



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

HOW ORGANIZATIONS CAN WORK TOGETHER TO
EMPOWER YOUTH AS LEADERS FOR HEALTHY CHANGE

Get
HYPE
Philly!

Dear Friends,

Young people are not just the leaders of the future; they are the leaders of today. In Philadelphia alone, students have a long history of advocating to make their communities better, and they follow in the tradition of youth leaders who came before them. For example, in the historic 1967 Black student walkout of over 3,000 high school students, one of the young people's demands was to add African-American studies to their curricula. Because of the groundwork of those students, Philadelphia became the first major city to require African-American studies classes for graduation. Today, our young people continue to face challenges—from lack of access to healthy food and clean water, to not having safe spaces to be physically active. Youth can and should be the ones identifying, understanding and changing the conditions that impact their health. When we support young people with resources and training, we can help equip them to lead the change to create healthier schools, families, and neighborhoods.

Get HYPE Philly! started with 10 nonprofit partners, committed to supporting the development of young people as leaders and improving the health of their communities. Beginning in 2015, GSK supported the collaboration of those 10 nonprofits through a collective impact project to develop youth leaders for healthy change in their communities. The 10 organizations committed to a participatory process, working with one another and youth to develop the roadmap to success and the strategies for getting there. Partner organizations worked in their focus areas: urban agriculture, cooking and nutrition, physical activity, workforce development and civic engagement, in mutually reinforcing programming. Partners collaborated to create a web of programming where young people can plug in. The number of organizations engaged in Get HYPE Philly! grew through an Advisory Board, mini-grants given to other youth serving organizations and organizations who partnered in programming.

The results of the Collective's efforts have been inspiring. Over three years, 56,000 youth were reached through the work of 2,000 youth leaders. 84% of youth leaders reported that they demonstrated leadership skills. Youth leaders ate more fruits and vegetables and exercised more than their peers in Philadelphia. Partner organizations significantly increased their ability to work together to provide programming to young people. And Get HYPE Philly! worked with partners to win an important policy change: As a result of advocacy efforts of Get HYPE Philly! and others, the School District of Philadelphia agreed to install three new hydration stations in every public school in Philadelphia.

The goal of this toolkit is to share resources for organizations interested in developing youth leaders through collaboration with other partners. We outline participatory processes we utilized to guide and support youth leaders who can create healthy change. We explore approaches that worked well and lessons we learned along the way. We are thrilled to share our experience and support other organizations looking to work collaboratively to support young people's health and leadership.

Best,

The Food Trust Staff

The Food Trust Staff

“I learned that we can make a huge impact on our community.”

—Get HYPE Philly! participant

GSK is committed to helping people do more, feel better and live longer. GSK understands that much of what influences our health happens outside the doctor's office—in our communities. Community factors, such as education, safety, access to healthy foods and recreational spaces, and the support of families and social networks, undeniably contribute to our health.

Where we are born and raised, live and work matters to our health. That's why GSK partners with local nonprofit partners to build healthier communities. By partnering with the Get HYPE Philly! collective impact project, GSK supports 10 innovative nonprofits working together to help young people develop the skills to become leaders of healthy change in their community.

Keep up the great work,



Becki Lynch
Director, U.S. Community Partnerships, GSK



This toolkit was created to assist youth-serving organizations—and the youth themselves—in developing or expanding programming through collaboration.

Whether through a structured collective impact initiative like Get HYPE Philly!, or by teaming up with other organizations more informally, youth leadership projects are strongest when we work together. We hope that by sharing our experiences and resources, we can empower other organizations to succeed in supporting the next generation of leaders.

Through five key sections—**Getting Started**, **Doing the Work**, **Telling Your Story**, **Measuring Success** and **Sustaining the Work**—this toolkit walks organizations through the process of building a collaborative project like Get HYPE Philly!. For more information, please email contact@thefoodtrust.org.



INTRODUCTION

Young people aren't just future leaders—they can change the world *right now*.

Youth leadership works when young people are given authentic opportunities to lead, make decisions and contribute in meaningful ways to the issues that impact them.

