

University of Windsor

Scholarship at UWindor

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Theses, Dissertations, and Major Papers

1-1-2007

Enhancing an organization's capacity to engage youth in decision-making and governance: A case study of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet.

Sara Somerset
University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd>

Recommended Citation

Somerset, Sara, "Enhancing an organization's capacity to engage youth in decision-making and governance: A case study of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet." (2007). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 6981.

<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/6981>

This online database contains the full-text of PhD dissertations and Masters' theses of University of Windsor students from 1954 forward. These documents are made available for personal study and research purposes only, in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act and the Creative Commons license—CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution, Non-Commercial, No Derivative Works). Under this license, works must always be attributed to the copyright holder (original author), cannot be used for any commercial purposes, and may not be altered. Any other use would require the permission of the copyright holder. Students may inquire about withdrawing their dissertation and/or thesis from this database. For additional inquiries, please contact the repository administrator via email (scholarship@uwindsor.ca) or by telephone at 519-253-3000ext. 3208.

**ENHANCING AN ORGANIZATION'S CAPACITY TO ENGAGE YOUTH IN –
DECISION-MAKING AND GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY OF GIRLS
UNLIMITED AND THE TORONTO YOUTH CABINET**

By

Sara Somerset

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through Human Kinetics
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Human Kinetics at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2007

© 2007 Sara Somerset



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-35006-5

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-35006-5

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

ABSTRACT

In this case study on Girls Unlimited (GU) and the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC), I investigated three sub-problems: the history of youth engagement with these organizations; their different methods and levels for youth engagement; and their strengths, barriers, and recommendations to youth engagement. Using document analysis, participant observation, focus groups and interviews I found that GU engaged its youth through 'Youth Leadership' (provided leadership and capacity building opportunities), while TYC youth members are engaged through 'Youth Organizing', (encompassing youth development, youth leadership, and civic engagement components). The levels of participation the GU and the TYC youth are experiencing were 'Placation' (a level of tokenism) and 'Delegated Power' (a degree of participation) respectively. Results also showed that organizational related and youth related barriers are dominant for youth engagement, while organizational, intergenerational, and youth related barriers are all important and need to be addressed when enhancing meaningful youth engagement.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all those who have been and are working to enhance youth engagement. This includes all the youth (the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders and Toronto Youth Cabinet members) and adults (the community partners and key staff members) I have met throughout this process -- you are all true leaders in this field and your insights have been invaluable to this thesis.

To Thien, Min Ae, and my parents (Alan and Felicity): I am sharing ownership of this thesis with each of you because it was your love and support that inspired me to return to school and kept me motivated right to the end. I truly appreciate your daily encouragement and efforts in making this process as easy as possible-- I love you all. I also write this in memory of Jenny: your spirit and admirable strength has guided me throughout this entire journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this process, whose combined support and advice have been invaluable to this thesis. I would like to especially thank Girls Unlimited, the Toronto Youth Cabinet and the Laidlaw Foundation whose staff, youth, and partners have shared with me their resources and insights.

I would also like to give special thanks to the support staff of the University of Windsor's Department of Kinesiology (especially Diane, Pat, and Kathy), Graduate Studies, and the Research Ethics Board for always taking that extra step to make this experience as transparent and easy as possible. To my committee members, Dr. Marge Holman, Dr. Andrew Templer, and Dr. Jay Johnson: thank you all for your support and guidance. To my advisor, Dr. Vicky Paraschak: thank you for always believing in me and encouraging me to keep going. I chose to go to Windsor because I wanted to work with you and now I am graduating because I did. Last but *definitely* not least, I wish to thank my friends and family, who have been incredibly supportive and kept me smiling throughout this entire process -- especially Matt, Babs, Eileen, Loretta, Danielle, Shawndra, Mirixi, the "Girls", Rick, Brian, Sandy, Adrian and Alex. Each of you made this experience so much more enjoyable!

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
AWKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTERS	
I. INTRODUCTION	
Introduction and Statement of the Problem.....	1
Assumptions.....	7
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Theoretical and Practical Justifications.....	13
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	
Sub-Problem 1	
What is Youth Engagement.....	16
History of Youth Engagement.....	17
Background on Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative.....	18
Background on the Toronto Youth Cabinet.....	20
Directional Propositions.....	22
Sub-Problem 2	
Levels of Participation.....	24
Mechanisms of Youth Engagement.....	31
The Demographics of the Youth Engaged.....	37
Directional Propositions.....	39
Sub-Problem 3	
Identifying the Barriers.....	41
Barriers to Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	43
Intergenerational Relationships.....	44
Youth Related.....	44
Barriers to Meaningful Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	47
Intergenerational Relationships.....	49
Youth Related.....	50
Summary.....	51
Identifying Recommendations.....	51

Recommendations to Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	52
Intergenerational Relationships.....	52
Youth Related.....	53
Recommendations to Meaningful Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	54
Intergenerational Relationships.....	56
Youth Related.....	58
Summary.....	59
Directional Propositions.....	59
 III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
a) Data Collection and Analysis	
Qualitative Research.....	61
Case Study Analysis on Girls Unlimited and the Toronto	
Youth Cabinet.....	61
Focus Groups.....	63
Document Analysis	65
Participant-Observation	68
Interviews	70
b) Delimitations/Limitations.....	77
 IV. RESULTS	
Sub-Problem 1	
Introduction.....	84
What is Youth Engagement.....	84
What is Meaningful Youth Engagement.....	85
History of Toronto's Youth Engagement.....	86
Case Study of Girls Unlimited	
History of Girls Unlimited.....	88
Girls Unlimited Missions.....	89
Organizational Structure of Girls Unlimited.....	90
Girl Unlimited Network Partner Responsibilities.....	91
GURLs Structure and Responsibilities.....	94
Girls Unlimited Meetings.....	96
Girls Unlimited Monetary and In-Kind Support.....	99
Girls Unlimited Programs and Services.....	100
Case Study of the Toronto Youth Cabinet	
History of the Toronto Youth Cabinet.....	101
Toronto Youth Cabinet Missions.....	102
Organizational Structure of the Toronto	
Youth Cabinet.....	103
Toronto Youth Cabinet Staff Structure.....	104
Toronto Youth Cabinet Membership Structure.....	105
Toronto Youth Cabinet Meetings.....	110
Toronto Youth Cabinet Monetary and In-kind	

Support.....	113
Toronto Youth Cabinet Programs and Services.....	114
Demographics of GU and TYC Programs' and Youth Services	
Participants.....	116
Conclusion.....	117
Sub-Problem 2	
Introduction.....	118
Methods of Youth Engagement.....	119
Levels of Youth Engagement.....	120
GU and TYC Outreach Process.....	121
Application Process	
GU Application Process.....	124
TYC Application Process.....	125
Training	
GURLs Training.....	127
TYC Members Training.....	129
Decision-Making Process	
GU Decision-Making Process.....	132
TYC Decision-Making Process.....	134
Perceived Level of Decision-Making Power	
GURLs Perceived Level of Decision-Making Power...	136
TYC Members Perceived Decision-Making Power.....	137
How Issues are Identified	
GU Issues.....	138
TYC Issues.....	139
Planning, Implementation, Evaluation Processes	
GU Planning Process.....	140
GU Implementation Process.....	142
GU Evaluation Process.....	142
TYC Planning Process.....	143
TYC Implementation Process.....	144
TYC Evaluation Process.....	144
Perceived Level of Involvement.....	144
Perceived Level of Ownership.....	146
Who Are Not Being Engaged.....	147
Conclusion.....	151
Sub-Problem 3	
Introduction.....	153
Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	153
Youth Related.....	164
Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to	
Meaningful Youth Engagement.....	172
Organizational Related.....	173
Intergenerational Relationships.....	188
Youth Related.....	195

Conclusion.....	200
V. ANALYSIS	
Sub-Problem 1	
Introduction.....	202
What is Youth Engagement.....	202
What is Meaningful Youth Engagement.....	203
History of Toronto's Youth Engagement.....	205
GU and TYC History and Organizational Structure.....	209
Conclusion.....	210
Sub-Problem 2	
Introduction.....	211
GU and TYC's Methods of Youth Engagement.....	211
GU and TYC's Levels of Youth Engagement.....	216
Who is Engaged.....	225
Conclusion.....	229
Sub-Problem 3	
Introduction.....	230
Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Youth Engagement	
Organizational Related.....	231
Intergenerational Relationships.....	233
Youth Related.....	234
Conclusion.....	237
Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Meaningful Youth	
Organizational Related.....	238
Intergenerational Relationships.....	242
Youth Related.....	245
Training.....	247
Conclusion.....	248
VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary.....	249
Conclusions	249
Recommendations	
Theoretical Recommendations.....	252
Practical Recommendations.....	254
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Barriers to Participating in Physical Activity Programs and Services.....	257
Appendix B: Information Email for GU/TYC.....	259
Appendix C: Focus Group Handout.....	261

Appendix D: Document Analysis Chart.....	264
Appendix E: Participant-Observation Data Collection Chart.....	265
Appendix F: Interview Guides.....	266
Appendix G: Researcher Autobiography.....	281
Appendix H: Girls Unlimited Organizational Structures.....	283
Appendix I: Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting Summary Analysis.....	284
Appendix J: Girls Unlimited Programs and Events.....	285
Appendix K: TYC Organizational Structure throughout its History.....	286
Appendix L: 2006-07 Executive Responsibilities	288
Appendix M: Toronto Youth Cabinet Events and Initiatives.....	290
Appendix N: Youth Engagement Continuum.....	292
Appendix O: Benefits of Youth Engagement.....	293
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	294
VITA AUCTORIS	316

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table I.a. Benefits of Successful Youth Engagement.....	10
Table II.a. Levels of Participation.....	26
Table II.b. Levels of Participation II.....	27
Table II.c. Levels of Participation III.....	30
Table II.d. Methods of Youth Engagement.....	32
Table II.e. Methods of Youth Engagement II.....	34
Figure II.a. Methods of Youth Engagement III.....	35
Table III.a. Methods Used by Sub-Problem.....	62
Table IV.a. Aspects of Meaningful Engagement.....	86
Table IV.b. Girls Unlimited Meeting Schedule.....	97
Table IV.c. Participant Observations Notes of Girls Unlimited Meetings.....	98
Table IV.d. Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting Schedule.....	110
Table IV.e. Participant Observation Notes of TYC Meetings.....	111
Table IV.f. Under-represented GU and TYC Program and Services Participant Groups.....	117
Table IV.g. Levels of Participation	121
Table IV.h. GURLs Training Summary.....	127
Table IV.i. TYC Training Summary.....	131
Table IV.j. Youth Training	184
Table IV.k. Support Staff Training	195

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CDO: Community Development Officer
- CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child
- CYAC: Children and Youth Action Committee
- CYER: Children, Youth and Education Roundtable
- GU: Girls Unlimited
- GURLs: Girls Unlimited Real Leaders
- THHP: Toronto Heart Health Partnership
- TPH: Toronto Public Health
- TTC: Toronto Transit Commission
- TYAB: Toronto Young People's Advisory Board
- TYC: Toronto Youth Cabinet
- UN: United Nations
- UNDES: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- UNCED: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
- UNOHCH: United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights
- YEPP: Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Promoting and improving access to physical activity for youth has become an important issue in Canada because of the current low levels of physical activity – approximately two-thirds of Canadians are physically inactive (Katzmarzyk, Gledhill & Shephard, 2000).¹ In 2003, 21.9% of males and 32.7% of females between the ages of 12 and 19 were physically inactive and only 54.6% and 39.5%, respectively, were active enough to sustain future health (Statistics Canada, 2004b).² Of those between the ages of 20 and 24, 34.1% of males and 45.1% of females were physically inactive, reflecting an average 10% drop in physical activity levels of youth between the ages of 12 and 19 (Statistics Canada, 2004b). This indicates a pattern of decreasing physical activity with age. Gender differences between physical activity levels are also evident. Females between the ages of 12 and 24 are 10% less active than males between the ages of 12 and 24 (Statistics Canada, 2004b).³

Physical inactivity is a risk factor for several chronic diseases (including coronary heart disease and type II diabetes), and premature death (Katzmarzyk et al., 2000). In 1999, approximately \$2.1 billion or 2.5% of total direct health care costs in Canada were

¹ For the purpose of this thesis physical activity refers to any structured or unstructured, planned or accidental forms of vigorous, moderate, or light activity that sustains bodily movement which expends energy (City of Toronto, 2003; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Youth are defined between the ages of 13 to 24 by the City of Toronto (City of Toronto, 2006). This age range is also within the parameters of the Toronto Youth Cabinet. However, the Girls Unlimited Initiative targets girls aged 13 to 17 (Zacher & Chin, 2004) and the federal government considers youth to be between the ages of 15 to 24 (City of Toronto, 2005). Therefore, any Statistics Canada youth will be limited to that age range (15 to 24). As well, literature references to youth vary between the ages of 10 to 29.

² Respondents are classified as follows: physically inactive if expending less than 1.5 (kcal/kg/day), moderately active if expending 1.5-2.9 kcal/kg/day, and active if expending 3.0 or more kcal/kg/day (Statistics Canada, 2004b).

³ When the Canadian Community Health Survey was done (the results of which the previous percentages were based on), it excluded 2% of the Canadian population aged 12 and older, including persons living on Indian Reserves or Crown lands, institutional residents, full-time Canadian Armed Force members, and residents in certain remote regions (Statistics Canada, 2004a).

attributable to physical inactivity (Katzmarzyk et al., 2000). Katzmarzyk et al. (2000) determined that “a 10% reduction in the prevalence of physical inactivity can potentially reduce direct healthcare expenditure by \$150 million a year” (p. 1435).

In the year 2010 it is predicted that there will be 2.76 million people in Toronto, of whom 21% will be youth (City of Toronto, 2004b). Currently there are 308,400 Toronto youth (City of Toronto, 2005) and this will grow to approximately 370,000 in the next five years (City of Toronto, 2004b).⁴ Youth only represent 9% of those registered in Toronto Parks and Recreation programs, which is a significant drop from the 64% of registered participants for children under the age of 12 (City of Toronto, 2004b). By the time these children reach the age of 13, they will most likely drop out of recreational programming (City of Toronto, 2004b).

Contemporary youth are facing risk factors and barriers that challenge service providers' ability to deliver services to youth (Bembry, 1998).⁵ Toronto has more barriers to physical activity than other cities in Canada due to the multicultural diversity within its large population and the marginalization of groups who are low-income, recent immigrants, homeless, or who speak languages other than English (City of Toronto, 2003). Females, low-income, and minority ethnic youth groups have all been found to have lower physical activity levels and are more likely to be physically inactive (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000; Sallis, Zakarian, Hovell, Hofstetter, 1996; Sulemana et al., 2006; Harrison & Narayan, 2003; Bungum & Vincent, 1997). Adolescents in underserved communities do not have access to the same programs, resources, opportunities, and supports as their more affluent peers (Hellison, Cutforth, Kallusky, Martinek, Parker,

⁴ The youth included in this prediction are those between the ages of 15 and 24 (City of Toronto, 2004b).

⁵ Service providers include recreation departments, local law enforcement, schools, businesses and public health organizations (Bembry, R., 1998).

& Stiehl, 2000). Research has identified numerous barriers to participating in physical activity, especially for marginalized youth.⁶ These barriers include: participation costs⁷ (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995; Duck, 1998; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002; Quinn, 1999; Brunton, Harden, Rees, Oliver and Oakley, 2003; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002); lack of physical activity services and facilities available (City of Toronto, 2003; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002; Quinn, 1999); and lack of family support (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995; Duck, 1998; Brunton et al., 2003) (see Appendix A for a more exhaustive list of barriers).

Over the next five years, the City of Toronto's goal is to have half of its youth population (approximately 185,000) registered in various programs and services (including volunteer opportunities or jobs) (City of Toronto, 2004b). To accomplish this, the City of Toronto has adopted the strategy of empowering youth and providing more mentorship opportunities to engage youth in the planning process and to work with local youth-at-risk staff to adjust programming to meet their interests (City of Toronto, 2004b).⁸ There is growing interest in research identifying the implications and providing evaluations for practices, policies and social actions that work to improve youth access to physical activity programs, facilities and opportunities (Sallis et al., 2000; Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; Sylvia & Baldwin, 2003; Sallis et al., 1996). In recent years Municipal and Provincial government departments, as well as non-

⁶ 'Marginalized' for the purpose of this thesis refers to those who have any of the following characteristics: low-income, ethnic minorities, females, and/or differently-abled.

⁷ These participation costs include service fees, equipment and travel expenses.

⁸ 'Empowerment' for the purpose of this thesis is defined as the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make decisions that will result in desirable actions and outcomes (The World Bank, 2006), allowing them to "participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (The World Bank, 2002, p. 6).

government recreation service providers have released reports for youth service organizations on the methods and benefits of engaging youth in decision-making.⁹ These reports include the City of Toronto's two editions of *Involve Youth* ("Involve Youth: A Guide to Involving Youth in Decision-making" and "Involve youth 2: A Guide to Meaningful Youth Engagement") (City of Toronto, 2004a; City of Toronto, 2006), the Parks and Recreation Ontario's (1999) "Together With Youth", and the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) "Youth as Decision Makers".¹⁰ The reports focused on youth engagement methods, benefits, and recommendations.¹¹ However, the reports did not include a critical analysis of the organizations that engage youth, to identify how their specific organizational structures or youth engagement processes facilitate or inhibit youth engagement.

