Webinar Series Part One:
Engaging Youth in Program Design & Development

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

YouthREX's Provincial office is located at York University. Both YouthREX and York University acknowledge their presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, and the Métis. It is now home to many Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the current treaty holders and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

Source: http://aboriginal.info.yorku.ca/

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THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- We are recording this webinar and it will be uploaded to both the YouthREX website and to the eXchange.

- If you have trouble with the audio quality today, please try calling in with a phone.

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ASK A QUESTION OR SHARE A COMMENT!

- Submit questions throughout the webinar using the box on the right side of your screen.

- You can also tweet us @REXforyouth.

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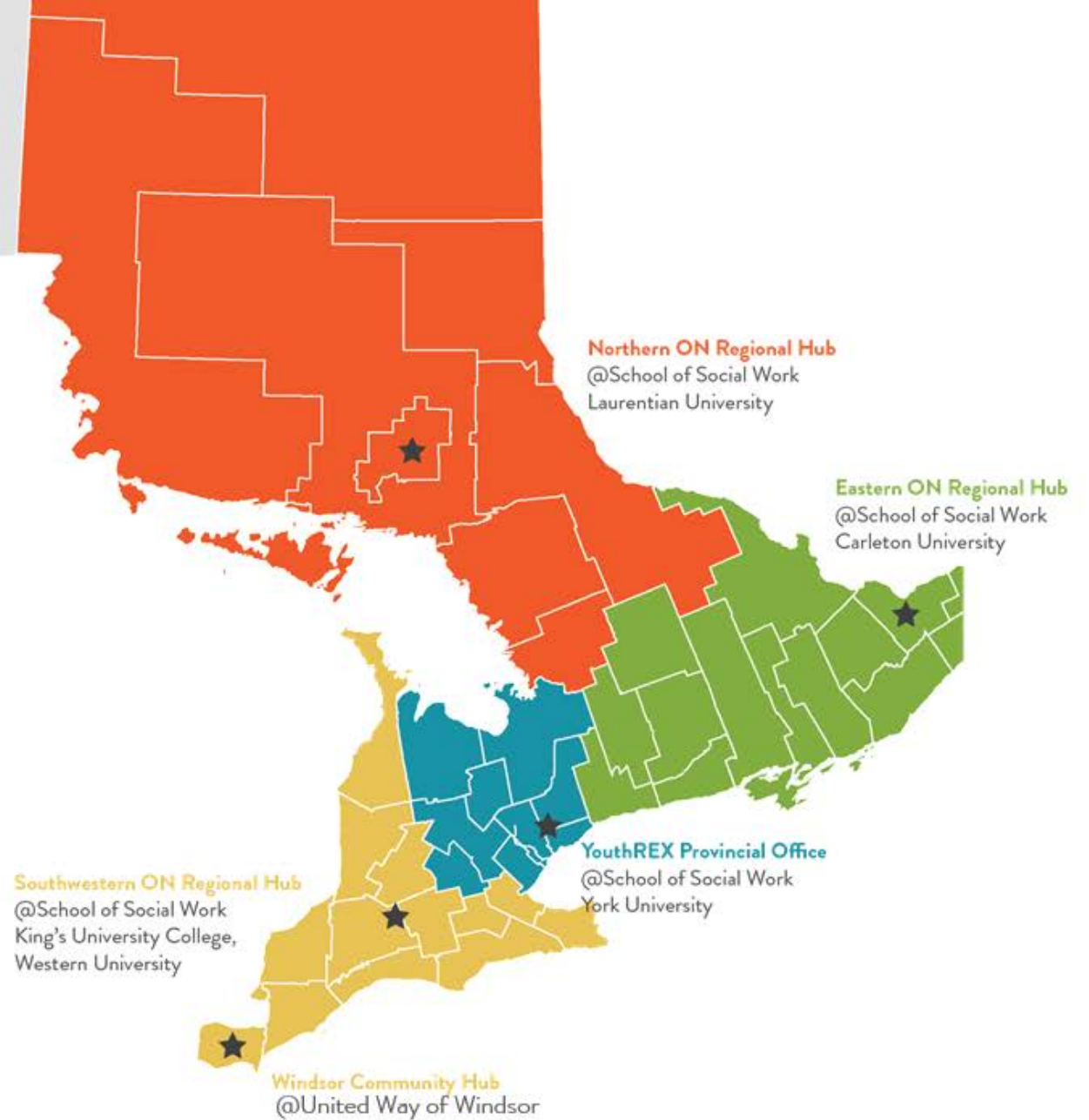Evaluation eXchange
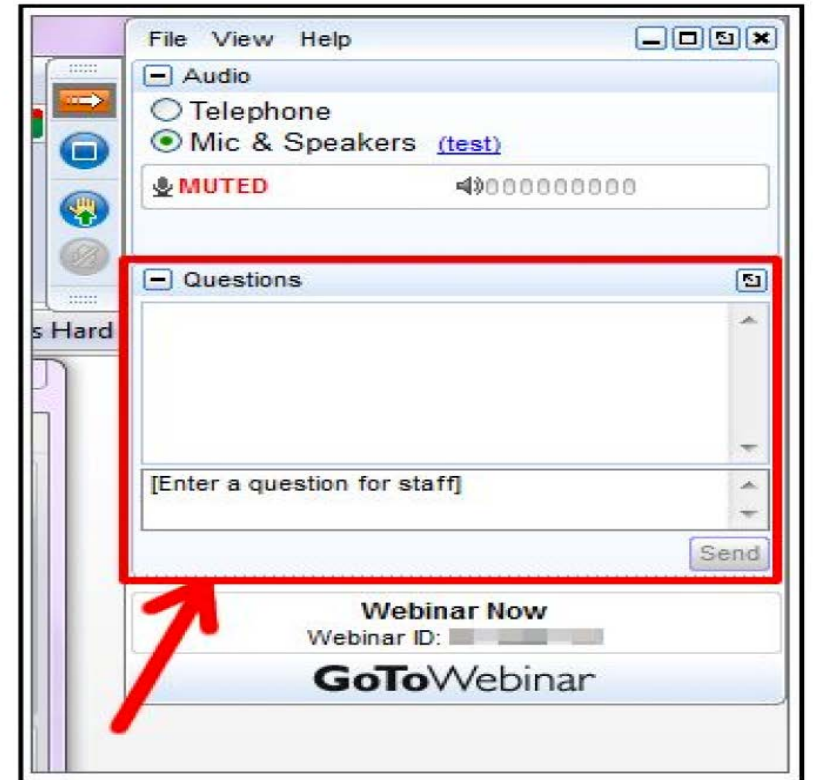
ABOUT YOUTHREX