Youth leadership is also a process. It requires consistent re-evaluation of the ways we engage young people, the ways young people give feedback, and the ways young people participate in decision-making. It requires that adults be willing to share power, and that they create safe spaces and relationships for youth to give honest feedback. It also means giving young people space to make mistakes—and learn from their wisdom.

Collaborative projects built on a participatory framework can create powerful change for the young people we seek to serve. By working together with multiple partners with a variety of backgrounds,

missions and goals, a variety of perspectives will emerge. By incorporating these myriad points of view, we can ensure that our projects cover multiple areas of programming without overlapping; that our reach is both broad and deep; and that young people have multiple opportunities to plug into programming that interests them and supports their growth. Young people can also play a tangible role in informing—and even designing—the programs in which they participate.

GET HYPE PHILLY! IOI

Get HYPE Philly! was a high-energy collective impact initiative focused on promoting health and positive youth development in Philadelphia.

Launched in 2015, Get HYPE Philly! brought together diverse collective partners to empower the city's youth to become leaders for healthy change in their schools and communities through physical fitness, nutrition education, entrepreneurship, civic involvement and more. Based on The Food Trust's HYPE (Healthy You. Positive Energy.) youth leadership program, Get HYPE Philly! created a lasting impact, helping to ensure that Philadelphia's young people play a key role in building healthier communities and becoming a healthier generation.

As the lead organization for Get HYPE Philly!, The Food Trust worked with thousands of students across Philadelphia to support and engage youth in becoming leaders for healthy change in their schools and communities. Youth leaders identified and prioritized needs, then developed strategies to address them: For example, they created and served healthy breakfast items in their school cafeterias; worked in community gardens to teach others about healthy food as well as sell or donate that food in low-income communities; and advocated for healthy policy change like increased water access in schools.

By empowering youth leaders to promote their culture of health in 100 middle and high schools citywide, Get HYPE Philly! reached over 56,000 Philadelphia youth.

"We made sure to center student voices in our forums. We don't create enough spaces where young people can share their school experiences and, more importantly, weigh in on solutions."

—Helen Gym, Philadelphia City Council



The Get HYPE Philly! Origin Story

In 2014, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) released a request for proposals for community-based collective impact projects. The Food Trust and nine other partners—who had been working together informally in many ways to promote health and youth leadership development—seized the opportunity for dedicated resources and a formalized framework for collaboration. Together, the groups assessed their capacities, programmatic goals and visions for the future, and developed a proposal that would enable our organizations to come together around one key concept: young people taking the lead to make healthy change in their schools and communities, focused on improving healthy food and fitness. Our \$5 million grant was awarded for 2015–18, and the Collective has continued to find innovative ways to partner on youth development initiatives across the city.

What is Collective Impact?

Collective impact brings people and organizations together to create a shared vision to help address a big social issue and uses shared measures to track progress. In the case of Get HYPE Philly!, we identified community health as our complex social problem and recognized that empowering young people to lead change in their communities should be our goal. By acknowledging that no single policy or tactic could solve this increasingly complex issue, we saw the value in creating a common agenda and aligning our efforts as we approached health from multiple perspectives to generate long-lasting results.

All of the organizations participating in Get HYPE Philly! shared resources, engaged in cross-programming, maintained regular group-wide communication and used shared measures to track progress in a unified, consistent way. Through this collective, partner organizations increased their capacity for communications, collaboration, programming and evaluation. The end goal is that Philadelphia's young people gained access to a huge network of interconnected resources as they learned how to be leaders in their schools and communities.



GETTING STARTED

We believe that success in youth leadership initiatives hinges on keeping young people at the forefront, providing unique, authentic opportunities to lead the way. A truly participatory partnership can give rise to the most meaningful innovation, so Get HYPE Philly! convened a cross-section of youth practitioners and other community leaders—from small grassroots organizations with deep community connections to large citywide institutions with broad reach—to build the foundation of cross-programming that would have the deepest impact on youth as they tackled their goals.

