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19TH ANNUAL ADVOCACY SUMMIT

equipping^{and}
empowering
advocates for public health

October 21-23, 2017

Washington, D.C.



Tools for Building & Empowering Youth Activist to Address Public Health Disparities

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Questions?
Comments?

Objectives

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Be able to identify youth participatory action research (YPAR) as a tool to engage and educate youth about advocating for public health
2. Be able to identify specific professional development skills youth will require to become advocates
3. Understand how to engage non-youth stakeholders to support youth advocate work

National Health Foundation

National Health Foundation's (NHF) mission is to improve the health of individuals and under-resourced communities by taking action on the social determinants of health. Our vision is that all people, regardless of who they are or where they live, can achieve their highest level of health.

Based and established in Los Angeles, California since 1973, NHF was founded to conduct research and educational programs related to healthcare delivery, particularly in hospital settings. In 2016 we rebranded and improved the mission to be more community and public health driven.

Two main programs:

- **Recuperative Care**
 - 3 sites; 2 in LA County and 1 in Ventura County
- **Community Engagement**
 - Health Academy
 - BUILD Health LA Challenge
 - Be A STAR
 - Pregnant and Parenting Teens program



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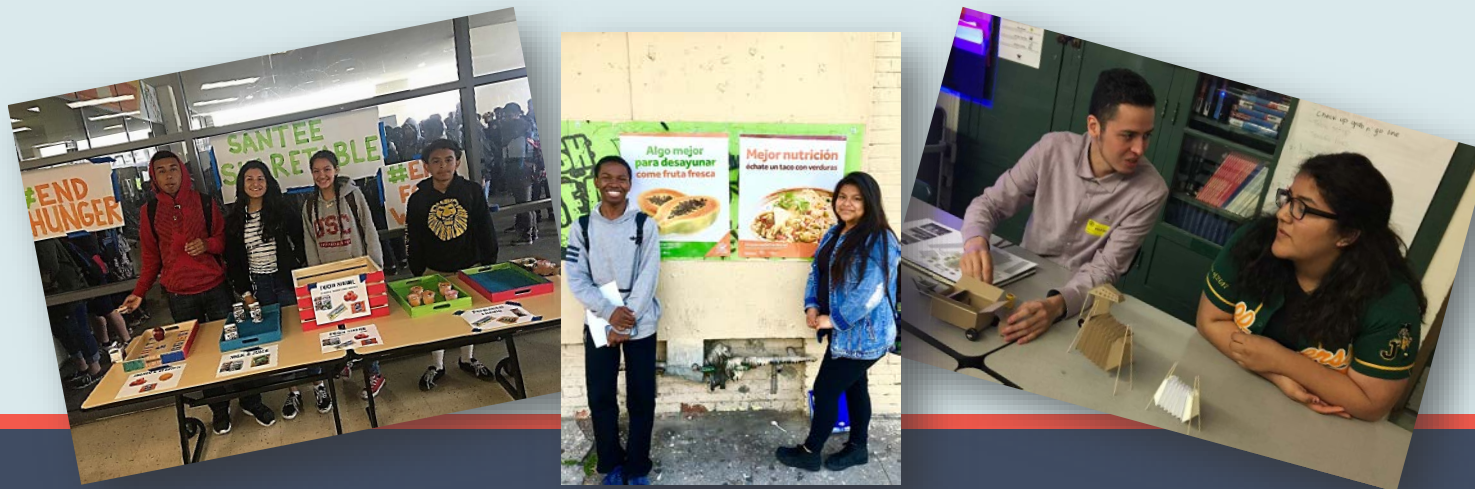


NHF's Health Academy

Started in 2013 funded in part by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health SNAP-Ed grants, NHF Health Academy engages high school youth in conducting research projects that identify challenges to eating healthy foods and beverages, and obstacles to being physically active in South LA.

NHF partners with Thomas Jefferson Senior High & Santee Education Complex to run Health Academy.