OUR VISION
An Ontario where shared knowledge is transformed into positive impact for all youth.

OUR MISSION
To make research evidence and evaluation accessible and relevant to Ontario's youth sector through knowledge exchange, capacity building, and evaluation leadership.

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WHERE WE WORK

Northern ON Regional Hub
@School of Social Work
Laurentian University

Eastern ON Regional Hub
@School of Social Work
Carleton University

YouthREX Provincial Office
@School of Social Work
York University

Southwestern ON Regional Hub
@School of Social Work
King's University College,
Western University

Windsor Community Hub
@United Way of Windsor

KNOWLEDGE
EXCHANGE

YOUTHREX
ED

YOUTH PROGRAM
SUPPORTS

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Today's Guests:

Jathusha (JJ)
YouthREX Provincial Office
Founder & Executive
Director, L.I.G.H.T.

Stefanie
YouthREX Provincial Office

Lina

Community Builder
Youth Advocate
Law Student

Adam

Christie Lake Kids

Outline

1. Youth Engagement
   - Visualization Exercise
   - Defining Youth Engagement

2. Engaging Youth in Program Planning
   - Benefits of Engaging Youth in Program Planning
   - Levels of Youth Participation
   - Reflection Questions
   - Youth Engagement in Practice

3. Panel Discussion – Shared Learning from Working with Youth

Visualization Exercise

Youth Engagement Defined

"The meaningful and sustained participation of young people in activities that matter to them. There is not one common definition for youth engagement as the process can look different for different people and needs. However it commonly includes: involvement in decision making processes, promotion of leadership, supportive adult allies, and listening to and respecting the ideas of youth."

Source: Heartwood Centre for Community Youth Development. (n.d.) *The Toolkit: Resources, Tools and Strategies for Youth Engagement*
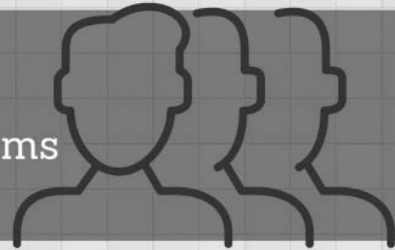
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Benefits of Youth Engagement

Benefits of Youth Engagement

Walking the talk
A toolkit for engaging youth in mental health

Adults will benefit from youth engagement because it:

Boosts energy
SOURCE: Zeldin, 2000 and Zeldin, 2004

Increases the adults' sense of belonging
SOURCE: Zeldin et al., 2000 and Zeldin, 2004

Increases connectedness
SOURCE: Zeldin et al., 2000

Promotes new strategies for interacting with youth
SOURCE: Zeldin et al., 2000

Brings new perspectives to decision-making
SOURCE: Zeldin, 2000 and Zeldin, 2004

Strengthens client-service provider relationship
SOURCE: Hawley & Weisz, 2005

Builds confidence in working with youth
SOURCE: Zeldin et al., 2000

Deconstructs stereotypes about young people
SOURCE: Zeldin, 2000 and Zeldin, 2004

The Centre strives to be evidence-informed in all aspects of its work. To read more about the resources used above, please visit www.yetoolkit.ca.

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Benefits of Youth Engagement

Benefits of Youth Engagement

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Levels of Participation

8 Young people's initiative, decisions made in partnership with adults

7 Young people's initiative and leadership

6 Adults' initiative, joint decisions

5 Adults make decisions, young people are consulted and informed

4 Young people are assigned tasks and informed how and why they are involved in a project

3 Participation for show - young people have little or no influence on their activities

2 Decoration - young people help implement adults' initiatives

1 Manipulation - adults use young people to support their own projects and pretend they are the result of young peoples' inspiration

Increasing levels of participation

levels of seeming involvement

Hart's ladder of participation

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Youth-Adult Partnership

"Youth-adult partnership is involving youth and adults in responsible, challenging, and collective action that seeks to benefit an organization or larger community. All individuals in the partnership have the opportunity to engage in planning, decision-making, and action consistent with their own interests and skill.

It is not expected that all youth and all adults will be involved in all decision-making. Some members do not have sufficient time to always participate; other members may not always be adequately prepared to participate."

Being Y-AP Savvy: A Primer on Creating & Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships
Shepherd Zeldin & Jessica Collura (Center for Nonprofits, University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Beware of Adultist Behaviour

Some questions to ask yourself:
"Would I treat an adult this way?"
"Would I talk to an adult in this tone of voice?"
"Would I make this decision for an adult?"
"Would I have this expectation for an adult?"
"Would I limit an adult's behavior this way?"
"Would I listen to an adult friend's problem in this same way?"