As part of Get HYPE Philly!, we developed a Youth Leadership Council, a small group of high school students from across the city who were responsible for advocating for citywide policy change, developing and implementing a youth-led philanthropy project, and advising adults on youth programming. At programming sites, youth were responsible for developing and implementing curriculum and

running community programming like farm stands and sports programming. Get HYPE Philly's youth leadership initiatives engaged youth leaders in other ways, too, like creating seats on an advisory board for young people and program alumni.

S P O T L I G H T

Get HYPE Philly's Kickoff Event Set the Pace by Giving Everyone a Voice

At Get HYPE Philly's kickoff event, held in March 2015, youth, partners, community members, funders, and government officials all had a place at the table: Collective partners set up activity tables; the project's funder, GSK, filmed footage to create a video; and then-Mayor Michael Nutter gave remarks. By including partners who had already established relationships with young people, youth were also able to be engaged from the very beginning: Young people participated by cooking nutritious snacks for guests, performing a cheer about healthy eating, and giving a speech to attendees about what it means to be a leader.

GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED

Talking to your target audience: Young people can participate in focus group conversations about their communities, take part in workshops where they do activities to identify strengths and challenges in their community, or have more informal conversations with trusted adults. Gathering this information into a centralized place can help staff identify common themes as well as the different needs found in specific communities or groups. For example, Get HYPE Philly! youth participated in focus groups at the end of the school year and at the end of summer programming; during Collective partner meetings, program staff also shared feedback from more informal conversations with youth.

Creating a “roadmap to success”: Establish your big-picture goals and aspirations by mapping out how you will reach specific objectives. This can be called a “theory of change” or “logic model.” Your roadmap should include your philosophy with working with youth; the short-, mid- and long-term outcomes you’re hoping to achieve; and what activities you’ll conduct along the way to reach those goals.

Building your team: Partnership is key to creating community-wide change; none of us can do this alone. When choosing your partners, consider everything from organization size and reach to areas of expertise, organizational capacity and potential impact. In order to maintain both a broad reach and a deep impact, your partners could range from community-based organizations to citywide institutions. Also, consider other informal ways to partner with additional organizations and support their work through cross-programming and cross-promotion. Get HYPE Philly! was able to partner with large, citywide agencies like the Free Library and the YMCA, along with smaller grassroots organizations like urban farms. Through youth-led philanthropy, partnerships were developed with even more youth-serving organizations.

Considering your budget: Collaborative projects require substantial funding. Assess what resources are currently available for administrative and programming costs, what funds need to be realized in order to support collaboration, and who will be responsible for grant administration and reporting. In-kind support may also be available, such as partners who are willing to donate meeting space, supplies or professional time and expertise where it’s needed. For example, Get HYPE Philly!’s funder, GSK, provided the Collective with highly skilled employee volunteers who conducted professional development, business planning and other capacity-building activities.

Establishing your lead organization: Related to grant administration, it is important to establish one partner as the lead organization, or “backbone,” of your project—in other

words, a central agency to convene partners, communicate with funders, establish processes and manage finances. With Get HYPE Philly!, The Food Trust was responsible for distributing funds and gathering financial data from each partner to report back to the funder. Depending on the funding structure, having a centralized tracking system can provide consistency for partner organizations to track and report on funding in a unified way.

Defining—and measuring—your reach: Think about the individual impact you want to have on youth; the impact you want to have on the organizations with which you’re partnering; the impact you want to have on the community at large; and how you want to tell your story to the public. Get HYPE Philly! measured impact on these four levels: individual impact on youth (through surveys and focus groups), impact on the community (through increased programming in the community), impact on the Collective (through partner interviews and a social networking analysis), and impact through communications (through social media and earned media exposure).

