Best Practices for Youth Councils and Teen Leadership

Intro

Sample Programs

Principles, Practices, & Lessons Learned

Bringing It Home: Reflection & Application

NYLA Annual Conference, November 2017
Erin Shaw, Brooklyn Public Library
Karen Keys, Brooklyn Public Library
I Introductions
What do you hope to take away from today’s session?
What words come to mind?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Council</th>
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## Definition

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**Definition in 10 words or less + a picture or symbol**
II Sample Programs
Teen Leadership Takes Many Forms

- CYLP, Iowa City
- Flight Skool, Iowa City
- BCAPteen, Brooklyn
Inspiration from the Crowd

3-4 volunteers, in 1 minute or less...

- Name of the program
- Number of youth and ages of youth
- Purpose (What to do they do?)
- How often do they meet? (e.g. weekly, monthly)
- Length of program? (e.g. 1 school year, all summer, multiple years)
- Optional: Funding?
- Optional: An additional aspect of your program that makes it unique that may be of interest to the group?
Sample Programs Continued
Bklyn Library Youth Council @ Central Library + Urban Art Jamm!
BKLYN Library Youth Council

https://www.bklynlibrary.org/support/volunteer/bklyn-library-youth

Bklyn Library Youth Council

Save the Date: Urban Art Jamm 2017 will be held on Saturday evening, April 12th! 

What: 
Plan and execute an urban arts event for teens at Central Library. Build skills in event planning, budgeting, and marketing. Learn the ins and outs of how libraries operate. Serve as peer leaders and library advocates.

When: 
Once a month November - May.
3rd Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30 PM.
Plus mid-winter break, intensive and spring event.

Where: 
BFL Central Library
10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn

How: 
Apply for next year’s class online Sept 15 Oct 15.
Visit www.bklynlibrary.org/urbanart. (Link is at the right.)

What Else:
Benefits and perks:

- Social networking and making friends
- Learn new skills and build confidence
- Gain valuable experience.

- All teens ages 14+ are welcome to apply. If you require any accessibility services for your application, please contact: youthcouncil@bklynlibrary.org

Love arts and culture events!

Think libraries are important?

Have leadership potential?
Selling It Internally

- Meet demand for additional high-quality teen programs
- Strengthen services for teens systemwide through peer-led initiatives and advising
- Build network of dedicated youth alumni for volunteer, ambassador, and other roles
NYC Service Youth Leadership Council Initiative

- Build a constellation of YLC’s across NYC in Schools, CBO’s and City Agencies
- Involve 10% of teens by 2017 (30,000 individuals)
- Engage youth in leadership roles related to policy, practice, or service
Timeline: Oct-Jan

- Get to know each other
- Get to know the Library, its mission and strategic goals
- Get to know stakeholders, and conduct research on peer interests
- Guest presentations from Library staff related to special events
- Event concept development and decision-making
- Intro to proposal-writing & budgeting
- Pro Tips
Timeline: February Intensive Week -- 18 hours in 3 days!

Select Teams & Work Together
- Community Engagement
- Programs & Exhibitions
- Design, Marketing, & Communications
- Project Coordinators (2 Alumni)

Proposal Luncheon with Staff
- Present proposal
- Discuss and get feedback

Work and prepare!

“Big MAC” meets “Little MAC”
Timeline: March-April

Final preparations!
Urban Art Jamm
Timeline: May

Reflection & Evaluation

Graduation Celebration with Family & Guests

Looking to the Future
Bklyn Library Youth Council
Year 2

- Continue Urban Art Jamm annually!

- 17 New and Returning Members
  - 9 new members
  - 2 alumni interns (FT)
  - 6 alumni volunteers (PT)

- Annual Theme: Rep Your Roots!

- 3 Branch Councils
Sample Programs Continued
Bklyn Library Youth Council @ the Branches
Brooklyn Heights Youth Council

I’m Perfect

Self-love Event at Brooklyn Bridge Park

- Meditation led by an instructor
- Decorations including a self-love wall created by the teens
- Staff shirts designed by the teens
Brower Park Youth Council

Teen Carnival

- Games
- Face Painting
- Mannequin Challenge
- Refreshments
Clarendon Youth Council

The Clarendon Garden Initiative

- Clean up our library courtyard
- Beautify our community
- Fun hands on experience
- Getting dirty!
Clarendon Youth Council

Clarendon Clothing Drive

- The library as a place for social improvement
- The value of giving
- Organizing the clothing drive
- Partnership with H&M
Bklyn Youth Council
Year 3

- Central kicking off November 15th!

- 20 New and Returning Members
  - 65 applicants!
  - 12 new members
  - 8 returning members (PT & FT)

- Annual Theme: TBD!

- 6-9 Branch Councils
III: Principles, Practices & Lessons Learned
Youth Development Principles

Positive youth development is a framework that guides communities in the way they organize services, opportunities, and supports so that young people can develop to their full potential. Positive youth development is not just another program. Communities that adopt a youth development approach emphasize these principles:

- **Focus on strengths and positive outcomes**
- **Youth voice and engagement**
- **Strategies that involve all youth**
- **Community involvement and collaboration**
- **Long-term commitment**

Source:
www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/development/
# Best Practices for Youth-Adult Partnerships

<table>
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<th>Best Practice</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tr>
<td>Youth are involved in meaningful decision-making and action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults support youth to help them develop and grow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth and adults work as partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth are engaged as a community</td>
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Adapted from:
Ten Lessons Learned

“I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!”
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- Improve recruitment and retention by giving the program prestige, setting expectations high, giving youth meaningful work and roles, and making incentives clear
- Recognize and embrace generational differences, and be realistic about professional skill development (Try our *Pro Tips!*).
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- Don’t forget the 3 F’s:
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IV Bringing It Home: Reflection & Application
Questions?
Thanks and have fun out there!

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