

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CURRICULUM RESEARCH FOR **Leadership Matters**

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This literature review was prepared for the specific purpose of assessing the environment, resources and need for curriculum designed specifically for youth work supervisors. It includes literature search results as well as synthesizes perspectives from interviews with colleagues and focus groups with youth work supervisors to define curriculum scope and content.

I. PRELIMINARY CURRICULUM CONCEPTS

INITIAL KEY CONCEPTS

- Youth Development as a professional field has distinct characteristics and a complex environment
- Supervisors of youth workers often are not provided training and support for their role as managers and leaders
- Professional development for youth worker supervisors should be more accessible and more targeted

Project Foundation:

Conversation at the U of M Youth Work Institute about the need for training specifically designed for youth work supervisors emerged as a priority in 2008 and was confirmed in conversations with other youth development professionals around the country, acknowledging that youth work supervisors have few professional development opportunities addressing the complex context of the work. Youth work managers need to account for the complexities of the work environment and nature of relationships between youth and adult when determining leadership strategies. Youth work has unique practice dilemmas, quality issues, and quite frequently underfunded budgets that should come into consideration when designing professional development for supervisors.

Youth work supervisors navigate complicated interactions with adults while building caring relationships and delivering programs to youth. Staff development strategies should address specific and contextualized dimensions of skill development in order to be

relevant and effective. **Wilson-Ahlstrom, A, Yohalem, N, Pittman, K, (2008). "Unpacking Youth Work Practice", Forum for Youth Investment, Out of School Time Commentary #12, available on-line at www.forumfyi.org**

Many Out-of-School-Time (OST) leaders rise through the ranks without any formal training or background in leadership and management. Seldom in the OST nonprofit sector are leaders identified because they are strategists with the vision and skills necessary for high performance in the field. **Weiss, H, Little, P. (2008) "Strengthening Out of School Time Nonprofits: The Role of Foundations in Building Organizational Capacity", a white paper funded by The Wallace Foundation, p. 10.**

Key Word Search:

- Youth Development
- Leadership
- Management
- Core Competencies for Youth Work

A key word search was conducted through the University of MN Library, Google Scholar.

Current youth development journals, and recent bibliographies from national youth development/out of school time organizations were also reviewed.

Preliminary Curriculum Learning Objectives and Audience based on initial concepts:

- Youth work supervisors, managers and leaders will recognize and address the unique context and perspectives necessary to guide youth work staff and organizations toward quality programming for youth.
- Specific leadership skills and strategies will be presented for improving leadership quality and team work for youth work programs.
- Sharing the latest research findings on quality, youth engagement and core competencies for youth work.
- Audience: youth workers who are new to supervising (0-4 years) and spend more than 50% of their time on supervision/management/leadership responsibilities.

KEY ORGANIZATIONS FOR NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED RESOURCES

These organization websites, curriculum and journal articles were reviewed to help set the context for the curriculum development.

- National Institute on Out-Of-School Time (NIOST)- (www.niost.org), Wellesley MA, Effective Management Curriculum 20
- Innovation Center (www.theinnovationcenter.org), New Haven CT, Supervising and Managing in Youth Serving Organizations curriculum
- Academy for Educational Development (AED)- (www.aed.org) Supervision of Youth Worker curriculum
- Forum for Youth Investment (www.forumfyi.org) Out of School Time Policy Commentary series
- Harvard Family Research Project (www.hfrp.org) multiple youth development publications, 2008-2009
- Mott Foundation: (www.mott.org) Core Competencies for Afterschool Educators (spring 2009)
- Youth Work Institute (YWI), University of MN Extension Center for Youth Development (www.extension.umn.edu/YouthWorkInstitute) curriculum in Quality, Culturally Responsive Youth Work, and Youth Engagement
- National 4H (www.4-h.org) afterschool resources
- Kellogg Foundation (www.wkkf.org) Collective Leadership Works
- Robert Wood Johnson, Turning Point (www.rwjf.org) Collaborative Leadership Skills
- Search Institute (www.search-institute.org) 40 developmental assets
- National Youth Leadership Council (www.nylc.org)
- National After School Association (www.naaweb.org) Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (Fall 2011)

Original Big Ideas for Leadership Matters curriculum

1. Youth Work Is Unique As A Field & Requires Unique Management and Supervision

Youth Work has a distinct role and purpose distinct from other fields. It is youth centered, the essence is voluntary participation, and focus is on experiential activity. Programs range from large organizations with delineated staff roles, to small programs with positions that take on multiple duties. Supervisors and managers need perspectives and skills to coach and empower youth workers using a positive youth development framework (Pittman, Yohalem, 2003).

Managers and Supervisors often have a dual role on the front line role with youth, as well as management responsibilities. This requires a unique lens to blend of skills for Leading from the Middle (Barry Oshry 1994).

2. Knowledge and Experience Base Varies:

We need to provide professional development that addresses the uniqueness of effective leadership in youth development to help develop an effective workforce. In both large and small programs, skill sets of supervisors will be unique as training or background skills vary greatly. Youth workers are too frequently dropped into situations without adequate preparation for supervising and leadership roles (Forum for Youth Investment, 2008).

3. Core Competencies Are Taking Hold:

Recent national focus on identifying youth work core competencies are helpful in focusing youth development skill sets and staff development. Core Competencies developed in 2009 address both Youth Workers and Youth Work Supervisors. Supervisors should be aware of the competencies and willing to take them into practice. One challenge is the number of core competency frameworks and the variation in content that has evolved. There is some recent effort to recognize commonalities across frameworks. (MOTT 2009, School's Out Washington 2009, National Afterschool Association 2012)

4. Self Knowledge and Reflective Practice Are Important:

Effective supervisors and leaders know their own unique skill set and their own strengths (Rath 2007 Strengths Finder, and Rath 2009 Strengths Based Leadership), and use reflective practice for optimal blending of their leadership skills with line staff strengths (Brookfield 1999). Recognizing unique strengths and differences helps in forming effective teams.

5. Staying on the Forefront of the Field:

Enhancing the youth work field with expertise in research based as well as experience based practice is important. Foundational knowledge on the topics of Quality, Youth Engagement, Cultural Responsiveness is important for youth work supervisors and managers, as we know what matters in the field of youth work. Supervisors and managers are in a position to influence, coach and mentor youth workers in these areas to assure quality and professionalism in the field of youth work.

