Using Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) as a Tool for Improving Community Health

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Disclosures

Emily Frank, MD

The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose
Objectives:

Session participants will be able to:

• Describe the process of youth participatory actions research (YPAR).

• Discuss the ways in which a YPAR approach can benefit individual youth and community health

• Consider a potential YPAR opportunity for their community
Agenda

• My path
• Introduction to YPAR
• Compare and contrast 2 YPAR programs
• Envisioning a YPAR Program in your community
• Resources
3 Lessons from the Middle School Classroom

1. Peer pressure is the strongest force on earth
3 Lessons from the Middle School Classroom

1. Peer pressure is the strongest force on earth

2. Young people actually do care about their health

Taken from http://www.freak8r.com/2015/12/cheetos-and-takis-challenge-you-game.html
3 Lessons from the Middle School Classroom

1. Peer pressure is the strongest force on earth

2. Young people actually do care about their health

3. With enough scaffolding, young people are capable of anything
“In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of the oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform.”

Paolo Freire
What is YPAR?

An approach intended to facilitate youth empowerment through training youth to engage in research and action to transform their lives and their communities.
Youth Participatory Action Research Cycle

1. Identify Issues
2. Collect Data
3. Analyze Data
4. Take Action
5. Assess

Cycle repeats until issues are resolved.
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Model 1: The Health Impact Partnership
Boston, MA
Format

• Partnership between Tufts University School of Medicine and a Boston public high school
• 12-20 high school students
• 6-10 medical student mentors
• 10 1.5 hour sessions (1 semester)
• Participant stipend and no stipend
Schedule

Week 1: Intro, Health Topic
Week 2: Health Topic
Week 3: Health Topic
Week 4: Topic selection, survey design
Week 5: Data Analysis
Week 6: Project Selection
Week 7: Project Work
Week 8: Project Work
Week 9: Project Work
Week 10: Presentation Creation
Final Presentation
Samples of data students collected:

• On average, students at our school each fast food **3 times per week**

• The average students at our school drinks **2 sodas per day**

• 94% of students **care** at least a little bit about what’s in their food
Samples of data students collected:

• 26% of students at our school *smoke weed* and 36% of our students *drink*

• 37% of students at our school reported they *did not have a safe place to exercise*
Student Interventions

• Designing a cookbook of easy-to-make healthy food and disseminating to graduating seniors

• Designing an online forum for students to get important information about drinking and resisting social pressure
Student Interventions

Healthy AND Delicious!

A collection of recipes from:
- Carla Soares
- Isaac Velez
- Sheltzie Flores

English High School, Spring 2012
The Health Impact Partnership
EHS Fitness

EHS fitness is written by a group of EHS students to help them learn more about fitness! This blog is to push kids in the right direction to get fit. FITNESS IS IMPORTANT ITS HELPING A GOOD CAUSE US BY SEEING NEW FACES AND GETTING PEOPLE FIT AND YOU YOUR GETTING ATTRACTING MUSCLES.

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

How To workout

Blog Archive

- 2012 (6)
- April (6)
  - How To workout Do you my fellow EHS students
Student Interventions
The students presented their findings for Tufts Medical students, faculty, their high school faculty, and their families.
Impact:

• 100% of student participants
  – Enjoyed the program
  – Learned a lot from the program
  – Felt the program increased their knowledge of health and public health issues
  – Felt proud of the work they did
  – Wanted to participate in the future

• 83% of student participants
  – Felt they learned leadership skills
Impact

Knowledge and Concerns
• Hypertension
• Obesity
• Teen pregnancy

Interest
• Science
• Pursuing a medical career

Confidence
• Sharing ideas
• Ability to go to college
• Speaking English

Increased
Impact:

“HIP is an awesome program and a great opportunity to learn” – HIP Investigator

“The HIP Program was a great program and I’m sad because it’s finished, because through this program I met more people and I took a big part of my shyness. I also learned about new things that can help a community” – HIP Investigator
Model 2: Summer Health Bridge
Oakland, CA
Format

- 3 district high schools and continuity schools (grades 9-12)
- 19 day summer school program
- 2.5 hours each afternoon dedicated to YPAR
- 20 students with 2 facilitators per class
- Credit recovery (or elective credit) offered
- Included 2 field trips, CPR training, and 8 health/public health guest speakers
Schedule

Week 1: Exploration of Health Justice Topics

Week 2: Topic selection, survey design and dissemination

Week 3: Survey Analysis, Intervention Creation

Week 4: Finish Intervention, Formal Presentation
Week 1: Sample Health Topics

- Food Justice
- Sugar and Diabetes
- Healthcare Access
- Mental Health
- Toxic Stress and Mindfulness
- Police Violence as Public Health Issue
Student Research and Interventions

Oakland Unified School District's Public Health Summerbridge Program

June 20 - July 16, 2016
How sweet are you?

