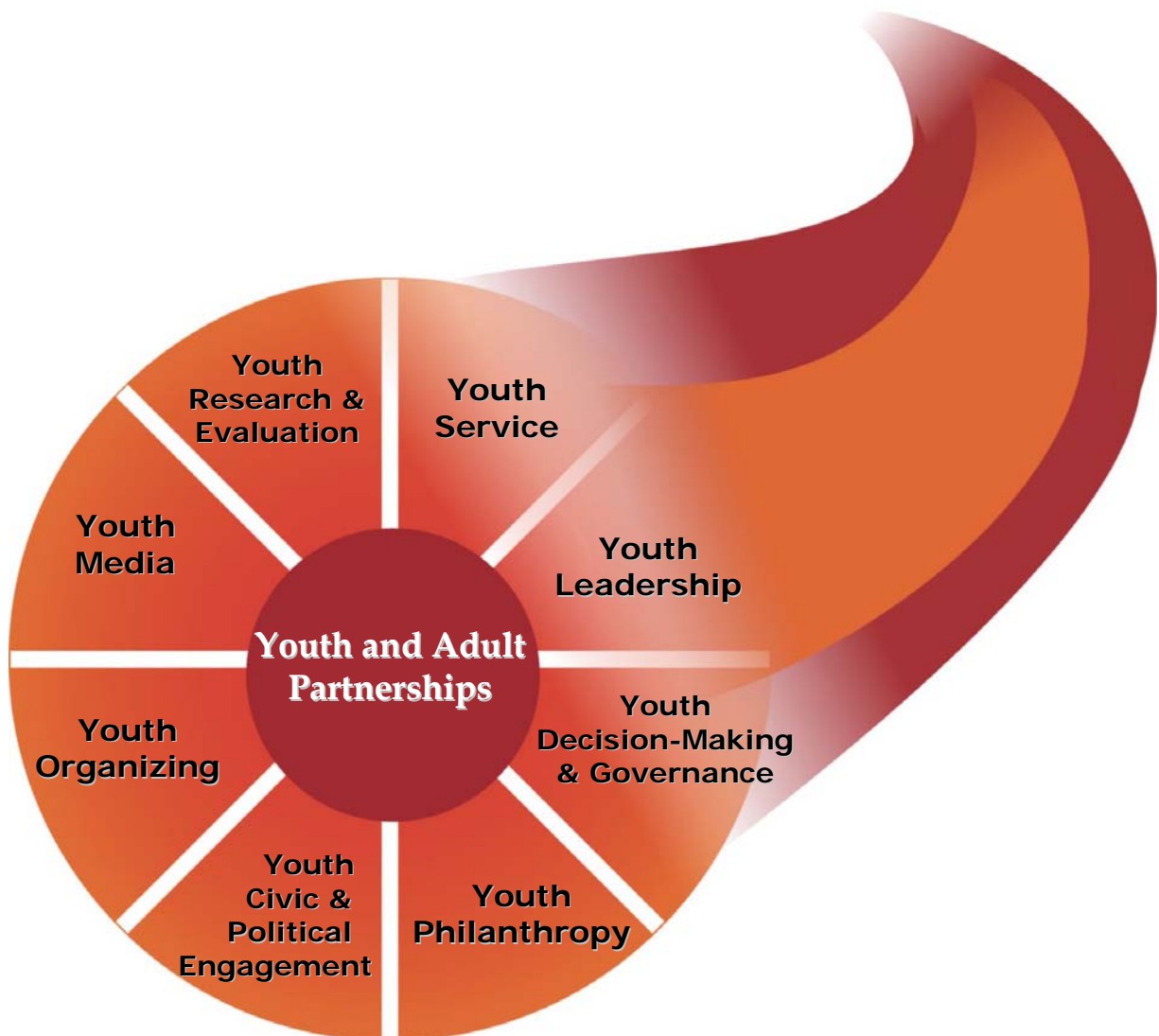


The Power of Youth and Adult Partnerships and Change Pathways for Youth Work

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Prepared by Search Institute for the
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

May 31, 2005



INTRODUCTION

Integrating Multiple Perspectives on Youth and Adult Partnerships and Change Pathways

Search Institute conducted a comprehensive assessment of the youth work field to inform the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's launch of the second Kellogg Leadership for Community Change initiative on the theme "Valuing and Building Youth and Adult Partnerships to Advance Just Communities" and also as it prepares the "Philanthropy and Volunteerism 75th Anniversary Seminar: A Celebration of Youth Engagement across Time and Culture."

The field assessment represents a broad environmental scan, and is intended to help people and institutions with a deep commitment to and a vested interest in youth development and the common good gain a historical perspective and a more informed outlook on what has transpired in recent years. It also offers more details on the present state of youth development and social change and advice for future courses of action. The assessment of the field is intended to stimulate reflection and dialogue on the youth work odyssey thus far, and encourage thought and conversation regarding the next leg of the journey.

Two overarching aspects of youth work form the primary basis for description and analysis. First, the assessment treats youth and adult partnerships as a core element of youth work, and documents permutations in the conception and implementation of those relationships over time.

