



ATOD Youth Leadership Academy VII: September 2014

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Description of respondents

Feedback on the Academy was collected from participating students, parents and other adults who chaperoned the event, as well as P&I grantees and Youth Group Leaders.

Youth

A total of 141 youth provided feedback about the YLA weekend, for a response rate of approximately 93 percent. The majority (73%) were in high school (14% in 9th grade; 21% in 10th grade; 17% in 11th grade; and 16% in 12th grade), while 25 percent were in middle school (5% in 7th grade and 20% in 8th grade). Nearly all youth (98%) said they will continue to participate in their youth group next year, excluding those who said it was not applicable (12th grade students).

Parents and other adults

A total of 8 adult chaperones provided feedback about the weekend. Five of the adult chaperones identified as parents or guardians with the remaining three identifying as an adult chaperone with no relation to the youth.

The forms indicate that ten P&I coordinators and six Youth Group Leaders provided feedback about the YLA conference. P&I coordinators may also have identified as Youth Group Leaders.

Results

Overall participant satisfaction

General satisfaction with the Academy

Overall, satisfaction with the Academy was very high. All youth and adult chaperones “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the conference was useful (100%). All youth felt that the information they learned will help them be a more effective youth leader (100%). All adult chaperones said they felt included in the conference activities, and agreed that the youth had an opportunity to personally contribute to the discussions (7 of 7 and 8 of 8, respectively; see Figure 1).

Most of the participants provided positive feedback on the resort and accommodations (99% to 100%). Nearly all youth and all adult chaperones would consider attending YLA in the future (98% and 8 of 8, respectively) and youth, specifically, felt that the small interactive group activities helped them learn the information (99%). The majority of youth (99%) said they would recommend the conference to their friends (99%). Most participants felt the poster session was useful (94% to 7 of 7).

1. Overall satisfaction

Item	Percent of participants who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”		
	Youth (N=141)	Adult chaperone (N=7-8)	P&Is/ Youth Group Leaders (N=16)
Overall, this conference was useful.	100%	8/8	94%
The information I learned will help me be a more effective youth leader.	100%	-	-
The accommodations were comfortable/I liked the resort.	99%	8/8	100%
The small interactive group activities helped me learn the information.	99%	-	-
I would recommend the Academy to my friends	99%	-	-
The activities were well organized.	98%	8/8	88%
I would consider attending the Youth Leadership Academy in the future/next year.	98%	8/8	-
The poster session was useful.	94%	7/7	94%
Youth had an opportunity to personally contribute to the discussions.	-	8/8	-
I felt included in the conference activities.	-	7/7	-
The Academy met my expectations.	-	-	81%

Note: Some items were only asked of certain groups of participants. Results are reported in counts rather than percentages when N<10.

Participant satisfaction with keynote presenters

All P&Is/Youth Group Leaders “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the keynote presenters were organized and prepared to teach the information and presented in a way that was easy to understand (100%). The majority of P&Is/Youth Group Leaders said the keynote presenters responded well to questions (94%). All adult chaperones “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the presenters were knowledgeable (8 of 8; see Figure 2).

2. Adult response to keynote presenters

Item	Percent who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”	
	Adult chaperone (N=8)	P&Is/Youth Group Leaders (N=16)
The keynote presenters were knowledgeable.	8/8	-
The keynote presenters were organized and prepared to teach the information.	-	100%
The keynote was presented in a way that was easy to understand.	-	100%
The keynote presenters responded well to questions.	-	94%

Note: Results are reported in counts rather than percentages when N<10. Some items were only asked of certain groups of participants.

When asked about the keynote presentations, youth reported an increase in overall knowledge. All youth “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the presenters set a positive tone for the academy and that after the keynote, they understand how the ‘YOGOWYPI’ approach can create a solid prevention program (100%). Nearly all youth said the presenters were fun and engaging and after the keynote they understand that responsibility is key to making programs work (99% each). The majority of youth said that after the keynote they understand the ‘5 thieves’ of responsibility (89%; see Figure 3).

3. Youth response to keynote presenters (N=139-141)

	Percent who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”
The presenters set a positive tone for the academy.	100%
After the keynote, I understand how the ‘YOGOWYPI’ approach can create a solid prevention program.	100%
The presenters were fun and engaging.	99%
After the keynote, I understand that responsibility is key to making programs work.	99%
After the keynote, I understand the ‘5 thieves’ of responsibility.	89%

P&I and Youth Group Leader perceptions and experiences

P&Is and Youth Group Leaders were asked more extensively about their participation in the Academy. The majority of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had an opportunity to personally contribute to the discussions and sessions (94%). Fewer P&Is and Youth Group Leaders felt they had an opportunity to provide input into the planning of the Academy (63%) and most respondents did not feel they had adequate time to prepare for the conference and/or recruit youth and parents/chaperones (38%; see Figure 4).

