AGREEMENT

THIS PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT, made and entered into by and between the **LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT**, by and through its **OFFICE OF SAFE AND HEALTH NEIGHBORHOODS** herein referred to as **"METRO GOVERNMENT",** and the **UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE ON BEHALF OF ITS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND INFORMATION SCIENCES ("UNIVERSITY"),** 485 East Gray Street, Louisville, KY 40202.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Metro Government desires to engage Dr. Aisha Brown to create and implement a Social Justice Youth Development Certificate program; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to K.R.S. 45A.380 the Metro Government has determined that competition is not feasible and that this Agreement is for the services of a professional; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Aishia Brown is employed by the University pursuant to an employment contract (the "Employment Contract") and has the requisite qualifications and experience; and

WHEREAS, University possesses the requisite experience and qualifications to provide the unique nature of the services desired by the Metro Government;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed by and between the parties hereto as follows:

I. SCOPE OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

A. University agrees to perform the services described on Attachment A attached hereto and incorporated herein which services have the following goal:

1. To increase professional development opportunities and supports for the youth development workforce in Louisville through the creation and implementation of the Social Justice Youth Development Certificate program.

II. FEES AND COMPENSATION

A. The Metro Government shall pay University as described on Attachment A. Total compensation payable to University shall not exceed **ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($100,000.00).**

B. The Metro Government shall reimburse out-of-pocket expenses if they are reasonable in amount and necessary to accomplish the scope of services of this Agreement. The Metro Government will not reimburse first class air fare, personal phone calls, short-term parking expenses, or other premium type expenses. The Metro Government reserves the right to reduce or disallow expenses considered excessive or unnecessary under this contract.

C. University agrees that all outstanding invoices at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) must reach the Metro Government no later than July 15 of the following fiscal year. University agrees that original invoices that are not in Metro Government possession by this time will not be paid and University agrees to waive its right to payment for services billed under such invoices.

III. DURATION

A. This Agreement shall begin July 1, 2022 and shall continue through and including June 30, 2023.

B. This Agreement may be terminated by submitting thirty (30) days' written notice to the non-terminating party of the intent to terminate. This Agreement may also be terminated by any party, without notice to the non-terminating party, because of fraud, misappropriation, embezzlement or malfeasance or a party's failure to perform the duties required under this Agreement. A waiver by either party of a breach of this Agreement

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shall not operate or be construed as a waiver of any subsequent breach.

C. In the event of termination, payment for services complete up to and including date of termination shall be based upon work completed at the rates identified in this Agreement. In the event that, during the term of this Agreement, the Metro Council fails to appropriate funds for the payment of the Metro Government's obligations under this Agreement, the Metro Government's rights and obligations herein shall terminate on the last day for which an appropriation has been made. The Metro Government shall deliver notice to University of any such non-appropriation not later than 30 days after the Metro Government has knowledge that the appropriation has not been made.

IV. EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP

It is expressly understood that no employer/employee relationship is created by this Agreement nor does it cause University to be an officer or official of the Metro Government. By executing this Agreement, the parties hereto certify that its performance will not constitute or establish a violation of any statutory or common law principle pertaining to conflict of interest, nor will it cause unlawful benefit or gain to be derived by either party.

V. RECORDS-AUDIT

University shall maintain during the course of the work, and retain not less than five years from the date of final payment on the contract, complete and accurate records of all of University's costs which are chargeable to the Metro Government under this Agreement.

VI. REPORTING OF INCOME

The compensation payable under this Agreement may be subject to federal, state and local taxation. Regulations of the Internal Revenue Service require the Metro

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Government to report all amounts in excess of $600.00 paid to non-corporate contractors. University agrees to furnish the Metro Government with its taxpayer identification number (TIN) prior to the effective date of this Agreement. University further agrees to provide such other information to the Metro Government as may be required by the IRS or the State Department of Revenue.

VII. GOVERNING LAW

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Kentucky. In the event of any proceedings regarding this Agreement, the Parties agree that the venue shall be Franklin Circuit Court, Frankfort, Kentucky. All parties expressly consent to personal jurisdiction and venue in such Court for the limited and sole purpose of proceedings relating to this Agreement or any rights or obligations arising thereunder. Service of process may be accomplished by following the procedures prescribed by law.

VIII. AUTHORITY

The University, by execution of this Agreement, does hereby certify and represent that it is qualified to do business in the State of Kentucky, has full right, power and authority to enter into this Agreement.

IX. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to KRS 45A.455:

(1) It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any employee with procurement authority to participate directly in any proceeding or application; request for ruling or other determination; claim or controversy; or other particular matter pertaining to any contract, or subcontract, and any solicitation or proposal therefor, in which to his knowledge:

(a) He, or any member of his immediate family has a financial interest therein; or

(b) A business or organization in which he or any member of his immediate family has a financial interest as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee, is a party; or

(c) Any other person, business, or organization with whom he or any member of his immediate family is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment is a party. Direct or indirect participation shall include but not be limited to involvement through decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or purchase standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing, or in any other advisory capacity.

(2) It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give, or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept, or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment, in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or purchase standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing, or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling or other determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any contract or subcontract and any solicitation or proposal therefor.

(3) It is a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity, or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith, as an inducement for the award of a subcontract or order.

(4) The prohibition against conflicts of interest and gratuities and kickbacks shall be conspicuously set forth in every local public agency written contract and solicitation therefor.

(5) It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any public employee or former employee knowingly to use confidential information for his actual or anticipated personal gain, or the actual or anticipated personal gain of any other person.

X. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding of the parties with respect to the subject matter set forth herein and this Agreement supersedes any and all prior and contemporaneous oral or written agreements or understandings between the parties relative thereto. No representation, promise, inducement, or statement of intention has been made by the parties that is not embodied in this Agreement. This Agreement cannot be amended, modified, or supplemented in any respect except by a subsequent written agreement duly executed by all of the parties hereto.

XI. SUCCESSORS

This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties hereto and their respective heirs, successors and assigns.

XII. SEVERABILITY

If any court of competent jurisdiction holds any provision of this Agreement unenforceable, such provision shall be modified to the extent required to make it enforceable, consistent with the spirit and intent of this Agreement. If such a provision cannot be so modified, the provision shall be deemed separable from the remaining provisions of this Agreement and shall not affect any other provision hereunder.

XIII. COUNTERPARTS

This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, in which case each executed counterpart shall be deemed an original and all executed counterparts shall constitute one and the same instrument.

XIV. CALCULATION OF TIME Unless otherwise indicated, when the performance or doing of any act, duty, matter, or payment is required hereunder and a period of time or duration for the fulfillment of doing thereof is prescribed and is fixed herein, the time shall be computed so as to exclude the first and include the last day of the prescribed or fixed period of time. For example, if on January 1, University is directed to take action within ten (10) calendar days, the action must be completed no later than midnight, January 11.

XV. CAPTIONS The captions and headings of this Agreement are for convenience and reference purposes only and shall not affect in any way the meaning and interpretation of any provisions of this Agreement.

XVI. MISCELLANEOUS The Metro Government and University agree to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et. seq.*) and all implementing regulations and executive orders, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 701) and the Kentucky Equal Employment Act of 1978 (K.R.S. § 45.550 to 45.640) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et. seq.*).

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in relation to activities carried out under this Agreement on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, disability or national origin. This includes provision of language assistance services to individuals of limited English proficiency seeking and/or eligible for services under this Agreement.

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The University shall reveal any final determination of a violation by the University or subcontractor within the previous five (5) year period pursuant to KRS Chapters 136, 139, 141, 337, 338, 341 and 342 that apply to the University or subcontractor. The University shall be in continuous compliance with the provisions of KRS Chapters 136, 139, 141, 337, 338, 341 and 342 that apply to the University or subcontractor for the duration of the contract.

XVII. HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFICATION CLAUSE

University, although vested with sovereign immunity, is subject to the Kentucky Claims Commission Act, KRS 49.010 – 49.990. Claims against U of L relating to personal injury or property damage may be filed and decided under the provisions of the Act. To the extent permitted by that Act and other applicable law, each party shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the other from and against any and all claims against the party which may result from any error or omission arising out of a party's performance under this Agreement.

WITNESS the agreement of the parties hereto by their signatures affixed hereon.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY CONTINGENT UPON METRO COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE APPROPRIATION FOR THIS AGREEMENT:

DocuSigned by:
Paul Rutherford

MICHAEL J. O'CONNELL
JEFFERSON COUNTY ATTORNEY

Date: 10/5/2022

LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT

DocuSigned by:
Amber Burns-Jones

Amber Burns-Jones
Assistant Director, Administration
OFFICE OF SAFE AND HEALTH NEIGHBORHOODS

Date: 10/12/2022

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

DocuSigned by:
T. Gerard Bradley

T. Gerard Bradley
Interim University Provost
Interim University Provost
Date: 10/12/2022

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ATTACHMENT A

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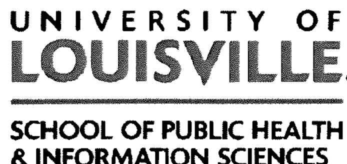

Purpose

The purpose of this scope of services document is to propose the creation of a Professional Service Contract (PSC) between the University of Louisville School of Public Health & Information Sciences and Louisville Metro Resilience and Community Services Office of Youth Development. The total amount of the contract is $100,000 to cover 24% of Dr. Aishia Brown's time, 45% of Dr. Rebecka Bloomer's time, fringe benefits, supplies, and indirect costs (see budget section below). These costs will cover the scope of services for the project specific aim outlined below. The initial term for this contract is July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 and it is renewable every year (12 months).

Specific Aim

To increase professional development opportunities and supports for the youth development workforce in Louisville through the creation and implementation of the Social Justice Youth Development Certificate program.

Justification for Specific Aim: Several resources and efforts are invested in the professionalization of organizations and individuals who work with children and youth. Majority of these resources focus on the licensing and certification of teachers, social workers, and day care facilities. While these focus areas are important, there is still a need for coordinated systems of professional development and certification for organizations and individuals who serve youth (ages 12 to 24). In Louisville, this need has been brought to the forefront with Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) transition to Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI) and the emergence of out-of-school time providers creating community learning hubs for youth with the most need. This layered on top of the murder of Breonna Taylor calls for a new approach to addressing educational and health disparities among youth in Louisville with a specific focus on addressing the root cause of academic achievement gaps and health disparities. The issues faced by youth experiencing marginalization in our society are not solely due to personal choices but hold strong connections to social, political, and economic patterns rooted in systemic racist, sexist, and classist practices and policies. Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) supports, opportunities, programs, and services focus on implementing social justice practices in all aspects of the lives of young people, including youth work. These approaches require transformative methods that ensure youth are at the center of all aspects of youth work, including the professionalization of youth work. The Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program (SJYDCP) provides training and resources to youth development professionals in Louisville.

Scope of Services and Expertise of the Project Team: The partnership between University of Louisville Center for Social Justice Youth Development Research (CSJYDR) led by Dr. Brown and Louisville Metro Office of Youth Development is to increase professional development opportunities and supports for the

youth development workforce in Louisville through the creation and implementation of the Social Justice Youth Development Certificate program.

- CSJYDR (led by Dr. Brown) will facilitate the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program.
    - Attend BLOCS Operations Team Meetings and participate in BLOCS Operations Teams subcommittees (i.e., data report subcommittee)
    - Develop and execute outreach plan for SJYD Certificate program in partnership with OYD outreach team
    - Coordinate the facilitation of youth development professional support groups
    - Facilitate training sessions for the SJYD certificate program in partnership with OYD outreach team

The project will be led by Dr. Aishia Brown, Assistant Professor, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Dr. Aishia Brown has worked closely with Louisville Metro Government since 2016 where she was in the role of Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Health Equity (CHE). During her time with CHE she established the Racial Equity Youth Council. Additionally, she has provided technical assistance to the Louisville Metro Office of Safe and Health Neighborhoods (OSHN) Youth Team Coordinators since 2017. Dr. Brown also conducted a photovoice study with the OSHN Youth Team in 2019 focused on the experiences youth team members have in their respective neighborhoods. Dr. Brown has served as a trainer for the youth worker trainings offered by the Office of Youth Development in 2019. Dr. Brown, along with Drs. Rebecka Bloomer and Andrew Winters, received funding from UofL Kent School of Social Work to conduct a needs assessment study focused on youth development workers in Louisville in 2019. This needs assessment study was conducted in partnership with the Louisville Metro Office of Youth Development and Parks and Recreation Department. Results from this study were presented (virtually) to the Metro United Way's Building Louisville's Out-of-School time Coordinated System (BLOCS) Communities of Practice group in December 2020. Dr. Brown has also supported Jefferson County Public Schools through her service on the racial equity policy development committee and the behavioral alternative schools' taskforce.

Deliverables

CSJYDR (led by Dr. Brown) will deliver the following by the end of each fiscal year (June 30th):

- A process evaluation report for the Social Justice Youth Development Certificate program.

Annual Budget Summary and Justification

Budget Category	Costs
Personnel	
Dr. Aishia Brown	$30,114
Dr. Rebecka Bloomer	$28,232
Fringe Benefits	$17,029
Materials & Supplies	$3,990
Indirect Costs	$20,635
Total	**$100,000**

Personnel Costs

Aishia A. Brown, Ph.D., will serve as the lead of this project and will retain ultimate accountability for completing the specific aims outlined in this scope of work. In this role, Dr. Brown is budgeted at 24% effort, $30,114 salary + $8,191 fringe, for the full duration of the project.

Rebecka Bloomer, Ph.D., will serve as the project manager and is budgeted at 45% effort, $28,232 salary + $8,838 fringe, for the full duration of the project. Dr. Bloomer will manage the operation of the SJYD certificate program.

Fringe benefits are those items that an employee of the University receives over and above salary. This category includes costs such as the university's contribution to Social Security, to retirement funds, to health insurance, long-term disability, life insurance, and the Medicare tax. Fringe benefits rates are calculated individually based on salary amount, employment type, and percent effort on the project. Only actual fringe benefits will be charged to the project.

$3,990 is budgeted for **materials and supplies** to support the operation and implementation of the project. This budget is intended to cover basic organizational materials, data storage, software license renewals, and consumable office supplies (i.e., flip charts, markers, binders, folders, etc.).

Indirect Costs

The University of Louisville's negotiated indirect cost rate for Louisville Metro Government is 26% of modified total direct cost. The total indirect costs for this project are $20,635.

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University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences
Sole Source Justification: Overview of Unique Qualifications
The Center for Social Justice Youth Development Research

In 2008 and again in 2015, the University of Louisville (UofL) was classified as a Carnegie Community Engaged campus by the Carnegie Foundation (valid through 2025). Schools that achieve this classification demonstrate significant evidence of addressing community-identified needs and intentionally engaging with the community in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

Through continued efforts to uphold Carnegie Community Engaged campus classification, researchers from UofL School of Public Health and Information Sciences and Kent School of Social Work and Family Sciences (Drs. Aishia Brown and Rebecka Bloomer) received funding to partner with local youth-serving organizations to conduct a needs assessment study focused on youth development workers in Louisville. The needs assessment study results had two major findings: 1) perceptions of youth behavior and youth mental health presented as primary challenges for workers and 2) workers described the need for "understanding differences" to better address those primary challenges. In this context, understanding differences referred to the desire to expand knowledge and practices when working with youth of a different cultural, racial, and/or socioeconomic status from themselves. Results from the needs assessment study were published in a 2021 issue of *Child and Youth Services Review*[1].

Results of the needs assessment study determined the need for a professional development certification in Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) for Louisville's youth development workforce. SJYD[2] is an approach to youth development focused on the adoption of practices by individuals, organizations, communities, and systems seeking to close gaps created by inequities in access and opportunities for youth by means of acknowledging and celebrating differences in identities and experiences of youth; working towards youth identified, created, and led initiatives; acknowledging the role of systemic oppression and intentionally and actively working to reduce and eliminate disparities for all youth; implementing methods that promote healing-centered approaches for impacted youth.

The SJYD certificate, developed in 2020/2021 and launched in 2022, builds capacity for youth development professionals and organizations that work directly with Louisville's most vulnerable and marginalized youth to develop healing-centered and equitable approaches and policies.

The Center for Social Justice Youth Development Research (hereafter referred to as the Center)[3], a

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[1] Bloomer, R., Brown, A. A., Winters, A. M., & Domiray, A. (2021). "Trying to be everything else": Examining the challenges experienced by youth development workers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 129*, 106213.
[2] Outley, C., Brown, A., Gabriel, M., & Sullins, A. (2018). The role of culture in out-of-school time settings. *Youth development principles and practices in out-of-school time settings*, 463-492.
[3] https://louisville.edu/sphis/departments/hpbs/center-for-social-justice-youth-development-research

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research lab at the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences led by Dr. Aishia Brown, was created in 2020 to provide professional development, research, and evaluation supports to the youth development workforce and youth-serving organizations in Louisville and more broadly through partnerships with organizations across the U.S. The Center has been in partnership with Metro United Way, Jefferson County Public Schools, and Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development since 2020 to provide professional development opportunities to Louisville's youth development workforce through the SJYD Certificate program (see Appendix A to view the SJYD Certificate Memorandum of Agreement).

Drs. Aishia Brown and Rebecka Bloomer, researchers at UofL School of Public Health and Information Sciences, have led several SJYD programs, projects, and training. They have also published various peer-review articles focused on integrating SJYD into youth development organizations and systems (see Appendices B and C for their curricula vitae and relevant publications). Drs. Brown and Bloomer have led the development and implementation of the SJYD certificate since its inception in 2020. These unique qualifications are justification for the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences to serve as the sole source for the development, execution, and evaluation of the SJYD certificate Professional Service Contract.

If there are any additional questions or documentation needed, please use the contact information provided below.

Eric Nunn
Associate Dean of Human Resources
School of Public Health & Information Sciences
University of Louisville
eric.nunn@louisville.edu
502-852-3019

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Appendix Contents

Appendix A: SJYD Certificate Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

Appendix B: Drs. Aishia Brown and Rebecka Bloomer Curricula Vitae

Appendix C: SJYD Relevant Publications by Drs. Brown and Bloomer

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Appendix A: SJYD Certificate Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

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JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 24, 2022, Regular Business Meeting

Agenda Item: **X.U.6. Recommendation for Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Metro United Way, University of Louisville, and the Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development**

Recommendation: Superintendent Martin Pollio recommends the Board of Education approve the attached Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Louisville, Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development, and Metro United Way and authorize the superintendent sign same.

Rationale: This Memorandum of Agreement will help promote the expansion of training and the professional development opportunities for youth development professionals across the city.

The youth development professionals across the city will participate in a comprehensive certification program led by the University of Louisville. The purpose of this collaboration with Metro United Way, University of Louisville, and the Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development will better support Louisville's youth.

Submitted by: Dr. Carmen Coleman

Attachment

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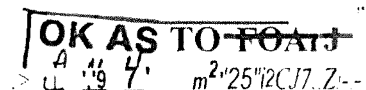

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

between

THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE,

LOUISVILLE METRO GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,

METRO UNITED WAY

and

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

This Memorandum of Agreement (hereinafter referred to as "Agreement") effective this 25th day of May, 2022, by and between Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development (hereinafter referred to as OYD), Metro United Way (hereinafter referred to as MUW), Jefferson County Public Schools (hereinafter referred to as JCPS) and the University of Louisville, on behalf of its School of Public Health and Information Sciences {SPHIS), a Kentucky higher education institution (hereinafter referred to as SPHIS).

The purpose of this Agreement is to expand the training and professional development opportunities for youth development professionals in Louisville, Kentucky by participating in the Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) Certificate Program (hereinafter referred to as certification program). The certification program, led by University of Louisville-SPHIS, will administer an expanded comprehensive training program to youth development professionals and organizations across the city.

In consideration of the promises contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

I. MUW RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Participate on steering committees and work groups for development of Code of Ethics and social justice youth development certificate

B. Engage in developed plan for recruitment and outreach to youth development professionals and youth-serving organizations for the certification program

C. Develop certificate content, including synchronous and asynchronous trainings modules, reflections sessions and additional areas identified through the development process

D. Assist SPHIS and OYD in training synchronous trainers and support personnel for individuals and organizations engaged in the certification process

E. Assist SPHIS project team with completing certification program evaluation

II. JCF> S B E SPONSIBILITIES:

A. Participate on certificate development steering committee and work groups

B. Identify ways to market and promote certificate to JCPS employees and partners

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C. Engage in developed plan for recruitment and outreach to JCPS employees and partners, youth development professionals and youth-serving organizations for the certification program.

D. Review certificate content, including synchronous and asynchronous trainings modules, reflections sessions and additional areas identified through the development process

E. Review SPHIS project team's certification program evaluation report.

III. OYD RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Participate on steering committees and work groups for development of Code of Ethics and social justice youth development certificate

B. Develop plan for recruitment and outreach to market certificate to appropriate parties

C. Develop certificate content, including synchronous and asynchronous trainings modules, reflections sessions and additional areas identified through the development process

D. Administer certification program application and admissions process

E. Track participant and organizational data, including completion of hours within core competency areas and continuing education units

F. Assist SPHIS project team with completing certification program evaluation

IV. SPHIS (University of Louisville) RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Developing and approving Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) Code of Ethics for Louisville

B. Developing and approving required SJYD core competencies and skills areas for individual and organizational levels

C. Designate appropriate areas for Continuing Education (CE) trainings and designate appropriate hours for maintenance of certificate

D. Develop certificate content, including synchronous and asynchronous trainings modules, reflections sessions and additional areas identified through the development process

E. Provide CE trainings and workshops for the certification program

F. Develop screening process for potential synchronous trainers and facilitators and implement with applicants to determine trainer and facilitator pool

G. Develop screening process for participants in the certification process, both individualand organizational levels

H. Identify pool of participants for inclusion and initiate consent process

I. Issue Social Justice Youth Development Certificates

J. Certify the Continuing Education Units (CEU) required to earn the Certification

K. Evaluate the certification program processes, outcomes, and impacts

V. DAJ_/_$_1-1/I.RING AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

A. SPHIS project team shall collect, maintain, and store all certification program evaluation data

B. OYD, MUW, or JCPS shall have access to de-identified and aggregate program evaluation data. JCPS IRB approval or a Data Sharing Agreement may be needed depending on the scope of the project.

Should any organization use or collect data for the purpose of conducting a research study, it will separately submit an external researchrequest through Data Provider's online system: https://assessment.jefferson.kyschools.us/DRMS/. For any project, involving data collection or research (e.g., program evaluation or monitoring activities), JCPS student or staff participation is voluntary. As a federally authorized Institutional Review Board (IRB), JCPS complies with the federal definition for research, which includes sharing of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for the purposes of answering a question or evaluating activities for effectiveness beyond standard educational or operational procedures. Thus, all data collection and research activities must be approved by the JCPS IRB and shall not begin before approval is secured from the JCPS IRB. Thus all research, program evaluation, and data collection activities involving JCPS staff or students or occurring on JCPS property must be approved by the IRB and shall not begin before approval is secured from the JCPS IRB.

C. OYD, MUW, or JCPS shall request access to any certificate program evaluation data by submitting a data request form to SPHIS project team. SPHIS shall not share any data with personal identifying information of certificate participants.

D. Employees and volunteers from SPHIS, OYD, MUW, and JCPS shall securely manage and maintain confidentiality regarding all participant information gained during interactions, in accordance with state and federal laws and Facility policies, as well as established research protocols.

E. Employees and volunteers from OYD, MUS, and JCPS will not disclose participant information to any third party without the permission of SPHIS to protect the identity of research participants.

F. All de-identified data collected by the certificate process shall be shared by all Parties. Each Party reserves the right to publish and disclose the results of joint project. Before publishing, however, each Party agrees to submit copies of any manuscript proposed for publication to the other Parties (and funding sponsors, when required) at least forty-five (45) days in advance of the presentation or manuscript submission date. Parties will acknowledge the contributions of the other in any resulting publication, following accepted publication and authorship guidelines

VI. TERM AND TERMINATION

A. This agreement shall commence on May 25, 2022, for a term extending to June 30, 2023.

B. Either party may terminate this agreement without cause at any time during the term by giving ninety (90) days prior written notice to all parties; provided parties are given an opportunity to complete their assigned responsibilities, if reasonably practicable.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

A. MUW, OYD, and SPHIS shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, marital or parental status, political affiliations or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, genetic information, disability, or limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

B. Individuals executing this Agreement on behalf of the organizations represent that they have been authorized to do so.

C. Amendment: This Agreement may be modified or amended only by a written agreement between the Parties.

D. Independent Parties: The Parties are considered independent parties and neither will be construed to be an agent or representative of the other. and therefore neither will be liable for the acts or omissionsof the other.

E. Captions: Section titles or captions in this Agreement are inserted as a matter of convenience and reference, and in no way define, limit, extend, or describe the scope of this Agreement.

F. Entire Agreement: This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the Parties and supersedes any and all prior oral and written agreements.

G. Severability: If a court of competent jurisdiction holds any provision of this Agreement unenforceable. such provision will be modified to the extent required to make it enforceable, consistent with the spirit and intent of this Agreement. If such a provision cannot be so modified, the provision will be deemed separable from the remaining provisions of this Agreement. If such a provision cannot be so modified, the provision will be deemed separable from the remaining provisions of this Agreement and will not affect any other provision.

H. Counterparts: This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, in which case each executed counterpart will be deemed an original, and all executed counterparts will constitute one and the same instrument.

I. Applicable Law: This agreement will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

VIII. NOTICES

All notices given pursuant to this Agreement shall be in writing and delivered or sent to:

University:
University of Louisville
School of Public Health & Information Sciences
485 E. Gray Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Attn: Dr. Aishia Brown

OYD
Office for Safe and Health Neighborhoods
Louisville Metro Government- Office of the Mayor
517 Court Place, Louisville, KY 40202

Attn: Monique Williams

MUW:
Metro United Way BLOCS
334 E. Broadway, Louisville, KY 40202

Attn: Angela Ditsier

JCPS:
Jefferson County Public Schools Policy & Systems
3332 Newburg Road
Louisville, KY 40218

Attn Suzanne Wright

[Signature page follows]

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In witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this Memorandum of Agreement as of the dates set forth below, but which shall be effective as the date first set out above.

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

By: ________

Name: T.G. Bradley
Title: Interim Provost
Date: 3/29/2022

LOUISVILL M IJ3ij,GOVERNMENT OFFICE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

By: ________
Name: Monique Williams
Title: Director
Date: 4/20/2022

METRCT

1EAF3F1554D4470...
By: ________
Name: Adria Johnson
Title: President & CEO
Date: 4/2172022

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By: ________
Name:
Title:
Date:

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Appendix B: Drs. Aishia Brown and Rebecka Bloomer Curricula Vitae

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Aishia A. Brown, Ph.D.

Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences
School of Public Health & Information Sciences
University of Louisville
485 East Gray Street, Louisville, KY 40202
Email: aishia.brown@louisville.edu | Office: 502.852.5164

EDUCATION

2016 **Ph.D.** **Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences** — **Texas A&M University**
Emphasis Area: Youth Development
Certificates: Prevention Science; Applied Statistics

2012 **B.S.** **Psychology** — **Texas A&M University**
Minors: Women & Gender/ Africana Studies

CURRENT POSITIONS

2020- Present **Founding Director, Center for Social Justice Youth Development Research**
School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville

2018- Present **Assistant Professor, Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences**
School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville

CURRENT AFFILIATIONS

2020- Present **Affiliate, Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research**
College of Arts & Sciences, University of Louisville

2016- Present **Affiliate, Youth Violence Prevention Research Center**
School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville

FORMER POSITIONS & AFFILIATIONS

2020- 2021 **Director, Office of Youth Development**
Office of Resilience and Community Services, Louisville Metro Government

2016- 2018 **Postdoctoral Researcher, Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky**
School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville

2016- 2017 **Postdoctoral Researcher, Center for Health Equity**
Public Health & Wellness, Louisville Metro Government

2014- 2016 **Instructor, Youth Development Program**
Department of Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University

2014- 2015 **Program Coordinator, Davila Middle School After-School Program**
Department of Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University

2012- 2016 **Graduate Research Assistant, Youth Development Lab**
Department of Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University

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2012- 2014 — **Graduate Teaching Assistant, Youth Development Program**
Department of Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University

FUNDED RESEARCH, CONSULTING, & GRANTS: ACTIVE

2022-2025 — **Co-Principal Investigator,** More than Just Safety: School Security Measures and Academic, Behavioral, and Social Outcomes; PI: Dr. Ben Fisher
Funding Source: U.S. Department of Education- Institute of Educational Sciences
Award Amount: $1,698,525 (direct: $346,073)
Grantee Institution: University of Wisconsin-Madison

2022-2024 — **Principal Investigator,** Healing Centered Capacity Building: Social Justice Youth Development Program
Funding Source: UofL+Humana: Health Equity Innovation Hub
Award Amount: $200,000
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2021-2023 — **Principal Investigator**, Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program.
Funding Source: Jewish Heritage Fund
Award Amount: $250,765
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2021-2022 — **Principal Investigator**, Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program.
Funding Source: Humana Foundation
Award Amount: $75,000
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

FUNDED RESEARCH, CONSULTING, & GRANTS: COMPLETED

2021-2022 — **Principal Investigator**, Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program.
Funding Source: Louisville Metro Government, Office of Youth Development
Award Amount: $99,351
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2021-2022 — **Co-Principal Investigator**, Youth Responses to Racial Inequities: Community-Listening Sessions and Advocacy Work.
Funding Source: University of Louisville Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research
Award Amount: $6,350
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2019- 2020 — **Principal Investigator**, Radical Healing Project: Girls in Youth Detention.
Funding Source: University of Louisville Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research
Award Amount: $5,500
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2019- 2020 — **Co-Principal Investigator**, SNAP!: Photovoice Project with Louisville Metro Office for Safe & Health Neighborhoods Youth Implementation Team.

