

City of Vancouver
INVOLVING YOUTH IN PUBLIC PROCESSES
Training Course



Trainers: Youth Outreach Team
604. 871. 6870
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Website: vancouveryouth.ca

Created by the Youth Outreach Team in partnership with the Social Planning
Department and the Staff & Organizational Development Team

2006

Agenda

TIME	TOPICS
Section 1 9:00-9:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Course description & Objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Icebreaker: Getting to Know You <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Youth Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Outreach Team
Section 2 9:10-9:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What is youth engagement? <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits of youth involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Challenges
Section 3 9:20-9:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Elements of Meaningful Youth Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Degrees of Youth Participation
10:35-10:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Break
Section 4 10:40-11:45 (Case Studies: approx. 30 minutes & Activity: approx. 40 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practical Examples of How to Meaningfully Involve Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Q&A <input type="checkbox"/> Involving Youth: Group Activity
Section 5 11:45-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Little Prince <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Form <input type="checkbox"/> FAQ <input type="checkbox"/> Resources & Further Reading

Section 1

Course Description & Objectives

Overview: *Involving Youth in Public Processes* - Facilitated by youth and adults, this course is an opportunity to learn about the advantages of meaningful youth engagement as well as to ensure that the City of Vancouver's public processes, programs, policies and projects are appropriate and relevant to youth. Youth bring new ideas and perspectives, and through this course you will: obtain a better understanding of youth issues and needs as they pertain to involvement; learn to broaden the representation of decision-making; break down generational barriers; and mostly likely, become inspired.

Blending theory and practice, this course uses innovative and interactive approaches to engage City staff in designing their own youth participation strategies.

In addition, this is an opportunity to meet the City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team. To learn more about the Civic Youth Strategy and the Youth Outreach Team, follow this link: <http://vancouveryouth.ca/>

Audience: For City employees, who participate, design and implement City public involvement processes, programs or policies that include or affect a diverse audience, including young people.

Course Level: Intermediate

What I will learn: Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

- Articulate how the City of Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy policy document pertains to your area of work.
- Understand the theory and issues related to youth engagement
- Develop skills and understanding of how to work more effectively with youth
- Learn what it means to become an adult ally
- Identify opportunities and develop practical strategies for meaningfully engaging youth in civic business
- Gain an understanding of how & when the City's Youth Outreach Team can be of support to you.

Special Features: None

Pre-Requisites: Planning Effective Public Processes is recommended

Dates: April 24, 2006
November 14, 2006

Time: 9:00 - 12:00

Getting to Know You

Please think about the following questions. You will be asked to share your responses with the group:

- 1) What is your name?

- 2) What department do you work for?

- 3) What do you want to get out of this course?

- 4) If you could be a superhero who would you be and why?

Civic Youth Strategy

A youth policy for our City

The City of Vancouver recognizes the responsibility of civic government to youth and adopted the Civic Youth Strategy in 1995. This Strategy sets the direction for the planning and delivery of civic services involving youth. Youth are people between the ages of 13 and 24 years.

Youth Policy Statement

- The City of Vancouver commits to involving youth as active partners:
 - i. in the development, assessment and delivery of civic services which have direct impact on youth;
 - ii. in broad spectrum community consultations and initiatives.
- The City of Vancouver promotes and supports youth-driven youth groups as a key consultation resource to the city to ensure that the voices of youth are heard.

Core Objectives

In order to create the opportunity for young people to be partners in determining the future of Vancouver, all departments in the civic government will work to achieve the following four objectives:

- * Ensure that youth have “a place” in the city.
- * Ensure a strong youth voice in decision-making.
- * Promote youth as a resource to the City.
- * Strengthen the support base for youth in the city.

Guiding Principles

In meeting the objectives outlined above, implementation plans will be based in the following three principles:

- Strong youth involvement at the local level.
- Partnership in planning and implementation.
- Assistance and support rather than control and management.

Structure for Implementation

Implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy is coordinated by a partnership between the CYS Department Representatives Committee, Child and Youth Advocate and Youth Advocate Mentor, community youth organizations and youth.

This group works in collaboration with other members of the community including: non-profit organizations providing community-based services to youth, in particular those focused on prevention such as neighbourhood houses, Boys and Girls Clubs, and school-aged childcare programs; youth-related ethno-specific / multi-cultural services; cultural organizations providing youth programs in the Arts; other levels of government delivering youth services; citizens, parents in particular.

