

**CITY OF SHORELINE  
COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOODS MINUTES**

November January 8, 2020  
Potluck from 6 – 7 pm, meeting at 7 pm

Shoreline City Hall

**COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOODS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT**

Briarcrest – Bill Dwyer, Lee Keim, Janelle Woolsey  
Echo Lake –Jeanne Monger, Marla Tullio  
Highland Terrace – Maria Ales, Cyndi Robinson  
Hillwood – Ann Erickson  
Meridian Park – Tom Karston  
North City – Dan Dale  
Richmond Beach –Tom Petersen  
Richmond Highlands – Pete Gerhard, Kathy Plant  
Ridgecrest – Patty Hale, Rebecca Hood, Cindy C.-Wilson

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** Constance Perenyi, Neighborhoods Coordinator; Amanda Zollner, Recreation Supervisor; Angela Elliott, Recreation Specialist; Waldo Nambo-Ojeda, Recreation Specialist.

**I. Call to Order**

Dan Dale called the meeting to order and reminded everyone that the focus of the meeting was the training. Minutes from the November meeting will be reviewed in February. There was a brief time for announcements before the training began:

- Bill Dwyer and Pete Gerhard both spoke about volunteering for Shoreline’s new Community Court, which opened on January 7. It was a very successful first day, and both encouraged CON members to explore volunteering.
- Patty Hale announced that Ridgecrest had once again had a very successful food drive and that Hopelink was very grateful for the donations.

**II. Training**

How can we make our neighborhood meetings more welcoming and our events more inclusive? And how do we reach out to youth?

Angela Elliott, Recreation Specialist and participants from the City’s YOLO (Youth Outreach Leadership and Opportunities) Program led a session on effective outreach to youth.

Waldo Nambo-Ojeda, Recreation Specialist with Parks, talked about what he has learned from working with youth. Most important, he noted, is for adults to be completely honest with young people they know and work with.

Amanda Zollner introduced the principles of Supporting Youth Voice. Through an interactive exercise, CON members experienced three different opportunities, and then shared their reactions, most choosing one that offered meaningful, engaging choices rather than the others, either lacking or having too many choices.

At the end of the exercise, Amanda briefly covered an event evaluation and encouraged neighborhood associations to regularly evaluate their meetings and events to see how that can become more welcoming and inclusive. The evaluation is included in Amanda's presentation below. The handout is also below.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm



DAVID P. WEIKART  
CENTER FOR YOUTH  
PROGRAM QUALITY

# youth voice

**YTDP Team**

*1/8/2020*

*City Hall*



## Agenda

- Opening Activity
- The Youth Voice Method
- Youth Voice in Your Program
- Event Evaluation
- Closing

## Youth Voice Workshop Objectives

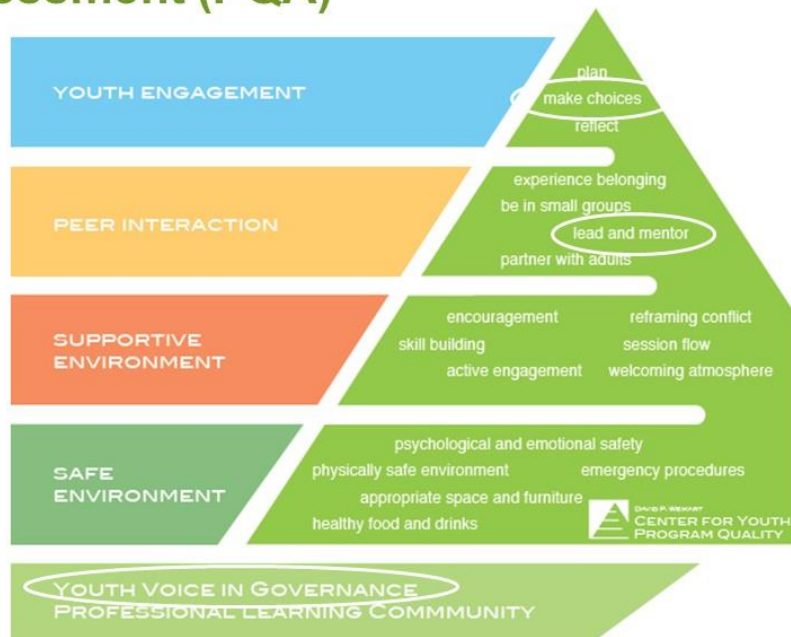
*Participants will...*

- have the opportunity to explore the ways they offer Youth Voice in their programs.
- gain experience with Youth Voice strategies.
- understand the benefits of giving Youth Voice and how to offer meaningful opportunities for participation.