Key Definitions:

1. **Leadership**— There are abundant resources on leadership and management; and it was a challenge scaling the content and intention of those resources to those applicable to the youth work context. Some definitions that help to bring clarity include:

“Leadership is a dynamic relationship based on mutual influence and common purpose between leaders and collaborators in which both are moved to higher levels of motivation and moral development as they effect real, intended change”. **Terry, R. (2005). *Authentic Leadership: Courage in Action* (revised). Action Wheel Publishing, 2005, 13 definitions of leadership, Bob Terry, *Authentic Leadership, Courage in Action*, presentation at the Executive Forum, September 23, 1998 p. 1:**

“The leader engages with followers and together create a connection that raises each of them to higher levels of motivation and morality”. **Bass, B, Avolio, B, (1994) *Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications p. 14**

2. **Youth Workers**—Someone who works in a program directly with young people to facilitate their personal, social, and educational development. – **Bowie, L, Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2006). “The Importance of Professional Development for Youth Workers”, *Child Trends, Research To Results Practitioner Insights*, p. 1.**

Youth Work is an umbrella term to refer to those working in the after school, school-age care, out-of-school-time, youth development, recreation and youth services fields. **Starr, B, Yohalem, N, Gannett, E., (October 2009) *School’s Out Washington, Next Generation Youth Work Coalition, “Youth Work Core Competencies: A Review of Existing Frameworks and Purposes”, p. 3***

3. **Non-Formal Learning**-- “non-formal learning opportunities are commonly described as youth development based on a strength based philosophy and a way of working with young people that is respectfully grounded in everyday life, builds from where young people are, and honors the partnership between youth and adults in the learning process. Other names applied to non-formal learning programs and activities are afterschool, out of school time, youth development work, school enrichment, complimentary learning, or simply youth programs”. **Walker, J. April (2009) “Once We Know it We Can Grow It: A Framework for Quality Non Formal Learning Opportunities and Youth Work Practice”, white paper Youth Work Institute, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Youth Development**
4. **Core Competencies for Youth Workers**-- “Core competencies are the ability of afterschool educators to apply a specific set of knowledge and skills to their day to day practice”. “Core competencies articulate what it is that adults working with children and youth need to know and do in order to deliver high quality, developmental programming Competencies should be concrete, research-based and achievable, establishing standards of practice that can serve as the basis for career development systems and policies that enhance quality and lead to increased recognition of those working in the field.” **Starr, B, Yohalem, N, Gannett, E., (October 2009) *School’s Out***

Washington, Next Generation Youth Work Coalition, “Youth Work Core Competencies: A Review of Existing Frameworks and Purposes”, p. 3

“a set of core skills that all youth development workers should possess. Knowledge, skills and personal attributes of youth development workers allowing them to be a resource to youth, organizations, and communities. “ www.aed.org/Youth source **Child Trends, Research To Results Practitioner Insights, (December 2006), “The Importance of Professional Development for Youth Workers”**

The Mott Foundation and the National Collaboration For Youth have professional development competencies specifically for Supervisors as well as youth workers. **Starr, B, Yohalem, N, Gannett, E., (October 2009) School’s Out Washington, Next Generation Youth Work Coalition, “Youth Work Core Competencies: A Review of Existing Frameworks and Purposes”, p. 10**

5. Basic Youth Needs—Knopka (1973) University of MN.

- Feel a sense of safety and structure
- Experience active participation, group membership, and belonging
- Develop self work through meaningful contribution
- Experiment to discover self, gain independence and gain control over one’s life
- Develop significant positive relationships with peers and at least one adult
- Discuss conflicting values and form one’s own
- Feel pride of competence and mastery
- Expand one’s capacity to enjoy life and know that success is possible

II. STEPS TO DEFINING AND REFINING THE CURRICULUM CONTENT

A.ABSTRACTED ARTICLES FROM LITERATURE SEARCH (BY TOPIC)

Organizational Challenge

1. **Wilson-Ahlstrom, A, Yohalem, N, Craig, D. (2010). "Shining A light on Supervision: Lessons from the Beacons", Forum for Youth Investment, Out of School Time Commentary, February 2010, Washington D.C., available on-line at www.forumfyi.org**

"Sink or swim" too often describes youth workers arriving on the job. The way youth work supervisor coaches, mentors and interacts with youth work staff is a key element in the performance of their job. Finding the time and means to provide on the job coaching and support to staff is a critical capacity to develop. As the field of youth work finds a more professional foundation, core competencies have evolved. In fact there are many frameworks of core competencies that have emerged in the last few years. Several of the frameworks specifically offer core competencies for Supervisors of youth workers. The article provides a brief list of some commonalities between the supervisory competencies. A unique aspect of the article is a feature called "A Week in the Life" (pgs 5-7) which highlights strong supervision practices as provided in Beacons programs.

This article uses multiple sources:

- Research highlights
 - Core Competency frameworks for supervisors
 - Interviews with multiple youth work organizations
 - Tangible examples of effective supervisory practices
2. **Weiss, H, Little, P (May 2008). "Strengthening Out of School Time Nonprofits: The Role of Foundations in Building Organizational Capacity", a white paper funded by The Wallace foundation**

This report funded by the Wallace Foundation documents discussions about Out of School Time non-profits maximizing the opportunity to create greater impact in difficult economic times.

Seven organizational challenges are documented in the proceedings as meaningful ways for foundations to invest in improving OST nonprofits to become high performing:

- Effective Leadership to manage complex, results oriented organizations
 - Effective OST leaders p. 10
 - Understand the difference between operations and strategy
 - Make decisions that are mission driven and tied to strategy
 - Spearhead benchmarking efforts
 - Set a climate of learning and innovation
 - Adapt to new ideas and trends
 - Create and expand networks beyond their circle, with city leaders and agencies, with schools, other sectors like health and early childhood

- Advocate effectively to promote the public and political will necessary to sustain OST
 - Promote and sustain staff
 - Engage their boards
- Mission Driven approach is necessary in the competitive funding environment
 - Ability to benchmark and use information for adaptation to track performance and feed evaluation information back into the organization to adapt and change to meet shifting field and client demands
 - Develop an effective workforce through professional staff development
 - Creating and maintaining internal and external networks is key to survival.
 - Integrating policy and advocacy with direct service to promote sustainability of the organization and the sector
 - Developing and implementing a sound sustainability plan

Three of these challenges are most pertinent to the Leadership Matters curriculum: Effective Leadership, Professional Staff Development, and Internal/External Networks.

3. Larson, R., Walker, K (2008), Dilemmas of Practice: Challenges to Program Quality Encountered by Youth Program Leaders. University of IL, p. 20.

Table I: Categories and Subcategories of Program Leader Dilemmas

- Supporting Youth’s Participation in Program Activities
- Cultivating Program Norms and Enforcing Rules
- Responding to Youth’s Personalities and Relationships
- Reconciling the Organizational System and Youth Development
- Adapting to top-down policies, directives and bureaucratic requirements
- Dealing with limited time and resources
- Accommodating different leadership styles and philosophies among front line staff
- Interfacing with External Worlds

The category of accommodating different leadership styles and philosophies among front line staff was the most relevant for consideration in developing the curriculum. Dilemmas in this category were reviewed for consideration as activities for discussion.