All City departments have a role to play in implementing the Civic Youth Strategy.

For the full version of the CYS report please visit:

http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/cys/PDF/cys_95report.pdf



Youth Outreach Team

Who are they & what is their role?

The Youth Outreach Team is a team of young people hired as City staff who specialize in youth involvement.

The Youth Outreach Team bridges the gap between the City and the youth of Vancouver by functioning as guides for youth to access the municipal system and create opportunities for youth to participate in decision making processes.

The Youth Outreach Team provides expertise to other City staff on how to engage youth meaningfully in public processes.

See rack card for more information or visit the website at:

<http://vancouveryouth.ca>

The rack card is titled "You Listen" at the top and "You Learn" at the bottom. Between the titles is a colorful collage of various images, including a heart, a guitar, a person, and abstract shapes. Below the collage, the text reads "Youth Are A Resource To The City" and "The City of Vancouver has a Civic Youth Strategy and Youth Outreach Team to better involve youth in municipal government". At the bottom, there is a phone number "604.871.6212" and the website "www.vancouveryouth.ca".

Artwork produced by youth throughout Vancouver and assembles as bus shelter advertising for the Youth Outreach Team.

~ Envisions Art Exhibit 2004

Rack Card

Section 2

Youth Engagement is...

What is Youth Engagement?

Youth engagement is the meaningful participation of youth in the decisions that affect their lives.

-David Driskell, Creating Better Cities for Children & Youth

Meaningful youth participation involves recognizing and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people through the provision of real opportunities for youth to become involved in decisions that affect them at individual and systemic levels.

-McCreary Centre Society

Benefits of Youth Involvement in Public Processes.....

Challenges of Youth Involvement in Public Processes.....

Section 3

Elements of meaningful youth engagement

Youth-Friendly Processes:

Youth-friendly is people-friendly. Here are some examples of what youth-friendly processes could look like:

- i. Fun and easy to understand handouts and materials (no jargon)
- ii. Plan meeting times for after-school and weekends
- iii. Meeting locations usually held in a youth-friendly space (i.e. local community centre, school, youth organization meeting room, and sometimes even City Hall)
- iv. Hire youth staff as co-facilitators/coordinators/contractors

Resources for Youth Participation:

Meaningful youth participation can happen when young people have sufficient resources to participate. The following is a list of things you may want to provide:

- v. Bus tickets for transportation
- vi. Food at meetings
- vii. Honoraria for participation
- viii. Training & skills building opportunities

Youth-Adult Partnership:

A youth-adult partnership exists when the youth and the adult have the opportunity to make suggestions and decisions, and the contribution of each is recognized and valued equally.

Tapping into passions:

A good place to start to get young people excited and involved in civic issues is to:

- ix. Ask young people what they care about in their community and what ignites their passion
- x. Go to where you know the young people are who would most likely be interested in the issue you are working on

Checklist to Involving Youth in Public Processes

Interested in involving youth in a public process, but don't know where to start? The Youth Outreach Team (YOT) can help! YOT helps connect City of Vancouver staff to the youth community, provides access to facilitation and the tools and techniques to ensure a meaningful process, and assists planners in the development of youth engagement process. To get you started we've listed some tips below. Not every project will require every tip listed here. Use the checklist only as a guide and contact YOT for assistance ☺

Contact the City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team (YOT)

The Youth Outreach Team will walk you through a youth involvement strategy that suits the needs of your project and sparks the interest of youth.

Contact the Youth Outreach Team:

- Email: debbie.anderson@vancouver.ca
- Tel: 604-871-6032
- Website: <http://vancouveryouth.ca/>

Resources

Ensure that a budget is put aside to engage youth in the planning process. When drafting a budget, consider things such as:

- Youth contractors/facilitators
- Food for meetings
- Bus tickets for transportation
- Honoraria for youth participation

Youth-Friendly

- Handouts and other material is easy to understand, looks appealing and is a fun layout
- Variety of activity formats are used in public processes:
 - Youth-only consultation
 - Intergenerational workshop
 - Focus groups
 - Written feedback
 - Interviews
 - Participatory research
- Meeting space is safe, comfortable and familiar
- Icebreakers and energizers added to process

Logistics

- Meeting times are after-school or weekends
- Meeting location close to a transit line

□ Support

Adult allies are important for youth to participate meaningfully. City staff are allies to young people when they work with, connect, partner and unite with young people. Adult allies are serious about sharing decision making power.

