



“If you asked Us...”

East & West SALUD
Youth Councils
Fresno, Ca.



Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)

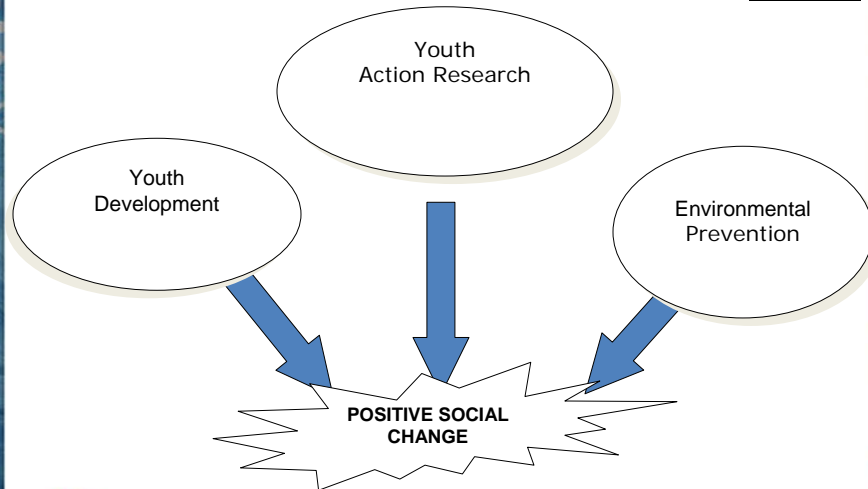
YLI builds communities where young people and their adult allies come together to create positive social change.

YLI designs and implements community-based programs that provide youth with leadership skills in the areas of prevention, philanthropy, and policy and civic engagement.

Building on these real-world program experiences, YLI creates evidence-based curricula and training programs that enable us to engage in social change efforts across the nation, all while promoting best practices in the field of youth development.



Prevention Youth Council Model



Standards of Practice

All young people will...

- experience a safe **environment** free of violence, alcohol, tobacco drugs, and a saturation of unhealthy food options
- have opportunities for **involvement** and **connection** to community and school
- have opportunities for **leadership** and **advocacy**
- have opportunities for meaningful decision-making and **skill building**
- have opportunities for caring and meaningful **relationships** among **youth** and with **adults**



An Environmental Prevention (EP) Approach

EP considers that individuals are influenced by a complex set of factors in their environments such as:

- Community Norms:** What is considered acceptable in families, neighborhoods and communities
- Media Messages:** TV, movies, music, magazines, social networking websites, etc
- Laws, rules, and policies:** Determined by City Councils, County Boards of Supervisors, school boards, state, etc.
- Accessibility and availability:** What is the ease or obstacles of access



Why employ an (EP) Approach?

Well, rather than address public health issues by targeting individuals, **environmental prevention** targets those community practices, attitudes and values that encourage unhealthy or unsafe behavior. It succeeds by **promoting long-term, purposeful, systemic change.**



Why employ an (EP) Approach?

EP is an essential part of a comprehensive approach to the prevention of broad health and community problems and issues, and a proven strategy for helping youth and adults make healthy choices.

To achieve this outcome, we promote responsible actions by government, communities and industry.



East & West SALUD Youth Councils

A group of committed rural youth from Selma and Kerman working together to create *positive health and safety changes* in their communities ...

Why is the issue of health important to youth?

- **More than 30% of children in Fresno County are overweight**
- **Increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease**
- **Affects quality of life and overall health**
- **Food and physical activity choices are shaped and influenced by their environment**



Community Assessment









Findings

- Kerman has a 5 to 1 ratio of fast food/convenient stores to grocery stores
- Selma has an 11 to 1 ratio fast food/convenient stores to grocery stores
- Schools lack a variety of produce (beyond apples, oranges, and iceberg lettuce)
- There are a lack of places to be physically active
- Infrastructure throughout the community is in need (sidewalks, parks, etc.)



Recommendations

- Introduce a Farm to School Program
- Re-establish Farmers' Markets in each community
- Use city policy to limit the number of fast food outlets
- Open school gyms during lunch and afterschool
- Fix sidewalks, add bike lanes and more spaces to have fun



Why engage youth in action research?

Youth Action Research *provides youth with opportunities to frame issues and questions, gather information, develop recommendations for change and take action.*



How does our organization engage youth in a community project?

- Staffing commitment and the appropriate training
- Resources for the project including easel pads, space, markers...
- Database software to manage information
- Transportation
- Fun, yet relevant!*



And most importantly...

Agency Readiness

- Support and buy in from agency leadership
- Commitment to youth input in decision making
- Capacity to implement youth recommendations



Presentation at the Selma City Council





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Questions



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