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Beware of Adultism

- an undermining of self-confidence and self-esteem,
- an increasing sense of worthlessness,
- an increasing feeling of powerlessness,
- a consistent experience of not being taken seriously,
- a diminishing ability to function well in the world,
- a growing negative self-concept,
- increasing destructive acting out,
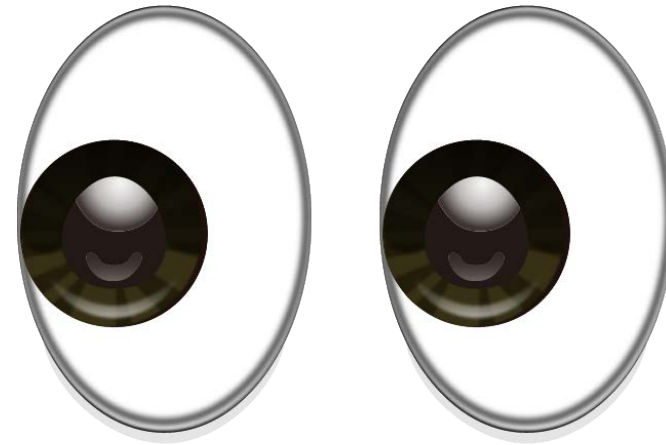
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Towards more Authentic Participation

The Process of Working Together	Typical Youth Participation	Authentic Youth Engagement
Level of Involvement	Youth may have token positions on decision making bodies or serve in advisory positions only. When asked, they often report that they are token participants without real power.	Youth have equal positions and roles on decision making bodies. They report that they are full partners with equal opportunities and capacity to influence decisions. They have both authority and responsibility.
Adult-Youth Relationships	Communication is often one-sided with adults doing much of the talking and planning. Trust and mutual understanding are lacking or not built. Age-based stereotypes are common. Participants may blame or sabotage each other.	Relationships are nurtured and trust is built from the beginning. Youth and adults listen to each other with respect, encourage, challenge and learn from each other. Everyone takes responsibility for his/her own actions and shares credit for achievements.
Length, Frequency of Youth Involvement	Short-term or one-time. Youth involvement is requested or included when adults decide.	Longer term. Youth have a recurring, ongoing role. They determine how long they will be involved.
Diversity	Often only a few dominant, well-organized perspectives are represented. Insufficient time and attention is invested in exploring diversity, which may be viewed as a "problem."	The views and perspectives of all youth and community members are sought and honored. Diversity is viewed as a strength and vital to decision making.
Ongoing Input and Feedback	Input from participants is ignored, sporadic, or inadequate. Youth views are not heard or adequately considered.	Youth and others have ongoing and frequent opportunities to express their views about decision making processes. Efforts continue until all perspectives are heard and recognized.

Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2007). *Engaging youth in community decision making*. Washington, DC.

Towards more Authentic Participation

Organizational Characteristics	Typical Youth Participation	Authentic Youth Engagement
Structures	Youth participation occurs through existing or new organizations designed by adults.	Young people decide whether they want to use existing structures, create new ones or participate without formal organizations. Youth have a voice in designing structures.
Leadership	Leadership opportunities may be lacking, tokenistic, or limited to specific "trainings" or situations.	Youth have opportunities to lead meetings, participate in staff hiring, and learn other organizational skills.
Expectations	Adults may expect too little or too much. Adults step in and "rescue" young people when they make mistakes.	Mistakes are viewed as a natural part of learning. Adults acknowledge their own mis- takes and allow youth to make mistakes.
Flexibility	Very limited. Decision making is often rigid, with comments and participation limited to specific formats, times, and methods.	Flexibility is required, even demanded by partners to get a clear picture of all per- spectives.
Accessibility	Often limited to those who know the right people, understand political/issue "code" language, have intimate knowledge of the issue, or are judged by adults as "positive" representatives.	Open to all with an interest or concern. Everyone is given a safe space to actively become engaged. Youth plan and lead activities. Barriers that exclude participants such as scheduling, transportation, and rules are addressed.
Collaboration	May be limited to existing partnerships. New relationships are defined or determined by existing organizations or adult leaders.	Youth have a voice in identifying partners that need to be engaged. Partnerships are often expanded to new groups. Partners may be asked to work together in new ways.
Support Systems	Supports for youth participation in decision making are weak, missing or sporadic. Youth lack needed skills and opportunities to be full partners.	Ongoing supports are in place to encourage youth participation. Skill development, leadership experiences and capacity-building are ongoing and considered as a core function.

Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2007). *Engaging youth in community decision making*. Washington, DC.

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3. Panel Discussion – Shared Learning from Working with Youth

Poll:
How comfortable do you feel working with youth?

- Very Comfortable
- Fairly Comfortable
- Fairly Uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable
- Not Comfortable at all

Poll:

How comfortable do you feel letting go of some of the control to allow youth to take some of the power?

- Very Comfortable
- Fairly Comfortable
- Fairly Uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable
- Not Comfortable at all

Poll:

What are your top concerns about working with youth as partners?

- Giving up some of the control
- Having different priorities
- Won't be able to relate to youth
- Might make the work take longer
- Expected to have all the answers as adults

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Engaging Youth throughout the Program Planning Process