4. P&I/Youth Group Leader experiences (N=16)

Item	Percent who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”
I had an opportunity to personally contribute to the discussions and sessions.	94%
I had an opportunity to provide input into the planning of the Academy.	63%
I had adequate time to prepare for the conference and/or recruit youth and parents/chaperones.	38%

Participant learning

All P&Is/Youth Group Leaders felt youth learned something new as a result of the Academy (100%) and nearly all thought that youth were engaged during the Academy and (94%; see Figure 5).

5. P&I/Youth Group Leader perceptions of youth learning (N=16)

	Percent who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”
Youth learned something new as a result of the Academy.	100%
Youth were engaged during the Academy.	94%

Five of the 8 adult chaperones identified as a parent of a student who was attending YLA. Four of five parents said they have a better understanding of their child’s role in the youth group, have a new appreciation for their child’s leadership abilities, and can better support their child as a leader as a result of the Academy (Figure 6).

6. Parent learning (N=5)

	Number who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”
I have a better understanding of my child’s role in the youth group.	4/5
I have a new appreciation for my child’s leadership abilities.	4/5
I know how I can better support my child as a leader.	4/5

Note: Results are reported in counts rather than percentages when N<10.

When asked what was the most helpful thing they learned at the Youth Leadership Academy, youth most often mentioned: specific leadership skills (including SLANT and YOGOWYPI), how to improve their communication skills, how to make community change, and that they are better together. Adult chaperones mentioned learning how to include others in leadership and improve their youth group. The P&Is/Youth Group Leaders said they found the strategic planning and how to utilize personality types most helpful. A full list of participant comments is included in the appendix.

Youth group outcomes

Youth and the P&Is/Youth Group Leaders also reported on the ways in which their youth groups will benefit from participating in the Academy. In particular, questions focused on youth group member cohesion and connections between groups.

In general, respondents felt that youth were able to make connections with one another. Nearly all of the P&Is/Youth Group Leaders responding to the survey reported that most of the youth attending YLA also attended the youth group meetings (94%). All of the P&Is/Youth Group Leaders said that it was useful to mix students from their group with students from other groups. All of the P&Is/Youth Group Leaders also said that youth had opportunities to spend time with the other youth from their group and youth from other youth groups. Youth tended to agree. Most youth said they felt more connected to the others in their own youth group (99%) and youth in other youth groups (95%) after the Academy (Figure 7).

This year, when youth were asked if they got the names and contact information of youth from outside their youth group, twenty-six percent said “yes.” Sixty-nine percent of P&Is/Youth Group Leaders also said they plan to connect with other youth groups after this weekend (Figure 8).

7. Youth group outcomes

Item	Percent who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”	
	Youth (N=141)	P&Is/Youth Group Leaders (N=16)
Most of our youth who attended YLA have also attended our youth group meetings.	-	94%
Youth had opportunities to spend time with youth from their own group .	-	100%
Youth had opportunities to spend time with youth from other groups .	-	100%
It was useful to mix students from our group with students from other groups.	-	100%
I feel more connected to the other youth in my own group after participating in this conference.	99%	-
I feel more connected to the other youth in other youth groups after participating in this conference.	95%	-

8. Youth group connections

Item	Percent who replied “Yes”	
	Youth (N=126)	P&Is/Youth Group Leaders (N=16)
Did you get the names & contact information of youth from outside your youth group?	26%	-
Do you plan to connect with other youth groups after this weekend?	-	69%

Breakout sessions

Changes in knowledge

All participants were asked to complete breakout-specific evaluations at the end of each session. There were three sessions that all participants had an opportunity to attend (How to Have Your Voice Heard, Get a Grip and Get Engaged, and Communicating Your Message). There was also a fourth session for Youth Group Leaders which the youth and adult chaperones did not attend.

How to Have Your Voice Heard

All participants who attended the ‘How to Have Your Voice Heard’ breakout session said they know more about themselves and their personality traits (100%) because of the session. Most participants said they feel like a better leader (97%) and they know more about what it means to be a leader (98%; see Figure 9). There was little difference between the youth respondents and the total group.

9. Breakout session knowledge: How to Have Your Voice Heard

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”	
	Youth (N=83)	Total (N=95)
I feel like a better leader.	96%	97%
I know more about what it means to be a leader	98%	98%
I know more about myself and my personality traits.	100%	100%

Note: Total includes ‘youth’, ‘adult chaperones’, ‘P&I’s, and ‘Youth Group Leaders’.

