



Empowering Youth. Transforming Lives.



Empowering youth, transforming lives through leadership development

CRDP API-SPW Conference
Wednesday February 1, 2012
3:00 PM-4:00 PM



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Overview

- About VYDC
- Phoent's Story
- ESAY-Leadership development project
- Successes and Challenges
- Engaging Youth



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About VYDC

VYDC Mission

The mission of VYDC is to provide direct assistance to Southeast Asian and neighborhood youth by empowering them and their families to participate actively in the development of their community.

Our Goals

Our goals are to prepare young people to transition successfully into adulthood. VYDC diverts youth from the juvenile justice system into meaningful programs. We advocate for the needs of low-income youth in the neighborhood and develop youth leadership in the Tenderloin community and throughout San Francisco.

Programs

- Case management
- Employment
- Leadership development
- Educational services
- Social and recreational activities



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Who we serve

Age

- 36%- 17-19 years old
- 35%-14-16 years old
- 11%- 20 years and up
- 2%-13 and under

Ethnicity

- 60%-Asian Pacific Islander
- 14%-Other
- 12%-African American
- 8%-Hispanic
- 6%-Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic

Household

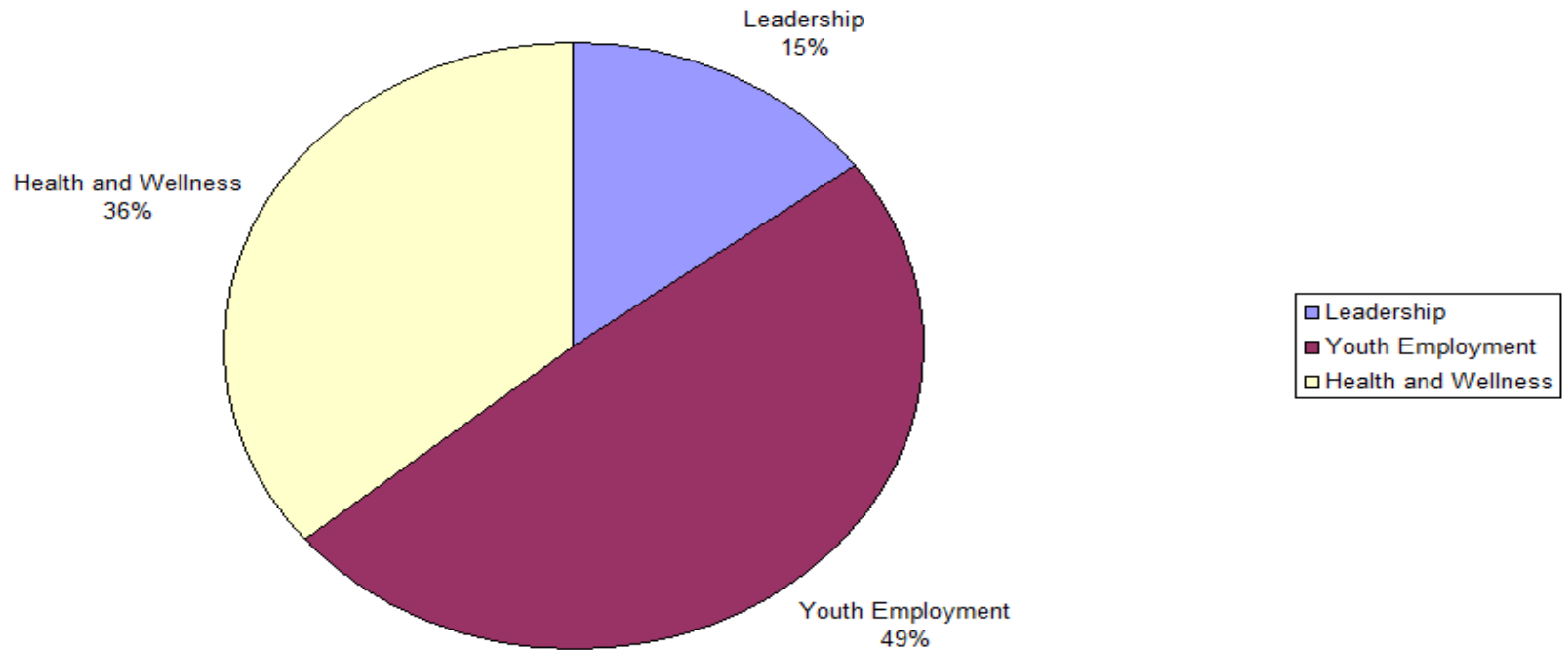
- 95%-Receive free or reduced meal
- 89%-Children of immigrant/refugees(Parents speak another language other than English)
- 40%-Live in 1 bedroom or studio apartments w/more than 2 family members