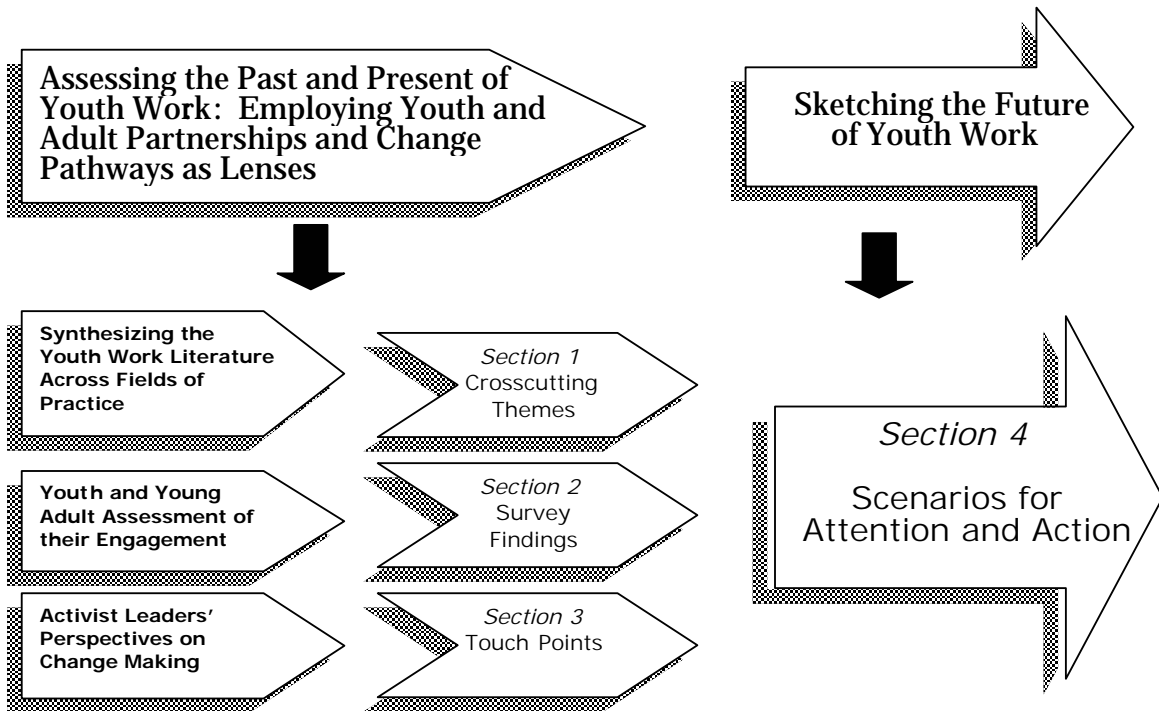
Second, the field assessment concentrates on capturing both large and small adjustments made by youth and adults regarding the purpose and substance of change making. The concept of the "change pathway" serves as a useful filter for interpreting and bringing a sense of order and cogency to the twists and turns that have occurred across major youth work fields of practice. Charting the trajectory of change pathways over time helps illuminate many of the ways in which youth, adults, power brokers, and funders operate as change makers.

A deep understanding of major milestones in youth work and projections of what the field could be in the future requires taking multiple viewpoints into account and looking for interconnections and patterns. To that end, the assessment integrated different information sources and intergenerational perspectives including:

- Multiple strands of formal youth work literature across fields of practice;
- Youth and young adults' experiences with adult partners and community change; and
- Activist leaders' views on the meaning of their change making.

The first section of this executive summary describes crosscutting themes evident in the youth work literature. The second section provides survey results from youth and young adults actively engaged in youth work. The third section offers touch points that evolved from interviews with change making leaders. In the final section a number of scenarios that have the potential to shape the future of youth work are sketched.

The field assessment design and executive summary structure are summarized below.



It is our hope that this information can be used to challenge the thinking and imagination of all parties involved in youth work. By thinking in novel and resourceful ways, all parties can make a positive difference in the quality of life for youth and their adult partners, and take decisive action to right community and social wrongs.



SECTION 1

The Literature's Perspective on Partnerships and Pathways

One of our major objectives of the field assessment was to take a series of snapshots of the youth work literature across major fields of practice in order to create an overall picture of the current state of the field. The eight major topics covered were: (1) Youth Service; (2) Youth Leadership; (3) Youth Decision-Making & Governance; (4) Youth Philanthropy; (5) Youth Civic & Political Engagement; (6) Youth Organizing; (7) Youth Media; and (8) Youth Research & Evaluation. In reviewing more than 300 articles on these multiple topics a number of crosscutting themes emerged that help provide insights regarding youth adult partnerships and youth adult change pathways. The themes and an excerpt from the literature, or synopses papers prepared by Search Institute on the eight major topics, follow. (The complete synopses papers can be found in the final report).

Crosscutting Themes

- 1. Youth involvement is expanding beyond community service to emphasize democratic citizenship that embraces both individual rights and responsibilities and concrete group contributions for the common good.**

A good service-learning program helps participants see their questions in the larger context of issues of social justice and social policy—rather than in the context of charity.

(Kendall, 1990)

- 2. Adults in multiple settings and at varying levels (local, national, and even global) have a primary role in creating opportunities for young people and supporting them in building their competencies as they simultaneously work for change.**

Youth development researchers and practitioners are... *heralding a deep shift in thinking and practice that regards America's youth not just as assets and resources, but also as leaders and stakeholders in communities....Rather than wait for a nonspecific time when childhood and adolescence end and adulthood begins, youth development and civic engagement theory demonstrates that young people have the capacity now to address serious problems in their institutions and communities.* (Youth Leadership Synopsis Paper, pp. 1-2)

By deepening our connection to the community, we become aware of issues and examine strategies for solving problems....

Many of us (at Wingspread) perceive service as alternative politics as a method of pursuing change in a democratic society.

