



COLLABORATION AND BEYOND: TEEN-LED LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

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Free Library of Philadelphia



Opening Discussion

What questions do you have about teen-led library programming? What do you hope we cover today?

Positive Youth Development

An intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

Positive Youth Development



* In his 2007 book "The Good Teen," Richard M. Lerner included this additional outcome

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Positive Youth Development

While a positive youth development approach can be beneficial for all adolescents, it can be particularly effective when working with vulnerable and underserved adolescents. There is evidence that a focus on PYD, including social skills, may foster resilience and improve well-being among adolescents who may have been maltreated. Focus on developing an identity, discovering strengths, and setting goals also has been demonstrated to be effective for adolescents who are part of racial/ethnic minority groups. Furthermore, a recent commentary by leaders in the field of positive youth development illustrates the expanded role PYD can play in increasing equity among diverse populations.

<https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/positive-youth-development/what-is-positive-youth-development/connection/index.html>

Developmental Assets

The Developmental Assets® are 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults.

<http://page.search-institute.org/40-developmental-assets>

Developmental Assets

- EXTERNAL → Empowerment
Boundaries and Expectations
Constructive Use of Time
- INTERNAL → Positive Values
Social Competencies
Positive Identity

Creating Safe and Inclusive Spaces

- Learn names
- Hang out
- Be clear, fair, and consistent
- Be flexible
- Ask “why” and listen to the answer

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Why involve teens in programming?

Practical benefits:

- Attendance increases when teens take ownership
- Teens are more likely to enjoy and actively participate in programs when they are personally invested in them
- Less waste of staff time planning programs that aren't of interest
- Teens can use their experience at the library to build up their resumes
- Teens can get volunteer / service hours for school

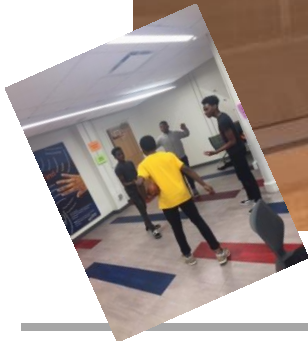
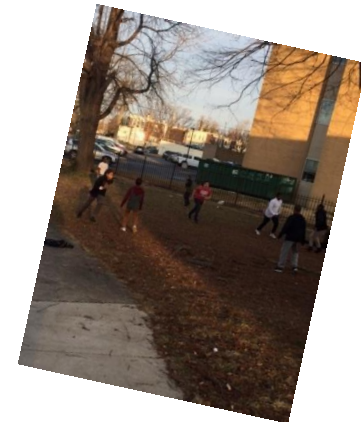
Getting started...

Make sure teens' basic needs are met first.

- Physical safety
- Food
- Skills that help with school success
- Skills that help with job success

Getting started...

Identify specific interests of your teens and build programs around those interests.



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Getting started...

Informally involve teens in program planning by asking for their advice and expertise.



Getting started...

Use teen input to structure your programs.



Getting started...



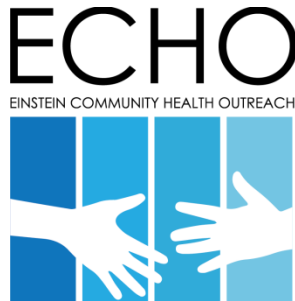
Consider your logistical needs and get creative!



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Getting started...

Develop and use your relationships with community partners.



Going deeper...

Create a formal collaborative program planning process through joint teen/staff committees and working groups. Give the committees and working groups decision making power!

Gaming Guidelines

- You must sign up for each controller
- Sign-ups are for 2 hours
- Times for gaming:
 - Mondays and Wednesday 4-5:30
 - Tuesday and Thursday 5:00-7:30
 - Saturdays 1:00-4:30
- No eating, play fighting, profanity, or excessive noise.
- Consequences: If you are found eating, play fighting, cursing or being excessively loud, you will get one warning. If you have to be given a second warning, you cannot game for the rest of the day. If there is a third strike, you will not be allowed to game for one week.
- Clean up- all equipment must be returned to a staff member. The gaming area must be clean and all furniture left as it was. If you do not clean up the gaming area, you will not be allowed to game for one week.

Gaming guidelines apply to all games regardless of game ownership.

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Going deeper...

Evaluate your programs through surveys and analyze the results.

Participant Survey

Social Justice Symposium for Teens, Saturday July 20, 2019, PCI Library

1. After participating in today's program, I am more aware of issues of importance in my community.

- ☐ True
☐ False

2. After participating in today's program, I feel more confident about becoming involved in my community.

- ☐ True
☐ False

3. What did you like most about today's program? _____

4. What could the library do to better assist you with your involvement in the community? _____

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Going deeper...

PCI's Youth Planning Committee made all major decisions for the 2019 Social Justice Symposium:

- Program location
- Program title
- Program structure and schedule
- Program budget
- Keynote speaker
- Workshop topics and leaders
- Program publicity plan and materials
- Logistics such as food and other incentives

Going deeper...

In order to even more fully engage teens in the planning process, the Youth Planning Committee held focus groups with their peers at two area afterschool programs.



Going deeper...

Focus group questions:

- What issues matter most to you?
- What would make you want to come to a program like this?
- What day/time would work best for you?
- Do you have suggestions for workshop presenters and/or topics?
- What ways do you think we could better promote our program?

Small Group Discussion

- How have you incorporated teens into your program planning process in the past?
- What concerns do you have about teen-led library programming?
- How do you define a successful teen program?
- Do you have an existing program that you could envision teens taking more leadership roles in?
- How do you balance meeting teens where they are with also helping their world views to expand?

Teen-Led Programming Review

1. Create a safe and welcoming library space for teens.
2. Establish relationships with your teens.
3. Do your best to make sure your teens' basic needs are met.
4. Identify your teens' specific interests and build programs around those interests.
5. Informally involve teens in program planning by asking for their advice and expertise.
6. Consider your logistical needs and get creative!
7. Develop and use your relationships with community partners.
8. Create joint teen/staff committees and working groups to plan programs.
9. Empower a teen committee to make all decisions for a specific program.
10. Use teen focus groups to hone program plans.
11. Evaluate your programs through surveys and analyze the results.

Thank You!

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