Within the youth leadership space, a number of key questions can help guide your project’s purpose: What issues are you hoping to address (e.g. poverty, education, health)? For how long? For which population? Where? Budgeting for a formal planning process can enable two important processes: First, you can take the time to create a community assessment—developed with youth, community members, schools and nonprofit partners—to deepen your understanding of your community’s unique needs. Second, you can make space for young people to be invited to the table as part of your project’s strategic planning process, ensuring that youth voices are heard and their goals are prioritized. Get HYPE Philly! hit the ground running with immediate programming for youth in 2015, and youth participation—getting youth engaged not only as program participants but as program developers—increased as the project matured.

FIELD NOTES

FURTHER READING:

See back cover, items 1–4.



DOING THE WORK

By providing young people with meaningful opportunities to lead, get involved in their communities, and create lasting change, they are empowered to invest in their future and the world around them. With a diverse, multifaceted support system on their side, they can receive the encouragement, guidance and platforms they need to channel their energy into making a difference.

Get HYPE Philly!’s philosophy of building young people’s social capital centered on providing authentic leadership opportunities to empower youth to be healthy change agents at schools, at home and in their communities. Through building their networks with other youth and with caring adults, young people develop the skills and networks necessary to create healthy change and be set up for future success.

S P O T L I G H T

Youth Lead the Charge Through Philanthropy

Get HYPE Philly!’s mini-grant program gave youth the opportunity to make large-scale decisions, and the power to decide which organizations were doing work that should be supported. When tasked with assessing the needs of their communities, they approached the work with a comprehensive understanding of where support was needed and what changes could be made to ensure accessible, equitable, enjoyable programming that benefitted youth across Philly.

As part of the Youth Leadership Council, Get HYPE Philly! high school youth learned about philanthropy, set priorities, created applications, reviewed submissions and granted awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to organizations working with young leaders in areas, including:

- food access and urban agriculture
- safe and inclusive streets and parks
- school climate
- support systems and job creation for young people

Over three years, 35 youth-serving nonprofits were awarded a total of \$195,000. Through this process, youth leaders had the opportunity to build social capital by learning about nonprofits and youth programming, meeting with youth leaders from other programs to discuss how to support each other, and speaking with philanthropists about their experiences in the field.

GUIDE TO DOING THE WORK

Focusing your programming: Based on your partners' strengths, you can hone in on specific types of activities that will help you address your social impact issue in a focused, clear way. For example, providing youth with public speaking opportunities will help instill leadership and workforce skills, while participating in an after-school sports program will address the need for more physical activity.

Building connections: At the start of your project, you can make note of how many ways your project partners are already working together. By the end of your project, these connections could grow exponentially. If you have the funding, you can work with an evaluator to create a "social networking analysis," or a visualization of existing relationships and collaborations, to help you understand the connections you have now, and how much deeper you want to go.

Getting out of your silos: Before cross-programming begins and throughout the project's lifespan, consider creating the time and space to develop meaningful relationships among partners; natural programming collaborations tend to spring easily out of conversations about one another's work. At Get HYPE Philly! bi-monthly meetings, Collective partners dedicated time to update one another on programming, discussing ways they could work together to create effective cross-programming and fill in gaps for other partners without duplicating programming.

Prioritizing events: In addition to raising the profile of your initiative, events can give youth authentic opportunities to activate their leadership and creative thinking skills, encouraging them to be deeply involved and accountable for success: From co-hosting and facilitating workshops to leading activities, performing and presenting, youth can have the opportunity to step into a leadership role, and the Collective can have the opportunity to put its trust in the youth. Get HYPE Philly! partners saw statistically significant outcomes for youth at annual Youth Leadership Summits, where youth reported an increase in being part of a movement of leaders and making their schools and communities healthier places. Meeting other young people with similar goals from different neighborhoods helped young people see their work as part of a broader movement and created opportunities to share that message.

Letting young people take the lead: Since youth are the reason this work exists, it is crucial that they are also making important decisions and advising on programming. A youth-led advisory council, composed of a diverse group of young people, can establish programmatic goals, advocate for change and promote the program to their peers in a way that is meaningful to them.