(Long, 2002)

- 3. Youth participation in partnerships with adults can take varying forms and is shaped by the mission of the organization or initiative. There is not one prescribed way for youth and adults to partner in community and social change.**

There are...

- 1. Youth and Adult Partnerships** that bring youth and adults together to work collaboratively to foster change; these partnerships are characterized by mutuality in teaching and learning between youth and adults, as well as mutuality in decision-making.
 - 2. Youth-Driven Initiatives** that bring groups of youth and adults together to devise, manage, and evaluate actions to foster change; youth exercise greater control over activities, and adults play supportive roles as mentors and facilitators.
 - 3. Adult-Driven Initiatives** that bring groups of adults and youth together to devise, manage, and evaluate actions to foster change; adults exercise greater control over activities, but obtain youth input.
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- 4. Increasing numbers of young people from marginalized and disenfranchised communities are becoming involved as leadership models begin to reflect both the realities and strengths of these young people.**

Organizing and activism initiatives appear to be a meaningful and significant approach for connecting with youth that are typically not reached by more conventional youth development efforts. These 'challenged' youth embrace the activism and the entities that do it because they provide youth with opportunities to concentrate on their own cultures and backgrounds, they create a means for youth to examine and deal with the difficult challenges they and their fellow community members confront.

(Youth Organizing Synopsis Paper, p. 10)

- 5. Youth awareness of social injustices within a community often serves to stimulate involvement and a desire for change. Investigating the history and ongoing impact of inequalities within a community then helps youth to focus their change making initiatives.**

Opportunities for youth (who are not represented in media) to be involved often has the effect of instilling a sense of community involvement and social activism. Because youth are encouraged to investigate and comment on issues close to them, they are then forced to think critically about their plight as well as the plight of others.

(Hunt, 2002)

... the challenges to adults can be daunting. Indeed, the ability to balance, negotiate, and creatively adapt adult roles to changing situations is likely to be the most important skill in the art of sustaining relationships with youth.

(Youth Leadership Synopsis Paper, p. 22)

By its very nature, youth media provide ways not only for youth with little power to be heard, but also to connect youth with others who are dispossessed, out of school, living in poverty, or socially isolated.

(Youth Media Synopsis Paper, p. 9)

6. Emerging views of youth involvement represent a broadening of focus from looking solely at individual-level outcomes for participating youth to also examining both changes in the external conditions that enable and support youth involvement and the organizational and community-level impacts that result.

A significant amount of research has been done in the area of the impact on youth when they are involved in decision-making. Across the board, the outcomes are positive. They include:

- Skill development, such as leadership and public speaking;
- Increased self-esteem;
- Better academic achievement; and
- Enhanced identity development.

(Youth Decision-Making & Governance Synopsis Paper, p. 18)

7. As adults and youth talk about making change, they are giving new meanings to words like leadership, philanthropy, empowerment. The work will be strengthened if players (youth, adults, theorists, and funders) begin to coalesce around a common language that represents the best ideas, approaches, and elements of good practice.

As the field of youth development embraces the role and exercise of leadership, observers are noting challenges that "... stem from the lack of clarity regarding conceptual definitions and untested assumptions... The risk is that 'youth leadership' will become jargon rather than a guide for innovative practice." (Youth Leadership Synopsis Paper, p. 2)

8. The prevalent mentality that youth development occurs only in programs may limit the creativity of youth and adults in moving beyond the program, activity, or curriculum to the idea of community engagement and civic activism.

Youth involvement is typically measured in terms of attendance, program dosage, and types of activities attended. The asset building approach (to community change) reveals the inadequacies of this model, which reflects youth as 'objects' of programming rather than 'community builders.' (Omni Institute, 2003)

Youth who are provided opportunities for actively learning and participating in local events are resources for their communities, and can see the value of their work and the effect it is having in the broader context.

(Youth Civic & Political Engagement Synopsis Paper, p. 21)

It took a decade of work to move the idea that young people don't grow up in programs, they grow up in communities. Perhaps we can increase the learning curve for the next challenge— participation shouldn't occur just in programs, it should occur in communities.

(Pittman, 2000)

9. For youth and adult partnerships to become a way of life in communities and programs, a great deal of work must be done to change the way American adults think about who youth really are and the positive changes they are capable of making.

By recognizing that youth are an important part of the ‘whole’ community, community leaders can understand why it is essential to listen to young people and involve them in community decision-making.
(Cretsinger, 1999)

10. The growth of youth involvement is occurring at the grassroots level in communities, and there is a continued need to strengthen its infrastructure to sustain and spread the work.

Greater foundation attention to intermediary organizations which improve effectiveness is a critical piece of the puzzle.
(Sherman, 2002)

Summary

The normative expectation for partnerships between youth and adults has been rerouted from an assumption that adults are responsible for “fixing” youth’s problems to that of lending a helping hand—or even stepping aside—so that youth themselves take responsibility for personal, peer, and community life. Traditional efforts permitting youth involvement in activities that improve themselves and their communities have morphed into initiatives that encourage youth to think boldly and make significant changes in the world in which they live.

The current landscape reveals intersections and linkages among the change pathways that documents movement in a number of directions:

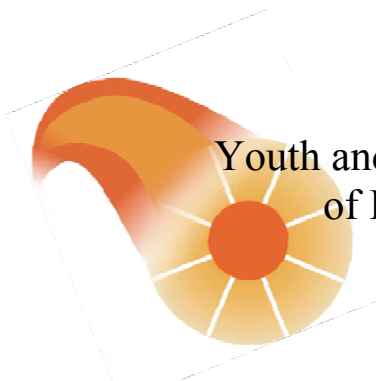
<u>From</u>		<u>To</u>
Individual efforts	—————>	Collective efforts
Fragmented strategies/ projects	—————>	Unified vision and collective action
Status quo	—————>	Work for justice
Youth work in limiting roles or in isolation	—————>	Youth work with adults for change and tap into the power of institutions and systems

A significant challenge to be faced is “the skepticism among adults about young people’s intentions, knowledge, or capabilities.