My research critically analyzed two Toronto organizations that engage youth and provide youth programs and services.¹² I identified the strengths and weaknesses of their organizational structures and youth engagement processes to identify individual recommendations. I conducted case studies on the Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative and the Toronto Youth Cabinet.¹³ I selected GU because it is a relatively new initiative that engages female youth (Girls Unlimited Real Leaders) from

⁹ 'Decision-making' is defined as "the act of making judgments, conclusions, choices and/or decisions" (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000, p. 17).

¹⁰ In an informal discussion with the TYC members, a few of the members showed me a copy of "Involve Youth 2: A Guide to Meaningful Youth Engagement" by the City of Toronto (2006) and told me that no youth were consulted in the creation of either of these manuals and that pictures of them were included in the manual without their knowledge.

¹¹ The Laidlaw Foundation (2003c) defines 'youth engagement' as a process of involving youth in decision-making. Throughout "Chapter II: Literature Review", 'youth engagement' is defined as such and is interchanged with 'participation'.

¹² For the purpose of this thesis, 'programs' will include events, projects, and initiatives.

¹³ From this point on 'Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative' is referred to as 'Girls Unlimited' or 'GU'. From this point on the 'Toronto Youth Cabinet' is referred to as the 'TYC'.

across Toronto in decision-making to increase their physical activity opportunities.¹⁴ I chose to do my second case study on the TYC because it has approximately 150 Toronto youth members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b), making it one of the largest and most recognized youth engagement organizations in Canada.¹⁵ The TYC is working to improve Toronto's youth services in many different areas including physical activity.¹⁶ In addition, according to the literature, both of these organizations 'appear' to use an approach that has the potential for a high level of youth participation.¹⁷

I investigated GU and the TYC's organizational structures and decision-making processes to identify the methods and levels at which the organizations are engaging its youth. Since the organizations structurally involve the youth differently, this approach provided me with an opportunity to gain a better understanding on the different mechanisms of youth engagement.¹⁸ In addition, my research investigated which groups of youth are not being engaged (or under-represented) and identified the similarities or differences among the youth groups that are under-represented in each of the organization's programs and services. Analysis of existing literature, individual interviews, participant observations and documents from both organizations provided the

¹⁴ The Girls Unlimited Real Leaders (also referred to as GURLs) are the female youth that GU engages. The GURLs will be explained in further depth in "Chapter IV: Sub-problem #1".

¹⁵ The TYC is mentioned by several youth engagement researchers including Fitzpatrick et al. (1988), Mullahey et al. (1999), Ross (2005), and the Laidlaw Foundation (2000).

¹⁶ Even though the Toronto Youth Cabinet does not have physical activity as one of its main issues, supporting the Toronto Parks and Recreation is part of the TYC policy (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b) and they are involved in physical activity service organizations. Hopefully this study will show the Toronto Youth Cabinet how important it is to be involved in improving physical activity services for Toronto's youth.

¹⁷ I used the term 'appear' because I investigated to find out the actual level of participation at which the youth are being engaged.

¹⁸ The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) recommended that future studies do a comparison between different youth mechanisms.

foundation for creating a recommended protocol for improving each of the organization's capacity to engage youth in governance.¹⁹

Main Question:

How do you build an organization's capacity to enhance youth engagement when addressing the barriers to physical activity services?

To explore this main question, the research design is structured to look specifically at three sub-problems. The first sub-problem looked at the history of Toronto's youth engagement initiative through the history and structure of each of the case study organizations. The historical analysis identified the underlying reasons for Toronto's youth engagement initiatives and how youth engagement processes have evolved. Case study analysis, participant observation, qualitative interviews with the organizations' stakeholders and document analysis helped me understand each of the organization's youth engagement history and structure.²⁰

The second sub-problem examined the different methods and levels of youth engagement. To identify each organization's methods and levels of youth engagement, I needed to understand the organization's structure and youth engagement processes. I

¹⁹ 'Governance' is defined as "the traditions, institutions and processes that control the policy and decision-making of an organization, a community or a subset of these" (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000, p. 16). Thus, to participate in governance would entail being a member of the organization or the community etc. and contributing to the policy decisions. A focus group was conducted with only the Toronto Youth Cabinet and this is explained in detail in "Chapter III: Research Methodology" section.

²⁰ 'The stakeholders for the GU included the TPH staff member, the GU community partners, and the GURLs. The Girls Unlimited community partners include major organizations in the recreation service such as Toronto Parks and Recreation, the Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. The stakeholders for the TYC included the TYC Coordinator, the TYC Executive members and the TYC 'General' members. 'TYC members' is the official name for youth members who are not on the Executive Council but in this thesis, I referred to them as 'General' members to differentiate between the two groups. I used the term 'TYC members' when I identified both groups at once.

conducted participant observation, interviews, and document analysis to identify each organization's youth engagement processes. The processes included how the organizations recruited the youth and how the organizations engaged youth in the decision-making process in planning, implementing and evaluating programs and services. After examining each organization's methods and levels of youth engagement, I identified which youth groups were under-represented among those who are engaged by each organization.²¹

The third sub-problem identified the strengths, challenges and recommendations for youth engagement, and ways by which to make it meaningful.²² Understanding each organization's structure and youth engagement processes assisted me in identifying each organization's strengths, challenges and recommendations. Participant observation, document analysis and insights from each of the organization's stakeholders further expanded on previous findings by identifying additional strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations.

Assumptions

1) Every child and youth has the right to equitable access to physical activity services.

In 1976, Canada adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Kinsella, 1979). Article 12 of this agreement declared the responsibilities of the State Parties to ensure provisions are made for every child to attain the highest standard of healthy development (UNOHCH, 1966). The United Nations believes that "[s]port can contribute to economic and social development, improving

²¹ These key insights include common barriers and recommendations to youth engagement and to meaningful youth participation.

²² 'Meaningful' engagement will be defined and elaborated upon in "Chapter II: Sub-Problem #1". It will be interchanged with the term 'genuine'.

health and personal growth in people of all ages—particularly those of young people” (United Nations, 2004, par. 3) and therefore it should be made accessible to every child and youth.²³

2) Children and youth are citizens of today and deserve to be fully treated as such.

The argument about whether or not children and youth should be considered present or future citizens is a potential barrier to youth engagement and undercuts the theories of empowerment and democracy. If children and youth are not considered present citizens, they will not be perceived as having the right to be included in governance and decision-making (Ross, 2005). The Convention of the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1990 by all States to the Covenant (United Nations, 1989). It recognizes children as present citizens and as such, children should have the right to express their own views in all matters affecting them (United Nations, 1989).

3) Marginalized youth need to be engaged in the decision-making process to ensure that programs and services address their barriers.

All young people should have an opportunity to participate in programs that directly affect their lives; this is supported by Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Hart, 1992; United Nations, 1989).²⁴ Participation is based on the belief that development must first and foremost be in the interest of the recipients (including youth) (Driskell, 2002). Those who are living in a marginalized situation will have more insight on the area and its issues, have more at stake, and will be more affected by the decisions made (Driskell, 2002). If marginalized groups are not engaged, the decisions made may result in exacerbating their living conditions (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Driskell,

²³ Sport can range from informal recreational matches to organized sports leagues and federations (United Nations, 2004).

²⁴ The United Nations defines “child” as anyone under the age of 18 (United Nations, 2006).

2002). Therefore, they should have the right to participate in the decision-making process (Driskell, 2002; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Marginalized citizens should be given the power to determine how information is disseminated, policies are set, tax resources are allocated, and programs are operated (Arnstein, 1969).

4) Youth engagement needs to be meaningful to improve the quality and delivery of youth services, their personal well-being and community development.

If youth are not being meaningfully engaged, they could be playing a non-participatory role in which they are manipulated, deceived, or treated as tokens (Driskell, 2002; Hart 1997). If youth are engaged at a non-participatory level, any contributions by youth will be minimal as their opinions are not taken into consideration in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs (Hart, 1992; Hart, 1997). Final decisions may end up perpetuating youth marginalization, and an organization's services will not address the needs of marginalized youth (Driskell, 2002). Therefore, if there is a genuine level of youth engagement then the program can better meet the needs of other marginalized youth. Benefits from having youth engaged in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of youth services will enhance their personal development (Mullahey et al., 1999; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998), increase the capacity for organizations to have services accessed by the marginalized youth (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992), and improve the functioning of the communities (Hart, 1992). I have collated all the benefits listed by various authors and separated them into three different categories: benefits for youth, the organizations, and the community (see Table I.a.).

Table I.a. Benefits of Successful Youth Engagement

Youth	Organizations²⁵	Community
Improve intergenerational relationships ²⁶ (Driskell, 2002).	Improve intergenerational relationships (Driskell, 2002).	Improve intergenerational relationships (Driskell, 2002; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).
Capacity-building (Driskell, 2002; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998) such as personal growth (learning and development) (Mullahey et al., 1999; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). ²⁷	Greater understanding of the function of community and development (Driskell, 2002)	Structural improvements to the community from youth participation projects (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).
Self-realization that they can contribute to social change (Davies & Markham, 2000; Hart, 1992; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).	Improve organization's capacity to increase youth access to its services (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992).	Improve functioning of communities (Hart, 1992).
Feel included and part of the community (Hart, 1992).	Create better policies that meet Agenda 21 and are based on the needs of the staff and the community members it provides service to (Driskell, 2002). ²⁸	Reduced problems with property damage and vandalism (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).
	Opportunity to educate the community stakeholders (including youth) of the inherent difficulties in policy planning and implementation (Driskell, 2002).	

e) Recommendations to improve youth engagement must start at the community level.

Youth are faced with numerous problems and challenges in their personal, social, political, economic, and cultural development (YEPP, n.d.). Therefore, youth empowerment must adopt a holistic approach addressing all the different aspects of

²⁵ This includes all institutions that plan policy for and/or provide physical activity services.

²⁶ Especially in terms of learning how to respect, understand and work with each other.

²⁷ Things learned includes gaining critical reflection skills and comparative perspectives that are essential to self-determination of political beliefs, which lead to self-realization and democratization of society (Hart, 1992; Davies & Markham, 2000). Things developed include increased competence and self-confidence.

²⁸ Agenda 21 was a comprehensive plan of action for any global, national or local organization that has an impact on the environment (UNDES, 2004). Agenda 21 re-introduced "sustainable development" as being unachievable without environmental protection and peace (United Nations, 1992).

youths' lives. The ability to create change depends on the individual's capacity and therefore can be limited if capacity-building opportunities are not provided (YEPP, n.d.). Youths' capacity can be strengthened by the youth themselves, by the support of the local community, and by the organizations providing meaningful youth engagement opportunities (YEPP, n.d.). Intergenerational partnerships (adult and youth partnerships) are instrumental in building civic infrastructure because they mobilize resources for a common purpose (Mullahey et al., 1999). Therefore, for youth empowerment to be sustainable there needs to be well-planned and coordinated community partnerships.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of democracy necessitates that ordinary citizens be enabled to resolve pressing public issues, answer social questions (Mullahey et al., 1999), and change their form of government (Hart, 1992). Therefore, democracy decentralizes the governance and decision-making power to the local level so that public policies can reflect local priorities (The World Bank, 2002). Since citizens include children and youth (Alparone & Risotto, 2001; Tonucci & Risotto, 2001; De Winter, 1997), then they too have the right to fully participate in governance and decision-making.

Youth participation cannot be discussed or understood without understanding power relations and the struggle for equitable power (Hart, 1992). Unequal power relations ensure that the participation system works to benefit those in power more than the participants themselves (Arnstein, 1969). Real participation has to provide youth with both power and opportunities for interaction (Driskell, 2002). According to Arnstein (1969), citizen participation is a category of citizen power. Citizen participation is the process of redistributing power to the "have-nots" (i.e., the marginalized citizens)

so that they are enabled to share the benefits of an affluent society by contributing to social reform (Arnstein, 1969).

The empowerment theory “compels us to think in terms of wellness versus illness, competence versus deficits, and strengths versus weaknesses” (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995, p. 569-570). To understand empowerment theory, the empowerment process and outcome must be understood as distinct from each other (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). The empowering process can be at the individual level, the organizational level, and the community level (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Participation in community development is an example of the empowerment process at an individual level (Parkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Providing opportunities for collective decision-making and shared leadership is an example of the empowering process at the organizational level (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Taking collective action to gain access to government and other community resources is an example of the empowering process at the community level (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). This thesis focuses on the empowerment process at two levels: the individual (i.e., youth) and the organizational levels (see Chapter III: Delimitations/Limitations”, p. 82) (i.e., the TYC and GU). The outcomes of empowerment depend on the operationalization of the empowerment process (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995, p. 370). For the individual, it includes his or her perceived control and ability to mobilize skills. For the organization, it includes the development of organizational networks, growth and policy leverage (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). This thesis looks at the effectiveness of the youth empowerment process by analyzing the youth’s perceived decision-making power and ownership of the program or service in

which (s)he is engaged. As well, this thesis looks at the organizational structures and youth engagement processes to see how they facilitate or inhibit youth empowerment.

If the person works with others to achieve goals, then that person must be able to gain access to resources, and have an understanding of the sociopolitical environment of the organization and/or community that is facilitating the empowerment (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Through my data analysis, I assessed whether or not the youth are provided access to these resources and provided training to make informed decisions and actions. Applying this general framework, it is important to understand an organization's processes and structures as they can enhance youth engagement and the organization's ability to achieve its goals (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). This thesis looks at each organization's structures and decision-making processes to identify if they facilitate or inhibit youth engagement.

Theoretical and Practical Justification

For physical activity services to enhance the lives of youth, youth need to be genuinely involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of such services. The results of this thesis expanded on the literature on the methods and levels of youth engagement, as well as the barriers and recommendations to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement.

Much of the literature on children and youth participation focused on community-based environmental planning and management, or urban regeneration (Hart, 1997; Hart, 1992; De Winter, 1997; Mullahey et al., 1999; Driskell, 2002; Mathews, 2001a).²⁹

²⁹ "Urban regeneration is a shorthand term to describe the process of renewal which is sought through policies, programs and projects aimed at urban areas that have experienced industrial decline and/or multiple disadvantages" (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998, p. 2). It embodies both economic objectives, such as

Research on investigating youth engagement in physical activity service organizations is limited. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) conducted 12 case studies on youth engagement in urban regeneration initiatives, which included generating new facilities, employment, housing, or leisure activities. This is the first indication that urban regeneration includes improving physical activity services. The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) published a research report called “Youth as Decision Makers”. They looked at four different physical activity service organizations to explore the current practices in youth engagement and to understand methods and benefits of youth engagement (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). However, the literature did not critically examine each organization’s structure and youth engagement processes to identify how they facilitate or inhibit youth engagement. The literature also did not identify what groups are under-represented in youth engagement and why.

Research has shown that some projects that claim to promote youth participation may in fact be adult-controlled projects (Driskell, 2002; Hart, 1997). Even though policy makers understand that youth participation is important and recognize that genuine youth engagement requires support and transfer of power from the adults involved, genuine participation can still be difficult to accomplish (Driskell, 2002). Youth can be manipulated and told what to do, thus supporting adult initiatives (Driskell, 2002; Hart, 1997). Organizations that cater to children and youth recreation rarely use democratic participatory principles in the organization’s management and democracy has been found to be more of an exception than a rule (Hart, 1997). This study can be a catalyst for other researchers to start evaluating the methods and level of participation organizations are

stimulating investment, and social objectives, such as alleviating the problems caused by poverty and being disadvantaged” (Fitzpatrick et al, 1998, p. 2).

engaging youth at and to critically assess how the organization's structures facilitate or inhibit youth engagement. Researchers can make the recommendations and practitioners can implement them to improve the level of youth participation in decision-making and governance.

The practical justification underlying this research is that meaningful youth engagement can result in many benefits not only for the youth themselves, but also for the organization, the community and the policy-makers (see Table I.a., p. 10).³⁰ If more marginalized youth are meaningfully engaged in the decision-making process, the youth, organization, and community will all benefit.

³⁰ In the literature the benefits were indicated as consequences of "successful" or "genuine" youth engagement. For the thesis the words "successful" and "genuine" will mean "meaningful". "Meaningful" will be explained in detail in "Chapter II: Sub-Problem #1", but briefly, this entails genuine participation where the youth are involved at some level in project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Sub-Problem #1

What is the history of youth engagement and what is the history and organizational structure of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet?

What is Youth Engagement?

Youth engagement is defined by Hart (1992) as a fundamental right of citizenship and an act of democracy. It is the “process of sharing decisions which affect one’s life and the life of the community in which one lives” (Hart, 1992, p. 5). Participation shifts the planning and decision-making power to those at the local level who will be affected by the decisions being made (Driskell, 2002; Arnstein, 1969).

