camp participants communicating directly with elected officials and law enforcement increased the benefit of the camps.

For more information on Co-Motion activities and Anoka County tobacco prevention projects, contact Rachel Claflin, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, at 763-422-7282. ▲

AUG 22 2001



Office of the Sheriff

Anoka County
Sheriff Larry Podany

325 East Main Street, Anoka, MN 55303-2489 (763)323-5000 Fax (763)422-7503

August 20, 2001

Anoka County Public Health
Rachel Claflin/Tabacco Prev. Coord.
2100 3rd Ave, 6th Floor
Anoka, MN 55303-2264

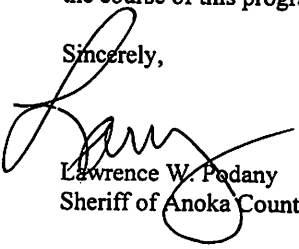

Dear Ms. Claflin,

I was able to attend the presentation that followed the "Co-Motion" seminar. I wanted to express to each of you how impressed I am with the program, the students and advisors working on this project. I believe that training the students to become leaders among their peers is a great step in getting the anti-tobacco message out to the kids in their schools.

Each of the kids involved in this program seems to have such a focused message and goal they want to achieve. I am looking forward to watching your success with this program as you enter your second year. There is such a passion among the children to end tobacco use that I am sure this project and these children will accomplish the tasks they set out to do.

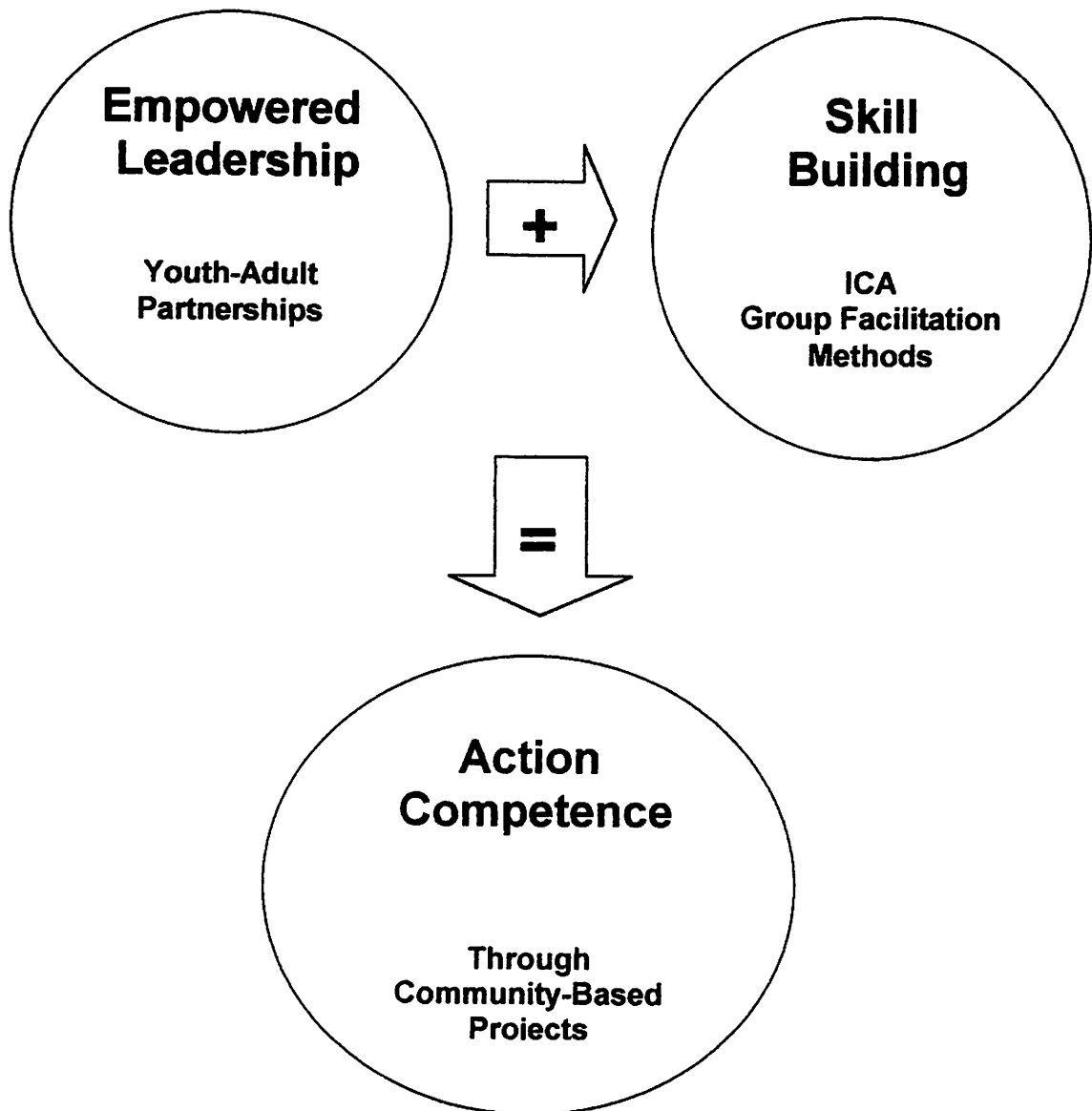
Thank you for inviting me and members of my office to attend your presentation. Please pass my appreciation on to your students as well. If the Sheriff's Office can be of assistance to you during the course of this program, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,


Lawrence W. Podany
Sheriff of Anoka County

Appendix J
Model of Action Competence

Model of Action Competence for Youth



May 3, 2002

Dear Marilyn & John,

Here is a little gift (actually big!) for the National Office of the ICA. I fully describe what Frida & I implemented up in Anoka County. My big focus - over and over - was to stress the need for skill building!! (And of course my preference is for the ICA methods.) I would love to be involved with ICA youth initiatives and other CVD planning, etc. Let me know how I can get some of my work out there! Thanks!

(Yes, [↓]CVD Journal!) Raulul Delfo