The Youth Engagement Continuum

The youth engagement continuum helps situate youth-led social change relative to other prevailing approaches to youth work.

Each of the five strategies described in the continuum offers services and programs to young people and plays an important role in supporting their healthy growth and development as individuals. Communities benefit most, however, when young people also have meaningful opportunities to engage in civic leadership and youth organizing. The development of strong and vibrant cities, communities, and states requires the intentional cultivation of organizations at each level of the continuum.

regy	INDIVIDUAL				SYSTEMIC CHAN
STRATEGY	YOUTH Services	YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	YOUTH ORGANIZING
ROLE OF YOUTH	1	11		(0000)	
ROLE OF	Client	Participants and interns/staff	Participants, leaders, interns/staff, and board members	Leaders, interns/staff, and board members	Members, leaders, organizers, interns/staff, and board members
	Provide services to address individual problems and behaviors Define programming around treatment, prevention, and	Provide supports and safe spaces Foster caring relationships between youth and adults; support youth-adult	Incorporate youth development AND Offer leadership opportunities within the program and organization	Incorporate youth development, leadership development AND Promote political education	Incorporate youth development, leadership development, youth civic engagement, AND
TIONS	basic needs	partnerships Develop talents and assets Provide opportunities for growth, development, and new roles	Deepen historical and cultural understanding of shared experiences and community issues Build skills and capacities for	and awareness Build skills and capacity for identification and analysis of issues and for action around issues	Offer opportunities to serve as core staff and governing body Build a membership base to which youth leaders are accountable
A C		Build individual competencies	making decisions and solving problems Provide opportunities to participate in community projects Support youth-adult partnerships	Cultivate build collective identity as agents of social change Engage in advocacy efforts	Develop campaigns and utilizes tactics— including direct action—to effect systemic change Take active roles in alliances and coalitions