## Housekeeping

- Materials
- Bathroom location
- Take care of yourself (eat, drink, stretch, etc.)
- Please silence your cell phone

# Youth Voice and the Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA)



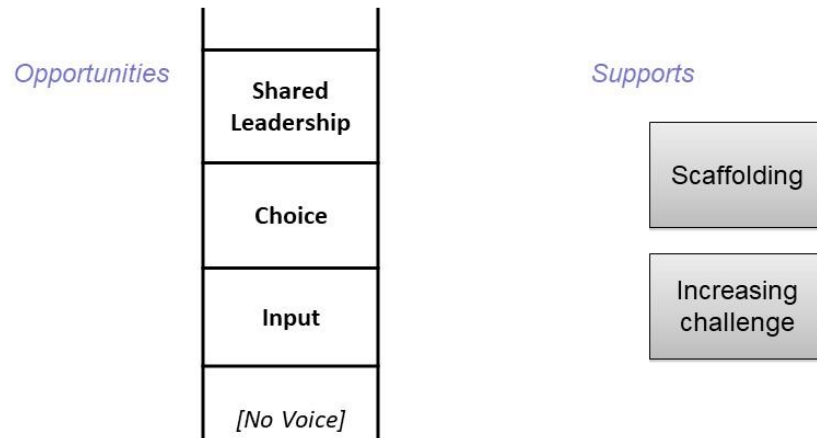
David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality - YOUTHVOICE

## Youth Voice Continuum



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## The Voice Ladder and Method



## Choice Rotation Stations



## Freedom Continuum



Not enough freedom  
(Lack of interest)



**Meaningful  
choices within  
supportive structure**



Too much freedom  
(Frustration)

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## Building the Rungs of the Ladder

- Examine the youth voice in your program or activities.
- Plan for increasing youth voice in your setting.



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## Reflection

**1**= I'm not ready to implement Youth Voice at my site

**3**= I get it, but I still have questions and need to spend more time exploring Youth Voice.

**5**=I feel ready and prepared to begin implementing Youth Voice at my site.

## Event Evaluation

**What are your goals for an event?**

**Who do you want at the events?**

**How do you engage community members before, during and after an event?**





Council of Neighborhoods **EVALUATION TOOL**

**Neighborhood:**

**Event Name:**

**Date/Time/Location of event evaluated:**

**Person doing Evaluation:**

**How was the event planned:**

**Who planned the event:**

**How was it promoted:**

**Who Attended:**

**Attendance:**

Evaluation Criteria	YES	NO
Was there opportunity for community input in the event?		
Was there opportunity to make relevant choices in planning the event for all community members?		
Was there opportunity for shared leadership and responsibility with all community members?		
Was the space free of health and safety hazards?		
Was there appropriate emergency procedures in place?		
Was the event welcoming and inclusive?		
Are there clear objectives established for the event?		
Was there appropriate space and supplies for the event?		
Was an opportunity for participants to actively engage provided during the event?		
Was there an opportunity for participants to reflect on their experience, either formally or informally, during the event?		

Please put additional notes on back

# HANDOUT

## overview

Supporting Youth Voice can occur in many ways. The ladder below shows this in context of a spectrum from low to high--from no voice at the bottom all the way to full blown adult-youth partnership in running programs at the top!

<b>SHARED LEADERSHIP</b>	Youth experience shared leadership of program with adults. Leadership opportunities for ALL youth; not just presumed "leaders". Youth take active roles managing their own time and learning; youth have real opportunities to shape program. Adults provide support and safety for youth decisions and leadership roles.
<b>CHOICE</b>	Youth have real, relevant choices about how they spend their time, processes, offerings, etc. This step may have the biggest range... from simple, closed-ended choices between activity options to important open-ended questions about how to run things.
<b>INPUT</b>	Youth provide feedback and input to adults. This can be structured (surveys, focus groups) or informal (asking youth what they think).
<b>NO VOICE</b>	No voice or false voice. This includes: tokenism, having one or two youth in leadership roles to give the appearance of youth voice; decoration, using youth to indirectly help support a cause (e.g., a media photograph that makes it look like youth are leading); and manipulation, youth are used to support a cause and adults pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.