YouthREX Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing

YouthREX Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing

DISCOVERY

01 Pre-Evaluation Check Up
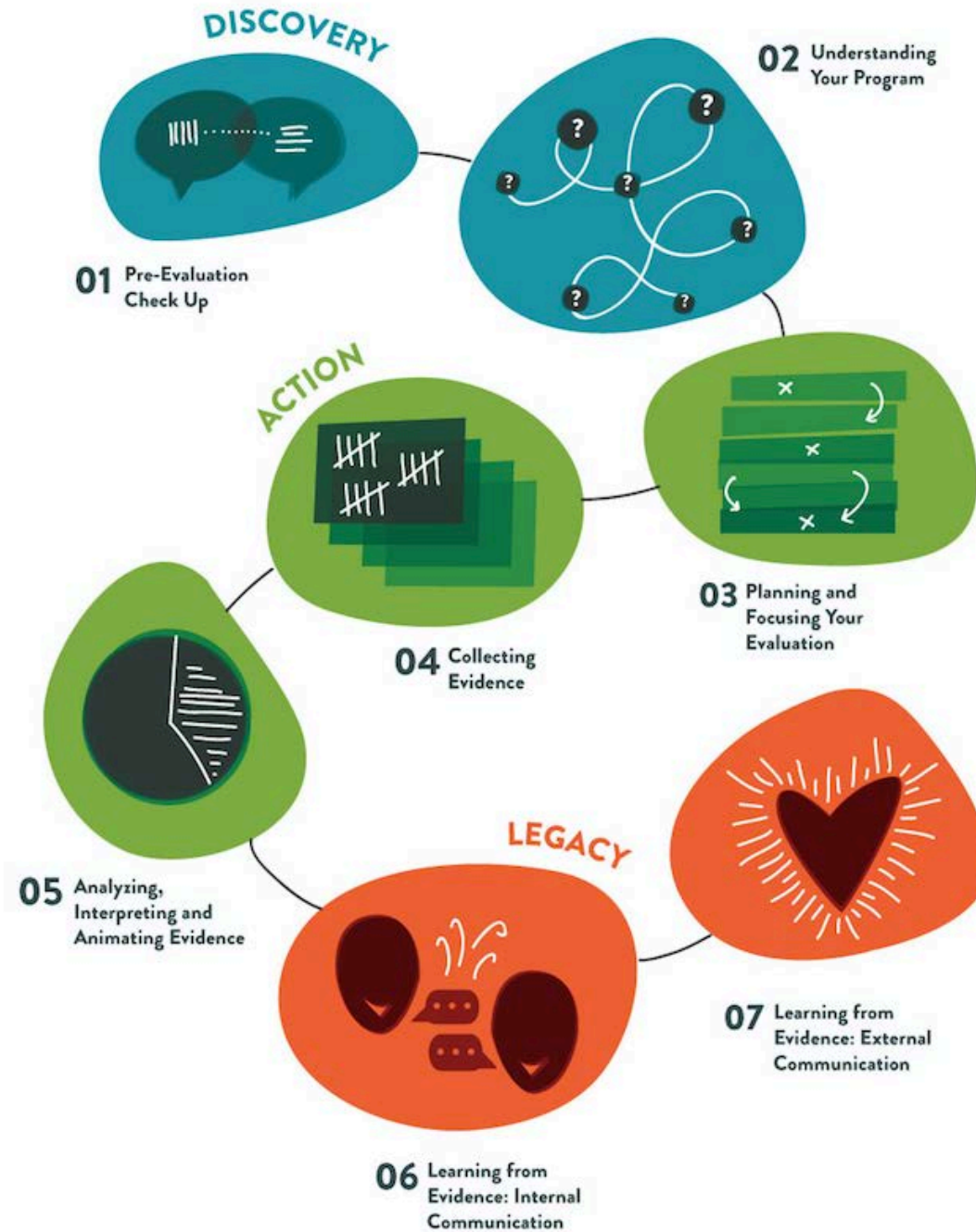
02 Understanding Your Program
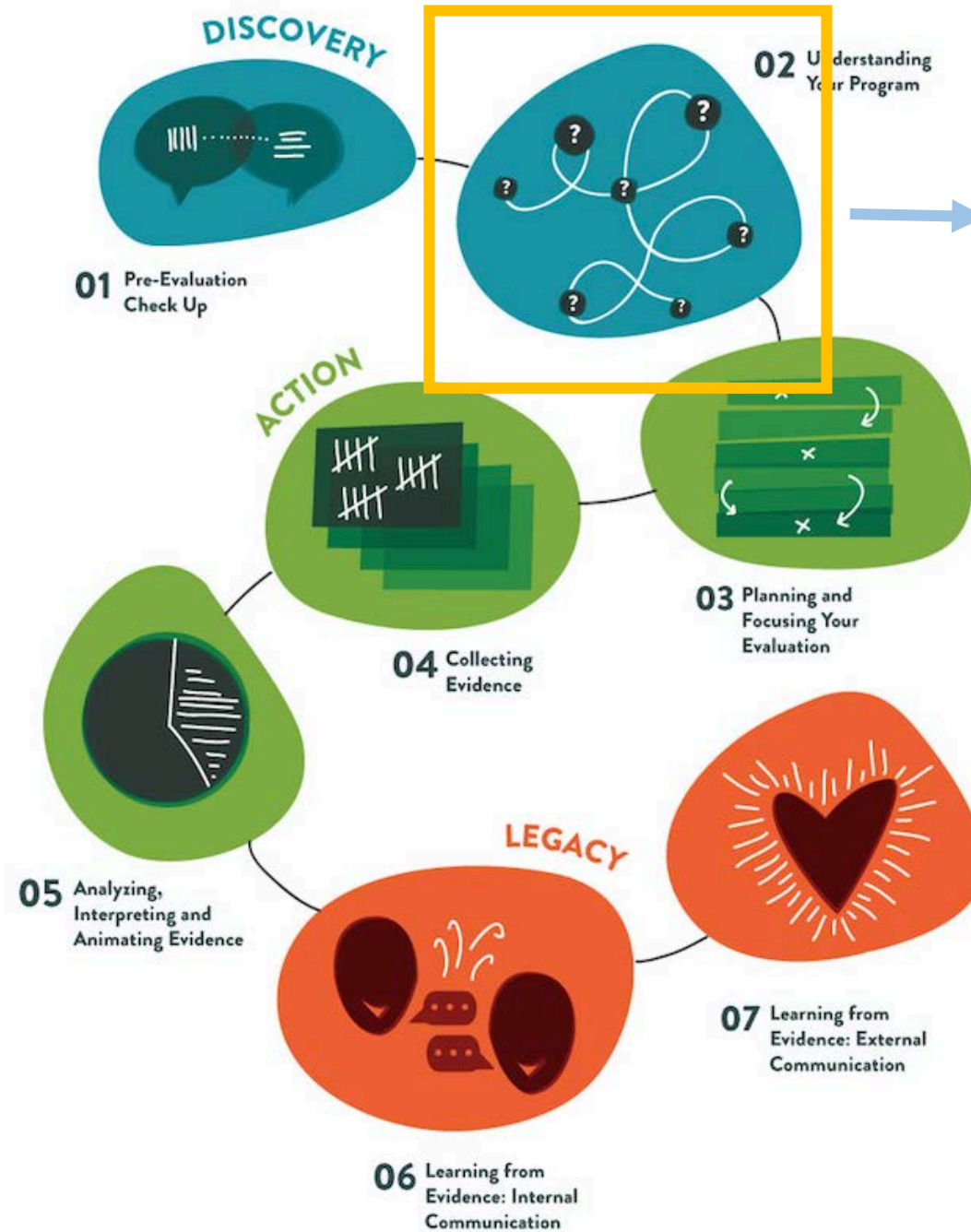
STEP 02: UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROGRAM USING LOGIC MODELING

