



Youth Voices Through Media

Youth Learning to Produce Professional Media

By Dwayne and Dwight Campbell

Beginning in the Spring of 2002, a group of five young people, ages 13 through 18, began a media training pilot program funded through a grant from the Ensworth Charitable Trust. The main five students learned aspects of camerawork, editing, sound production, writing, graphic design and web programming. Many other students assisted with the student projects in various ways, learning both media and leadership skills in the process. One student created her own web site using the skills that she learned in the program. Another group of students is creating a video documentary about their educational experiences. Many other students have made video productions, posters and other print media, and even basic web sites as a result of their training. Program participants also speak highly of the program's effect on their self-esteem and enjoyment of learning. During the yearlong program, several students decided not to drop out, or to return to school after having dropped out previously. Also, both the English and Spanish skills of the trainees was improved through the development of materials in both languages. With the printing and distribution of their newsletter, and the broadcast of their documentary on public access television, the trainees hope to continue this program while intensifying the activities of the youth leadership organization.



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'Listening to Youth Voices'

By Nancy Alvarez

Two years ago, on a Saturday in May 2001 from 10 AM until 3 PM, 80 youth, 10 young adults and 10 older adults from across the city of Hartford gathered together for a Forum about Youth Voices. The instructions were simple: The Youth are in charge. For one day, the kids finally got the respect that they deserved. The mixed group of black, white, Latino and Asian youngsters reflected the population of Hartford both by race and other characteristics such as academic achievement, learning disabilities, and behavior problems. Even those students who had lost all the trust of their teachers and principals at their Middle and High Schools were given the freedom to direct the day's activities. Without even one incidence of violence or disrespect, the Forum was a success, and the students proved their ability to handle a major responsibility. The purpose of the Forum was for the young people to express their feelings and

what they thought about relationships, abuse, education and violence, four topic areas determined by a steering group of young people. Several teens, and even younger students, felt comfortable bringing up things that they had been through, including cases of kids who had dropped out of school or been expelled who wished to return. Also, kids who had committed crimes and had to pay the price, either through jail time or through simply living with the guilt over what they had done, were also able to express themselves at the Forum. By the afternoon, the discussions taking place at the beautiful Village for Families and Children Campus on Albany Avenue in the north end of Hartford turned towards solutions. The student participants encouraged each other to discover potential solutions to all the problems that were raised in the morning. The youth agreed upon many solutions, which still continue to impress parents, educators and other adults in Hartford. Some examples of the conclusions reached by the youth in the relationships group included youth mentoring youth, when a young person needs extra attention and support.

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'The Ones Who Support Us, Sometimes Harm Us'

By: Jesus Rodriguez and Milena Alvarez

Have you ever felt that the police, the ones who are supposed to protect us, are often the ones who are hurting us? Once upon a time, we felt that the police were our protectors, they were there to support us and watch over us. After what happened to our family last month, we are now more afraid of the police than anything else. On March 23, 2003, a Sunday, we arrived home to find our older brother and several other friends from the neighborhood hanging out in our front yard, near the driveway. A Police Officer rolled up in his cruiser, and through the window, asked, "Is there a problem here? Let me see some ID for all of you". We explained to the officer that we lived right there, and that none of us had any official identification. However, he insisted on harassing us, especially our oldest brother who has been in and out of programs for juvenile offenders. When our oldest brother asked the officer why we needed ID's if we lived right here, the officer stepped out of his car and got into our brother's face, instigating. "You're a tough guy, huh?," he pushed, "let's see what you've got, punk!" At this point, our brother with his hands behind his back, stood completely still, saying only "I'm a man...", at which point the officer grabbed him by the collar and dragged him into the street. He was choking our brother, as he struggled to become free of the cop's tight, painful grip. Our sixteen year-old sister couldn't stand to watch any longer as this supposed protector abused our brother. She began to pull on the back of our brother's shirt and when he became free and ran around the corner, the officer sprayed her eyes with pepper spray, threw her to the ground and arrested her. Two other cops around the corner caught our brother and beat him until his face was bloody. They arrested him, too. Finally, our other brother arrived home just as our oldest brother and sister were being carried off in cop cars. He asked the officer, "What Happened? Why are you taking them?", to which the cop replied "Shut Up!". Then our brother said, "No" and demanded again to know why his brother and sister were not only being arrested, but covered in blood. At this point, the three cops threw him to the ground and beat him bloody as well, and arrested him. He has the most severe charges between the three of them, which demonstrates the injustice of this situation. One of the officers must have leaked his story to the Journal Inquirer, a popular newspaper in the suburbs east of Hartford, because the next day was an article that listed all of our names, and even our home address. The article described the event as if what the cop said happened definitely, and truly, happened. Reading this article was like being victimized all over again. It described our sister as jumping onto the officer's back and scratching at his eyes, something she would never do. It even described our youngest brother as a Hartford man of twenty-two, when he just recently turned eighteen. The article said he threatened and attacked the officers, when he only asked them, in tears, why this was happening. We never did get an answer.