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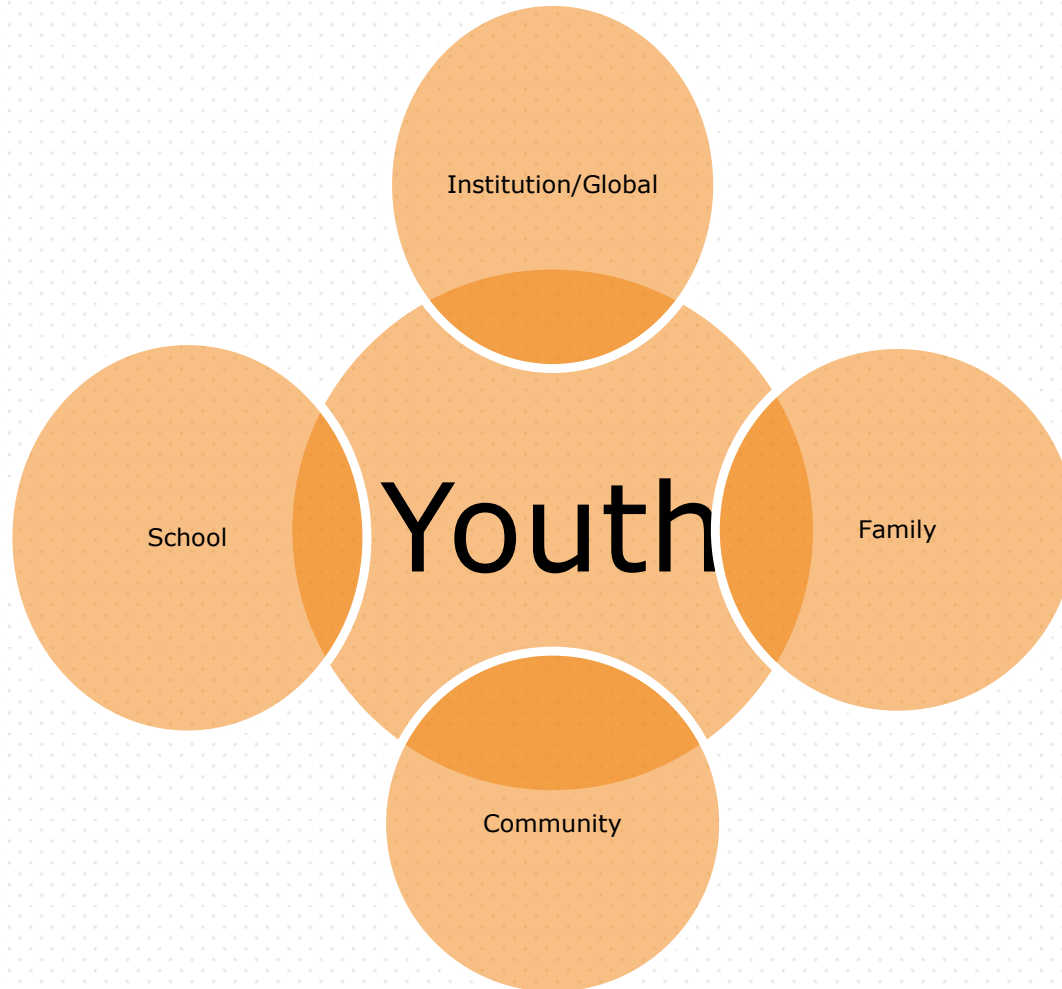
VYDC-All Programs