What is your program theory? What are your program components and your intended outcomes? A logic model is a visual representation of your program and how it is intended to work.

ACTION

04 Collecting Evidence

03 Planning and Focusing Your Evaluation

05 Analyzing, Interpreting and Animating Evidence

LEGACY

07 Learning from Evidence: External Communication

06 Learning from Evidence: Internal Communication

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What is a Logic Model?

"… a picture of how your program works – the theory and assumptions underlying the program. This model provides a underline road map of your program, highlighting how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes are achieved."

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook, 1998

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Logic Models

- **Summarize** the key elements of your program

- **Explain** the rationale behind program activities

- **Describe** the link between activities and outcomes

- **Provide** an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss the program and agree on its description and intended results

- **Serve** as a useful communication tool to describe your program to others (clear picture, logical, simple

- **Occur** during the planning stage of your evaluation

LOGIC MODEL

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Date: Status: Contributors:

PROGRAM: SITUATION:

PRIORITIES:

INPUTS	OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES		
	Activities	**Participation**	**Short (6-12 months)**	**Medium (1-2 years)**	**Long (3-5 years)**

ASSUMPTIONS/EXTERNAL FACTORS

SITUATION	PRIORITIES	Inputs	→	Outputs Activities Participation	→	Outcomes - Impact Short Term Medium Term Long Term
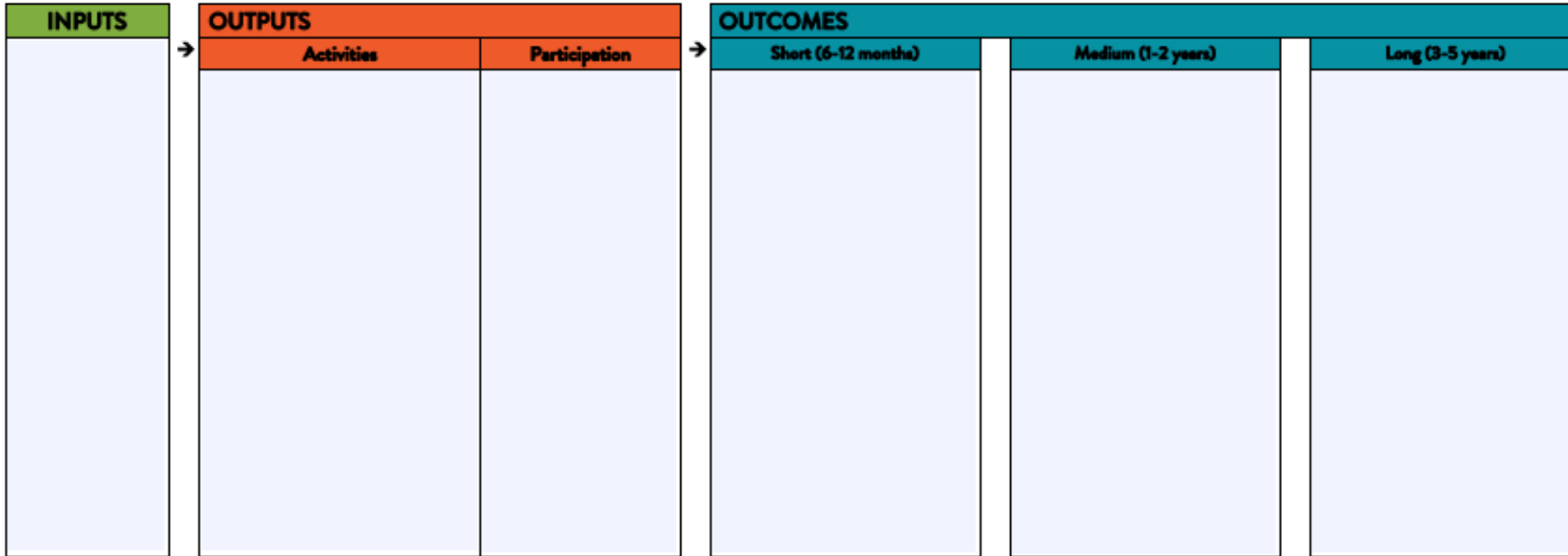
10 WAYS TO MEANINGFULLY ENGAGE UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH:
Organizational & Adult Readiness in Fostering Youth Leadership Development

Developed by Amy Hosotsuji, Duane Hall and Jasmine Mwanaisha for YouthREX

FACTSHEET

Who is an underrepresented youth?