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Funding Source: University of Louisville Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research
Award Amount: $7,500
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2020-2021 — **Co-Investigator**, Changing the Narrative: Shifting Social Norms of Violence
Funding Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Award Amount: $4,204,750

2019- 2020 — **Co-Principal Investigator**, Our Emotional Wellbeing Project.
Funding Source: Center for Health Organization Transformation
Award Amount: $24,000
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2017- 2020 — **Principal Investigator**, Bridge Kids International Program Evaluation.
Funding Source: Kellogg Foundation
Award Amount: $30,000
Grantee Institution: University of Louisville

2015- 2016 — **Co-Investigator**, Rape Prevention Evaluation Plan. PI: Dr. Corliss Outley.
Funding Source: Texas Department of State Health Services
Award Amount: $100,000
Grantee Institution: Texas A&M University

2014- 2015 — **Co-Principal Investigator**, Texas Youth Empowerment Summit.
Funding Source: Texas Department of State Health Services
Award Amount: $100,000
Grantee Institution: Texas A&M University

2014- 2015 — **Co-Investigator**, Forgotten Spaces, Endangered Hope: Exploring Social Justice amongst Youth in Rural America.
Funding Source: Program to Enhance Scholarly and Creative Activities (PESCA), Texas A&M University Office of Research
Award Amount: $10,000
Grantee Institution: Texas A&M University

2012- 2014 — **Co-Investigator & Project Manager**. Scan of the Implementation and Impact of Existing Rites of Passage Programs.
Funding Source: Heinz Foundation
Award Amount: $100,000
Grantee Institutions: California University of Pennsylvania and Texas A&M University

FUNDED RESEARCH, CONSULTING, & GRANTS: NOT FUNDED

2020 — **Title**: Examining the Use of Social Justice Youth Development in a Coordinated System of Youth Serving Organizations.
Agency: William T. Grant Foundation
Research Team: Aishia A. Brown, PhD, Monica Wendel, DrPH, MPH, and Rebecka Bloomer, MSSW

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Role: Principal Investigator
Requested Amount: $500,000

2018 **Title**: Transforming Youth-Serving Institutions: A multilevel approach to prevent violence by reducing structural racism/discrimination.
Agency: National Institute of Minority Health & Health Disparities.
Research Team: Aishia A. Brown, PhD, Billie F. Castle, PhD, Cherie B. Dawson-Edwards, PhD, Monica L. Wendel, DrPH, Shantel Crosby, PhD, Ahmad Washington, PhD, and Detra Johnson, PhD.
Role: Principal Investigator.
Requested Amount: $2,500,000

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

† - Student advisee/mentee

Bloomer, R. †, Harris, L.M., **Brown, A.** (Under Review) Conceptualizing Roles of Youth Workers Engaging Youth Voice in Community-based Programs. *Journal of Community Practice.*

Bloomer, R. †, Harris, L. M., **Brown, A.**, & Crosby, S. (2022). Exploring the promotion of youth voice in community-based youth development programmes. *Child & Family Social Work.*

Wendel, M., Jones, G., Nation, M., Howard, T. †, Jackson, T., **Brown, A.**, Williams, M., Ford, N. †, Combs, R. (2022) Their help is not helping": Policing as a tool of structural violence against Black communities. *Psychology of Violence*, 12(4), 231.

Bloomer, R. †, **Brown, A.**, Winters, A., Domiray, A. † (2021). "Trying to be Everything Else": Examining the Challenges Experienced by Youth Development Workers. *Child and Youth Services.*

Hartson, K. R., King, K., O'Neal, C., **Brown, A.**, Olajuyigbe, T., Elmore, S. †, & Perez, A. (2021). Testing the Effects of Two Field-to-Fork Programs on the Nutritional Outcomes of Elementary School Students from Diverse and Lower-Income Communities. *Journal of School Health*, DOI: 10.1177/10598405211036892

Gabriel, M.G., **Brown, A.**, Leon, M. †, Outley, C. (2020). Power and Social Control of Youth During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Leisure Sciences,* 43(1-2), 240-246.

Pinckney IV, H., Outley, C., **Brown, A.**, Stone, G., & Manzano-Sánchez, H. (2020). Rights of Passage Programs: A Culturally Relevant Youth Development Program for Black Youth. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 38(3), 173-193.

Brown, A., & Gabriel, M. G. (2019). The Role of Youth Voice in This Special Issue. *Journal of Youth Development*, 14(2), 205-208.

Pinckney, H. P., **Brown, A.**, Senè-Harper, A., & Lee, K. J. (2019). A case for Race scholarship: A research note. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *50*(4), 350-358.

Brown, A., & Outley, C. (2019). The Role of Leisure in the Dehumanization of Black Girlhood: Egypt's story. *Leisure Sciences*, DOI: 10.1080/01490400.2018.1539686.

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Brown, A., Outley, C., & Pinckney, H. (2018). Examining the Use of Leisure for the Sociopolitical Development of Black Youth in Out-of-School Time Programs. *Leisure Sciences*, 40(7), 686-696.

Pinckney IV, H. P., Outley, C., **Brown, A.**, & Theriault, D. (2018). Playing While Black. *Leisure Sciences*, 40(7), 675-685.

Pinckney, H. P., Mowatt, R. A., Outley, C., **Brown, A.,** Floyd, M. F., & Black, K. L. (2018). Black spaces/white spaces: Black lives, leisure, and life politics. *Leisure Sciences*, 40(4), 267-287.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Outley, C., **Brown, A.,** Gabriel, M.G., Sullins, A. (2018). The Role of Culture in Out-of-School Time Settings. In Witt, P. & Caldwell, L. (Eds.). *Youth Development Principles and Practices in Out-of-School Time Settings.* Venture-Sagamore Publishing.

PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

† - Student advisee/mentee

Brown, A., Howard, T. † (October 2021). Addressing education and health disparities through a social justice youth development certificate program. American Public Health Association 2021 Annual Meeting & Expo.

Ford, N. †, Howard, T. †, **Brown, A.** (October 2021). How methodology is used as a liberatory practice: A mixed-method approach. American Public Health Association 2021 Annual Meeting & Expo.

Fisher, B., **Brown, A.,** Story, A. † (October 2021). "In My 'Hood": Using Photovoice to Understand Youth Perceptions of Structure and Agency in their Communities. Society for the Study of Social Problems 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting.

Williams, M., **Brown, A.,** Jackson, T., Wendel, M., Jones, G., Robinson, Q. (October 2020). Social justice youth development as a strategy for preventing violence among youth. American Public Health Association 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting & Expo Poster Session.

Nation, M., Wendel, M., Jackson, T., Williams, M., **Brown, A.,** Jones, G., Debreaux, M. (October 2020). Effects of structural violence on youth development and wellbeing. American Public Health Association 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting & Expo Poster Session.

James, V., **Brown, A.,** Williams, M., Wendel, M., Nation, M., Jackson, T. (October 2020). Scaling up: Institutionalizing a social justice youth development approach throughout city policies and structures. American Public Health Association 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting & Expo Poster Session.

Brown, A., Story, A. †, Howard, T. †, Bailey-Ndiaye, S., Ndiaye, B., Smith, J. (February 2020). The Role of Culturally Responsive Camps: A Look into the Seven-Generations African Heritage Camp. The 2020 American Camp Association Annual Meeting Camp Research Forum. San Diego, CA.

Brown, A., Ingram, M., Castle, B. (November 2017). Challenges and Triumphs: Applying the Social Justice Youth Development Framework to Public Health. The 2017 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo. Atlanta, GA.

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Jackson, T., **Brown, A.**, Wendel, M. (November 2017). Does Black History Matter? Exploring Socioecological Motivations that Facilitate Social Movements around Movie Media and Empowerment. The 2017 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo. Atlanta, GA.

Kelly Pryor, B., Holston, A., **Brown, A.** (February 2017). Navigating the Epistemological Lens of White Men: Examining Holes in Leisure Theory. The Academy of Leisure Sciences 2017 Research Institute. Indianapolis, IN.

Brown, A., & Kelly Pryor, B. (February 2017). Urban Recreational Sites as Spaces for Radical Healing. The Academy of Leisure Sciences 2017 Research Institute. Indianapolis, IN.

Outley, C., **Brown, A.**, & Kelly Pryor, B. (September 2016). "Miss They're All White, They Don't Understand": Developing Cultural Competency with Youth Development Majors Through Community Based Service-Learning Experiences. National Society for Experiential Education Annual Conference. San Antonio, TX.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (October 2016). Healing Recreational Spaces of Refuge for Black Youth. Leisure Research Symposium presented at National Recreation and Park Association Congress. St. Louis, MO.

Brown, A., Outley, C., & Pinckney, H. (October 2015). Positive Identity Development in Rites of Passage Programs for African American Girls. 2015 Black Doctoral Network Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Brown, A., Outley, C., & Pinckney, H. (September 2015). Cultural Youth Development Programs for African American Girls. Leisure Research Symposium presented at National Recreation and Park Association Congress. Las Vegas, NV.

Brown, A. (April 2015). Empowering Youth through Hip Hop. Youth Development Initiative Conference. San Marcos, TX.

Brown, A., Kelly Pryor, B.N. (December 2013). If I Was Gay I Would Think Hip-Hop Hates me. 2013 Gender, Sexuality, and Hip-Hop Conference. Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

Kelly Pryor, B. N., Outley, C. W., & **Brown, A.** (October 2013). Consuming Princess Tiana: Shared Mother and Daughter Leisure through Consumerism. Leisure Research Symposium presented at National Recreation and Park Association Congress. Houston, TX.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (October 2013). Empowering Youth through Hip Hop. Education Session presented at National Recreation and Park Association Congress. Houston, Texas.

PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH POSTER PRESENTATIONS

† - Student advisee/mentee

Ford, N. †, Osezua, V. †, Elmore, S. †, **Brown, A.**, King, K., Hartson, K., O'Neal, C., & Perez, A. (October 2021). Training youth in food justice and advocacy: Lessons learned from the youth community agriculture program. In APHA's 2021 Annual Meeting and Expo (Oct. 24-27). *American Public Health Association.*

Hartson, K. R., King, K., O'Neal, C., **Brown, A.**, Elmore, S. †, & Perez, A. (June 2021). Farm-based education is associated with increased vegetable intake and knowledge of healthy recipes among

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elementary students. 2021 Association of Community Health Nurse Educators Annual Institute. Alexandria, VA.

Salunkhe, S.S. †, **Brown, A.**, Edmonds, T., Miller, J. (April 2021). Arts-based interventions and emotional wellbeing of the youth: A systematic review. 2021 Kentucky Public Health Association Conference.

Salunkhe, S.S. †, Ford, N. †, Van Schyndel, A., **Brown, A.**, Edmonds, T. (October 2020). Culturally responsive interventions for youth emotional wellbeing: A mixed-method approach. American Public Health Association 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting & Expo Poster Session.

Elmore, S. †, **Brown, A.**, King, K., Hartson, K., O'Neal, C., Perez, A. (October 2020). Centering Youth Voices in Evaluation through Photovoice: Examining the Food Literacy Project. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics 2020 Virtual Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo.

Perez, A., **Brown, A.**, Elmore, S. †, Hartson, K., O'Neal, C., King, K. (July 2020). Nourishing Food Literacy, Community Health, and Sense of Place in Louisville, KY. Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior 2020 Virtual Annual Conference.

Brown, A., Story, A. †, Howard, T. †, Bailey-Ndiaye, S., Ndiaye, B., Smith, J. (February 2020). The Role of Culturally Responsive Camps: A Look into the Seven-Generations African Heritage Camp. The 2020 American Camp Association Annual Meeting Camp Research Forum. San Diego, CA.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (April 2018). Creating a Culture of Critical Thinking in Out-of-School (OST) Programs. 2018 Society for Research on Adolescence Conference Poster Session. Minneapolis, MN.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (April 2016). Social Justice Youth Development, Radical Healing, and Artistic Expression for Black Youth. 2016 Society for Research on Adolescence Conference Special Poster Session. Baltimore, MD.

Brown, A., Outley, C., & Pinckney, H. (September 2015). Cultural Youth Development Programs for African American Girls. Leisure Research Symposium Presented at National Recreation and Park Association Congress. Las Vegas, NV.

Brown, A. (April 2014) Hip Hop Pedagogy and Positive Youth Development. Youth Development Initiative Conference Poster Session. Navasota, TX.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Brown, A., Gast, M., Perry, A., (March 2021). Virtual Community Engaged Scholarship Panel for New Faculty. University of Louisville Office of the Vice President for Community Engagement. Louisville, KY.

Brown, A. (May 2020). Social Justice Youth Development: An Introduction (virtual webinar). Coalition Supporting Young Adults. Louisville, KY.

Dawson-Edwards, C., Cosby, R., **Brown, A.**, McCormack, S., Shawnee Revolution High School Students, (February 2020). Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools Film Screening & Discussion. University of Louisville Department of Criminal Justice and Jefferson County Public Schools. Louisville, KY.

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Williams, K., **Brown, A.** (November 2019). Conversation Café. Bernheim Forest and Play Cousins Collective Urban Seeds of Play Conference. Louisville, KY.

Brown, A. (November 2019). Social Justice Movements and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Education First Foundation 10th Annual Showcase of HBCU College-Career Fair. Louisville, KY.

Brown, A. (November 2019). Avoiding Burnout. Louisville Metro Government Office of Youth Development. Louisville, KY.

Golden, T., **Brown, A.** (May 2019). One Day I'll Rise: Building Trauma-Informed, Arts -Based Programs that Elevate Girls in Advocacy & Social Change. National Crittenton Foundation, In Solidarity Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Brown, A. (March 2018). Literature Reviews: A Brief Introduction. Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness Center for Health Equity Health Policy Work Group. Louisville, KY.

Brown, A. (February 2017). Social Justice Youth Development and Youth Violence Prevention. Family & Children's Place PAL Coalition Meeting. Louisville, KY.

Brown, A. (November 2015). Exploring the Challenges: Hip-hop Education and the Youth-Adult Relationship Continuum. 2015 Words, Beats, Life Teach-In. Washington, DC.

Brown, A. (February 2015). Empowering Youth through Hip Hop. City of College Station Inaugural DreamWorks Conference. College Station, TX.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (October 2014) Empowering Youth through Hip Hop, Texas Recreation and Park Society Regional Conference. Austin, TX.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (October 2014) Empowering Youth through Hip Hop. 10th Annual Strengthening Youth and Families Conference. San Marcos, TX.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (October 2014) The Development of Prejudice in Youth: What are we Really Teaching Them? 10th Annual Strengthening Youth and Families Conference. San Marcos, TX.

RESEARCH REPORTS

King, K., **Brown, A.**, Elmore, S., Hartson, K., O'Neal, C. (2020). Final Evaluation Report: Food Literacy Project. Submitted to Food Literacy Project.

Brown, A., Ford, N., Salunkhe, S., Edmonds, T., (2020). Our Emotional Wellbeing Research Study Report. Submitted to Center for Health Organization Transformation.

Brown, A., Story, A., Howard, T., (2019). Bridge Kids International Programs Evaluation Report. Submitted to Bridge Kids International and Kellogg Foundation.

Brown, A., Outley, C. (2015). Final Evaluation Report: Summer Arts at the Center Program. Submitted to the South Dallas Cultural Center: Dallas, TX.

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Brown, A. (2014). Final Evaluation Report: Restoring Inspiration through Science and Artistic Expression (RISE) Program. Submitted to the Change Rocks Foundation: Richmond, VA.

Pinckney, H., Outley, C., & **Brown, A.** (2013). Final Report: National Scan of Rites of Passage Programs. Submitted to the Heinz Foundation: Pittsburgh, PA.

TEACHING & INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE

2022 PHPB 321: **Social Justice Youth Development (Social Justice & Youth Activism)**, Instructor, 22 students, University of Louisville

2022 PHPB 611: **Community Organization and Assessment (spring 2022)**, Instructor, 12 students, University of Louisville.

2021 PHPB 711: **Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health (fall 2021)**, Instructor, 10 students, University of Louisville.

2020 PHPB 650: **Evaluation Research (fall 2020)**, Instructor, 8 students, University of Louisville.

2019 PHPH 550/SCHG 302: **Social Justice & Youth Activism (fall 2019)**, Instructor. 18 students, University of Louisville.

2019 PHPB 650: **Photovoice (summer 2019)**, Instructor. 10 students, University of Louisville. *Service-Learning focus on using CBPR to influence policy makers.

2019 PHPH 401: **Public Health and Health Policy (spring 2019)**, Instructor. 72 students, University of Louisville.

2018 INVITED LECTURE: Youth Focused Community Based Participatory Research, RPTS 689: **Community Based Participatory Research (spring 2018)**. Texas A&M University.

2017 INVITED LECTURE: Engaging Youth Stakeholders, PHPB 650: **Health Promotion Policy Development and Advocacy (spring 2017).** University of Louisville.

2016 RPTS 478: **Youth Development Practice (spring 2016)**, Co-Instructor. 21 students, Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing Boys & Girls Club and Lincoln Recreation Center Afterschool Program.

2015 RPTS 478: **Youth Development Practice (fall 2015)**, Co-Instructor. 27 students, Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing Boys & Girls Club and Lincoln Recreation Center Afterschool Program.

2015 RPTS 478: **Youth Development Practice (spring 2015)**, Instructor. 17 students, Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing Davila Middle School Afterschool Program.

2015 INVITED LECTURE: Planning a Community Youth Development Summit, RPTS 489/689: **Youth Evaluation and Engagement (spring 2015).** Texas A&M University.

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2014 RPTS 478: **Youth Development Practice (fall 2014)**, Instructor. 28 students, Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing Davila Middle School Afterschool Program.

2014 RPTS 370: **Youth Development Organizations & Services (summer 2014)**, Teaching Assistant. 30 students, Texas A&M University.

2014 RPTS 370: **Youth Development Organizations & Services (spring 2014)**, Instructor. 62 students, Texas A&M University.

2013 RPTS 370: **Youth Development Organizations & Services (fall 2013)**, Teaching Assistant. 45 students. Texas A&M University.

2013 RPTS 489: **Introduction to Camp Administration (summer 2013)**, Teaching Assistant. 14 students, Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing Exxon Mobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp.

2013 RPTS 372: **Youth Development Practice (spring 2013)**, Teaching Assistant. 35 students. Texas A&M University. *Service-Learning focus managing youth programs within Bryan-College Station area.

2012 INVITED LECTURE: Introduction to Youth Development, RPTS 301: **Leisure and Outdoor Recreation in American Culture (fall 2012)**. Texas A&M University.

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISING & MENTORSHIP

2022 Dissertation Committee Chair/Graduate Advisor, Tanisha Howard (PhD candidate), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Expected Graduation: Spring 2023.

2021 Dissertation Committee Chair/Graduate Advisor, Shakeyrah Elmore (PhD candidate), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Expected Graduation: Spring 2023.

2020 Dissertation Committee Member, Victory Osezua, PhD, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Graduated: Fall 2022.

2020 Dissertation Committee Member, Nana Ama Bullock (PhD candidate), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences. University of Louisville. Graduated: Spring 2022.

2020 Graduate Advisor, Dana Seay (PhD Student), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Expected Graduation: Spring 2025.

2019 Dissertation Committee Chair/Graduate Advisor, Nicole Ford (PhD student), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Expected Graduation: Spring 2022.

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2019 Graduate Advisor, Grant Harris, MPH, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Graduated: Spring 2021.

2019 Graduate Advisor, Emily Divino, MPH, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Graduated: Spring 2021.

2018 Dissertation Committee Member/Graduate Advisor, Alice Story (PhD candidate), Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville. Graduated: Spring 2022.

2018 Dissertation Committee Member, Rebecka Bloomer, PhD, Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville. Graduated: Fall 2022.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

2019 Selected Scholar, Health Equity Leadership Institute (http://uwheli.com), The University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health & The University of Maryland School of Public Health. Madison, WI.

2018 University of Louisville Delphi Teaching Institute, Seminar on Teaching for New Faculty.

2018 Purdue University, 9th Annual Conference for Pre-Tenure Women.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES: UNIVERSITY

2021 **Student Academic Grievance Committee Member,** School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville.

2020 **Community Engagement Committee Faculty Liaison,** Office of Community Engagement, University of Louisville.

2020 **Anne Braden Institute Steering Committee,** College of Arts & Science, University of Louisville.

2018 **PhD Seminar Ad Hoc Committee Member**, Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville.

2018 **Health Policy & Equity Co-Investigator**, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Summer Health Professions Education Program, Health Science Center Office for Diversity & Inclusion, University of Louisville.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES: COMMUNITY

2021 **Board Member,** Coalition Supporting Young Adults (CSYA), Louisville, KY.

2020 **Operations Team Member,** Building Louisville's Out-of-School Time Coordinated System (BLOCS), Louisville, KY.

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2020 **Advisor,** Youth Resistance Collective (YRC), Louisville, KY.
**YRC is a youth-led grass roots organization.*

2020 **Co-Founder/Co-Lead,** Louisville Political Education for Liberation (LPEL), Louisville, KY.
**LPEL is a community-led grass roots organization.*

2020 **Organizational Design Committee Member,** Louisville Metro Government Youth Center of Excellence Cross Functional Team, Louisville, KY.

2020 **Education Committee Member,** Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, Louisville Metro Government Criminal Justice Commission, Louisville, KY.

2019 **Planning Committee Member**, Juvenile Justice Community Conversations. American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky & Louisville Metro Government Criminal Justice Commission, Louisville, KY.

2019 **Panelist**, The Feet but Never the Face: Exploring the Role of Women and LGBTQ folks in the Movement, National Youth Violence Prevention Week, Louisville, KY.

2019 **Speaker**, The Power of Words: Asset v. Deficit Based Language. Community Foundation of Louisville, Louisville, KY.

2018 **Task Force Member & Student Voice Facilitator**, Behavioral Alternative Schools Task Force. Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, KY.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES: FIELD

2020 **Ad-hoc Reviewer**, Journal of Family & Community Health

2019 **Reviewer**, Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting, Neighborhood, Community, and Out-of-School Time Research Presentations

2019 **Guest Editor**, *Journal of Youth Development*
(Special Issue: Immigrant, Refugee, and Border Youth)

2018 **Reviewer**, National Recreation & Park Association Congress & Expo, National Research Sessions

2017 **Reviewer**, Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting, Neighborhood, Community, and Out-of-School Time Research Presentations

2017 **Ad-hoc Reviewer**, Journal of Leisure Sciences

2016 **Ad-hoc Reviewer**, Journal of Park & Recreation Administration

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS

2018 American Public Health Association (APHA)

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2018 American Evaluation Association (AEA)

2018 Culturally Responsive Evaluation Association (CREA)

2017 The Academy of Leisure Sciences (TALS)

2016 Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky (CIK)

2014 Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA)

2013 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

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Rebecka Bloomer, PhD, MSSW
School of Public Health and Information Sciences
Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences
University of Louisville
485 East Gray Street
Louisville, KY 40202
Email: Rebecka.bloomer@louisville.edu

EDUCATION

2021	**Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Work**	University of Louisville
2010	**MSSW**	University of Louisville
2005	Study Abroad (Paris)	KY Institute International Studies
	BA: French	Eastern Kentucky University
	BA: History	
	Specializations: Francophone Africa, Women and Gender Studies in Francophone Countries	

DISSERTATION

Exploring the Promotion of Youth Voice and Activism by Youth Development Workers in Community-Based Programs

Committee Members: Drs. Lesley M. Harris (chair), Thomas Lawson, Aishia Brown, Shantel Crosby

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social justice youth development; youth-adult partnerships; critical consciousness; immigrant and refugee access to social supports; self-care; community-based participatory research and practice, arts-based research methods

PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Harris, L., Williams, S., Nygeres, E., **Bloomer, R.** (2022). Beyond #FreeBritney: Teaching social workers surrogate decision making through the Spears case. *Journal of Social Work Education. (In press).*

Bloomer, R., Harris, L.M., Brown, A., Crosby, S. (2022) Exploring the promotion of youth voice in community-based youth development programs. *Child & Family Social Work.* https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12961

Bloomer, R., Brown., A., Winters, A., & Domiray, A. (2021). "Trying to be Everything Else": Describing Youth Development Worker Experiences with Challenges in the Context of Out of School Time Settings. *Child and Youth Services Review.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2021.106213

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Harris, L.M., Smith, L., Thang, N.D. & **Bloomer, R.** (*Accepted*). Caregiving Processes for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in the Wake of the AIDS Epidemic in Vietnam. *Journal of Refugee and Global Health.*

Harris, L.M., **Bloomer, R.**, Williams, S., Osezua, V., Sato, D., Thang, N.D., Byun, K. & Hambrick, H. (Revise & Resubmit) "Not Strong Enough to Protect Children": Using Photovoice to Identify Systems Risks Among Youth Orphaned Due to HIV/AIDS in Vietnam. *Children and Youth Services Review.*

Bloomer, R., Harris, L.M., Brown, A. (Under Review) Conceptualizing Roles of Youth Workers Engaging Youth Voice in Community-Based Programs.

Harris, L.M., **Bloomer, R.** Mitchell, B. Williams, S., Osezua, V., Sato, D, Byun, K., Hambrick, M. & Thang, N.D. (*Under Review*). Exploring the Varied Dimensions of Youth's Ideas for Social Change: A Photovoice Project on HIV Risk and Resilience in Vietnam.

Invited Manuscripts in Progress

Bloomer, R., Brown, A. Moving from second-sight to critical consciousness: Building community-based OST programs fostering praxis. *Children & Schools Special Issue: Organized Activities During Out of School Time as a Tool for Social Justice. Projected submission* (July, 2022).

Other Manuscripts in Progress

Bloomer, R., Storer, H.L., Nyerges, E.X. From service-users to agents of social change: Repositioning the role of youth at Gender-based Violence (GBV) organizations. *Projected submission* (July, 2022).

Bloomer, R., Harris, L., Mitchell, B. Moving towards social justice and critical consciousness development: Lessons learned from Vietnamese youth orphaned by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. *Projected submission* (Nov., 2022)

Brown, A., **Bloomer, R.,** Elmore, S., Ford, N., & Osezua, V. Youth cultivating change: Photovoice with a community agriculture program. *Projected submission* (Oct., 2022)

Elmore, S., Brown, A., Osezua, V., Ford, N., Bloomer, R., & Gunderson. Critical consciousness and social action through food literacy youth development program: A photovoice project. *Projected submission (*Oct. 2022).

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Bloomer, R., Brown., A., Winters, A., & Domiray, A. (2021). "Trying to be Everything Else": Describing Youth Development Worker Experiences with Challenges in the Context of Out of School Time Settings. Technical Report for Office of Youth Development and Kent School of Social Work.

Gast, M., Brown, A., & Bloomer, R. (2022) Community Listening Sessions Technical Report for Office of Youth Development.

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Bloomer, R., Brown, A., & Williams, S. (November, 2022) Critical consciousness building in youth OST spaces: A Photovoice project. American Public Health Association Annual Conference. (presentation).

Storer, H.L., Nyerges, E.X., **Bloomer, R**. (April, 2022). From Service-users to agents of social change: Repositioning the role of youth at Gender-based Violence (GBV) Organizations (poster) . National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC)Youth Mentoring. Conference, Virtual.

Storer, H.L., Nyerges, E.X.. **Bloomer, R**. (April, 2022). From Service-users to agents of social change: Repositioning the role of youth at Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Agencies. ResilienceCon, Virtual, Virtual.

Bloomer, R., Brown, A., & Winters. A. (2022). "Trying to be Everything Else": Describing Youth Development Worker Experiences with Challenges in the Context of Out of School Time Settings. *Society on Social Work Research Annual Conference*. Washington, D.C.

Byun, K., Harris. L.M., **Bloomer, R**., Hambrick, M., Williams, S., Osezua, V. & Sato, D. (2021). Our World Our Say: Understanding HIV Risk and Resilience Among Adolescents Who Have Been Orphaned By HIV/AIDS in Hai Phong, Vietnam. Environmental Design Research Association. May. 2021.

Harris, L.M., **Bloomer, R**., Williams, S., Osezua, V., Sato, D. Byun, K., Hambrick. M. & Thang, N.D. (2021). "Our World, Our Say": The Use of Photovoice for Youth-Driven HIV Advocacy Efforts in Vietnam. International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Champaign, IL. May, 2021.

Harris, L.M., **Bloomer, R**. Williams, S., Osezua, V., Sato, D. Byun, K., Hambrick, M. & Thang, N.D. (2021). "Not Strong Enough To Protect Children": Systems Risks Identified Among Youth Who Have Been Orphaned Due To HIV/AIDS In Vietnam: A Photovoice Project. Sixteenth International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, Oxford, England, July 21-23, 2021.

Bloomer, R. & Middleton, A. (2019). Social Work Adjunct Instructors: Exploring On-Boarding Processes and Perceptions of Organizational Support. International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. Champaign, IL. May 2019.

Bloomer, R., Middleton, A., & Purdy, L. (2019). Challenges Experienced and Opportunities for Improvement Noted by Social Work Adjunct Faculty. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting. Denver, CO, October 2019.

UNDER REVIEW FOR PRESENTATION

Bloomer, R., Brown, A., & Harris, L. Engaging youth in photovoice methods: Minimizing harm and maximizing benefits. Symposium submission for Society for Social Work and Research 27th Annual Conference. January, 2023.

CREATIVE PRODUCTS

Bloomer, R., Henry-Floyd, S., & Avila-Ugalde, J., Brown, A. (2022, August). "If it's perfect, there's nothing for us to fix": Exploring youth-identified challenges and strengths through Photovoice. [Art-Advocacy Exhibition]. Acme Artworks Gallery, Louisville, KY.

Byun, K., Harris, L.M . Williams. S., Osezua, V., Scoggins, C., Coleman, L., **Bloomer, R.**, Sato. D. & Hambrick, M. (2021, July). "Landscape of Crisis" [Art-Advocacy Exhibition]. SPACE XX Gallery, Seoul, Korea.

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Harris, L.M., Williams, S., Osezua, V., Byun, K. **Bloomer, R.** & Sato, D (2020, March 21). Our World Our Say Photovoice Project [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3uBODfFB1KFXEnAmYH4MCGhMWIZdeFfU

Byun, K. Harris, L.M., Williams, S., Osezua, V., Scoggins, C., Coleman, L., **Bloomer, R.** & Sato, D. (2020, February 21 – 2020, April, 24). Our World Our Say Exhibition #2: Understanding HIV Risk and Resilience Among Adolescents Who Have Been Orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Hai Phong, Vietnam [Art-Advocacy Exhibition]. Retrieved from: https://mailchi.mp/cranehouse/crane-house-weekly-3108413

Byun, K. Harris, L.M., Williams, S., Osezua, V., Scoggins, C., Coleman, L., **Bloomer, R.** & Sato, D. (2020, January 10 – 2020, February, 6). Our World Our Say Exhibition #1: Understanding HIV Risk and Resilience Among Adolescents Who Have Been Orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Hai Phong, Vietnam [Art-Advocacy Exhibition]. Retrieved from: https://louisville.edu/art/exhibitions/all/our-world-our-say

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Funded Proposals

Principal Investigator 2022-Present
University of Louisville
Social Work Student and Louisville Library Partnership
"Creating community spaces of care for foreign-born residents: Expanding social work and library collaboration"
Jon Seiger Grant, $7500.