- Shared decision making power

□ Training

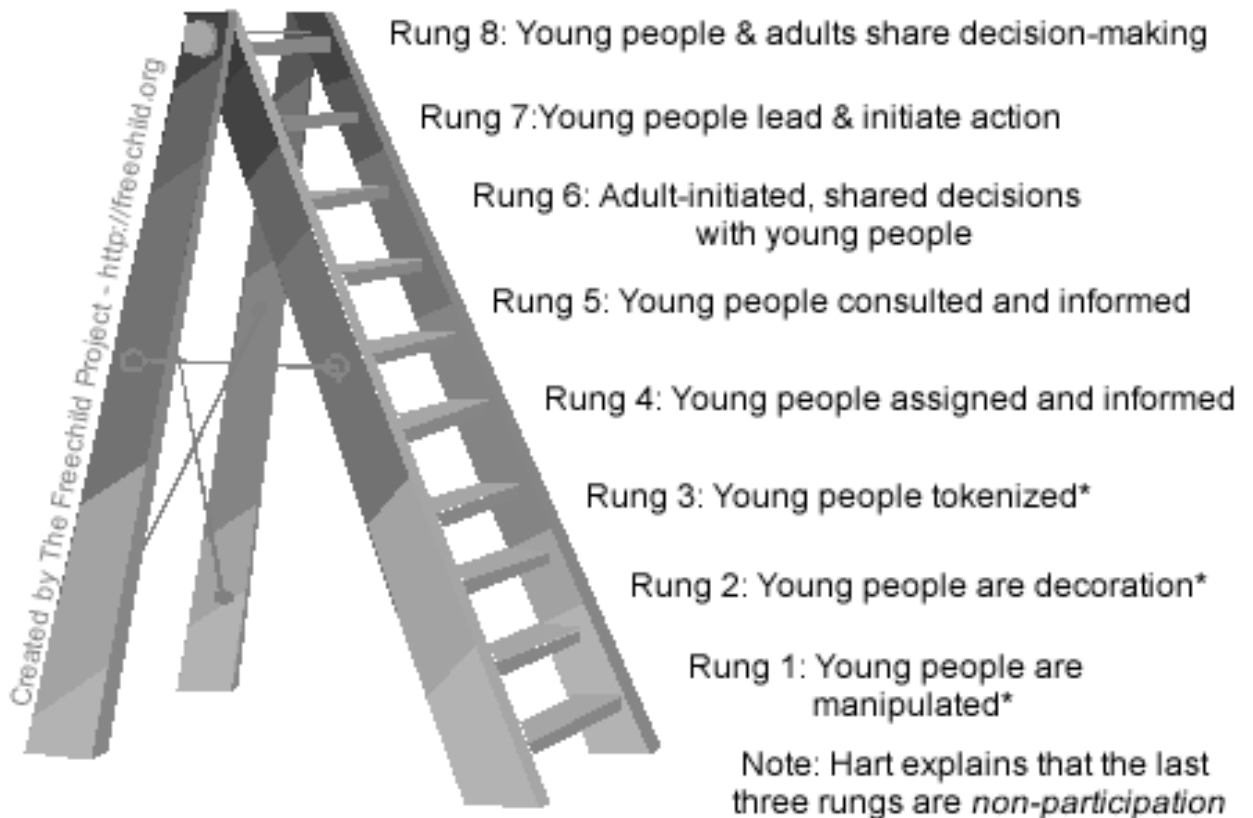
In order for young people to feel prepared to fully participate, training should be offered.

- Orientation session
- Educational component of the issue
- Opportunity to debrief the experience

Additional training (if interest and resources allow):

- Facilitation skills building
- Presentation and public speaking skills building
- Conflict resolution training
- Tap into youth passions

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Degrees of Youth Participation

A little theory for you...

8) Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults

This happens when projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared between young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

7) Young people-initiated and directed

This step is when young people initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a supportive role.