Someone who is not represented or treated fairly by government or policies and laws, mainstream media, education etc. Groups today include people of colour, immigrants, those living with physical and mental disability, low-income, unemployed, LGBTTQ, homeless etc.

1. Let Youth Self-Identify

Labels such as 'at-risk,' 'marginalized' or even 'youth' are strong words to use that have repercussions around how you treat youth and how they see themselves. While there may be contexts where these labels are appropriate or necessary, take time to consider how your organization embodies these labels internally and externally.

2. One-Off Consultations Don't Create Leaders

Focus groups and consultations perpetuate marginalization. Embed youth in advising, brainstorming and decision making – try to create space for them to grow in your organization.

3. Create the Sandbox from the Get-Go

Share parameters and project goals early on so that youth can exercise creative freedom while understanding boundaries and expectations.

4. Recognize Your Power and Their Power

Global: male, heterosexual, English-speaking w/political and economical power

Local: Power within a specific context/room/situation

Personal: One's self-esteem, skills, decisions they can make and what they can control within themself

It's about having power with youth vs. over youth and creating a dynamic that allows youth to contribute their personal power to the local context of your organization.

5. Experience is NOT a Form of Payment

Youth engagement is not just about validating their contributions but also compensating them for time, effort and value added. Be realistic and upfront about the potential for pay and what you can offer monetarily and in-kind.

6. Make All Resources Known

It may be harder for marginalized youth to feel safe in seemingly safe spaces due to forms of violence they've experience, whether micro-aggressive, physical or institutional. Make them aware of resources before they have to ask: i.e. lunch is covered, transit fare, ability to re-arrange office space (some may not want to sit with their back to the door).

7. Silence is a Part of the Conversation

Give time for youth to respond or ask questions, especially about sector jargon that may need explanation. Explicitly inviting youth to contribute helps them feel like their ideas matter and that you're curious to hear from them.

8. Get to Know their Interests and Goals

This helps to ensure their role and responsibilities align with what they want to do – youth will be able to offer more to your organization and you will be able to support them in growing professionally.

9. Provide a Job Title

A job title helps clarify responsibilities, validate youth roles and adds to their resume

10. Appreciate and Foster their Intangibles

Marginalization prompts particular skills and perspectives that may not be tangible – different worldviews, neighbourhood experience, creativity, resourcefulness, artistry etc. Harnessing these intangibles may benefit your organization in innovative, unexpected ways while fostering self-confidence.

LOGIC MODEL

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ASSUMPTIONS/EXTERNAL FACTORS

| SITUATION | PRIORITIES | Inputs | → | Outputs
Activities   Participation | → | Outcomes - Impact
Short Term   Medium Term   Long Term |