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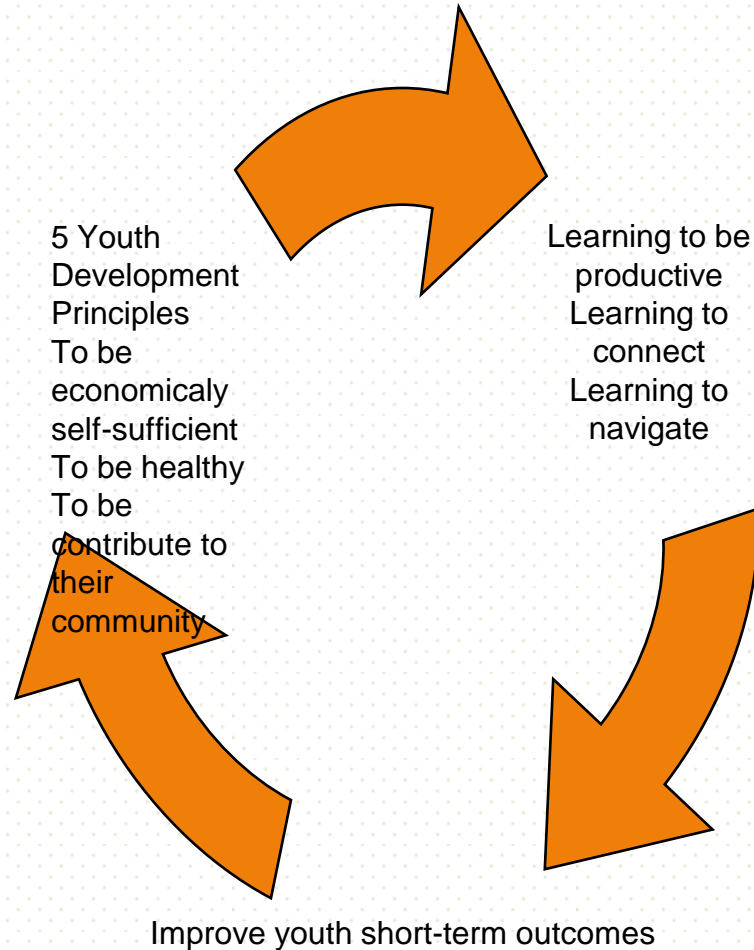
Youth Development





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Process of Youth Development





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Phoeut, a Cambodian young woman born and raised in San Francisco's poorest and urban neighborhood the Tenderloin came to participate in VYDC's employment program at the age of 14 in 1994. Her home was just 2 blocks away from VYDC where she lived with her 4 siblings and her mother, a Cambodian refugee who fled her homeland in the late 1970s after the Khmer Rouge's Killing Fields. The summer job she worked at kept her busy for the summer while earning money to help her and her family. The following year, Phoeut was selected to participate in the Empowering Southeast Asian Youth (ESAY) project at VYDC. Through her participation in two cycles, Phoeut learned public speaking skills, creating videos, dance, acting and writing. ESAY helped Phoeut to build her confidence, advocate and speak on behalf of her community, all in which helped her to finish high school, continue onto to college and now is VYDC's current ESAY Youth Development Specialist.



Phoeut's Story (celtics #33)



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Empowering Southeast Asian Youth (ESAY)

Project Design:

- Created in 1989 to meet the needs of Southeast Asian refugee youth living in the Tenderloin
- Includes life skills, leadership development and training through arts, digital media, public speaking, public performances and fun recreational enriching activities
- Summer cycle: 8 weeks; Daily meeting (4 hours a day)
- Fall cycle: 6 months; 4 times a week (2 hours a day)



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ESAY

Strategies:

1. Start a summer program
2. Use video, arts and performances
3. Draw on local resources (volunteers, other cbos)
4. Start small and mix it up
5. Provide stipends to participants
6. Cultivate Trust and relationship building
(Bilingual/bicultural staff)
7. Diversify funding (foundations, local state and federal support)



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Program Successes



- ESAY highlights: 30 short documentaries produced, 2 feature film documentary (1 Emmy award winning film, *AKA Don Bonus*)
- Positive outcomes for youth: increase public speaking skills, arts/creative skills enhance, finish high school, improve communication w/family and adults
- Youth stay at VYDC on average of 2 years and up
- Youth come back to Center as staff



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Program Challenges

- Funding landscape changes
- Youth are only in one year of programming
- Retention: youth experience multiple barriers prior to enrolling program i.e., housing, family issues due to cultural/generational gap, language barrier, difficulty in school, etc.



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Engaging Youth

Barriers to youth engagement

1. Desire to relax and “hang out” with friends after school
2. Desire or need to work
3. Family responsibilities
4. Boredom or disinterest
5. Transportation/Safety



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Examples of incentives to counter barriers

- Offer field trips earned from attendance
- Offer space for recreation, snacks and talking with friends
- Job programs
- Offer flexible days of programming
- Remind families of homework assistance opportunities
- Offer diverse rich opportunities to develop new relationships with peers and adults
- Allow students some choice of activities
- Offer older students leadership opportunities
- Target children and youth who live close by and can participate most easily

Thank You!

Questions and Answers

The End