Unique Context of Youth Work

1. Wilson-Ahlstrom, A, Yohalem, N, Pittman, K, (2008). “Unpacking Youth Work Practice”. Out-of-School Time Policy Commentary #12, The Forum for Youth Investment, Washington D.C.

The primary focus of this curriculum is to acknowledge that youth work practice is complex. This commentary highlights the reality of the youth work environment where staff regularly navigate complicated interactions and dilemmas while at the same time building caring relationships with youth and delivering program content. “Workforce investment strategies need to be equally complex. Professional development efforts for

youth workers need to be specific and contextualized in order to be relevant and effective.” P. 1

As the field of youth work evolves and is continually influenced by a range of academic disciplines and practice fields, “our ... understanding is deepening...leading to a more nuanced picture of what program staff do, one that pushes beyond the notion of specific and divisible competencies toward a more holistic understanding of youth work practice.” P.2

The current approach to promoting individuals within the field “does little to ensure that staff have the supervision and support they need to handle the complexity of their jobs. In contrast to other professions and other countries, US youth workers are too frequently recruited quickly and “dropped” into situations without adequate preparation or supervision”. P 11

2. “Opportunity in Hard Times: Building Out-of-School time Learning Systems That Last,” The Wallace Foundation Report on the Conference on Out-of-School Time Learning, Washington, D.C. February 2009.

This report was generated recently to highlight discussion by 108 out of school time decision makers from 5 cities supported by Wallace Foundation who attended a conference in February 2009 to discuss the current economic storm (cities included Boston, Chicago, NYC, Providence, and Washington DC). The result was a suggestion that six action elements may achieve a coordinated approach for improving out of school time. These six elements are:

- Committed leadership- including top political, school, community, and OST leaders to secure funding and other resources, and shape policy
- A coordinating entity- to manage the development of plans, link disparate OST players, build citywide attention and support for OST and ensure that plans and performance stays on track
- Multi-year planning- to set goals and priorities
- Reliable information
- Expanding participation to reach more children and ensure that they attend often enough to benefit
- A commitment to quality- quality programs most benefit children therefore scarce OST funding should be directed to delivering high quality programming.

This YWI Leadership curriculum is invested in the first of the six action elements- committed leadership- and focused specifically on strengthening OST leaders. The conference results speak to Leadership and Coordination in terms of forming alliances and ensuring that each participant is committed to, and has confidence in, the system building work is essential if it is to withstand inevitable changes in policy and politics in scare times. The need to establish greater trust among groups that otherwise might compete for scarce resources is essential. Providence, RI, is an example where relationships have become collegial enough to approach a group of providers without fear of touching off a grab-for-funds war, ask for consensus on which organizations can ask among them which would be best suited for a particular grant.”

Core Competencies

1. Starr, B, Yohalem, N, Gannett, E, (2009), "Youth Work Core Competencies: A Review of Existing Frameworks and Purposes", Schools Out Washington, Next Generation Youth Work Coalition, p. 3 (also available on the NIOST website as of Oct 2009).

This publication was recently released (October 2009) to provide an overview and comparative matrix of many frameworks for Youth Work Core Competencies that exist. Although dozens of frameworks have evolved in the past decade, the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition chose 14 frameworks to analyze, focusing on frameworks that target professionals working with youth ages 5-18. The attempt is to provide a unifying view of competencies in the field of youth work. The publication includes weblinks to each of the 14 competencies, as well as a useful page that categorizes the Common, Less Common, and Outlier competencies (p. 7).

For purposes of the Leadership Matters curriculum, the most useful of the 14 frameworks are the two that include specific and separate competencies for Supervisors (Mott Foundation and National Collaboration for Youth Competencies).

"Emerging research in the OST arena as well as a more robust body of literature in early childhood education, underscores the importance of professional development to strengthening the quality of services delivered to children and youth. Despite this evidence ... the field lacks a systematic commitment or approach to professional development. Core competencies articulate what it is that adults working with children and youth need to know and do in order to deliver high quality, developmental programming. Competencies should be concrete, research-based and achievable, establishing standards of practice that can serve as the basis for career development systems and policies that enhance quality and lead to increased recognition of those working in the field." At the organizational level, core competencies often serve as a basis for job descriptions, professional development planning, supervision, hiring and career lattices." P 4

Figure 1 (p. 4): Directors/Administrators use core competencies for

- interviewing, hiring, job descriptions, staff orientation/training, staff evaluation
- professional development goal setting and planning for director
- establishing salary scale based on educational achievement/demonstrated competency

2. "Core Competencies for Afterschool Educators" Mott Foundation Working Paper, March 2009, p. www.afterschoolprofessional.info/

The Mott Foundation Core Competencies publication that was released spring 2009 identifies supervisor specific competencies that are useful for the Leadership Matters curriculum. The curriculum intends to address how to operationalize several of these competencies.

The perspective in the publication about the role of afterschool supervisors is also useful, and describes the position as, “Program leaders who are responsible for the supervision, support and professional development of afterschool educators. Supervisors must have a working knowledge of the same competencies needed by their afterschool staff. The core competencies may help create this professional development plan. As managers, programs supervisors must possess a set of competencies related to their responsibilities to support their staff. In addition, it is important to note that program supervisors likely have additional operational and administrative duties such as budget management and record keeping.” P. 2

“Core Competencies for Afterschool Supervisors: p. 13

- Ability to articulate within the organization and to external stakeholders the programs mission and goals, and how program activities align to them
- Ability to design program activities that support program goals and incorporate needs and interests of program participants, thier families and the broader community
- Ability to successfully manage program staff
- Ability to promote the professional growth and development of program staff
- Ability to engage, and support afterschool educators in implementing program activities to achieve program goals
- Has a working knowledge of and abilities to use resources within the broader community
- Ability to gather and review program data for timely program improvement

As one of the specific aspects of the Leadership Matters curriculum will be an emphasis on the importance of professional development, this publication includes a useful list for, “Planning for Effective Professional Development: Activities and Strategies” :p.18

- Awareness and knowledge through program orientation
- Readiness to apply knowledge to practice through training sessions and self-directed learning
- On-going support through staff meetings and observation and feedback
- Other: site visits, learning communities, mentoring, coaching, professional associations. professional conferences

3. Core Competencies of front line Youth Workers – National Collaboration for Youth 2005 National Youth Development Learning Network www.nassembly.org, www.nydic.org, http://wikis.lib.ncsu.edu/images/b/b8/Competencies_for_Youth_Workers.pdf

This is one of dozens of core competency frameworks that provides a list that may be useful for supervisors who participate in the Leadership Matters curriculum to engage in what youth workers need to know about their practice.