Get a Grip and Get Engaged

The breakout session ‘Get a Grip and Get Engaged’ was well received. Nearly all respondents said as a result of the session, they understand how to use activities as a way to get people involved and the Elements of Excellence for working in small groups (99% each) and that they know how to debrief activities so participants walk away learning a lesson (98%; see Figure 10).

10. Breakout session knowledge: Get a Grip and Get Engaged

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”	
	Youth (N=145)	Total (N=145)
I know how to use activities as a way to get people involved.	99%	99%
I understand the Elements of Excellence for working in small groups.	99%	99%
I know how to debrief activities so participants walk away learning a lesson.	98%	98%

Note: Total includes ‘youth’, ‘adult chaperones’, ‘P&I’s, and ‘Youth Group Leaders’.

Communicating Your Message

Respondents felt better prepared for different aspects of presentations after the breakout session ‘Communicating Your Message’. Nearly all respondents said that after the session they know multiple ways to communicate their message (98%) and they know how to prepare for a presentation (97%). The majority said they know how to handle tough questions at a presentation (93%; see Figure 11). There was little difference between the youth respondents and the total group.

11. Breakout session knowledge: Communicating Your Message

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who “strongly agreed” or “agreed”	
	Youth (N=145)	Total (N=156-157)
I know multiple ways to communicate my message.	98%	98%
I know how to handle tough questions at a presentation.	95%	93%
I know how to prepare for a presentation.	97%	97%

Note: Total includes ‘youth’, ‘adult chaperones’, ‘P&I’s, and ‘Youth Group Leaders’.

Youth Group Leaders

There was a fourth breakout session specifically developed for Youth Group Leaders. The majority of P&Is/Youth Group Leaders said they feel like they can be better youth group leaders after this session (83%) and they learned about new resources or tools to help them be an effective youth group leader (79%; see Figure 12).

12. Breakout session knowledge: Youth Group Leaders

Because of this session...	Percentage who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' (N=18-19)
I feel like I can be a better youth group leader.	83%
I learned about new resources or tools to help me be an effective youth group leader.	79%

Breakout Satisfaction

Nearly all participants were satisfied with each of the breakout sessions. The majority of respondents felt that overall they were satisfied with each session (94%-100%), the information was presented in a way that was easy to learn (95%- 98%), and the presenters listened well and had good answers to questions (97%- 100%; see Figures 13 to 16). There were also many positive comments for each of the breakout sessions noting the interesting topics and fun activities. A full list of participant comments is included in the appendix.

13. Breakout session satisfaction: How to Have Your Voice Heard

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who "strongly agreed" or "agreed"	
	Youth (N=83)	Total (N=95)
Overall, I was satisfied with this session.	100%	100%
The information was presented in a way that was easy for me to learn.	98%	98%
The presenters listened well and had good answers to questions.	99%	99%

Note: Total includes 'youth', 'adult chaperones', 'P&I's, and 'Youth Group Leaders'.

14. Breakout session satisfaction: Get a Grip and Get Engaged

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who "strongly agreed" or "agreed"	
	Youth (N=145)	Total (N=145)
Overall, I was satisfied with this session.	100%	100%
The information was presented in a way that was easy for me to learn.	99%	99%
The presenters listened well and had good answers to questions.	97%	97%

Note: Total includes 'youth', 'adult chaperones', 'P&I's, and 'Youth Group Leaders'.

15. Breakout session satisfaction: Communicating Your Message

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who "strongly agreed" or "agreed"	
	Youth (N=145)	Total (N=157)
Overall, I was satisfied with this session.	94%	94%
The information was presented in a way that was easy for me to learn.	96%	96%
The presenters listened well and had good answers to questions.	98%	97%

Note: Total includes 'youth', 'adult chaperones', 'P&I's, and 'Youth Group Leaders'.

16. Breakout session satisfaction: Youth Group Leaders

Because of this session...	Percent of participants who "strongly agreed" or "agreed"	
	Youth (N=5-6)	Total (N=20-21)
Overall, I was satisfied with this session.	4/5	95%
The information was presented in a way that was easy for me to learn.	6/6	95%
The presenters listened well and had good answers to questions.	6/6	100%

Note: Total includes 'youth', 'adult chaperones', 'P&I's, and 'Youth Group Leaders'.

Suggestions for improving the Academy

Although many of the participants noted how much they enjoyed the Academy overall and did not feel anything needed to be changed, a number of the participants did offer recommendations for improving future academies. Several youth had suggestions to improve activities, including more games and time with other students. Some offered suggestions about scheduling the Academy, including adding more recreation time and more time at the Academy in general. A few adult chaperones suggested further mixing the youth groups. P&Is/Youth Group Leaders suggested ensuring more time to prepare and recruit for the academy or holding it later in the school year. A full list of participant suggestions is included in the appendix.