Youth engagement is defined by the Laidlaw Foundation (2003c) as the process of involving youth in decision-making and governance (Laidlaw Foundation, 2003c). Although the Laidlaw Foundation (2003c) included the term “meaningful” in its definition of youth engagement, I have excluded that word since other literature has implied that not all youth engagement experiences are “meaningful”.³¹ Combining the literature’s descriptions of youth engagement (i.e., from Hart (1997), Hart (1992), Arnstein (1969), Parkins & Zimmerman (1995), YEPP (n.d.), Laidlaw Foundation (2003c), Driskell (2002), and Fitzpatrick et. al., (1998)), I have defined “meaningful participation/engagement” as occurring when each youth is participating at the highest level that he/she desires, fully understands his/her role and responsibilities in the

³¹ In some instances the literature implies that the youth engagement is far from “meaningful” and veering towards tokenism or non-participation (i.e., Hart, 1997; Arnstein, 1969). In this thesis “meaningful” was interchanged with “genuine.”

organization, is empowered and trained in the knowledge and skill areas needed to make informed decisions and actions, and the decisions are made in a democratic way.

History of Youth Engagement

In 1981, the United Nations (UN) recognized the “profound importance of the direct participation of youth in shaping the future of mankind and the valuable contribution that youth can make in the implementation of the new international economic order” (United Nations, 1981, par. 3). The UN designated 1985 as “International Youth Year: Participation, Development, and Peace.” This designation was intended to mobilize all local, regional, national and international government levels to promote educational, professional and living conditions for young people and to ensure their active participation in the overall development of their society (United Nations, 1981).³² Two years later, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted (United Nations, 1989) and ratified by over 100 countries (Hart, 1992). It was the first international legal document that declared the present citizenship rights of children (Driskell, 2002).³³ In the CRC, article 12 affirmed that the child’s views on issues that affect the child should to be taken into account, but weighted against the child’s age and maturity (United Nations, 1989). Article 13 recognized the child’s freedom of expression including freedom to seek, receive, and convey information and ideas. Article 15 recognized the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of assembly (United Nations, 1989). The CRC has two separate aims: first, to protect the less powerful and less competent; second, to provide more opportunities for

³² It was recognized that some countries had more resources than others to do this, so each country was expected to mobilize to the best of their ability (United Nations, 1981).

³³ However, even fifteen years later, children and youth are still perceived only as future citizens and not as present citizens. The younger youth are unable to vote, rarely own property and are perceived as incapable of participation (Forsyth, 2006).

self-determination for those who are oppressed or constrained (Hart, 1997).³⁴ The overall message the CRC conveys is that youth need to be considered as present citizens and empowered with the ability to act as such. Following the adoption of the CRC, four initiatives were launched to further support the rights of children: the “Earth Summit”, “Agenda 21”, the “City Summit: Children’s Rights and Habitat”, and the “Mayors, Defenders of Children” (Driskell, 2002).³⁵ At the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) Agenda 21, the “Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Statement of Principles for Sustainable Management of Forests”, was conceived and adopted by more than 178 attending governments (UNDES, 2004). In Agenda 21, principles 10 and 21 identify the importance of having youth and other marginalized groups participating in decision-making processes to ensure sustainable development and environmental improvement (United Nations, 1992). By the 1990s, most of the nations had redefined the role of citizens in development and almost all of the countries had signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Hart, 1992).

Background on Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative

In 1997, the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers released a report emphasizing the importance of having all the levels of government and non-government organizations work together to provide appropriate cost-effective strategies that would improve the physical activity levels of Canadians (Federal-Provincial/Territorial, 1997).³⁶

³⁴ For specific examples please see Hart (1997).

³⁵ Driskell (2002) had stated that there were three but listed four different initiatives.

³⁶ It was the ministers who were specifically responsible for Fitness, Active Living, Recreation and Sport (Federal-Provincial/Territorial, 1997).

In 2002, Ontario Works gave a \$50,000 short-term funding grant to Toronto Public Health (Zacher & Chin, 2004; Gauer & Chin, 2004).³⁷ To decide where and how the funding was to be used, a citywide community forum was hosted and as a result GU was conceived (Zacher & Chin, 2004; Gauer & Chin, 2004). The vision of GU is for girls (ages 13 to 17) to have equal access and opportunities to participate in physical activities that are structured to meet their needs and interests, regardless of socio-economic status or geographic location in Toronto (Zacher & Chin, 2004; Gauer & Chin, 2004).³⁸ GU is divided into four regionally-based community networks in the City of Toronto (North, South, East, West) (Zacher & Chin, 2004). Each of the networks would partner with TPH, Toronto Parks and Recreation, and their local community agencies (Gauer & Chin, 2004). Within each network, the community partners work together to address the barriers to physical activity for female youth and to increase resources needed to create more local physical activity opportunities for girls (Zacher & Chin, 2004; Gauer & Chin, 2004). Although GU was funded by Ontario Works, each Network is expected to acquire additional resources (i.e., monetary or in-kind) from their community businesses or organizations or from governmental or non-governmental grants (Zacher & Chin, 2004). The literature revealed that GU has in the past engaged female youth between the ages of 13 and 19 in the planning of physical activity programs for female youth (Gauer & Chin, 2004; Chin, 2006).

³⁷ From this point on "Toronto Public Health" is interchanged with "TPH".

³⁸ The actual delivery of physical activity programming is still under service delivery channels such as the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation, Boys and Girls Clubs, OPHEA, the YMCA, the YWCA, and other community based services (City of Toronto, 2004b).

Background on the Toronto Youth Cabinet³⁹

Another way that the City of Toronto decided to engage youth was by creating a youth council called the TYC. The TYC was initially a two-year pilot program for youth between the ages of 12 and 24 and was originally called the Toronto Young People's Advisory Board (TYPAB) under the supervision of the Healthy City Project (which covered equity, environment, and economy) (Mullahey et al., 1999).⁴⁰ The original board members included the following community youth representatives:

- Two youth in care
- Two street youth
- Two working youth
- Four youth from secondary school
- One youth from elementary (grade 7 or 8)
- Two youth from post-secondary institutions
- One representative from the Toronto Area School Councils (TASC) and
- One youth worker or City of Toronto staff (Mullahey et al., 1999).

The process to join the board as a member was the same as for any City of Toronto committee; for example, applications for a specific committee were submitted and then current committee members selected and interviewed the applicants (Mullahey et al., 1999). The Toronto Young People's Advisory Board was strategically placed under the Healthy City Project; this ensured that there would be connections between the

³⁹ This data was collected from two different research papers that outlined case studies on the Toronto Youth Cabinet. Mullahey et al. (1999) focused on the early TYC while Ross (2005) did a case study in 2004 that looks at the TYC structure at that time.

⁴⁰ The membership age range now is 13 to 24 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004).

TYPAB and various other City of Toronto departments (Mullahey et al., 1999). The Healthy City staff acted as the general go-between, relaying information between the TYPAB and the City of Toronto departments (Mullahey et al., 1999). When the city was amalgamated in 1998, a Toronto City Councillor was appointed to the Youth Advocate position and took over the Healthy City staff's responsibilities as the liaison between youth and City Council (Mullahey et al., 1999). In addition, the TYPAB was replaced with the Children and Youth Action Committee (CYAC) (Mullahey et al., 1999). The CYAC's 35 members (including City Council, school trustees, and community representatives who work with youth) coordinated the various sectors that provided services to children and families so that service delivery would be enhanced to promote well-being (Mullahey et al., 1999).

In the fall of 1998, Olivia Chow, Toronto City Council's Children and Youth Advocate, created the TYC (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b). The TYC was formed and funded by City Council through the CYAC (Ross, 2005) to represent the voice of multi-ethnic and geographically isolated youth (Mullahey et al., 1999). The cabinet was open to all those between the ages of 15 and 24 and its members reported back to the CYAC through its steering committee (Mullahey et al., 1999). When Ross (2005) conducted her case study on the TYC, she reported that the TYC was an official committee of the council and thus could attend council meetings.⁴¹ This gave the TYC members direct access to council members, which was an improvement in City Hall access compared to when Mullahey et al. (1999) conducted their study.

⁴¹ Ross (2005) notes that although they are official members of the council, the TYC members are first and foremost advocates for youth and can freely express their views in favour of youth over the council's views.

In 2004, the TYC consisted of 150 General members, 8 executive members and 3 issue-based chairs, all between the ages of 13 and 24 (Ross, 2005).⁴² Cabinet actions included lobbying councillors on policy issues, conducting protests, and developing initiatives, partnerships and projects.⁴³ Issues that the TYC address includes: youth employment, homelessness, affordable education, violence, and youth empowerment (Mullahey et al., 1999; Ross, 2005).⁴⁴ The TYC fosters responsible citizenship and civic engagement and awareness, and acted as an effective youth council that spans across Canada (Mullahey et al, 1999).⁴⁵ In 2004, the TYC changed its organizational structure from hierarchical (with a Chair and Vice-Chair) to a consensus approach (Ross, 2005).⁴⁶ The hierarchical positions were replaced with Executive members in the issue-based positions; these fell into the three main issue categories of community relations, council relations and media relations (Ross, 2005). The issue-based positions were replaced every year when the focus-issue was changed (Ross, 2005). The ‘General’ youth members had the choice of being involved in as many (or none) of the committees as they want (Ross, 2005).

Directional Propositions

Since the literature stated that youth and children are being engaged to enhance youth services (City of Toronto, 2004b; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992; Driskell,

⁴² At the time of her study, the issues were youth safety, community relations, and street level services (Ross, 2005).

⁴³ These can include youth assemblies, newsletters, fundraisers for community youth projects and the TYC website (Mullahey et al., 1999).

⁴⁴ For example the TYC hosts Youth Power Speak Out workshops, which empower youth to create change at the municipal level (Mullahey et al., 1999).

⁴⁵ “[Y]outh civic engagement is defined as young people developing the skills and habits needed to actively shape democratic society in collaboration with others” (Listen, 2003, p.8). ‘Youth Council’ will be discussed in “Chapter II: Sub-Problem#2”.

⁴⁶ Consensus incorporates direct democracy as it provides everyone with the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process (Hart, 1997).

2002), I expected to find that many of the interviewees would agree that one reason why Toronto's organizations are engaging youth is to enhance youth services. I anticipated that having a greater understanding of the history of Toronto's youth engagement initiative would help me to identify and understand "why" GU and the TYC engage youth.

From the literature on GU and the TYC, it appears that both organizations were adult-initiated, but it is not clear how the original and current youth leaders were/are engaged, and whether or not the youth that were initially engaged were self-selected or recruited by adults. There was a significant lack of information on how both of these organizations are structured. For GU and TYC, this included their organizational history, the support structure (staff, funding, training etc.), the programs and services, the roles and responsibilities of the youth engaged, and the methods and levels at which the youth are engaged. Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) and Hart (1997) state that the organizational structures (including support network) need to be analyzed to understand how they facilitate or inhibit youth engagement. Therefore, I expected that learning about the organizational structures of both organizations would help to identify the methods and levels of youth engagement, as well as each of the organization's barriers and recommendations to youth engagement.

Through interviews with a GU TPH staff member, Network community partner representatives, and GURLs (as well as through document analysis), I expected to identify the organizational structures for each of the four networks and their programs and services. Since the networks function separately from each other, I anticipated that there would be a number of structural differences that would make their decision-making

processes unique to their network. I expected that the interviews and documents would be complementary to the literature review in building the story of GU from its inception to the present.

On the TYC, I expected to elaborate on Mullahey et al.'s (1999) case study, starting in 1998 when the TYC was initially launched, and identify what the organizational structure was at the TYC's inception. Through interviews with a City of Toronto staff member, the Executive and General members, as well as through document analysis, I expected to identify how the TYC organizational structure has evolved within the last eight years. Since the organization has engaged youth for a longer period of time, I anticipated that the TYC would have an organizational structure that is more facilitative to a meaningful youth engagement experience than GU.

Sub-Problem #2

What level of participation and mechanisms for youth engagement are the Girls Unlimited Leaders (GURLs) and the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) members experiencing?

Levels of Participation

This section focuses on identifying different levels of and mechanisms for youth engagement. Although there are several models concerning level of participation, this research discussed Arnstein's (1969), Hart's (1997) and Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) typologies of participation levels.⁴⁷ Hart's (1997) and Arnstein's (1969) models of participation levels look critically at the various degrees of participation and identify which levels are not really participatory. Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) typology of the levels

⁴⁷ For additional levels of participation, see the Laidlaw Foundation (2000)'s report "Youth as Decision Makers".

of youth participation were discussed to emphasize the importance of identifying levels and to explore the similarities and differences in Arnstein's (1969) and Hart's (1997) typologies.

Arnstein (1969) adapted a typology that was circulated in 1967 through a HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) staff discussion paper titled "Rhetoric and Reality". Unlike the original typology from the HUD, Arnstein's (1969) typology make the levels of participation distinct and progressive, ranging from non-participation to tokenism to degrees of citizen power. Arnstein's (1969) typology of the eight levels of citizen participation emphasizes that although an individual can be given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, it does not necessarily mean that the participant is empowered to have an affect on the outcome of the process (see Table II.a., p. 26).⁴⁸

Arnstein's (1969) typology was adapted by Hart (1992; 1997).⁴⁹ Unlike Arnstein (1969), who focused on all marginalized people (the "have-nots"), Hart's (1992; 1997) ladder focused only on children.⁵⁰ He believes that for genuine participation to occur, children's programs need to be designed to facilitate each child to participate at the highest level or his or her ability (Hart, 1997). Hart's (1997) ladder was designed for adult facilitators to use when establishing working conditions that would enable groups of children to work at whatever level of participation they choose. Hart (1997) and/or Hart's (1992) ladders of children's participation have been used to analyze youth

⁴⁸ She acknowledges that the rungs are only a general representation of reality, because in actuality there can be up to 150 different levels of participation, each with varying degrees of distinction between them (Arnstein, 1969).

⁴⁹ Hart (1997) made some adjustments to Arnstein's (1969) typology including the description of the levels and the degrees of participation.

⁵⁰ Arnstein (1969) uses the term "marginalized" instead of specifically discussing a particular group, such as children and youth. Hart (1992) uses the term "children" in his book; however, he interchanges the word with older youth and children of ages 16, 18, and 21, thus making it relevant to this study.

involvement by several researchers including the Laidlaw Foundation (2000), Mullahey, Susskind, Checkoway (1999) and Driskell (2002).

Table II.a Levels of Participation (based on Arnstein, 1969)

Rungs⁵¹			Level of Power for Marginalized	Consequences
8	Citizen control	Degrees of citizen power	Obtain majority of decision-making seats or full managerial power (i.e., a neighbourhood corporation with direct access to funding source).	Guarantee participation, responsibility and control over policy and managerial aspects; ability to negotiate conditions under which changes can be made by original powerholders
7	Delegated power		If heavy clash with powerholders, marginalized may form their own “government” with the power to “veto” any differences in opinion unresolved through negotiation.	Achieve dominant decision-making power; given clear majority seating; ability to make original powerholders accountable.
6	Partnership		Power to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with powerholders.	Power is redistributed to share planning and decision-making responsibilities.
5	Placation	Degrees of Tokenism	Amount of power to press for issues depends on the ability of marginalized to articulate their priorities, thus powerholders can still make the final decision.	Marginalized continue to be out-powered if the powerholders are not accountable to a community constituency, or have the majority voting seats.
4	Consultation		Allowed to be heard and to have a voice.	Time wasted from repeated surveys and because results don’t lead to action.
3	Informing		One-way information flow from powerholder to citizen.	Given no opportunity for feedback, or power for negotiation.
2	Therapy	Non-participation	Recipients of education, advice, and persuasion from powerholders.	Places blame on individual and not on society.
1	Manipulation			Decisions made are for the powerholders and are not in the best interest of marginalized.

⁵¹ The levels are in ascending order, with the lowest level of participation at one and the highest at eight.

Similar to Arnstein's (1969) ladder, Hart's (1997) ladder of children's participation is divided into eight distinct and progressive levels ranging from non-participation to degrees of participation (see Table II.b).

Table II.b. Levels of Participation II (based on Hart 1992 unless otherwise stated)⁵²

Rung	Level	Degrees of Participation	
8.	Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults	Degrees of Participation	Teenager ⁵³ feels competent and confident enough in his/her community roles to recognize and seek out the need for collaboration with others, (including adults ⁵⁴ in positions of power) at certain stage(s) of the project.
7.	Child-initiated and directed		Only found in children's play and requires very observant adults to recognize children's initiatives and foster their growth without taking over. ⁵⁵
6	Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children		Adults don't assume to know what children want and ask them to identify their own needs. The children are also informed of the constraints to addressing the needs in an open discussion at the initial part of project planning. ⁵⁶
5.	Consulted and informed		Occurs when children are consulted ⁵⁷ and involved in the analysis and discussion of the results of adult designed and run projects ⁵⁸ .
4.	Assigned but informed Or <i>Social mobilization</i> (this was added		At this level the child is fully informed, feels a sense of project ownership (even if they were not involved in the project's initiation), volunteers for the position (not regime instigated), ⁵⁹ and might partake in critical reflection. ⁶⁰

⁵² Although this research focused on Hart's (1997) ladder of children's participation, I wanted to show the additions that Hart had made from the 1992 version.

⁵³ This is the only level where Hart (1997) uses the word "teenager" but while elaborating on the level he interchanges the word with "child". He assumes, perhaps, that the child needs be at an older age for this level of participation to occur.

⁵⁴ The adult's role at this level is to play the animator, promoter, and facilitator to foster the potential of young people (Hart, 1997).

⁵⁵ Unfortunately, examples are hard to find in North America because children's activities, including play, are being directed by adults.