- Understands and applies basic child and adolescent development principles
- Communicates and develops positive relationships with youth
- Adapts, facilitates and evaluates age-appropriate activities with and for the group

- Respects and honors cultural and human diversity
- Involves and empowers youth
- Identifies potential risk factors in a program environment and takes measures to reduce those risks
- Cares for, involves and works with families and communities
- Works as a part of a team and shows professionalism
- Demonstrates the attributes and qualities of a positive role model
- Interacts with and relates to youth in ways that support asset building

4. Nee, J., Gannett, E., Starr, E. (2011) Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals, National Afterschool Association www.naaweb.org

Core knowledge and competencies describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed by professionals to provide high quality afterschool and youth development programming and support the learning and development of children and youth. Both core knowledge and core competencies are used to define the content of professional development curricula, set goals and outcomes for training and design mechanisms for the demonstration and assessment of practitioner skills. Close to 100 reviewers from across the country provided feedback to this newest framework of competencies. Dozens of frameworks from across the country were consolidated.

Professional Development

1. Bowie, L, Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2006). “The Importance of Professional Development for Youth Workers”, Child Trends, Research To Results Practitioner Insights.

The Leadership Matters curriculum will focus intently on the importance of professional development to assure quality of youth programming through skill development. Managers and supervisors invested in the importance of professional development will help assure that the field is unified and professionalized. This article provides specific steps for developing a professional development system for workers in youth programs (p. 5), and provides a good case study from a program in Washington D.C. that highlights Executive Level and All Staff Level professional development and training (p. 8), as well as a comprehensive bibliography (p. 9).

“Youth workers...enter the profession through a number of different paths, and thus, have backgrounds in a range of fields, including social work, education, public health, and community education. Other youth workers enter the profession without any formal education and training and gain knowledge and skills on the job. “ p. 1.

Value of professional development (p. 2):

- Improves program quality, and a long term interpersonal influence over youth
- Affects the survival of providers in the field through retention
- Vital to enhancing and sustaining a cadre of quality youth workers by advancing youth workers within the field
- Benefits the individual to handle the multiple roles and endless responsibilities

- Benefits the program and serve as a conduit to cross agency collaboration
- Benefits the field by legitimizing youth work and youth development

2. Hill, S., Natloff-Nieves, S, Townsend, L, (2009). “Putting Our Questions at the Center: After School Matters Practitioner Fellowships”, *Afterschool Matters*, p. 46-50

This article discusses how the fragmented nature of the field of youth work is beginning to consolidate to a more focused and professional level. The authors promote the concept of including practitioners in the development of the profession through practitioner research and inquiry as a way to help shape and define the field. The importance of bringing the youth worker voice and experience into the mix with academic research will provide for improved effectiveness. The specific strategy offered in this article is to offer a Fellowship experience in select communities across the nation to democratize the research through publications by practitioners in the field, giving voice to the practice experience. There is value in merging the academic research with practitioner inquiry.

3. Peter, N, (2009). “Defining Our Terms: Professional Development in Out of School Time”, *After School Matters* p. 34-41

This article is a current attempt to bring common definitions to the field of youth work. Some of the proposed definitions that are offered include specifically for the out-of-school time context:

- Professional Development
- Capacity Building
- Mentoring/Coaching
- Peer Networking and Professional Learning Communities
- Quality Improvement
- Technical Assistance
- Workshops/Training

For the Leadership Matters curriculum, the term most integrally incorporated is Professional Development. The article states, “Research in the out-of-school time (OST) field confirms a strong connection between professional development for staff and positive experiences and outcomes for youth Professional development for those who work with children and youth is fraught with challenges and ripe with opportunity—specifically, the opportunity to increase staff quality, which experts agree is critical to positive experiences for children and youth” (p. 1). In recent years the OST community has invested significant time and money into researching, creating, implementing and evaluating professional development activities for OST staff. These efforts, while important, have been hampered by irregular wording and inconsistent definitions...Some organizations distinguish professional development...from staff development...others use the terms interchangeably ... Because there is no standard OST professional development glossary, we have no common reference point through which to synchronize our terminology.”

“Proposed definition: Professional development refers to a spectrum of activities, resources, and supports that help practitioners work more effectively with or on behalf of children and youth. Professional development formats include workshops, conferences, technical assistance, apprenticeships, peer mentoring, professional memberships, college coursework and diverse offerings.” P. 34-36

4. Professional Development related to QUALITY: Walker, J, (2009). “Once We Know It, We Can Grow It”, University of MN Extension Center for Youth Development, White Paper Article

Quality influences the participation of youth, the satisfaction and retention of youth workers, and the impact programs have on young people, families and the community.

Quality is measurable, malleable and marketable. System level accountability is important to help practitioners, supervisors and organizations strengthen their work.

Poor quality is not neutral; it can be detrimental to youth. High quality shows measurable impact on school performance, social behavior, attitudes and beliefs.

Unique Context of Middle Management

1. Oshry, B. (1994) In The Middle, Power and Systems, Boston MA ISBN 0-910411015-8

The role of youth work manager or supervisor is often as a dual role with responsibilities face to face with youth as well as managing within the organization. The uniqueness of this middle role drew significant interest in the focus group discussions while trying to define the most useful curriculum components. Oshry’s book attempts to define the dilemmas associated with the middle manager role, but, more importantly, the opportunity for this to be a position of empowerment within the organization. This empowerment concept will be brought into the Leadership Matters curriculum.

Oshry: “Definition of the middle role...middles are expected to be responsive to others. The role is positioned such that middles believe they are supposed to be emissaries of others, extensions of others, negotiators for others, buffers for others. Such definitions encourages middles to act in the interests of specific others rather than in the interests of the system as a whole. Middleness is more than a telephone wire between Tops and Bottoms, that there is a legitimate perspective that goes with middleness that is different...which in fact do serve the best interests of the system”. P. 15

“The system power potential of Middles is to function as System Integrators—to act in ways which enhance the coordination of system parts...so that these parts function in sync with one another, so that they enhance rather than block one another, so that each part can adjust its performance to meet the requirements of the whole”. P 54 Middles are usually hired to be managers of system units, not as system integrators.

Leadership

1. **Boyce. K. (2006). "Using a comprehensive leadership framework as a scholarship and teaching tool". *Journal of Leadership Education*, 5 (2), 69-79.**

Boyce's article provides a framework to look at multiple views of leadership, which is very essential while diving into as big a subject as it is. The Leadership Matters curriculum will do a brief overview of these multiple frameworks to assure that we are not proposing one right answer, rather trying to find a context that fits for youth work supervisors and managers.