"It was awesome to collaborate with the YMCA to get youth physically active at the Free Library. Incorporating Y Without Walls helped make our program even more dynamic. Youth are already excited and surprised to find out we cook delicious, healthy food in the library. When we gave them healthy snacks and got active, we showed youth just how HYPE they could get, wherever they may be."

—Aurora Sanchez, Culinary Literacy Collaboration Coordinator,
Free Library of Philadelphia (Collective partner)

Assembling key advisers: Consider bringing on a network of high-level professionals as a project advisory board; these voices can bring to the table a broad perspective, wide-reaching network, and knowledge of community resources that can be used to support and guide the work. For example, the Get HYPE Philly! Advisory Board consisted of nonprofit, for-profit and government leaders who met quarterly to support the project through policy/advocacy, sustainability and communications/marketing.

Building a strong foundation: Planning ahead can help provide the internal supports necessary for external programming to succeed. By asking yourself what methods of communication will best serve your project, you can set up everything from internal newsletters to weekly calls to in-person meetings; establish committees to provide administrative, financial and communications support; and work with a group of professionals to advise the project.

Over time, we learned that youth participating in more "high-touch" programs (e.g. programs that convene young people at least two times per week) were more likely to eat the daily recommended number of fruits and vegetables, exercise regularly, and feel like leaders in their communities than those participating in "low-touch" programs (e.g. programs that convene young people less frequently). Get HYPE Philly! used this data to set up intentional structures to use big events (e.g. our Youth Leadership Summits) to recruit youth for more high-touch programming.

FIELD NOTES

FURTHER READING:

See back cover, items 5–7.



TELLING YOUR STORY

Just as young people want to be involved with creating big-picture strategies and programs to support those goals, they want a voice in telling their stories, too.

With youth at the center of the storytelling, messaging is more likely to resonate with other young people; adult stakeholders are able to learn more about the impact of programming; and media are more interested in covering the project. Young people can also learn valuable skills around crafting messages, branding and public speaking. For example, if young people decide they want to start smoothie sales at school, it's up to them to promote their campaign to get their peers to buy in, thus driving profit and ensuring success.

Another way to keep youth leadership programs youth-centered was through merchandising and branding. Get HYPE Philly!'s brand is ubiquitous among youth: Students new to the program often asked where they could get a HYPE hat, notebook or wristband, and if you were walking the streets of Philadelphia, you'd likely see a young person wearing a HYPE T-shirt. Part of the reason the HYPE brand was so popular is that the young people themselves had a say in the way materials looked, what they said and even how they were produced.

Having partners of varying sizes and capacities requires different supports and expectations for those

organizations. Internally, by ensuring your partners have the right resources—from editorial calendars and press lists to social media training opportunities—you can help grow their capacity and support their ability to succeed in the long term. Larger organizations participating in the project can help raise the profile of smaller, grassroots groups.

S P O T L I G H T Incentives Encourage Youth to Lead the Way on Social Media

If you truly want your young people to lead social media efforts, they should be compensated for their work. Youth in the Get HYPE Philly! initiative were not just interested in being the subjects of social media campaigns, they wanted to opportunities to direct and develop the content. They were most engaged when those opportunities were connected to some form of compensation for their work. For example, paid summer interns at the Free Library of Philadelphia had social media content development written into their job descriptions. At Saul High School, students were tasked with developing content as part of their assignments for class, and received credit for their content. Both groups were responsible for much of the youth-developed social media content for a #WaterWednesday hashtag campaign. By compensating youth for their work, adults show young people that they value their input.

GUIDE TO TELLING YOUR STORY

Meeting your partners where they are: To gain a better understanding of each organization's communications strengths and weaknesses, you can start by asking partners to report on their competencies/capacities in social media, writing and blogging, public relations and media and other communications areas. With this data, you can identify "experts" within the Collective who could work to increase the initiative's overall capacity and output. For example, GSK has a widespread and robust social media presence, while a few of Get HYPE Philly's partners had only just begun to develop their social strategy. In April 2016, GSK hosted a social media workshop open to all communications and programming staff in the Collective, where partners learned about social media, youth engagement and other marketing strategies.

