



Program Outcomes and Results

June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013

Outcome 1: Youth involved in Camp Sunrise, YouthLEAD and the Young Women's Mentoring Program will increase their cultural awareness and respect for others.

Just about every activity that happens at YouthCARE is focused on bringing together youth and adults from diverse backgrounds to participate and learn together. Focusing on diverse communities allows youth and adults to learn and grow from each other not only as a result of the planned activity or event, but from the informal opportunity to learn from people with different experiences. Survey results demonstrate success with this outcome:

- 78% of youth participants surveyed responded agree or strongly agree to the statement "I enjoy working on projects with people from different racial, ethnic, cultural and gender groups."
- 89% of youth participants surveyed responded agree or strongly agree to the statement "I am very comfortable meeting people who are different from me."

Not only have staff observed young people participating in multicultural groups, they have also seen them encourage and challenge their peers' views about difference. Maricella was noticed stepping into a conversation between two African American males about why they didn't want the Asian kid on their basketball team at the lock-in. She challenged them about why they thought the Asian boy would not be an asset to their team. She convinced them in about 5 minutes that they should keep their options open and look for people's actual qualities, not the perceived ones.

Outcome 2: Youth involved in Camp Sunrise, YouthLEAD and the Young Women's Mentoring Program will increase their leadership skills and potential.

Survey results and staff observations indicate that the youth involved in YouthCARE's leadership programs were successful in increasing their leadership skills this past year. Survey results show that youth involved with one of YouthCARE's primary leadership programs as Youth Advisory Council members, Youth Mentors and campers, believe they are leaders.

- 90% of youth leadership participants responded agree or strongly agree to the statement "I have important things to say about making our community a good place to live."
- 92% of youth leadership participants responded agree or strongly agree to the statement "I go out of my way to become a better leader."

In addition to positive survey results staff also saw an increase in participation, confidence and willingness to take safe risks throughout the year. When the Youth

Advisory Council met with YouthCARE's evaluation consultants, they asked the youth how we should measure success. Ryan responded in saying, "Just watch us, two months ago I wasn't a part of this group, I came, but I just sat here, laid back in my chair. Now, I am sitting up and joining the conversations to help make decisions."

Styling Science

During the grant period, June 1, 2012- May 31, 2013 YouthCARE program staff worked with Science Museum of MN staff to provide 129 girls and young women, 6-18 years old, involved in the Young Women's Mentoring Program with 72 "*Styling Science*" hands-on interactive workshops and activities; 66 of the girls and young women who participated live at Little Earth of United Tribes in south Minneapolis.

Responses to survey questions, comments made by program participants, and program staff observations confirm that girls and young women do want to succeed in fields of science – they are asking for help in completing their science and math school assignments, and are answering STEM survey questions with such comments as:

- Technology is cool, I want to make up my own phone.
- I liked learning how to make lip gloss, I didn't even know I was learning science.
- I didn't know how important bugs are to growing food.
- Growing things is fun.
- I want to learn more about plants.
- I didn't think learning science could be fun.
- Fossils are so interesting, I want to learn more about earth's history.

In addition to the above comments, girls and young women are answering the "what is your dream job" evaluation survey comment with such as answers as; "being a scientist, a veterinarian, a marine biologist, an archeologist, and a doctor".

The "*Styling Science*" program continues to surpass the expected program outcomes. A primary purpose of the "*Styling Science*" program is to provide girls and young women with the least access to STEM learning opportunities with the opportunity to actively discover and examine concepts for themselves, while at the same time allowing them to develop creative problem solving skills and build self-confidence in their ability to succeed in the fields of science. Based upon the positive feedback we have received to date, there is no question that this program has sparked the interest and cultivated the confidence and knowledge of girls and young women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of the girls and young women participating in the "*Styling Science*" program were girls and young women of color;

Sample activities conducted during the grant period included;

Rain Gardens: program participants worked in a local rain garden. This activity allowed participants to build hands on understanding of how rain water goes through our local

eco systems, including street runoff and the affects of fertilizers and toxins on our plants and livestock.

Fossils: program participants explored fossils and what scientists can learn about the earth's history from studying fossils. This activity allowed participants to learn about the different stages of the earth's development over time and what organisms lived during each age.

Forensic Science: program participants participated in a sleep over at the Science Museum of MN. This over night activity had a theme of "Who Done It?" Throughout the night girls participated in figuring out who stole the cookie from the cookie jar, by learning about finger printing, DNA, hand writing analysis and more.

Pollination & Bugs: program participants worked in a local garden. This activity allowed participants to learn about the importance of insects in the creation of our food and how each insect plays a role in creating a larger eco system that can support humans and other animals.

Oxygen Bags Activity: program participants used the chemical reaction of yeast plus hydrogen peroxide to prepare and test oxygen O² gas. This activity allowed participants to learn about chemical reaction, catalyst, oxygen, hydrogen, peroxide, atoms, molecules, H₂O, H₂O₂, and O₂.

