YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

The Youth Leadership Institute stakeholders agreed upon a set of process outcomes that, in addition to being achievable and measurable, are informed by current research and youth development theory. These process outcomes articulate a set of standards for a quality program setting, one that facilitates positive youth development. In other words, they describe the types of supports and opportunities that address the basic needs of youth and that research has linked to longer-term developmental outcomes. YLI has designed an evaluation process that measures the kinds of experiences young people are having in a program, which reflects the extent to which a program setting is utilizing these practices, and achieving the process outcomes. We describe them in this way -- youth in our programs will experience the following:

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- Physical Safety
- Emotional Safety

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Knowledge of Community
- Interaction / Interface with the Community
- Communication with the Community
- Contribution to the Community

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

- Decision-Making and Governance
- Youth Voice
- Action

OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP HEALTHY PERSONAL ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOR

- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD)
- Violence Prevention
- Academic Completion / Fostering Learning

OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD CARING, MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS & ADULTS

- Peer Knowledge
- Adult Knowledge / Guidance
- Emotional Support
- Practical Support
- Sense of Belonging

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN INTERESTING & RELEVANT SKILL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
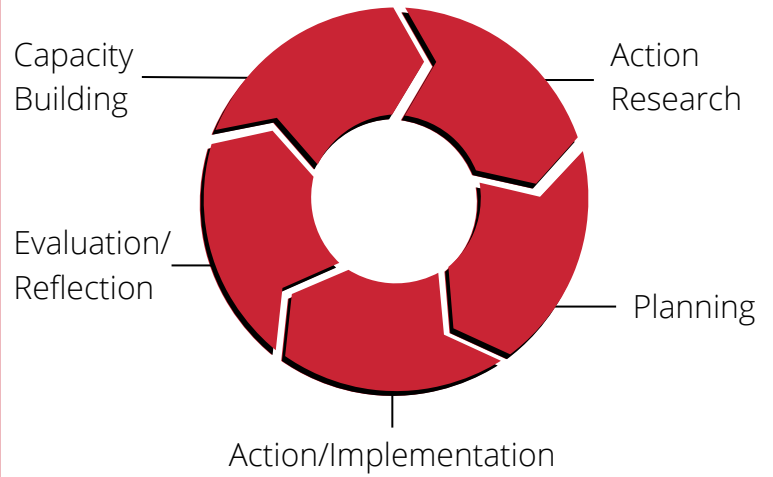
- Peer Knowledge
- Adult Knowledge / Guidance
- Emotional Support
- Practical Support
- Sense of Belonging

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OF PRACTICE	YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT CYCLE

1. Safety
2. Relationships
3. Decision Making
4. Community Involvement
5. Skill building

Capacity Building — Action Research — Planning — Action/Implementation — Evaluation/Reflection

HART'S LADDER

Youth and Adult Initiated and Directed → Designed and run by youth and adults in full partnership

Youth Initiated, Shared Decisions with Adults → Designed and run by youth who share decisions with adults

Youth Initiated and Directed → Designed and run by youth and decisions made by youth

Adult Initiated, Shared Decisions with Youth → Designed and run by adults who share decision-making with youth

Consulted and Informed → Designed and run by youth who consult with youth, youth make recommendations that are considered adults

Assigned, but Informed → Youth did not initiate, but understand and have some sense of ownership

Tokenism → Symbolic representation by few - may not have a genuine voice, may be asked to speak for the group they represent

Decoration → Adults use youth to promote or support a cause without informing youth, youth are not involved in design or decision-making

Manipulation → Youth involvement used by adults to communicate adult's messages