(Cervone, 2002)

The relative newness of organizing and campaign models has meant that groups with a youth organizing mission, ‘have to repeatedly craft their own solutions to the same sets of issues that other groups have previously addressed.’

(Listen Inc., 2003)



SECTION 2

Youth and Young Adult Assessment of Partnerships and Pathways

A second major objective of the field assessment was to incorporate youth voices into the project. Search Institute developed a web-based survey to capture what youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 29 had to say about their partnerships and their involvement in youth work change pathways. The survey was launched on Search Institute’s website in November 2004. Youth conference attendees at Search Institute’s 2004 Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth (HC • HY) Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota were sent an e-mail asking them to complete the survey and were asked to encourage other young people to fill it out. Many youth serving organizations and intermediaries posted announcements and links to the survey.

These partnership and pathway findings are derived from an analysis of the data from the 193 young people who completed the survey.

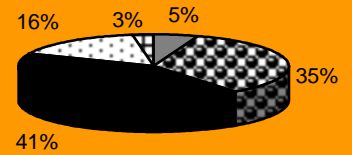
Youth and Young Adult Assessment of Partnerships

The Nature of Youth and Adult Relationships

- 75% of respondents spoke of strong relationships with adults.
- 61.7% indicated they “work side-by-side” with adults, suggesting a multigenerational youth and adult partnership that involves young people and adults working together, sharing power, and learning from each other.
- 15.5% responded that adults “are central” to their work.
- 19.2% felt adults were “present, but not central.”
- 2.1% suggested that adults are “not involved” with them.

Youth and Young Adults Who Completed the Survey

Age



- 12-14
- 15-18
- 19-24
- 25-29
- Not Reported

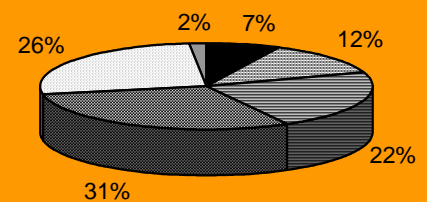
Gender

Female:	79%
Male:	20%
Not Reported:	1%

Race

American Indian, Alaska Native, or Aboriginal	1%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander	7%
Black or African American	6%
White	76%
Hispanic	6%
Other	4%

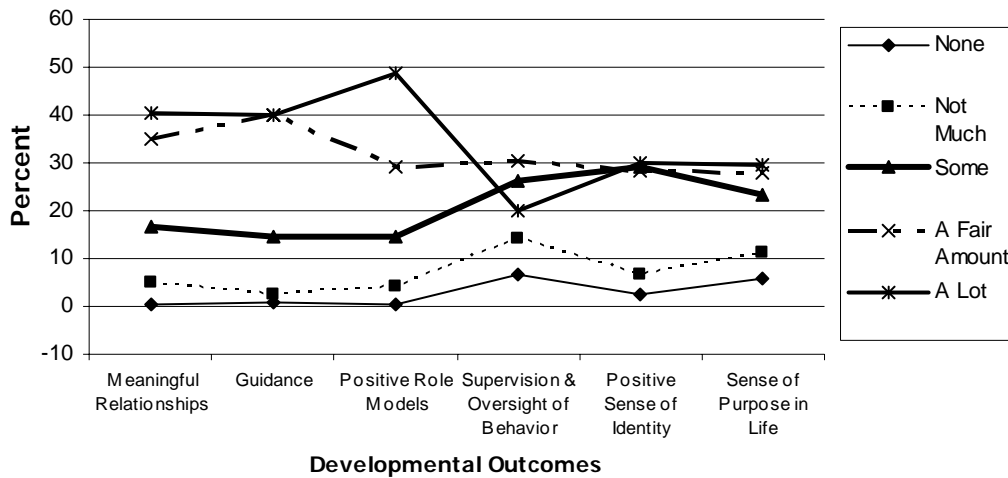
Location



- Small Town (under 2,500)
- Town (2,500 to 9,999)
- Small City (10,000 to 49,999)
- Medium City (50,000 to 250,000)
- Large City (over 250,000)
- Unknown

Connecting Adult Relationships to Developmental Outcomes

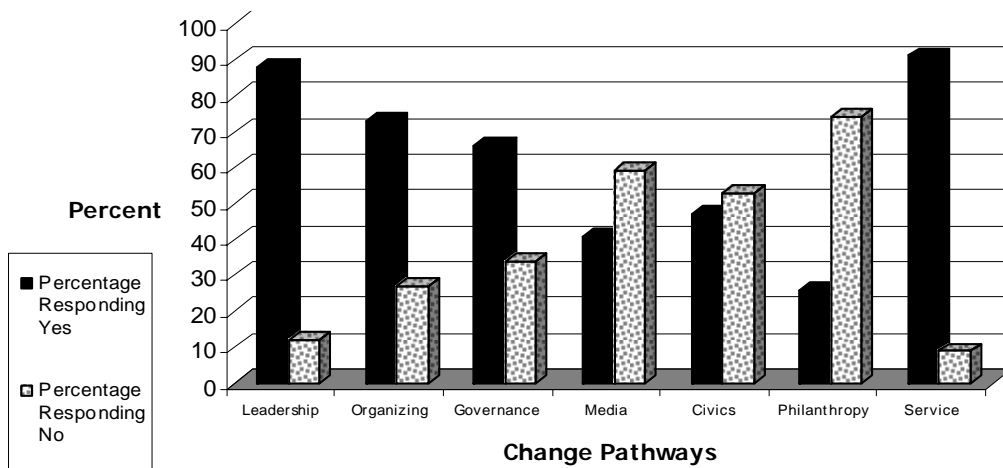
Youth and young adults were asked to rate (on a five-point scale) the degree to which adult involvement contributes to beneficial developmental outcomes. At least 40% of respondents indicated that adult involvement meant a lot to them as a meaningful relationship, a source of guidance, and as an opportunity to experience a positive role model.



