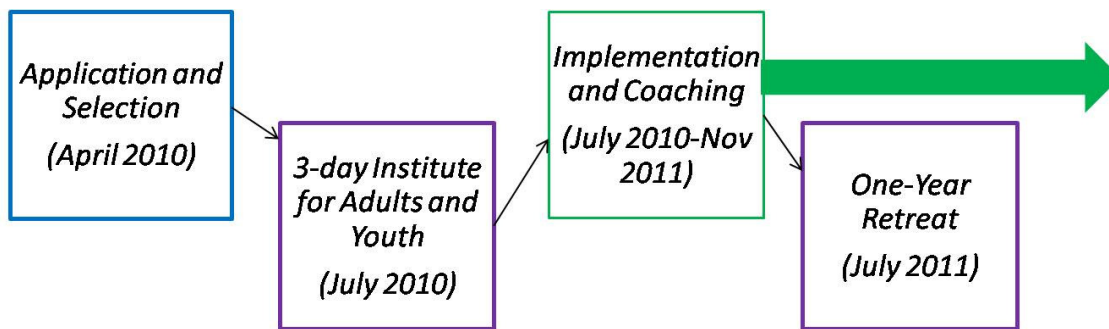




An Invitation to Serve as Pilot Site

The Youth Driven Space (YDS) project is a 2-year initiative, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, in which six to eight youth-serving programs in Michigan will serve as pilot sites to receive intensive training and coaching/consulting. As a result of training and coaching, pilot sites will develop and support opportunities for older youth to authentically lead programs and share in their organizational governance. The expected outcomes of the project at each site are to achieve increased participation of older youth, develop higher quality programs that are exciting for teens, and the successful development of 21st Century skills for teens as they serve in higher order roles within organizations.



THREE-DAY INSTITUTE A three-day, residential training begins the cycle. This event supports youth-service staff and volunteers (i.e. Board members) in the use of youth-driven program practices and strategies while concurrently building youth capacity to serve in genuine leadership roles.

Teams of teens/adult staff & volunteers from each youth-serving organizations will participate in training with the following goals: 1) (better) understand the principles of youth-driven practice; 2) learn program and organizational strategies that support youth-driven practice; and 3) to make plans for organizational and program changes that they will apply in their setting to support youth-driven practice.

Youth Service Professionals receive training in:

- How to institute & support youth-voice throughout your organization
- Youth-driven program practices
- Active & cooperative learning
- Building community support for a youth-driven

Youth Participants receive training in:

- Creating and running a youth advisory
- Leading programs
- Creating new program initiatives
- Fundraising & advocacy
- Participating in organizational governance

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/COACHING Site visits, consulting, coaching and on-site training will be provided for 15 months following the training. These components provide a means to support, evaluate and monitor practices and training strategies. They also provide a chance for agencies to continue to develop and implement youth-driven practices with consultation.

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF THE MODEL The following elements make Youth Driven Spaces approach unique:

- **Youth-Adult Partnerships:** The framework provides adult training and *CONCURRENTLY* builds youth leadership within organizations. This partnership gives youth a prominent voice in decision making and the program development.
- **Practice-based and Research Proven:** Training for adults and youth is drawn from the High/Scope adolescent model, an approach with a 45+ year history. This program significantly improves the lives of youth, an outcome which is research validated (U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel, 1995).
- **Linking Theory and Practice:** The training and support model connects theory and practice so that adults and youth leaders develop concrete program supports and structures, around youth-driven practice to implement in their own settings. Additionally, the development of high quality programs, using a youth-driven approach, will help build 21st Century skills for youth participants through greater opportunities for autonomy, voice, and choice all of which are demonstrated by research to improve positive outcomes.

BENEFITS:

Participating youth-serving organization will receive the following benefits as a result of their participation:

- 3-day intensive residential training institute for (up to) 10 staff/adult volunteers AND youth participants; all travel, lodging, meals and training material expenses are covered.
- 15-month coaching/consulting/on-site training with certified High/Scope trainers and staff/teens from the Neutral Zone, Ann Arbor Teen Center.
- A \$4,000 award, over the 18-month project, to help offset staff time for participating as a pilot site.
- A host of resources to support on-going implementation including guidebooks, access to on-line tools.
- Participate as part of a network of youth-serving programs throughout Michigan.

COMMITMENTS

In order to ensure successful collaboration on this pilot initiative, sites must consider their commitment to the following items:

- Your organization's key stakeholders (Board, staff, youth, key volunteers or community supporters) are informed and support the project's goals, philosophy, and activities.
- Executive staff are open to support organizational changes in policies and protocols based on practices learned in training & coaching, with a focus on bringing youth into meaningful roles within the organizational structure.
- Executive Staff commit themselves and key staff to participating in professional development activities and being an integral part of planning and follow up processes
- An interest and commitment exists among core youth participants to have increased leadership roles and get more involved in the programs and organization
- Completing evaluation documents and supporting the monitoring of progress on the implementation of new practices, organizational changes, and youth outcomes.

TO APPLY:

To apply, any Executive Director or Senior Program Director may fill out the enclosed application and return it to John Weiss, Executive Director – Neutral Zone, 310 E. Washington, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, by **April 5, 2010**. Selected agencies will be notified by May 7, 2010. For more information e-mail weiss@neutral-zone.org or call John Weiss @ 734.214.9995.