6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people

Occurs when projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people.

5) Consulted and informed

Happens when young people give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.

4) Assigned but informed

This is where young people are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.

3) Tokenism

When young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

2) Decoration

Happens when young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by young people.

1) Manipulation

Happens where adults use young people to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by young people.

Section 4: Practical Examples of How to Meaningfully Involve Youth



West Point Grey

Youth Chronicles

West Point Grey Visions Youth Council

In 1997, the Community Visions Program was launched to bring CityPlan to the neighbourhood level. This program entails communities working with City staff over a two year period to create their visions for the future of their community, based on CityPlan directions and community needs and aspirations.

In November 2005 a youth committee formed in West Point Grey and has been meeting ever since with the intent of participating in something called a Community Visions Process. The cool thing is that these youth aren't just talking about participating... they're getting down and dirty! They're acting on it!

How did the City get the word out?

Community Visions Staff began outreaching to youth at the local school and soon realised that partnerships would need to be formed to provide appropriate supports for youth wanting to get involved.

Who was involved?

CityPlan Community Visions staff in partnership with the Youth Outreach Team and the Youth Community Asset Mappers are supporting these youth to identify what the needs are in their community from a youth perspective. Vancouver School Board Community School Coordinators are also playing a role in tying youth into other local community based projects and supporting youth in the Visions process.

What were the Youth friendly processes?

- Going to where youth are instead of expecting them to seek out the opportunity
- Offering peer to peer mentorship opportunities.
- Seeking tangible outcomes for youth to contribute to, experience and witness
 - Conferences, designing and delivering workshops, profiling the work

To Learn more about the West Point Grey Visions Process / Timeline:

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/cityplan/Visions/index.htm>

Articles written by youth can be found at:

http://www.vancouveryouth.ca/media_gallery/west_point_grey

Youth involved in this process have written articles giving their take on what it's been like to get involved in their community. The articles talk about: How they got started - Why they're still involved - What it's like presenting at a conference - What youth engagement means to them. So take a read !

City of Vancouver Drug Prevention Youth Engagement

In the summer of 2004, the City of Vancouver Drug Policy Unit approached the Youth Outreach Team to request assistance to involve youth in the development of a strategy to prevent harmful drug use. A decision was made to host facilitated dialogue sessions with youth to get their input on what constitutes problematic drug use, effective prevention and a healthy community.

The dialogue sessions were an opportunity to bring the diversity of the Vancouver youth community together on a common issue that affects us all, and to provide a space where youth could share their knowledge and experience on the topic with City staff.

How did the City get the word out?

The City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team helped to connect City staff and youth. Through a large email distribution network, youth newsletters, front line youth workers and youth website (vancouveryouth.ca) YOT was able to reach diverse youth communities.

Who was involved?

To ensure the process would be representative, YOT recruited and trained 20 youth facilitators to be paired and deliver drug prevention dialogue sessions in their own communities. Over 120 young people from across the city were consulted in the first phase of this project. These include: Aboriginal youth at the Friendship Centre; gay and lesbian youth at The Centre; newcomer and refugee youth at Immigrant Services Society; street involved youth at the Gathering Place, and Dunbar Community Centre youth.

The dialogue sessions gave voice to the young people of Vancouver and a number of recommendations from the youth will shape the drug prevention programs and policy in our City.

What were the youth-friendly processes?

- A) A budget was put aside to offer: facilitator's honoraria for their time and bus tickets and food for youth participants in the dialogue sessions
- B) Training and youth dialogue sessions were designed and delivered by youth in a peer to peer/adult supported model
- C) Material, such as handouts and reports, were redesigned to be more accessible and easy to read (see "short and sweet" version of drug prevention report)
- D) Dialogue sessions were held in the community, on bus routes, on weekends and/or in the evening, and in a space where youth often visit and feel comfortable
- E) Currently, the Youth outreach Team and Drug Unit is working on the development of a long term sustainable youth engagement strategy for the prevention of problematic drug use in our city. Finding ways to keep youth engaged throughout the life of a City process is vital to building an inclusive and healthy city.

Question & Answer Period

Involving Youth: Group Activity

Please break into 4 groups. Each group will have a young person in their group as a resource person. Your group must work through the scenario given below and design a process for youth involvement. You will be asked to present back to the entire group. Please refer to the principles of meaningful youth engagement and checklist.