Youth and Young Adult Assessment of Pathway Participation

Pathway Participation Rates

Youth and young adults report varying degrees of involvement across the pathways. The figure below illustrates survey findings of youth and young adult change pathway participation rates. Youth Leadership and Service are the most common, at over 80%, with Organizing and Governance identified by over 50% of respondents.



Youth and young adults participate in pathway work because they...

- ◆ Recognize problems in their community and/or social injustices.

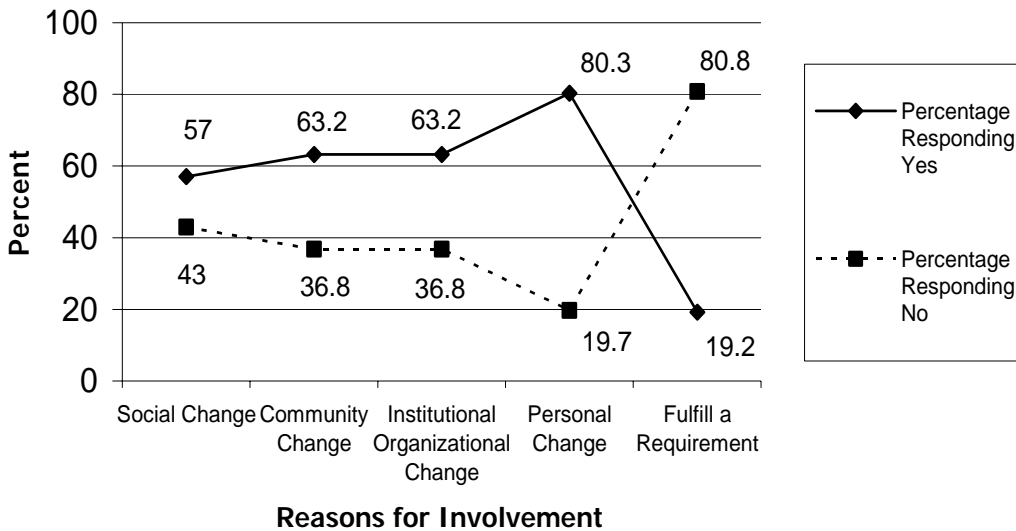
- ◆ Seek to promote youth voice, ideas and opinions to influence decision-making.

- ◆ Want to emulate an important person in their life.

- ◆ Were encouraged, supported and/or saw parents model the importance of involvement.

Change Making Youth and Young Adults Pursue

Youth and young adults were asked to describe the purposes of their change pathway work. From the survey sample, it is evident that the majority of respondents are involved in change efforts for reasons other than to satisfy an obligation such as a mandatory service requirement.



Motivation for Ongoing Youth and Young Adult Change Pathway Participation

Survey participants identified and described their sources of motivation as follows:

- **To address social issues and help make a difference in the lives of others.**
The youth I work with are labeled 'at risk,' and for many reasons they are, but it's not due to their lack of character or motivation. [It's] due to social circumstances preventing these bright young people [from having] the ability to thrive.
- **To build connections and relationships with others.**
The passion and dedication young people have to their communities is what motivates me to continue helping and supporting them.
- **To develop the potential of others, as well as to improve the community.**
When the day actually comes and I see how others reap the benefits of my work, it makes everything work.

Youth and young adult motivation is sustained by...

- ◆ Mentality that personal involvement will help build a better future for youth, adults, and communities.
- ◆ Observation of the impacts and personal transformation or growth of others.
- ◆ Emphasis on learning, discovery, building a knowledge base, new skills, or capacity.
- ◆ Genuine interest shown toward building youth and adults partnerships that are valuable, empowering, and respecting of opinions, ideas, feedback, or efforts.

Support Needed to Sustain Youth and Young Adult Change Pathway Engagement

Youth and young adults completing the survey described the supports they need to stay involved in change efforts.

➤ **Increasing involvement**

The support, acceptance, and involvement of other youth...A constant reminder that the people around me support me. Constant interest and support for my work is key for my confidence.

➤ **Viewing youth as resources**

I really wish the adults of our community were more willing to let youth be a part of the decision-making process. I don't feel that we are valued enough for all the things that we do right as opposed to all the things that just a few do wrong.

➤ **Receiving and providing capacity and skill building opportunities**

[Youth need] not only guidance and support, but adults who lead by example. I think mentoring and other efforts would be stronger if the youth who participated witnessed people of all ages committed to the cause through direct service.

➤ **Collaborating between individuals, programs, organizations, agencies, and institutions.**

[I need] active ongoing discussion with people who are involved in the same or similar experiences to my own.

➤ **Creating steady or new funding**

Unfortunately, [I need] money. I would be more willing to continue working for change full-time if I knew I would be able to pay off my student loans and buy a house while doing so.