Co-Investigator 2021-2023
PI: Dr. Aishia Brown
Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program
Funded by: Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence $250,765
Louisville Metro Government, Office of Youth Development $99,351
Humana Health Equity Innovation Hub Grant, $200,000

Co-Investigator 2022-Present
PI: Dr. Aishia Brown
Youth Advisory Board
Funded by: Humana Foundation $75,000
Mayor's Summer Bash $20,000

Co-Investigator 2020-Present
PI: Dr. Melanie Gast
Youth Responses to Racial Inequities, Community-Listening Sessions and Advocacy Work
Funded by: University of Louisville Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research $6350

Co-Investigator 2020-Present
University of Louisville
PI: Dr. Lesley Harris
Our World Our Say: Exploring the Impact of Arts-Based Social Change Initiatives in Vietnam in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic
Funded by: Cooperative for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research ($4000)

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Co-Investigator 2020-Present
University of Louisville
PI: Dr. Scott LaJoie
"The Lived Experience of Black or African American Mothers Raising Children in West Louisville: A Photovoice Project"
Funded by: Cooperative for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research ($6300)

Principal Investigator 2019-Present
University of Louisville
"CLASP Photovoice Project: Exploring strengths, needs, and challenges experienced by youth in an out of school time program"
Funded by: Jewish Family Heritage Foundation ($15000)

Co-Investigator 2019-Present
University of Louisville
PI: Dr. Lesley Harris
"Understanding HIV Risk and Resilience among Adolescents who have been Orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Hai Phong, Vietnam Using Photovoice and Social Network Analysis"
Funded by: Cooperative for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research ($15000)

Co-Investigator 2018-2021
University of Louisville
PI: Dr. Andrew Winters
"Louisville Youth Development Workers' Needs Assessment"
Funded by: Kent Seed Grant Award ($5000)

Unfunded Projects

Principal Investigator 2018-2020
University of Louisville
"Social Work Adjunct Instructors: Exploring Perceptions of Support and Readiness to Teach"

Principal Investigator 2017-2018
University of Louisville
PI: Dr. Thomas Lawson
"Youth and School-Age Program Quality Intervention: Relationship between Staff Training and Increased Performance"

Proposals Under Review

Principal Investigator 2022
University of Louisville
Social Work Student and Louisville Library Partnership

"Creating community spaces of care for foreign-born residents: Expanding social work library partnerships"
Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence, $500,000.

Unfunded Proposals
Co-Principal Investigator 2022

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"Assessing and responding to psychosocial and health equity needs of immigrant and refugee communities through library partnerships: Creating a continuum of care". Health Equity Hub Grants, $100,000.

Co-Principal Investigator 2020
"Examining the Use of Social Justice Youth Development in a Coordinated System of Youth Serving Organizations". William T. Grant Foundation. $600,000.

Co-Investigator 2020
"Collaborative Learning After School Program (CLASP) Summer Arts & Activism: A Photovoice Project Addressing Multidimensional Poverty". Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation Internal Grant Program. $3000

Principal Investigator 2019
"Collaborative Learning After School Program (CLASP) Summer Arts & Activism: A Photovoice Project Addressing Multidimensional Poverty". Humana Foundation Community Partners Arts and Culture Grant. $49,500.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor 2022-Present
University of Louisville
School of Public Health and Information Sciences: ***Strategies for Social Action***

- Created course content based on required outcomes related to competency development

Instructor 2018-2022
University of Louisville Summer, Fall, Spring
BSW Program: ***Intro to Social Statistics (Online)***

- Transitioned course into online platform, developed and implemented content

Instructor 2017- 2019
University of Louisville
BSW Program: ***Practicum Seminar & Lab I (F2F and Online)***

- Revised course content and developed assignments for course across sections to be congruent with established program CSWE outcomes

Instructor 2017-2019, Spring 2022
University of Louisville
BSW Program: ***Practicum Seminar & Lab II***

Revised course content and developed assignments for course across sections to be congruent with established program CSWE outcomes

Instructor 2016-Present
University of Louisville Fall/Spring
MSSW Program: ***Advanced Practicum (Campus and Online)***

Instructor 2016-Present
University of Louisville Fall/Spring
MSSW Program: ***Foundation Practicum (Campus and Online)***

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Instructor — 2016-Present
University of Louisville — Fall/Spring
BSW Program: ***BSW Practicum (Campus and Online)***

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

University of Louisville Faculty Favorite	2017-2018
Building Louisville's Out of School Time Coordinated System (BLOCS) Scholarship	2015
National Network to Eliminate Disparities in Behavioral Health Grant	2013
Charlotte Schmidlapp Scholarship—Women's Writing	2003
Honors Presidential Scholarship	1999-2003
Books-on-Loan Award	1999-2003

COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE

2015-2021 **Field Education Coordinator**
University of Louisville

- Develop community-based projects to mentor field agencies in creating quality field placement experiences for BSW/MSSW students
- Advise students on practicum choices, navigating students through the referral process, interviewing, placement confirmation. Create and conduct student orientations, develop Field forums for practicum supervisors

2015-2019 **PQI External Accessor**
BLOCS (Louisville Office of Youth Development/Metro United Way)

- Certified reliable accessor in using and scoring the Youth Programs Quality Assessment (PQA) tool developed by the David P. Weikert Center for Youth Program Quality.

2012-2015 **Assistant Director of Family and School Services**
Family & Children's Place

- Develop Trauma Informed Care initiatives for youth development workers in city
- Provide direct supervision to Family and School Services Site Supervisor; managed 12 staff; supervised up to 7 practicum students a semester
- Supervised implementation of all Family and School Services programming and curricula.
- Write grants/funding opportunities and create quarterly reports: Louisville Metro, Metro United Way, 21CCLC, KY ASAP, Brown Forman, New Hope, YUM.
- Researched evidence-based practices for client populations served and ensured EBPs utilized in Out of School Time, Youth Development, and Family Programs.
- Ensured parameters are met for each grant by implementing and overseeing evaluation tools.

2011-2012 **Family and Youth Programs Coordinator**
2010-2011 **VISTA Family Education Coordinator**
Americana Community Center

- Worked with immigrant and refugee individuals and families, assisting them in navigating US social service and educational systems
- Worked with community partners to create, develop, and implement meaningful curricula for K-12 Out of School Time Program and Family Education Program.

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- Assisted families with navigating U.S. social services and educational systems
- Use intersectional lens of identity to craft programming to meet needs of diverse youth populations

Grants Received: Sisters of Nazareth ($20,000), Book Buddies ($5000)

2010 **Research Analyst**
Kentucky Youth Advocates

- Researched experiences of immigrant/refugee families attempting to access pre-K in KY and developed issue brief for dissemination.

2009-2010 **Social Work Practicum**
Kentucky Youth Advocates

2008-2009 **Social Work Practicum**
Hebron Middle School/North Bullitt High School YSC

TRAININGS PROVIDED

Social Justice Youth Development. Coalition for the Homeless. August, 2021.

Social Justice Youth Development and Trauma Informed Care. BLOCS Summer Institute. July, 2021.

The Challenges and Needs of Louisville Youth Development Workers. Metro United Way, BLOCS Community Practice Partners. 10 December 2020.

Supervising Social Work Practicum Students During COVID. University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work. November 2020

Using a Trauma Informed Lens in Out of School Time Settings. Family & Children's Place. September 2017.

Generational Differences and Impacts on Supervising Practicum Students. University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work. December 2016.

How to Manage Difficult Behavior in Youth. Office of Youth Development. 18 May 2016.

Building Resiliency to Overcome Trauma. Kentucky Prevention Network. May 2016.

Youth Worker Training: Module 1. Trauma Informed Care. BOUNCE Coalition. July 2015.

A Trauma Informed Approach to Out of School Time Settings. Louisville Office of Youth Development Summer Learning Summit. July 2015.

SERVICE

2016-Present **Youth Development Program Consultant**
Family & Children's Place (Louisville)
Center for Social Justice Youth Development Research, University of Louisville
Louisville Youth Group (Louisville)

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- Provided consultation and training to youth development programs in Louisville in social justice youth development framework
- Worked with youth development programs to integrate social work practice within out of school time setting
- Provided formal supervision to students placed with community agencies

2017 **Out of School Time Proposal Review Committee Member**
Metro United Way
- Reviewed applications for OST funding after historical funding structure dismantled

STUDENT MENTORSHIP IN SOCIAL WORK

2010-Present **BSW/MSSW Practicum Field Instructor**
Louisville: Americana Community Center, Family & Children's Place, Louisville Youth Group, Saving Sunny
International and National Placements: Red Cross Guam, TESSA of Colorado Springs
- Collaborated with host agencies to integrate social work into organization. Provided formal on and off-site field instruction to over 50 students.

2019-Present Research and Publication Student Mentorship

Project: Social Justice Youth Development Certificate Program (2021-2022)

Student Activities: Engaged in content development, creation of logic model, timeline tracking, development of outcome measures, IRB proposals and amendments, preliminary data analysis, manuscript production

Students Funded by Project: Stephanie Henry-Floyd, MSSW and Endia Moore, MSSW
Additional Students on Project BSW/MSSW: Matthew Williams, Jessica Callahan, Jenna Salins

Project: CLASP Photovoice Project: Exploring strengths, needs, and challenges experienced by youth in an out of school time program

Student Activities: IRB amendment completion, consenting participants, tracking data, Photovoice co-facilitation, engagement in social action project, outcomes dissemination to funders, manuscript production

Students Funded on Project: Stephanie Henry-Floyd, MSSW
Additional Students on Project BSW/MSSW: Jessica Callahan

Invited Manuscripts: Bloomer, R., Brown, A., Williams, S., Callahan, J. Creating Youth-Adult Partnerships for Critical Consciousness Building in OST Spaces. *Children & Schools Special Issue: Organized Activities During Out of School Time as a Tool for Social Justice.*

Project: Louisville Youth Development Workers' Needs Assessment

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Student Activities: engaged in preliminary qualitative analysis, community dissemination of findings, manuscript production:
Bloomer, R., Brown., A., Winters, A., & Domiray, A*. (2021). "Trying to be Everything Else": Describing Youth Development Worker Experiences with Challenges in the Context of Out of School Time Settings. *Child and Youth Services Review*

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Evaluation Association	2017-Present
Society for Research on Adolescence	2017-Present
National Association of Social Workers	2008-Present
Phi Alpha Theta—History Honors Society	2003-Present

MEDIA ARTICLES

Lee, Jae Wook (2020, April 1). "Human Health and Art". TK-21 [Online article]. Retrieved from https://www.tk-21.com/TK-21-LaRevue-no105?lang=fr#Our-World-

King, Niki (2020, January 15). "Our World, Our Way: Hite exhibition showcases photography of Vietnam youth affected by HIV. UofL news [Online article]. Retrieved from https://www.uoflnews.com/section/arts-and-humanities/our-world-our-sav-hite-exhibition-showcases-photography-of-vietnam-youth-affected-by-hiv/

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Appendix C: SJYD Relevant Publications by Drs. Brown and Bloomer

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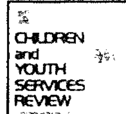

"Trying to be everything else": Examining the challenges experienced by youth development workers

Rebecka Bloomer [a], Aishia A. Brown [b], Andrew M. Winters [a,*], Anna Domiray [a]

[a] University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work, 2217 S 3rd St, Louisville, KY 40292, United States

[b] University of Louisville, School of Public Health and Information Sciences, 485 E Gray St, Louisville, KY 40202, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords
Youth development
Youth development worker
Challenges
Constructivist grounded theory

ABSTRACT

Youth development research and practice have evolved significantly in the last forty years, as theoretical orientations shifted to reflect the focus on youth strengths and assets. While research on youth development has evolved, research with an emphasis on those who work with youth in this context is strikingly limited. This study aimed to bridge this research gap by using a constructivist grounded theory approach to explore the challenges experienced by youth development workers. Semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews were used to garner perceptions of challenges. Nineteen participants completed a total of 26 interviews. Participants explained the complex and intertwining relationship of internal and external challenges they experienced. Participants grounded these challenges within the context of their work environment. Their shared meaning across these topics informed the development of a context specific framework including three themes of (a) *"trying to be everything else"* (b) emotional response and (c) youth behavior, with a subtheme of (d) youth behavioral health. The field of youth development often focuses on building more professional development opportunities however, results from this study show a need to address challenges youth workers experience within the bounds of the youth program and larger organization. Specifically, there is a need for organizations to support youth workers by clearly defining their role, and identifying areas where additional capacity and support are needed.

1. Introduction

Youth development research and practice have evolved significantly in the last forty years, as theoretical orientations shifted to reflect the focus on youth strengths and assets (Liang, Spencer, West, & Rappaport, 2013). Frameworks have progressed from the deficit-oriented theory of the 1980s (Small, 2004), to positive youth development (PYD) in the 1990s (Larson, 2006), followed by social justice youth development closer to the turn of the 21st century (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, Outley, Brown, Gabriel, & Sullins, 2018). This progression of frameworks marks a shift from individual focused orientations to more holistic theories which account for youth identity, social and environmental contextual factors, and the development of critical consciousness and self-awareness (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, Ginwright & James, 2002). Social Justice Youth Development (SJYD) acknowledges the impact of community and environmental contexts in shaping youth, emphasizing the development of self, community, and global awareness and subsequent action towards changing oppressive systems (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). While the positive youth development frameworks incorporate the contexts of family, neighborhood, and community, SJYD hinges on the utilization of a social justice lens when engaging with youth. As implied by its name, SJYD asserts youth, especially youth experiencing marginalization and oppression, need the concept of equity centered to make meaningful social change and foster positive development and well-being (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright & James, 2002). Youth possess the agency and capacity to bring about positive social change themselves and adults should assist in facilitating and reducing barriers for youth to engage in advocacy.

While research on youth development has evolved over time, research exploring the voice and choice of youth development workers has been limited. This study aims to bridge this research gap by using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014) to explore the challenges experienced by youth development workers. Our primary research question was: What are the challenges experienced by youth development workers who work with youth in out-of-school time programs?

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: Rebecka.Bloomer@louisville.edu (R. Bloomer), Aishiabrown@louisville.edu (A.A. Brown), Andrew.winters@louisville.edu (A.M. Winters), Anna.domiray@louisville.edu (A. Domiray).

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2. Literature review

2.1. Defining youth development

Youth development is conceptualized in three ways: 1) a natural or biological process; 2) a set of principles; and 3) a practice of implementing the principles (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). Additionally, the terms youth development and afterschool or out of school time programs (OST) are often used interchangeably, but the terms are not synonymous. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC; 2021) define out of school time (OST) programs as supervised programs "that young people attend regularly when school is not in session" (para. 1). OST programs may occur before or after school and on weekends. They also range in foci, with some acting as childcare and others focusing on specific activities or skill development. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) outline three characteristics of youth development programs which differentiate them from programs serving adolescents. These characteristics include 1) incorporating program goals that promote positive development, "even when seeking to prevent problem behaviors" (p. 97); 2) having workers that foster an atmosphere of hope, and programs that create physically and psychologically safe places where strong buy-in and commitment from youth can occur; 3) offering program activities with informal and formal opportunities to nurture and develop youth skills, interests, and talents. After school OST programs often implement programming to minimize behaviors deemed negative, such as drug use, teen pregnancy, or truancy where in contrast, youth development programs focus on youth as resources to be developed instead of problems to be mediated (Lerner et al., 2005).

2.2. The evolution of youth development practice

For over a hundred years, the problem-prevention model, or deficit-based approach, focused solely on youth problems or risk-factors (e.g. substance use/abuse, teen pregnancy, violence) and how adults could fix them by cultivating protective factors (e.g. academic success, caring adults and mentors) (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). In the early 1990s, positive youth development (PYD) emerged and promoted a "process in which young people's capacity for being motivated by challenge energizes their active engagement in development" (Larson, 2006, p. 677).

The focus of PYD is to promote assets in which youth already hold, and foster assets in which they do not. This approach moves away from focusing solely on youth problem behaviors and viewing youth, especially marginalized youth populations (e.g., Black youth), as "at-risk". The PYD model argues that youth must display certain characteristics such as personal competence, social maturity, and a sense of identity and self-esteem in order to develop into functioning adults (Bowers et al., 2010). Examples of PYD models are Lerner's (2002) 5C's (Connection, Confidence, Character, Caring, and Competence) and The Search Institute's (1997) 40 Developmental Assets.

While PYD models include markers of empowerment and feelings of value for youth, the embedded nature of white supremacy (e.g., not recognizing racial/cultural differences, centering one's own experiences as normative) within implemented programmatic curricula and offerings lead organizations to often fail in accounting for differences in lived experiences of participating youth, specifically youth of color. The mandatory use of evidence-based practice (EBP) from funding entities may further exacerbate this issue. Randomized control trials (RCTs) are often viewed as the "gold standard", but representation within these studies of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples is limited, making their use with untested populations less scientifically sound (Cross et al., 2011). Consequently, youth development workers in these settings often approach their interactions similarly with all youth. For instance, workers would interact with a "high-needs" youth with similar supports as the rest of participants, failing to distinguish contextual factors that may require more individualized attention. The role of parents and the community is to provide the support, opportunities, programs, and services (SOPS) throughout youth's development to foster these characteristics (Pittman, Wright, & Wynn, 1991).

In the early 2000s, social justice youth development (SJYD) was introduced, revolutionizing the field and offering youth workers a new way to examine the role of adults working with youth. SJYD is an equity-based model defined as "an approach focused on the development of equitable access and opportunities for all youth by actively reducing or eliminating disparities in education, health, employment, justice, and any other system that hinders the development of young people" (Outley et al., 2018, p. 491). While it falls under the umbrella of a youth development framework, SJYD acknowledges social contexts and the importance of identity formation for youth in responding to systemic violence inflicted on youth of color by hostile environments (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). SJYD provides a framework for those working with marginalized youth to integrate concepts of critical consciousness development and social action (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Paulo Freire (1970) concept of "praxis" or the interdependence of critical consciousness building and social action, underpins the primary goals of youth healing and engagement in social change within SJYD. As such, youth workers adopting this framework need to possess cultural awareness and an openness to engaging in conversations centering identity, systemic oppression, and social change

2.3. Youth development organizations

While shifts have occurred within the theoretical frameworks associated with the youth development sector, the translation into practice has moved more slowly. The SJYD framework offers a variety of potentially positive academic, social, cultural, and political outcomes for involved youth, specifically those belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups, but funding institutions for youth development programming place economic constraints on what programs provide and how they function. For instance, the only federal funding source specific to afterschool OST programs is 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grants (Baldridge, 2019, 2020). 21st CCLCs hold ties to No Child Left Behind and academic enrichment, especially for children in low-performing schools with high levels of poverty (Gayl, 2004; James-Burdumy et al., 2005). Youth serving organizations must rely on sources of funding like this, which emphasize academics and deficit-based thinking around marginalized youth (Baldridge, 2020), creating significant challenges for organizations to make practice shifts when funding sources, whether inherent or overt, require an approach that may be out-of-date or even perceived as harmful. Youth development organizations cannot be separated from the influences of larger systemic structures of oppression which influence the culture of programming and the frameworks utilized by workers (Baldridge, 2020; Hammer & White, 2014).

Youth development workers are responsible for implementing the PYD and SJYD frameworks and programming, thus understanding the challenges experienced by this workforce is essential. Youth development workers are a key element in creating communities that foster youth voice, increase sociopolitical engagement, and eliminate violent systemic structures for marginalized youth.

2.4. Youth development workers

A youth development worker is defined as an "individual who works with or on behalf of youth to facilitate their personal, social, and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence, and a place in society as they make the transition from dependence to independence" (Stone, Garza, & Borden, 2004, p. 9). The expansive nature of this definition highlights the multiple roles youth development workers adopt in their engagement with youth serving organizations and those served. The interdisciplinary nature of the youth development field and variability in settings and practices create complexities which

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result in a lack of recognition for youth work as an independent profession (Borden et al., 2020a, 2020b). Pozzoboni and Kirshner (2016) highlighted the difficulties of youth work practice, as an individual worker may draw upon various, competing strategies and frameworks at once, simultaneously seeking congruence with organizational values and ideology, leading to varied outcomes. Although the variation and diversity within youth development work is often celebrated, it presents challenges for youth development workers and the field of youth development more broadly.

Youth development work as a profession is often understudied as youth development research, practice, and funding emphasize program quality rather than the quality of the youth development workforce (Larson & Walker, 2010; Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010). However, the Journal of Youth Development (JYD) released a special issue in 2020 focused on the current research, practices, and policies that capture the challenges and opportunities of the youth development workforce. Articles within this special issue explore areas related to youth development worker passion (Hall, DeSouza, Starr, Wheeler, & Schleyer, 2020), job stress (White, DeMand, McGovern, & Akiva, 2020), capacity building, trainings and professional development (Dodge, 2020; Quinn, Garst, Bowers, & Weston, 2020; Robideau & Santl, 2020). In the closing article of this special issue Borden et al. (2020a, 2020b) point out the lack of value placed on youth development workers and view this undervaluing as a negative side effect of a larger issue: the disregard of the U.S. in creating a national infrastructure or policy coordinating youth development systems.

Borden, Craig, and Villarruel (2004) called attention to the role of higher education in the professional development of youth workers, pointing to the challenges many youth workers face in gaining the benefits that accompany educational opportunities, such as higher pay and benefits, full-time employment, and career advancement. These challenges correspond to issues faced outside of the organization and program, but additional research is needed to better understand how workers conceptualize challenges more broadly. Multiple youth development frameworks and approaches to practice, insufficient funding landscapes, and the absence of a nationally recognized credentialing process often places youth development workers in challenging and complex situations.

Given the dearth of research focusing on youth development workers, this study used an exploratory qualitative design to capture the challenges experienced by youth development workers, and their perception and meaning making of their experiences. SJYD (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright & James, 2002), Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 1998) and Symbolic Interactionism (Blumer, 1969) were used as sensitizing theoretical orientations.

3. Methods

3.1. Study design

This study sought to develop qualitative description through using constructivist grounded theory (CGT) analysis strategies (Fig. 1). Semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews aimed at obtaining rich description of the experiences of youth development workers were used to gain perceptions of challenges. The interview process sought to maintain consistency by using an interview guide but remained flexible enough to accommodate the iterative process established by CGT (Charmaz, 2014).

3.2. Sample

Recruitment for this study was purposive and occurred in partnership with the local government-based youth worker training organization located in the southern region of the United States. After approval from the University IRB, flyers describing the study were distributed via email by the organization's youth development worker listserv. Staff at

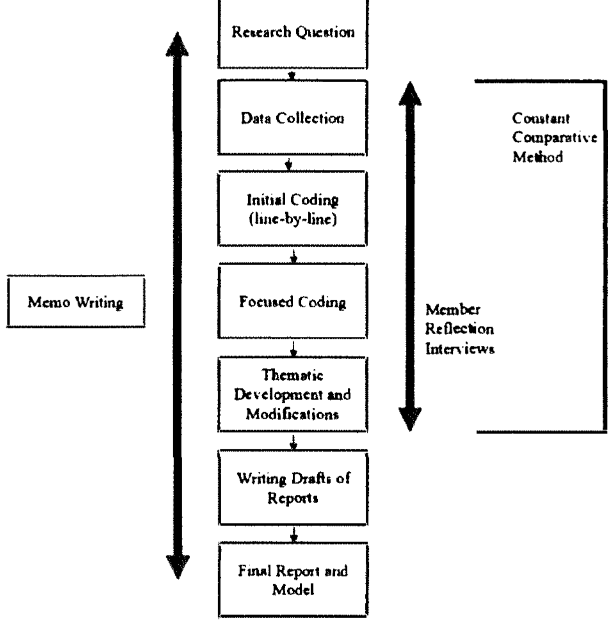

Fig. 1. Methods and process.

the organization reached out to known youth development contacts for distribution of the flyer and study information. Study staff also sent personalized emails to known youth development workers and agencies within the city to share information about the study.

To be eligible for the study, participants must have been employed by a youth development program in the city region for at least six of the last 12 months and be at least 18 years of age. Because national turnover rates within the youth development sector are as high as 30–40% (Alley, 2020), the six-month threshold was chosen to ensure workers had been employed with the agency 1) through the probationary period and 2) long enough to speak to challenges within the organization and program. This study sought to specifically investigate the experiences of youth development workers, thus the sample consisted of those working within programs which met the criteria for youth development established by Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003).

Those interested in participating contacted research staff via email or phone to determine eligibility. Once eligibility was determined, initial interviews were scheduled in-person at the location of the participant's choosing. At the time of interview, participants chose pseudonyms for the purpose of affirming participant agency in the process of reporting findings. A total of 19 initial interviews were completed. Tracy (2010) offers the process of engaging participants in member reflections as a method to enhance a study's credibility. In addition to diversifying the voices present during data collection, member reflections seek "input during the processes of analyzing data and producing the research report" (p.844). Member reflections allow researchers to present their findings to participants and engage in collaboration and reflexive elaboration (Tracy, 2010). The practice of theoretical sampling towards theoretical saturation was employed during the member reflection interview process (Charmaz, 2014). A total of 7 member reflection interviews were completed with participants for saturation. Participants were purposively chosen from the original sample. Member reflection interviews were scheduled via virtual platform or phone due to imposed restriction related to COVID and occurred in August of 2020 (Tracy, 2010). Participants received a $25 Visa gift card for participating in the interview. Interviews were digitally audio-recorded and professionally transcribed verbatim.

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3.3. Data analysis

Sources for data analysis included audio recordings, transcripts of interviews, field notes, reflexivity journaling, and memos to capture observed data, researchers' thoughts, and notes concerning the study. Version (2018), a web-based qualitative analysis application, was used to organize, manage, and store transcripts for the study and served as an analytic tool during analysis. Initially, three interview transcripts were divided between three researchers for initial line-by-line coding, with each researcher separately performing initial coding. Once this process was completed, researchers met together to compare and discuss their initial coding and assess areas of agreement and dissent. When areas of disagreement were found, researchers engaged in conversation to build consensus moving forward. The codes found in this process helped support the formation of focused codes regarding areas of challenges. An initial codebook comprised of focused codes with preliminary definitions was developed and loaded into Dedoose, along with the remaining de-identified interview transcripts. Each researcher separately coded two additional transcripts for challenges. Following this code application, the team met together to go through the excerpts applied to each identified code. Each excerpt was discussed between researchers to discern potential modifications in definitions to existing codes, the need to create new codes, and where excerpts did not fit the definition of existing codes. In instances where disagreement regarding excerpts was found, researchers decided as a group how to address discrepancies to enhance agreement applying codes moving forward. A Cohen's Kappa test was created to further ensure interrater reliability between researchers. The three researchers achieved an averaged Cohen's Kappa score of ($k = 0.97$), indicating excellent agreement. Focused codes were applied for the remaining transcripts, with the iterative process of data checking and consensus building occurring continually. From memo writing, peer debriefing, and constant comparison to interviews, three descriptive themes emerged.

4. Findings

4.1. Sample characteristics

There were a total of 19 participants in this study. The mean age was 45 (SD = 8.45, range 27–59) years old. There were 13 White participants, 5 African American participants, and one Latina participant. Most of the sample were female (n = 14). All but one participant had a Bachelor's degree (n = 11), or Master's degree (n = 7). Most of the participants were not new to youth work (n = 16), as the sample had a range from 0 to 32 years serving as youth professionals with a mean of 9 (SD 8.8) years. The range for length of time in their current role was 6 months to 28 years (SD = 7.47), with an average of 7.23 years. Over half of the sample (n = 13, 68%) worked in full time employment, with annual salaries for full time participants ranging from 21 k to 66 K. Additionally, over one third of the sample (n = 8, 42%) had a second job. Table 1 provides individual sample characteristics.

The sample represented youth workers from local nonprofits (n = 9), nationally affiliated nonprofits (n = 4), and programs sponsored through local government (n = 6). All programs (n = 19) were affiliated with a local funding initiative sponsoring programs centering academic enrichment and improvement, social engagement, and social and emotional learning primarily for underserved children and youth in the community. These programs were voluntary enrollment and operated throughout the city region and served youth in areas of the city with fewer resources for out of school time support or engagement. All participants were employed by agencies using the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality assessment tool and associated supportive trainings (Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)) (Forum for Youth Investment, 2021).

Table 1
Sample characteristics.

Variable	n(%), M(SD)
Age	45.25(8.45)
Race	
White	13(68.4%)
African American	5(26.3%)
Latino	1(5.3%)
Gender	
Female	14(74%)
Male	5(26.3)
Education	
Bachelors	11(588)
Masters	7(37%)
Yrs at current job	6.55(7.47)
Prior yrs in youth work	9(8.80)
Full-time employment	13(68%)
Works two jobs	8(42%)

Total sample N = 19

4.2. Emergent themes

Within interviews, all nineteen participants explained the complex and intertwining relationship between both internal and external challenges experienced by the youth development worker. The interviews grounded these challenges within the context in which participants worked. Their shared meaning across these topics informed the development of a context specific framework of three themes. As shown in Fig. 2, the overlapping themes included (a) "trying to be everything else" (b) emotional response and (c) youth behavior, with a subtheme of (d) youth behavioral health having permeable boundaries with its larger category. Youth development workers embedded these experiences within the context of their employment within the youth development program.

4.3. "Trying to be everything else"

Youth development workers described a process of "*trying to be everything else*". They defined this process as navigating the difficulties they experienced related to ambiguous job duties and boundaries established by their supervisors, programs, and/or organizations. The main challenge with "*trying to be everything else*" was difficulty understanding existing expectations and the boundaries of their positions. This was not due to a failure on the part of youth development workers, but a lack of communication and consistency on the part of supervisors and organizations in training and detailing job duties.

Red Said detailed their difficulties with mounting job duties and ambiguity surrounding the boundaries of their role.

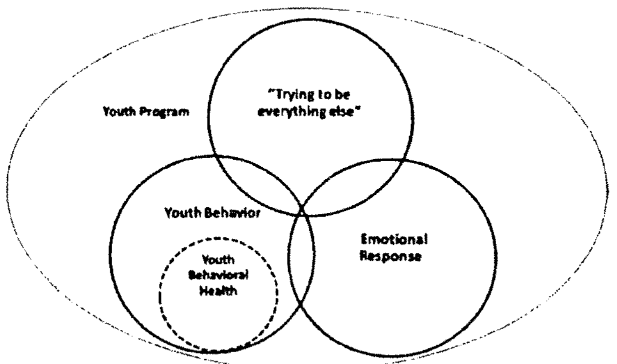

Fig. 2.

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"Well, you know honestly, with us, I really would like to know what my job role is. I feel like years ago it used to be to recreate, since I am in recreation, but it seems like in the last 10 years or so, we're not really recreation anymore. It's like we're trying to be everything else, plus recreation. I have to be a social worker, I have to be a janitor, I have to be I don't know what you call them a landscaper. I have to go out and weed eat and blow grass. We have to do the food. It's just the list goes on and on and on. And it's like we used to just recreate and now it's like we've added it seems like 15 or 20 other titles to the list of what we have to do."

Temporal elements emerged within "trying to be everything else" as workers compared their initial understanding of the role with their present circumstances. For some workers, time offered an opportunity to clarify how their roles were bounded within the organizational context. Jeff illustrated this by comparing his conceptualization of his duties at hire to his more refined current understanding. He discussed having "Superman Syndrome" when starting direct service work with youth, possessing a desire to fix all their problems. Over time, his outlook shifted to the perception of meeting youth where they are saying, "I help those that want to be helped." He also credited high quality training in transforming his approach over time, as the organization offered internal opportunities for its workers.

On the other hand, most youth workers offered an alternative position within their progression of understanding their role. For these workers, more clarity existed in the beginning when they were first hired. With time, they experienced challenges within their positions as organizations failed to sufficiently hire enough individuals to complete all the required work. This left workers to have additional tasks and responsibilities assigned without the necessary time to complete them. As Elliott discussed, clarity existed that they were not going to undertake duties related to grant writing or community presentations, as those duties were already clearly prescribed to a different organizational position. Difficulties arose as leadership identified additional responsibilities that did not clearly belong to anyone, as those reverted into the worker's tasks. For Elliott, they desired a "*better understanding within the job or role of what's too much.*"

Workers explained that hiring practices of their organizations exacerbated challenges related to "*trying to be everything else*". Supervisors placed new hires in the role of youth worker without properly onboarding them or training them for the position. In these situations, workers were only expected to maintain safety of youth. Jeff explained:

"There was a culture of what I like to call warm body syndrome, which is as long as you have somebody who can do the eight hours, if they are here and the building doesn't burn down, that's a successful shift."

