



 **vancouver youth**
CITY OF VANCOUVER YOUTH OUTREACH TEAM

CityLearn: Involving Youth in Public Processes

City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team



Section 1

Introductions, Civic Youth Strategy, Youth Outreach team

Section 2

Youth Engagement, Benefits of youth involvement, Challenges

Section 3

Elements of meaningful youth involvement, Checklist, Degrees of youth participation

Break : 10:35 – 10:40

Section 4

Practical examples of meaningfully involving youth, Q&A, Group Activity

Section 5

FAQ, Resources & Reading, Evaluations,



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
- Become inspired



Upon completion participants will be able to:

- Articulate how the Civic Youth Strategy policy pertains to your work
- Understand the theory and issues related to youth engagement
- Develop skills & understanding 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.



Getting to know each other

- What is your name?
- What Department do you work for?
- What do you want to get out of this course?
- If you could be a superhero who would you be and why?



Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy, 1995

The Civic Youth Strategy is a policy adopted by Council in 1995. It is a statement of commitment to work in partnership with youth and the community.

4 objectives of the CYS:

- 1) Place
- 2) Space
- 3) Resource
- 4) Support base



Youth Outreach Team

Recognized as a best practice model of youth engagement. YOT is a team of young people funded to work as City staff to increase the meaningful participation of youth in municipal decision making.



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 Engagement

- Broadens the representativeness of decision-making
- Helps the City make better decisions
- Helps the City improve its services for youth
- Builds relationships between the City and its young citizens
- City staff receive new ideas and perspective
- Strengthens youth support for proposed policies
- Obtain a better understanding of youth issues and needs
- Ensures that the City does not overlook youth issues and needs
- City staff becomes inspired!



Benefits for youth & the community...

- Breaks down generational barriers
- Improves overall civic participation by starting to involve citizens when they are young
- Builds self-esteem and self-confidence
- Develops important skills
- Provides experience relevant to education and employment
- Connects youth to other youth and to their community
- Youth become life-long leaders
- Overcomes negative stereotypes about youth
- Creates new respect for young people
- Strengthens community capacity and local democracy



Challenges for the City

- Lack of organizational support
- Under-investment of resources
- Flawed recruitment (i.e. straight A student)
- Poor representation (lack of diversity of age, gender, ability, etc.)
- Do not know how to access youth population
- Only know traditional public involvement techniques (i.e. open house, mail outs, surveys, etc.)
- Tight deadlines



Challenges for the youth & the community...

- Unclear roles and objectives
- Not youth-friendly
- Lack of training and skills-building = under-prepared youth
- Tokenism
- Shortage of meaningful opportunities
- Only 1 or 2 youth involved as “the voice of youth”
- Perception that there is a lack of youth interest or knowledge in what the City does
- Perception that you can’t change government or fight City Hall
- Busy (i.e. school, p/t & f/t employment, family responsibilities, etc.)



Elements of Meaningful Youth Engagement

- Youth-Friendly Processes
- Resources for Youth Participation
- Youth-Adult Partnership
- Tapping into passions

Reviewing the Checklist



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Break – 5 min ☺



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West Point Grey Visions Youth Council

Tori Clarke, Abdeslam Boubia, Iona Liozayansky, Jack Xu

City of Vancouver Drug Prevention Youth Engagement

Lanny Jimenez



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.



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



Wrapping up

- The Little Prince
- Evaluations
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Resources & Readings



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Thank you !

<http://vancouveryouth.ca>