Summary

Although the survey sample was small and in no way intended to be representative, it provides valuable information on the ideas, perspectives, feelings, and concerns of youth and young adults engaged in youth work. Based on the findings presented in this chapter there is a richer understanding of how these youth and young adults assess their partnerships with adults, how adult relationships strengthen their development, and how those relationships lead to action. There is also a fuller appreciation of the change experiences of these youth and young adults, why they get involved, what motivates them to continue, and what is needed to sustain them in their change making efforts.

Sustainability Factors

◆ Increased support or involvement from individuals or particular sectors of the community.

◆ Shifting the thinking and attitudes of adults, communities, institutions, and society from regarding youth as people who have deficits to regarding them as offering strengths.

◆ Guidance, mentoring, role models, and learning/professional development opportunities.

◆ Enhanced youth-adult relationships or opportunities that support bringing youth and adults together to build relationships.



SECTION 3

Activist Leaders' Take on the Currency of Partnerships and Pathways

A third major objective of the field assessment was to reach out to the next generation of leaders who had engaged in at least a decade of activism, who could speak in-depth about their specific work, who held a vantage point that extended beyond their own communities, and could address how the work of youth as change makers was unfolding across the nation. Search Institute conducted and transcribed interviews between mid-November 2004 and mid-January 2005 with ten activists who are recognized leaders and catalysts for change in the youth work field. Eight “touch points” emerged from an analysis of the interview transcripts. The touch points and excerpts from the transcripts that illuminate them follow.

Touch Points

1. Activist leaders take up systemic change and social justice issues that affect young people.

The kids in this community seemed totally unengaged, not necessarily from their own apathy, but from the fact that there weren't a lot of opportunities or venues for young people to address social justice issues...what we found was that there was a desire on behalf of teens to get involved in transforming the conditions that made them 'at-risk'...in terms of the environment and the things that they were facing in the neighborhood, creating environments and conditions where young people can really make their community better so other young people will have better life-long outcomes...

2. Activist leaders work to raise awareness of the value of collaborations between youth and adults in order to create change.

We try at all our gatherings to [make it] multigenerational, multi-age, so our facilitators are young adults or adults, and, of course, we have many gatherings where our elders are also present, and then also the really young folks, like the 2- and 4-year-olds....And I think that's definitely one of the highlights or one of the strong points of our organization...it's all intentional and purposeful, so each person has a reason for being there and a role to play...

Raising Consciousness through Action

We organized a school walk out and rally to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Brown vs. Board [of Education of Topeka]...It was attended by 600 high school students.

There was not one fight. And that was the biggest concern for the principals; it wasn't them leaving school, ironically.

At the rally we actually had workshops on domestic violence, on police brutality, on how to find scholarships. They were leaving the school building but they weren't leaving education—and I think that in the principal's mind, that at that point they understood what it is that we're about.

3. Activist leaders have been involved in and have utilized many change pathways in order to engage youth and advance a social change agenda.

When we started, our initial focus was really service learning with some youth leadership [and] youth mentoring in there, [but] our work began to shift. Most of our work now centers on youth voice in school and in the community, youth leadership, peer engagement, focusing around the students really being at the forefront or really being involved in the school reform that's going on at the planning stage.

4. Many activist leaders feel they are part of something bigger, or they see their work as trying to create a movement.

When we talk about Urban Underground, we refer to our work as a movement....Our hope is to transform the way this community looks at, engages, and believes in its young people, and not in a patronizing kind of way, but in terms of a respect for their power and their ability that is demonstrated—and not demonstrated with the permission of adults, but demonstrated based on what young people in this community want for themselves and for their community.

5. Activist leaders strive to have youth assume real, significant roles, which increases the power of youth experiences and fuels them to reach their future goals.

Without being conscious of the research or lingo, I think youth media specialists instinctively knew that we could engage this population by using media as it addressed different learning styles and multiple intelligences that were not often acknowledged or appreciated in a traditional school setting. It was hands-on and involved project-based learning, with youth engaged from the onset as they developed their own idea for a film and saw it through to completion.

6. A variety of motivational and inspirational factors drive activist leaders.

I see myself in terms of creating other change agents...I know that the young people that we work with, if they so desire, have the skills and ability and confidence to do exactly what I'm doing, and if they don't, then I've failed.

**Sense of Being Involved
in a Movement**

It's a movement in terms of young people staking claim to, understanding, and identifying with their own power...

Our hope is to transform the way this community looks at, engages, and believes in its young people...

7. Today’s activist leaders realize the importance of youths’ strengths to help support youth activism work.

Young people are more plugged in and have a good view of what’s going on around them. In addition, they have time, energy, enthusiasm, and lack of cynicism.

8. Activist leaders experience many challenges and have a keen awareness of the future challenges associated with social change work.

[Activist leaders] are facing a more divided world. I think the whole idea—of Red and Blue America—...is very true, and I think that people who read The New York Times do not understand the people who watch NASCAR racing. And you have a deep divide in this country along a cultural fault line, which expresses itself politically...so I think the major challenge of the next generation of social action leaders is to be able to bridge divides...I think the challenge is to find people who can draw circles that draw people in...

Summary

This chapter has shed light on the perspectives, purposes, and passions of activist leaders who are supportive of partnerships and actively serving as agents of change. We know of their desire to foster youth and adult collaborations, and their commitment to working with youth and young adults strengths. We have learned about these activist leaders’ emphasis on social justice, their blending of action across change pathways, and their willingness to tackle challenges in order to achieve progress.