⁵⁶ Adults must have fostered the child's sense of competence and confidence to participate at this level (Hart, 1997). It is important that the children or youth involved clearly understand what level of decision-making power they have – to pretend they have more than they actually do will result in tokenism (Hart, 1997). The children are involved in some degree throughout the entire process, not only in the conceptual design but in the technical details as well, and it is explained to them what compromises were made and why, making this a genuine participation level (Hart, 1997)

⁵⁷ This is the key difference between this level and the level at a lower degree of participation. The children are not just asked for their opinions, but their opinions are given serious consideration in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project (Hart, 1997)

⁵⁸ Examples are city wide, adult designed and run surveys that inform participants of the purpose of the survey, ask participant to volunteer for the survey, and inform the participant of results (Hart, 1997)

⁵⁹ The political climate needs to be investigated.

	in Hart's 1997 Ladder of Participation)		
3.	Tokenism ⁶¹	Non-Participation	Occurs in many of forms of youth participation, including youth representatives on boards. This level results when explanations are not made in terms that children and youth can fully understand. As well, children/youth are not provided with opportunities or resources to confer back to the peers whom they are supposedly representing.
2.	Decoration		Children are used to promote a cause ⁶² on the adult's agenda. But unlike manipulation, the adults don't deny their intentions. ⁶³
1.	<i>Deception</i> (this was added in Hart's 1997 Ladder of Participation)		Occurs when adults deny any involvement in the project/event etc. to make it seem that it was completely the children's idea and work from the beginning to the end.
	Manipulation		"Adults consciously use children's voice to carry own messages" (p. 40) and do not make explanations to participant in terms that they can understand.

Another significant contribution that Hart (1997) made to the literature on engaging children and youth was recognizing that for genuine participation to occur, the child/youth does not have to operate at the highest rung of the ladder. In fact, some participants might enjoy being at the lower levels of participation (i.e., not involved in planning but only in the implementation); however, the emphasis is placed on the fact that this was their conscious and informed decision (Hart, 1997).

There are many differences between Arnstein's (1969) and Hart's (1997) levels of participation. Hart (1997) seems to be more optimistic, creating more levels of participation and believing that adults would give up their decision-making power to

⁶⁰ As a result, children will believe they are involved in the tasks because their perspectives are important and not because they are just another set of hands.

⁶¹ Carried out by adults who want to empower children but don't critically think about the process and end up designing projects; as a result children have little say or choice about the subject or style of communicating, or time to formulate their own opinions (Hart, 1997).

⁶² This is done through costumes and performances (Hart, 1997).

⁶³ Because the adults don't pretend that they are not using the children, this is a higher level than deception.

youth. Meanwhile, Arnstein (1969) has more levels of non-genuine participation and does not believe the powerholders will empower the marginalized enough to allow them to act completely independently.⁶⁴ According to Arnstein (1969) independence will only occur if the marginalized people completely leave the boundaries set out by the powerholders and form their own 'government'.⁶⁵ At the highest level of participation, Hart (1997) believes that children and youth can be empowered enough to choose to involve the adults in their projects, while Arnstein (1969) believes the marginalized will only be empowered enough to have a majority voice but not enough to have a choice about involving the powerholders.

A major weakness with Hart's (1997) and Arnstein's (1969) ladders are that they were designed by adults for adults.⁶⁶ Hart (1997) assumes that children and youth are submissive and passive agents. Duality of structure recognizes that youth are agents who can either accept structures within the hegemonic discourse or expand to include other possible structures (Giddens, 1984). These agents' actions can either reinforce or expand the boundaries set out by these structures (Giddens, 1984). Arnstein (1969) addresses this issue at the level of delegated power where the marginalized people will choose to go outside the boundaries if they can't work with the powerholders. Arnstein (1969) discussed that powerholders may resist power redistribution and not provide the marginalized with the resources they need (including knowledge, political, and financial resources) to be independent.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Arnstein (1969) is quite critical about the levels of participation in which powerholders engage marginalized people.

⁶⁵ This is an example of delegated power.

⁶⁶ The ladders are designed by adults, therefore from an adult perspective and not from a youth perspective. The ladder was designed for adults to facilitate children/youth to participate at higher levels.

⁶⁷ Arnstein (1969) brings up some other interesting reasons for non-empowerment, including the belief that empowering communities may support separatism; create balkanization of public services (overlapping); be

In addition, neither ladders of participation/citizenship incorporate other factors (besides the adult) that impact the youths' level of participation. These factors include the participant's socio-economic and cultural status (Rose, 1992; Arnstein, 1969; Hart, 1997; Hart, 1992).⁶⁸ These factors and others can prevent youth from participating at their desired level and thus should be addressed in the ladder in order to identify ways to improve the level of participation.⁶⁹

As mentioned earlier, Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) created a typology of youth participation levels. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) separated youth participation into three different levels: consultation, joint management, and control (see Table II.c.).

Table II.c. Levels of Participation III (Based on Fitzpatrick et al., 1998)

Low Level of Participation —————→ *High Level of Participation*

Consultation⁷⁰	Joint Management	Control⁷¹
Provides minimal level of involvement, opportunities for capacity building and personal interaction; however, unlike the other levels of participation, this could include higher numbers of youth.	Risk of tokenism and a lower number of youth who can participate; however, there is an increased opportunity for capacity building and feelings of project "ownership" by youth.	Youth are either delegated decision-making power on the projects, or the projects have been conceived and run by the youth themselves ⁷² .

Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) typology of levels of youth engagement has a number of limitations. First, the model does not separate the levels into non-participatory and

more costly and less efficient; enable minority group "hustlers" to be as opportunistic and disdainful of the "have-nots" as their Caucasian predecessors; be incompatible with merit system; and a new game for the have-nots to gain control but not allowing them enough resources to succeed.

⁶⁸ These influencing factors will be explained further in the next section under barriers to meaningful participation.

⁶⁹ In "Chapter II: Sub-Problem #3", I went into detail about how these factors can impact the youth's ability to participate at a higher level and identified the recommendations that have been made to address this issue.

⁷⁰ Hart (1997) warns about referenda and opinion polls as they can be manipulated by adults.

⁷¹ Out of the 12 case studies investigated, only one of them was at this level of participation (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

⁷² The youth develop the initiative, secure the funding and manage the project (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

genuine participation. It fails to recognize that there are occasions in which the youth engagement process will not provide youth with any decision-making power.⁷³

Additional weaknesses with this model include being too vague (not clearly defined), and having too great of a difference between each level. Large differences would make upward movement more difficult because it would require too many resources at one time from both the youth and the organization. In contrast, Hart (1997) provided examples of how to move towards a more genuine form of participation through minor adjustments. His levels appear easier to attain because there are fewer degrees of difference among them and they require fewer changes. Interestingly, Fitzpatrick et al's (1998) ladder shares more similarities to Arnstein's (1969) ladder in that both typologies have tokenism higher up on the participation levels, and leave fewer opportunities for genuine levels of participation. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) made a compelling point when they suggest that lower participation levels can involve a larger number of youth than the higher levels.⁷⁴ One possible explanation for this is that the higher levels of participation require a larger commitment, thus making it harder to mobilize a large number of capable youth.⁷⁵

Mechanisms of Youth Engagement⁷⁶

The literature revealed the different mechanisms that youth have been engaged in regarding governance and decision-making. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) identified several

⁷³ This issue is addressed by both Arnstein (1969) and Hart's (1997) levels of participation.

⁷⁴ Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) do not elaborate on why this is the case

⁷⁵ The added number of responsibilities and decision-making power would require more involvement. This can be due to numerous factors such as time constraints, lack of training etc., these will be discussed further in the next section when I look at the barriers to "meaningful" participation.

⁷⁶ For additional typologies of youth involvement please see Laidlaw Foundation (2000) Youth as Decision Makers.

methods of youth engagement.⁷⁷ Unfortunately they are categorized under the three participation levels they identified, thus assuming that the mechanism determines the level of actual participation (see Table II.d.). Even though this is not the case, for exploratory purposes Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) mechanisms of youth engagement will be investigated more closely.⁷⁸

Table II.d. Methods of Youth Engagement (Taken from Fitzpatrick et al., 1998, p. 15)

Consultation	Joint Management	Control
Youth Surveys	Youth representative on management board of specific projects	Delegated Power
Youth Conferences	Youth delegates on partnership boards and community forums	Youth-owned projects
Focus groups		

Fitzpatrick et al., 1998 defined 'Youth Surveys' as structured questionnaires used to explore the needs and desires of youth. 'Youth Conferences' are generally one-day events involving 40 to 80 youth that included a capacity-building component and provided an opportunity for political impact (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).⁷⁹ "Focus Groups" are not explained clearly by Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) but they do state that this method is not capacity-building unless it is another youth that is facilitating the focus group. With respect to 'Youth Representation' on management boards of a specific project,

⁷⁷ In this paper the word "mechanism" is interchanged with "method".

⁷⁸ From Hart (1997) and Arnstein (1969), we learn that this is not the case because the level of participation can be altered within each method depending on the transparency of the project, the level of consultation, initiation, etc.

⁷⁹ Because conferences are large and publicized, politicians find it hard to ignore the issues being addressed (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) acknowledged that it is hard to determine the actual level of participation and whether or not the project is jointly youth-owned.⁸⁰

‘Youth Forums’ are typically initiated through existing youth groups that nominate two representatives to attend a forum-development meeting, or the members are recruited from other youth conferences or existing youth forums (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Youth Councils (also referred to as Youth Forums) are not a new concept; they were first established in 1979, and have recently been implemented more often within local governments and used as a method of urban regeneration (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Usually they function with either a voting membership or a small executive committee with no hierarchy between the members (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Most participants in the councils/forums are between the ages of 14 and 19 years old (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Mathews (2001b) also defines youth councils and forums as interchangeable and stated that they are usually initiated by adults. These youth forum committee groups discuss issues relating to their communities (Mathews, 2001b). ‘Delegated Power’ occurs when youth are given control over the project by an adult (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).⁸¹ ‘Youth-Owned projects’ are those where the youth initiate, develop, and secure project funding (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

Fitzpatrick et al.’s (1998) case study analysis find that out of all of the methods for youth engagement, the lower levels of participation (which they identified as consultation) were found to be the best, primarily because they involved the highest number of youth. In case studies involving youth councils/forums, it was found that most of the members were usually in name only, or merely attended the social functions

⁸⁰ This supports the point I made earlier, that levels of genuine participation should not be assumed based on the mechanism of youth engagement.

⁸¹ This example was only found in cases of small-scale projects (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

(Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). However, Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) did note that benefits can be derived from the methods they identified at higher levels of participation.⁸²

Unfortunately, Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) methods were not clearly defined in the case studies, so it is difficult to differentiate between the different mechanisms.

The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) also designed two typologies of youth engagement mechanisms specifically used by recreation service-providers.⁸³ The first typology had three different methods of youth engagement. These are “Youth-run Programs,” “Youth/Councils Committees” and “Youth on Boards/Governance Bodies” (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) (see Table II.e.).

Table II.e. Methods of Youth Engagement II (based on the Laidlaw Foundation, 2000)

Youth Programs⁸⁴	Youth/Councils Committees	Youth on Boards/Governance Bodies
Facilitated by youth workers, the youth plan and implement recreation programs (or programs with a recreation component) by partaking in a variety of roles such as advocacy, management, fund-raising, staffing, etc.	Facilitated by staff, possibly addressing all youth issues and not just recreation; usually act as advisory to other committees, councils or boards	Youth work with adults who are on formal decision-making bodies. ⁸⁵

However, when the Laidlaw Foundation conducted their five case studies, they divided the methods of youth engagement into four different areas, separating “Youth Councils/Committees” into “Youth Governed Organizations”⁸⁶ (Youth Councils) and

⁸² These methods included youth forums, youth representatives on boards, or delegated power and youth owned projects.

⁸³ The researchers call it levels, but they do not take into consideration that within each method, actual participation levels can be different (they can still play token roles); thus, for the purpose of this study, these are identified as mechanisms of participation.

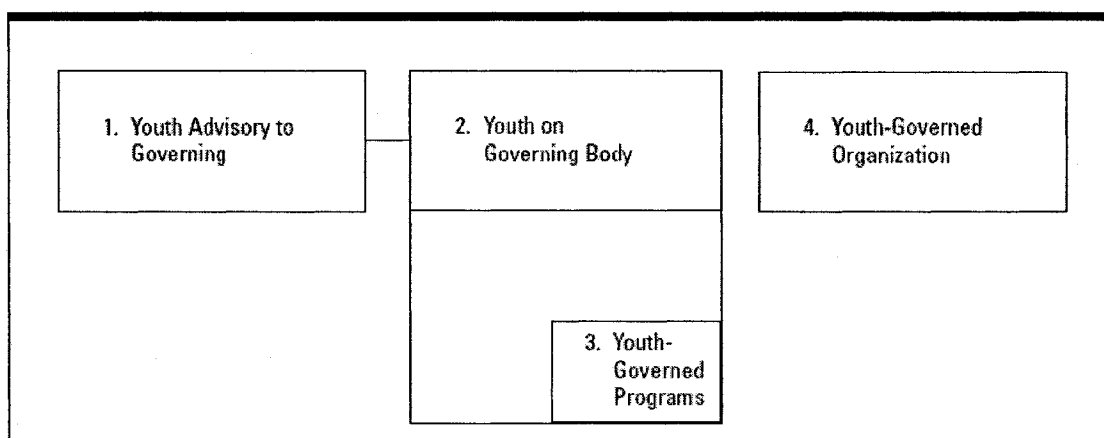
⁸⁴ “Youth Programs” is interchanged with the term “Youth Governed Programs.”

⁸⁵ They only found two examples for this mechanism of youth engagement-the Boys and Girls Clubs and the provincial government of British Columbia.

⁸⁶ “Govern” for the purposes of this thesis will use the Laidlaw Foundation’s (2000) definition, which means being responsible for policy-setting, funding and management oversight.

‘Youth Advisory to Governing’ (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).⁸⁷ Figure II.a. illustrates how the Laidlaw Foundation identified the mechanisms of youth engagement.

Figure II.a. Methods of Youth Engagement III (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000, p. 21)



The design of the typology was not explained in detail, but my understanding is that they set up the different methods to show which methods require adult policy decision-makers. The first method ‘Youth Advisory to Governing’ has youth advising the adult policy decision-makers. The second method ‘Youth on Governing Body’ has youth working with the adult decision-makers to make the policies. The third method ‘Youth Governed Programs’ needs the adult decision-makers to make the policies but youth are empowered to plan and implement the program. Finally the ‘Youth-Governed Organization’ does not require the adult decision-makers to make the policies because the youth are empowered to make their own.

In 1996, at the first Asian regional meeting of YouthNet International programs, strategies to enhance youth participation were developed (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.) and the following methods of youth participation were identified:

⁸⁷ The reason for this was not elaborated in the report.

1. **Administrators:** Carry out basic administration responsibilities ranging from bookkeeping to typing to conducting research and collecting data.
2. **Advocates:** Form unions, participate in public rallies and campaigns, and contribute to policy papers and public debates.
3. **Counsellors/Peer to Peer Support:** Trained as counsellors and listen and advise their peers on issues such as drug and alcohol use, sexuality, parent-child relationships, peer pressure, trouble at school, and other causes of anxiety and depression.
4. **Decision-makers:** As a member of a youth-serving NGO (non-governmental organization) Board, the youth contribute to the planning and evaluation of programs and services. As a member of a youth council, the youth learn democratic principles.
5. **Educators:** Act as mentors or educators through unique methods such as theatre.
6. **Income generators:** Work in youth-run businesses (learn management and marketing skills) or participate in programs to learn trade skills such as sewing, carpentry, and growing produce.
7. **Monitoring and evaluation**⁸⁸: Help monitor and evaluate program goals and activities on an on-going basis.
8. **Planners:** This was mostly an assistant role in planning program activities designed by adults.

After further reading on youth engagement mechanisms, I considered these methods to be the roles that youth play in various methods of engagement. They are similar to the roles that the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) described within each youth engagement mechanism. For the purpose of this paper they are considered as various responsibilities youth undertake when participating.

I combined Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) model with the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) model to capitalize on the strengths of both models. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) were quite obscure with their definitions for the assumed 'higher level of participation'

⁸⁸ Usually occurs when the youth are involved in the planning and implementation process as well.

methods and which appear to be similar to the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) mechanisms.⁸⁹ Since the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) mechanisms had four separate categories, they were included as examples used in this study. Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) simpler methods of youth engagement were ignored by the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) and thus will be included in the list of categories. These categories of youth engagement methods were used to facilitate the focus groups with the TYC youth leaders to develop a youth perspective of engagement mechanisms. Listed in no particular order, the youth leaders were asked to either expand on or discard the following youth engagement mechanisms:

1. Youth Surveys
2. Youth Conferences
3. Focus Groups
4. Youth Governed Organizations
5. Youth Governed Programs
6. Youth Advisory to Governing Boards
7. Youth on Governing Body

The redefined categories of youth engagement will be used in my data analysis to identify the different youth engagement mechanisms in the TYC and GU.