Keeping youth at the center of your work: Project partners can learn communications tips and tricks at any conference, but when creating professional development opportunities for your youth leadership collective, you can hone in on how communications and youth intersect. For example, at Get HYPE Philly's social media workshop, the breakout session "Youth Engagement in the Digital Age" unpacked issues like appropriate responsibilities for youth and adults in social media campaigns; privacy and consent; and how to make social media campaigns exciting for youth leaders and participants.

Being well-rounded: To maximize your impact, you can include digital marketing, merchandising, social media, public relations, videography and photography in your arsenal of storytelling formats. Plus, once content has been created once (i.e., for a press release), it can be used and reused in multiple avenues.

Focusing your social media strategy: Consistently provide content—including content produced by your partners and curated content from others in your field—that your audience will find valuable. You can use content curation tools like Feedly to access a source of new content to share, and scheduling tools like Hootsuite to save time and manage multiple social media profiles from one place.

Get HYPE Philly! set a goal to engage 80% of youth leaders on social media. Attempts to encourage young people to post about Get HYPE Philly!, follow the project's accounts and engage with our social media posts through likes, comments and shares proved more challenging than we anticipated; from focus groups with youth, we learned that students were not interested in engaging on social media in this way. Instead, they wanted to be involved at an organizational level, crafting stories and messaging. As a result, Get HYPE Philly! incorporated young people into our social media strategy through internships, wherein students help guide our digital goals and tactics. Other youth-led efforts can focus on creating social media policies around privacy, personal use of social media accounts, cell phone use at program sites, and the responsible use of social media to advance a project's goals.

FIELD NOTES

FURTHER READING:

See back cover, item 8.



76,917 NEW FOLLOWERS
OF ALL PARTNERS ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS
(179% INCREASE)



MEASURING SUCCESS

To meet the needs of young people, the Collective placed a strong focus on formative evaluation—that is, enabling the partners to evaluate the program in real time as it evolved. In this way, needed improvements could be identified, communicated and addressed on an ongoing basis. We often changed programming components to better fit the needs of young people and create a more lasting impact. Collaborative partnership is key to this approach: If one strategy wasn't working, another partner might have a better method for success to share. For example, focus groups revealed that youth were not interested in engaging on social media as individuals, but were more interested in developing social media strategy and content for organizations. As a result, Get HYPE Philly! has shifted focus away from individual youth engagement on social media to engaging young people in developing content for organizations.

Evaluation takes time and dedicated resources; some projects will need to adjust evaluation expectations based on available resources and capacity.

S P O T L I G H T

Creating a Roadmap for Collective Success

Partners in the Get HYPE Philly! Collective worked together to create the Roadmap for Collective Success, which served as a logic model and quick reference guide throughout the project. As a first step, Equal Measure (the project's external evaluation partner) created a draft roadmap, drawn from the original program proposal. Then, at a Collective partner meeting early in the project, Equal Measure staff led the group through an interactive, discussion to gather feedback. With this collective input, the roadmap was refined further, then finalized with additional review and input from the partners. The completed roadmap became a working document to help keep collaborative efforts well aligned and on track toward key goals. This participatory process kept all partners deeply involved in planning, strategy and implementation.

“Being a youth leader means we can change something, and we’re not ignored.”

—Get HYPE Philly! participant

GUIDE TO MEASURING SUCCESS

Working with partners, Get HYPE Philly!s evaluation team developed short- and long-term expected outcomes; created both qualitative and quantitative tools to measure those outcomes; and used our dashboard to report on numbers by using quotes, text and graphics.

Not letting hard numbers be king: Supplementing quantitative data (for example, numbers gathered through youth surveys) with qualitative data (for example, youth interviews or focus groups) can create a more comprehensive picture of impact. For example, Get HYPE Philly!s focus groups and interviews with youth frequently cited authentic leadership opportunities as a meaningful part of their experience with programming. By talking with youth, you can discover impacts that wouldn't necessarily be captured in surveys; find unexpected outcomes; and learn of ways that programming needs to shift to meet young people's needs.