Scenario #1 :

Canada Line planners have been hosting a series of public open houses in each of the 9 Vancouver neighbourhoods where stations will be constructed. The first round of open houses is almost complete and the second round will begin in a couple of weeks. You are a planning assistant on this project and use the Skytrain as your primary mode of transportation. When travelling on the Skytrain, you see that it is often filled with young people, but have observed that very few young people attended any of the open houses. You would like to see that change for the second round of open houses. What steps will you take to ensure that young people are involved in this public process?

Instructions:

Decide how you will meaningfully involve youth.

Using flip chart paper, outline the following:

- 1) The issue
- 2) Challenges /elements to be included to overcome challenges
- 3) The outcome

SPACE TO WRITE NOTES:

Scenario #2:

You are staff on the Greenways Program and the process for a new neighbourhood greening project is about to begin. You have been asked by your supervisor to design a public consultation that is representative of the diversity in the neighbourhood. A high school is located close to the proposed greenway and the City hopes that young people will be one of the major users. Time and budget are tight. How will you ensure that young people are meaningfully involved in this process? Think about how partnerships could play a role both in the education and design aspect of this scenario.

Instructions:

Decide how you will meaningfully involve youth.

Using flip chart paper, outline the following:

- 1) The issue
- 2) Challenges /elements to be included to overcome challenges
- 3) The outcome

SPACE TO WRITE NOTES:

Scenario #3:

The City's Emergency Preparedness Team is reaching out to Vancouver residents. They want to know what people's thoughts are regarding emergency preparedness, such as: how well are we doing as a City to be prepared and where do we need to improve. You are part of the Emergency Preparedness Team and are planning a 6 month city-wide public consultation with youth being the primary target to consult with. You are in the process of designing a strategy to involve youth. What does it look like?

Instructions:

Decide how you will meaningfully involve youth.

Using flip chart paper, outline the following:

- 1) The issue
- 2) Challenges /elements to be included to overcome challenges
- 3) The outcome

SPACE TO WRITE NOTES:

Scenario #4:

The Vancouver Public Library has many fun and innovative programs for teens, including a youth advisory council and leadership programs. You were asked to conduct a survey of teen library users. Your results show that a sizable percentage of youth between the ages of 5-12 use the library, however when it comes to the 13-19 age group the numbers drop drastically. You have been tasked to design a strategy to attract a more diverse youth population in the 13-19 age range. What are the steps you will take to involve youth in this process?

Instructions:

Decide how you will meaningfully involve youth.

Using flip chart paper, outline the following:

- 1) The issue
- 2) Challenges /elements to be included to overcome challenges
- 3) The outcome

SPACE TO WRITE NOTES:

Section 5

The Little Prince

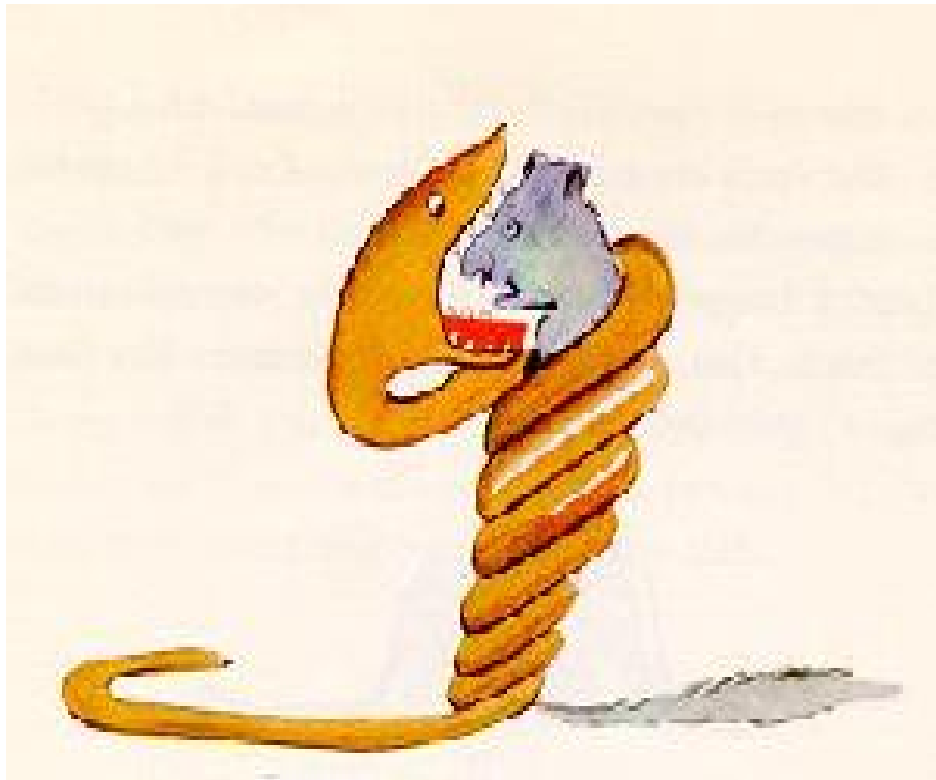
Written and illustrated by
Antoine de Saint Exupéry