The Demographics of the Youth Engaged

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) presupposed that those engaged would primarily be drawn from groups of disaffected youth who experience difficulties at school and feelings of alienation etc. However, they found that the natural leaders or the "cool" kids are recruited in order to draw in the followers (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). This is supported by Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) findings that the majority of the youth engaged were 'high

⁸⁹ Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) 'Youth Representatives' is similar to the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) categories.

achievers'.⁹⁰ After reviewing the case studies, Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) identified a trend in the demographics of the engaged youth; most of the youth involved were males aged 16 or younger. Female youth (especially young mothers) were generally not involved (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). In general, it was found that most of the youth engaged may not be representative of those who are hardest to reach (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). This is a concern because the youth who could benefit most are the least likely to be engaged (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). This is exacerbated by the fact that high profile youth forums get a highly disproportionate share of youth work resources (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Youth engagement ends up disempowering the youth from the most disadvantaged communities because they are not involved in the decision-making process and the resources do not end up effectively addressing their needs (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) recommended that a conscious effort should be made to increase the participation of older female youth (20+), especially young mothers, and to find methods that will attract older groups of youth.⁹¹ Both Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and the Laidlaw Foundation recognized that there needs to be further exploration of who (age, gender, ethno-cultural background, socio-economic status etc.) is engaged in governance and decision-making, so that the youth engagement processes and organizational structures can be improved to include those who are the hardest to reach (i.e., marginalized youth).

⁹⁰ This term was not defined but I assume it is those who are self-motivated, participate in many other organizations, and already feel empowered.

⁹¹ This is especially important since the level of physical activity decreases with age and is lower with female youth. Engaging the older and female youth is important if recreation services are to address the needs of older and female youth to improve their levels of physical activity levels.

Directional Propositions

I expected that the TYC focus group would want to make adjustments to the descriptions of the methods of participation. The literature was neither very consistent, nor was it detailed in explaining each of the methods. Reading the short descriptions of each of the Executive members, it seems that they have been experienced in many different levels and methods of youth engagement. Therefore, I believed that the TYC Executives would have a better idea than the GURLs of what each method and level of participation entails. I expected that TYC Executives would make adjustments to each of the levels to incorporate the factors that are important to youth. I hoped to have youth participants from a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds so that these variations could be incorporated into the frameworks. I expected the outcome of the focus group would be two frameworks from a youth perspective that I could use to assist in my data analysis to identify the level and methods of youth engagement for each of these organizations.

Through interviews, documents, and participant observations with both GU and the TYC, I expected to identify the level at which the youth are engaged. According to Hart (1997) it is important to have a clear and transparent youth engagement process to ensure a meaningful experience. Therefore, I expected that analyzing the GU and TYC's youth outreach and application processes would contribute to identifying the level at which the youth of both organizations are engaged. Youth engagement incorporates the process of empowerment (Arnstein, 1969; Driskell, 2002). Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) stated that the empowerment outcome can be determined by assessing the support provided (resources, training, and staff support) and the youth's perceived decision-

making power and ownership of the programs. Since the literature on the TYC did not suggest that adults are involved, I expected to find that the TYC members would have a higher level than the GURLs of perceived decision-making power and ownership over the events or initiatives they organized. However, the literature on GU reflects that they have community partners that provide resources, so I expected that that the GURLs would have a larger support system provided (staff, resources, training) than the TYC.

Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) also stated that the organizations' processes have an impact on the empowerment outcome. Therefore, I expected identifying the organizations' decision-making process (including how they identify issues, plan, implement, and evaluate programs and services) would help identify the method and level of youth engagement.

Since the GU initiative is fairly new and the literature on GU does not include youth engagement as part of its mission, I expected to discover significantly lower levels of youth engagement than the TYC. Given that the GU Networks function quite separately from each other, I expected to find differences in youth engagement levels between each of the networks. Each network has its own set of community partners and resources, which would impact the level of participation.⁹² I expected that the TYC would have a variety of levels of youth engagement, as the organizational structure appears to be set up with two categories – the executive members, and the general members who choose how involved they want to be.

As for the mechanisms of youth engagement, from the literature review it seems that the TYC is a 'youth governed organization' and GU is a 'youth on governing body'

⁹² This will be discussed further in "Chapter II: Sub-Problem #3" when I identify the barriers to meaningful youth engagement.

and I anticipated that the interviews, documents, and participant observation would confirm this. However, since there are 150 members, I believed that my data analysis would reveal that the TYC is in fact engaging its members in numerous different ways, such as through surveys and consultations.

As for identifying those who are engaged, I expected to find that the youth engaged in GU would not be representative of their under-represented program and event participants. I expected the TYC members would be very diverse and more representative of Toronto's youth population (including marginalized youth groups). GU is fairly new and I did not expect the recruitment process to ensure that females from various ethno-socio-economic backgrounds were being engaged.

Sub-Problem #3

What recommendations should be made to enhance youth engagement so that physical activity services for marginalized youth are improved?

Identifying the Barriers

Before recommendations can be made to engage more youth in meaningful participation, the barriers to youth participation in governance and decision-making need to be identified. Most of the literature on youth engagement includes a section on the barriers to youth participation in governance and decision-making (i.e., Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Mathews, 2001b; Driskell, 2002).⁹³ This information is important for organizations that are interested in engaging more youth at genuine levels. The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) briefly listed the barriers under the following categories: (a) barriers related to demographics; (b) barriers related to socio-economic status; (c) barriers related

⁹³ In fact, it was the focus of one entire paper (see Mathews 2001b).

to time and location; (d) barriers related to organizational preparedness; and (e) barriers related to youth culture. Mathews (2001b) categorized the barriers to youth participation in community decision-making: (a) the nature of local decision-making, (b) the attitudes of adults, and (c) the characteristics of young people. Meanwhile, Driskell (2002) stated that the level of youth participation depended on two primary dimensions: (a) the youth's power to make decisions and affect change and (b) the youth's interaction and collaboration with other people in the community. However, the literature on barriers to youth engagement does not separate the barriers that prevent youth from participating in governance and decision-making from the barriers that prevent youth from a meaningful youth engagement experience. Identifying what barriers prevent marginalized youth from being engaged is especially important, since the literature has reflected that these groups are under-represented. Identifying the barriers to moving towards more genuine levels of participation is important as well because the literature has shown that there are many benefits derived from meaningful engagement. An organization interested in increasing the number of engaged youth and in reaching out to the most marginalized youth would need to address the barriers to participation. Conversely, an organization interested in enhancing the levels of youth engagement should address the barriers specific to meaningful youth participation.⁹⁴ Thus, I separated the barriers into two main categories: barriers to youth engagement and barriers to meaningful youth engagement. Under each of the two categories, I incorporated the material identified in the literature and separated them into barriers related to organizational structure (including decision-

⁹⁴ It would be beneficial for the organization to address both sets of problems, but, if there is a lack of resources, the organization will have to choose which set of barriers they want to address.

making processes), intergenerational relationships, and youth.⁹⁵ Even though I created a typology of barriers, it is important to recognize that the barriers are interacting; a barrier from one source can be caused by a combination of sources. For example, if a youth is unable to attend the meetings because (s)he lives in the outskirts of Toronto, this could also be a barrier related to organizational structure; that is, non-accessible meeting locations. In addition, some of the barriers will act as both barriers to participation in governance and decision-making, and to participation that is meaningful; these will be identified and noted.

Barriers to Youth Engagement

Organizational Related

Organizations may not have the resources to engage youth in the decision-making process (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). Consequently the youth feel discouraged from participating in decision-making because of the lack of opportunities for personal and community development (Mathews, 2001b). In the case studies of youth councils, Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) found that youth were usually selected or self-selected, unlike the democratic processes of the adult forums that they are modeled after. The councils, too, often end up reinforcing cliques and do not focus on expanding the network (Fitzpatrick et al.; 1998).⁹⁶ It is a significant challenge to reach out and engage those who are marginalized. The uncaring and exclusive nature of a community's political and social institutions discourages full integration and hampers the youth's ability to make informed decisions (Wyllie, 1999; Arnstein, 1969). In addition, marginalized people do not have

⁹⁵ I will narrow down youth related barriers into three different categories: culture and socio-economic status, gender, and the youth's characteristics and experiences.

⁹⁶ This can also be a barrier related to youth because their lack of confidence and the intensity of peer relationships at this age make it intimidating to join a new group (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

the knowledge base and have difficulty following leadership while feeling despair and distrust (Arnstein, 1969).

Intergenerational Relationships

In general these barriers are related to how adults perceive youth. Adults fear that children are too young to understand the principles and values of electing competent, interested and responsible peer representatives, so adults end up either selecting the children themselves or recruiting volunteers (Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). This may lead to a biased selection process because participants may be chosen based on the requirements that are preferred by the facilitator. Another possibility is that the youth who applied for the position might be the bully that nobody wants to challenge (Hart, 1997; Mathews, 2001b).

Families are socially constructed to be authoritarian (Hart, 1997); the parents/guardians make decisions about what is best and what a child/youth can or cannot do.⁹⁷ Some adults feel that it is their role to protect youth from the problems of the “real world”, and thus they do not engage them, focusing instead on directing and controlling youth (Hart, 1992; Mathews, 2001b; Mullahey et al., 1999; Driskell, 2002; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d). Also, it is harder for the parents/guardians to understand the youth engagement process if they are not empowered themselves⁹⁸ (Hart, 1992).

Youth Related

Attitudes and Characteristics

The youths’ attitude and characteristics may inhibit their willingness to participate (Mathews, 2001b; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Hart, 1997; Driskell, 2002). Reasons include

⁹⁷ Having a lack of voice, independence and self-direction may be a direct consequence of how the youth were brought up (Hart, 1992).

⁹⁸ This can also address the cultural barriers by involving parents/guardians in the empowerment process.

lack of interest in formal political processes (Mathews, 2001b; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), low self-esteem (Hart, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998), and disaffection (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).⁹⁹ In the case studies, it was found that the narrow range of youths' interests limited them from participating in other areas of development, such as employment (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). At the Asian youth engagement conference, they identified youth in crises¹⁰⁰ as a barrier (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). This was not discussed in the other literature, perhaps because the other researchers and facilitators assumed that youth in crises should not be engaged until after they are rehabilitated. Another group that is consistently marginalized includes those who are differently-abled. This group is perceived to lack the ability to deal with stress; thus opportunities to actively engage these youth are not provided or created (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).¹⁰¹

Culture and Socio-economic Status

Toronto is a multi-cultural metropolitan city. The population of Toronto represents 200 countries, 80 religions, and speaks more than 160 languages and dialects (City of Toronto, 2003). In 2001, 52% of youth aged 15 to 19 and 48% of youth aged 20 to 24 were people of colour (City of Toronto, 2005). The percentage of families¹⁰² in Toronto earning under \$40, 000 per year in 2001 was 35.5% (City of Toronto, 2004c).

⁹⁹ Self-esteem will impact the child's ability to demonstrate competence and his/her coping, and communication methods will impact his/her ability to think or to work in a group—these are often tied into their culture and social class (Hart, 1992). 'Disaffection' is when youth choose to be uninvolved because they think that it is un-cool to participate. However, the case studies showed that this made a very minimal impact on their participation enthusiasm (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

¹⁰⁰ This includes youth struggling with drug addiction, family violence, psychological problems etc. (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).

¹⁰¹ This can also be an organizational barrier because the organization does not provide the opportunities and an intergenerational barrier, in that adults do not perceive differently-abled as competent.

¹⁰² "Refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling" (City of Toronto, 2004c, p. 4). Children can include grandchildren if no parents are present.

Therefore, it is important to address cultural and socio-economic barriers, since the youths' ability to participate can be restricted due to cultural and socio-economic factors (Ross, 2005; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Driskell, 2002).¹⁰³ Another cultural barrier is territorialism; rivalries between different gangs or cultural groups make it hard for youth from different areas to work with each other (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹⁰⁴

Hart (1992) also identified class variations as barriers to youth engagement; society is heavily constructed in keeping with a middle-class orientation, including values such as independence and autonomy, and thus results in child-rearing pattern differences. Low-income families place higher values on obedience, because they believe that this is the path to economic success (Hart, 1992). Low-income youth are pressured to be out working and generating income (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.), thus reducing the amount of free time they have to participate in governance and decision-making.¹⁰⁵ Cultural and socio-economic status is often intertwined. For example, in some cultures it is improper for youth from lower income families to interact and to act as equals with those from wealthier families (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).

Gender¹⁰⁶

Females are socially constructed as the "other" and made invisible by society, parents, teachers, and even peers (Hart, 1992; Hart, 1997).¹⁰⁷ As a result, they are

¹⁰³ This can be a factor for meaningful participation as well because the desire to be even more involved is impacted by culture and socio-economic status.

¹⁰⁴ This is an important issue in Toronto with the re-location of public housing to the outer areas of Toronto where there are low-income, high-rise apartments. This has forced gang rivals to live next door to each other. In addition, Toronto is a very multi-cultural city (City of Toronto, 2003).

¹⁰⁵ This can also be a factor affecting meaningful engagement for the truly motivated youth, who make time to include this in their busy work schedule.

¹⁰⁶ From the literature that addressed the barriers to youth engagement, only a few of the authors identified obstacles that female youth face.

provided with fewer opportunities than male youth to be empowered and engaged in governance and decision-making (Hart, 1992; Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). Hart (1997) believed that “many adults in all cultures think of boys as the children who need to be prepared to become decision-makers as adults” (p. 36); thus more programs are created for boys, to foster their autonomy and decision-making skills. In low-income families, stereotypical female gender roles are reinforced and girls are given responsibility for domestic chores and caring for younger siblings, providing them with less time to participate¹⁰⁸ (Hart, 1997). In Fitzpatrick et al.’s (1998) study, it was found there were less female mothers being engaged, indicating that motherhood was a barrier to youth engagement. Culture and gender can also be intertwined; for example, a female Muslim youth who has reached puberty cannot participate in mixed-sex groups or attend late meetings (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

Barriers to Meaningful Youth Engagement

Organizational Related

An organization’s lack of clarity and sense of purpose on reasons why they want to engage youth end up obscuring youth involvement (Mathews, 2003); momentum can be gained and lost quickly (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).¹⁰⁹ Research suggests that many of the existing youth councils are flawed because they are utilizing inappropriate participatory devices and the methods used often do not make genuine participation possible (Mathews, 2001b). Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) also identified organizational structural barriers within the youth councils. The case studies revealed that there was a

¹⁰⁷ “Other” is a term used to separate groups from the “norm” and from the “important.”

¹⁰⁸ This can also be an obstacle to more meaningful engagement, as the female youth is not given enough time to become involved at the level she wants to be.

¹⁰⁹ This is also a problem within youth councils (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

lack of democracy in youth councils and youth involvement in general (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). In addition, no one seemed genuinely accountable to the broader group of youth, even if they were supposed to represent a particular youth group or club (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

For youth delegates on partnership boards and community councils, the formal and political nature of a board meeting environment (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), combined with the unfamiliarity of the political process and the art of compromise, makes it difficult for them to make contributions¹¹⁰ (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). The nature of an organization's decision-making processes is complicated, intricate, time-consuming, and involves jargon-filled paperwork, especially if they involve cross-sectoral partnerships and are being funded by the government (Mathews, 2001b; Fitzpatrick et al., 2003).¹¹¹ Consequently, youth find the process cumbersome and vague. Youth end up learning that they have very little decision-making power and eventually their interest in participating drops (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). When combined with the lack of immediacy and circuitous nature of management, youth end up with very little incentive to stay involved (Mathews, 2001b; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

The time and location of board and committee meetings can also act as a potential barrier, as safe transportation is difficult to find for youth, and meetings are usually held during school hours (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). As well, organizations are pressured to get development projects up and running quickly, which jeopardizes the project's

¹¹⁰ If youth engagement organizations do not provide training, then lack of skills in leadership, communication, social awareness etc. can inhibit participation (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).

¹¹¹ Decision-making is slowed down because of the formal channels and internal politics these partnerships create (Mathews, 2001b).

sustainability and continuity (Mathews, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). This can be a barrier to meaningful engagement because project implementation is often done haphazardly, and when the funding drops so does the project (Mathews, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). In addition, staff turnover acts as a barrier because continuity is broken and nobody follows up with the youth who want to be engaged meaningfully (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). Another organizational barrier are policies that don't meet the needs of the youth; for example, training and highly structured leisure activities being prioritized when all they want is a warm and safe place to hang out (Davies & Markham, 2000).

Intergenerational Relationships

Stoneman (1998) coined the word "Adultism", which recognizes that adults' attitudes and beliefs that "they know best" can marginalize the youth's ability to make responsible decisions by patronizing his/her efforts. Adults feel that youth lack the capacity (i.e., education, training, competence in communicating and processing information¹¹²) for involvement (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Mathews, 2001b; Driskell, 2002; Davies & Markham, 2000). Adults may exclude youth from program and project planning and implementation because they view youth as *problems* and not as resources, thus reinforcing unequal power relations and lowering the youth's self-efficacy and ability to make change (Mullahey et al., 1999). Adults find it hard to give up some of their own decision-making power (Mathews, 2001b; Arnstein, 1969) and are simply not good at responding to young people's own initiatives (Hart, 1992).¹¹³ In addition, youth

¹¹²Just the presence of two adults in the room will change the group's dynamics (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), possibly because youth find adults intimidating and their ability to communicate is hampered.

¹¹³ Arnstein (1969) stated that powerholders may empower marginalized people enough to gain control but not provide them with enough resources to succeed.

are either not taken seriously or expected to adopt adult behavior if they wish to participate at a higher level (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Mullahey et al., 1999). In response, youth become cynical about adults (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998), perpetuating the angst perceived by both groups and making it harder to work together.