SITUATION

PRIORITIES

KNOWLEDGE

RESEARCH

LIVED EXPERIENCE
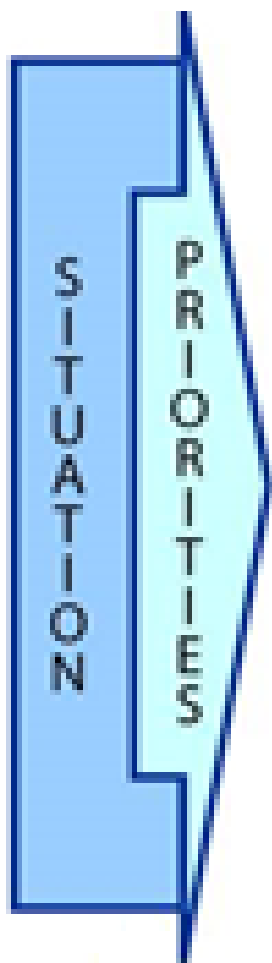
PRACTICE

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SITUATION | PRIORITIES

Inputs → Outputs — Activities Participation → Outcomes - Impact — Short Term Medium Term Long Term
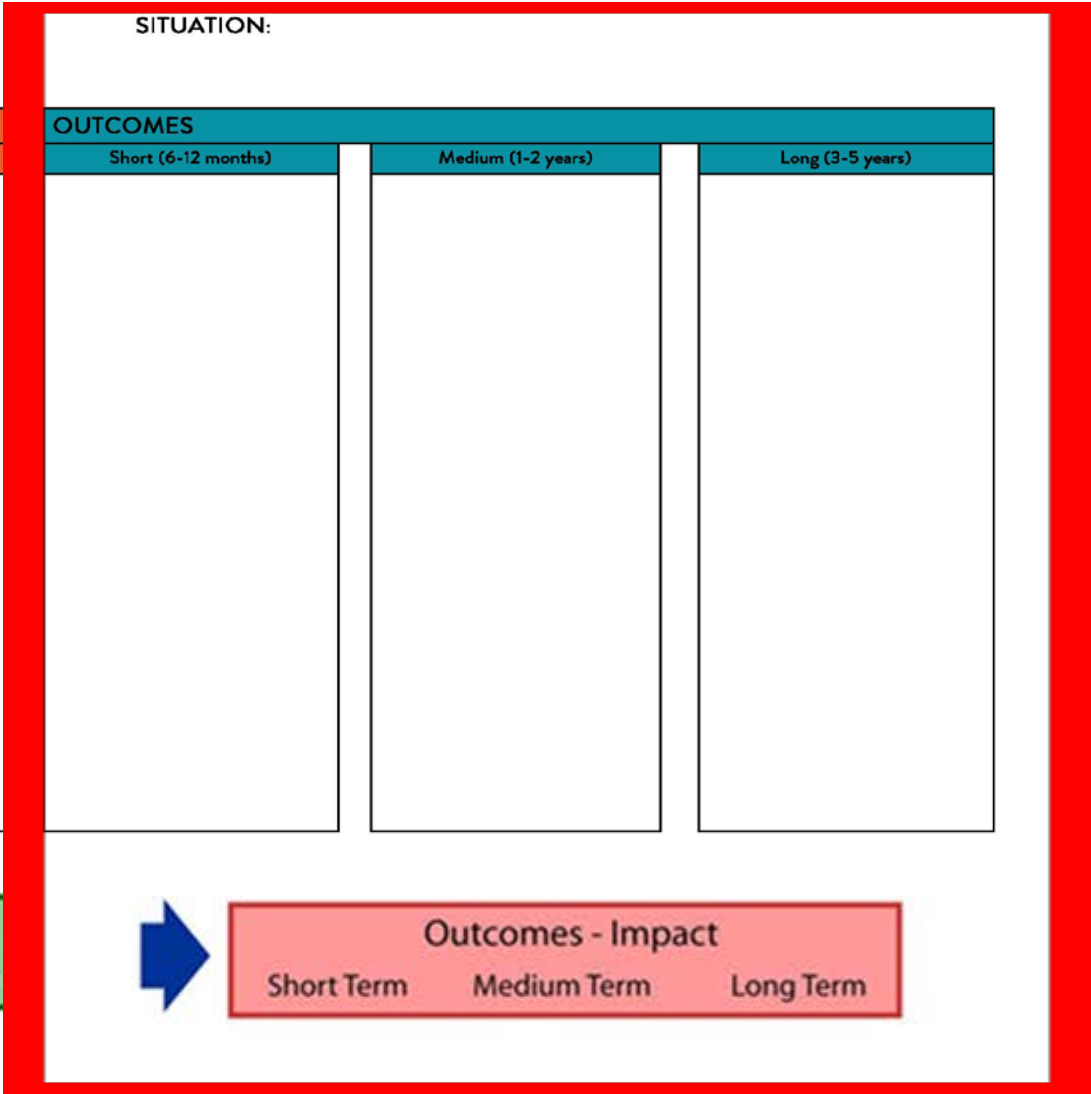
OUTCOMES
What results for youth?

SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG-TERM / IMPACT
Learning	*Action*	*Conditions*
Changes in:	Changes in:	Changes in:
• Awareness	• Behavior	• Conditions
• Knowledge	• Decision-making	• Social (well-being)
• Attitudes	• Policies	• Health
• Skills	• Social action	• Economic
• Opinion		• Civic
• Aspirations		• Environmental
• Motivation		
• Behavioral intent		

CHAIN OF OUTCOMES

7. Silence is a Part of the Conversation

Give time for youth to respond or ask questions, especially about sector jargon that may need explanation. Explicitly inviting youth to contribute helps them feel like their ideas matter and that you're curious to hear from them.

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SITUATION PRIORITIES

Inputs

Outputs
Activities   Participation

Outcomes - Impact
Short Term   Medium Term   Long Term
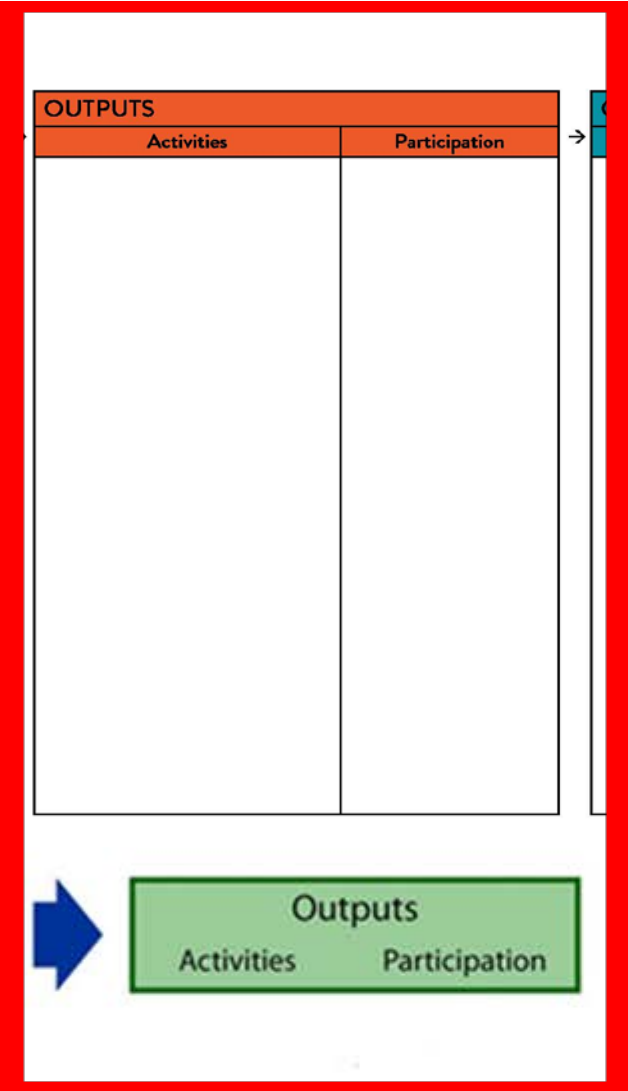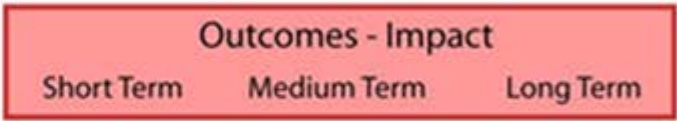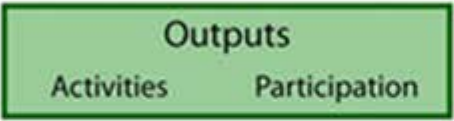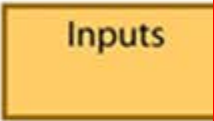
OUTPUTS