This ladder is a variation of the "ladder of youth participation" promoted by Hart (1992).

## The Method

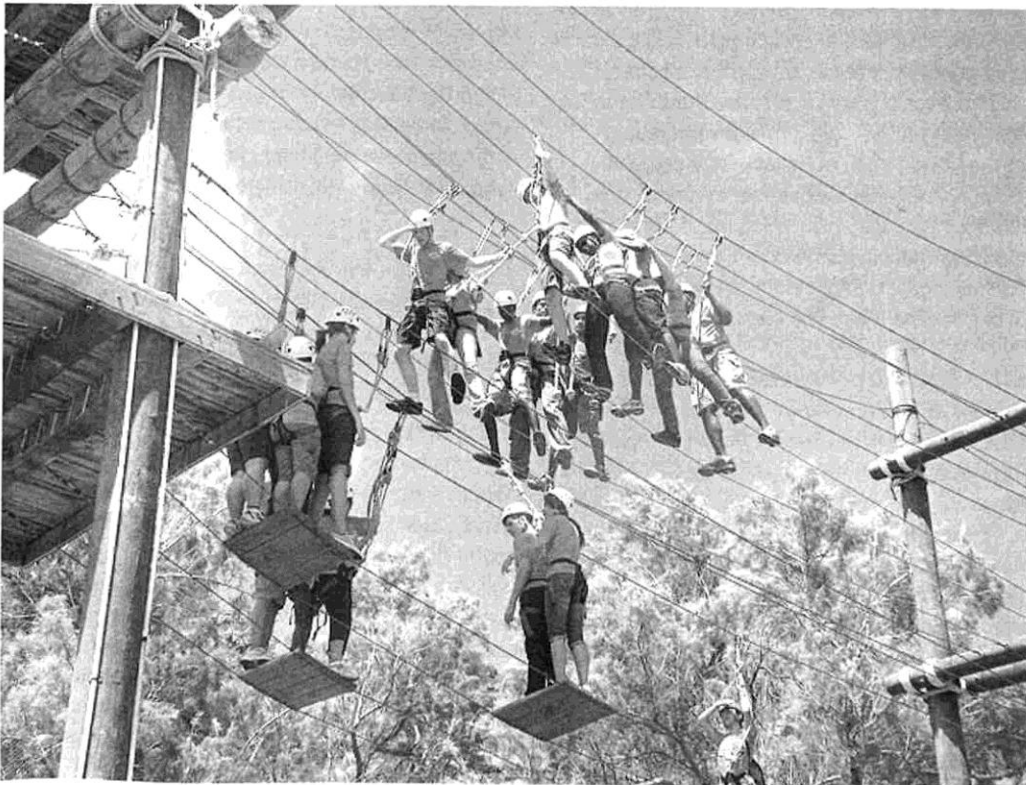
We divide our recommended strategies into *opportunities* and *support*. The Voice opportunities correspond with the rungs of the ladder; the support strategies apply across all rungs. Please note that these categories are not entirely separate. In fact, providing opportunities without supports are not likely to be successful. But meaningful opportunities for voice coupled with strong support can result in benefits for youth, programs, and communities. These strategies are explained in the next few pages.

### Opportunities for youth voice

- INPUT: Provide opportunities for youth to provide input and feedback to adults.
- CHOICE: Provide opportunities to make relevant and meaningful choices.
- SHARED LEADERSHIP: Provide opportunities for leadership and responsibility.

### Support for youth voice

- Provide scaffolding (and sometimes get out of the way).
- Increase challenges, roles, and responsibilities over time.



## Opportunities for Youth Voice

### **INPUT: Provide opportunities for youth to provide feedback to adults**

The first level in the Youth Voice ladder is to open up the door for youth input and feedback. This can be done in lots of ways: structured ways like session evaluation surveys (see page 30-31), or unstructured ways like just asking youth for input.

Why provide opportunities for input? There are two main reasons. First, so you can shape activities around youth interests and needs. Making program activities engaging, relevant, and meaningful to youth (also discussed in choice section below) begins with finding out what youth are into and what they think about the existing offerings. Second, people of all ages like to be heard; asking for input helps youth feel that their concerns matter and will be heard.