Ross (2005) and De Winter (1997) discussed the issue of citizenship, recognizing that children and youth are still perceived as being ‘future citizens’, even though the Convention of Children’s Rights recognizes that children and youth are current citizens and deserve to be treated as such. Organizations that perceive youth as “future citizens” will limit the degree to which the youth are engaged, because only current citizens are perceived as being capable of fully participating in governance and decision-making (Ross, 2005). The point of this sub-section is not to say that adults should not be involved; Hart (1997) recognizes that there will continue to be instances where the adult(s) must maintain the final say.¹¹⁴ However, as long as there is honesty and clarity from the beginning about the extent of control or power the participating children have, genuine participation can occur.

Youth Related

Attitudes and Characteristics

Sustainability of youth participation was found to be a problem (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹¹⁵ Youth involvement took a lot of commitment and

¹¹⁴ This should have been the case for one of the urban regeneration projects, where city council gave the engaged youth the resources to design any hangout they wanted without any adult supervision or input (De Winter, 1997). The youth ended up designing a big metal container that was fully screened from the outside world (with the exception of the entrance door) (De Winter, 1997). It was always dark and ended up being a dangerous area and not surprisingly, the site of the first sexual assault in that area (De Winter, 1997). This could have been prevented if the adults had shared their expertise with the youth (De Winter, 1997).

¹¹⁵ This can also occur because of barriers related to the organization due to the long and complicated decision-making processes.

training and the turnover was great, especially for youth over the age of 18 because their lives change from being school-oriented to work-oriented (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

Culture and Socio-economic Status

At the Asian regional meeting of YouthNet International programs, participants identified that it is especially important to address cultural barriers, since in Asia many of the cultural norms and traditions are resistant to youth engagement processes (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.). It is difficult to empower youth in a culture where youth are raised to be passive and obedient and to never question authority (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).¹¹⁶ Since Toronto is a multi-cultural city and has a large Asian population (City of Toronto 2005), this is a challenge for Toronto organizations that want to engage Asian youth.

Summary

The literature review has revealed a pattern of barriers for both youth engagement and for enhancing meaningful youth engagement. Most of the origins of the barriers to youth engagement are intergenerational and/or stem from the youth themselves. Meanwhile, the barriers for more meaningful development seem to originate from the organizations and from intergenerational relationships.

Identifying the Recommendations

With the exception of Hart (1997), the literature did not separate the methods used to engage youth governance and decision-making from methods used to meaningfully engage youth in governance and decision-making. I have separated the recommendations

¹¹⁶ This can be a barrier for entry level participation as well. Parents may not allow their child to join youth engagement organizations if they believe that their child should not have a voice.

section into two main categories, indicating recommendations that have been suggested for both engaging youth and for engaging youth in a more meaningful way. Unlike the barriers, the literature did not categorize recommendations for addressing the barriers.¹¹⁷

I have separated the recommendations into the same categories used above.

Recommendations to Youth Engagement

Organizational Related

From the literature review, I was able to find only one recommendation that addressed organizational related barriers. Mathews (2001a) suggested that organizations should make more attempts to increase the opportunities for youth to contribute to community development (Mathews, 2001a).

Intergenerational Relationships

If community development is to be sustained, adults need to realize that youth should be considered important stakeholders and that their ideas and opinions need to be taken seriously (Mathews, 2001b). In addition, the process for choosing youth representatives should be fair and transparent, similar to the procedures taken in the elections process (Hart, 1997). Adults must recognize that children and youth are the citizens of the present and that it is their right to be included in the decisions that impact them today (Alparone & Risotto, 2001; Tonucci & Risotto, 2001; De Winter, 1997). Involving families and communities will help encourage them to support youth empowerment, and to do so in a manner that will be consistent with their culture (Hart, 1992).

¹¹⁷ This indicates that the recommendations were broad and could be used for any or all the barriers and different types of organizations. However, this thesis separated them because I believe that the recommendations need to be specific and have a purpose (i.e., used to address a certain issue).

Youth Related

Attitudes and Characteristics

Before facilitating youth engagement, an environment should be created that will maximize the child's opportunity to demonstrate competence in order to enhance a child/youth's self-esteem (Hart, 1992; Mathews, 2001b). The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) and Driskell (2002) emphasized the importance of identifying the youth's interests and motivations to participate, so that engagement mechanisms can address these issues.¹¹⁸

Cultural and Socio-economic Status

The approaches used to involve youth need to be flexible and facilitated by responsive front-line staff who can address the complexity of multiple cultures and identities (Mathews, 2001b; Hart, 1997; Mullahey et al., 1999; Driskell, 2002).¹¹⁹ Diversity and inclusiveness should be key strategies in designing opportunities for interaction and participation (Mullahey et al., 1999). It is important to use a variety of youth engagement mechanisms rather than only youth councils, because councils make it harder to engage those who are the most marginalized (Davies & Markham, 2000; Mathews, 2001b; Hart, 1992; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹²⁰ Toronto's Involve Youth 2 (City of Toronto, 2006) suggested to ensure that access to youth engagement opportunities is equitable, honoraria or stipends should be provided so that all youth can have the opportunities to the benefits volunteering.

¹¹⁸ Youth interests ranged from just generally occupying their time to wanting to develop leadership skills and become heavily involved in the decision-making process (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

¹¹⁹ This can be used to address the gender barriers and to enhance the levels of participation. Gender issues should be identified to determine if the female youth would prefer to be in an 'all girl' setting (Driskell, 2002).

¹²⁰ The literature did not elaborate on why this was so.

Recommendations to Meaningful Youth Engagement

Organizational Related

To avoid a superficial level of involvement, the organization should have clear objectives and clarify roles (Davies & Markham, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1997).¹²¹ For the participant to be able to understand his/her role in the project, the project should be as transparent as possible and be clearly understood by the participant, even if he/she is not involved in all phases of the project (Hart, 1997). Rules and the decision-making process should be established by the group, but youth should still feel they can call the group together to address and/or establish new rules for problems (Hart, 1997). Understanding that youth have a different perception of time, bureaucracy needs to either be efficient and expedited on projects involving youth, or ensure that the project is as transparent as possible, so the youth can understand why it is taking so long (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹²²

Methods chosen for participation should take into consideration the following: (i) the purpose; (ii) the age and abilities of participants; (iii) the number of people involved; (iv) the special material required; (v) the project's location; (vi) the alternative methods and (vii) the possible problems and issues that will need to be addressed (Driskell, 2002).¹²³ Meetings when youth representatives or members are in attendance should be

¹²¹ To clarify roles, they could include a code of conduct for how youth are to behave in way that reflects well on all youth (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). This should be applied to youth councils as well (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).

¹²² This can also be used to address the youth related barriers, because the youth may be an impatient person.

¹²³ Driskell (2002) did not elaborate what the alternative methods were, but my assumption is that it is the same as most processes - always think of all your choices before making one. Therefore, if the organization is thinking about youth councils, the organization should also consider surveys, focus groups, youth advisory etc. The possible issues can also be used to address youth related barriers, because youth

held during times and at locations that are convenient for youth, and not be extremely formal and intimidating but rather encouraging of youth engagement (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Driskell, 2002).¹²⁴

When selecting project staff (professionals and community members), it is important to select members who will provide a variety of backgrounds and skills that will be valuable to the project (Driskell, 2002). Youth should be involved in modifying the policies, but unless these youth are trained in policy making, those who are trained in policy analysis should still remain in charge (Davies & Markham, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).¹²⁵

Youth should also be educated about the different models for decision-making and provided time to critically analyze them before selecting one for the group (Hart, 1997).¹²⁶ In addition, Davies and Markham (2000) suggest that organizations should provide basic education on how government works and/or technical training skills (Davies & Markham, 2000).¹²⁷ Hands-on, action-based activities can connect youth with their environment and can develop the capacity of youth for community planning, as well as increase their level of social responsibility (Mullahey et al., 1999). Continuity can be maintained if the adult facilitators are dedicated and act as mentors to the youth, teaching

may have different interests and if they are not involved in something that interests them, they may not want to put in a lot of effort.

¹²⁴ Location is especially important since they will be taking public transit and late night meetings can be as much of a barrier as daytime meetings because of the issue of safety.

¹²⁵ This should be applied to youth forums as well (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998)

¹²⁶ Six different decision-making models include: authoritarianism (decision rests on one person or one small group); delegation of responsibility (authoritarianism with representative democracy—used most often and posed as a true representative democracy when it is not because it still represents the interest of one rather than the collective); random choice; direct democracy (everyone votes, majority rules); representative democracy (representatives are elected through votes, but usually given few choices on who to vote for) and consensus (everyone finds it acceptable but this does not necessarily mean they completely agree) (Hart, 1997).

¹²⁷ Proper policy training is necessary for youth before having them develop policies, otherwise their knowledge and skills may be insufficient to create good policies and they will end up further marginalizing themselves (Davies & Markham, 2000).

them essential knowledge on how organizational and community systems work (Laidlaw Foundation; 2000). Last but not least, it is important to document and apply the lessons learned (Driskell, 2002).

Intergenerational Relationships

Intergenerational relationships should be treated the same way as cross-sectoral partnerships (Driskell, 2002; Davies & Markham, 2000). The project members need to be well organized with clearly defined roles and responsibilities; they should provide youth with respect, support and acknowledgement (Driskell, 2002; Davies & Markham, 2000). In addition, the adult facilitators should form some kind of communication method with other participatory projects (whether local or international) to allow for collaboration (i.e., a sharing of ideas to help identify “best practices”) (Driskell, 2002; Davies & Markham, 2000). The youth should determine an organizational culture with adults that will provide a trustworthy base (Hart, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Youth should play the role of facilitators to help adults understand their needs and identify their issues (Hart, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). The project staff should also have experience working with young people (Driskell, 2002; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) as well as knowledge of the local area and an understanding of the local politics (Driskell, 2002).¹²⁸ Adults need to be trained to learn how to work with and better engage youth (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹²⁹ Adults should avoid talking down to youth and become better listeners (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

¹²⁸ The Laidlaw Foundation (2000) suggested that these adults be generally younger (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) -- I disagree. Even though it is easier to build relationships with younger adults, the purpose of intergenerational relationships is to get a sense of perspective on how the other person thinks and acts, so that better coordination can occur. Having youth only work with younger adults would avoid an important learning experience of mutual understanding, which is much needed with older adults.

¹²⁹ They need to be cognizant of the youth's age-related ability and training experiences as well as training requirements (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). Ways to better engage youth includes recognizing and

Adults need to empower the youth, provide more opportunities for them to plan and conduct activities independently of adults, and to not make decisions without the presence of youth (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹³⁰ Youth engagement mechanisms should be empowering so youth are able to have influence through their decisions, and opportunities to speak on their own terms and territory (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). In addition, youth need to be encouraged to exercise real citizenship and to take responsibility for common community goals (Mullahey et al., 1999; De Winter, 1997). The level of participation should not limit them to only having influence over their own lives; they should be able to have an impact on issues concerning the community as well (Mullahey et al., 1999).

Meetings should have between four and eight participants, so each person can feel involved and not feel intimidated (Hart, 1997; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).¹³¹ Problem-solving in pairs before the meeting is also a good idea, because it will maximize the youth's opportunity to identify and express his/her ideas (Hart, 1997). Youth should be provided with a positive supportive environment so they feel that their opinions can be said without repercussion (Driskell, 2002). Youth need to be provided with opportunities to experience the process because teaching youth about the process of change is not the same as involving them in the process (Mullahey et al., 1999).¹³²

expanding on non-traditional approaches to engagement such as drama, art, action, media etc. (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).

¹³⁰ This can also be used to address organizational barriers because meetings could be scheduled to accommodate to the youth.

¹³¹ Organizations should also take this into consideration when conducting meetings.

¹³² This can be used to address organizational barriers as well because organizations need to understand that engagement is not an automatic process, the youth need to be genuinely involved.

Youth Related

Attitudes and Characteristics

Since friendships among youth frequently change, the program/project groups should be flexible (Hart, 1997) and accommodating.¹³³ Different degrees of facilitation and types of involvement for different people at various stages need to be designed for each project (Hart, 1992). When youth are engaged in the reflection and the evaluation process, any criticism made towards them should be constructive and foster creativity (Driskell, 2002) so that self-esteem can be nurtured. The reflection process should happen early and often to allow the participants to reflect on their tasks and accomplishments and make suggestions on how to enhance the engagement (Driskell, 2002). Youth councils should continuously be recruiting new youth members to replace the ones that have left (Mathews, 2001b).¹³⁴

Culture and Socio-economic Status

Mathews (2001b) was the only source that specifically mentioned a recommendation for cultural and/or socio-economic related barriers, supporting my assumption that these barriers are not really considered as such for meaningful youth engagement. The suggestion was that the facilitators needed to recognize the individuals' abilities, including their own work pace and diversity (Mathews, 2001b).¹³⁵ Therefore facilitators should not use one method of youth engagement for everyone. Instead youth engagement mechanisms should be flexible to address the diverse needs.

¹³³ However, in this case study for the girls between the ages of 13-17, it should be made clear to them that maintaining continuity and learning to work with those who are not their friends is important (Hart, 1997).

¹³⁴ This can be used to address barriers to meaningful youth engagement as well as to ensure there is continuity towards more genuine engagement.

¹³⁵ However, Hart (1992) warns that it is not a good idea to use simple developmental stages or age-related norms to determine the capability of the child, but that this is used only as a guide to identify the sequence of development.

Summary

There has been little research addressing gender related barriers; any recommendations made have been tied in with other barriers such as cultural and/or socio-economic related barriers. Most of the recommendations made to address the barriers to participating in governance and decision-making were specific to societal attitudes and youth variations. There were many more recommendations made to enhance the level of youth engagement even though most of the literature did not discuss in-depth how to identify the level at which youth were engaged. Most of the recommendations made for enhancing genuine youth engagement addressed the organizational and intergenerational barriers.

In general, the recommendations made for engaging youth were quite vague and contained ambiguous phrases such as ‘should increase’. Recommendations to engage youth in a more meaningful way were slightly more specific and described how and what to change. However, every organization has its own culture, structure and decision-making processes, therefore recommendations should be specific to the organization to address its particular barriers. In general, the literature’s recommendations are not very helpful, as they can be easily ignored or interpreted in ways that do not end up addressing the barriers.

Directional Propositions

There is not much in the literature focusing on the barriers and recommendations for female youth engagement. I expected that the GU members would be insightful and expand on the literature in terms of barriers and recommendations regarding female youth engagement. The TYC is a well established youth council and I expected that the data I

collected from them would expand on the barriers and recommendations for youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement. I expected that the TYC members had participated at a variety of different levels of youth engagement and would be able to identify what made it harder or easier for them to participate in governance and decision-making. I expected that the GU interviewees would also be able to expand on the literature regarding specific barriers and recommendation for youth engagement because they just started to engage GURLs in the past year and would most likely have organizational and decision-making processes that are not facilitative to youth engagement and reinforce the unequal power relations between the youth and adult.

Intergenerational barriers may come into play if the partners do not feel that the GURLs are capable of planning events and/or making their own decisions. Therefore, I expected to find the GURLs' perceived decision-making power would be weaker than that of the GU community partner representatives. In addition, the literature also suggested that an organization's structure can create many barriers to youth engagement and to meaningful youth engagement. Since the TYC and GU are structured differently, I expected to find different strengths, barriers, and recommendations for youth engagement.

To expand on the recommendation made by the Laidlaw Foundation (2000), I asked the youth leaders and the key staff members from both organizations (as well as the GU community partners) what they perceived as the barriers for those who are not engaged in the leadership roles. I expected that my interviews would expand on the cultural barriers, since Toronto is a multicultural population and the engaged youth would be from many multi-cultural backgrounds.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A) Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative Research

I used qualitative research methods to conduct my research. The primary objectives of qualitative research are: describing, understanding and determining meaning according one's perception (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). Even though qualitative research is often inductive (no preconceived hypotheses - the purpose is to develop hypotheses), this study was both inductive (data analysis frameworks were developed based on data collected) and deductive (data collection frameworks were based on the theoretical work of previous youth engagement and empowerment researchers) (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). This study included several components of qualitative research: a small purposive sample size; data collected in natural, real world settings; myself as the primary data collection instrument; a flexible research design; and the data analysis was descriptive and interpretive (Thomas & Nelson, 2001).

Case Study Analysis on the Toronto Youth Cabinet and Girls Unlimited

To develop a better understanding about the history and development of Toronto's Youth Engagement Initiative, I conducted case studies on two different organizations: GU and TYC. My case studies were descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative because I had a three-fold purpose: explain each organization's process of youth engagement; interpret the data collected to expand on theories of youth engagement; and evaluate the organization's youth engagement techniques (Thomas and Nelson, 2001).

According to Yin (2003), my research was a case study because it looks at the “how” question; specifically, how to enhance an organization’s capacity to enhance youth engagement when addressing barriers to physical activity. To clearly explain each of the organization’s youth-engagement processes, I first examined the history, structure, recruitment and decision-making process of each organization. I then evaluated how the organization’s youth-engagement processes addressed the barriers to youth engagement and to meaningful youth engagement. To collect this information I completed document analysis, participant observation, and interviews specific to each of the organizations (see Table III.a.).