Motivational Influence

I think about people I know who have been in the nonprofit field forever, who are still in it and still are very excited and enthusiastic and feel like their work can solve social problems....It's amazing that they could be in the field forever and still feel that passion and energy.

Activist Leaders’ Frequent Challenges...

- ◆ Under Funded and Under Understood
- ◆ Lack of Experience
- ◆ Age Discrimination
- ◆ Lack of Research
- ◆ Consumerism & Materialism



SECTION 4

The Next Generation of Youth Work: Scenarios for Attention and Action

We close by sketching a number of scenarios that have the potential to positively influence and shape the future of the youth work field. In doing so, we operate under the assumption that partnerships between youth and adults will remain the nucleus of youth work. We also assume that the change pathways will continue to channel the purposeful energy and ambitions of youth and their adult partners.

➤ **Scenario 1. *Maintain Alignment and Fidelity with Positive Youth Development***

The evolution and current status of youth and adult partnerships and the change pathways reveals a consistent commitment on the part of youth and adults to put the core principles of positive youth development into practice. In view of the growing evidence that demonstrates how essential family, neighbors, peers, other adults, and various institutional socializing processes are to successful youth development, it is important that youth and adults become savvier about the ways partnerships and pathway approaches and methods can make even greater contributors to healthy development.

➤ **Scenario 2. *Ground Partnerships in an Ethos of Respect and Rapport***

Youth and adults who work in tandem across the change pathways must remain vigilant about maintaining partnerships based on respect and rapport. Interpersonal communication skills that encompass attending, clarifying, informing, inquiring, motivating, and evaluating must be cultivated and enhanced so that youth and adults can do the following:

- Strengthen their abilities to ask appropriate questions and pursue understanding through active reflection and listening;
- Pay attention to nonverbal aspects of behavior, understand the influences of various cultural backgrounds, and accept the different ways partners express feelings;
- Recognize the appropriate moments to ask open-ended, as well as closed, questions in order to draw out new ideas and to move events forward; and

- Confront discrepancies between thought and action, and use these discrepancies as the basis for caring invitations to consider change.
-

➤ **Scenario 3. *Make Improved Human Relations the Essence of Community Building***

Youth and adults are urged to focus on human relations in order to accomplish community building.

Community building as enhanced human relations entails:

- Strengthening emotional connectedness among people, which generates a commitment to others and serves as a springboard for collective action;
 - Broadening participation to meaningfully include those who have been routinely excluded from discussions and decisions so that they are active participants in the affairs and governance of community life;
 - Establishing more equitable interpersonal relations, which can translate into a greater sense of fairness and support for community improvement efforts; and
 - Instituting democratic processes to address and reconcile differences in opinions and actions.
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➤ **Scenario 4. *Use Social Capital and Cultural Pluralism to Enrich Diversity Perspectives***

Youth and adults must partner in ways that move beyond the usual confines of culturally competent courses of action along the change pathways. They are especially encouraged to incorporate aspects of cultural pluralism and social capital into their youth work.

More deliberately integrating different facets of cultural pluralism such as transculturalism (distinct transitions that must be attended to as one moves from one culture to another), metaculturalism (commonalities among people of color around cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors), and panculturalism (universal characteristics common to people throughout the world), as well as bonding and bridging forms of social capital can propel youth and adults to advance the cause of social change in ways that honor diversity.

➤ **Scenario 5. *Organize to Address Discrimination and Oppression***

Youth and adults should engage in collective action which throughout history has been one of the most effective mechanisms for tackling discrimination and oppression. Collective action is more often than

not spearheaded through community organizing. Not surprisingly, differences of opinion exist regarding how community organizing should be carried out to redress acts of discrimination and oppression.

On one hand, should youth and adults pursue “consensus organizing,” best understood as an ongoing process that responds to local needs, promotes partnerships, and tries to make progress within the terms, conditions, and boundaries of the existing power system? Or, should adults and youth embrace “confrontative organizing,” that is rooted in contention and conflict and taps strategies such as pursuing legal remedies through the judicial system, establishing economic boycotts, and spawning social protests?

Much of the dilemma revolves around the false thinking of youth and adults, who often feel they must choose between the two forms of organizing. Instead, adults and youth can employ both strategies, understanding that it is to their advantage to determine the situations in which it makes sense to be the diplomat and the occasions when acting as the firebrand has its virtues. In fact, more fully appreciating how the use of both strategies can often produce greater progress would be beneficial.

➤ **Scenario 6. *Link Youth-Sponsored Social Change to Contemporary Social Movements***

More dutiful study and application of other types of social movements that dot the contemporary landscape can enrich the change pathway work of youth and adults. First, there are the “new social movements,” a form of social action differing from that of earlier eras in a number of ways. Then there are the “American community movements,” intent on building a more supple, vibrant civic sector.

While there is a measure of agreement that the social movements of the 1960s serve as the epicenter for certain change pathway impulses, these other recent genres of social movements also have important things to say to both youth and adults about youth-sponsored social change.

➤ **Scenario 7. *Unleash a New Wave of Organizational Transformation***

The new wave of youth involvement is about youth and adults ensuring that youth manifest a full range of leadership roles at the heart of organizational decision-making and governance, including those of:

- Figurehead
- Disseminator
- Disturbance handler
- Liaison
- Spokesman
- Resource allocator
- Monitor
- Entrepreneur
- Negotiator

Through change pathway work: youth conduct symbolic duties; communicate vital information to key parties within the agency; link with others inside and outside the organization; take the lead in

dealing with new opportunities that emerge; deal with crises and problematic situations; distribute human, financial, and material resources; and negotiate current and future courses of action.