WHAT WE DO	WHO WE REACH
Activities • Train, teach • Deliver services • Develop resources • Mentor • Build partnerships • Assess • Facilitate • Work with the media	**Participation** • Youth • Participants • Clients • Customers • Agencies • Decision makers • Policy makers

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SITUATION PRIORITIES

Inputs → Outputs

Activities   Participation

→ Outcomes - Impact

Short Term   Medium Term   Long Term

Inputs
What We Invest

Staff

Volunteers

Time

Money

Research Base

Materials

Equipment

Technology

Partners

6. Make All Resources Known

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SITUATION | PRIORITIES

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	Activities	Participation	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
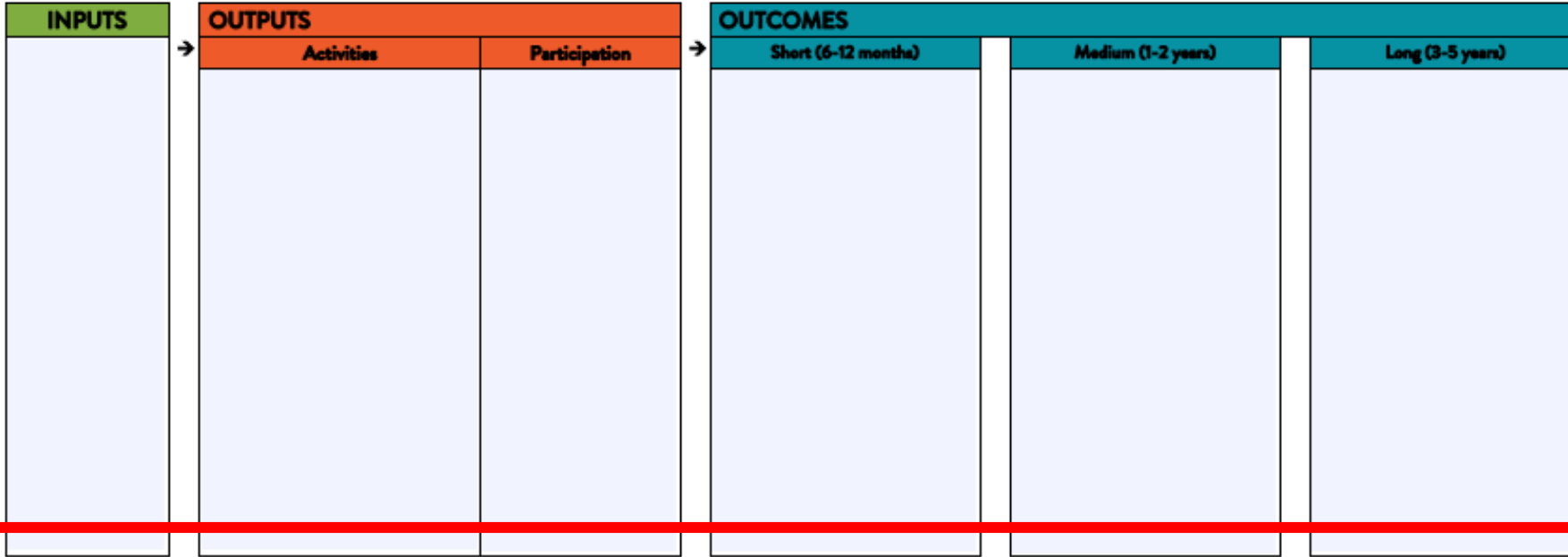
ASSUMPTIONS & EXTERNAL FACTORS

Assumptions refer to the beliefs we have about the program, the youth involved, the situation, and the way we think the program will work. Ex. program may engage youth in activities meant to foster a sense of environmental stewardship. Some assumptions might be: Youth are the best target for this type of programming, a lack of stewardship is the root problem that should be addressed (vs. other factors), and engaging in program activities will foster a sense of environmental stewardship. Faulty assumptions are often the reason for program failures.

External factors refer to elements that affect the program over which there is little control. Aspects external to the program that influence the way the program operates include larger social, political, and economic factors. Ex. Funding and policy shifts.

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Important things to remember…

Logic Models are best when:

- Used in conjunction with other descriptive information or as part of a conversation
- Used for program planning - it is advisable to start with outcomes and then determine what activities will be appropriate and what inputs are needed
- Multiple stakeholders review the Logic Model and agree upon what is included and how

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Limitations of Logic Models

- Logic models only represent reality; they are not reality.
  - Programs are not linear.
- Logic models focus on expected outcomes—you also need to pay attention to unintended or unexpected outcomes: positive, negative, and neutral.
  - Outcomes cannot always be attributed to items listed in the logic model.
- Logic models do not address the questions:
  - Are we doing the right thing?
  - Should we have this program at all?

Fostering Youth Engagement

1. **Acknowledge** the Inexperience and Concerns of Many Adults

2. **Adapt** to the Complexities of Youths' Lives

3. **Respond** to Existing Structures and Norms within Organizations

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   - Youth Engagement in Practice

3. Panel Discussion – Shared Learning from Working with Youth

Today's Panellists:

Lina
*Community Builder;
Youth Advocate;
Law Student*

Adam
Christie Lake Kids

Jathusha (JJ)
*YouthREX Provincial Office;
L.I.G.H.T.*

Stefanie
YouthREX Provincial Office

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Youth-Centered Approaches to Meaningful Engagement

PART TWO: TUESDAY, JULY 10TH | 11:00am to 12:30pm

Let's continue the conversation!

Join **Jathusha** and **Dr. Corliss Bean**, our Research & Evaluation Specialist, in conversation with frontline youth workers about meaningfully engaging youth in program evaluation.

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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

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