Translated from the French by Katherine Woods



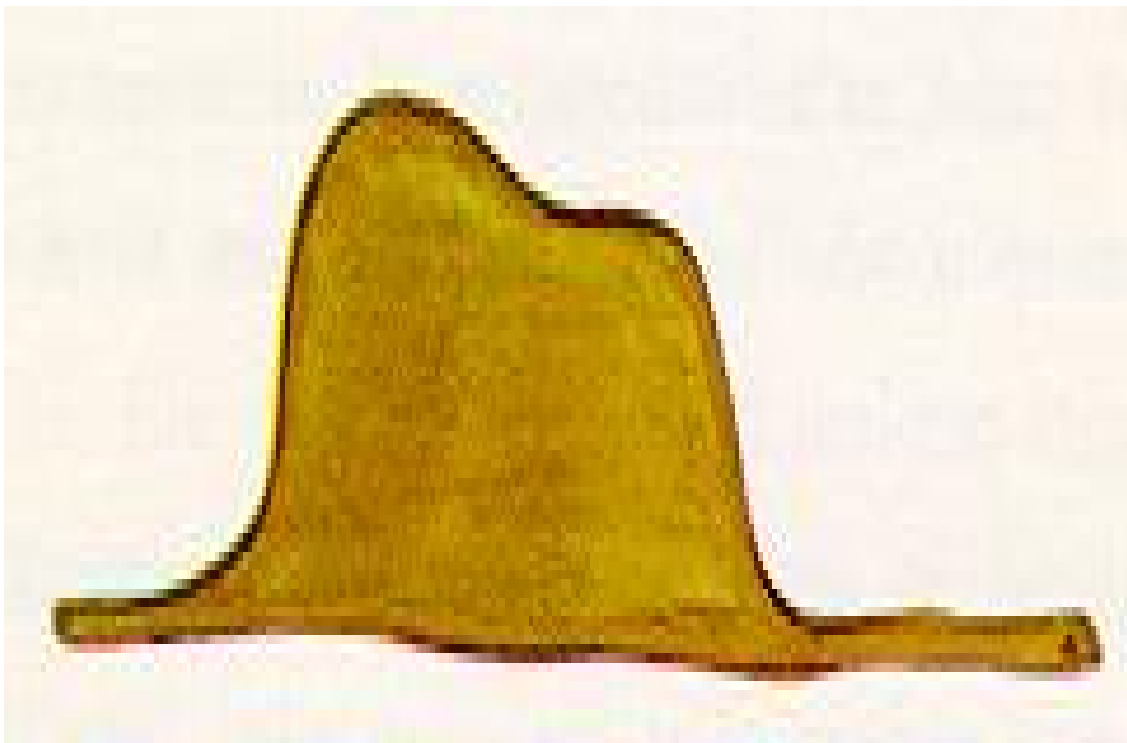
Chapter 1

Once when I was six years old I saw a magnificent picture in a book, called *True Stories from Nature*, about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal. Here is a copy of the drawing.



In the book it said: "Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing it. After that they are not able to move, and they sleep through the six months that they need for digestion."