Speaking the language of your target audience: When developing common evaluation tools like surveys, overly formal or broad language may ultimately skew your results. For example, in our youth leadership surveys, we discovered that not all youth had the same definition for "community," so we changed the word to "neighborhood," which was defined similarly among youth across the city.

Sharing results early and often: What are the most important takeaways from your work? What is the why of what you do? Sharing these in aesthetically pleasing ways via infographics, GIFs and blog posts can increase uptake of your ideas by making findings more accessible and digestible.

Evaluating from the inside and from the outside:

By combining internal research capacity within your lead organization with an external evaluator, your project may be able to hit the ground running with pre-existing tools to be modified, rather than having to create something from scratch. For example, The Food Trust's internal evaluation team provided the project's external evaluator with questions for surveys and observation tools that could be adapted to meet the needs of the collaborative project.

Young people will likely be asked to answer surveys and participate in focus groups as part of any youth leadership evaluation, but being participants isn't the only way to get them involved. You can incorporate young people into the evaluation process through peer surveying (i.e., engaging youth leaders who are trained to survey their fellow students), which will create a more youth-centered model.

FIELD NOTES

FURTHER READING:

See back cover, item 9.

OVER THREE YEARS, GET HYPE PHILLY! YOUTH LED
OVER 746 ACTIVITIES
IN THEIR SCHOOLS, REC CENTERS, LIBRARY
BRANCHES AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

THIS TRANSLATES TO OVER 25 YOUTH-LED ACTIVITIES PER MONTH.



SUSTAINING THE WORK

Get HYPE Philly! approached sustainability in two ways: seeking out continued programmatic funding, and fighting for policy change that has a long-term impact and can sustain itself.

For Get HYPE Philly!, we believe that not only are policy change and programmatic funding two key components of a sustainability plan, but that these components influence each other: Through continued financing, we continued working with young people to create long-term policy changes in their neighborhoods, and through healthy policy change, more funding may become available and attractive to potential donors in the future.

Engaging young people in policy work is a win-win: As young people increase their leadership skills, they can simultaneously create a lasting impact on their communities. At the same time, the programming itself must be sustainable in order to reach young people better, more deeply and for a longer period of time.

S P O T L I G H T

How Youth Led Policy Change

During Get HYPE Philly!'s Youth Leadership Council meetings, young people identified water access in schools as a major issue that the adults around them were unaware of or unwilling to address. Students shared that they did not have access to free, clean, palatable water during the school day due to a lack of working fountains. After researching the effects of water on learning and health, youth collected testimony from peers and created a document where their findings and anecdotes were consolidated, including asks and next steps for the School District of Philadelphia. Youth met with City Council members and presented testimony in front of members of the School Reform Commission and the superintendent. Staff supported in developing testimony, scheduling visits with City Council members, and acting as liaisons with other people working on this issue (e.g. a local councilwoman and other youth organizers from Youth United for Change). As a result of their efforts, the superintendent made a public pledge to install three filtered hydration stations in every district school. These water fountain and bottle filling stations gave students better access to cold, clear, safe water, enabling them to stay hydrated throughout their day. As a follow-up to the commitment from the School District, Collective partners implemented a postcard campaign in which hundreds of handwritten notes were sent to the superintendent, thanking him for his commitment to water access in schools.

GUIDE TO SUSTAINING THE WORK

Budgeting for fundraising: By including some funding for sustainability planning in your initial budget, you can provide your team with the resources—and the time—to make thoughtful decisions about the best strategies to sustain your initiative. Get HYPE Philly!’s sustainability budget line enabled us to hire a consultant to help the Collective develop a business plan for the program. Get HYPE Philly! also convened a sustainability committee made up of advisory board members, executive directors and development directors from partner organizations.

Expanding your audience: When considering new funding sources, think about how you can build on the existing strengths of your organization and its partners. Are there ways you can expand your audience? Are there new partners who are doing complementary work? For example, Get HYPE Philly! could have expanded to work with pregnant or parenting teens, youth who are over-age and under-credit in a high school setting, immigrant teens, or other marginalized groups.