Workers explained that "*trying to be everything else*" impacted their emotional well-being, as well. Often describing strong emotional responses and illustrating the interconnected nature of the two categories.

4.4. Emotional response

Youth development workers experienced challenges related to individual emotional responses and discussed them emerging from 1) performing direct services with youth 2) being confronted with the realities of youths' lived experiences 3) youth facing negative outcomes and/or 4) experiencing organizational ambiguity around job role. Emotional responses stemmed from being unable to intervene when youth experienced difficult circumstances or abusive situations when providing direct service. Camille LaRose described the emotional response she had relating to youth being hurt and abused. She explained the need for not demonstrating her feelings in front of the youth, as this may make things worse, but she "*crumbles*" once she has the opportunity. She illustrated the progression of emotions experienced in these situations from wanting to help the youth to feeling pity over the situation. Finally finding herself at the end saying she was guilty of "*taking it home, crying in the office, getting furious with someone who hurt this child*".

Workers faced additional challenges related to emotional response when domains overlapped. For instance, workers may be faced with confronting the realities of youths' lived experience while simultaneously witnessing youth facing negative outcomes. In these instances, workers often experienced grief and loss related to their relationships with youth. Youth development workers specifically discussed their experiences managing emotions when youth became involved in the criminal justice system and when youth died. They communicated that their agencies lacked formal response or support in those instances. 001 explained, she had clients die by suicide or attempt to die by suicide while at her program. She has also had clients die in accidents, such as car wrecks, and she "*wasn't prepared for that until it happened*".

Hope reiterated this sentiment:

"Here's the other things I wanna say. That's very, um, lacking and that is, Mental health support for us. My clients go to jail, they go to prison, they you know, they just have hard lives. We've had clients pass away and so just when that happens, instead of acting like "Everybody hush and don't talk about it. Nobody talk about it." You don't hear anybody talk about it. It's, don't talk about it? What're you telling? I need to talk about it. Like I'm grieving. Like it hurts, like these are my people... So I think that could be improved and just acknowledging that these workers do get attached to their clients and sometimes when your clients go through it, if you have a heart, you kind of go through it with them you know?"

Emotional responses related to job ambiguity stemmed largely from continual modification of job duties and a lack of communication on the part of the organizations. Expectations from workers shifted over time without clear discussions of what the boundaries were within the job role. Additionally, organizations failed to provide adequate supervision and performance evaluations in many cases, leaving workers to operate independently until a problem arose. This lack of support led workers to voice feeling frustration and burnout.

Rose discussed her perception of her job duties and how she believed they were changing to be in better alignment with her desired position. She assisted in writing a job description, which she believed was a modification of her existing job role. In her mind, her role was altering to one which better suited her. She was not specifically notified, but "*put things together*" that the position she wrote the job description for was not going to be offered to her. Rose explained, "*my frustration, my burnout, honestly, was more with management and just the way that the programs were being run and the frustration it was causing more than anything else*".

4.5. Perceptions of youth behavior

Youth behavior was explained as those behaviors exhibited by youth that falls outside the expected parameters of the program or worker and is subsequently deemed negative or problematic by the youth development worker. The primary challenge related to youth behavior remained how the youth worker made meaning of, and perceived the various behaviors. Youth workers found both internalized and externalized behaviors of youth to be challenging, citing anger, failure to engage in programming, and not showing respect as common occurrences.

Lola discussed the challenge of youth behavior and trying to elicit respect within programming. Youth demonstrated externalizing behaviors in her program, talking over each other and not abiding by the established expectations. She tells them at the beginning of the program, "*we may not necessarily agree with somebody, but we respect their opinion*". Unfortunately, she found youth still talked over one another and were unable to listen.

Charlie Brown related youth behavior as a cause for turnover in the workforce. He talked about the externalizing behaviors of youth ranging from "*dropping F bombs*", to carrying weapons, to threatening youth workers physically. He further described, "*They're going to run. They're going to steal from you. So it's hard to keep workers...*"

Youth behavior also impacted the emotional response of youth

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workers, often in a negative way. Celeste illustrated the overlapping nature of "*trying to be everything else*", emotional response, and perceptions of youth behavior. She discussed the frustration she felt at youth when she had to take time away from facilitating activities "*to do behavioral management stuff*" when that is not something she was trained to do. When this occurred, she indicated she felt youth pulled time away from the planned activity, which was what she perceived her job role to encompass, and resulted in feelings of exhaustion.

Internalized youth behaviors centered primarily around youth not engaging in programmatic offerings. Rather than outbursts or external demonstrations of their emotions, youth opted out of engaging in activities. Warren articulated how perceptions of youth behavior as demonstrated by lack of engagement may influence the emotional response of workers:

> "*I try to tell the staff this all the time, that you're never going to get a hundred percent. You may. It goes happen from time to time, but if you get discouraged because twenty kids are really into the activity and two of them are not, then ...*".

4.6. Perceptions of youth behavioral health

Perceptions of youth behavioral health fell under the broader umbrella of perceptions of youth behavior, as the workers perceived poor behavioral health to be related to subsequent problematic behavior. Youth workers created shared meaning around behavioral health, expounding the challenges they experienced with youth presenting with diagnosed or undiagnosed mental or behavioral health concerns within the programmatic context. Workers often articulated their lack of expertise within the domain of behavioral health, but subsequently went on to discuss their perceptions for the need of specific diagnosis for youth.

Most often, youth workers expressed a lack of preparedness in tackling youth behavioral health needs or serving youth with differences. Workers professed feeling specifically ill-prepared for engaging with youth with neurodivergence. Camille LaRose discussed the youth she has the most difficulty working with, finding that "*usually it's the ones who don't have a diagnosis*". But went on to relay that the program had turned away youth when parents are forthcoming with youth differences because if youth have special needs, she lacked qualifications to know how to deal with that.

JK echoed this sentiment:

> "*I was not prepared to address the emotional challenges with these kids, and I don't think anybody would be unless they were a licensed therapist*"

5. Discussion

While Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) clearly define the aspects of a youth development program, youth workers still lack an understanding of their role *within* programs. This study placed youth workers at the center of inquiry to examine the challenges experienced during direct service work. The interconnectedness within themes exemplifies the complex ways youth workers experience challenges in their role, holding implications for the community and potentially the future of youth development research and practice more broadly. "*Trying to be everything else*" emphasizes the ambiguity and permeable boundaries surrounding the role of youth workers within youth development programs. The lack of clear boundaries around the role of youth workers may influence their perceptions of youth behavior and behavioral health, while also impacting the emotional response evoked from their perceptions of youth behavior and behavioral health.

The emphasis should be placed on "perceptions" regarding youth behavior and youth behavioral health, as the identities, previous education and training, and life experiences all impacted how youth workers identified and placed values on the actions and well-being of youth. While workers quickly acknowledged their own dearth of training in behavioral health, they nonetheless frequently labeled or "diagnosed" youth with mental health disorders and neurodiversity. Additionally, youth workers that engaged with youth of differing racial and cultural backgrounds than themselves were prone to label youth behavior as disrespectful or disruptive when it did not reflect their own cultural norms. This labeling occurred specifically when youth behaviors drifted outside youth workers' expectations. Instead of questioning the appropriateness of their own expectations, workers veered towards deficit-based mindsets that placed blame squarely on the youth, their families, and sometimes their communities. Even so, youth workers strongly cared about the well-being of youth in their programs, seeking to address all the needs of all the youth (*Superman Syndrome*), even when they lacked capacity, training, support, or it fell outside the limits of their role as youth workers.

Participants in this study recognized the alignment of their initial understandings of their job role and current organizational expectations were not congruent. For example, the programmatic goal at the time of hire revolved around recreation but the current goal hinged on concepts of youth development. Despite the shift in focus, the organization did not provide additional training for workers to understand how objectives had altered and how to approach their new duties. Workers frequently engaged in comparison of initial and present job duties with nostalgia, seeking a simpler time with greater clarity. Borden, Schlomer and Wiggs (2011) argued that youth development workers exist in an evolving or ever-changing role due to the nature of the field and the type of youth served, which is echoed in the sample of the current study.

Youth development workers clearly described their experiences regarding role ambiguity in the initial interview process. Even so, it is important to note that follow-up interviews and member reflections occurred after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many youth development workers in this study experienced changes in their job expectations during this time, including movement to virtual platforms, expectations around content delivery for school-related content, and providing basic needs to families. Youth-serving organizations sought to support the local school district by using youth workers in different ways. This could have impacted how youth workers discussed their feelings of inadequate organizational support.

Professionalization offers standardization around minimal training and education requirements, as well as clear professional boundaries and codified ethics. Borden et al. (2020a, 2020b) examined the perceptions of key leaders in the field of youth development regarding challenges of youth development workers. Leaders in this study identified funding constraints as a primary catalyst which forced youth development workers to take a fragmented approach to their work. They further elucidated the connection between the lack of value for youth development work as a profession, fragmented roles, and funding deficiencies. Baldridge (2019) also shed light on this fragmented approach, arguing that youth development programs are often forced by funders to place value solely on academic achievement and not the evidence-based social emotional learning outcomes these programs are known for.

Programs in this study rely heavily on competitive grant funding to keep their operations going. Limitations exist regarding other large funding opportunities, with a few local small foundation grants, minimal city funding, and only one federal grant opportunity directed at OST programming. Both the included national and local nonprofits, as well as the government affiliated programs witness yearly programmatic budget fluctuations. White et al. (2020) found a strong correlation between lacking resources within programs and job-related stress for youth development workers. Similarly, organizational financial strain acts as an influential source of stress for youth development workers (Borden et al., 2020a, 2020b; White et al., 2020).

The inability of organizations to secure adequate funding is reflected both in the low wages experienced by front line direct service staff, and

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in the inability to hire enough staff to cover all responsibilities within this study. Insufficient staffing lead to a "piling on" of duties for workers, as there is no one else in the organization to assign them. This resulted in further blurring boundaries of job roles. The overburdening of youth development workers reflects the lack of value placed on the youth development sector by organizations and the community more broadly. The presence of professionalization may positively impact the realm of emotional response, as self-care and job management may be incorporated within the educational or training process. Nevertheless, the tendency for youth development workers to stay underpaid and overworked will remain unchanged until adequate attention is given to professionalization and building the value of youth development work.

Borden et al. (2004) wrote "The field of youth development must identify and support multiple pathways for youth development professionals to access a comprehensive and systematic range of educational opportunities to prepare them to meet the needs of young people successfully" (p.77). When it comes to discussing the needs of youth workers, the field of youth development tends to focus on building more professional development opportunities. However, results from this study show the need to address challenges youth workers experience within the bounds of the youth program at the organization, as well as professionalization more broadly. Specifically, there is a need for organizations to support youth workers by clearly defining their role and identifying areas where additional capacity is needed.

The deficit of adequate funding may negatively impact organizational capability in responding to youth worker needs with adequate support. Consequently, the sector requires intentional interdisciplinary collaboration. Social work possesses a long history with youth development programming and was involved in the inception of modern conceptualizations of out-of-school time programming (Addams, 1895). Despite this intertwining history, social work currently has limited presence within the out-of-school time sector. Youth workers requested both greater behavioral health support for themselves and for training related to this topic. As practitioners with specific training and knowledge of behavioral health and the interconnectedness of person and environment, social workers should take a more intentional role within the youth development sector. This would include working within the sector as youth development workers, but also lending their skills towards enhancing training for youth workers. More broadly, individuals holding expertise in youth behavior and behavioral health challenges should be embedded in youth development programs to ensure youth workers are able to focus on their duties of program activity facilitation. This would also enhance aspects of inclusion and equity, as youth workers could limit time spent labeling youth behavior. Additionally, youth with differences could be included more intentionally, as workers in this study indicated they were often intentionally excluded from programs due to a perceived inability to meet their needs.

Organizations offering youth development programs should also find innovative ways to support the emotional wellbeing of youth workers by building mental and emotional healthcare into policies and other organizational mechanisms (e.g., health benefits packages, wages, etc.). Utilizing youth development frameworks as a tool to address the challenges youth workers experience in programs will be of critical importance to the future of youth work. The SJYD frameworks focus on the sociopolitical context that youth live in should aide youth development organizations in understanding how that context impacts youth workers and the challenges they experience within the bounds of the program. Addressing these challenges utilizing SJYD requires a shift and transformation in how organizations function. This will require an examination and change in organizational policies and a redistribution of labor and resources in ways that support youth workers while they are doing direct service and even after the youth have left the program for the day.

Organizations must identify ways to procure more adequate funding that does not require a drift away from mission into another domain. Such drifts potentially contribute to the already fragmented approach of direct service youth development professionals. There must also be intentionality regarding the time provided for workers to engage in professional development opportunities. The community sampled has used findings from this study to inform shifts in policy and procedures more broadly. An educational certificate focusing on foundational concepts of SJYD is being developed for broad implementation, with plans to scaffold training to account for differences in foundational knowledge between workers. Specialized content regarding best practices for working with specific populations is forthcoming in the future. The common funding source for programs included in this study has supported and encouraged development of the certificate, which will enhance organizational buy-in within the sector. Additionally, plans to build in more intentional behavioral health supports for youth workers through partnerships with community organizations and educational institutions are being planned. The community collaboration may serve to better support youth development workers in receiving the training necessary for engaging in their roles and act as a template for similarly challenged communities.

5.1. Limitations

Our study was successful in elucidating challenges experienced by youth development workers in one southern city in the United States. Their narratives reflect commonalities described by workers in organizations of varying sizes, as well as agencies with diverse missions and goals. While we learned of challenges present within the out of school time context for these individuals, the study design and methodology has limitations that should be acknowledged. The underlying purpose of the study was to explore the challenges and needs of youth development workers, meaning all participants defined themselves as a member of that population. The definition of youth development described by Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) was used to identify eligible study participants. However, individuals describing themselves as youth development workers reached out to participate that failed to meet our criteria. Additionally, youth development programs operate in the city outside the parameters of this project, specifically those not receiving funding or training by the partnering organizations. These youth-serving individuals perceive themselves as youth development workers and may possess different narratives to those included in the study.

Potential challenges or needs were not defined a priori for participants, as they were encouraged to make meaning of these constructs themselves. Due to the self-defined and self-reported nature of challenges, it is unknown how educational attainment, previous experience in the youth development sector, or previous experiences with trauma, and racial or cultural match between youth worker and youth served may impact their perception of challenges experienced. For instance, multiple participants described their lack of preparedness for working with high-needs youth populations and specific types of career-oriented education that would assist them. We were limited in understanding these perspectives and meaning-making of the study participants.

Sixty-eight percent of the sample identified as White and seventy-four percent identified as female, with over half of the sample (n = 13, 68%) in full time employment. Our sample was not reflective of the significant portion of youth development workers who are part-time. The challenges experienced by full-time, and primarily White female workers, may differ significantly from those working part-time and youth development workers of color. Between initial and member checking interviews, a global pandemic occurred which altered the context in which OST and youth development programs operated. Many of the organizations represented by the youth development workers saw temporary or permanent closure at some period during the interview process, making it necessary to acknowledge as a limiting factor.

5.2. Future research

This study utilized a descriptive qualitative approach to further

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explicate the current experiences of youth development workers. Given this, future studies should expand on the initial work in this study to include a larger sampling frame to garner the experiences of youth development workers in other regions of the United States. Future research can also explore the needs of youth development workers, with a particular emphasis on effective workforce interventions. That is to say, exploring intervention strategies with youth development workers that they determine would be effective.

5.3. Conclusion

Organizations offering youth development programs should also find innovative ways to support the emotional wellbeing of youth workers by building mental and emotional healthcare into policies and other organizational mechanisms (e.g., health benefits packages, wages, etc.). Utilizing youth development frameworks as a tool to address the challenges youth workers experience in programs will be of critical importance to the future of youth work. The SJYD framework's focus on the sociopolitical context that youth live in should aid youth development organizations in understanding how that context impacts youth workers and the challenges they experience within the bounds of the program. Addressing these challenges utilizing SJYD requires a shift and transformation in how organizations function. This will require an examination and change in organizational policies and a redistribution of labor and resources in ways that support youth workers while they are doing direct service and even after the youth have left the program for the day.

Ethical approval

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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CRediT authorship contribution statement

Rebecka Bloomer: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing–original draft. **Aishia A. Brown:** Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing. **Andrew M. Winters:** Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Visualization. **Anna Domiray:** Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Exploring the promotion of youth voice in community-based youth development programmes

Rebecka Bloomer PhD, MSSW[1] | Lesley M. Harris PhD, MSW[2] | Aishia A. Brown PhD[1] | Shantel Crosby PhD, MSW[2]

[1]School of Public Health and Information Sciences, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, USA

[2]Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Correspondence
Rebecka Bloomer, PhD, MSSW, School of Public Health and Information Sciences, University of Louisville, 485 E Gray St., Louisville, KY 40202, USA.
Email: rebecka.bloomer@louisville.edu

Abstract

This constructivist grounded theory study used semi-structured interviews with 19 youth service providers in community-based youth development programmes to develop a context-specific framework of how and why youth voice promotion occurred. Factors external to the youth programmes, such as funder expectations, influenced the conceptualization of role for youth workers. The social process of meaning making in relation to role identity impacted how youth workers perceived self-efficacy when working with youth, especially when engaged with behaviours falling outside programmatic expectations or norms. Workers prioritized fostering physical and psychological safe spaces for youth participants. When conflict occurred, perceptions of efficacy guided workers in taking positions that either promoted or restricted youth voice based on their perceptions of efficacy in resolving conflict safely. Youth programmes have the capacity to resist or replicate oppression present within the educational system. The adoption and adaptation of educational models of resistance offer a strategy for community-based youth organizations to promote equity and thriving youth.

KEYWORDS

community work, social justice youth development, youth voice, Youth workers

1 | INTRODUCTION

The field of youth development (YD) has established core principles and values for working with young people, including promoting youth voice, agency, and empowerment (Ginwright & James, 2002; Hamilton et al., 2004; Lerner et al., 2005). Despite central features of best practices for programmes, the heterogeneous nature of YD programmes creates ambiguity around the skills necessary for workers' success (Borden et al., 2011). The diversity within the sector creates opportunities for workers to engage with youth using flexible and creative strategies, but also presents challenges in identifying core competencies and skills for the profession.

YWs are often part-time and underpaid, with programmes experiencing significant turnover (Alley, 2020; Bloomer et al., 2021; Colvin et al., 2020; Yohalem et al., 2010; Yohalem & Pittman, 2006). Research has highlighted the sector's ambiguous job roles and consistent turnover (Alley, 2020; Bloomer et al., 2021; Borden et al., 2011). Further clarifying the relationship between job role, self-efficacy, and role conflict within the YD sector offers an opportunity to better understand how and why YWs promote youth voice. How workers perceive job identity may impact the understanding of job boundaries and how components of YD, such as youth voice, are prioritized. Exploring the connections between these factors offers the opportunity to clarify potential support mechanisms for YW as they create spaces that value and foster youth input and voices.

2 | YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS AND WORKERS

Community-based YD work hinges on youth engagement through relational practices that promote physical and psychological safety for

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participants. YD spaces encourage youth-adult partnerships (Y-APs), as well as its two key features: youth voice and positive relationships (Ginwright & James, 2002; Hamilton et al., 2004; Lerner et al., 2005). Youth voice refers to the involvement of youth in decision-making around relevant issues (Wong et al., 2010; Zeldin et al., 2008, 2013). Principles of youth voice (1) challenge power hierarchies between adults and youth, (2) provide space for youth as experts of their own lived experiences, and (3) emphasize equity in decision-making, democratic values, and co-learning within relationships (Wong et al., 2010). The principles require adults to alter their mindsets related to power and place value on youth as partners (Zeldin et al., 2008). Access to programmes promoting Y-APs may prove most salient for youth facing identity-based oppression, as the empowerment associated with equity and youth voice may counter the effects of social exclusion while building skills, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging for participants (Baldridge et al., 2017; Zeldin, 2004; Zeldin et al., 2013).

The field of YD centres on relational practice, building connections, and providing support for youth. Opportunities for youth voice are created through intentional design, reflection, and evaluation efforts that create space for youth to voice concerns, provide input, and be democratically involved in decision-making. (Wong et al., 2010; Zeldin et al., 2008, 2013). Despite the clear benefits of Y-APs and youth voice, youth professionals are unlikely to receive the training or support required to build programmes and skills in relational practices (Akiva et al., 2020; Colvin et al., 2020; Yohalem et al., 2010; Yohalem & Pittman, 2006). YWs are reliant on employing organizations to convey the focus of their positions and provide any additional tools or resources to appropriately engage with youth (Emslie, 2013; Fusco, 2012). Sponsoring organizations have varying infrastructure and resources, which creates difficulties for YWs in clearly defining their roles within the organization. Without clarity in job role, YWs are well-situated to experience role ambiguity and conflict that promotes low perceptions of self-efficacy.

3 | THEORETICAL SENSITIZING CONCEPTS

This study used three theoretical frameworks as sensitizing concepts for exploring the relationship between YWs, organizational factors, and the promotion of youth voice within programming: organizational role theory, critical race theory, and symbolic interactionism (Biddle, 1986; Blumer, 1969; Kahn et al., 1964).

3.1 | Organizational role identity and role episodic models

Biddle (1986) theorized that roles created predictable patterns for human behaviour regarding social identities and the situation encountered. While professional identity and roles are not synonymous, the presence of an articulated role for YD professionals would assist in providing clarity around purpose. Roles allow the individual to assign meaning congruent with the position. Roles have titles relative to position, whether within an organization or more broadly, that offer space to generate shared meaning. Expectations, obligations, and responsibilities emerge from shared meaning, which also assists in establishing how one may be evaluated for job purposes. Within an organization, an individual may take on multiple roles with various purposes assigned by different entities, such as coworkers or supervisors, to ensure organizational needs are met. Delegation of roles and corresponding duties may occur whether the individual feels prepared or even willing to undertake the responsibilities of that position.

3.2 | Critical race theory

Critical race theory (CRT) scholars assert racism as a standard feature of American society systemically embedded to create inequities for communities of colour (Delgado & Stefancic, 1998). Intercentricity of multiple identities creates difficulties for people of colour to possess one collective identity, mandating the need for inclusion of counter-narratives obtained from diverse voices of people of colour to combat dominant discourse and ideology (Delgado & Stefancic, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). CRT serves as a foundation for this study, offering means to critically interrogate why YWs establish behaviour expectations that lack cohesion or congruence with populations served. For instance, how are YWs who primarily serve Black and youth of colour imposing values and ideals on youth by centring expectations based on White middle-class value structures?

3.3 | Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism views the individual rather than society as primary, emphasizing the meaning-making process for individuals based on their experiences and identities across the lifespan (Blumer, 1969). Self-concept or how one views oneself is a self-product created not by the interactions or language used in an interaction, but the meaning placed on those interactions or language by oneself. Perceptions of self-efficacy, or the belief one can capably engage in behaviours necessary for successful role navigation, develop in accordance with self-concept (Bandura, 1989). YWs initially conceptualize their roles relative to the job description and their general understanding of the term "youth worker." Once they start, the tasks required of the job also factor into their conceptualization. Their ability to navigate the various tasks associated with the role impact their internal stance towards self-efficacy in the position.

Given the importance of youth voice promotion when working with youth historically facing identity-based exclusion, exploring any potential relationships between worker roles and youth voice remains imperative. This qualitative study sought to better understand the relationship between the perception of job role and youth voice promotion for YWs in community-based programmes engaging with youth historically excluded from sociopolitical participation due to identity-based discrimination.

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4 | METHODS AND RESEARCH PROCESS

A constructivist grounded theory (CGT) research approach was employed to develop a context-specific framework describing the social process of how and why job roles impact YWs' promotion and engagement of youth voice in programming. The research team sought to create a conceptual model describing the social process in question using CGT methods and situational analysis (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke et al., 2018).

Study recruitment began after IRB approval. Study participants were employed in community-based YD programmes in frontline positions providing direct service for 6 of the last 12 months at the time of interview. Workers served youth between 10 and 24 years of age and self-identified as YWs. Semi-structured, in-depth qualitative interviews using an interview guide occurred at the locations chosen by participants, both face-to-face and via a virtual platform. Participants chose a pseudonym for reporting purposes, and identifying information was excluded.

The interview guide focused on understanding organizational dynamics and job role clarity and the understanding, implementation, and value placed on youth voice. Three research team members trained in qualitative interview methodology conducted interviews. The study purpose was explained, and consent was garnered prior to commencing interviews. Interviews took place between April 2019 and November 2021. COVID-19 occurred during participant recruitment, and interviews were moved to a virtual platform to comply with social distancing standards. Interviews lasted between 45 min and 2 h. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Purposive sampling was used with theoretical sampling to ensure that a diverse group of YWs was interviewed. Participants came from a range of programmes, including local and national nonprofits with diverse structures. The common thread between organizations was primary funding occurring through a sizeable local foundation that prioritizes programmes serving youth of colour, youth experiencing poverty, and youth with oppressed identities. Workers were sought through email via a listserv for YWs in the community. In initial rounds of coding, organizational supports and lacking resources emerged as key constraints faced by participants. Participants with increased access to training, supervision, and knowledge of community resources were sought to better understand the complexity of the issue and work towards theoretical saturation. Participants were asked to engage in member reflection interviews to confirm and co-create meaning (Tracy, 2010). Workers primarily serving youth of colour, youth with disabilities, and gender and sexual minority youth were intentionally sought for this study.

A total of 19 individuals participated in a total of 33 semi-structured interviews. See Table 1 for additional sample characteristics. Data sources for this study included interviews, memos taken on sensitizing literature, situational maps, and data analysis (Clarke et al., 2018). Initial, focused, axial, and theoretical coding strategies were used while engaging in constant comparison with data (Charmaz, 2014). Peer debriefing assisted researchers in building consensus around focus codes. Following focused codes, a codebook consisting of code families and definitions was created, and Dedoose version 8.0.35 (2019) was used as an organizational tool. Axial coding and selective coding followed, with peer debriefing occurring at every stage of model development.

TABLE 1 Sample characteristics

Variable	n (%), M (SD)
Age	45.25 (8.45)
Race	
White	13 (68.4%)
Black	5 (26.3%)
Latino	1 (5.3%)
Gender	
Female	14 (74%)
Male	5 (26.3%)
Education	
Bachelors	11 (58%)
Masters	7 (37%)
Years at current job	6.55 (7.47)
Prior years in youth work	9 (8.80)
Full-time employment	13 (68%)
Works two jobs	8 (42%)

As preliminary data analysis occurred, a difference emerged between workers experiencing more job clarity and those with less. To better understand these differences, specific participants were sought at three small local nonprofits and one national nonprofit, with varying job clarity and support levels. Relational maps were used to understand the dynamics between concepts such as youth worker race, perceptions of youth behaviour, youth participant race, and perceptions of the job role. Subsequently, positional maps were implemented contrasting concepts of the value of youth voice by YWs with the actual implementation of youth voice within programming. Positional maps also contrasted youth voice promotion with perceptions of organizational support, illustrated by how much the workers perceived the organization valued their input and opportunities for training (see Figure 1). Additional questions were asked of workers to understand silences in the data and how high levels of voice promotion occurred with low levels of support. Data collection, analysis, and recruitment continued until saturation occurred. Theoretical saturation is not simply collecting information until participants fail to describe new experiences. It requires the researcher to fully explicate the range of categories for theory development (Charmaz, 2014). In conjunction with participant feedback, peer debriefing and consensus-building occurred until the final model was produced and shared.

4.1 | Rigour and reflexivity

Tracy (2010) proposed a model of eight markers of qualitative research, which distinguish quality across paradigms. They assert

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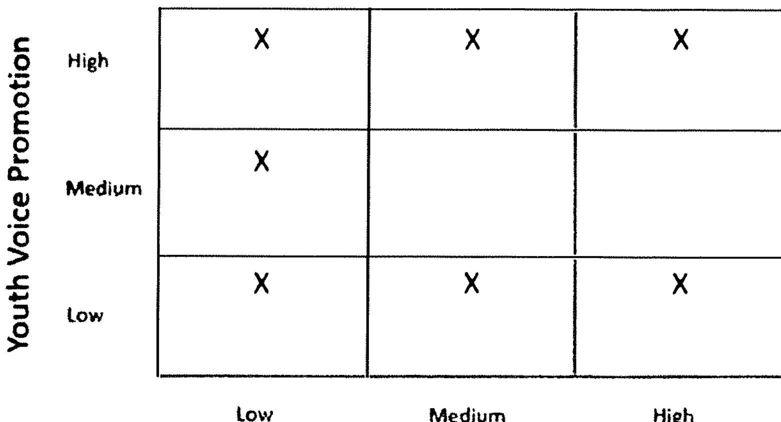

FIGURE 1 Positional map of youth voice promotion contrasting organizational support

that "high quality qualitative methodological research is marked by (a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence" (p. 839). The application of these markers occurred throughout the research process. The profession of YD work remains under-studied and theorized. As scant research currently exists, the topic is both relevant, significant, and interesting. Rather than quantitative precision, qualitative rigour is marked by complexity and abundance with rich data (Weick, 2007). Rich data are developed by variety, including theoretical constructs, sources, and samples (Tracy, 2010). Tracy (2010) described, "a researcher with a head full of theories, and a case full of abundant data, is best prepared to see nuance and complexity" (p. 841). The use of multiple sensitizing theories in the evaluation of the data enhanced the overall rigour of this study. Prior to engaging in the research study, the research team engaged in self-reflexivity and examined motivations.

Engaging in reflexivity required the research team to consider their own identities and positionality related to the participants. The first author was a direct service provider and programme director for YD programmes serving primarily youth of colour experiencing poverty for 5 years. She has continued to work with social work students placed with YD programmes and volunteered supervision, support, and training for organizations. The third author worked in afterschool programmes during practicum placements for her degree in Parks and Recreation. She has served as the director of the Office of Youth Development. The first and third authors have provided professional development training on YD and social justice youth development principles in the community to frontline workers, organizations, and city personnel. The second author is a qualitative methodologist. The first and second authors identify as White, and the third author identifies as Black. All authors identify as female. The team continually challenged preconceived notions and concepts of youth and YWs by employing peer debriefing and memo writing.

5 | RESULTS

This study sought to understand the social process of how and why job roles impact YWs' promotion and engagement of youth voice in programming. The context-specific framework, entitled "Promoting Youth Voice: The Influence of Role Identity and Self-Efficacy in Youth-Adult Relationships" (see Figure 2), describes how the direct engagement with youth impacts the process that YWs undergo when promoting youth voice and agency for these youth within the programmatic context.