Boyce state, "At times leadership is very formal and at other times it is informal. At times leadership is very directive and autocratic and at other time it is very non-directive and open. Sometimes leadership appears to be very public, bold and obvious. Other times leadership appears to be very calm, quiet and filled with humility....links to life experiences and beliefs, and assess the degree to which the "theories" of leadership match the realities of the "practices of leadership. Often the degree of match between theory and practice is high; however that is not always the case.... It is important to demonstrate a level of effective application of leadership skills and practices in the real world and community --leadership that is efficient, useful and just in solving public problems and enhancing community life"

Finding this effective application for youth work supervision is key to the curriculum. The focal point for the experiential part of the curriculum will be based on Strengths Finder and Situational Leadership, with some overtones related to the Middle Manager role within a youth work organization.

Boyce's framework shows six views of leadership:

- **Personal/Trait Theory Leadership:** linked to biological and inborn traits, dependent personal style. Meyers Briggs work is one example
- **Situation/Team Leadership:** everyone has potential to lead and be a group member. Addresses the question of what type of resources are needed for success. Example: Hersey and Blanchard
- **Organizational/Positional Leadership:** Connected to organizational position and role. What plans, processes and system are used to organize the work. Examples: Bennis & Nannus, Kouzes & Posner
- **Power/Political Leadership:** connected to getting something done, and initiating change. Leadership is viewed as moving forward a personal agenda and/or empowerment and engagement of others. Formal and informal systems, build coalitions address issues of participation and involvement. What is the level of commitment of those who are stakeholders. Example: Byte, Block, Byrson & Crosby
- **Visionary Leadership:** Leaders provide a sense of direction for the future. What purpose, director or mission are we trying to accomplish? Example: Wheatley, Senge

- **Ethical Leadership:** Doing the right thing, moving toward a beneficial end or common good. What are the right things to do? Example: Covey, Kouzes & Posner.

This framework draws on scholarship and theory yet does not overwhelm participants with great complexity; it helps sort and examine the multiple leadership experiences they have and will encounter. The framework allows for a systematic examination of leadership perspectives, the respectful integration of participant life experience, opinions and beliefs regarding leadership and a useful tool to clearly communicate leadership concepts.

2. SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL- adapted from Ratzburg, W. "Blanchard Leadership Model", <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/1650/htmlblanchard.html?20092>

As stated in the previous abstract (Boyce), the extensive leadership material available makes it difficult to narrow down. Other Youth Work related supervisor courses such as The Consultation Center, Youth Development Training & Resource Center, New Haven, CT find the Situational Leadership Model useful and this will be briefly reviewed in the Leadership Matters curriculum.

Similar to the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid, this model takes into account situational variables. The developmental levels of a leader's subordinates play the greatest role in determining which leadership styles are most appropriate, whether a more directive or a more supportive role is helpful. The distinction is in readiness and competence of the subordinate, determining which of 4 leadership styles to implement.

High Experience	SUPPORTING Employee is highly experienced and unenthusiastic Discuss the situation and encourage employee to take the job in light of skills	COACHING Employee lacks experience and is unenthusiastic Closely supervise work while drawing out feelings about the task
	DELEGATING Employee is highly experienced and enthusiastic Allow staff to formulate and implement the work and the schedule on their own	DIRECTING Employee is inexperienced and enthusiastic Tell employee exactly what to do and closely monitor progress
Low Experience	High Enthusiasm Low Enthusiasm	

3. FOCUS ON STRENGTHS

a. Rath, T. (2007), *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, Gallup Press, NY, NY.

Tom Rath introduces his book in the context of living in a world that often revolves around fixing our weaknesses. He offers 3 books related to viewing ourselves and our colleagues from a strengths basis. Based on 40 years of Gallup poll research, he proposes 34 common talents, a common language and understanding about the variety and combination of strengths that each individual possesses. From a management perspective, the premise of the book is essential: “our studies indicate that people who do have the opportunity to focus on their strengths every day are six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs and more than three times as likely to report having an excellent quality of life in general...how easy it is to decrease the active disengagement or extreme negativity that runs rampant in organizations”. p. iii. Rath’s maxim of “You cannot be anything you want to be---but you can be a lot more of who you already are” p. 9 is a useful management perspective for Leadership Matters to consider.

b. Rath, T., Conchie, B. (2008) *Strengths Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams and Why People Follow*, Gallup Press, NY, NY.

The 34 Strengths Themes found in StrengthsFinder 2.0 can be clustered into four domains of leadership. The value in these 4 domains is found when looking across an organization to see where the balance of leadership style exists. Rath posits that successful leaders across all kinds of professional fields and business endeavors never have the exact same sequence of strengths. The usefulness for the Leadership Matters curriculum is recognize your individual strengths, the combination of strengths, which domain your leadership style lies, and where others in the organization balance your strengths.

Rath’s four domains of Leadership are described in detail in the book:

- Executing: the dominant strengths in this domain are in knowing how to make things happen. These are the people who will work tirelessly to implement at solution
- Influencing: the dominant strengths in this domain are in helping the team reach a much broader audience, making sure the group is
- Relationship Building: leaders with this strength have the unique ability to create groups and organizations that are much greater than the sum of their parts.
- Strategic Thinking: people with strength in this domain continually stretch our thinking for the future--- what could be.

The section of Strengths Based Leadership that discusses “The Collective Talent of a Team” p. 67-76 is also a useful consideration for the Leadership Matters curriculum.

4. **Haugen, H., & Harrington, B. (2009). Developing Leaders of Today. Presentation workshop at the 2009 National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA) Conference: Rochester, N.Y.**

Defining “Leadership for What?”

Varied nature and types of leadership:

- a. Types: autocratic, laissez-faire, and shared
- b. Leadership as a position of authority versus an activity
- c. Leadership for all versus a select few
- d. “Inside” vs. “outside” leadership

Leadership for What?

Clarifying Goals for individual versus group versus organizational versus community outcomes.

Types: Autocratic, Laissez-Faire, and Shared

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/library/internal/ScriptsFolder/LHage01135.4.mp3>

Leadership for All:

Leadership as an ability or talent, like musicality. All can do and can get better, but some seem to be born with more talent in an area.

Inside vs. Outside Leadership:

The importance of differentiating between and intentionally focusing on both “inside leadership,” which takes place inside existing organizations and involves youth who have access to and acceptance within them, and “outside leadership,” which occurs outside of these organizations with young people who do not have this access or acceptance (Klau, M., Boyd, S., & Luckow, L. (2006).

5. **Terry, R. (2005). Authentic Leadership: Courage in Action (revised). Action Wheel Publishing, 2005, 13 definitions of leadership, Bob Terry, Authentic Leadership, Courage in Action, presentation at the Executive Forum, September 23, 1998 p. 1**

“Leadership is a dynamic relationship based on mutual influence and common purpose between leaders and collaborators in which both are moved to higher levels of motivation and moral development as they effect real, intended change

6. **Kouzes, J., & Posner, B.Z. (2007) *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco; CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**

Written to describe how ordinary people can provide leadership at their personal best. Five practices of Exemplary Leadership are outlined. The leadership role in creating a climate of trust and building relationships is critical. Working with staff to develop confidence and competence is essential. Expecting the best from self and staff drives the organization to excel. Leaders need to be personally involved and rely on reflection and action.