Sometimes adults resist asking for youth feedback, because they do not want to hear an onslaught of complaints. This is a reasonable fear. Complaints can become unproductive at a certain point and produce negative effects on motivation and the program climate. However, if you honestly ask youth for input, making it clear that you are genuinely interested in what they think, such complain-fests are less likely. Plus, if youth have legitimate concerns but no outlet for them, they may voice these concerns elsewhere, perhaps in less productive ways. If youth are complaining, you might ask them for input into how to best fix the things they are complaining about.

### **CHOICE: Provide opportunities for youth to make relevant and meaningful choices**

There are many ways to provide youth with choices about how they spend their time. Youth can make choices about the activities that are offered, about how or when tasks are carried out, about roles, about materials, etc. Choices can involve options (a, b, or c) or be open-ended. Choices can be small, like how to decorate Mother's Day cards, or larger, like how to put together a program fundraiser. Choices can be offered at the program level, like what to offer or how to recruit new youth; or within an activity.

Researchers have argued that for choices to have a positive impact, they must be relevant and meaningful to youth (see research review, page 40). In other words, it's pointless to give youth choices about things they don't care about.

How can you find out what's relevant to youth? Finding relevant choices requires good detective work—you need to know your youth well, what they like to do, as well as what their hopes and dreams may be. Experience will help—the more you work at providing relevant and meaningful choices, the better you'll get. You can certainly ask youth (see feedback strategy above). You can do activities to get at youth interests; for example, perhaps youth make drawings of things that are important to them, or maybe youth share their dreams as an interpretive dance. Be creative! Sometimes it can be as simple as this: when you're planning, to take a step back and consider, *Will youth find the choices I'm offering relevant and meaningful?*

When done well—a few meaningful choices with ample support—choice can be a powerful motivator and can help kids learn. The key is to find the balance on the spectrum depicted below: to provide meaningful choices with an appropriate level of challenge, and to support young people in their decision-making.



Not enough choice  
(can lead to lack of  
interest)



Meaningful  
choices with  
adult support



Wide-open choice  
with no support  
(can lead to  
frustration)

Some youth programs (especially for younger youth) offer 'choice time' as part of the daily routine. This is fine, but remember, the choices have to be relevant to be effective. While it's reasonable to assume, for example, that after a long structured day of school youth would prefer to have free time, research does not support this. Only relevant choices within a structure of support are effective. Once you've established relevance, choices

may be offered in various ways. If, for example, you know the youth in your program want to be dancers when they grow up, they could decide how they want to learn about that career-- should they interview dancers at a local dance company, go to a performance and talk to the performers afterwards, watch a movie about being dancers, read a book about being dancers, come up with their own routine, or something else entirely?

Sign-ups can be a good way to offer choice but still keep a handle on group dynamics. Relevant choices can be offered within almost any activity. For example a service learning activity may provide choices among options (e.g., do you want to pick up leaves, pick up garbage, or paint the park benches for our community service project?) and open-ended choices (e.g., what could we do to improve the park for our community service project?).

You can involve youth in deciding what activities the group or program will do. For example...

- *Have youth brainstorm a list of possible activities to offer and then have them select their top choices. Have youth select their 1st, 2nd, & 3rd choices among workshops and then put them into workshop groups accordingly.*
- *Have youth select and help set up field trips.*
- *Have a group of youth work with a group of adult leaders to decide what will be offered.*
- *Ask youth to compile a list of activities the program has offered and pros and cons about each activity, then use that as a way to discuss potential new activities.*
- *Have youth brainstorm a list of activities they'd like to see on big paper and then have them sticker vote for the ones they're most interested in (e.g., each youth gets 5 stickers to vote with by placing stickers by the item(s) they like).*

### **SHARED LEADERSHIP: Provide opportunities for leadership and responsibility**

Leadership opportunities—large and small—can exist for all youth in your program. Note that leadership opportunities go hand in hand with the 3rd support strategy of building complexity (described below). As youth grow in age and gain experience in the program, their roles and responsibilities should grow with them.

In youth programs with effective Youth Voice, youth lead or help lead many activities. But many smaller leadership opportunities can be provided too, like distributing materials, leading a discussion, keeping time, presenting the ideas of their small groups, and mentoring. Sometimes a small leadership opportunity like having two youth set up snacks can help those youth feel a sense of belonging and purpose in the group. Leadership opportunities can be less public too, like asking a youth to help establish a positive climate (“Hey, I notice you have a lot of pull with the group; will you help us establish this service project as a cool thing?”) It’s great if young people can take on more advanced leadership roles over time (described more fully in next section). Eventually, when youth take leadership roles throughout the program, it becomes “their” program.