Considerations

Participants were generally satisfied with the Academy. However, based on the evaluation findings, Wilder Research has identified the following considerations for planning future conferences or follow-up in the P&I communities:

- Nearly all P&Is/Youth Group Leaders asked that the Academy be held later in the school year to allow more time for recruiting and preparing students to attend. Consider when would be the best time of the year to hold the Academy to meet all stakeholders' needs.
- Many participants suggested changes to the length of the Academy, including making it longer, shortening sessions, and allowing more free time. Organizers can continue to seek a balance in the schedule so there is enough time to cover the material, while allowing free time for socializing.
- Respondents requested more breaks between sessions. Consider whether time allows for shortening the sessions, allowing more breaks, or scheduling longer breaks throughout the Academy.
- Youth Group Leaders requested more time together to share strategies and learn from one another. Consider whether there is time at the Academy to allow for this.
- Respondents valued the time spent on strategic planning and requested more time working through this. Consider strategic planning as a topic for next year's Academy.

Appendix

Open-end comments

A1. Open ends: What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy? Adult chaperone responses

What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy?

Development of being a leader with communication and sharing ideas with your peers.

How to be a better leader.

How to include others in leadership.

Personality colors.

Stop – adjust – go for it again. Youth voice and support to one another.

Telling people what the youth group is about.

That our group has some really incredible ideas and energy. They just may need more support from their youth leader.

No response (N=1)

A2. Open ends: What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy? Youth responses

What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy?

Leadership skills

Be a better leader.

Being a better leader.

How to be a better leader (N=3).

How to be a better organizer of activities, how to do better in school.

How to be a better positive leader for my group and in life.

How to be a leader and bring it back to my community.

YOGOWYPI - you only get out what you put in.

YOGOWYPI (N=6).

YOGOWYPI. And how you are older peers are so incredibly influential.

Go to WYPI.

You only get out what you put in.

To lead.

Learning about myself and my personality.

SLANT (N=7).

Speaking in front of everybody.

Stop, adjust, court over it again.

Stop, adjust, try again.

Stop; adjust. Continue forward.

My personality and how to use it.

Is how to be involved in class SLANT.

Leadership skills.

My personality and how it affects my leadership.

My personality and how to use them.

The SLANT.

To be a leader.

That everyone is a leader, but different.

That instead of try, stop, adjust and do again.

That it's good to have people by your side.

That leaders can be anyone.

That leading is more about interactions than being in charge.

That one person can make a difference.

That you can make a difference even if it is one person.

The different colors and ways to be a good leader.

The different types of people.

How to SLANT.

Communication skills

Communicating skills (N=2).

How to communicate better (N=2).

How to communicate with people in my committee.

I learned how to communicate and read better.

I learned how to communicate with others and how to make choices.

To reach out to others (N=2).

To talk to others (N=2).

How to connect with people.

How to interact with groups of people.

How to interact with people you don't know.

How to keep a conversation.

How to speak better.

How to speak up.

How to meet new people.

How to present, how to be successful.

Be outgoing.

I learned how to be more interactive.

How to be more engaging.

Learning how to deal with people.

Meeting new people (N=2).

Meeting other youth.

Talk to others.

Everything

Everything, how to treat people.

Everything (N=4).

A lot of it was very useful and I can't just choose one.

There were many things that we learned and they were all useful.

Academy activities

Poster session.

Presentation/communication session in Babes Burn.

Presentations.

The personality test and S.A.D.

The presentation.

The presenter.

Ga Ga ball.

Strategy planning time.

When Bill showed us the timeline.

Be yourself

How to be myself.

How to be yourself and how that contributes to my community.

Be yourself.

Working together

Be better together.

We are better together.

When you fail, stop, adjust and try again. We're better when we're together.

We're better together.

To work together even though we were leaders.

How to help their Youth Group

How to contribute to my group.

Contributing.

Ways to get my group more structured and out there.

What I can do to help my group and what each person can do.

Other

Billy.

Chunking and modeling (N=3).

Applying yourself.

Don't to drugs or alcohol.

Having active things to do.

How to have fun while learning important things.

How to make a difference.

How to make the best out of everything.

How to make the change and what to bring back.

Be positive.

Be proud not to be with alcohol.

I learned how to get better grades in school.

I like unicorns do you?

Learn to laugh.

More outside time.

Not to do drugs.

Telling us new things.

The ET buddy.

The most important was on the second day discussing with our hometown youth groups.

To be a more effective people person.

To do more things with the community.

To help others do things right.

To know what to do.

What were some good things to bring back with me?

You should apply yourself to everything.

No response (N=11).