B. FINDINGS: COMMON THEMES IDENTIFIED FROM LITERATURE REVIEW ABSTRACTS

1. Context of youth work leadership is unique

“Youth work practice is complex...involves a range of judgments and behaviors that must be weighted and juggled simultaneously in order for staff to be effective. Staff in youth programs regularly navigate complicated interactions and dilemmas while at the same time building caring relationships and delivering program content. Workforce investment strategies need to be specified and contextualized in order to be relevant and effective.” P.1 Forum for Youth Investment June 2008

2. Need for professional development for youth work supervisors is strong

- Need for youth workers to be regarded as professionals with access to professional development opportunities to improve their expertise and stay in the field. (Quality article Once We Know It We Can Grow It, Spring 2009)
- “Fifteen years ago marked a critical point in the history of youth development. AED needed a set of core competencies for youth work practice....As the field evolves and is continually influenced by a range of academic disciplines and practice fields, our ... understanding is deepening...leading to a more nuanced picture of what program staff do, one that pushes beyond the notion of specific and divisible competencies toward a more holistic understanding of youth work practice.” (Forum for Youth Investment June 2008)
- “The current thinking about youth worker preparation does little to ensure that staff have the supervision and support they need to handle the complexity of their jobs. In contrast to other professions and other countries, US youth workers are too frequently recruited quickly and “dropped” into situations without adequate preparation or supervision”. (Forum For Youth Investment June 2008)
- Professional Development opportunities can be created and incorporated to cover a span of time and activities including:
 - program orientation
 - training sessions and self-directed learning
 - staff meetings and observation and feedback
 - site visits, learning circles
- Value of professional development: (Child Trend Research to Results Dec 2006)
 - Improves program quality
 - Affects the survival of providers in the field
 - Vital to enhancing and sustaining a cadre of quality youth workers
 - Benefits the individual
 - Benefits the program
 - Benefits the field

3. Range of supervisor/manager skills and backgrounds

- Supervisors should ideally have a working knowledge of the same competencies they expect to be used by their afterschool staff. Core competencies may help define this professional development plan. As managers, programs supervisors must possess a set of competencies related to their responsibilities to support their staff, in addition, it is important to note that program supervisors have additional operational and administrative duties such as budget management and record keeping. (Mott Foundation 2009- Core Competencies)
- The system power potential of those in the middle of the organization to function as System Integrators—to act in ways which enhance the coordination of system parts...so that these parts function in sync with one another, can help enhance rather than block one another, so that each part can adjust its performance to meet the requirements of the whole”. P 54 Middle managers are usually hired to be managers of system units, not as system integrators. (Oshry, In The Middle, 1994)
- Effective OST leaders (Wallace Foundation White Paper “Strengthening OST Nonprofits (May 2008)
 - Spearhead benchmarking efforts
 - Set a climate of learning and innovation
 - Adapt to new ideas and trends
- The developmental levels of a leader’s subordinates play the greatest role in determining which leadership styles are most appropriate, whether a more directive or a more supportive role is helpful. The distinction is in readiness and competence of the subordinate, determining which of 4 leadership styles to implement. (Blanchard Leadership Style- Situational Leadership Model)
- Strengths Based Leadership Rath 2009. Maximizing the work team by recognizing and working with the different strengths of each individual on the team. There is value in knowing your individual strengths, and in investing in knowing the strengths of each individual on the team. There are four basic needs all employees need to have in order to be willing to follow leadership. There are also 4 Domains of Leadership essential to a balanced and functional organization.

4. Youth worker competencies are specific

A youth worker is someone who works in a program directly with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development....they enter the profession through a number of different paths, and thus, have backgrounds in a range of fields, including social work, education, public health, and community education. Other youth workers enter the profession without any formal education and training and gain knowledge and skills on the job. (Child Trends Research to Results Practitioner Insights Dec 2006)

As the field evolves and is continually influenced by a range of academic disciplines and practice fields, our understanding is deepening, leading to a more nuanced picture of what program staff do, one that pushes beyond the notion of specific and divisible competencies toward a more holistic understanding of youth work practice (Forum for Youth Investment, Unpacking Youth Work Practice, June 2008)

Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals (National Afterschool Association, 2011)

Core knowledge and competencies is the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed by professionals to provide high quality afterschool and youth development programming and support the learning and development of children and youth. Ten content areas are outlined as informed by 20 core competency frameworks from across the nation were compiled into a composite. The one Content area most relevant to this curriculum is Professional Development and Leadership. The specific competencies in this content area are:

- Displaying professionalism in practice
- Ongoing professional growth
- Leadership and Advocacy

Core Competencies of front line Youth Workers - (National Collaboration for Youth 2005)

- Communicates and develops positive relationships with youth
- Understands and applies basic child and adolescent development principles
- Adapts, facilitates and evaluates age-appropriate activities with and for the group
- Respects and honors cultural and human diversity
- Involves and empowers youth
- Identifies potential risk factors in a program environment and takes measures to reduce those risks
- Cares for, involves and works with families and communities
- Works as a part of a team and shows professionalism
- Demonstrates the attributes and qualities of a positive role model
- Interacts with and relates to youth in ways that support asset building

5. System building- need to strengthen relationships outside the organization

- Importance of supervisors and managers to advocate effectively to promote the public and political will necessary to sustain OST by creating and expanding networks beyond their circle, with city leaders and agencies, with schools, other sectors like health and early childhood
- It is important to demonstrate a level of effective application of leadership skills and practices in the real world and community --leadership that is efficient, useful and just in solving problems and enhancing community life

- Wallace Foundation recommends six action elements that may achieve a coordinated approach for improving out of school time. These six elements are:
 - Committed leadership- including top political, school, community, and OST leaders to secure funding and other resources, and shape policy
 - A coordinating entity- to manage the development of plans, link disparate OST players, build citywide attention and support for OST and ensure that plans and performance stays on track
 - Multi-year planning- to set goals and priorities
 - Reliable information
 - Expanding participation to reach more children and ensure that they attend often enough to benefit
 - A commitment to quality- quality programs most benefit children therefore scarce OST funding should be directed to delivering high quality programming.

- Leadership and Coordination: Forming alliances and ensuring that each participant is committed to, and has confidence in, the system building work is essential if it is to withstand inevitable changes in policy and politics in scare times. (We need to establish greater trust among groups that otherwise might compete for scarce resources.... In Providence, RI, relationships have become collegial enough to approach a group of providers without fear of touching off a grab-for-funds war, ask for consensus on which organizations can ask among them which would be best suited for a particular grant.”