5.1 | Context-specific framework

YWs described navigating ambiguous job roles with various levels of efficacy in managing behaviours occurring outside programmatic expectations. Workers prioritized programme participants' physical and psychological safety in navigating their adoption of a stance with conflict management. A relationship existed between how the youth worker perceived their efficacy in mediating conflict and the stance adopted. When YWs had lower levels of perceived self-efficacy, they adopted the frame "you're not going to save them all." Workers with higher levels of perceived efficacy in managing conflict while maintaining programmatic safety often attempted to "love them through it" first and defaulted to "you're not going to save them all" if their efforts at conflict mediation were unsuccessful. Workers with higher levels of perceived self-efficacy typically promoted higher levels of youth voice in individual relationships. Self-efficacy is also related to the youth worker's understanding of their job role. Workers with greater job clarity demonstrated higher levels of perceived self-efficacy, possibly due to better understanding the purpose and goals of their position when interacting with youth. Workers with more nebulous job roles described having duties "piled on" and experiencing conflicting messages between their job description and subsequent organizational expectations.

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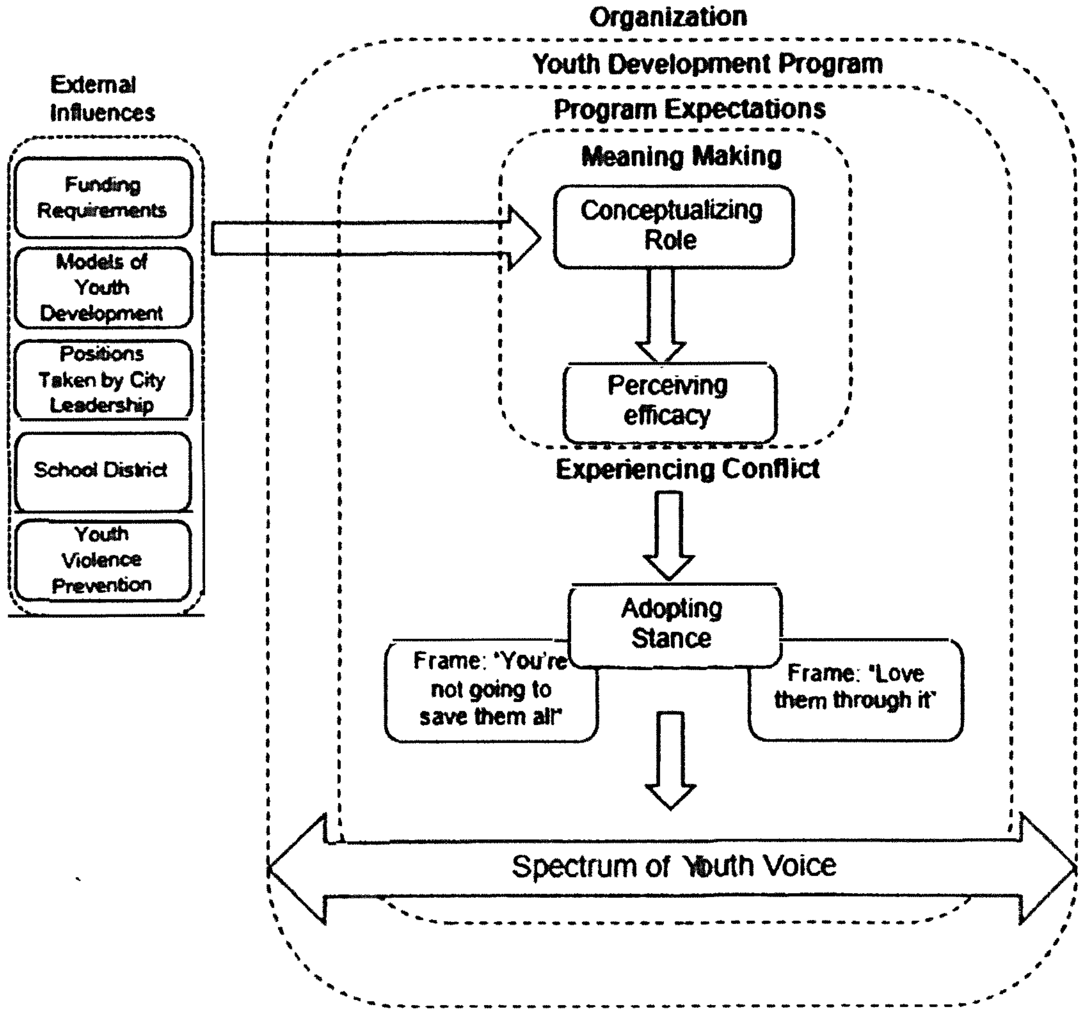

FIGURE 2 Promoting youth voice: The influence of role identity and self-efficacy in youth-adult relationships

5.2 | Conceptualizing role

New and more established YWs need to understand the scope of their role as this serves as the foundation for prioritization of youth engagement within tasks, influencing the allocation of time and resources. The conceptualization of the job role emerged from primarily two sources: (1) the provided job description and (2) interactions with youth and peers as YWs. Many YWs indicated continual change and alteration occurred in their job roles from initial employment, with organizations piling on additional job duties. In discussing the endlessly changing nature of his job role, Red Said stated, "I really would like to know what my job role is." The repeated alteration and accumulation of duties created confusion about the boundaries of the job, as well as what constituted operating within the scope of practice for the role. Hope illustrated this point when saying, "I guess it is understanding job role, but just knowing where that line, where it's at, like how far do you go to help someone before you do start to refer them out?"

The diverse needs of youth presented within programme created further role confusion, as YWs' felt compelled to address unmet needs of youth. Despite feeling ill-prepared to tackle challenges, workers did their best to serve youth and provide resources whenever possible. One worker described "rolling with things" when additional needs presented themselves and "try to make that accommodation" if possible while also recognizing "we can't always help." The conceptualization of role occurred episodically for workers as day-to-day duties changed and workers observed, processed, and made meaning with new information.

5.3 | Perceiving efficacy

The youth worker conceptualized their role, forming related boundaries and establishing skills necessary for successfully navigating the position. The conceptualized role shaped perceptions of required education or training relative to accomplishing the goals of the position in

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the programme. The perceived skills necessary to function in the role were sometimes outside the worker's training, experiences, and education, impacting how the worker approached the role and perceived their capabilities and efficacy. Rachel explained how YWs felt "stressed" working with youth "when you're not a social worker" or "somebody who understands more about social development." She further elaborated, "If you don't have those sorts of more clinical background, it's hard." The youth worker engaged with youth in the programme conceptualized their role and potential efficacy in carrying out the related duties of the position.

Conflict emerged when the youth behaved outside of programme expectations. The conflict established a need for YWs to engage conflict mediation skills within their positions. When conflict arose, the priority of YWs remained the physical and psychological safety of all programme participants. Workers perceiving themselves to have either quality relationships with youth or possessing high levels of self-efficacy in conflict resolution approached their roles with confidence. Workers with lower self-efficacy experienced emotional stress and burnout due to feeling ill-equipped to manage the situations appropriately during conflict. The youth worker's perception of self-efficacy in securing safety amidst mediating conflict directly impacted the subsequent stance adopted by workers.

5.4 | Meaning making

The starting point for each youth worker adopting a stance was youth engaging in behaviours falling outside the established expectations of the programme. The meaning-making process was influenced by the YWs' life experiences, belief systems, and norms. Each youth worker brought multiple identities and experiences, shaping how they made meaning of encounters and situations and the subsequent positions taken within their job role.

The foundation for decision-making by workers stemmed from the coalescing identities of workers, life experiences, and perceptions of efficacy in the job role. Factors such as skills, training, education, cultural values, shared experiences with youth, empathy, and emotional bandwidth created perceptions of situations internal to the worker per their manifested worldview. Rather than "making a decision" as a conscious endeavour of weighing pros, cons, and potential associated outcomes, workers processed behaviours through existing thought patterns and reacted accordingly. The individual's perception of the behaviour, not the behaviour itself, guides how YWs will approach conflict and manage the situation. Youth may exhibit unexpected behaviour, but the worker's norms, expectations, and perceptions are the basis for interpretation.

Many YWs served primarily Black youth and youth of colour with low socioeconomic status and lacked common cultural norms, identities, or experiences with programme participants. The racial identity of workers impacted perceptions of desirability or comfort with behaviours exhibited by youth and their ability to establish meaningful connections. A race- and/or identity-based mismatch between the worker and the youth yielded the potential for increased misunderstandings and challenges in both directions: youth worker to youth and youth to youth worker. Rose discussed how whiteness could impact work with Black youth and youth of colour in his position:

> I think there are times when being White, I guess, you try to overcompensate in some way, and it makes you look so disingenuine. Then you try to backpedal and not be. And then you just look like a confused White person. And they are not dumb. They know what you are trying to do.

Rose illustrates how the unique nature of thought patterns relative to identities and norms influenced how workers experiencing identity-based mismatch had trouble connecting to youth, which held weight in their perceived efficacy regarding positive conflict resolution. Relational practice acted as the foundation for promoting youth voice, creating difficulty for workers without shared identity, culture, or norms in enhancing opportunities with programme participants.

5.5 | Adopting a stance

A primary responsibility of YWs was maintaining the emotional and physical safety of programme participants within the programmatic space. YWs adopted a stance based on their ability to ensure safety while resolving conflict between or with youth. Workers filtered conflict through identity, life experiences, skills, and perceptions of efficacy to adopt a stance. The stance taken is shaped by the currently displayed behaviour, previous youth behaviours, and the emotional bandwidth and resources to safely address and diffuse the situation.

Additionally, a worker may take more than one stance with youth when engaging in conflict mediation. In discussing how adopting a stance occurred in practice, 001 clarified, "It can oscillate between both." She shared that she sometimes changed stances when working with youth if additional information came available. For instance, she described working with youth on goals related to adhering to programme expectations and subsequently becoming privy to information or interactions that demonstrated a safety risk. After starting with "love them through it" first, she recognized "if there is a safety concern," she resorted to "you're not going to save them all" because they did "need to be discharged from the program."

Workers with less perceived efficacy in resolving conflict with youth adopted more rigid stances with continued exposure to challenging behaviours. JK discussed the lack of consequence for youth engaging in "bad behaviour" as he wanted "some students, some members, removed permanently." He felt youth failing to follow programme expectations "caused havoc. And by causing havoc, you get into a safety situation." While still prioritizing group safety, these stances often sought to remove youth from the programme entirely to reduce risk.

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5.6 | Youth worker frame: "You're Not Going to Save Them All"

"You're not going to save them all" represented a path taken by workers in two contexts: (1) when YWs had less perceived efficacy in remediating youth behaviour and conflict or (2) strategies to combat unexpected behaviours and conflict were unsuccessful and/or exhibited behaviours posed a safety risk, and the worker had to prioritize the collective programme over individual youth. Workers typically voiced frustration and negative stereotypes of "*troubled*" youth in the first context. In contrast, the second situation emerged from a worker taking the "love them through it" stance and finding conflict resolution unproductive, emotionally draining, or a threat to the safety of others.

5.7 | Less efficacy

Workers adopting "you're not going to save them all" often reflected adults seeking to preserve the hierarchal relationship between adults and youth, with workers taking authoritarian positions over programme participants. Workers taking this stance prioritized structure and order, which was demonstrated by discussions about accountability. When confronted with programme expectations or norms violations, workers used their frames of reference to evaluate the situation and inform the response. Because YWs often carried differing cultural norms, values, and expectations from the populations served, they often did not connect youth behaviour to potential underlying motivations.

A few workers expressed more severe negative opinions regarding youth behaving outside programme norms. These workers called for more consequences when youth caused programmatic conflict. One worker discussed the "unreal" behaviour eliciting conflict at his site, saying, "there's no discipline, there's no respect, there's no boundaries, there's no consequences." This worker talked about the difficulties experienced in performing his role and his lack of preparedness for dealing with the challenges. He said he "was not prepared" and did not believe anyone would be "unless they were a licensed therapist." He gave the example of one youth that needed to be removed "because of the danger that he was causing" and the difficulty doing that because they lacked proper "documentation." In this instance, the worker demonstrated a more severe judgement of the youth; nevertheless, the frustration reflected the emotion felt due to the organizational "bureaucracy" restricting them from taking action to preserve safety.

Workers frequently criticized parents for being absent and not attending programmatic events, failing to understand that parents of youth in these communities may have other obligations and stressors, such as working or taking care of additional children. Many White YWs adopting "love them through it" were often able to develop higher quality relationships with youth, even those exhibiting behaviours that violated group expectations. White YWs taking the "you're not going to save them all" stance often relied on individual level rather than structural level factors to explain motivations for behaviours that caused conflict. As one youth worker explained, the disrespect and disdain for the adult authority by youth stemmed from one place: "it's from home."

5.8 | Prioritizing programme

In working towards adopting a stance, YWs had to balance individual and collective youth well-being. Workers described youth experiencing community violence, gangs, poverty, food instability, and trauma and relayed difficulty establishing meaningful relationships. When workers wanted to assist youth in setting and achieving goals to mitigate conflict, they had to strike a balance between perceived job role, their perceived self-efficacy, and programmatic safety.

Some YWs adopting "you're not going to save them all" sought to "save" youth and help redirect their life paths. Workers were adjusting how they conceptualized their role and taking on roles more congruent with social workers. YWs wanted more community collaboration between agencies, but most youth organizations did not employ social workers or engage in formal assessment and referral processes. Many workers emphasized the need for time and space to network with youth service providers to enhance collaboration and knowledge. Despite wanting to serve youth better, many workers reported feeling drained by engaging unready youth. Jeff described this experience as he would spend a great deal of time attempting to convince youth to demonstrate the potential of their worth. The closer they came to making change, the more frustrated he would become by their lack of progress. He described how this caused him to waste "an opportunity" and overlook other youth wanting help.

Given the time and resources available to workers, they did not always feel prepared to provide what some youth required in terms of support while also appropriately maintaining their job role. Some conflict resulted from how youth chose to engage with programme activities. Workers described how youth engaging "less vociferously" distracted workers from recognizing the bigger picture. Warren discussed how getting 100% of the youth to participate in an activity is unrealistic. Holding this standard had a detrimental impact on the programme because "if you allow two of them" to act as a distraction, "you're just going to lose the twenty who are paying attention."

Adopting the stance of "you're not going to save them all" is not an umbrella that oversees all interactions in all instances. "You're not going to save them all" is often the result of attempting to balance time and resources while operating within one's available emotional capacity. The strategy of meeting youth where they are, ready or unready to work on their issues, could prevent "wasting" time engaging in unproductive activities for which workers lack the skills and training.

Many workers expressed the desire to receive more training in behaviour management, trauma, cultural humility, and clinical skills. Some specifically mentioned the need to be a clinician or social worker to manage the conflicts created within programming. One worker relayed how a youth "lost it" 1 day and resorted to "tossing a

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chair." While the worker did not react negatively at the moment, he admitted staff "got upset" by the situation, and they needed more coping skills to handle situations better. He explained needing to know "how to calm that kid down and feel like he's being listened to and believed and trusted." Another worker described engaging in conflicts and having "to learn that by doing" and felt it "was not fair" to the involved youth. Finally, many workers reiterated the need for more significant professional development to effectively work with youth bringing "all the baggage that these kids are bringing in."

Whether the initial stance or the default after "love them through it," "you're not going to save them all" often resulted in youth being dismissed from programming and diminishing youth voice. "You're not going to save them all" does not promote voice for individual youth engaged in conflict; however, the programmatic utility of this stance may serve to promote voice for remaining youth programme participants.

5.9 | Youth worker frame: "Love Them Through It"

YWs attempting to "love them through it" used prevention strategies to mitigate the youth escalation. Workers adopting this frame emphasized building individual relationships with youth, which served as the foundation for open communication both before and after experiencing conflict. When conflict with youth emerged, they sought to understand motivations provoking behaviours outside the bounds of programmatic norms. Due to the emphasis on building relationships, YWs in this frame believed youth were the experts in their lived experiences, and honouring their voice was vital.

5.10 | Building relationships

Many workers described "love them through it" as the starting point for their interactions with youth before conflict presented itself. Workers using this frame attempted to develop individualized relationships with youth to establish connections that opened the door for communication. In taking this position, workers learned that youth are the experts in their own lives and listening to them created pathways to better understand their motivations and desires. By engaging in direct, one-on-one interactions with youth, the workers promoted high levels of youth voice that allowed youth to express their feelings and choose how they wanted to move forward. The allowance of youth voice during conflict does not suggest that youth were permitted to engage in unsafe or challenging behaviours. One worker described this path as taking a "harm-reduction" approach, focusing on the positive progress demonstrated by youth rather than deficits, promoting growth in behaving within programme expectations by providing encouragement and support.

While conflict with youth due to unexpected behaviours represented a primary challenge for workers, many workers connected conflict within the programme to external experiences of youth. Camille explained that conflict arose because youth do not know how to positively gain adults' attention. In illustrating this point, she stated, "they're the sweetest kids on the face of the planet, and that's what they want and crave, is attention." Other YWs also expressed that despite the hardship youth face, supporting them and promoting voice were important. 001 illustrated this point:

> But we are really on choices, letting the kids know that they do have choices even though they are children, and they cannot make a lot of choices because of their age. You do have some choices, and your behaviours are in the situation. So we help them and guide them through the choices that they do have.

The "love them through it" frame represents the willingness of YWs to assist and support youth in the face of conflict. For YWs able to adopt this stance, the value of building relationships outweighed the ease accomplished by dismissing youth outright. When confronted with peers labelling youth "*bad*" or "*problems*" and wanting to "*get them out of here*," many YWs pushed their peers to see past the demonstrated behaviour. Workers who adopted this frame were more likely to attribute unsafe behaviours to structural rather than individual factors. Betty explained, "And it's like, 'Okay, hold up. There's a reason.' Not that you justify everything but try to figure out why they are behaving that way or why they are acting this way, and let us see if we can help fix it."

5.11 | Honouring youth voice

While loving youth through conflict often entailed engaging in one-on-one interactions, it sometimes meant allowing youth space to process or decompress without adult intervention. Workers described situations where conflict occurred, and youth needed to be separated from the rest of the group. Once they understood the needs of youth, workers provided youth the freedom to take care of their needs without assistance. In some cases, this meant youth sitting alone in designated spaces or standing up when activity was underway. For example, one worker talked about one youth not wanting to participate in programming. Because she had built a relationship with the youth, she knew sometimes she could engage the youth and "other times when she just wasn't going to be engaged." YWs understood that allowing the choice not to participate or step away when needed promoted voice and autonomy in those situations. This is not to be confused with simply ignoring conflict altogether, as recognizing and acknowledging the needs of youth is required for adopting this stance.

Individualized relationships with youth allowed for more significant voice promotion at the programmatic level. Youth voice is often conceptualized as youth providing input at the programmatic or organizational level, taking the role of partners and leaders by impacting the direction and operations of programming. This study conceptualized youth voice as having decision-making abilities and providing

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options reflective of their identities within the programmatic space—both in individual and group interactions. Workers placed greater emphasis on individual relationship-building to de-escalate conflicts and build community. Due to historical exclusion within programmes and decision-making systems, workers expressed a desire to have the youth take over their positions eventually. However, skill-building needed to occur before the youth could take those roles.

By fostering individual relationships, workers have promoted buy-in from an often difficult-to-engage population in the YD space. In addition, once youth have established relationships within the programme, workers perceive them to have greater faith in the importance of their voice in other contexts and settings. In this way, the one-on-one relationships fostered by workers adopting this frame promoted higher levels of youth voice at the individual level, hoping to extend that programmatically.

5.12 | External factors for adoption of stance

The individual interactions between youth and workers occurred within the context of overarching macro structures that also impacted the ability of workers to promote youth voice. One prominent local funder for study participants required programmes to utilize a specific tool assessing programme quality. The tool has multiple domains that evaluate the environment's safety, relationships between adults and youth, and the activity offerings occurring within the observed day. Training supplements the tool to align the workers with the evaluated domains, focusing on relationships, choice, and youth voice. Workers described the training as great in theory but lacking in tangible practices for implementation more broadly. Workers indicated funding was tied to their use of the tool, and they felt constrained in what they could provide based on what they were supposed to emphasize. Workers reported that their conceptualization of youth voice emerged directly from the training for the tool and how the funding entity portrayed it. In attempting to adhere to the assessment tools, workers felt less able to allow youth actual agency and voice to inform programmatic activities and organizational workings. The introduction of the tool and standards of practice diminished the promotion of youth voice within the programmatic context in many instances.

The tension between the criminal legal system, youth, city leadership, violence prevention efforts, and models of YD created conflict experienced by the city. Recently, a heavy emphasis was placed on youth violence prevention and adopting violence prevention as positive YD. In this stance, city leadership prioritized preventing crime as a desired way to impact youth positively. Most of the youth involved in programmes with these YWs were Black or youth of colour living in areas of high multidimensional poverty, making them the target demographic for youth violence prevention efforts. While workers did not directly discuss the connection between these entities, they did indirectly discuss the impact this tension created on their work, youth in programming, and positive outcomes.

External factors impacted how the youth worker conceptualized their role by influencing perceptions of job functions, boundaries, and programmatic outcomes. For example, funding requirements are often tied to educational outcomes, expecting the YD programme to operate as an extension of the educational institution, allowing additional time added to the school day. For programmes requiring academic-focused outcomes, workers were required to spend some of their programmatic time on homework assistance.

Viewing YD programmes as spaces exclusively for academic enrichment devalued the space and restricted workers from engaging youth in building leadership skills and sociopolitical involvement—both attributes amplify youth agency, voice, and community building skills. The skills required for youth to be change-makers and engage in active participation in their communities are not represented by many funders or YD models, especially those emphasizing violence prevention. Systemic racism embedded deeply within youth-serving systems served to impact modes interactions heavily and desired outcomes for external influences on the paths to promote youth voice for YWs. The macro external structures represented a specific view of youth and the programmes serving them, establishing outcomes and strategies relative to their position, and promoting their perspective through funding, training, and community partnerships. As YWs made meaning of behaviours and adopted a stance within the overarching system promoted by these mechanisms, external influences influenced the promotion of youth voice.

Components internal to the youth worker, YD programme, and organization were all influenced by the position and stances taken by external influences. The macro perspective created a trickle-down effect on mezzo and micro levels, as political and social capital related to funding and employment. External influences relate to role conceptualization and perceived efficacy, eventually impacting the level of youth voice promoted within the programmatic context. While external influences and models included youth voice as best practices, the failure to create policies at the macro level impedes the promotion of youth voice in programmes. Despite being held accountable for engaging in specific "best practices" at the programmatic level, the autonomy of YWs to do so was impeded by restrictions related to their job roles created by funding entities and the sponsoring organization.

6 | DISCUSSION

YWs navigated conflict emerging from youth behaviour by prioritizing collective physical and psychological well-being. Workers with greater perceived self-efficacy attempted to mediate conflict with youth by adopting the stance "love them through it" first and resorted to "you're not going to save them all" when that consistently failed or safety became an issue—workers who had greater access to professional development opportunities, supervision and supports experienced more role clarity. Organizational supports fostered more knowledge and capacity in workers, emphasizing relationship building and promoting youth voice, which was reflected in perceptions of self-efficacy related to mediating conflict. Workers with unclear organizational roles were often required to do many tasks unrelated to YD

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programming, pulling them in varying directions. These workers experienced barriers in adopting the frame "love them through it." Workers adopting "you are not going to save them all" did not do so with malicious intent. Instead, workers appraised their skills and perceived their efficacy in performing various tasks. "You're not going to save them all," reflected workers that often-lacked necessary training in managing conflict within the programme. As they determined the best method to maintain safety, they prioritized the collective programme over the individual youth, fostering lower levels of youth voice. Workers in this frame experienced role conflict between their perceived job role and organizational expectations, which often shifted due to external influences.

The trickle-down influence of macro level values and ideals most frequently impeded the amplification of voice from Black youth, youth of colour, and other youth facing identity-based oppression. In this way, solely recommending that organizations provide more training and support for workers fails to acknowledge the salience of systemic racism that undergird the precarity experienced by workers. The idea that society should support a vast diversity of activities, each holding value unto itself, remains outside mainstream thought patterns and lacks significant financial support (Steinert, 2014). Both youth participants and YWs feel the burden of how white supremacy impedes programmatic and organizational support for difference, diversity, and non-hierarchal communities.

The traditional conceptualization of youth-adult partnerships (Y-APs) positions multiple youth working with multiple adults in addressing social action or community change. Creating relationships between youth and adults where youth feel safe to express their thoughts and concerns at the individual level is a precursor and establishes the foundation for collective Y-APs. The context-specific framework in this manuscript refers to youth-adult partnerships at the individual level. This study's YWs faced difficulty in achieving collective Y-APs due to barriers engaging youth in collective action at the organizational level. Those voicing greater understanding and placing greater value on youth voice often lacked the support and resources to build capacity around engagement. Because of this, individual-level relationships were more readily represented.

The inextricable link between YD programmes and the education system creates both challenges and opportunities for YWs and community-based youth organizations (CBYO). A dearth of research exists related to CBYOs but a vast body of educational literature centres practices of equity and anti-racist pedagogy. Love (2019) discussed the need for the educational system to foster environments that lead to youth thriving rather than simply surviving. CBYOs and YD programmes have an opportunity to engage and adapt models of abolition, resistance, and agitation more prevalent within educational discourse to promote youth success.

6.1 | Limitations

A vast number of YD programmes employ part-time workers and use volunteers, making the full-time employees in this sample less reflective of YWs more broadly. Part-time workers may have lacked time or flexibility to participate in the interview process. This study focused on YWs engaging with a specific client population in one city. The results of this study are not representative of all populations and contexts, but may have transferability to similar populations. This study adds to the limited existing literature base by developing a relevant theory.

6.2 | Conclusion

Creating empowering environments for youth requires adults to challenge traditional views of youth and take intentional measures to foster youth participation and voice. Decision-making should be positioned in an egalitarian and democratic way that values the perspectives and insights of participants. Creating decision-making in this way calls for adults to create a culture of inclusivity by challenging concepts of "ideal" youth behaviour that replicate systems of oppression. For adults to have the capacity to foster empowering environments, organizations and systems must also challenge traditional deficit-based thinking and mechanisms that produce oppressive environments for youth, including offering YWs the opportunity for meaningful "voice" and input in programmatic decision-making and policies.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

ORCID

Rebecka Bloomer https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8499-2294

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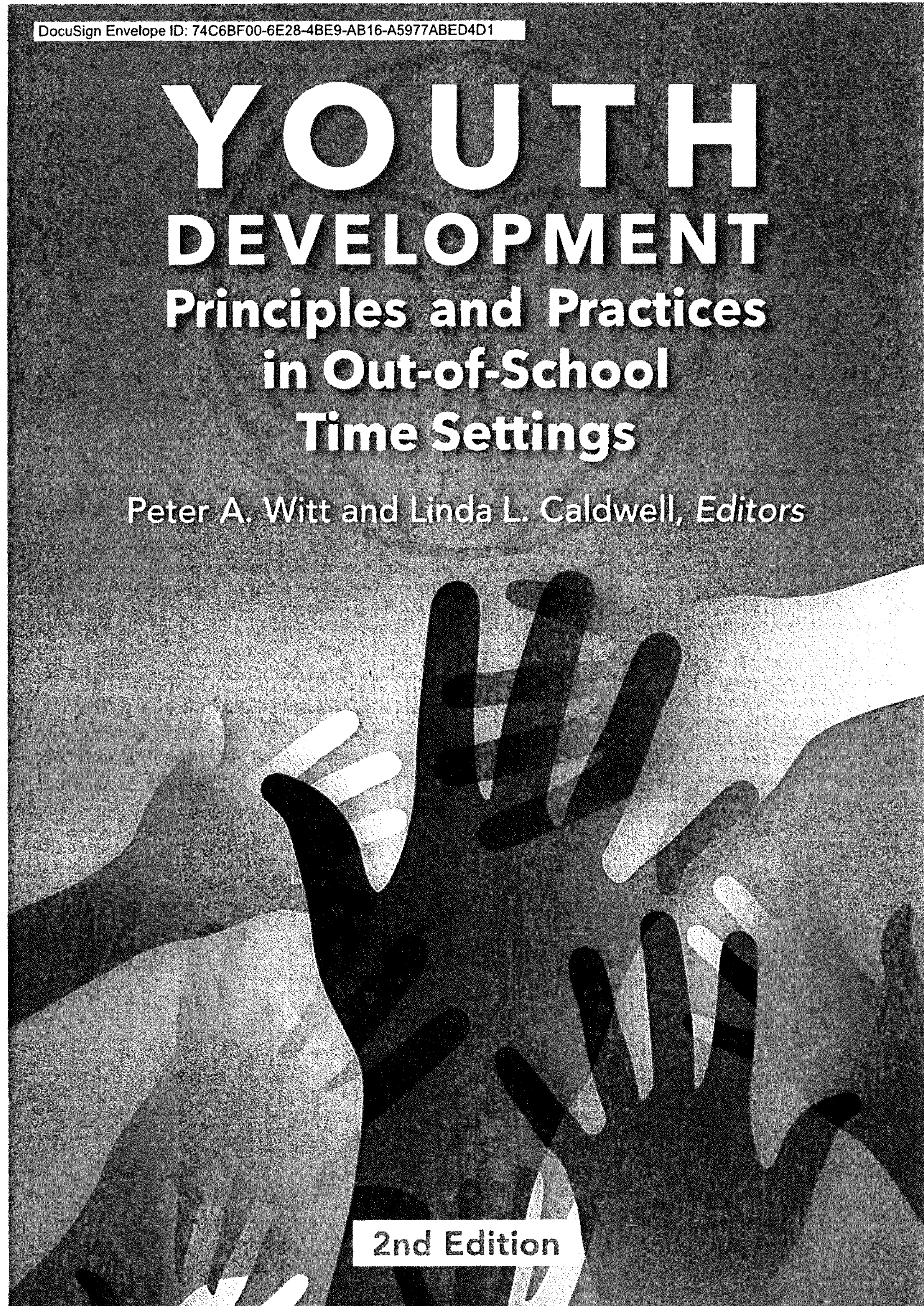

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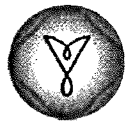
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Principles and Practices in Out-of-School Time Settings

2nd Edition



Peter A. Witt and Linda L. Caldwell
Editors

SAGAMORE VENTURE

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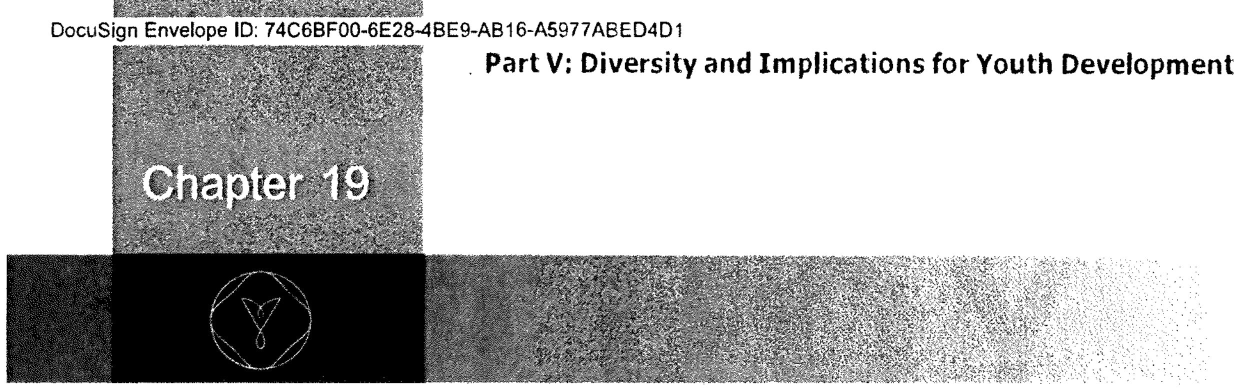

The Role of Culture in Out-of-School Time Settings

Corliss Outley, Aishia Brown, M. Gayle Gabriel, and Alex Sullins

A walk through an old growth forest reveals a multitude of plants and trees. Each of these floras will vary in form, blossoms, leaves, and size; yet all share the same basic needs of good soil, adequate water, and sunlight. However, the type of soil, amount of water, and degree of sunlight required for continued growth varies, plant by plant. In addition, the same species may grow differently in different environmental contexts.