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High I.Q. Media

Youth Learning to Produce Professional Media

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By the end of June, the youth trainees will also have expanded their web site to allow for additional students to sign up for the youth programs. Any young person in Hartford with an interest in positive activities, relating to media production, leadership and youth empowerment, will be able to join in the exciting projects of the Youth Voices Through Media program.



Listening to Youth Voices (continued)

They also recommended that youth encourage each other to make wise choices in their relationships, and learn more about healthy relationships in school and the community. The education group reached solutions such as 'Adults need to treat young people with respect and dignity'. They also decided that more opportunity for youth to collaborate and exchange ideas in school, as well as a more student-directed environment, would help prevent drop-outs and make education more meaningful to all students. In the abuse group, the youth came to the conclusion that solutions must center around finding ways to develop and enhance self-esteem. They agreed that the youth must help to raise awareness about the existence of abuse, and make it a more important topic for discussion in school. Most importantly, they decided that peer support groups, a therapy program with kids helping kids, would be effective in preventing abuse of and by youth. The violence group came to the conclusion that, in order to prevent violence in Hartford, we must find and develop more 'community role models' and youth leaders. They agreed that the economic situation for youth must be improved and there must be more education around teen pregnancy, dropping out and improved family communication and dynamics. Again, this group insisted that confidential peer support groups be made available. All the youth agreed that it was a wonderful experience, and they are hopeful that there will be a greater focus in the future, with more respect, on the ideas and feelings of young people. The effort to inform the larger community about the Forum is still under way.

Name: _____ Age: _____

School/Job: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____

Areas of Interest:

video web print animation music leadership

1. Would you like to add your opinions and ideas to our youth organization? _____
2. Would you like to be interviewed for our newsletter or television program? _____
3. Would you like to help the youth leaders register new voters or conduct other leadership activities? _____

Questions or Comments:

ENTRY FORM

Postage
Here

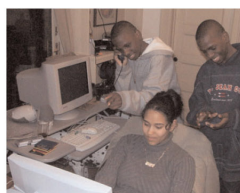
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VOCES DE JOVENES CON MEDIOS



JOVENES APRENDEN A PRODUCIR MEDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN

Por Dwayne y Dwight Campbell

En la primavera del 2002, un grupo de cinco jóvenes, edades 13 a 18, lanzaron un entrenamiento de medios fundado por una donación de Ensworth Charitable Trust. Los estudiantes aprendieron aspectos de trabajar la cámara, editar, producción de sonido diseño de grafica y programación de web. En el proceso los estudiantes aprendieron como hacer líderes de la juventud y su comunidad. Una estudiante creó su propia página de web utilizando las habilidades que había aprendido en el programa. El otro

grupo de estudiantes están creando un documental sobre sus experiencias positivas en el programa. Los participantes también han comentado varias veces sobre el afecto positivo que el programa les ha hecho en su autoestima. Durante el año del programa varios estudiantes decidieron quedarse estudiando en la escuela y los que dejaron la escuela, regresaron a sus estudios. Con la distribución del boletín y transmisión de su documental en la televisión de acceso público, los jóvenes tienen las esperanzas de continuar este programa de los líderes jóvenes. Los jóvenes han expandido su página de web para invitar a estudiantes adicionales al programa. Esto les permitirá a cualquier joven en la ciudad de Hartford registrarse en nuestro programa.

Escuchar a las Voces de los Jóvenes

BY NANCY ALVAREZ

Dos años atrás, 90 jóvenes y 10 adultos de la ciudad de Hartford se reunieron para un Foro de jóvenes. Las instrucciones eran fáciles: los jóvenes estaban en cargo. Por un día, los jóvenes al fin recibirían el respeto que se merecen por sus opiniones. El grupo era mixto con Afro-Americanos, Anglosajones, Latinos y Asiáticos. Los grupos reflejaban la población de la ciudad por razas y otras características, como el logro académico, incapacidad para el aprendizaje y problemas del comportamiento. La oportunidad para dirigir las actividades por un día también fue ofrecida a los jóvenes que habían perdido la confianza en los maestros y principales de las escuelas. El Foro fue un éxito, si ningún incidente de violencia o desacato, los jóvenes comprobaron que tenían la habilidad de manejar una gran responsabilidad. El propósito de este foro era para que los jóvenes expresaran sus sentimientos y opiniones sobre relaciones, abuso, educación y violencia. Mucho de los jóvenes

se sintieron cómodos en hablar sobre sus experiencias, incluyendo a los que habían dejado los estudios, los que estaban expulsados de la escuela y a los que querían regresar a sus estudios. Jóvenes que habían cometido delitos contra la ley también se sintieron cómodos en expresarse en el foro. Cuando la tarde apareció, las discusiones que se habían tomado en la Villa de los Niños y Familias, localizado en Albany Avenue, se dirigieron a muchas soluciones. Los participantes se apoyaban uno a los otros para que descubrieran todas las soluciones que aún hasta hoy, los padres, educadores y adultos de la ciudad de Hartford quedan impresionados por ellas. Unos ejemplos de las soluciones que se habla comentado por los jóvenes, incluyeron, más oportunidades para que los jóvenes puedan colaborar sus sentimientos e ideas en la escuela y tener un ambiente más dirigido por los estudiantes para prevenir que dejen sus estudios, al mismo tiempo a su autoestima. Los jóvenes también estaban de acuerdo sobre la importancia de que los estudiantes se hagan conscientes sobre la existencia de abuso, un tema que es bien necesitado por las escuelas.