A3. Open ends: What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy? P&I/ Youth Group Leader responses

What was the most helpful thing you learned at the Youth Leadership Academy?

Bill Cordes and sessions.

Direction and strategies our youth want to pursue.

Events and leaders making things fun while learning and personality styles are important to understanding group dynamics.

How to engage all of my youth in our meetings.

It takes all types of personalities to create a great group.

Leadership qualities in time to talk as a group on strategic planning for the year.

Sessions with Bill Cordes were enjoyable for students; personality color test was helpful to have students understand their natural strengths.

Strategy planning session. Opportunity for us to connect with our students.

Teaching and group tips from keynote.

That our students really learned from/enjoyed being with students from other schools.

The personality test was good for future's strategizing.

Through the breakout sessions, I was able to see a gap in knowledge about our group the youth needed. We discussed this gap in our strategy planning group work.

Utilizing personality types.

What other youth groups are doing and working on.

No response (N=2).

A4. Open ends: If you plan to connect with youth/other youth groups after this weekend: In what ways could this help what you are doing in your own groups? P&I/Youth Group Leader responses

If you plan to connect with youth/other youth groups after this weekend: In what ways could this help what you are doing in your own groups?

Afterschool youth group retreat in the summer.

For our summer leadership retreat in June 2015.

Helps connect for events, summer retreats, ideas, etc.

Local youth leadership retreat. Students like connecting with other students from other communities – adds to their feeling supported and connected to a larger movement.

Maybe participate with other youth groups for leadership training.

Plan a youth retreat in June.

Promote individual talents.

Regional youth trainings.

The youth got a look at what other groups are doing. We're going to implement some.

Will meet with my youth group and recruit more members.

**A5. Open ends: What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy?
Youth responses**

What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy?

More/longer breaks

More breaks (N=2).

More breaks. It was so hard sitting in one space with a lot of people.

A few more like 10 minute breaks.

A little bit of breaks between the sessions.

Give more breaks during the long talks/sessions (bathroom breaks, water breaks, stretch breaks).

Have a break when sitting a long time during keynotes.

Shorter sessions

Shorten keynote speaker sessions. I like them but they were too long.

Shorter session times.

Split the presentation, add a break.

The two different two-hour sessions got really long.

More activities

Have more fun activities.

Have more games.

More activities or fun time.

More activities (N=5).

More time with other schools.

More trips/activities/get-togethers.

Do more activities.

Be more interactive. Use your personality help.

More group activities.

More hands-on activities.

More little activities.

More mingling.

More organized with whole group.

More outside activities.

More outside time.

New activities each year.

Longer academy/different dates

Longer.

Make it longer (N=2).

Make it on a weekend.

Maybe stay longer. I didn't want to go home.

Have people, Sunday and stay two nights.

More free time

Add more free time.

Free time starts at 7 o'clock not 730 and goes until 11.

More water park time, free time

More free time (N=6).

More free time, more snacks.

More free time, stay longer.

More engaging sessions

Breakout stuff kind of boring, more movement, no presentation slides.

To have a few more fun sessions.

Less boring.

I'm tired. It got boring after a while.

Make sessions more interesting.

Make sure you get a good speaker for the next year too.

Making the presenter's activities more relevant to the same.

Lodging/Food

Air-conditioning.

Better food.

Better microphone. A little more free time.

Better pizzas.

Different pizza.

More brownies.

No more meat.

The food lines. Food Friday. More breaks. Drink variety.

More room.

Other

Not to be scared or talk or people (N=2).

Notebooks for notes and ideas.

All ideas.

Attend it.

Be together.

Better warning for breakouts.

Breakout sessions to be with different towns.

Don't do drugs.

Have more sessions.

Have the leaders engage more so we can get to know them.

How to incorporate others.

More "orange" personality to people.

More things like this.

Stick to the schedule. Don't make changes after.

The presenter talked really fast.

To talk to others.

We could have more people.

We could work on getting our name out there.

Nothing

Nothing (N=19).

Nothing. I thought it was great but maybe longer breaks.

Nothing. It was cool.

Nothing. It was fun.

Nothing. It was very well organized.

Nothing. It's all fun.

None (N=2).

Not much.

Not sure, all was pretty good.

Nada.

Absolutely nothing.

It was already good. Nothing.

It's perfect already.

I can't think of anything.

I don't know (N=3).

I think it's great like it is.

I'm not sure.

No response (N=19).

**A6. Open ends: What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy?
Adult chaperone responses**

What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy?

Engage the youth who hang out in the “outer circle.”

Force kids to connect outside of their groups more.

Great job.

I loved it. I love more strategy times and more mix-up of all the different groups.