Spy, Code and Alarm Club Activity: program participants made espionage gadgets as a way to observe and/or pass on top secret information. This activity allowed participants to explore electricity to create ingenious alarms to protect their top secret stuff, discover how codes are constructed and created, and to plan a way for exchanging information with an unknown contact.

Get Set to Be a Vet Activity: program participants were able to look at the careers of veterinarians and learn about specialties such as large animal and zoo practice. This activity allowed participants to gain knowledge of animal philosophy and anatomy as they examined x-rays of animals, performed a mock surgery, and learned how to make dog treats and how to take better care of pets.

Safaris in the City

YouthCARE's Safaris in the City increased participation in outdoor recreation in two ways: by providing youth participants with the opportunity to participate in outdoor recreational events, and by introducing them to activities they could do in their own community. Minneapolis and St. Paul are home to some of the best park systems in the country, exposing youth to what is in their neighborhood and easily accessible is a vital step in teaching them to enjoy the outdoors. Having a positive staff, who already have relationships with the youth, to lead activities and encourage participants helps youth adjust to new environments and be more willing to try new things.

Most of the youth who participated in Safari in the Cities admitted to staff they would likely be at home playing video games or talking with friends if they were not involved in

the activity. Activities such as bike riding using the “Nice Ride” bikes around town and snowshoeing at a Minneapolis Park not only introduced youth to engaging outdoor activities, but are activities they could continue to do on their own in their own neighborhoods. A common sentiment from youth after an activity was, “I had no idea this was here.” Informal surveys of youth at the end of activities informed staff that the youth are enjoying the outdoor opportunities and looking forward to participating in future activities in their community with and without YouthCARE’s support. Examples of activities:

- Nice Ride MN - Explored the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area in downtown Minneapolis while discussing the many benefits to cycling.
- Environmental Restoration Project at Cold Water Springs with the National Park Service - Worked with Park Rangers, watering baby trees recently planted in a new area of the park.
- Wild River State Park - enjoyed a five mile scenic hike along the St. Croix River on one of the last warm days in November.
- Boy Scouts of America, Base Camp - Rock climbing, indoor ropes course, team building, outdoor ice climbing and indoor archery.
- National Park Naturalist - Explored three miles of new trails along the St. Croix River at Wild River State Park. Our guide showed us important geologic, cultural and historic events pertinent to the area as we hiked, using photographs, props and animal pelts as visual aids.
- Ice Skating at the Minneapolis Depot - Seasonal activity at one of the premier indoor skating locations in the metro area, a great option for a cold winter evening!
- Franconia Art Sculpture Park - A short hike and photo scavenger hunt. We split into three groups: the task, to creatively interpret the art sculptures and outdoor environment to communicate ideas about respect, including respect for our shared natural environment.
- Wild River State Park - An interpretive program with a National Park Ranger about adaptations animals use to survive during the winter months. After the program, youth warmed up in the Visitor Center and explored other hands on exhibits that helped depict the ecology of the St. Croix River area.
- Geo-caching at Crosby Farm Regional Park with a National Park Ranger - We learned how to use GPS technology while learning more about the natural and cultural history of the Mississippi River.
- Night hikes, star gazing and some sledding on fresh snow.

During the 2012-13 program year the YouthLEAD Program went through a significant expansion which resulted in the addition of 2 full-time staff as well as a significant increase in the amount and type of programming offered. The new programs provided by the YouthLEAD Program included:

- Homework Help: Provided youth with the opportunity to not only gain study skills, but skills to help them thrive as adults. The purpose of the Homework Help program is to help youth help themselves, or to assist/guide them to the point at which they become increasingly self-directed as a learner, and able to apply strategies and skills on their own

- Health & Wellness: Provided youth with the opportunity to learn about maintaining a healthy lifestyle through physical activity and healthy eating habits.
- College Knowledge: Provided youth with basic knowledge about the process of getting into college as well as the opportunity to visit colleges in the area.
- Teen Tech: Provided youth with the opportunity to gain digital literacy skills while engaging in a final project in which they were able to explore and express their personal identities through technology.
- Arts & Culture: Provided youth the opportunity to explore various forms of art such as music, poetry, print making, dance and photography. The purpose of the Arts & Culture programming is to expand the youth participant's appreciation, knowledge, and involvements in the arts.

In addition to providing the new programs YouthLEAD also continued to facilitate the Youth Advisory Council (YAC), Community Service Stars Program and Camp CAMERA. YAC met weekly to plan large social recreational events for their peers while continuing to develop their personal leadership skills. Some of the highlights from YAC include the second annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser which raised over \$1,200 dollars to assist in funding the annual Lock-in. YAC also played a large role in planning and facilitating the 21st annual Lock-in which had a large turnout of 129 youth. The Community Stars Program employed 57 youth from Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Camp CAMERA Program also continued for the 3rd Consecutive year in collaboration with Macalester College. The Camp CAMERA youth participants showed off their photo's at a gallery show at Gallery 13 which had significant familial presence.