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Escuchar a las Voces de los Jovenes (continued)

Mas importante fue la sugerencia sobre grupos de apoyo para prevenir el abuso hacia los jovenes y entre jovenes. Tambien concluyeron que para prevenir la violencia en la ciudad de Hartford, necesitaban un ejemplo de la comunidad y lideres jovenes. Los jovenes realizaron que la situacion economica para los estudiantes necesitaba mejorar para que haiga mas educacion sobre el embarazo entre jovenes, prevencion de no continuar los estudios y mejorar la comunicacion entre las familias y los jovenes. Todos los jovenes comentaron que tubieron una experiencia positiva y maravillosa en el foro. Ellos tienen la esperanza de que en el futuro haiga un enfoque con mas respeto en las ideas y emociones de los jovenes. Insistieron de que un grupo confidencial con apoyo se realice para que ayuden a los jovenes. El esfuerzo para informar a la comunidad sobre este foro todavia se esta realizando.

LAS AUTORIDADES NOS PROTEGEN Y TAMBIEN NOS HACEN DAÑO

BY MILENA ALVAREZ + JESUS RODRIGUEZ

¿Alguna ves has sentido que la policia, los que supuestamente nos protegen son los que varias veces nos hacen daño?. Anteriormente nuestra familia opinaba que la policia eran nuestros protectores, que estaban ahí para apoyarnos. Despues del incidente que le sucedio a nuestra familia, ahora le tenemos miedo a la policia. En el 23 de Marzo del 2003, llegamos a la casa de mi familia, donde encontramos a mi hermano mayor y sus amigos al frente de nuestra casa. Un oficial de la policia se estaciono al frente de la casa y comento, "Dejame ver identificación de todo ustedes!" Tratamos de explicar al oficial que vivianos en la propiedad y no teniamos identificación propia,

pero el oficial insistio en molestarnos, especialmente a mi hermano mayor. Cuando mi hermano le pregunto al oficial, "¿Por que necesitamos identificación si vivimos en la propiedad?" El oficial salio de su vehiculo y llego hasta el frente de mi hermano donde le pregunta mientras lo empuja, "Eres un hombre valiente verdad?". Mi hermano le contesto y dijo "Soy un hombre". En ese momento el oficial agarro a mi hermano por su camisa arrastrandolo a la calle, mientras al mismo tiempo lo ahogaba. En ese momento mi hermana no podia sostener lo que estaba viendo con sus ojos y trato de aguantar a mi hermano por su camisa. El oficial procedio a hecharle 'pepper spray' a mi hermana en sus ojos y la arresto. Luego dos oficiales llegaron y arrestaron a mi hermano, pero no antes de darle una palisa. Mientras llevaban a mis hermanos al vehiculo del oficial, mi hermano menor llegaba. El le pregunto al oficial que habia pasado y a donde nos llevaba. El oficial le contesto en una manera grosera y le dijo que se callara. Mi hermano preocupado por vernos lleno de sangre demando una respuesta por su pregunta. Los tres policia empujaron a mi hermano al suelo mientras ledaban la paliza. De todos mis hermanos el menor fue el que recibio los cargos mas fuertes. Esto explica la injusticia que se habia hecho contra nuestra familia. El dia siguiente la historia sobre el incidente fue reportada en un periodico popular de las ciudades de East Hartford y Manchester llamado el 'Journal Enquirer'. Nuestros nombres y dirección fueron reportado, pero lo peor de todo fue que los oficiales explicaron otra version del incidente y nunca nos dieron una respuesta justificada por lo que nos hizo a nuestra familia.

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Nombre: _____ Edad: _____

Escuela/Trabajo: _____ Telefono: _____

Dirección : _____

Cuidad: _____ Estado: _____ Zip: _____

Areas de Interes:

Video Pagina de web Diseno Animación Musica Lideres

Si o No Preguntas:

1. ¿Le gustaria agregar sus opiniones e ideas a nuestra organizacion de jovenes? _____
2. ¿Le gustaria ser entrevistado para nuestro boletin o un programa de television? _____
3. ¿Le gustaria ayudar a los lideres jovenes, registrar nuevo votantes o manejar actividades de lideres? _____

Preguntas y Comentarios:

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