I think we need to remember that the kids we are bringing here are already leaders of some sort. We had some of our kids say to us “if we are supposed to be leaders, why does it feel like they don’t trust us?” I think that says a lot. I understand the reason for some of the structure, but I think it’s gone way too far. I think it makes more sense for us as adults to be in charge of our own groups. If kids are doing things they shouldn’t be, then maybe groups need to choose more appropriate adult chaperones. I think it was a waste of time to have everyone get back together to be dismissed to the next session. They are given an agenda and are mature enough to follow it especially if leaders are with them. We are bringing leaders to YLA. We need to treat them like leaders.

No response (N=2).

A7. Open ends: What can be done to make preparing for Youth Leadership Academies easier in the future? P&I/Youth Group Leader responses

What can be done to make preparing for the Youth Leadership Academy easier in the future?

Get more feedback from students before planning. Get older students involved in planning.

Have it at a later date.

Having the items at the beginning of August was helpful.

It was good.

Make it a little later in the year to give us a time to reconnect and connect with youth. I understand needing chaperones to watch the kids, but it would be nice to have half the chaperones do 1 ½ and then switch to let them have 1 ½ to connect with their youth.

More time after school starts to get kids signed up. We had homecoming week. That took time away from organizing to with the early start.

More time to recruit students since school year at beginning is so busy.

More time to recruit students.

More time.

Push it back farther into the school year. Right now it’s in a stressful/busy time of year. We missed homecoming activities and coronation.

The timing of recruiting for YLA and when information was required to be submitted we difficult because of it being so way soon after school started. One registration form that is used for all groups.

No response (N=5).

A8. Open ends: What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy? P&I/ Youth Group Leader responses

What could be done to improve the Youth Leadership Academy?

A little less micromanaging.

A little more time for you to have fun with other groups and let leaders have the time to also connect with their youth.

Different time of year. Too early in the year, a little earlier free time – maybe 6 to 10?

Free time, have less stationed adults, maybe by each covering one shift and having the opposite, allowing them to interact with other students.

I think the youth need a little bit more time to mix with students from other youth groups. I also think free time should start after dinner. Students had a hard time focusing at the breakout session following dinner.

List of website resources for future reference. Have a different month than beginning of school year.

Makes youth groups from different schools more.

Maybe more student-led/discovered leadership opportunities. Less repetitive “group speak.”

More summarizing and debriefing of lessons learned from the activity to reinforce the “why.” Good to have fun but sometimes lessons seem to be lost for some youth.

Not so much lag time – for example poster session. Students said 2 hours, even with Bill, was way too long.

Possibility of YLA be for older students only (10, 11, 12)

Too close to the beginning of the school year.

No response (N=4).

A9. Open ends: Other comments Adult chaperone responses

Other comments

Again great job.

Enjoyed tremendously! Seen the growth in attendees.

More info about how colors work together.

My specific group of kids needs to find out how to work with their community and the younger kids better, this has helped with that, but if we have people in the community actively or apathetically hindering, we need education in this.

Thank you for the opportunity.

The “communicating your message” class was pretty much worthless. It was mostly information the kids have already been through in school. Would have been more effective to have them working in groups to come up with their five key points in talking to other groups. “What would you say if someone asked you what your group was about?”

No response (N=1)

A10. Open ends: Other comments P&I/Youth Group Leader responses

Other comments

Consider inviting other communities also working on substance use prevention. Content of the conference should be provided far enough in advance to that youth group leaders can be more strategic in choosing students who are a good fit. Breakout sessions were repetitive for most of our students.

Folders were lost a lot. Something we can put in the lanyard would be easier to keep track of.

Get rid of the onions.

Great fun. Thanks.

Great job. Everything was well organized. Some chaperones/youth group leaders did not feel that they were treated like adults/professionals. Plus, it's a long time to be in one area (especially the pool area). I think the review of PCN would be helpful for new students and a session on why scare tactics don't work. Also please make sure that keynote and other presenters don't give examples of things that won't be funded (like Grim Reaper activity, mock car crash, etc.). Folders, tags, and shirts were nice.

Great venue. Youth really enjoyed the location.

Reminding students throughout the Academy (especially breakouts) about them developing as leaders and keeping in mind how they can bring it back to their schools/communities.

Should switch up leader responsibilities at night between inside and outside more. Not all inside or all outside for three hours. It would've been nice to mingle with different/more students more in different areas throughout the night rather than staying in one spot all night.

Students didn't seem to interact much with students outside their group— except when Bill made them. Re: 2 – There was some confusion at times about where youth were supposed to be. Re: 3 – Poster session was good for getting ideas but 50 minutes spent on this was way too long. Re: 11 – While students likely learned something new, a few of the students commented a lot of the stuff/content was a duplicate of last year's YLA and/or our local leadership retreat. For ex: the color personality assessment was taken by our students this past summer. General: Having chaperones and youth leaders sit in hallways for 3 hours was a little much. Fewer people for shorter periods of time. 3 people in a hallway?