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan

YouthCARE used the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) for the first time ever during the 2012-13 program year to assess program quality. Program Directors and staff had been trained in best practices promoted by the tool prior to the year, but never had an assessment been done. With the help of Sprockets, YouthCARE was able to train most of the full time staff in the theories and best practices promoted by the YPQA. The original plan for the year was to have the staff do peer assessments of each other for us to use. After a few rounds of practice assessments, it was determined that staff didn't have the time to do a good job reviewing their peers and it might be better to have an outsider do the first round of observations. In April 2013, YouthCARE hired two consultants to help with the observations of the programs.

Areas where YouthCARE did exceptionally well, as determined by scoring 4.5 or higher in a category, are:

- Section I. A – Psychological and emotional safety is promoted (average score 4.75)
- Section I. B – The physical environment is safe and free of health hazards (average score 4.56)
- Section II. F – Staff provides a welcoming atmosphere (average score 4.70)
- Section III. L – Youth have opportunities to develop a sense of belonging (average score 4.5)

Areas where YouthCARE could improve, as determined by an average score of less than 3.0 in a category, are:

Section III. M – Youth have opportunities to practice in small groups (average score 2.99)

Section III. N – Youth have opportunities to act as group facilitators and mentors (average score 2.83)

Section IV. Q – Youth have opportunities to make choices based on their interests (average score 2.37)

YouthCARE's leadership team is working with program staff to improve in these three areas as well as other areas through staff training and individual development opportunities. Overall YouthCARE is very excited by the initial results of this first ever quality assessment on its programs. Moving forward we are looking forward to working with our consultant to help provide more direction and including youth more in the process.

Stories

Frank Downwind – Director, Little Earth Youth Development Center

Having Iris [Program Specialist] at Little Earth has been great for the youth in this community. She does a great job relating to them and getting them connected to new activities. Before she came we could hardly get the teens to participate in activities outside of the teen center. Iris and the youth she has been working with are off all the time. The video project with Intermedia Arts is a great example of an activity that Iris got the youth that would not have happened in the past. Iris allows the youth to lead their group with her and encourages them to try new things and get out and see the city. The teens she is reaching are not the ones who would have come to the center in the past. Getting new youth into the center and then encouraging them to volunteer and try new things has been a great addition to what we are trying to do at Little Earth.

Melvin Saballos – Youth Participant, Washburn High School

I've been involved with YouthCARE since 2009. I started as a camper and have moved my way up the leadership ladder. The experiences I've had and the skills I've learned are already helping me and will be assets for me to use in my future. This summer I've noticed that I really have changed my perspective on why I want to be involved with YouthCARE. It used to be about what I got from YouthCARE: mentors, friends, employment, leadership skills, and self confidence. While all of those things are still true for me, the reason I want to be here now is not about that, it is about providing other youth with the experiences I had when I first started. As a Counselor in Training this summer, I see all of my time with YouthCARE coming to fruition. I find myself calling out adult staff when they start slacking off. I remind them of all of the awesome experiences they had and I had as a youth and that it is our job to make that happen for the youth now. When I first started with YouthCARE, I thought it was just a camp I could go to for free. It is so much more. I've learned to stand up for myself, others, and tell people when they are wrong. Having the skills and confidence to stand up to bigots and bullies is something all people should be able to do, but don't. YouthCARE this year and in years past helped me be ready to take on the challenges of the world I'll face.

Daphne Green – Parent of JaMarcus Green

I called YouthCARE last summer concerned about JaMarcus' behavior and looking for a positive place for him to be. He went to Camp Sunrise for a week and said he had a great time. When he returned to the city he met up with his old friends and started back up with his bad habits. So I called Isiah Jones [Camp Director] at YouthCARE.

JaMarcus had mentioned him when he got back from camp. Isiah suggested he apply for a job with CS Stars. JaMarcus joined the fall crew of Community Service Stars (CS Stars). For eight weeks JaMarcus went to work three days a week and learned some important job and leadership skills. At the end of his session with CS Stars JaMarcus was doing better in school, but without some place to be three days a week he was hanging out with the bad kids again. He got into some trouble with law enforcement and as a result needed to complete community service hours. This time JaMarcus called YouthCARE for some help, over the next few months he went to the office regularly to volunteer. While he was doing community service I saw a significant change in his attitude toward people and making the right choices for himself. He openly talked about finding positive people in his life, participating more with YouthCARE, and avoiding some of his old friends. As the mother of a 15 year old this change in perspective was a dream come true. I hope JaMarcus continues to stay involved with YouthCARE.