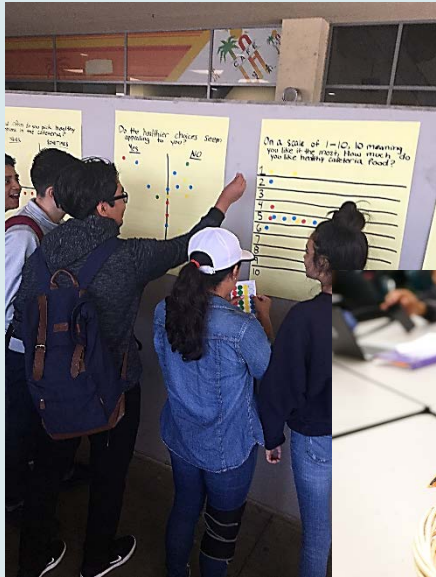
Health Academy is an after school program following a **YPAR framework** – youth conduct research and analyze data to identify and implement projects that bring about change to their community.



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health ACADEMY





BUILD Health LA Challenge

BUILD started in 2015 with a national grant funding multi-sector partnerships taking **B**old, **U**pstream, **I**ntegrated, **L**ocal, and **D**ata-driven approaches to community health.

During its first year, Community Health Liaisons (youth leaders) conducted research and helped create a Community Action Plan. The Plan focused on three main areas of concern when it came to South LA residents health:

1. Lack of access to healthy food
2. Lack of access to open spaces for physical activity
3. Crime and safety concerns

Currently:

- Youth leaders are reaching out and working with small corner markets to connect them to COMPRA, a cooperative produce purchasing program, to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables being sold at the stores
- Free fitness classes are being offered at underutilized parks to increase opportunities for PA
- Youth leaders are conducting park/green space safety assessments to report to Parks & Rec Department and advocate for improvements





Be a STAR

Be A STAR (Successful Teen Acting Responsibly) is a school-based pregnancy prevention program that provides social, emotional, an academic support to youth in 4 LAUSD high schools .

Students are identified* and referred by school counselors. The goal is to reduce risk for teen pregnancy and completion of high school or GED.

Launching in 2017, Be A STAR YPAR – where students will go through the program but then conduct research on environmental/systematic barriers to prevention and support services. The research will lead students to design mini projects to address these barriers in their school.

Example: Create a campaign on where to access condoms on school campus.



YPAR

Youth Participatory Action Research – a collaborative approach to addressing health disparities that involves training youth to conduct research and develop solutions to problems they are facing as a community.

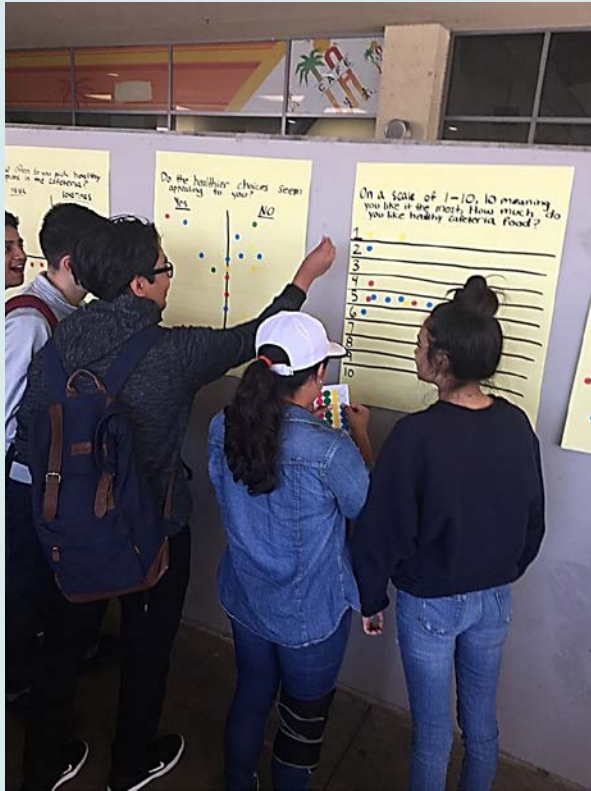
YPAR programs create an environment of **empowerment** by allowing youth to develop and practice leadership and professional development skills.