We are trying to understand more about sugar and diabetes in our community. Your answers will help us understand how we can make our community a healthier place. Your participation is completely voluntary. Please only take this survey once.

What grade are you in?

- 9th
- 10th
Survey Analysis

In the past 7 days, how many days did you feel really stressed?
59 responses

- 0 days: 31.3%
- 1 day: 20.3%
- 2 days: 13.6%
- 3 days: 10.2%
- 4 days: 7.8%
- 5 days: 7.4%
- 6 days: 4.7%
- 7 days: 16.9%

I am good at calming myself down when I am stressed.
59 responses

- Strongly Disagree: 1.7%
- Slightly Disagree: 16.9%
- Slightly Agree: 25.4%
- Agreed: 24.1%
- Strongly Agree: 31.3%
Projects

Police Awareness and Presence in Oakland Communities
Marijuana in the Student Community
Influences and Consequences of Lean Cough Syrup
Bullying
Reading Habits
The Effects of Substance Abuse in Oakland Communities
Oakland Prostitution Awareness
Gun Violence in Oakland
Teen and Alcohol Drug Use
Obesity
Police Brutality
“Thought It Was a Drought”: Food Deserts in Oakland
Social Interactions: Community and Me
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Brain Injury
Weed and the Adolescent Brain
Student Conference

Students from all 3 schools came together to present their findings for each other, their families, and community health and public health professionals.
Impact

Year 1:
• 3 schools
• 40 students
• 16 research projects

Year 2:
• 3 schools
• 32 students
• 12 research projects
Impact
## Impact: Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students reported they:</th>
<th>Agreed or Strongly Agreed n=40 2016</th>
<th>Agreed or Strongly Agreed n=32 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enjoyed</strong> the Summer Health Bridge Program</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would <strong>recommend</strong> the program to a friend</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt more <strong>connected</strong> to their peers</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed collecting data from my community</td>
<td>97.5%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe their project could <strong>make a difference</strong> in their community</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a better understanding of the health issues impacting their community</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe <strong>they can make a difference</strong> in their community</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students reported that compared to the start of the program they can better:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak in front of a group of people</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a conversation with a stranger</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know how to be a leader</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know how to gather useful data about an issue to solve a problem</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a presentation about an issue I care about</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can break down important issues facing youth to figure out what we can work on</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can work with others to organize an event in my community</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Impact: Careers

Students reported that compared to the start of the program they:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students reported that compared to the start of the program they:</th>
<th>Agree or Strongly Agree n=40 2016</th>
<th>Agree or Strongly Agree n=32 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are more interested in having a health or public health job</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know more about health and public health jobs</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know what steps are needed to get a health or public health job</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact: Student Quotes

“It changed the way I think about what job I want to go in – realizing that there’s more to the health field than doctors and nurses”

“I have more confidence”
Impact: Student Quotes

“I liked how we proved when the community all gets together we can change things”

“It was the first time I was actually interested in school”

“I have more confidence talking to strangers. I am talking to strangers more”
Resources

- Oregon Curriculum
  - https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Youth/Pages/youth.aspx

- YPAR Hub
  - yparhub.org

- Focused Oregon/YPAR Hub by Emma Anselin
  - https://sites.google.com/view/ypar-ucsf/youth-leading-action

- Summer Health Bridge Curriculum
  - https://sites.google.com/view/ypar-ucsf/create-the-change
?? Questions ??
Your Vision

• Close your eyes.

• Imagine what youth participatory action research could look like in your community.
Your Vision

• Close your eyes.

• Imagine what youth participatory action research could look like in your community.

• Imagine what wild success would look like.
Your Vision

• Close your eyes.

• Imagine what youth participatory action research could look like in your community.

• Imagine what wild success would look like.

• Now write it down
• Individual or Small Group Work Time – pick either page 2 or page 3

• Group Share

• Large Group Share Out
Large Group Discussion

- What were your ideas?
- What challenges are you running into?
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EBAYC

BACR

OUSD Summer Bridge Students
Resources

• Oregon Curriculum
  – https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Youth/Pages/youth.aspx

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  – yparhub.org

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