- Effective leadership involves
 - Creating and expanding networks beyond their circle, with city leaders and agencies, with schools, other sectors like health and early childhood
 - Advocating effectively to promote the public and political will necessary to sustain OST
 - Creating and maintaining internal and external networks is key to survival

6. Quality

- Wallace Foundation suggests six action items for improving out of school time. One of these action items is a commitment to quality- quality programs most benefit children therefore scarce OST funding should be directed to delivering high quality programming (Wallace Foundation White Paper by Weiss, Strengthening Out of School Time Nonprofits May 2008)
- Quality influences the participation of youth, the satisfaction and retention of youth workers, and the impact programs have on young people, families and the community. (Walker, White Paper University of MN: Once We Know It, Spring 2009)
- Poor program quality is not neutral; it can be detrimental to youth. High quality shows measurable impact on school performance, social behavior, attitudes and beliefs. (Weikert Center)

C. Focus Groups (Fall 2009)

Two focus groups were held in September 2009 (one in Saint Paul, MN and one in Rochester, MN) to assess the usefulness of draft curriculum content based on the Big Ideas listed on Page 4.

Each focus group was scheduled as a 2 hour session to review the “platter” of potential content, and to refine which concepts are most important to include in the curriculum. The Saint Paul focus group had 10 participants and Rochester had 9 participants.

Participants were offered a free ½ day Youth Work Institute Workshop session.

Agenda

- Opening: Introductions: participant name and brief reflection about what it was like to enter the role of supervisor in youth work. On a scale of 1 to 10 how stressful was your first year as a supervisor/manager?
- Hand out the “Big Ideas”. In what way do these ideas provide useful content for supervisors/managers/leaders?
- Review draft curriculum online—and answer the following questions
 - Thinking back to when you first entered the role of supervision, what were the most helpful resources to you as you entered this role? Name 1 or 3 sources.
 - Where do you go now for support or development of your skills related to supervision/management? Name 2 or 3 sources.
 - Looking at the proposed COURSE COMPONENTS—
 - Which of the 5 proposed curriculum sessions seems most compelling and why?
 - Which one seems the least compelling and why?
 - When Talking about CORE COMPETENCIES (proposed in Session 3), is this a useful way to frame the skills and knowledge required in supervision and management? What concerns you about using the COMPETENCY List?
- Who should the target audience be? New supervisors, intermediate supervisors, experienced supervisor?

Metro Area Participants -- Program Managers and Youth Work Supervisors from programs:

- Camp Fire USA
- YMCA Saint Paul
- Saint Paul Park and Recreation
- Plymouth Christian Youth Center
- Hennepin County Library
- Catholic Charities, St. Joseph Home for Children
- YDL leadership U of M masters degree student participant and youth worker
- Faith Community
- Stepping Stone Theatre
- 21st Century Learning Center Program (Mn Department of Education) and previous Boys and Girls Club supervisor

Rochester Area Participants -- Program Leaders and Youth Work Leaders

- Girl Scouts Rivertrails program coordinator
- Boys and Girls Club program supervisor
- 4H Youth Development, program coordinator
- Rochester Public Schools Community Education/ 21st Century Site Supervisor
- Family Y Mentors director
- Rochester International Youth Organization (serving Somali youth) program director
- Hispanic afterschool program coordinated through Olmsted County and Family Y
- Rochester Community and Technical College Youth program coordinator
- Faith Community- Youth Minister

Suggested Curriculum Changes Based on Focus Group Findings: Framing Key Concepts for the Course

1. **Preferred Title:**
“Leadership Matters: Enhancing Management Skills for Youth Work Supervisors”
2. **Target audience:** target for new supervisors (0-4 years of experience). Consider inviting those with 5 or more years of experience but know when they register they will be part of a mostly less experienced group of participants. Perhaps begin to craft a second session for more experienced supervisors, but not yet.
3. **Operationalize core competencies** for youth workers and for supervisors. Hand out the full list of competencies but selectively go in depth on the most relevant to the curriculum (not yet determined but likely related to SUPERVISOR COMPETENCY) (review NIOST matrix description of usefulness wide variety of topics covered by 14 different competency lists). What does this look like, how do we get there without going through each competency? This session will probably need to cover 4 ½ hours of content.
4. Make sure Session One (**Context of Supervision and Management in Youth Development**) is not a repeat of material they have already received in other YWI sessions like Youth Work Matters--- use the session to lay the ground work for the other 4 sessions and the usefulness of new skills and perspectives that will be included
5. Describe **Leading from the Middle**- (position of empowerment) earlier in the curriculum (during Session One).
6. Where to add in a segment on ways to **Network with Peers** (is there a resourceful networking exercise from CLF or Community Vitality?)
7. **Strengths Based Leadership** (part of Session 4): do the individual assessment that focuses on positive strengths rather than individual weaknesses, but also get a picture of the organization not just individuals, using StrengthsBased Leadership material by Tom Rath.
8. Create a **resource list** for staying on the forefront of the field.
9. Post **pertinent research articles** and discussion questions for them to respond to.
10. Anything from coaching and mentoring that would be helpful (coaching and being coached).
11. Staying on the Forefront of YW Trends and Implications- what is the best way to do this without repeating other workshops on YE, Quality, Cultural Responsiveness. Avoid having a sampler of Youth Work Institute courses. The challenge is how to make this segment new information for those participants who may have attended previous training on the topics.

D. Key Contacts:

Conversations with professional colleagues helped shape the curriculum development:

- Janet Beyer, Area Program Leader, Youth Work Institute, University of MN Extension
- Joyce Walker, Director, Youth Work Institute, University of MN Extension
- Deborah Stewart and Terry Freeman, The Consultation Center, Youth Development Training & Resource Center, New Haven, CT
- Ellen Gannet, Executive Director, NIOST (National Institute on Out of School Time), Boston, MA
- Chris Grota, Boys & Girls Clubs youth work supervisor, Milwaukee, WI
- Steve Courts, Executive Director, Rochester Area Family Y, Rochester, MN
- Sheila Oehrlein, Mn Department of Education, 21st Century Learning Centers

E. RECOMMENDED Online Resources for Leadership Matters

Web Site Resource List:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/YouthWorkInstitute> Youth Work Institute

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/YouthWorkInstitute/toolkits> Youth Work Institute, Quality Toolkits

<http://www.youthengagement.umn.edu> Youth Work Institute Youth Engagement site

<http://www.forumfyi.org> Forum for Youth Investment

<http://www/hfrp.org> Harvard Family Research Project

<http://www.niost.org> National Institute on Out Of School Time

<http://www.nydic.org> National Youth Development Information Center

<http://www.gpidea.org> on-line learning resource (11 university consortium)

<http://www.aed.org/Youth> Core Competencies for Youth Workers

<http://www.nti.aed.org> Supervising Youth Development Practice

<http://www.naaweb.org> National Afterschool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals

III. SYNTHESIZING RESULTS:

Based on the Literature Review, Consultations with Colleagues, and Focus Groups, this preliminary draft of Course Components for pilot Leadership Matters 15 hour curriculum resulted. Each session represents a 3-hour curriculum segment.