YPAR provides youth with a **platform** to use and develop a **stronger voice** and **participate** in shaping social, environmental and political policies and systems.



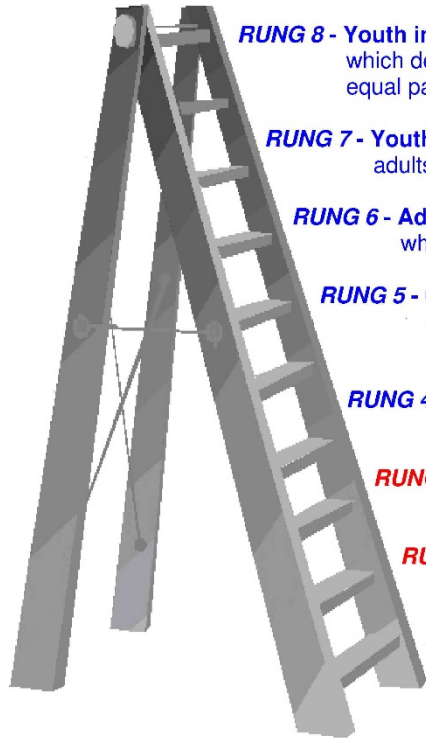
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YPAR in use...



When considering YPAR – Level of Youth Participation

ROGER HART'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION



RUNG 8 - Youth initiated shared decisions with adults: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared between youth and adults working as equal partners.

RUNG 7 - Youth initiated and directed: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.

RUNG 6 - Adult initiated shared decisions with youth: Adult-led activities, in which **decision** making is shared with youth.

RUNG 5 - Consulted and informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions.

RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

RUNG 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

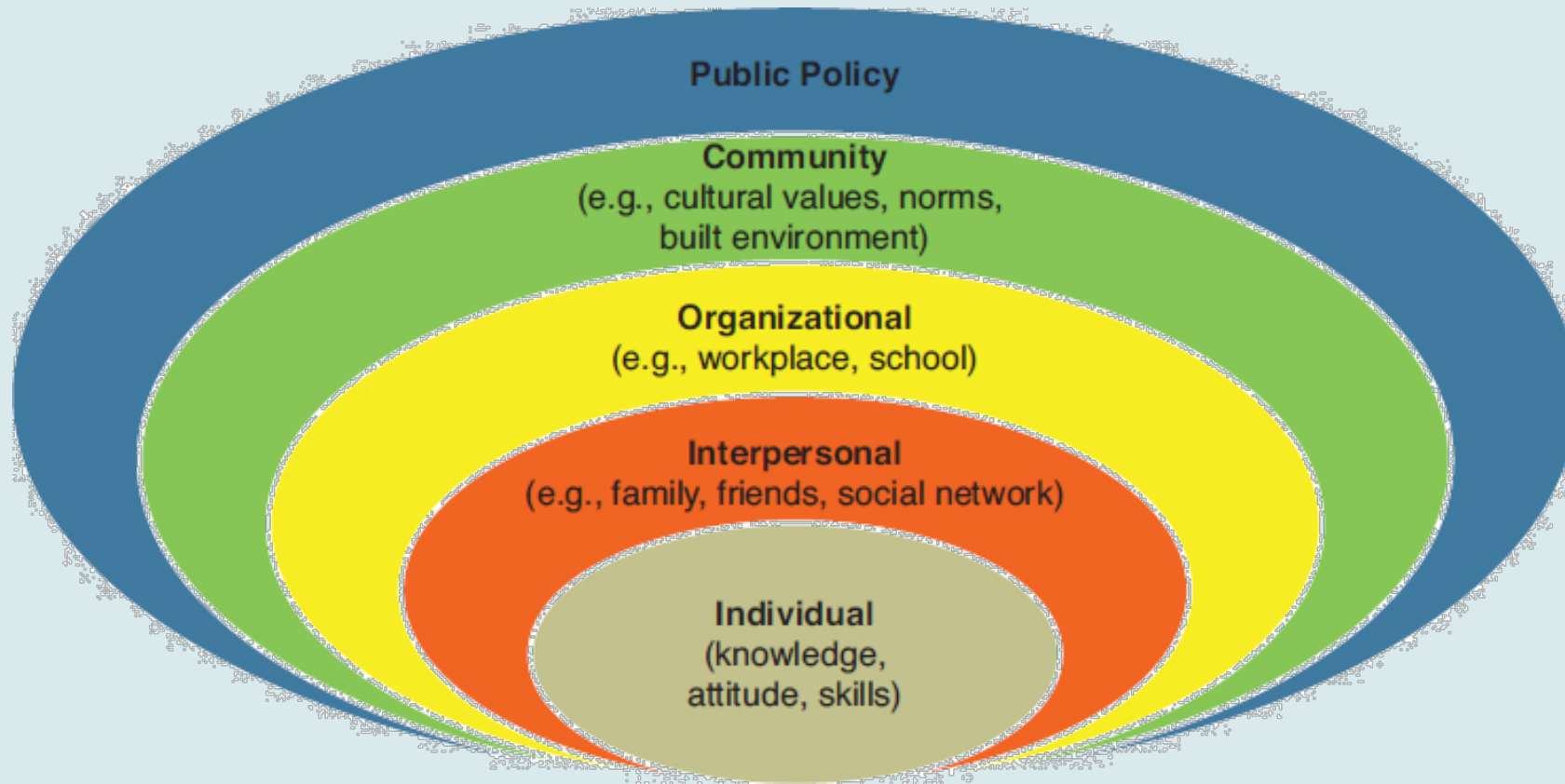
RUNG 2 - Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

RUNG 1 - Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.

Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, as cited in www.freechild.org/ladder.htm



When considering YPAR – The Social-Ecological Model



When considering YPAR – Finding the Youth

- **Recruitment and Implementation site**
 - stick with what you know!
- **Compete**
 - you need to compete for the youth's time and attention
- **Set a recruitment plan**
 - campaign, market, present!
- **Incentives!**



Professional Development for Youth to become Advocates

Public Speaking & Elevator Pitch

- Most youth have spent very little time in front of a crowd or pitching an idea. They need to become comfortable with advocating for their ideas & beliefs.
- Make it fun and set judgment free zone



Professional Development for Youth to become Advocates

Goal Setting & SMART Objectives

- Besides for homework and applying to college, most youth haven't specifically set goals and objectives, especially for a deadline. Most don't even realize that goal and objective setting is a activity.
- Try to use typical or everyday situations to get them to understand and practice goal and SMART objective setting
 - New Year's Resolution
 - Applying to College
 - Graduating on time



Professional Development for Youth to become Advocates

Emailing – Professional Communications

- Youth need to know how to write an email and communicate professionally!
- Check email regularly
- Social Media is fun and good for spreading messages but not professional communicating



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Engaging Non-Youth Stakeholders

How do you, as a youth-supporter, convene other adults and stakeholders to buy in to the youth's work?

1. Have youth identify key stakeholders
2. Have the youth ready to present their positions, ideas and proposals
3. Choose stakeholders based on aligned mission and vision
4. Find stakeholder at different levels
 - a) Implementation stakeholder
 - b) Champions/Cheerleaders
 - c) Evaluation stakeholders
5. Share results!



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EMPOWER YOUTH!



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Questions?

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