Like flora, youth are diverse and possess common and unique needs. Young people also grow up in diverse cultural contexts, interacting with their surroundings through processes that may enhance or diminish their development in unique ways. In this chapter we discuss the importance of culture as an aspect of youth diversity and address the ways culture impacts youth development.

Following our discussion of the role of culture in youth development, we will use this information to discuss the role of out-of-school time (OST) programs in the lives of youth of color. Youth development professionals should be aware of the

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similarities and differences between and across cultural groups; there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all program! Like the forest, youth within the community share basic needs, but cultural differences may mean that they differ in the types of programs that best meet those needs. Thus, program providers should be aware, knowledgeable, and understanding of the varying cultural practices that enhance the positive development of diverse groups of youth. In addition, programs should be consciously tailored to focus on the concerns, priorities, needs, and resources of each cultural group that is served.

Key Concepts and Terms

There are many ways of defining culture, albeit often with subtle differences. In this section, we provide working definitions of various terms related to the cultural, racial, and ethnic differences ascribed to the U.S. youth population.

Culture

Culture has been defined as the following:

- "An integrated pattern of human beliefs, values, behaviors, and institutions shared by a distinct group, the inhabitants of a region, or the citizens of a nation" (Glossary - Living with the Future in Mind, n.d.)
- "Shared knowledge, behavior, ideas, and customs of a group or groups of people" (Illinois State Museum Society, 2000)
- Concerned with the production and exchange of shared meanings; "the 'giving and taking of meaning' between the members of a society or group that organize and regulate social practices, influence conduct and result in real practical effects" (Hall, 1997, p. 2)

Given the variety of definitions, culture is not a rigid set of behaviors, but rather it is a framework and world view through which people's behaviors and individual characteristics are filtered.

Additionally, culture is not reborn with each generation, but instead consists of shared knowledge that is learned and passed on from one generation to the next. In other words, culture is everything that comprises who we believe we are. It is a complex system, and a culture can have several subcultures within it (e.g., gender, religion, ethnicity, and race). People can also belong to several different subcultures at the same time (e.g., Filipino American and Buddhist). In the U.S., it is common to use the terms *dominant culture* or *majority group culture* to refer to the primary or predominant culture of a geographic region. However, these terms do not connote superiority of one group over another.

Race and Ethnicity

For many people, *race* refers to an individual's physical characteristics. However, race is a social construct developed by the dominant culture to categorize people based on

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socially defined physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, or facial features. In the U. S., the concept of race has been used (knowingly or unknowingly) to elevate the ideology that one particular race is superior to others. Based on this definition, people believe that they can walk into a room and identify the different racial groups that are present based on their physical appearance. Despite beliefs that a biological difference exists, there is no one characteristic, trait, or gene that distinguishes all members of one so-called race from all members of another race. So, why is race important? Race plays an important role in society's social, economic, cultural, political, legal, and ideological systems. Race has become an institutionalized concept that guides U.S. policies, laws, and procedures within our society.

A term that is often used interchangeably, but is distinctly different in meaning is *ethnicity*. Ethnicity refers to a group of people that share common characteristics such as history, national origin, religious belief, language, clothing, and traditions. Race and ethnicity are both socially constructed terms that carry significant meaning in U.S. culture. So how does ethnicity differ from race? As noted, race is a socially constructed concept based on socially defined physical characteristics and historical ideological understandings, whereas ethnicity is based on shared social and cultural identities. As an example of how these concepts are not mutually exclusive, consider an African American whose ancestors have lived in the U.S. for centuries, a Somali American immigrant, and a Black Colombian; all have different ethnicities, yet in the U.S., each of these individuals is classified as Black.

Next, we will look at how the U.S. defines the terms race and ethnicity. The U.S. Census includes questions that relate to ethnicity and race when it conducts the decennial Census of residents as mandated by the U.S. Constitution. These questions follow federal guidelines, and responses are based upon citizens' self-identification. As a result, Census data are collected in two separate and distinct categories: race and ethnicity. The first question asks about one's ethnicity, and individuals can choose whether one identifies (yes or no) as "Hispanic or Latin origin," which is defined as the "heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parent or ancestors before arriving in the United States" (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., para 1). People of Hispanic or Latino/a origin can be from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, South or Central America, or from another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish-descended group. People who identify as Hispanic or Latin origin may be of any race. Next, individuals identify their race. Racial categories used in the 2010 Census include the following:

- *White* refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as "White" or reported entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, Moroccan, or Caucasian.
- *Black or African American* refers to a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as "Black, African American, or Negro" or reported entries such as African American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

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- *American Indian or Alaska Native* refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This category includes people who indicate their race(s) as "American Indian or Alaska Native" or report their enrolled or principal tribe, such as Navajo, Blackfeet, Inupiat, Yup'ik, Central American Indian groups, or South American Indian groups.
- *Asian* refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as "Asian" or report entries such as "Asian Indian," "Chinese," "Filipino," "Korean," "Japanese," "Vietnamese," and "Other Asian," or provide other detailed Asian responses.
- *Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander* refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as "Pacific Islander" or reported entries such as "Native Hawaiian," "Guamanian or Chamorro," "Samoan," and "Other Pacific Islander," or provided other detailed Pacific Islander responses.
- *Some Other Race* includes all other responses not included in the five racial categories described above. Respondents reporting entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic or Latino group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish) in response to the race question are included in this category.

The U. S. Census categories were developed to reflect a social definition of race as the term is recognized in the U.S. However, you will notice that there is great variation within each of the racial categories. For example, the definition of race includes both racial classifications and some identifiers that reflect national origin or cultural groups. These categories are not an effort to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. The definitions presented for each category and how we use them are important for creating policy solutions that are equitable and not driven by stereotypes.

The definitions presented for each category and how we use them are important for creating policy solutions that are equitable and not driven by stereotypes.

Throughout this text, the authors will use the term *racial/ethnic* to indicate the social construction of both terms and the overlap that exists in U.S. culture. In addition, the terminology *youth of color* (rather than minority or nonwhite) will be used to refer to racial/ethnic groups that have been subjected to historical racism and discrimination in the U.S. The authors believe that using the terms *minority* or *nonwhite* reinforces the ideology of white as the norm or dominant group to which all other groups are compared and defined. Minority

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refers to a group that is cumulatively disadvantaged, especially in relationship to the distribution of society's power and resources, in proportion to their population size.

Other Key Terms

There are a number of other terms that are important when discussing race and ethnicity. Each of these terms will be defined below based on the works of Fitzgerald (2014) and Cashmore (1994).

Stereotypes. Stereotypes are overgeneralizations about a specific group of people. Stereotyping people based on distorted and inaccurate information that is accepted as fact can foster prejudice, racism, and discrimination. Many times, stereotypes are based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation (and potentially many other characteristics), and are learned through interactions with parents, peers, and mass media. Thus, stereotypes become part of our everyday lives. Some stereotypes may seem positive (e.g., Asians excel in math), but instead they create unrealistic and narrow expectations, and in most cases result in negative impressions about a group of people. Ultimately, stereotypes can be harmful by fostering prejudice, biases, and discrimination.

Prejudice. Prejudice is usually based on stereotypes, and refers to the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs that someone holds about a particular group. Ultimately, having prejudicial thoughts and feelings are harmful because they can lead to biases and discrimination. However, note that people can have prejudicial thoughts without deliberate intent to take action on those thoughts. Stereotypes and prejudices are so ingrained in our society that they become very difficult to change because they are maintained and reinforced by our biases.

Biases. Biases cause a person to consciously or unconsciously filter out information that contradicts or challenges that person's pre-existing beliefs. Biases can influence a person's immediate response toward something or someone as either favorable or unfavorable. To find out what your level of bias is, you can take the Implicit Association Test (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/), which measures an individual's level of unconscious racial bias. This test attempts to measure the strength of our associations between people and negative stereotypes. By discovering your subconscious biases and learning how to address them, you can be more impactful in your work with youth.

Discrimination. Discrimination occurs when people act on biased perceptions and prejudices and undertake differential treatment of people based on characteristics such as age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. Discrimination can take on many forms, for example, consciously not hiring an individual because she is Mexican American. In the U.S., we have legal protections against overt discrimination under the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. Unfortunately, many acts of discrimination can be covert as well (Pager & Shephard, 2008).

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Racism. Racism is a system of beliefs, behaviors, and actions that combines stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination to disproportionately disadvantage members of one racial/ethnic group. Racism can be used to justify the belief that one race is superior to another. It can be intentional or unintentional, and can be difficult to dismantle. Racism is embedded in the fabric of society and is reflected in disparities in our health, education, justice, economic, and employment institutions based on varying cultural dimensions of identity (e.g., age, race, gender).

Institutional racism is often hard to identify or describe because it is not based on individual actions but is part of collective and often deeply rooted actions of U.S. society.

Institutional racism. Institutional racism is the differential access to services, goods, and opportunities for racial and ethnic groups of people that are built into the everyday practices, procedures, and policies of various sociopolitical systems. Institutional racism is often hard to identify or describe because it is not based on individual actions but is part of collective and often deeply rooted actions of U.S. society. For example, youth of color who come in contact with the juvenile justice system are more likely to be sentenced to harsher punishments in comparison to White youth (Alexander, 2010).

One of the greatest strengths of the U.S. has been the diversity of people living within its boundaries. Historically, waves of voluntary immigrants have come to the U.S. to pursue a better way of life. Immigrant culture (i.e., traditions, languages, religious beliefs, food, and clothing from places of origin) has contributed to the creation of a country that is increasingly diverse. Chapter 21 discusses immigrant youth in more detail. At the same time, cultural groups such as Native Americans, who were already in the U.S. when Europeans arrived and were violently removed from their lands, along with African Americans, who were violently enslaved and involuntarily brought to the U.S., have also contributed to the diverse landscape, despite historical imbalances in equality and opportunities.

The inclusion of voluntary immigrants, first-peoples, and involuntary immigrants have an impact on youth development approaches, given the demographic changes and inequalities that continue to exist and have impacted our society. For example, youth development professionals need to consider the degree of cultural adaptation experienced by youth and their families.

Cultural adaptation. Cultural adaptation refers to the degree to which a person or cultural community has adapted to the dominant culture and/or retained their traditional cultural practices. Attention also needs to be given to the distinct needs and experiences of *first-generation individuals* (those born outside the U.S.) who may identify more with their original cultural tradition; *second-generation individuals*

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(meaning they were born in the U.S., while one or both parents were born in their country of origin); and *third-generation individuals* (these children and their parents are born in the U.S.). This process has often been referred to as the *melting pot*. However, despite thinking of the U.S. as a melting pot, a majority of voluntary immigrants usually chose to maintain their traditional culture by living in their own communities and maintaining many familiar cultural practices. This has led to the cultural adaptation process being described as a *salad bowl*.

Acculturation. Acculturation refers to the degree of adaptation that takes place when members of a cultural group take on or adapt to the beliefs and behaviors of another group. This usually occurs when members of a minority group adapt to the cultural traits of the dominant group. Regardless of the process utilized, cultural adaptation and acculturation reflect the cultural interaction that has occurred in the U.S. over time. Each wave of immigrants has maintained many strengths of their own cultures, while adapting to their new social, political, and economic environments. However, these interactions have too often led to discriminatory responses (e.g., *No Irish Need Apply* in response to the late 19th century waves of Irish immigration; the implementation of the *Black Codes* after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863); forced acculturation (e.g., Indian assimilation schools); and imprisonment (e.g., Japanese internment during World War II). With the changing demographics, this process, both good and bad, will continue to evolve as more people of different cultures continue to arrive in the U.S.

Racial/Ethnic and Cultural Identity and Youth Development

The process of adolescent identity development is addressed in other chapters in this book. In this chapter, we discuss the role of racial/ethnic and cultural identity in youth development. This topic should be under critical consideration for youth development professionals who work with youth from various ethnic, racial and/or cultural backgrounds. Understanding how young people develop perspectives of themselves in relation to others is important to understanding issues of diversity and intercultural understanding, and ultimately to promoting culturally relevant programming. These understandings are particularly important because youth who are members of racial/ ethnic and cultural groups experience racism and discrimination, which is damaging to their sense of self (e.g., Priest et al., 2013; Titzmann, Brenick, & Silbereisen, 2015). Furthermore, a strong positive racial/ethnic identity is a protective factor that results in higher levels of adaptive functioning, including increased self-esteem, decreased depression, avoidance of drug use, commitment to education, less aggression, and more prosocial behaviors (e.g., Stein, Supple, Huq, Dunbar, & Prinstein, 2016).

During the process of identity development, adolescents learn who they are in relation
to their parents, siblings, peers, teachers, community, nation, and the world. Developing a sense of self and possible selves (i.e., who I will be in the future) is far more complex today than in previous generations. For all youth, the process of identity development

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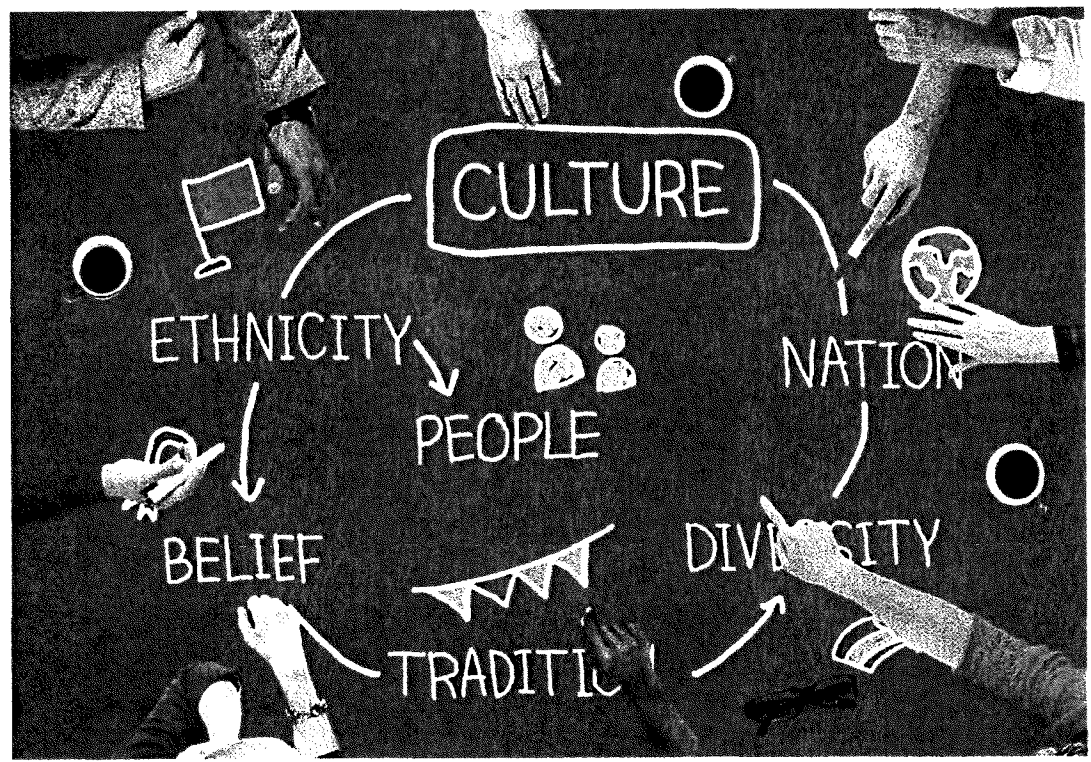
also means understanding who one is from a racial, ethnic, and cultural perspective. The term *racial/ethnic identity* refers to the connection people have to their cultural ancestry or ethnic group membership (Sue & Sue, 2016). Racial/ethnic and cultural identities are important because they provide a sense of belonging to a community and historical continuity with one's ancestors. Racial/ethnic identity formation takes place over time as youth explore, engage, and commit to the role or multiple roles they believe race/ethnicity plays in their lives. In addition, identity development may be a more pressing issue for youth of color as they are often confronted with the recognition at an early age that they are of a *different* racial/ethnic background than the people in the dominant culture and therefore must find unique ways to deal with this situation (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Exploration and identity formation, however, are complex. Today's youth wrestle with overlapping and conflicting identities (Burke, 1991; Hall, 1990, 1992; Stryker & Serpe, 1994). For example, a young person's home life may be associated with very traditional values based on parents' and family members' ethnic or cultural heritage, while at school or in other public places, youth may be faced with other societal influences. Furthermore, for some youth, understanding the self in relation to others happens in a more constricted environment, meaning their world consists of a small and/or homogeneous neighborhood or community. Other youth establish their identities and self-concept in more global or heterogeneous environments that expose them to a wide variety of outside influences.



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In addition, racial/ethnic identity will not develop in the same way within or even across different groups of people. For example, the ethnic identity formation process will be different for a Latino/a American youth growing up in a barrio near the Mexico-
U.S. border, who is being raised by a single mother who works as a migrant farmworker, compared to a Latino/a American growing up in the suburbs in a middle class two- parent household outside of a large Midwest city.

Other factors that can influence racial/ethnic and cultural identity include the following:

- Socioeconomic status
- Age
- Gender
- Language proficiency
- Time of arrival to the U.S.
- Sociopolitical climate
- Educational level
- Proximity to other members of their racial/ethnic group or community
- Proximity to racial/ethnic groups that are different from their own

Each of these factors influence their lives and can support or hinder the healthy development of a youth's racial/ethnic identity. However, remember that each youth and his or her family are unique, and culture-specific information may not apply to all youth in all situations. In other words, avoid the tendency to stereotype or make generalizations about one youth based on knowledge of other youth whom you might consider similar. Understanding the process of racial/ethnic identity development is important because it provides youth development professionals with a basic understanding that will enable them to ask questions and respond sensitively and effectively to the issues that racial/ ethnic youth and their families may face.

Intersectionality

As noted, youth may wrestle with or embrace multiple racial/ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Using an intersectional lens when interacting with youth and developing programming for and with them is one way to recognize and support youth who identify with multiple racial/ethnic and cultural identities. *Intersectionality* is a term that describes the overlapping or interconnected identities of an individual or group (Crenshaw, 1991). These intersecting identities (e.g., race, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, ability, migration status, religion, etc.) shape the way youth experience the world, and may be associated with different forms of prejudice or discrimination. Understanding intersectionality also helps one to identify how intersecting identities shape the levels of inequity individuals or groups experience.

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A Brief Historical Perspective

In the following sections, we briefly describe common experiences, cultural practices, and beliefs of five distinct cultural groups: African Americans, Latino/a Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and White Americans. While there are multiple racial/ethnic groups residing in the U.S., we chose to discuss these five groups based on their extensive U.S. history, commonly acknowledged racial/ethnic status by the U.S. government, and available U.S. Census data. This information will provide insight into contextual elements and forces that shape youth development and the provision of supports, opportunities, programs, and services. It is important to keep in mind that some youth are referred to as first, second, or third generation. These distinctions are important because a young person's degree of acculturation and cultural adaptation plays a major role in his or her world view and behaviors, and consequently in his or her development. To become a culturally competent youth development professional, you are encouraged to seek an understanding of key differences between each cultural group and respect those differences.

African Americans

Throughout history, racial identification of African Americans by the U.S. government has been controversial (Cohn, 2010). In 1790, during the early days of U.S. Census tracking, the Census designated this cultural group based on their status as *free persons* or as slaves. In addition, African Americans were counted as only three-fifths of a person for political representation purposes. This changed in the early 1850s, when the use of the terms *Black* and *Mulatto*, defined as "all persons having any trace of African blood," were used to indicate people of color. The U.S. also used the terms *quadroon* (one- fourth trace of black blood or one black grandparent) and *octoroon* (one-eighth trace of black blood or one black great-grandparent) during the 1890 and 1900 Census to identify African Americans. However, the definitions for these persons varied from Census to Census, and the use of *quadroon* and *octoroon* stopped altogether in 1910. Subsequently, the Census began using the "one-drop [of blood] rule," which continued for decades. The 1910 Census instructions continued to use the term Black ("all persons who are full-blooded Negros"), but also allowed the inclusion of Mulatto, ("all persons having some portion or perceptible trace of Negro blood"). In addition, the 1910 Census included "any person that was mixed heritage of White and colored had to be designated as 'Colored', and any one mixed with another race or ethnicity was designated as the same racial identity of the father" (United States Bureau of the Census, 1975, para.3).

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By the 1930 Census, the term *Negro* was introduced and was used to reflect any individual of African heritage regardless of the amount of "Negro blood" present. Most African Americans prior to the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s were referred to as *Negros/Negroes* or *Coloreds*. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, African Americans began recognizing their Black identity in a celebratory way, which gave rise to the Black Power movement. People began encouraging the use of the term *Black* instead of *Negro*. The 1970 Census was the first time individuals could self-identify their race. Before that time, Census takers filled out the forms and chose the category for each person based on their observed physical characteristics. In the 1980s, the term *Black* evolved into *Afro-American*, as many citizens attempted to trace their ancestral roots back to Africa after the 1976 publication of the novel, *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley and its subsequent 1977 television miniseries. As a result, the 1980 Census provided several different terms to reflect the growing awareness of self-identification among Blacks.

It was not until 1988 that Jesse Jackson, in a press conference, announced that *African American* was the new preferred term for *Black* Americans due to the term's focus on an ancestral home country and a cultural heritage (Martin, 1991). Today there is disagreement on which specific term, *Black* or *African American*, should be used for this cultural group. The terms *Negro* and *Colored* are considered derogatory and should no longer be used. However, the 2010 U.S. Census still used "Negro" as a racial category; whether it will be used in the 2020 Census has yet to be determined.

For many years, African Americans were the largest minority group in the U.S., with a total 2016 estimated population of over 42 million adults and a youth population of around 10 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Between 2000 and 2010, African American citizens accounted for approximately 13% of the U.S. population. Currently, Latino/as have replaced African Americans as the largest minority group. Although African Americans continue to rise in total population, their rate of growth has slowed when compared to Asian and Latino/a American populations.

Latino/a Americans

The term *Hispanic* was officially designated during the 1970s by the U.S. Census and served as an umbrella term for over 20 different Spanish-speaking nationalities. However, many people view the use of the term *Hispanic* in a monolithic manner, implying that all Spanish-speaking peoples have a uniform cultural, social, and political heritage. In fact, the people categorized under this term come from diverse backgrounds and have different educational patterns, religious views, socioeconomic statuses, and languages. *Latino/a* is often preferred by members of this cultural group rather than Hispanic for describing people of Spanish descent in the U.S. Another term is *Chicano*, which was created during the Brown Power/Chicano movement by Mexican American activists in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This term became popularized during the farmworker strikes and youth movement led by Cesar Chavez. During this time, Chicano was used to demonstrate political consciousness and to reflect pride in the shared identity of Mexican and American cultures.

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The use of identity terms for Latino/a groups is also regionally based. The preference for particular terms may vary by region within the U.S. and by country of origin. For example, the terms *Chicano* and *Mexican American* are used primarily in California, *Latin American* or *Latino/a* in Texas, Mexican in Arizona, *Cuban* and *Puerto Rican* in Florida, and *Spanish American* in New Mexico. Terminology used to identify individuals of Latino/a descent may be further complicated by imposed racial categories (e.g., Black Puerto Rican) and the different racial designations used in other countries (e.g., someone who is Black in the U.S. may be White in Brazil, since variations in skin tone are interpreted differently in different countries). Finally, the term *Latinx* emerged in 2016 to reflect a more gender-neutral terminology for inclusiveness within the Spanish language.

The Latino/a community is now the largest minority group in the U.S. comprising about 17.1% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Due to high birth rates and increased immigration patterns, the Latino/a population contributed to more than half of the growth from 2000 to 2010 of the U.S. population. Of the 54.6 million Latino/as in the U.S., nearly two-thirds (64%) are of Mexican origin, with 9.4% of Puerto Rican origin, 3.7% Cuban, 3.6% Salvadorans, 3.0% Dominicans, and from 1.2% to 2.2% each for Guatemalans, Colombians, Hondurans, Ecuadorians, and Peruvians. The remainder originated from other Central and South American countries.

Asian Americans

The term *Asian American* is an umbrella term that refers to all the Asian ethnic groups currently in the U.S. (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Samoan, etc.). One of the first terms used to describe this cultural group was *Oriental*, and reflected the people and all goods and services that were derived from Asia. Similar to the terms *Negro* and *Colored*, the term *Oriental* was deemed inappropriate during the 1970s due to its negative and discriminatory historical use. In 2016, President Barack Obama signed legislation outlawing the term *Oriental* (as well as *Negro*) from all federal laws (Fabian, 2016).

In 2016, President Barack Obama signed legislation outlawing the term *Oriental* (as well as *Negro*) from all federal laws.

Recently, the term *Asian American* was also considered a monolithic term that assumes all Asian Americans are homogeneous, much like the term *Hispanic* is used for Latino/a Americans. Another term that is used in conjunction with Asian Americans is *model minority*, which assumes that Asian Americans are all high-achieving, economically sound, and the least likely to be in poverty or commit crimes of all the minority groups (Lee, 1996). However, the term *model minority* should not be used due to its potential for masking issues within specific Asian ethnic communities. For example, 14.3% of the Vietnamese American population live in poverty, while 7.5% of Filipino Americans and 12.1% of all Asians live in poverty (Lopez, Ruiz, & Patten, 2017).

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According to the U.S. Census (2017), the Asian American population is the fastest growing racial group in the U.S., growing 2.2% between July 2014 and 2015, and with an overall population increase of 43% since 2000 (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim, & Shahid, 2012). The Census also projects the Asian American population will reach 40 million people by the year 2050 and that immigration from Asian countries will account for nearly 75% of the U.S. population growth (Pew Research Center, 2015). The Asian American population includes people with origins in the Far East (China, Japan, and Korea), Southeast Asia (Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), and South Asia (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal). Unique cultural characteristics and languages, as well as the historical, sociopolitical and economic conditions of their native countries, shape the experiences of people with different Asian ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Nepalese, etc.)

Native Americans and Alaskan Natives

Preferred terms for the indigenous people of the Americas have been controversial, changed over time, and vary by region, tribal designation, and age of individual. Terms

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such as *Native American, Indian, Indian Americans, American Indian, Aboriginals,* and *AmerIndian* as well as *Eskimo* and *Alaskans* have been interchangeable throughout history (Jobe, 2004). The arrival of Christopher Columbus to this hemisphere while searching for a passage to India has perpetuated the designation of the indigenous people of the Americas as *Indians*. Objection to this term has arisen not only due to its historical and geographical error and its negative and demeaning connotations, but also because it does not adequately reflect the distinct cultural tribes that exist in the U.S.

The 1860 U.S. Census was the first time that Native Americans living in areas near White colonizers were counted and were referred to as *Indian*. Native Americans were counted by U.S. marshals as part of a special Indian Census, with the condition that Native Americans renounce their tribal affiliation; many refused (Jobe, 2004). This led the U.S. to begin federally recognizing tribes and their members in order to establish land agreements. By 1900, the U.S. had begun focusing on the distinction between full- and mixed-blood Native Americans to determine purity for tribal membership and the degree to which they had adopted a European immigrant lifestyle. As a result, Native Americans living on reservations and Native Americans living in the general population were separately identified in the Census. Those living on the reservation were typically viewed as still identifying with tribal affiliations and were noted as full blooded "Native American." However, those considered "pure blood" (i.e., full-blooded Native American) or "mixed breed" (of a mixed tribal or racial origin) who lived in local towns or cities among Whites were identified based on blood purity and their degree of assimilation. For example, people of mixed heritage, such as White and Native American, were designated as *Indians* on the Census. Exceptions occurred if a Native American had become integrated into the local European immigrant community and was viewed and accepted as being White by the residents (Jobe, 2004). The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 declared all Native Americans born in U.S. territories as citizens, granting them the right to vote. This act was the first time the U.S. government recognized this cultural group's right to citizenship. In addition, Native American tribes and villages could also grant citizenship to its enrolled tribal members.

By 1950, the Census changed the racial designation to *American Indian* and *Alaskan Native/Eskimos*. During the American Indian Movement in the late 1960s, the term *American Indian* was encouraged by varying tribal groups in order to promote a pan- Indian identification. Today the terms *Native American, First Nations,* and/or *First People* are more common.

Approximately 6.7 million people self-identify as *Native American* and *Alaskan Native* alone or in combination with some other race. This represents 2% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017b). Some of these individuals belong to federally recognized tribes, while others belong to state recognized tribes, or are not enrolled in any tribe. Over two million are members and descendants of federally recognized tribes and qualify for access to certain federal benefits and services such as health care through the U.S. Indian Health Service. There are currently 567 federally recognized sovereign tribal groups across 36 states, of which 229 are Alaskan Native tribes (Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services, 2017). A federally recognized tribe is a tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the

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U.S. through binding treaties, acts of Congress, and executive orders. Therefore, these tribes possess certain inherent rights of self-government and are eligible for funding, services and protection from the U.S. There are also 200 non-federally recognized tribes in the U.S. that are in the process of applying for federal recognition. Nevertheless, Native Americans and Alaskan Natives remain a mostly invisible group within U.S. society.

Whites

Caucasian refers to people of European origin. The term draws its origins based on the name used for people from the Caucasus Mountain region, which runs from Russia to North Africa, that were deemed as an ideal form of humanity. The term was introduced during the 18th century by Johann Blumenach, a German anatomist as part of a racial classification system and was adopted in the U.S. to justify the use of scientific racism—research used to scientifically justify racist ideology, in our legal system (Mukhopadhyay, 2008). The term *Caucasian* was never used officially in the U.S. Census categorizations but can be found in official government documents during the 18th and 19th century.

Beginning in 1790, Whites were categorized based on being "free white males" and "free white females." The term *White* was used in all subsequent Census enumerations. However, the meaning of *Whiteness* and who is or is not included in the White racial category has changed throughout U.S. history. The vast majority of early settlers emi- grated from White European countries such as England, Sweden, France, and The Neth- erlands. These groups all became part of the U.S. when it gained its independence in 1776 and began to blend together into a distinct unique culture. The Naturalization Act of 1790 restricted U.S. citizenship to any free White person living in the country for two years. This left out White inden- tured servants, slaves, and women, which prevented them from becoming U.S. cit- izens. The early 1800s saw increased im- migration from European countries and led to distinctions between people who were immigrants with citizenship (ear- ly settlers) and foreigners (new immi- grants). These distinctions were further highlighted during a subsequent wave of mass immigration that occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Groups like the Irish, Italians, and Poles were not considered White during this time period. In addition, non-foreign born Whites did not readily accept these new groups into their businesses or communities and viewed them as inferior, ignorant, and criminals (Alba, 1990; Hochschild & Powell, 2008). As time passed, each new immigrant group found ways to assimilate into U.S. mainstream

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culture and began to take on the label of *White* based on societal acceptance, historical events, and legislation.