Table III.a. Methods Used by Sub-Problem

Method Used	#1	#2	#3
Focus Group: I conducted a 1-hour focus group with 8 TYC members (2 female, 6 male).	X	X	N/A
Participant Observation: I conducted participant observation at 6 GU meetings (4 network meetings, 1 GU Steering Committee and 1 GURLs Citywide) and 3 TYC meetings (2 Executive and 1 ‘General’).	X	X	X
Document Analysis: I conducted document analysis of meeting minutes, work plans, constitutions, partnership agreements, etc., from the Steering Committee, GURLs Citywide, Network 1 and Network 2 and the TYC.	X	X	X
Interviews: I conducted 9 interviews with GU stakeholders (4 GURLs, 4 community partners, and 1 TPH staff member), 5 interviews with TYC stakeholders (2 TYC Executives, 2 TYC ‘General’ members, and 1 TYC Coordinator), and 1 with the Laidlaw Youth Engagement Coordinator.	X	X	X

These methods were triangulated to analyze similar and different themes (Patton, 1990). Triangulation can be used to determine the consistency of findings from different data-collection methods and within the same methods between different sources (Patton, 1990). In this case, triangulation occurred through interviews, document analysis and participant observation, and between the youth leaders, the key staff members and the

community partners. Patton (1990) notes that, with qualitative studies, consistency should not be expected and the main purpose is to explain why the differences exist.

Focus Group with the Toronto Youth Cabinet

The materials I used to conduct the focus groups included the focus group handout (see Appendix C), my own writing utensils and notebook, as well as the TYC boardroom's large flip chart and white-board. Focus groups are small groups that involve a select number of individuals who have something in common, where views and feelings are expressed in their own words about an issue or topic, and opportunities are provided to respond to input given by other participants (Driskell, 2002). Focus groups can be used to develop an interview instrument (Driskell, 2002). The purpose of this focus group was to incorporate a youth perspective and to incorporate differing individuals' cultural and/or socio-economic variations as well.¹³⁶ I conducted the one-hour focus group as the first part of the TYC Executive meeting. I chose to use the same location, in keeping with Driskell's (2002) direction that the location should provide privacy, familiarity and accessibility. The focus group participants were both TYC Executives and 'General' members.¹³⁷

Five days before the focus group was conducted, the TYC Coordinator forwarded to all the Executives my information and recruitment email explaining the nature of the research and requesting their participation in the focus group (see Appendix B). Only one of the participants had responded to the email and consented to participating in the

¹³⁶ The weaknesses with the methods of youth engagement framework and the levels of participation framework were that they were developed from an adult perspective. Since it is the youth who are being engaged, they have a better insight on what they are and should be experiencing. Youth should be able to dictate what the characteristics and names are for each method and participation level.

¹³⁷ I did not know until the focus group that the Executive meetings are open to all members. It was identified during the focus group and confirmed against the Executive Contact list (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006m) that there were four Executive members and four 'General' members who participated in the focus group.

focus group.¹³⁸ According to Driskell (2002), a focus group should be a small group of between six and ten participants. Therefore taking Driskell's (2002) direction I waited for an additional half hour for at least six more TYC members to arrive and to agree to participate in the focus group. As each member arrived, I informed him/her about the purpose of my study and asked for their participation and for them to sign the University of Windsor's consent form. The focus group commenced once eight TYC members agreed to participate in the focus group and signed the consent form (the last three focus group participants arrived together).¹³⁹ Out of the eight focus group participants, two were females and seven were youth of colour.

Each member was provided a handout which outlined the purpose of the study and the adult's perspectives of the methods and levels of youth engagement (see Appendix C). The focus group began by brainstorming about what made youth engagement meaningful. The ideas were recorded on a large flip chart that was available in the boardroom. The focus group members were then asked to assist in developing a "Methods of Youth Engagement Framework" (e.g., methods can be youth surveys or youth councils) and to provide descriptions for each method. Together the youth and I reviewed Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) categories of youth engagement methods described in the handout (see Appendix C). As a group, the youth were asked to make adjustments to the methods of youth engagement framework.¹⁴⁰ The focus group's ideas were recorded on the large flip chart.

¹³⁸ This is because the email was only sent out to the Executive members and the 'General' members did not receive the email; in addition, one 'Executive' member stated that (s)he ignores the emails because they receive so many.

¹³⁹ These were the first eight TYC members to arrive.

¹⁴⁰ This is discussed further in data results and data analysis of "Chapter IV: Sub-Problem #2" and "Chapter V: Sub-Problem #2".

The youth were also asked to define meaningful youth engagement and to develop a “Youth Participation Ladder,” incorporating descriptions of the different levels of youth engagement (i.e., manipulation, tokenism, and youth-initiated shared decisions with adults). To facilitate the discussion, the youth and I reviewed the handout that described the participation ladders from Hart (1997) and Arnstein (1969) (see Appendix C). In addition, I had written out each of the frameworks on the white-board. As a group the youth were asked to make adjustments to the levels of youth engagement framework. The focus group’s ideas were recorded on the flip chart.

The focus group created a new level of youth engagement framework combining parts from Arnstein (1969) and Hart (1992).¹⁴¹ The results of the focus groups were used to assist in the data analysis of the methods and levels of youth engagement as well as in identifying what was meaningful in the youth engagement experience.

Immediately after the focus group session was completed, I expanded on the notes made by summarizing and analyzing the focus group results and then organizing the records into my file folders, as recommended by Driskell (2002).

Document Analysis

Based on the case study framework created by the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) and Perkins & Zimmerman’s (1995) empowerment analysis framework, I created a case-study analysis framework to identify the following for each of the organizations: history, their mission, their programs and services, their profile of the youth served, their profile of the youth engaged, their youth engagement process (including the outreach and application process), the profile of the engaged youth, the youths’ roles and

¹⁴¹ This is discussed further in data results and analysis of Sub-Problem#2.

responsibilities (including the decision-making power), and the nature of the support provided (including facilitation and training).

I used Driskell's (2002) youth-engagement process framework to explore the steps that each organization uses to engage youth in governance and decision-making. Driskell (2002) elaborated on the youth engagement process, stating that the organization's participatory planning process should take into consideration the context (the political, economic, social, and cultural factors) and all the tasks that are needed to initiate and maintain the project.¹⁴² These factors will create potential opportunities as well as barriers and constraints for the stakeholders (Driskell, 2002). To understand the youth engagement process, I needed to know how each of the organizations did the following: identified the issues (i.e., evaluated the local area and analyzed the results); planned for change (i.e., set goals, explored alternatives, and developed a plan); performed implementation (i.e., put the plan into practice through a series of actions); and completed evaluations (i.e., monitored and reflected on the progress) (Driskell, 2002).¹⁴³

The two frameworks (case study analysis and youth engagement), as well as Hart's (1997) description of the different methods of decision-making, and the literature on the barriers and recommendations to youth engagement were used to guide my document analysis for both organizations (see Appendix D). Collecting the same categories of information facilitated my data analysis. The document analysis assisted me in identifying the history of Toronto's youth engagement initiative. In addition it assisted me in identifying each organization's methods and levels of participation and

¹⁴² Driskell (2002) uses the term "youth engagement process" but I believe what we are really looking at is identifying the decision-making process to understand the youth engagement process. Therefore in this study I will refer to it as decision-making process.

¹⁴³ Evaluation also looks at what targets and indicators they used to determine if the program, project and/or event was a success.

strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement.

After receiving approval from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (and the TPH Research Board to conduct research on GU), I emailed the TPH nurses of Network 1 and Network 2 as well as the key staff members from the GU and the TYC to provide me with relevant documents that would assist in identifying the categories outlined in the document-analysis framework (see Appendix B).¹⁴⁴ These documents included, but were not limited to grant applications, meeting minutes, policies, terms of references, work plans, partnership agreements, application and evaluation forms and training supplements. Besides the documents directed to me by the TPH staff and TYC staff, I looked at additional documents that my interviewees suggested (i.e., three interviewees directed me to look at the youth engagement continuum by Listen (2003) and one interviewee directed me to the Listen (2003) document.

For GU, I limited my document collection to the Steering Committee, GURLs Citywide, Network 1 and Network 2.¹⁴⁵ I received documents for the Steering Committee and GURLs Citywide from the TPH lead. For Network 1 and Network 2, I collected documents from their respective TPH nurses. The time-frame of the documents was from 2002 (when GU received the Ontario Works Grant) to 2006. To understand the GU's current planning, implementation and evaluation processes, I focused on the documents pertaining to the GU Network and Citywide events hosted in the year 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Before I conducted data collection with Girls Unlimited, I had to get approval from the Toronto Public Health Evaluation and Research Board. This process took a month and was very difficult as it required much more information than the University of Windsor Research and Ethics Board and validation of qualitative research. Since the GU networks were independent of each other, I was redirected by GU to the Public Health Nurses of Network 1 and Network 2 to access these two Networks documents.

¹⁴⁵ This is further explained in "B) Delimitations/Limitations" section below.

For Network 1, I conducted most of the document analysis at the Public Health Office and was given access to all GU documents. I was also emailed a few documents and was provided with photocopies of documents. For Network 2, I was provided with photocopies and emailed some of the documents. I was both emailed and provided with original documents related to the Steering Committee and GURLs Citywide from the TPH lead. If I was missing anything (such as missing meeting minutes or work plans), I would email/call and if they had the document they would email it.¹⁴⁶

For the TYC, I conducted document analysis at City Hall and was provided access to all TYC related documents by the TYC Coordinator. The time frame of the document analysis was from 1998 (when TYC was first created) to 2006.¹⁴⁷ To understand the TYC's current planning, implementation and evaluation processes, I focused on the documents that pertained to the TYC events or initiatives in the year 2006.

Participant Observation

To gain a better understanding about the youth engagement processes, I conducted participant observation in each of the meetings and/or events of the TYC and GU during the one month data collection period. During the timeframe of the participant observation there were no events or initiatives hosted.¹⁴⁸

After receiving approval from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (and the TPH Research Board to conduct research on GU), I sent out an information email to the TYC Coordinator (who forwarded it out to all the TYC members) and the

¹⁴⁶ However, there was an instance where I requested for a document and did not get a response back from the community partner I had been directed to by the TPH nurse of Network 2 to obtain the document from.

¹⁴⁷ One document was given to me by the TYC Coordinator, dated 1997, which elaborated on the initiation of TYC and contradicted Mullahey et al. (1999), so I included it to the study.

¹⁴⁸ I had been invited to an event that GU had sponsored. Unfortunately, the GURLs' role in the event was postponed until a later time and I was unable to attend. The GURLs were supposed to do speeches and promote GU. However, I was told later that the GURLs' role in the event was taken away because other important dignitaries were given the time slot.

TPH network nurses as well as Steering Committee and GURLs Citywide lead staff (who forwarded it out to all the community partners and GURLs). The purpose of the email was to explain the purpose of my study and to gain consent from the meeting chairs and from all the participants attending the meetings/event (see Appendix B). I provided the TYC members, the GURLs and the GU community partners with opportunities to email me any questions or concerns they had. Both GU and TYC members and stakeholders took this opportunity to voice their concerns about my presence at the meetings and request more information on the purpose of my study and what exactly I would be recording during the meeting.¹⁴⁹

For GU, I conducted participant observations at all four of the network meetings, one Steering Committee meeting and one GURL Citywide meeting. For the TYC, I conducted participant observation at two Executive meetings and one ‘General’ membership meeting. These meetings included either youth leaders, community partner representatives and/or staff members.

To facilitate my data analysis, I used Driskell’s (2002) decision-making process framework and created a chart to record each organization’s strengths, weaknesses (using the categories of barriers I identified in my literature review in sub-problem #2), and recommendations to record my observations (see Appendix E). For each organization, I used Hart’s (1997) different methods of decision-making and the literature on the barriers

¹⁴⁹ The TYC members only needed one email response; however, the GU community partners from one Network were more skeptical about my ability to conduct a proper participant observation. Further email correspondence was required to address their concerns. I had to defend my qualifications as a student researcher and reassure the partners that I was only trying to get a better understanding of how the organization engages youth. I emphasized that I am focusing on recording information on their decisions-making process and how they facilitate or inhibit youth engagement and that the observations would not be identifying any specific partner agencies. In addition to the emails, I had to arrive at the Network meeting early and do another presentation to the network partners present about the purpose of my study before I was given permission to stay and conduct the participant observation.

and recommendations to youth engagement to identify the methods of decision-making and the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations. Immediately after each participant observation period, I elaborated on my notes. I created reference abbreviations for my participant observation notes: PO A, PO B, PO C, PO D, PO E, PO F, PO G, PO H, and PO I. These observations assisted me in my data analysis, as they contradicted, expanded upon, or supported the information I collected from my interviews and document analysis. Participant observation also helped me better understand the organization's decision-making processes and the barriers to youth engagement and to meaningful youth engagement.

Interviews

Babbie (1992) lists the following benefits to interviews: they are harder for the participants to ignore than surveys, allow for further comprehension of questions, and allow for data-collection on additional responses including body language.¹⁵⁰ I prepared clearly worded questions in advance, with probes, and avoided leading questions (Driskell, 2002; Patton, 1990). As each participant group had different roles in their organization, three sets of semi-structured interview guides were developed (see Appendix G). The semi-structured interview guides made my data analysis easier because I was able to locate and analyze the different respondent's answers to the same question (Patton, 1990). The questions for the TYC members, the GURLs and the GU community partners were very similar. The set of interview questions for the organization's key informants, the Toronto Public Health Staff and the City of Toronto

¹⁵⁰ The interviewer is also present to respond to any confusion with the questions.

staff, were very similar.¹⁵¹ The set of interview questions for the Laidlaw Foundation Youth Engagement Coordinator had some similar questions but also had more general youth engagement questions (i.e., to discuss different methods and levels of youth engagement).

The questions were based on the information gathered in the literature review, which guided me in identifying the history of youth engagement and/or the TYC or GU as well as each organization's decision-making processes, youth engagement processes, methods and levels of youth engagement, and strengths, weaknesses and recommendations to youth engagement.¹⁵² For example, the literature review suggested that there are two main barriers to youth engagement: intergenerational relationships and youth variations. It also suggested that most of the barriers to meaningful youth engagement are due to the organization's structure and intergenerational relationships. Therefore, the interview questions were set up to explore the nature of these barriers.¹⁵³

The semi-structured interview questions were reviewed and revised according to suggestions from the thesis committee, the University of Windsor Ethics Board, the TYC Executive members, and the Toronto Public Health Ethics Board. This process was completed so that the questions would as ethical as possible (Babbie, 1989) as well as relevant.¹⁵⁴ Once the revisions were completed, I conducted a pilot interview with a

¹⁵¹ The Laidlaw Foundation survey was similar to that of the TYC and GU staff members but more questions were asked about the interviewee's expertise on youth engagement. In addition, the Laidlaw foundation, the GU staff members and the TYC staff members got asked questions that were on the GU and TYC survey.

¹⁵² The youth engagement processes questions were specifically on the outreach, application as well as the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation process of the program or service in 2006.

¹⁵³ However, both the survey and interview guides were also set up to identify barriers and recommendations that were not discussed in the literature review.

¹⁵⁴ This is important because I interviewed youth leaders ranging from 13 to 24 years old.

member from the TYC who was not going to be involved in the actual study.¹⁵⁵ The purpose of the pilot study was to test the suitability of the language and wording of the questions (Driskell, 2002) and to provide an opportunity to practice my interview skills. The wording of the questions was adjusted based on feedback from the pilot study participant. I also followed Babbie's (1992) advice and made sure that I was thoroughly familiar with the questions so that they could be clearly explained to and understood by the interviewee (Babbie, 1992). The interviews were conducted at a time and place that was convenient, safe, and familiar to the interviewees.¹⁵⁶ One interview was not possible in person and was conducted over the telephone. I made the interviewee as comfortable as possible by following general rules for interviewing, such as dressing in accordance with the participant and maintaining a pleasant attitude (Babbie, 1992).¹⁵⁷

After receiving approval from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (and the TPH Research Board to conduct research on GU), I sent out information and recruitment emails to the GURLs Citywide and Steering Committee TPH lead staff, each network's TPH nurses, the TYC Coordinator and the Laidlaw Foundation's Youth

¹⁵⁵ I could only conduct one pilot study since getting volunteers for the interviews was very difficult and the interview guides for the staff, community partners, and youth were similar. In addition, I had the interview guides approved and analyzed by both the Toronto Public Health Ethics Board and the Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive members. For the Laidlaw Foundation, there was only one full time Youth Engagement Coordinator. To facilitate the interview process, the interviewees (with the exception of the Laidlaw Foundation Youth Engagement Coordinator) was emailed the interview a few days before to understand the questions. However, the interview guides sent did not include the probe questions, so that there would still be some spontaneous answers. In addition, the interviewees were provided with a copy of the interview guide during the interview, in case they were visual learners.

¹⁵⁶ Interviews were conducted at coffee shops, public libraries, offices, and board rooms. The interviews that were conducted in the public locations (coffee shops and libraries) were harder to transcribe because of the background noise or because we tried to keep our voices low. I personally felt a little more uncomfortable conducting the interview in these public spaces, however, the interviewees did not indicate any discomfort (verbally or through body language or voice).

¹⁵⁷ I dressed in a fashion that would be similar to the dress code the interviewee would be wearing; if casual, then dress casual etc. and followed Babbie's (1992) suggestion to be neat and wear modest apparel. In addition, I have experience working with youth and was able to make them feel comfortable, welcomed, and appreciated (see Appendix G).