SESSION ONE: CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP, SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

BIG IDEAS:

Youth work has a distinct role and purpose Youth work is distinct from other fields. It is youth centered, the essence is voluntary participation, and focus is on experiential activity. Programs range from large organizations with delineated staff roles, to small programs with positions that take on multiple duties. Supervisors and managers need perspectives and skills to coach and empower youth workers using a positive youth development framework (Pittman, Yohalem, 2003).

Managers and supervisors often have a dual role on the front line with youth, as well as management responsibilities with staff.

Knowledge and experience base varies

We need to provide professional development that addresses the uniqueness of effective leadership in youth development to help nurture an effective workforce.

SESSION OVERVIEW:

- I. Introductions
 - a. Getting to know you activity to develop a sense of network with other youth work supervisors
- II. Setting the Stage
 - a. Unique need for Leadership Matters
 - b. Definitions and distinctions between Leadership vs. Management
 - c. Overview of the 5 Sessions
 - i. Introduce StrengthsFinder and Strengths Based Leadership
 - ii. Introduce the Youth Work Core Competencies
 - iii. Introduce professionalizing the field of youth work
 - iv. Introduce need for staying on the forefront
- III. Experience and Reflect
 - a. Activities
 - i. Mental models of youth work supervisors (NIOST 2-6 and 2-7)
 - ii. Leadership vs. Management (composite of definitions and scale)
 - iii. In The Middle (Oshry)
 - iv. Process Practice Dilemmas using Suggestion Circle (NIOST model)

b. Articles to review

- Read “Unpacking Youth Work” Article for Session 2
- “Leading From the Middle” excerpt from Oshry
- Strengths Based Leadership book and on-line tool

IV. Overview of Next Session

RESOURCE/RESEARCH BASIS:

- **Forum for Youth Investment (2008)**
- **Oshry (1994)**
- **Konopka**
- **NIOST curriculum**
- **Rath (2007 and 2008)**

SESSION TWO: KNOWING LEADERSHIP STYLES AND STRENGTHS

BIG IDEA: Self knowledge and reflective practice are important

Effective supervisors and leaders know their own skill set and their own strengths (Rath StrengthsFinder, 2007 and Strengths Based Leadership, 2008), and use reflective practice for optimal blending of their leadership skills with line staff strengths (Brookfield 1999).

SESSION OVERVIEW:

- I. Review from last session
- II. Setting The Stage
 - a. Central focus on youth - understanding role of middle managers (face to face with youth as well as strategic direction for organization)
 - b. Need to know self and individual strengths (Rath 2007) (Brookfield 1999)
 - c. Need to know staff (Rath 2008)
- III. Experience and Reflect
 - a. Activities
 - i. Strengths Based Leadership (4 types of leadership within an organization) (Rath 2008)
 - ii. Practice Dilemmas using Suggestion Circle
- IV. Next Session

OTHER POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

- Challenge Traditional Perspectives of Youth Voice—p. 3 Quality Toolkit on Youth Engagement
- Essentials for Hiring Youth Workers (NIOST p. 5-4)
- Trends Affecting OST Programs NIOST 4-10

RESOURCE/RESEARCH BASIS:

- Strengths-Based Leadership (Rath 2007, 2008)
- Suggestion Circle (NIOST 6-2)
- Brookfield Reflective Inquiry (1999)

SESSION THREE: CORE COMPETENCIES FOR YOUTH WORK SUPERVISORS

BIG IDEA: Recent national focus on recognizing youth work core competencies (MOTT 2009) (NAA 2011) are helpful in focusing youth development skills sets and staff development. Core Competencies developed in 2009 address both Youth Workers and Youth Work Supervisors. Discuss and learn how to take supervisor competencies into practice.

SESSION OVERVIEW:

- I. Overview from last session and Team building exercise
- II. Setting the Stage
 - a. core competencies
 - i. for youth workers
 - ii. for youth work supervisors
- III. Experience and Reflect
 - a. Activities
 - i. Shining a Light on Youth Work Supervision (Forum for Youth Investment 2010)
 - ii. Process for operationalizing youth work supervisor core competencies
 - iii. Process a Practice Dilemma using Suggestion Circle (NIOST)
 - iv. Pro and Con perspective
- IV. Overview of Next Session

RESOURCE/RESEARCH BASIS:

- Forum for Youth Investment articles “Shining a Light” (2010) “Unpacking Youth Work Practice (2008)
- Core Competencies for Afterschool Educators (Mott 2009)
- National Afterschool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals (2011)

SESSION FOUR: EXPERTISE AND PROFESSIONALISM OF YOUTH WORKERS

BIG IDEA: Expertise and professionalism provide more depth to the competency frameworks that are emerging nationally.

SESSION OVERVIEW:

- I. Overview of youth worker expertise and professionalism (Reed and Walker research)
 - a. Understands and applies basic child and adolescent development principles
 - b. Communicates and develops positive relationships with youth
 - c. Adapts, facilitates and evaluates age-appropriate activities with and for the group
 - d. Respects and honors cultural and human diversity
 - e. Involves and empowers youth
 - f. Identifies potential risk factors in a program environment and takes measures to reduce those risks
 - g. Cares for, involves and works with families and communities
 - h. Works as a part of a team and shows professionalism
 - i. Demonstrates the attributes and qualities of a positive role model

- II. Experience and Reflect
 - a. Activities:
 - i. Building a strong staff (NIOST chapter 5)
 - ii. Process a Practice Dilemma using Suggestion Circle
 - iii. Refine Action Plan

- III. Overview of Next Session

Articles to review for next time (Next Generation Youth Work Coalition site)

RESOURCE/RESEARCH BASIS:

- **Reed and Walker Research**
- **Next Generation Youth Work Coalition website**

SESSION FIVE: STAYING ON THE FOREFRONT OF THE FIELD

BIG IDEA: There is value in knowing your staff, knowing competency frameworks, appreciating the uniqueness of youth work expertise, having a network of peers and an action plan.

SESSION OVERVIEW:

- I. Review from last session
- II. Setting the Stage
 - a. Ways of Staying on the Forefront
 - i. Networking with other supervisors
 - ii. Knowing some of the Research
 - iii. Professional development opportunities
 - iv. Interaction with staff
- III. Experience and Reflect
 - a. Activities
 - i. Presentation of Action Plans
- IV. Final Wrap-up and Evaluation

RESOURCE/RESEARCH BASIS:

**All of the previous resources and research base come together
Action Plans are the focus of this session.**