No response (N=7).

A11. Open ends: Comments about the Communicating Your Message breakout session

Other comments

Already know. Wish could have worked with our group on our REAL message. Too generic. Have had this so many times in school.

Applicable to all areas of life, not just youth leadership.

Awesome sauce.

Awesome session.

Awesome.

Boring.

Candy.

Cool cats.

Cool way of teaching it.

Dolly & Slim BRUH.

Easy, but pretty neat.

Funny video.

Gave me pointers on how to present better.

Good.

Got a little slow sometimes. Otherwise great.

Great.

Had lots of fun. Was very engaging.

I didn't like the speaker, she was disrespectful.

I know it was crowded but you should add some games/activities, make it more fun.

I learned how to do a speech better.

I learned how to speak better.

I like candy.

I like the video. It was funny.

I like this presentation. It taught me new ways to give public speeches.

I like what the presentation was about.

I liked this because it broke down how to communicate my message.

I think this session didn't really teach our kids anything they didn't know. More of a basic speech-making class which they've all had at school already.

I wish that we could have had more practice on the speeches.

If you speak with a little more feeling – like Bill – you would have a little more attention.

It was a very comprehensible course. Easy to understand. SWAG.

It was cool. We got to work as a group.

It was fun.

It was funny.

It was good to connect.

It was good.

It was pretty cool.

It was very good.

Learned lots of interesting tips on public speaking.

Lindsey gave very helpful tips on how to communicate your message effectively to the people you are trying to get your message across to. Great job, Lindsey!

Lots of fun.

Loved the candy.

Nice information, nice presenters.

Nice presentation.

No, except the candy at the beginning was fun.

None (N=3).

Please stand up.

Small individual groups supply good learning on broad topics.

Some of our youth have special needs and I didn't feel that responding "seriously" was positive, but rather was shaming the youth for giving an honest, although obviously incorrect answer. Good PowerPoint and activities, an example of popcorn speech would be helpful.

Sounded good and presented well.

SWAG.

Thank you.

The girl with brown hair was funny. I also thought the video added well to the presentation.

The video really added to the presentation.

They knew what they were talking about.

They were very active.

Very good job. Kept everyone on task. Enjoyable.

Very good.

Very yummy candy.

Well done dealing with all of us.

Yeah!

You're awesome.

No response (N=115).

A12. Open ends: Comments about the Get a Grip and Get Engaged breakout session

Other comments

Amazing and so much fun. Loved it.

Amazing speaker, learned a lot.

Amazing.

Awesome.

Being here is the best.

Better when we're together. SWAG YOLO. Bill's awesome.

Bill has so much energy and it's great.

Bill was awesome.

Good ideas on small group activities. Activities may not be ideal for large groups.

Good, was interesting.

Great energy, never boring, awesome guy.

Great speaker.

Great speaker. Very engaging.

He looks like the dad from Solo Surfer. Can I have his autograph?

He made everything a lot of fun. I love YLA.

Hello.

Hi. Thanks.

I felt part of something.

I love Bill. I get what he's saying plus you can tell he loves working with us. So I'm more engaged in what we're doing. Come back next year.

I had so much fun.

I like the strategy used to get people involved. It was fun but yet I got something out of it that I can take to school.

I liked all the activities we did and how they were fun but we still learned from them.

I liked Bill and his energy.

I liked the speaker.

I liked the speaking style. It was easy for me to learn. Thank you.

I liked the way you make us get out of our comfort zones. We don't realize how fun it is until we do.

I love how he got us involve.

I love this place.

I loved the way that he explained everything.

I loved this activity.

I loved this session. It wasn't all learning, it was fun. Awesome. YLA. MN.

I loved this session. It taught me how to teach others and get them involved.

I really enjoyed it and learned a lot.

I really enjoyed the activities we participated in. I learned a lot from this and I plan on using this information back at my school.

I really enjoyed the engaging activities, meeting new people and having a fun time learning.

I really try getting people into things. To me it was hard to get people as excited as I was. Learning this will help me in the future.

I thought it was great.

I was very intrigued with how he presented everything. Easy to understand.

I wish I was as good a leader/talker.

It was awesome.

It was easy to get involved and to understand what we were being taught.

It was fun learning about this stuff and participating in all of the activities.

It was fun.

It was really good.

Like the activities. Really makes a sense of comfortableness.

Liked the energy.