➤ **Scenario 8. *Catalyze Policy Activism and Social Citizenship***

Youth and adults will always feel the urge to take the formal policy route and use legislative advocacy to produce public policies that can strengthen civic activities and create impact across the change pathways. Policy activism means honing skills in policy development and implementation, and becoming more adept in the art of political persuasion.

Encouraging a more robust expression of social citizenship is also imperative. Social citizenship is often recognized as the latest stage of citizenship, a natural progression and outgrowth of the earlier civil and political forms of citizenship. Social citizenship defines and affirms the social rights all citizens possess, as well as the responsibilities and obligations all people have for the well-being of their fellow citizens. It calls for all citizens to have full access to a society's social heritage and for the right to live life according to prevailing social standards. Civic progress depends largely upon youth and adults helping the general public value and support robust expressions of social citizenship and moving forward with their policy activism.

➤ **Scenario 9. *Alter Adult America's Negative Mindset Regarding Youth***

Youth and adults who are immersed in the change pathways can help transform the media-inspired and culturally-entrenched negative persona of youth that sways public opinion. Change pathway participants need to identify their natural allies and work together as a coalition to alter the public information landscape through the introduction of new communication messages at the local and national levels. It is imperative that concerned parties become smarter about public issue life cycle strategies, including raising the public consciousness, conducting pressure campaigns, and introducing a mix of attitudinal and behavioral incentives or disincentives that can lead to the formation of revised social norms.

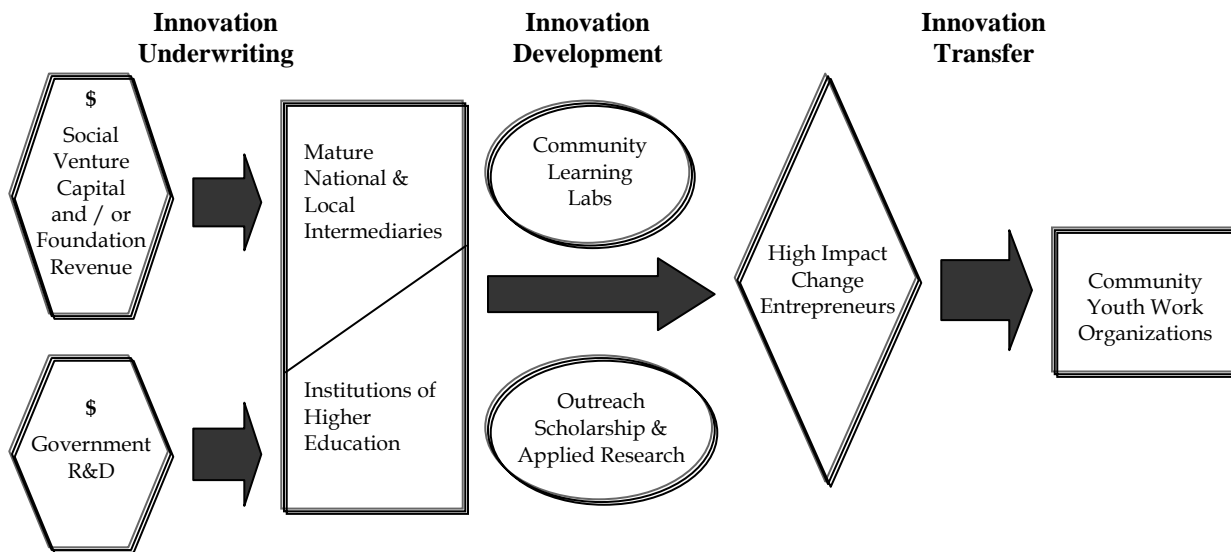
Facilitating a greater degree of adult contact with "other people's kids" is also an important step in eventually turning the tide. Many easy actions taken by adults, youth, parents, and community leaders can broaden and deepen the extent of positive intergenerational relations and help change adult attitudes.

➤ **Scenario 10. *Revitalize Infrastructure through Astute Investing and Connecting Stakeholders***

There are several key ingredients to financially upgrading infrastructure. One requires social venture capital and foundation investments in mature intermediary organizations to support community change “laboratories” and develop innovations. A second consists of governmental research and development funding for intermediaries and institutions of higher education that also spawns innovations and sets the stage for dissemination. Finally, it is vital to capitalize a group of high-impact change entrepreneurs who can transfer innovations to community youth work organizations. This schema is illustrated on the following page.

A well resourced infrastructure will still need to be well connected. Options wherein key stakeholders can loosely collaborate in the absence of a common operational structure, or can form a national network and yet still retain local flexibility and ownership need to be considered.

A Revitalized Youth Work Infrastructure



Concluding Thoughts

This assessment of the youth work field has uncovered a wealth of insights and mutual influences regarding youth adult partnerships and the change pathways. The crosscutting themes derived from the youth work literature, the experiences of youth and young adults engaged in intergenerational relationships and social change, and the perspectives of activist leaders on youth development and change making have rendered greater understanding of and perspective on youth work's past, present, and future.

Amartya Sen, one of the world's foremost contributors to reconciling the dilemmas inherent in securing economic and social development and social justice, resolutely espouses the principles of freedom, participation, and agency as fundamental to human development. We will affirm all of our youth adult partnership and change pathway endeavors along the next leg of the youth work journey by locally remaining "in synch" with the global reach and relevance of Sen's principles.