A functioning youth advisory group can provide a great opportunity for voice, choice, and leadership. This group may be made up of volunteers or young people that adults recommend. The advisory group may make or help make decisions about things like what to offer and how the daily routine is set up. They also may participate in hiring of new staff and in outreach to bring new youth into the program. They may have responsibilities for putting events like parent night together. If you’d like more information, Weikart Center offers a detailed guidebook, *Teen Advisory Council*, available at [www.cypq.org](http://www.cypq.org).

## Support for Youth Voice

### Provide scaffolding (and sometimes get out of the way)

Many young people do not have ample opportunities to make meaningful decisions in many areas of their lives. On the other hand, if young people are given wide-open choices with little support, making decisions can be overwhelming. Similarly, if young people are given voice in how a youth program runs, they'll need strong support from adults in order to be successful. A strategy for addressing this balance is called scaffolding.

Providing effective scaffolding is perhaps the most challenging and most important thing you can do as a youth worker. We introduce the basics of scaffolding here; however, for more detail please see the Weikart Center Method guidebook, *Active Learning*.

The first step is to be actively involved with youth (without taking over). Participate with youth, ask lots of questions, and help when they ask for it. Pay close attention to what's going on with youth—are they bored? Overwhelmed? Do they seem to enjoy the activities?

Scaffolding may involve breaking larger tasks up into smaller ones, doing some tasks for youth and helping them with others—always with the goal of helping youth to be in their learning zone, where tasks are challenging but not overwhelming. While you work with youth, it's important to allow youth to make mistakes but you also want to help them feel successful. A goal in providing scaffolding in a youth voice context is to be a 'guide on the side': there for youth when they need you but not in the driver seat. For example, a group of youth might not be able to independently publish a book of their creative writing. However, there are several subtasks youth can do such as collecting stories and artwork, publicizing the book, and designing the cover; and some that you might do like hiring the printing company.

Finally, sometimes it's best to get out of the way and let youth lead. This might mean holding back, even when you know the best way to do something or see the answer to a problem. It might mean allowing youth to make mistakes that they wouldn't have made if you took over. In order for 'getting out of the way' to be successful for youth, you can set some things up. You can promote a climate of shared responsibility, emphasizing to youth that it is 'their program'. The idea of youth voice can be written into program vision statements and by-laws. You can also work with youth to develop group agreements that limit adult involvement; for example, making a rule that adults should wait to hear from youth before giving their opinion. Finally, you can work with youth to create meaningful roles for every group member. Such roles can be very diverse and range from minor to major in importance.

### Increase challenges, roles, and responsibilities over time

Although this is the last strategy we present, it should be embedded into every Youth Voice activity you do. Youth come to your program at different ages, with different interests and with different skills. As they continue to participate their interests and abilities change. It is essential that the program grows with youth. The ladder presented at the beginning of this section also reflects increased complexity over time. Youth may begin at the bottom of the ladder, providing simple input about their experiences in the program. This may lead to youth making choices about program offerings, which may then lead to leadership roles and greater responsibilities.

Easier choices or leadership roles can build toward bigger ones. For example, an adult might provide choices among options for a small afternoon community service project and then have the youth plan a more substantial and open-ended project afterward. Or a youth may take on a small leadership role in an activity (e.g., leading a discussion) and this may lead to a more official leadership role in the program (e.g., leading the youth council).

Youth may grow into leaders in the program over time. They may begin to attend the program but be kind of quiet. Then they may become more engaged. Eventually they may become active leaders, running programs, bringing other youth in, and more. Adults in the program should be aware of such development and support youth as they grow. You can actively work to try to make this happen. For example, staff might identify growth opportunities for young leaders and work with those youth to develop leadership plans.







## Building the Rungs of the Youth Voice Ladder

Use this form to examine the Youth Voice in your program or activities and plan for increasing youth voice in your setting. For description of the terms below, see page 6.

Opportunities
<b>SHARED LEADERSHIP</b>
<b>CHOICE</b>
<b>INPUT</b>

How do we do this now?

How can we do this better?

How do we do this now?

How can we do this better?

**PROVIDE SCAFFOLDING**

**INCREASE COMPLEXITY OVER TIME**