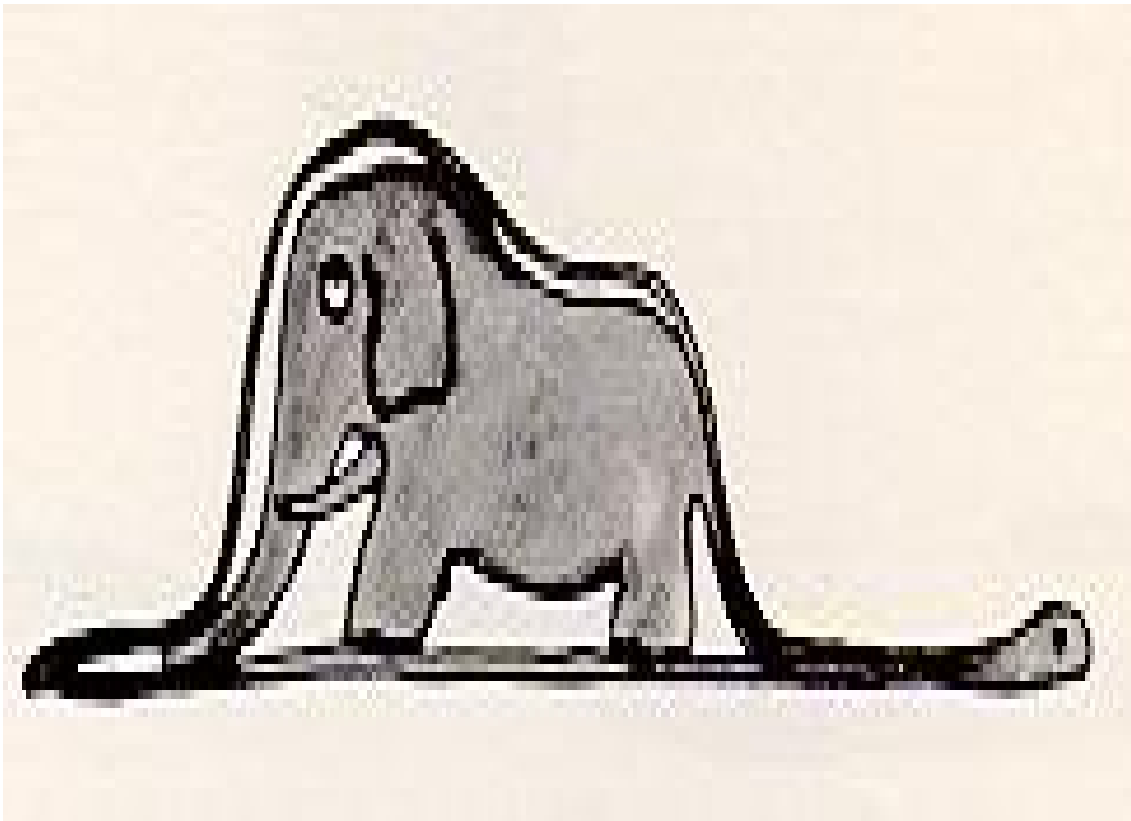
I pondered deeply, then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a colored pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing. My Drawing Number One. It looked something like this:



I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them.

But they answered: "Frighten? Why should any one be frightened by a hat?"

My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of a boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained. My Drawing Number Two looked like this:



The grown-ups' response, this time, was to advise me to lay aside my drawings of boa constrictors, whether from the inside or the outside, and devote myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic, and grammar. That is why, at the age of six, I gave up what might have been a magnificent career as a painter. I had been disheartened by the failure of my Drawing Number One and my Drawing Number Two. Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

Evaluation Form

In order to provide training that is most meaningful and effective for you and your co-workers, we would appreciate your feedback on this pilot course. **Please complete all applicable sections.**

Please read the following statements & circle your response, using the following scale: **5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Neither Agree or Disagree; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree**

COURSE CONTENT

Objectives of the course were made clear	5	4	3	2	1
Course content was organized effectively	5	4	3	2	1
Length of the course was appropriate	5	4	3	2	1
This course was a worthwhile experience	5	4	3	2	1
I would recommend this course to others	5	4	3	2	1
Content was delivered at appropriate level	5	4	3	2	1
Size of the group was conducive to learning	5	4	3	2	1

How did the course material contribute to your skills and knowledge to assist you in engaging youth in the future work you do? Please elaborate

What additional content should be included to make the program more relevant to a cross-section of City staff?