Meeting with your partners: Having honest conversations with partners about interest in continuing, outlook for the future and capacity to bring to the table can provide transparency and bypass potential funding roadblocks. Get HYPE Philly!’s backbone organization met individually with each partner organization with these ideas in mind and gained valuable information about potential funders.

Broadening your focus: Funders may be interested in supporting individual organizations’ programming (e.g. an individual urban farm), multiple partners’ collaborative programming (e.g. your collective’s urban farming-related programming) and/or full collective funding (e.g. supporting all of your partners’ capacity to continue their full array of youth leadership activities). Get HYPE Philly! used this three-pronged approach to fundraising, developing materials and outreach for specific organizations, focus areas (e.g. workforce development) and full collective funding. Through this work, organizations gained access to new funding streams, and partners were empowered to use the collaboration to fundraise jointly.

Developing relationships with change-makers: Politicians and other advocates are often looking for groups that are doing work aligned with the policies they are pushing forward. Fostering relationships with the key decision makers in your city and/or state can be very useful when searching for opportunities to voice your concerns—and can even land you a consistent seat at the table. Get HYPE Philly! worked hard to maintain strong relationships with City Council members, Congresspeople and other key players in the city. As a result, we had multiple opportunities to sit down with people who have the power to create long-term city-wide change.

Collaborating with community partners: Collaboration can extend beyond your immediate group of collective partners: Look to community partners who have similar priorities and are working on similar campaigns. Partnering with them can lead to opportunities that aid in the longevity of your project. While working on the effort to improve water access in Philadelphia schools, Get HYPE Philly! worked in tandem with other youth organizing groups and community members to reach out to City Council members and the School District. Because these leaders were hearing about this issue from multiple sources who utilized multiple tactics, it rose to the top of their priority lists.

In addition to budgeting for sustainability planning, other strategies might include hiring a member of your staff, or someone from a partner organization, to take the lead on researching potential funding sources; vetting potential strategies for sustainability; or convening partners to develop consensus around sustainability plans. Get HYPE Philly! thought about the people within our network who could assist with the process of sustaining programming, so we formed a sustainability committee to connect the initiative with potential funders, think up new ways to market the work we were doing, and bring together local entities interested in learning more about what Get HYPE Philly! could look like in the future.

FIELD NOTES

FURTHER READING:

See back cover, items 10–12.

“Collective partners are also continuing to nurture and strengthen collaborations on our own accord, because we find the connections to be so beneficial to our work and our impact. A substantial number of partners have continued to work with Get HYPE Philly! beyond our initial grant cycle, and some strong new partners have recently joined.”

—Jean Wallace, Former Director of Development, The Food Trust

FURTHER READING

Getting Started

1. Get HYPE Philly's Roadmap To Success:
http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/ghp-roadmap-to-success-1.original.pdf
2. WW Kellogg Guide to Logic Models:
<https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide>
3. Understanding the Value of a Backbone Organization in Collective Impact
https://ssir.org/articles/entry/understanding_the_value_of_backbone_organizations_in_collective_impact_2
4. Year 1 video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQcobtVsGrk&t=13s>

Doing the Work

5. Hart's Ladder:
http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/hart-s-ladder-1.original.png
6. Workplan template:
http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/workplan-template-1.original.pdf
7. Year 2 video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2el9cTkfDg&t=2s>

Telling Your Story

8. 27-9-3 messaging:
http://www.powerprism.org/27-9-3_Worksheet.pdf

Measuring Success

9. Rick Davies, April 2012: Blog post on the criteria for assessing the evaluability of a theory of change:
<http://mandenews.blogspot.co.uk/2012/04/criteria-for-assessing-evaluability-of.html>

Sustaining the Work

10. Funding area chart:
http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/funding-area-chart.original.pdf
11. Business plan:
http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/business-plan-1.original.pdf
12. Year 3 video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VK3-hSCz6vM>

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