As more "less desirable" European immigrants (e.g., Polish and Irish) arrived during the early 1900s, a resurgence of the belief in racial hierarchies emerged as nationality groups (i.e., Irish) began to challenge their non-White status and faced discrimination. In 1920, the White majority political leadership passed the Johnson-Reed Act, which established quotas for immigrants based on population proportions that existed in the 1890 Census. This led to segregation, job discrimination, and in some cases, even lynching of the new White immigrants (Pfeifer, 2005).

However, with the emergence of the Jim Crow era (from the mid-1800s to the 1960s), a time period where Whites used institutional policies and practices to distance themselves from African Americans and other racial/ethnic groups, many of the immigrants who had just arrived in the U.S. found it much easier to assimilate, and by the 1930 Census, many citizens from European nationalities were considered White. In addition, country of origin among the new immigrants lost its importance due to the negative connotations that were strongly tied to socioeconomic status of immigrants arriving from Eastern European countries. In other words, a social and legal process took place that allowed immigrants to cut their ties to past cultural specific traditions, and an emphasis was placed on becoming more American (i.e., speaking only English instead of their native language; Alba, 1990; Hochschild & Powell, 2008). This led to a rejection of past connections and a reinvention of the White race in a way that is viewed as a more generalized identity (i.e., White American).

Whites (non-Hispanic or Latino/a) currently represent the largest ethnic and racial group in the U.S. at 256 million, comprising 72% of the U.S. population. However, the proportion of Whites in the total U.S. population has decreased due to significant growth in Latino/a American and Asian American populations. By 2065, it is predicted that White Americans will constitute only 46% of the total U.S. population, and technically while still the largest racial group, will constitute a minority of the overall population (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Youth Population and Its Changing Demographics

The racial and ethnic diversity of the U.S. population has grown dramatically over the past decades and is expected to change further in the future. These changes have implications for the U.S., particularly if racial/ethnic disparities in education, health, employment, wealth, and other socioeconomic indicators continue to widen. In order to move forward, we have to understand the demographic changes and how data can assist us in ensuring the success of all youth.

As you read this and the following sections, consider how data may be used by others (and possibly yourself) to reinforce stereotypes and/or biases people have about various cultural groups. Consider ways as a youth development specialist you can help others interpret these types of data to mitigate their stereotypes and biases and how data can be appropriately used to promote social justice.

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Table 19.1 provides the population of youth living in the U.S. from 2010 through 2016 categorized by race. In 2016, the U.S. had over 73 million youth under 18 years of age; 51% were White, non-Hispanic; 25% Latino/as; 14% were African American; 5% Asian; and less than 2% Native American. By 2020, over half of all children and youth under the age of 18 are expected to be Latino/as, non-White, and this percentage is expected to increase significantly by 2050 (Pew Research Center, 2015). By 2060, only 32% of the youth population will be White, non-Hispanic, based on projections that populations will continue to become more diverse.

Table 19.1
Youth Population by Race

	2010	2013	2016
All Youth	74,123,332	73,579,424	73,642,285
Native American/Alaskan Native	1%	1%	1%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	4%	5%	5%
African American	14%	14%	14%
Latino/a	23%	24%	25%
White	54%	52%	51%

Due to categories not shown, columns do not sum to 100% (Kids Count Data Center, 2017).

The White youth population (under the age of 18) decreased from 61% to 51% of the total youth population between 2000 and 2016. In the same time period, the percentage of Whites aged 18–24 years (college age population) decreased from 62% to 54% of the total 18–24 population, while the percentages of Latino/as and multiracial youth increased. By 2020, the White population growth is expected to slow with a decrease projected by 2050 due to the projected number of deaths among Baby Boomers exceeding the number of births. Since 2010, 46 states have recorded significant losses in their White youth populations, and 37 states have showed declines in youth overall. By 2050, it is also projected that the African American youth population will continue to decrease from 14% of the total youth population to 13.1% (Pew Research Center, 2015). Currently, Texas, Georgia, Florida, New York, and North Carolina are the states that represent the largest populations of African American youth under the age of 18 (Kids Count, 2017a).

The Latino/a youth population comprises 25% of the total youth population in the U.S. Approximately 18 million Latino/as are younger than 18 years of age, with the median age being 28 years old. The states with the largest population of Latino/a youth are California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois. Latino/a Americans are concentrated in three metro areas: Los Angeles, New York City, and Miami-Dade (Motel & Patten, 2012).

The Asian youth population is growing rapidly and at a faster rate than all other racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. Its total share of the youth population increased by 43% from 2000 to 2010. Since 2010, Asian, non-Hispanic children have increased from 3.5% of all U.S. children to 5% in 2016. By 2020, they are projected to represent 5% of all U.S. children and increase to 9.3% by 2060.

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Similar to the White youth population, the percentage of Native American youth (currently about 400,000) is expected to decrease to 0.8% percent by 2020 and 0.7% by 2050. While Native American youth represent a very small population, Native American youth are amongst the most negatively affected in terms of poverty, family structure, and educational attainment.

Poverty among Racial and Ethnic Youth Populations

The U.S. Census uses a series of income thresholds, determined by the size of the family including the number of children under 18, as well as total family income, to determine who can be classified as living in "poverty." The 2018 federal definition of the poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children (living in the contiguous U.S.) is an annual household income at or below $25,100. The current poverty rate for an average family of four would equal $2,092 a month, $483 a week or $69 a day.

Poverty, especially youth poverty, can negatively affect youth well-being. Poverty negatively affects children's educational attainment, impedes development, and is associated with increases in youth crime rates. These negative impacts contribute to lower social mobility, which makes it increasingly difficult for them to move upward toward a higher social or economic class. In addition, lowered social mobility exacerbates disparities and can exist across all race/ethnicities and even every family structure type (Evans & Kim, 2013).

Figure 19.1 provides statistics on the percentage of youth living in poverty by race. In 2016, over 14 million youth (19%) in the U.S. lived in poverty. The U.S. youth poverty rate has shown slight improvement; the percentage of youth classified as in poverty each year since 2012 has decreased. In 2016, African American (34%) and Native American (34%) children under the age of 18 years made up the two largest racial groups in terms of percentage living in poverty, although the raw number of African Americans is much higher compared to Native Americans (Musu-Gillette, de Brey, McFarland, Hussar, Sonnenberg, & Wilkinson-Flicker, 2017). The 2016 poverty rate of Latino/as (28%) is just slightly less than for African Americans and Native Americans. Asian American and White youth have the lowest poverty rates of all racial groups (12% each).

Family Structure by Race and Ethnic Youth Populations

Similar to poverty, the characteristics of a young person's family structure can influence educational attainment, poverty status, and overall well-being (Evans & Kim, 2013). In 2016, the majority (69%) of children in the U.S. lived in households headed by two parents (biological, step, or adoptive). Children living with unmarried parents accounted for 3 million children under 18 years of age. However, the number of all U.S. children living in single-headed households has almost tripled since the 1960s, and currently is at 27%. In single-parent households, 23% live in mother-led households, compared to 4% in father-led households. Figure 19.2 displays the breakdown of children and youth under the age of 18 based on family structure type. Since the 2010 Census, there has been little change in the percentage of children living with relatives (3%) and non-relatives (1%).

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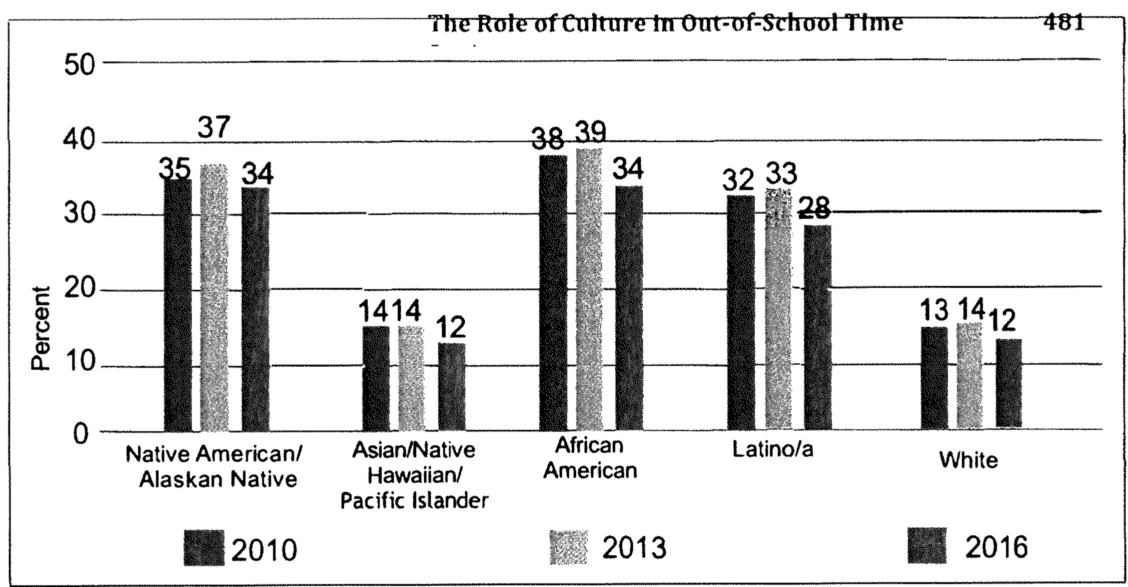

Figure 19.1. Percentage of Youth in Poverty by Race. Source: Kids Count Data Center (2017a). *Note:* A more accurate way to view population tables is to look at the proportion of each racial/ethnic group. Comparing gross numbers can lead to a misleading picture of social issues. For example, if the total African American youth population is 10.3M and the poverty rate for African Americans is 34%, then approximately 3.6M African American youth would be living in poverty. For Whites, if the total White youth population is 37.5M with a poverty rate of 12% for Whites, then approximately 4.5M White youth would be living in poverty. Thus, the percentages by themselves would be misleading with regard to the actual number of youth of each race who are impacted.

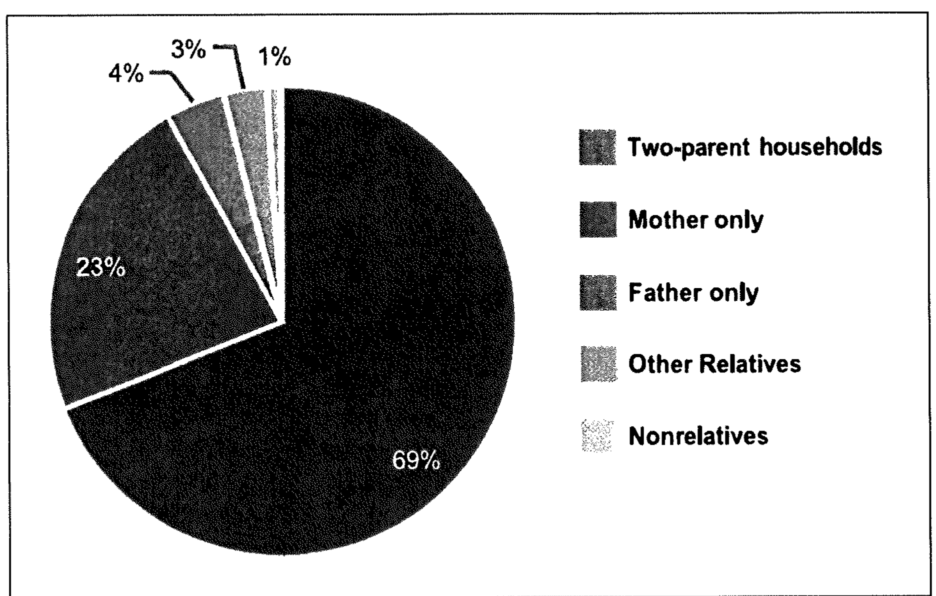

Figure 19.2. Breakdown of Family Structure by Type. Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2017c).

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Single-parent families can result from children being born to a single female, because of a divorce or death within a married couple, or due to parents never being married. Such scenarios can create significant strain on the single parent to fulfill both parental roles, including providing the entire family income. Although the primary role of youth development workers is to support the growth and development of the youth they serve, it is also important to consider how their efforts may help support single and dual parent households.

Based on data from Kids Count (2017b), Figure 19.3 displays the percentage of youth living in single-parent households by race/ethnicity. As you can see, there are vast differences between these groups, with only 16% of Asian American youth living in single-parent households compared to 66% of African American youth. For Native American youth, 52% live in single-parent households, with Latino/a youth at 42%. White youth (25%) have the lowest rate of children and youth living in single-parent households.

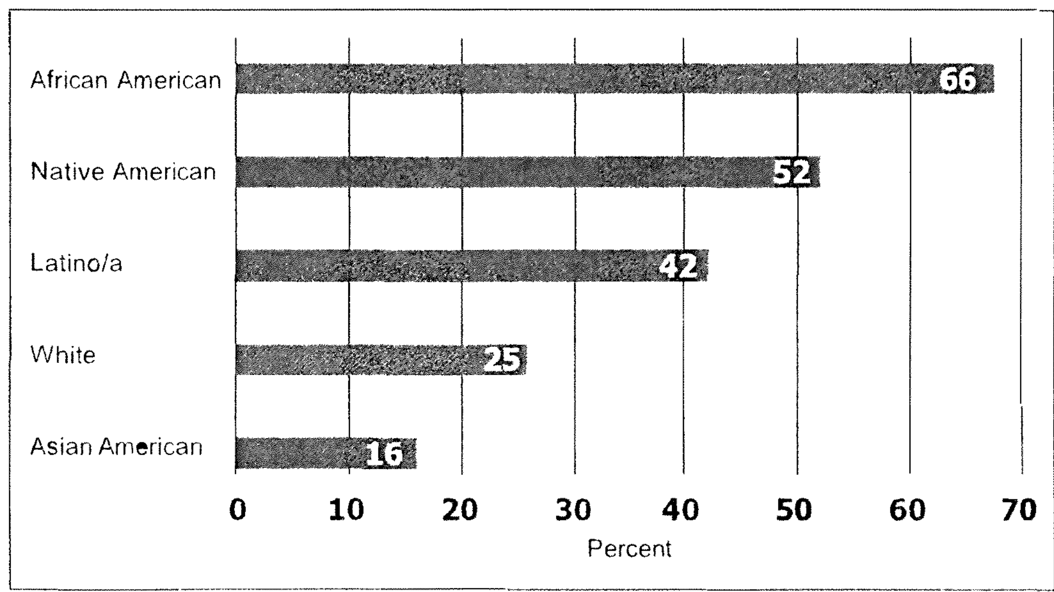

Figure 19.3. Percent of Youth Living in Single-Parent Households Source: Kids Count Data Center (2017)

Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnic Youth Populations

Educational completion and advancement are considered key components of youth development. As of 2015, the high school and GED graduation rates ranged from 82% for Native Americans, 88% for Latino/a, 92% for African Americans, 95% for Whites, to 97% for Asian Americans (Table 19.2).

Each racial group has made substantial improvements since 1990. For example, between 1990 and 2015, graduation rates of African American youth increased from 84% to the current level of 92%. For Latino/a youth the graduation rate rose from 59% in 1990 to 88% in 2015 (Musu-Gillette et al., 2017).

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In addition, the graduation rate for Latino/a youth was 88% for those born in the
U.S. and proficient in English, but only 70% for Latino/a children born outside of the
U.S. For comparisons, the dropout rates have decreased since 2000, when Latino/a youth had the highest dropout rate (28%) among all cultural groups in the U.S., followed by African Americans (13%), and Whites (7%). By 2015, the gap in dropout rates between Latinos/as and Whites had closed from 9.2% to 4.6% (Musu-Gillette et al., 2017).

Following high school graduation, each cultural group (beside American Indian/ Alaskan Native due to lack of information) has shown increases in higher education enrollment since 2000. In Table 19.2, 2015 data regarding graduation diploma or equivalent credential completion rates are provided along with 2016 higher education enrollment rates separated by race/ethnicity. Asian American youth (62%) have the highest rate of college enrollment among all cultural groups.

Table 19.2

Percentage of High School Graduation and College Enrollment Among 18- to 24-Year-Olds by Race

	2015 High School* Graduation or Equivalency Completion by Race, Aged 18-24	2016 College Enrollment Rate by Race, Aged 18-24
American Indian/Alaskan Native	82%	N/A**
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	97%	62%
African American/Black	92%	43%
Latino/a	88%	47%
White	95%	47%

*Data provided by Musu-Gillette et al. (2017)
**Data not available for racial group. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (2017)

Becoming Culturally Competent in Youth Development Practice

Recognition and respect for variations in the characteristics among various ethnic and cultural groups are fundamental to developing strategies for developing quality youth development supports, opportunities, programs, and services (SOPS) in a culturally competent manner. *Cultural competence* is a set of behaviors, attitudes, structures, and policies that need to be applied in intercultural situations (Isaacs & Benjamin, 1991; Purnell, 2013). Cultural

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competence can be achieved by individuals and organizations through the development of (a) an increased understanding and

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appreciation of cultural differences and (b) the skills necessary to work with and serve diverse youth, their families, and communities.

Further, the implementation of culturally appropriate SOPS requires an understanding of culturally based strengths, assets, resources, and desires of specific groups rather than basing SOPS on stereotypes, biases, and myths. This process may prove difficult, as some professionals may not be open to considering cultural beliefs and practices or lack the training necessary to achieve the level of cultural competence needed to undertake effective programs and services. In some cases, they might not recognize the value and necessity of such training. Attaining cultural competency is complicated further by the lack of cultural diversity among professionals, academics, and advocates in the youth development field.

Individuals and organizations that are conducive to creating culturally competent programs and services adhere to certain values and principles. These values and principles include the following:

- Acknowledging culture as a prevailing factor in shaping behaviors, values, and institutions
- Understanding when the values of the dominant culture are in conflict with those of diverse cultural groups
- Respecting the culturally defined needs of a particular community
- Conducting cultural self-assessment and acknowledging and accepting that cultural differences exist and have an impact on how services are delivered and received
- Recognizing that the concepts of individual, family, and community often differ across cultural groups
- Adapting services to fit the cultural diversity of the youth, families, and communities served
- Institutionalizing cultural knowledge in self, organizations, and systems

Cultural competence is an ongoing process that requires dedication. The process or ability to be culturally competent is on a continuum, with cultural destructiveness on one end and cultural proficiency at the other end of the continuum as illustrated in Table 19.3 (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989). Recognizing this continuum does not mean that you need to know everything about every cultural group. It means that individuals are respectful and sensitive and understand their own world views. Being culturally competent is a process that youth development professionals should strive to accomplish and only through ongoing education and training will cultural competence be nurtured and implemented in actual programs and services.

Cultural Competency Principles for Youth Development

In order for youth development professionals to develop cultural competence, behavioral and institutional changes are needed to transform program design and implementation processes. These changes are necessary to give *voice* to diverse youth and provide services and programs that meet their developmental needs. Three principles are critical to implementing culturally relevant youth programs and services.

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Table 19.3
Cultural Competence Continuum

Cultural	Systems and organizations hold culture in high esteem, as a foundation to guide all of their
Cultural	Systems and organizations demonstrate an acceptance and respect for cultural
Cultural Pre-competence	Awareness within systems or organizations of their strengths and areas for growth to respond effectively to culturally and linguistically diverse groups
Cultural	Lack of capacity of systems and organizations to respond effectively to the needs, interests, and preferences of culturally and linguistically diverse groups
Cultural Destructiveness	Attitudes, policies, structures, and practices with a system or organization that are destructive to a cultural group

Principle 1: Awareness of bias. The first principle focuses on the cultural awareness of youth development professionals by asking them to examine their own biases regarding racial/ethnic youth, especially as they relate to prejudice, racism, and discrimination. Everyone has a unique life experience based on the influence of family, friends, school, work, and community. As a starting point, these positive and negative life experiences need to be discussed, shared, and examined. For example, are there stereotypes, perceptions, and/or beliefs that you as a youth development professional hold about a particular cultural group that would create a an intentional or unintentional barrier to how you serve and/or work on behalf of youth, their families, or their communities? To be culturally competent means "that you have dealt with these questions and have worked through the biases, feelings, fears, and guilt associated with them" (Sue, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2016, p. 63).

Principle 2: Knowledge acquisition and understanding. Principle two involves the acquisition of knowledge connected to theories, models, and concepts dealing with demographic changes related to race and ethnicity in American society that are essential to cultural competency. It is important to understand youths' world view by acquiring knowledge related to their racial/ethnic background, daily lived experiences, family background, and personal fears and aspirations. Of particular importance is understanding the social, political, and historical factors in local communities

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that have led to conditions of oppression, marginalization and social inequality, and how these oppressive factors affect the lives of youth and their families. Finally, youth development professionals should acquire knowledge about the collective values, beliefs, history, family systems, religious and/or spiritual practices, and communication patterns associated with the racial/ethnic groups being served.

It is important to understand youths' world view by acquiring knowledge related to their racial/ ethnic background, daily lived experiences, family background, and personal fears and aspirations.

Principle 3: Fostering cultural respon- siveness. This principle focuses on the profes- sional application of knowledge to empower youth, their families, and their communities. The focus is on the delivery of programs and services that recognize and honor the cultural needs of the youth and their families. The use of one-size-fits-all programming by youth development professionals is never warrant- ed. The effectiveness of youth programs and services are enhanced when they are con- sistent with the world views, experiences, and cultural values of the youth.

Cultural Competency, Youth Development, and Social Justice

The goal of helping youth development professionals develop cultural competency is to ensure culturally based empowerment and advocacy. Through the proper use of methods and approaches that assist in facilitating youth empowerment, youth development professionals will be able to incorporate social justice principles into their work. Social justice involves providing access and opportunity to all groups by ensuring the removal of individual and systemic barriers to the provision of youth-based programs and services provided at the micro (individual), meso (family and neighborhood), and macro (society, region, state) ecological levels. In other words, for youth development professionals to be effective in their cultural competency efforts, they must put social justice at the center of their professional philosophy and practice. Social justice "includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable, and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure" (Bell, 1997, p. 3).

Why is having a just society important to the field of youth development? The goal of youth development programs and services is to enable youth to thrive and successfully navigate pathways to adulthood. Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) assert that youth development professionals must not only work to change the lives of youth, but also engage in changing the institutional, systemic, and cultural practices that prevent equal access and opportunity for youth throughout society. Therefore, a social justice youth development approach to cultural competency is warranted. Based on Ginwright and Cammarota's foundational work, the authors of this chapter propose a definition of social justice youth development as:

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an approach focused on the development of equitable access and opportunities for all youth by actively reducing or eliminating disparities in education, health, employment, justice, and any other system that hinders the development of young people.

This active approach has the following four goals:

1. To produce equitable access and opportunity for all youth regardless of circumstances through the recognition of power imbalances in our communities
2. To reduce or eliminate societal systems and structures (e.g., in health and education programs and services) that perpetuate practices and policies that not only produce disparities, but also decrease quality of life
3. To encourage youth development professionals to consider cultural relevancy in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services for youth, their families, and communities
4. To broaden the scope of youth development to include all sectors of a community in order to be inclusive of and responsive to the needs of all youth in a way that promotes social, economic and political change

Social justice youth development is ultimately concerned with putting an end to the injustices and obstacles that harm individuals in our society. The development of cultural competency serves as the foundation to guide the field in this direction. Additional information about cultural competency can be found in Chapters 20 and 21.

Conclusion

Enabling youth development professionals to develop cultural competency and practice social justice presents many challenges, as well as many opportunities. Each cultural group in the U.S. has unique strengths, assets, and needs. By acknowledging these differences, we can provide better services to youth from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Youth development professionals should be proactive in developing culturally responsive programs and services. In order to optimize positive opportunities for human development, contextually and culturally responsive environments must be constructed and specific attention directed toward developing programs that are relevant to the lives of diverse youth.

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Discussion Questions

Key Terms and Concepts

1. Select four group identities you possess (e.g., race, age). Of the four you have chosen, which one is most important to you? Why? Does its significance change in different settings? Why?
2. What are the differences between the concepts of race and ethnicity? Why do these differences matter?
3. Bella is a young person who identifies as a girl and describes herself as deaf, Latina, and lesbian. Bella is also overweight for her age and dark-skinned. These characteristics all contribute to her identity. What forms of discrimination might Bella face in her school, community, and OST activities? Would she face stronger or more types of discrimination given the intersectional nature of her identity? Would her disability, race/ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, or a combination thereof, contribute to forms of discrimination, social injustice, or cultural identity?
4. In terms of race/ethnicity, do you believe someone can be colorblind? Why is it so difficult to acknowledge differences, especially cultural differences? In what ways does a colorblind approach hinder youth-adult relationships when working with youth?

Diverse Profiles

1. Were any of the historical racial/ethnic categorizations terms new to you? If yes, which ones? Would you consider yourself someone that has avoided interactions with other racial/ethnic groups because you were unsure "what to call them?" If yes, having read this chapter, how might you behave in the future?
2. What changes do you believe will occur in U.S. Census racial and ethnic categories over the next 50 years?

Cultural Competency

1. How do organizational policies and processes serve as barriers to the development of cultural competence by youth development professionals?
2. How do some youth development practitioners, despite their best intentions, cause inequality in their programs?

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Class Assignments

1. Cultural Observation

- Historically, racial segregation has been a sociopolitical problem in the United States. Despite various social, political, legal, and economic policies to desegregate our schools, churches, businesses, parks, beaches, and neighborhoods, the U.S. continues to be segregated along racial and economic lines. Look around your campus (e.g., dormitories, recreation centers, classes) or your community (e.g., a local park, church). Take a minimum of 15 minutes to observe the people interacting. Answer the following questions:
  - Is there evidence of racial/ethnic segregation?
  - Why do you think people segregate along racial/ethnic lines?
  - What does it tell us about society? Is it harmful or beneficial for the development of youth?
  - Should we eradicate the ability of people to segregate? If yes, how would you accomplish this? If no, why not? Be prepared to justify your answer.

2. My Cultural Identity

- Your belief system was shaped to a large degree by primary caregivers and peers. You were taught what you now hold as "truth" through participation in religion, educational institutions, and life experiences. These socializing influences have contributed to your racial/ethnic identity. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to examine who you are by identifying your own values and beliefs and to begin to think critically about their impact on your ability to function effectively in a diverse environment.
  - Describe your family's racial, ethnic, and/or national background. What particular aspect of your culture explains your beliefs and attitudes about racial/ethnic differences (e.g., family practices, gender, race/ethnicity, religion, holidays, and traditions)?
  - What can you recall about events and conversations related to race/ethnicity that may have impacted your current perspectives and/or experiences? What did these experiences teach you about people who are racially/ethnically different from you?
  - Identify and discuss biases, prejudices, and stereotypes you have regarding racial/ethnic groups different from yourself. How do those experiences influence the ways in which you interact with members of those groups?
  - Were you particularly interested in or surprised by any of the information/ feelings you may have uncovered while completing this assignment?

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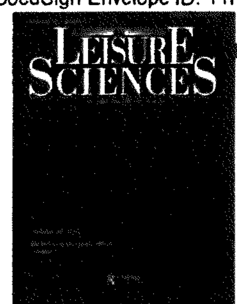

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Examining the Use of Leisure for the Sociopolitical Development of Black Youth in Out-of-School Time Programs

Aishia A. Brown, Corliss W. Outley & Harrison P. Pinckney

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Examining the Use of Leisure for the Sociopolitical Development of Black Youth in Out-of-School Time Programs

Aishia A. Brown, PhD[a], Corliss W. Outley, PhD[b], and Harrison P. Pinckney, IV, PhD[c]

[a]Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, USA; [b]Department of Recreation, Park, & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA; [c]Department of Parks, Recreation, & Tourism Management, Clemson University, Clemson, SC, USA

ABSTRACT

The current social and political climate in the U.S. requires a reexami- nationof how marginalized groups shape their leisure around polit- ical identity development and resistance. This paper will first provide a brief introduction to the concept of sociopolitical development (SPD) and its role in culture specific out-of-school time programs that serve Black youth. Next, using a multiple case study approach, the authors examined how leisure informs the SPD of Black youth. Results identify SPD as a critical component of these recreational program's theoretical approaches, leadership structure, staff selection and training, and curriculum design. Study results inform the ways recreational agencies can serve as sites for SPD and activism for marginalized

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black youth; leisure politics; out-of-school time; social justice; sociopolitical development

Introduction

From sitting in the "Whites only" section of movie theaters during the Jim Crow era to creating the culture of hip hop to resist the unequal treatment of poor Black and Brown communities in the South Bronx, Black youth have consistently used leisure as leverage for sociopolitical development (SPD) and resistance. As the United States has become more diversified, youth have shined a light on a pervasive system of oppression that privilege some groups at the expense of others (i.e., #BlackLivesMatter, #MarchForOurLives). While some may fail to understand the significance youth political activism has within leisure studies, the authors of this article shed light on the critical role leisure programs/activities hold in the SPD of Black youth in the United States.

Leisure studies has made attempts to examine the politics of leisure but failed to include the political nature of Black youth's leisure activities. Despite recreation and leisure studies promoting the importance of recreation in the lives of youth (Witt & Caldwell, 2005), there is a paucity of literature surrounding the intersections of Black youth leisure and political activism (Brown, 2016). Historically, slavery and segregation laws and practices shaped Black youth's engagement in leisure activities (Jones, 1970;

CONTACT Aishia A. Brown, PhD aishia.brown@louisville.edu Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville, 485

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East Gray Street, Louisville, KY 40202, USA.

[1]The terms "Black" and "African American" will be used interchangeably.

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Holland, 2002). Although those laws and practices are no longer in place, this population still feels the effects of hundreds of years of oppression and the political systems of power that currently influence their leisure (e.g., kneeling during the national anthem at sporting events). Furthermore, the documented role of Black youth in the historical desegregation of recreational facilities (Wiltse, 2007) and the examination of leisure spaces as sites to develop a sociopolitical identity have been limited (an exception is Kelly Pryor & Outley, 2014). Despite SPD theory being grounded in advancing human rights and social equity, few studies have examined leisure through the lens of its political implications to individual and collective resistance (Shaw, 2001).