What suggestions do you have on the order of the content, the examples and case studies used? Please elaborate

What content, if any could be eliminated from the course?

INSTRUCTOR/FACILITATOR

Instructor was organized & prepared	5	4	3	2	1
Instructor communicated content effectively	5	4	3	2	1
Instructor actively involved me in the learning	5	4	3	2	1

What suggestions do you have for the facilitators around both delivery and content?

TRAINING AIDS

Use of training aids (e.g. PowerPoint, videos, etc) complemented my learning

5 4 3 2 1

Handout material supported my learning

5 4 3 2 1

Did you find the course information presented in an interesting and relevant way? (Please comment)

FINALLY

Please add any additional comments or suggestions

Optional:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your feedback!!!

FAQ's

1. How do I design a typical adult focused public process, like an open house or community consultation, so that it is more inviting to youth?

Ideally, a typical public process is designed so that it is inviting to all. Tips to meaningfully involving young people in an adult focused public process include:

- *Ensure that the youth have been given an opportunity to meet prior to the adult meeting. This offers the youth a space to talk about the issues in greater detail, and to formulate their ideas and decide on what they would like to say*
- *Design the public process so that it is fun for everyone! Create a space where everyone's comments will be heard and valued, no matter if they are 14 years old or 80 years old*
- *Debrief with the young people after the public process. This gives the youth a chance to talk about how they felt about the process and what they would like to see happen differently next time*

2. What is the best way to contact the youth community in Vancouver?

Youth can be found all over the city...in community centres, schools, youth organizations and the street. The best way to connect with young people is to connect with them through other people who know them and who have a relationship with them. Contact the Youth Outreach Team and we will work with you to access diverse youth populations.

3. What are City departments doing in terms of youth participation? Is there an inventory of youth activities?

Many City departments are involved in working with and/or for youth. In the Spring of 2006, the Social Planning department began to collect information on youth related work happening across the City. The information is currently being compiled into an inventory and a draft will be ready in June 2006 for review.

4. What is the role of Social Planning and youth? What is the role of the Youth Outreach Team?

The Child and Youth Social Planner provides overall coordination and planning for youth in collaboration with other levels of government, the youth community service providers and internally with other City departments and the Youth Outreach Team.

The Youth Outreach Team is the City's model of youth engagement. It is a group of youth hired as City staff whose primary goal is to build and strengthen meaningful youth engagement in municipal decision-making.

5. What are practical and interesting outreach ideas?

When outreaching to youth, you need to think about going to where the youth are and presenting your info in a fun and interesting way. Some quick tips to help you:

- *Youth Outreach Team can help connect you to 1 000's of youth through our email distribution list*
- *Youth Outreach Team can post your workshop, consultations, etc. on the Vancouver Youth website events calendar*
- *Youth Outreach Team can announce the event in our bi-monthly e-newsletter*
- *In-house graphics department are fantastic at jazzing up a poster or newspaper announcement so that it catches the eyes of young people.*
- *Wording of an announcement is important. If you want to outreach to particular communities of people, make sure your language changes as well*
- *Youth to youth outreach is really effective. Young people are usually more interested in what you've got to say when one of their peers is saying it. Consider hiring youth to do outreach*

6. What is important to youth? What are their values and what are they interested in?

This question gets asked a lot ☺

Youth are as diverse a population as any, and so is what they value. Whether they come from the Eastside, Westside, speak another language, gender, sexual orientation, or younger youth or older youth, all will have different (and yet sometimes similar) opinions. It is the role of City staff to find ways to ensure that the diversity of voices, opinions, and values of all are heard.

Resources & Further Reading

Public Process Guide

The Public Process Guide is intended for use as a staff guideline to conducting public involvement processes.

The Public Process Guide is an undertaking of the Public Involvement Review, aimed at improving the City's communication and involvement of citizens in their municipal government.

The Intranet-based Public Process Guide is available on Citywire, the City staff website:
<http://citywire.city.vancouver.bc.ca/publicprocessguide/index.htm>

Involving Youth In Public Processes Training Course is a complimentary course to the City of Vancouver's Public Process Training Course

Check out the City's youth website under tools and resources for more youth info:
<http://vancouveryouth.ca/>