Love the energy level and the messages behind the activities. They're great ways to get moving and to also learn at the same time and it's fun to do these activities with great people that take the activity seriously and also have fun with it. The activities were simple and easy to learn and doing so it made it easy to get everyone involved. Overall, great activities and a lot of fun.

More strong material – the ending was better than the beginning but overall good.

Most of these things would seem boring but this was fun. It made me come out of my shy-shell.

None (N=3).

None. Great job.

Really fun and a great teaching style.

Really good session.

Should get to the point (N=2).

Thank you.

Thanks for the list.

The activities helped bring people together and the comfort level with one another became less stressing.

The activities were fun and kept you engaged.

The activities were nice because they got us out of our seats and regained focus. Everything was very energized and fun.

The session was good and made a lot of sense and will be useful when we go back to our schools.

The speaker was really loud. The volume should be turned down a bit.

The speaker was very good. Efficiently taught concepts in an interesting way.

They did excellent.

This session was fun and very informative.

This session was fun.

This was a good session for learning how to lead and participate in a small group. I also learned some great activities to get people involved.

This was fun, all activities, I laughed a lot.

Very energized session. Lots of good info.

Very enthusiastic speaker. Got individuals very involved in the lecture.

Very exciting. Very fun. Loved it.

Very fun to listen and engage to.

Very fun. Learned a lot. Entertaining. Not boring.

Very good. Always happy and excited.

Very memorable, easy to understand.

Was fun activities.

Was fun.

You're awesome.

No response (N=68).

A13. Open ends: Comments about the How to Have Your Voice Heard breakout session

Other comments

Amazing.

Awesome thank you.

Awesome!

Awesome.

Best one yet.

Bill was funny.

Cool way to learn more about yourself.

Fun activity.

Heather and Jeremy are the best!

I know I was a gold, but to be honest, at my school I have to do everything so I have a little of each trait.

I learned how my personality can affect my role as a leader.

I like how we split up into groups of colors.

I like the personality test and the activity options that went with it.

I like trying to find out what role or personality leads.

I love personality things. It gives me a chance to stop and look at myself instead of others. Yeah blue!

I think it was a great insight into who I am and a great insight as to who my daughter and her friends are.

It was fun to learn what personality I have. I enjoyed the session.

It was good to see the personality types around me.

It was good.

It was lots of fun.

Love the personality test and what it means to honor all different types and what they bring.

None.

None. It was fun.

Orange is life.

Really liked the session

So far so good.

The best.

The expressing who we are by colors was really helpful and fun.

The leaders were amazing and I loved kid president.

The leaders were very fun. Enjoyable info.

The speaker was awesome.

They are fun.

They did a nice job presenting.

They did excellent explaining.

They mostly talked about themselves.

This is pretty fun session.

This was an interesting session.

This was the best session!

Very energetic.

Yeah swag.

Yellow swag. Orange rocks. YLA for life.

You are the best! Really learned a lot about myself; learned that my best friend is blue and I'm orange. We get along so well!

You're awesome.

You're the best!

You're the best!

No response (N=50).

A14. Open ends: Comments about the Youth Leaders breakout session

Other comments

Covered same as last year. I took a lot from last year that helped – but I failed to learn anything new.

Done great job.

Enjoyed the soccer ball icebreaker/introduction. Good ideas for group activities.

Good ideas – especially the soccer ball. I wish we would have had more time.

Good ideas. Not a lot of time spent and I heard him speak last year. He has great numbers and is obviously invested.

I feel we should be in charge of knowing where your students are at, not necessarily taking care of a specific area. I was asked to come up here to take care of my specific group, not everyone else's kids.

I think this time could be used for sharing successes and challenges in forming and running a youth group. Maybe not just one group, but opportunities for everyone to share. Not enough time to get to all this.

It was good but too short. Would love to have had more time to get recruitment ideas and how to make it the coolest group in school.

Less time on introductions. More activities in handout form. I like the list of activities but would be nice to have it to bring home.

More time for sharing would have been nice. Speaker did a great job. Loved the questions on the soccer ball. How about a list of website resources for more future youth group ideas?

Our introductions took longer than expected. Not the fault of anyone because the activity was good but it did not allow for much time to share or ask questions.

Very basic. Wish we could have had more discussion with each other, brainstorm and build ideas from one another. Rushed – this is a vital resource for me and there was no time. I understand the chaperone duties but we took away networking time.

Was some good info but way too fast. Zero time to jot down things. I am not our official youth leader but help with a lot of the activities. Would've been better info for our youth leader if she was here. The chaperoning/supervising bit was odd to me. I think it'd be more appropriate for us to keep track of our own kids. That way we'd have a chance to mingle with kids too.

Would you be willing to share the ideas/activities? How can we contact you?

No response (N=7).