Given that Black youth have a history of engaging in leisure activities tied to their political education and resistance (DuBois, et al., 1996), the present study was guided by SPD theory. SPD considers how young people gain an understanding of inequities and become active agents, individually and/or collectively, to promote meaningful change. This article examines Black youth's leisure activities through participation in culture-specific youth out-of-school time (OST) programs[2] with a specific focus on SPD. The authors explore the context of SPD, by examining the research question: ***How do culture-specific youth programs foster the SPD and activism of Black youth?***

Sociopolitical Development

Defining SPD

Flanagan et al. (2007) argue it is time for the field of youth development (YD) to "take a political turn … Joining with young activists in redressing these inequities should be the next step …" (p. 243). Youth need opportunities to not only engage with people from diverse backgrounds but to think critically about society and their role in engaging civically within their communities (Sherrod et al., 2010) and the systems they live in (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). A number of Black youth learn the political nature of their identity within culture-specific OST programs. The SPD process occurs as young people engage in political thought and activism, developing critical parts of their identities. The reflection and analysis of one's sociopolitical environment, ***critical consciousness,*** is expected to build cap- acity for involvement in social change (Watts et al., 2011). As such, critical consciousness is assumed to motivate strategic action and challenge oppressive conditions. SPD is "the evolv- ing, critical understanding of the political, economic, cultural, and other systemic forces that shape society and one's status in it" (Watts & Flanagan, 2007, p. 784).

OST Programs, SPD, and Black Youth

Motivations and level of engagement around youth participation has become a primary area of study under the realm of youth recreation (Caldwell, 2000). Culture-specific OST programs can empower Black youth through the development of leadership skills, historical knowledge, critical consciousness, and racial identity to seek activism within

[2]Culture-specific youth OST programs refers to youth programs that incorporate the culture of the youth, families, and communities being served (Outley, Brown, Gabriel, & Sullins, 2018). These programs are often created to introduce youth to cultural programming focused on positive racial/ethnic or cultural identity development.

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communities of color (Brown, 2016; Ginwright, 2010). In addition, these programs provide an understanding of group status and racial identity within the larger social political systems, illuminating the role of oppression and structural barriers (Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012). Finally, these programs foster self-awareness to promote positive social and cultural identities while also fostering critical consciousness. Educating youth on the role of power and privilege in our society, an approach to education that is often absent in mainstream educational systems, takes place in these programs (Baldrige et al., 2017).

The social justice youth development (SJYD) approach to YD brings a critical analysis to SPD in the lives of marginalized Black youth, a population often pathologized by being labeled "at-risk." Social change related to transforming systems of oppression is the goal of this approach, making it popular in youth organizing and activist research and practice (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). Critical consciousness and racial/ethnic identity development are considered essential components of SPD within the SJYD approach. While SJYD is fairly new to the study of youth recreation, this approach is vital to understanding the politics of leisure surrounding youth in the United States. SJYD requires recreation researchers and agencies to work to actively reduce disparities in education, health, employment, justice, and any other system that hinders the development of young people (Outley et al., 2018).

Youth interact with more than just the education system, and these systems (i.e., health, economic, political, justice) become interconnected with their SPD. Building on the work of Black feminist scholarship, a young person's identities and their intersections are political (Crenshaw, 1991); thus, resistance against oppressive forces is an important part of development for marginalized youth. As a result, we cannot hold dialogue about, conduct research, or practice SPD without considering SJYD. This study addresses this gap in the research through a qualitative approach examining youth program structures and content. A qualitative approach is warranted given the underpinning philosophies of SJYD and the need to understand inductively the meanings and associated practices related to leisure activities and SPD.

The Present Study

Case Study Methodology

A multicase study approach examining SPD within culture-specific OST programs was conducted. The case study method, known for its efficacy in exploring complex phenomena, was selected as the best research method to examine the connection between SPD and leisure for Black youth in an exploratory manner (Yin, 2013). In this research, the authors investigated three culture-specific programs designed to raise critical consciousness among Black youth by examining organizational content, structure, and processes. Three sites were selected based on the following criteria: be in existence for a minimum of five years, provide culture-specific programming to Black youth, and hold a mission of fostering the SPD of program participants. A qualitative approach was adopted for this multicase study to answer the research question: ***How do culture-specific youth programs foster the SPD and activism of Black youth?*** Multimethod data collection took place during site visits and consisted of four youth focus groups, five program director interviews, three program leader focus groups, participant observations, and

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organizational artifact review. Cross-case analysis was used to interpret and summarize data collected. This process included synthesizing data from each site, categorizing program characteristics, and developing themes based on program characteristic categories.

Case Study Site Profiles

All three sites selected for this case study held outcomes and SPD activities that overlap. For these programs, cultivating African-American SPD is a direct response to the social, political, cultural, and economic environment in which the youth navigate. Table 1 provides a brief overview of the case study sites.

The authors find it important to provide context to environments in which the case study sites are located. Youth living in inner-city urban areas such as Atlanta, Harlem, and Dallas are dealing with environmental issues, including poverty, high unemployment rates, and community and structural violence. As a result, these sites are doing more than just traditional OST programming. By incorporating specific SPD activities into the curriculum and approach to youth recreation, these sites ignite activism among the youth they serve.

Findings

Program Theoretical Approaches

The structure of OST programs is generally developed based on a theoretical or philosophical approach to YD. These approaches are significant to the program's mission and the development of its curriculum and activities. Each case study site used a theoretical approach rooted in Pan-Africanism or Afrocentrism, guiding the development and implementation of program curriculum.[3]

Knowledge of self, as part of a larger culture, a principle of both Pan-Africanism and Afrocentrism, was a shared goal throughout all sites. However, the process of instilling this knowledge varied between sites. The Ujima program practiced this principle by focusing on developing youth with creative and critical thinking skills that could be used throughout their lifetime, not just as young people.

> *As individuals we like to give them different techniques and skills, creative thinkers, to understand ..., the love of knowledge, you know to give them the love of knowledge. That means to have them always trying to gain something and learn something in life as they keep going. – Ujima Program Leader (PL)*

The Umoja program focused on building knowledge of self for the purpose of providing opportunities to succeed by helping youth understand that they are more than what they see in their environment.

> *Encompassing, really, I would say the main components are to teach youth who they are, to give them opportunities for success, to help to motivate them to look beyond whatever their immediate surroundings are and to think further. – Umoja Program Director (PD)*

[3]The authors would like to note that Afrocentric and Pan-African approaches have been critiqued for failing to acknowledge the role that patriarchy and misogyny play in the lives of African American girls and women (Collins, 1989). However, a discussion surrounding this topic is beyond the scope of this article.

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Table 1. Case Study Sites Overview.

Site name[1]	Youth served	Program outcomes	Program approach	Examples of SPD activities
Umoja	• 20 Black youth • 13-17 years old • Atlanta, GA	• Leadership skills • Knowledge of self	• Pan-African[2] approach	• Pan-Africanism identity and political education • Entrepreneurship and community service • Travel to Ghana and Ethiopia
Ujima	• 50 Black & Latino boys • 11-18 years old • Harlem, NY	• Sense of belonging • Knowledge of self • Support for success	• Afrocentric[3] approach	• Education on history of African Diaspora • Addressing toxic masculinity • Protests stop and frisk
Kuumba youth	• 40 Black • 5-18 years old • Dallas, TX	• Knowledge of self and community • Understanding of social justice	• Afrocentric approach	• Education on history, culture, and art of the African Diaspora • Utilizing art for social change • Travel to Senegal

[1]All program described in this study were assigned pseudonyms
[2]Pan Africanism is the "promotion of self-determination among Africans under African leadership for the benefit of Africans themselves (Padmore, 1972, p. 106).
[3]Afrocentrism is a framework that adopts African-centered social, cultural, political, and economic practices and beliefs (Asante, 2011).

The Kuumba program practiced knowledge of self by focusing on developing their youth's knowledge of the history of people of African descent, holding outcomes related to youth learning the critical role they play in shaping the future.

> *I'm first and foremost interested in children of African descent learning their history and understanding their part in that continuum. – Kuumba PD*

In addition to knowledge of the self, each case study site developed ***outcomes*** based on the site's theoretical approaches that fostered SPD. Ujima's PD discussed the theory of change for the program and its focus on youth agency by highlighting how they use support, guidance, love, and education to ensure youth have agency in their lives and communities.

> *"... our theory of change that we want to provide support, guidance, love, and education to young people. We want to teach discipline and order and then we want to provide access and opportunities that lead towards agency. – Ujima PD*

Kuumba's PD used history of the African Diaspora to build critical thinking skills, one component of critical conscious development. Specifically, Kuumba recognizes how the public education system may fail to teach accurate history of people of African descent. The program works to ensure youth become the guardians of that history by developing their critical thinking skills.

> *It's one, getting them to know the history but two, to get them to be the guardians of the history because we stress to them that you have to be the people who make sure that this history does not die ... The other thing is that we are also interested in building critical thinking skills because these children now are in schools by and large that do not support even the notion of thinking for yourself. – Kuumba PD*

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The theoretical approaches each program adopted, guided by principles surrounding knowledge of self in relation to one's role in the larger society, was essential to the SPD of the youth in each program. Results show the Afrocentric and Pan-African approach requires less focus on individual behavior change and more focus on critical consciousness development and youth understanding their connection to history and how they can change the future, promoting youth agency.

Leadership Structure

The organizational leadership structure was also influential in the SPD of program participants because it affected knowledge sharing among program directors, leaders, and participants. One common characteristic of Umoja and Ujima was the organizational structure designed to mimic traditional villages across the African Diaspora with elders (PDs) serving as the decision makers of program activities and endeavors. Since Ujima separates the youth into different chapters, this program referred to their leaders as chapter leaders. Umoja referred to program leaders as ***Jegna***, a word originating from the Amharic language in Ethiopia meaning" brave leader" and "protector of the rights of their people."

The Umoja PD describes the critical role Jegna's play in the structure of the program.

> *We have what's called Jegna, which is basically the highest level. Those are the people who have full commitment to the program. They require to be in attendance at all workshops, basically the same requirements that the youth have. – Umoja PD*

It is important to note that with this position of power comes the responsibility of holding a strong connection to each individual in the organization, so all decisions reflect the shared beliefs and values of everyone. The Ujima program puts this into practice by ensuring that youth have full access to their group leaders.

> *... members of Ujima have 24/7 access to their group leaders. So that if I'm running a chapter with another man, then those 15 young men have cell phones ... We, you know, work with them from 7th grade to 12th grade. – Ujima PD*

This action is taken as a result of the Ujima program recognizing that youth may need an adult they trust to call if they get arrested or removed from their home.

Sharing decision making and power with youth is a critical component of the develop- ment of their sociopolitical identity. One youth participant (YP) in Umoja reported this organizational structure helped him understand how to lead in ways that value and build relationships.

> *... we're also being taught something. We're also coming together, and everybody's having their time to talk and have a say-so, and it becomes a discussion and dialogue in which everybody can voice their opinions and everything. But you're learning at the same time ... everybody's learning about each other, so it's a constant exchange of knowledge, rather than just the teacher's giving up information and you're just supposed to sit back and accept it. It's more like a constant exchange going on. – Umoja YP*

Sharing power was built into the organizational structure of the Umoja program. This assisted the youth in developing their own leadership skills and recognizing their power in the ability to guide conversations and content covered in the program.

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A PL from Kuumba spoke about his influence on the decision one youth was making about his future, highlighting his role as someone this young person trusted, not just a leader in the program.

> *And out of that, two, three years of the program and me being involved, I'm not going to say I helped him make a decision, but he would ask me opinions about what he should do in college and where he wants to go and the direction he's trying to do; with his musical career and other like aspects of life. And I can't say ..., I had a big influence but some of the steps that I kind of recommended, he took it upon himself and he's making those steps right now. – Kuumba PL*

Each program had designed their leadership structure with the intentions of building strong relationships between the youth and the program leaders. Umoja and Ujima used culture to inform these roles, adopting specific names for PLs that reflected African-centered culture. Kuumba centered their structure on building trust with youth so they come to their PLs for advice on making big decisions about their future.

Staff Selection and Training

Each program had a different method for ***staff selection*** and ***training***. Ujima's PD highlighted his extensive hiring process for PLs. While adopting standard staff hiring procedures for their initial selection process, Ujima also conducts an ideological interview with each potential staff member to ensure he or she is a good fit for the program.

> *The third stage is then the person has to come in for something called an ideological interview. Which is a two-hour long conversation where we throw scenarios at them ... How would you deal with it if a young person called and said that she was pregnant or he was pregnant or what would you do if a member got arrested at two in the morning? How would you respond to a member who says my school sucks and is failing so why should I go into school. What would you do with a young person who's questioning around their sexuality? What would you do with a young person who says I don't want to go to college? How would you respond to these scenarios? – Ujima PD*

The ideological interview plays a critical role in how well the program meets the needs of the youth they serve. The scenarios presented to each interviewee come from actual events that have happened in the program and are an innovative tool for staff selection.

Whereas Ujima hires staff with specific youth leadership skills and ideological perspectives, Kuumba addresses these areas in its staff training. ***Training***, including research on the theoretical approach, was a critical component for Kuumba because it directly influenced the cultural grounding that the program was working to instill in their youth.

> *... you know, choosing staff becomes a very delicate kind of thing because I've had people come and I've had to let them go because they didn't understand that .. the children really do come first here, and I don't give a damn about you. ... if you can't figure out that this is a place where the children are top of the heap and we're there to serve them, then you need to go somewhere else. I have had people come in who didn't want to do the work to learn what they needed to learn and they found out that ... I don't care how accomplished you are in whatever art form you bring to the table, if you don't do the research that helps give the cultural ground, then you've got to go. – Kuumba PD*

For the PD at Kuumba, staff selection and training were critical to reaching program outcomes, especially those related to having a knowledge base of the culture.

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Umoja trainings focused more on how to engage youth participants in authentic ways, another important aspect of SPD. This program valued having staff with strong youth leadership skills.

> *... we did have some trainings in terms of okay, this is our curriculum. These are the lesson plans that accompanies each chapter and just through observation they got a chance to see how we actually do facilitate a workshop from some of our old or former participants facilitating. So that's basically the training ... they can relate to the young people, because ... I had people that were facilitating lessons that really weren't necessarily teachers. They didn't know how to tune their voices to the crowd. They didn't know how to connect with the young people and I felt like a lot of what we were trying to do were being missed because they didn't know how to deliver the message. – Umoja PD*

Recognizing the importance of ideologies, youth leadership skills, and cultural grounding in the staff selection and training help the programs facilitate SPD for youth by placing adults in their lives that have the necessary skills and training to promote youth agency and their engagement in activism.

Curriculum Design

One of the most important aspect of all sites in this case study was ***curriculum*** because it served as the foundation of each program. Across all case study sites, SPD was a focal point of the curriculum. All sites relied on contemporary and historical readings from prominent Black philosophers, documentaries, and artifacts to ***teach history across the African diaspora and critical-thinking skills***.

Kuumba focused on a different part of the history of the African diaspora each year of the program. One program participant highlighted the different topics they learned over the course of multiple years in the program.

> *It was different, but I would say that's a good thing because each year, you learn something different. It was like a 7-year rotation and one year we would learn about like the Haitian revolution and the next year the civil rights movement in Dallas and the next year slavery burial rituals and their American translations. – Kuumba YP*

Covering multiple topics in the curriculum helped the youth learn the multiple ways people of African descent have influenced the world around them.

Ujima's PD connected the environment youth are living in to the program curriculum, placing a focus on youth building connections between their own environment and other places in the African Diaspora, including Africa and Latin America.

> *I don't think any program can be successful with youth who are coming from the kind of conditions that our young people are coming from and that are pervasive throughout the country and only focus on one area. ... ours is multiservice, multiprong, multiapproach. It's cultural awareness. Our young people are studying the culture, politics, and history in relation to Africa and Latin America. Then they spend a month with us in South Africa, in Ghana, in Brazil, in Haiti, in the Dominican Republic, in Morocco, in Egypt. You can't get more culturally based than that. – Ujima PD*

For all three sites, ***traveling to countries in the African Diaspora*** was critical to imple- menting the curriculum. Umoja's program placed a focus on youth developing know- ledge about Africa being the continent where the oldest human remains were found and the youth understanding their connection to Africa.

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> *We want to teach these young people the truth about where it all started and then taking them overseas to make that connection, because that's really why we take them overseas just to connect all of the things that they would have learned in a classroom. – Umoja PD*

After this knowledge was developed, the program takes the youth to Ethiopia to experience the continent firsthand. Traveling is critical to the curriculum because it not only helps youth understand their racial identity, but it also helps them conceptualize their future. An Umoja youth used the Sankofa bird as a metaphor to explain this process.

> *I think that the goal is most importantly education about yourself and your people and your past and where it can take you to your future. What I took from going to Africa was sankofa, the bird, your past determines your future and I think this is what they're trying to instill in us. – Umoja YP*

The knowledge of self-instilled in the youth from their trips abroad informed the ways each program approached youth community engagement.

Sites provided opportunities for ***youth activism*** embedded actions related to community social change into their curriculum. Kuumba engaged youth on the topic of gentrification by having a community elder speak about her experiences with this issue.

> *I remember my godmother came up here we did the gentrification, we made a documentary, this was last year ... We made a documentary on gentrification and that's how I found out what that was ... – Kuumba YP*

The youth in the Kuumba program not only made a documentary addressing gentrification in their community, but they also went to the neighborhood where it was taking place, going door-to-door with the youth leaders to raise awareness and urge residents to contact their local representatives to address the issue.

Each site used their curriculum to engage youth on social issues related to the lack of accurate African Diaspora history being taught in the United States, understanding how the past informs the future, and fighting against gentrification in impoverished neighborhoods. This engagement with sociopolitical issues facilitate SPD for youth in each program and became essential to engaging youth in social justice and political activism.

Discussion

Lessons Learned: Adopting an SJYD Program Structure

There are many aspects of SJYD that each case study site adopted to facilitate SPD in their youth participants. SJYD requires shifting the focus from changing individual youth behaviors to focusing more on youth developing a knowledge of self in relation to their community and the world around them (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002). This is directly aligned with the theoretical approaches and curriculum design that sites used in their program structure, since both Afrocentrism and Pan-Africanism are centered on knowledge of self through accurate knowledge of history of Africa and the African Diaspora. Adopting these theoretical approaches and curriculums facilitated SPD among the youth participants at each case study site because it made their organizational mission, central to all program activities.

The structure of culture-specific OST programs, including program leadership and staff selection and training, are interconnected with the SJYD approach. Designing program structures that intentionally fail to mimic traditional systems of power (i.e., public education

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systems) help youth develop leadership skills through their relationships with program leaders who are required to provide knowledge sharing opportunities. This sharing of knowledge shifts traditional power dynamics, a component essential to SPD and the SJYD approach.

Conclusion

The authors argue that the historical and current ways that Black youth engage in leisure is rooted in social justice, requiring opportunities for SPD. The SPD of Black youth facilitated by culture-specific OST programs that adopt SJYD provide critical insight into how leisure programs for youth can be used as a tool to engage youth in political activism. Black youth have played an important role in the history of leisure, making their SPD relevant to the field of leisure studies. As a result, leisure studies should expand our scholarship to highlight these programs and the complex and nontraditional ways they engage in the politics of leisure.

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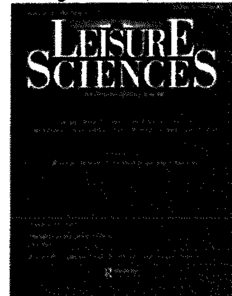

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Power and Social Control of Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Myra Gayle Gabriel, Aishia Brown, Maria León & Corliss Outley

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SPECIAL ISSUE: LEISURE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19. A RAPID RESPONSE
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CRITICAL COMMENTARIES

Power and Social Control of Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Myra Gayle Gabriel[a]*, Aishia Brown[b], Maria Leon[c], and Corliss Outley[d]

[a]Independent Scholar, Atlanta, Georgia, USA; [b]Department of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, USA; [c]Department of Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA; [d]Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, USA

ABSTRACT
While people across the globe adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, young people have been the center of many news stories. Millions of young people are required to stay home due to school closures, and adults are forced to consider alternative structures to support youths' needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed multiple injustices and forms of oppression experienced by the most vulnerable in our country, which includes young people experiencing poverty, incarceration, foster care, homelessness, and those with marginalized identities. This article will discuss the role of power and social control in the lives of youth during the COVID-19 pandemic and present strategies leisure researchers and practitioners can adopt to overcome the loss of critical support structures and mitigate exponential effects of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable youth.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed multiple injustices and forms of oppression experienced by the most vulnerable in the United States, including *vulnerable youth*. Here the authors define "vulnerable youth" as those *between the ages of 10 and 24 years*
old who are racialized, experiencing poverty, incarceration, mental health issues, food scarcity, abuse, foster care, homelessness, and/or youth who have marginalized identities (Emig, 2020; Hager, 2020; Sawyer et al., 2018; United Nations Population Fund, 2014; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Their vulnerability is further exacerbated by the youths' lack of power and control due to sociopolitical systems, structures, and poli-
cies that are produced based on adult-centric biases rooted in Eurocentric colonialism,
particularly oppression and power. Injustices and oppression are results of power, with roots in global colonialism and conquests and reflected in centuries of violent conflict,

CONTACT Myra Gayle Gabriel mggphd@gaylegabriel.com
*Myra Gayle Gabriel is an Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Office of Health Equity in National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.gaylegabriel.com

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cultural and spatial displacement, and social, economic, and political oppression that continue to produce inclusionary/exclusionary practices today (Palmer et al., 2019).

Unfortunately, many adults serve as agents of oppression who deny the occurrence of injustices and believe control is needed to monitor perceived problematic behaviors and actions of youth. As a result, these youth become subjects of increased surveillance and control measures. However, research has shown that providing vulnerable youth oppor- tunities for voice and to exercise their own agency greatly contributes to positive devel- opmental pathways toward adulthood (Caldwell, 2018; Outley et al., 2018). This article will discuss the role of power and social control in the lives of youth during the COVID-19 pandemic and present strategies leisure researchers and practitioners can adopt to address the loss of critical support structures and mitigate exponential effects of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable youth.

Current status of COVID-19

It may seem that youth populations are at lower risk for COVID-19 fatality; however, all youth, especially vulnerable youth, are suffering the abrupt end to employment, edu- cational programs, and community and social services due to closures and social dis- tancing measures intended to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

While social distancing and other guidelines to protect the public health of the U.S. population at-large are implemented, COVID-19's impact on youth goes beyond staying home from school. Rates of poverty, abuse, neglect, and unemployment have risen dur- ing this pandemic, and millions of youth are not receiving the necessary support (Bartlett & Vivrette, 2020). If anything, COVID-19 has exacerbated day-to-day chal- lenges for our most vulnerable youth, mainly youth of color who are trapped in gener- ational poverty, associated with the juvenile justice system, in foster care, with disabilities, homeless or housing insecure, and youth who are undocumented. Furthermore, the sudden losses of health and educational services continue to marginal- ize vulnerable youth by removing avenues to use their voice, thus introducing greater instability and insecurity.

Leisure behavior, youth, and COVID-19

Leisure activities are important for youth because they support healthy growth and development, improve mental health, assist in building social skills, and reduce disease later in life. However, during times of stress, youth with the most access to support, opportunities, programs, and services (SOPS) in leisure settings are more likely to suc- ceed in maintaining a healthy future (Caldwell, 2018). In contrast, vulnerable youth do not have the same opportunities for leisure as youth who have greater access to SOPS. Even the temporary loss of SOPS greatly impacts the health and wellbeing of marginal- ized and vulnerable youth, who might rely on such community organizations for food, clothing, safe spaces, or employment.

Without SOPS even temporarily, vulnerable youth have limited structured options for leisure and recreation outside of using the internet and social media platforms. Historically, the unstructured leisure time of vulnerable youth has often come under

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scrutiny and has been viewed with skepticism and assumptions of wrongdoing or vagrancy (Maimon & Browning, 2010). Unfortunately, COVID-19 has exacerbated the policing and controlling of vulnerable and marginalized youth bodies as youth cope with the loss of structured and group activities (Davis, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2020; Leon, 2020; Robinson, 2020).

Power and social control of youth during COVID-19

During these unprecedented times, we must place a critical lens on the power dynamics and forms of social control experienced by our most vulnerable youth. Power exerted through policy enactment is often used to practice social control on marginalized youth and their communities (Hirschi, 1969). Social control theory suggests that youth who engage in what is often deemed "negative" behavior lack protective factors, such as strong familial bonds, high academic achievement, and so on. The public health and other fields hold a long history of adopting social control theory in youth prevention and intervention efforts by advocating for policy change within social systems (Hirschi, 1969; Huebner & Betts, 2002). However, unless such policies are critically examined, the systems will maintain and reinforce disparities at a macro level. Given that adults hold control of decision-making processes at the local, state, and federal levels, there is an implicit bias that favors adults, particularly white men who have been at the helm of decision-making groups for centuries. The exclusion of youth and people of color from decision making maintains the engrained thought processes rooted in racist and adultist ideology (Bell, 1995; Feagin, 2013). Policies that exert social control in this manner disproportionately impact vulnerable youth by placing them into social systems like juven- ile justice or foster care, where their likelihood of experiencing trauma significantly increases. These effects could be exacerbated during pandemics like COVID-19 where social distancing policies and shelter-in-place orders are enacted. This is especially the case in how the current discourse on reopening many localities has played out. Furthermore, Freire (2003) asserts that when the interests of the oppressors are fore- most, the oppressor is able to maintain and embody oppressive acts through the dehu- manization of the oppressed.

How adults use social control to exert power over vulnerable youth is clear in the early April 2020 incident where a white man attempted to strangle a black teenage girl who was lounging with her friends on a picnic blanket (Fieldstadt, 2020). Despite the man breaking the social distancing guidelines himself by coming within six feet of the group of girls, the most violent actions were reserved for the nlack teenage girl and not anyone else involved in the situation. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the social con- trol of youth is acted out by adults and takes place in a number of ways, including how media cover the activities of black youth during the pandemic, and parallels the racism experienced by black youth in the phenomena of "playing while black" (Martinez, 2020; Pinckney et al., 2018).

The leisure of Asian American youth has also suffered in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the president's politicizing of the virus. If not the outward discrimination faced in public spaces, Asian American youth face increased online bullying as well. Following social distancing guidelines, a young Asian American girl turned to the chat

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site Omegle in search of new friends. Instead, she found a cesspool of xenophobic users who barraged her with racist verbal comments and pantomimed slanted eyelids meant to represent Asian people (Nguyen, 2020). Whether in physical spaces or over the inter- net, the scrutiny and xenophobia meted out to Asian Americans during COVID-19 has greatly reduced their power of choice in leisure activities and instead produced a height- ened anxiety surrounding their emotional and physical safety. Consequently, Asian American youth are pushed even further to the margins by xenophobia and the "model minority" myth (Chou & Feagin, 2015; Margolin, 2020). As leisure researchers, we must employ strategies that promote, advocate, and practice equity and social justice for groups experiencing racism and discrimination, and for those subject to policies that exert power and social control in ways that exacerbate inequities.

Strategies to address issues of power and social control

Efforts to flatten the curve during the COVID-19 pandemic often fail to consider how social distancing and shelter-in-place orders may affect vulnerable youth. Social support systems vital to physical, mental, and emotional health of youth, such as schools, public parks, community centers, and recreational youth programs, are experiencing strains on their ability to provide services. Many of these support systems are losing federal funds due to closures and are having to furlough or terminate staff who serve as caring adults in the lives of vulnerable youth. These social support systems also serve as safe spaces for vulnerable youth and those with marginalized identities (LGBTQIAþ, homeless, dis- connected, and justice-involved youth). Economic strain of these social support systems also influences factors like youth employment, causing many youth who work out of necessity to lose their only source of income. We note that the experiences of youth in group homes, detention centers, and on the streets were not considered when decision making took place at the federal, state, and local levels in response to the COVID- 19 pandemic.

Current strategies to address the pandemic have been actions like school closures and shelter-in-place orders for nonessential work and activities. However, these strategies have exposed vulnerable youth to the lack of resources and disparities in communities across the country. This, we contend, amounts to a form of power and social control where only those who are nonvulnerable are centered. So how do we begin to change the current discourse? As leisure researchers and practitioners, we must use the history of systemic racism and oppression in the United States to inform our strategies to address issues experienced by youth during this pandemic.

Adopting social justice youth development as a strategy

Historically, the voices of the most vulnerable in our society have been censored or not taken seriously when it comes to informing both policy and practice decisions. With young people under the age of 18 not having the right to vote, we must reexamine the ways we value youth civic engagement and its importance. Outley et al. (2018) defines this as "an approach focused on the development of equitable access and opportunities for all youth by actively reducing or eliminating disparities in education, health,

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employment, justice, and any other system that hinders the development of young peo- ple" (p. 486).

In practice, social justice youth development requires intentional support from caring adults focused on ending injustices and obstacles that harm vulnerable youth in our society. A focus on inequalities brings to light the deficit and cultural pathological colo- nial views that keep youth and the communities they live in powerless. This strategy not only ensures that youth voice is transformative but also allows youth to challenge systemic inequalities by raising their critical consciousness to analyze their lived experi- ence through a broader sociopolitical systemic lens along with their connected histories (Cammarota & Fine, 2010; Outley et al., 2018).

Cultivating sociopolitical development through culturally responsive programming

There is a long history of marginalized communities adopting culturally responsive pro- graming to serve the needs of children and youth. For example, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense Free Breakfast Program provided more than just free food to black children and youth living in Oakland, Calif., in the 1970s. This group also focused on promoting positive collective identity and political self-efficacy development while youth attended the breakfast program. Events leading up to the student walkouts of 1968 organized by East Los Angeles youth from the Chicano Student Movement were also heavily influenced by similar approaches where out-of-school time was used as a tool to cultivate sociopolitical development among vulnerable youth. Sociopolitical development or the process where youth build awareness of how culture and politics shape their sta- tus in society and engage in action in social and political systems is shown to be vital to the developmental process for vulnerable youth (Watts et al., 2003; Ginwright, 2010; Outley et al., 2018). To be culturally responsive to oppressed and vulnerable youth expe- riences, youth programs should adopt sociopolitical development as a key indicator in all culturally responsive programing.

Adopting youth impact analysis as a methodology

We should also adopt new research methodologies that amplify the voices and lived expe- riences of youth, especially those who were experiencing inequities before the pandemic. One strategy is to conduct what we refer to as a *youth impact analysis* to inform emergency and contingency plans and policies to prepare for pandemics like COVID-19 (Bogenschneider et al., 2012; National Center for Environmental Health, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2016). Adopted from public health and family studies, this strategy integrates youth voice in the decision-making process and involves them in ana- lyzing policies and programs to calculate and predict their impact on youth and their com- munities prior to implementation (Leon, 2020). Through a youth impact analysis, youth can force many decision makers to consider the effects policies such as closing public parks, community centers, and schools have on their wellbeing. This crucial step will increase accountability among decision makers as they are presented with a full scope of potential consequences for all youth, especially those considered vulnerable.

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Conclusion

Scholars and practitioners must begin to challenge the colonial systems rooted in whiteness that have created the current inequitable experiences for vulnerable youth. As more researchers begin to examine the connection between power and vulnerable youth, the importance of examining how adults use adultism, the white racial frame, and its associated control mechanisms to maintain inequality and dehumanize the most vulnerable among us will allow us to more fully critique the social, historical, economic, and political implications for the field of youth development and leisure. It is our hope that the strategies above will lead to empowering vulnerable youth to take the lead to activate change in their community rather than be oppressed by the current inequitable systems, policies, and practices.

Disclosure statement

We have no known conflicts of interest to disclose.

ORCID

Myra Gayle Gabriel http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5138-7810
Maria Leo, n http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6055-6372

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