Engagement Coordinator (Appendix B).¹⁵⁸ In addition, I made announcements at the meetings explaining the nature of the research and requesting their participation in the interviews.¹⁵⁹ In the email, I requested that the volunteers had to have been part of their respective organizations (either GU or TYC) for at least six months to ensure that each of them had an opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of an event or initiative.¹⁶⁰ The GURLs Citywide and Steering Committee TPH lead staff, and the TPH nurses forwarded my email to all the GURLs and the Steering Committee community partners. Each networks' TPH nurses forwarded the email to their respective network community partners. The TYC Coordinator forwarded the email on the TYC listserv (reaching out to all TYC members). Only four interviewees responded to the mass email(s).¹⁶¹ After one week, I switched from this method of sampling to convenience sampling, so that I would have enough participants to interview. Two of the community partners I interviewed were referred to me by a network's TPH nurse - they consented to the interview after I emailed a personal request to participate in the interview. Three GURLs, one community partner, and three TYC interviewees were recruited at the meetings.¹⁶² At the end of the Executive meeting, I personally asked one

¹⁵⁸ The Laidlaw Youth Engagement Coordinator responded by email and volunteered to be interviewed.

¹⁵⁹ No announcements were made at Laidlaw Foundation meetings.

¹⁶⁰ The TYC Coordinator had only been part of the TYC for five months, however, (s)he was the only current full-time TYC staff member and (s)he worked closely with the youth but had a limited knowledge of TYC history. Two GU interviewees had been involved in GU for just under six months. I interviewed these two because they were the only ones that volunteered for their networks. One interviewee had only been part of GU for four months, but she was the only GURL in her network.

¹⁶¹ It took three more emails before any TYC members volunteered. Only two members responded to the emails. However, one member was outside the age range (older), so I chose to interview the youth that was within the age range and was not a very active member. At the 'General' membership meeting I attended, only one member was not new to the TYC; however, that person wasn't interested in volunteering.

¹⁶² At the first GURLs meetings I attended, one GURL and community partner volunteered while the rest provided me with their email addresses to get a copy of the information email. Two weeks later I emailed the GURLs again and attended another GURLs meeting to make another volunteer request. The last two GURLs volunteers were apprehensive because they were worried that it would be very formal and time

female and one male to volunteer to be interviewed. To ensure that my interviewees were as diverse as possible, I tried to recruit interviewees who were varied in gender, age, cultural background, and personality.¹⁶³ All the interviewees were told that they could take a day or two to make their decision to volunteer.¹⁶⁴ Those who volunteered to participate in the interview were emailed the University of Windsor consent forms and they were handed back to me in person at the time of the interview.¹⁶⁵

Before each interview began, I went through the purpose of the study and told the interviewees that they did not have to answer any questions they found uncomfortable. With the interviewees' permission, I recorded and transcribed the interviews to ensure the data was accurate for analysis (Patton, 1990). In addition, I brought a pen and paper to make additional notes regarding body language and perceived attitude during the process (Driskell, 2002). Writing notes during the interview gave non-verbal feedback to interviewees that their responses were important and facilitated data analysis by identifying important points (Patton, 1990).

I conducted one hour semi-structured interviews with four GU Youth Leaders (GURLs), four GU Community Partners, two TYC Executive members and two Toronto Cabinet 'General' members. I conducted ninety minute interviews with one GU Toronto Public Health staff member, one TYC Coordinator, and one Youth Engagement Coordinator from the Laidlaw Foundation.¹⁶⁶ The GU TPH staff member and TYC

consuming but once they understood that it would be a casual interview and that I would conduct the interview anywhere that was convenient for them, they both volunteered.

¹⁶³ With the exception of the last 'General' member interviewee and the first GURL volunteer interviewee, I had time to get to know the youth before recruiting volunteers.

¹⁶⁴ However, the majority of them said yes immediately.

¹⁶⁵ One GURL had to be mailed her consent form and she was provided with a pre-addressed and stamped envelope to return it back to me.

¹⁶⁶ Their interview guide had additional questions, but in addition these interviewees had much more to say than the other interviewees.

Coordinator worked closely with the youth and had in-depth knowledge of their respective organizations.

Immediately after the interview, I reviewed the entire interview once more and elaborated on any notes made during the interview.¹⁶⁷ The transcribed interviews were emailed to the interviewee for additions, revisions and/or clarifications on any ambiguous answers (Driskell, 2002; Patton, 1990).¹⁶⁸ Each interviewee was given two weeks to review his/her interview and if it was not returned within the two weeks, that was an indication that it was fine and I commenced with the interview coding. I followed five steps in the qualitative analysis process that helped me to ensure the patterns and themes identified from the data are valid (Patton, 1990). These included: *transcribing* the interviews; *coding* the data¹⁶⁹; *identifying common and variable patterns* within each group (i.e., female youth leaders) and across groups (i.e., female youth leaders and male youth leaders); and finally *identifying the themes* that will link or explain the data (Patton, 1990; Metcalf, 2003). The interview results were used in my data analysis to elaborate on the each of the three sub-questions.

The age range of the youth from both organizations I interviewed was between 15 and 22 years old. The youngest adult interviewee was between 20 to 25 years old and three of the interviewees were between 30 to 40 years old.¹⁷⁰ Out of the eight youth I interviewed, two identified him/herself as poor, three interviewees identified him/herself

¹⁶⁷ This included summarizing the responses to each question and integrating quotes made during the interview (Patton, 1990).

¹⁶⁸ One of the interviews was completely redone by one of the interviewees who felt that his/her responses were incoherent. So the interviewee retyped out his/her answers and provided an interview supplement (a speech that he/she did at a conference which was based on the work by Listen, Inc (2003)). Therefore in the data results there are some interview responses that were supported and/or answered by the interview supplements (i.e., original speech and the document by Listen, Inc. (2003)).

¹⁶⁹ Key words are chosen to identify the similarities and differences between data sources (Patton, 1990).

¹⁷⁰ Four of the adult interviewees did not disclose their age.

as lower-middle class (getting-by), while two other interviewees identified him/herself as middle-class.¹⁷¹ Out of the six adult interviewees, one of the interviewees identified him/herself as lower-middle class, while five other interviewees identified themselves as middle class.¹⁷² The ethno-cultural make-up of the interviewees was diverse. When asked about their ethno-cultural background, the interviewees identified themselves as Eastern European (1), Black (3), White (1), Sri Lankan (1), Asian (1), Jamaican and Trinidadian (1), Russian (1), Latina (2), and Somalian (1).¹⁷³ Two interviewees described him/herself as a mix of three to four different ethno-cultural backgrounds.

Seven out of eight youth interviewees stated that they were involved in one or more school or community organizations other than GU or TYC. Four of six adult interviewees stated that (s)he is involved in community organizations in addition to TYC or GU. To maintain confidentiality, I have assigned pseudonyms (*a, b, c, d, e, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, n, o*). The interviewees in italics are from GU and the non italicized interviewee pseudonyms are from either TYC or Laidlaw Foundation. The capitalized letters represent youth and the lowercase letters are adults. To help maintain confidentiality, the four different networks have been given pseudonyms (Network 1, Network 2, Network 3, and Network 4).¹⁷⁴ In cases where it will be obvious which Network is being discussed, the interviewee(s) will not be identified and rather will be

¹⁷¹ One of the youth interviewees did not state socio-economic status.

¹⁷² One of the adult interviewees did not state socio-economic status.

¹⁷³ To maintain confidentiality I have replaced the pseudonyms with 'X', with the number preceding it, representing the number of interviewees stated it.

¹⁷⁴ There are only two GURLs per Network and it would be easier to identify who said what if the networks were identified. In addition, due to the apprehensive attitudes from the GU community partners, I felt it was necessary to not identify who said what about his/her specific network. In cases where it will be obvious which Network is being discussed, the interviewee(s) will not be identified and instead referenced as 'X'. The number of interviewees that supported the statement will be identified by the number preceding the 'X'

referenced as 'X'. If there is more than one interviewee that supported the statement, it will be identified by the number preceding the 'X' (e.g., 2X).

B) Delimitations/Limitations

i. I delimited the number of organizations I would be conducting case studies on to two, so that I would have enough time to get an in-depth understanding of each of the organizations.

The significance of the results of this study is limited because case study results cannot be generalized to populations or universes (Yin, 2003). The barriers and recommendations identified in this study cannot be applied completely to other organizations because each organization is structurally different and will have its own youth engagement processes. However, they can be used to help expand upon and generalize theories (Yin, 2003). The results of this study can illustrate to other organizations that youth engagement is a complex process and should be critically analyzed to ensure it is done in a meaningful way.

Another drawback to conducting only two case studies is that it has limited the number of different youth engagement methods I could expand upon from the literature. Conducting more case studies on organizations that engage youth in methods other than the ones used with the TYC or GU, would have allowed me to gain a better understanding on the different methods of youth engagement.

ii. I delimited the research focus to only analyzing the aspects of youth engagement that have impacted on the past and present youth engagement processes. I did this because the Center of Excellence (2005) stated that assessments should be done to measure the impact of programs designed to enhance engagement before

measuring the impact that youth engagement has on improving health. In addition, Hart (1992; 1997) stated that if youth aren't engaged meaningfully their impact on the outcome will be minimal.

This focus limited my analysis of youth engagement by excluding the outcome of the youth engagement process, such as discovering the actual benefits of successful youth engagement. Discovering the actual benefits of youth engagement might have helped the organizations to increase their resources as they would be able to apply for more grants from organizations interested in supporting the benefits.

iii. Since document analysis can take a long time (Yin, 2003), I delimited the time-frames for the documents I analyzed. For Girls Unlimited, I only looked at documents dated from the year 2002 (when they started) to 2006. For the Toronto Youth Cabinet, I went from 1998, when the Toronto Youth Cabinet was created, to 2006.

I was not able to analyze any documents in the year 2007, which limited me from discovering any recent changes to the organization's structure or decision-making process. Therefore, recommendations made in the study may no longer be an issue because the organization has already taken action to address them. However, these recommendations and barriers may still help the members to identify barriers they hadn't yet recognized or addressed.

iv. For both of these organizations, I only analyzed documents that addressed the categories outlined within the document analysis framework. I only looked at the youth engagement aspects outlined by the literature (i.e., organizational structure, decision-making processes, youth engagement processes etc.).

This approach limited me from analyzing documents that were outside the scope of the framework. This may have prevented me from identifying other aspects of the organization. For example, GU had more partnership documents and Toronto Public Health Physical Activity Workgroup meeting minutes were excluded in this study. However, I did a very extensive document analysis on the areas that were identified in the document analysis framework, which assisted me in identifying the organizations' strengths and weaknesses in relation to youth engagement.

v. I delimited my participant observations to only include the meetings and/or events hosted within the one month timeframe allotted for each organization.

I was limited to only observing those who attended the meetings and/or events. Those who attended may not be the same youth and community partners who participated in the planning and organization of the major 2006 event for their network. In addition, my data collection period was in the winter months. There were no events or initiatives running during that period of time. GU programs were not observed because they are not under the responsibility of the GURLs. What I was observing might not have been the normal meeting culture because different people might change the group dynamic, thus it might be different from what occurred last year when they were planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services. However, I was provided with documents (such as meeting minutes) and interviewees also elaborated on what was normally discussed during the meetings.

vi. Due to time constraints, the fact that the TYC members have been participating in youth engagement longer than the members of GU, and the delay in the Ethics

approval from the TPH Ethics Board, I limited myself to conducting only one focus group, which was with the Toronto Youth Cabinet.

I conducted only one focus group - with the TYC - to develop the methods and levels of youth engagement frameworks. This limited the youth perspective on the frameworks to only those of the TYC. I also did not have as great a female perspective in the TYC focus group as I would have with a GURLs focus group. Gender has been identified as an important barrier to both youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement (Hart, 1992; Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998) and thus it is important to have female youth there to share their experiences and to help design the frameworks. Fortunately, two out of the eight focus group members were female and one of the female participants was very vocal. In addition, I conducted interviews with six female youth (four GURLs, and one TYC Executive and one TYC 'General' member) who elaborated on their experiences in youth engagement and on what makes youth engagement meaningful.

vii. Due to the difficulty of gathering interviewees, I interviewed some individuals who were involved in the organization less than six months.

I initially delimited my interview sample to gathering the opinions and views of those who have been involved in the organization for over six months, so that I would be able to ensure that each interviewee had at least an opportunity to participate in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of an event. However, the GURLs position had only existed since March 2006 and a few of the networks already had experienced turnovers with their GURLs. Only two of the GURLs who volunteered to be interviewed were part of the organization since the beginning. The other two interviewees had only

been GURLs for four to five months. One GURL was the only representative of her network and the other GURL was the only person to respond to the volunteer request. Some of their responses were thus not as in-depth because they lacked experience in the organization. I was also limited to interviewing the TYC Coordinator, who was the only present full-time staff member and had only been part of the organization for five months. There has been turnover with the TYC Coordinator position as well.

viii. Due to time constraints, I only conducted an in-depth document analysis of two of the four networks. I also only collected network meeting minutes and other documents about programs and services specific to the network.

The delimitations placed on my document analysis meant that I was unable to provide document support for some of the interviewee responses that were specific to their network (i.e., how often the GURLs attended the meetings – I was not able to support their response with documents because I did not analyze that network’s meeting minutes). Documents from other networks might have supported, contradicted, or extended the literature, interviews, and participant observations.

ix. I delimited the data collection of the meeting minutes that were provided by the TYC Coordinator and the Toronto Public Health staff or nurses from the Network’s, the GURLs Citywide and Steering Committee.

The meeting minutes analysis was limited because unfortunately there were missing minutes that the TPH nurses or staff member of each organization were unable to locate. The TYC had major gaps in their meeting minutes: 1998/1999 were missing; and 2005 (except for the Executive meetings)/2006 were missing. Therefore, I was not able to determine how many youth attended the TYC meetings in 2006, or have an idea about

how they planned, implemented and evaluated their recent programs and services. GU were missing a few random meeting minutes from the networks, GURLs meetings, and Steering Committee meetings. With GU, I was unable to see exactly how many meetings were hosted during the year 2006 and how many of them had GURLs in attendance.

x. Even though Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) stated that the empowerment process can occur at the individual, organizational, and community level, I delimited this thesis to analyzing the empowerment process only at the individual and organizational levels. I did not address the empowering or disempowering process of the surrounding community due to time constraints in collecting the data and analyzing the results.

The results are limited because the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations of the community's empowerment process were not be identified or discussed. Without the community's perspective on the empowerment process, I was not able to identify how the community facilitated or acted as barriers to youth empowerment. Both organizations interacted with the community (GU provides female physical activity networks and citywide events and the TYC hosts Youth Speak Outs); thus the community will have an impact on how empowered the youth are and whether or not they are able to follow through with their initiatives.

xi. I delimited the research methodology to qualitative research.

Since qualitative research requires the researcher to be the instrument to collect data and "[o]ne's view of the world varies with one's perception and is highly subjective" (Thomas & Nelson, 2001), it is important to acknowledge that my experiences (see Appendix G) bring biases to my role as the researcher. After reading the youth

engagement literature, and drawing from my life experiences, I tried to be cognizant of my predisposed thoughts on what the youth engagement processes should include and to be open to hearing perspectives that differed from the one I have.

xii. Due to time constraints, I delimited interviews to four GURLs, four community partners, four TYC members, one key staff member from each organization, and an expert from the Laidlaw Foundation on youth engagement..

By delimiting the number of interviews I held, the interview results were limited because I did not attempt to – and thus did not reach - the point of saturation on perspectives concerning youth engagement. Continuing to interview until the point of saturation is reached would have provided additional, important information that could support, contradict or extend the literature on youth engagement.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Sub-problem #1

What is the history of youth engagement and what is the history and organizational structure of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet?

Introduction

To understand the history of youth engagement, we need to understand what youth engagement is and the underlying reasons why Toronto's organizations are attempting to engage youth. In addition, we need to understand each case study's history, mission, organizational structure (including resources, staff and youth structure and responsibilities), and the programs and services of both organizations (including identifying those who are under-represented in their programs and services). This clarified how youth engagement has broadened from being youth services-oriented (intervention programs) to focusing on youth leadership development and civic engagement.¹⁷⁵

What is Youth Engagement?

Youth engagement is a process that includes youth in decision-making (Hart, 1992; Laidlaw, 2003c). From my interviews, I was able to get a broader adult and youth perspective on how youth engagement is conceptualized. Three dominant themes emerged from the interviews: youth engagement as a process, youth engagement as a continuum, and youth engagement as a concept wherein power needs to be exchanged.

¹⁷⁵ Civic engagement involves youth in political education and building awareness to collectively create social and political change (Listen, 2003). It includes capacity building in understanding power relations, activism and advocacy (Listen, 2003). Youth services will be elaborated upon in 'Sub-Problem#2: Data Results'.

Four interviewees (two adults, two youth) regarded youth engagement as a continuum of different methods to engage youth from very simple to complex (J, *b*, *e*, L; Ilkiw, 2007).

[Youth engagement is] a spectrum as the less rigorous end of the spectrum is more of a consultation or a needs assessment, kind of looking like broad stroke over what do youth say they need all the way to the other extreme of youth-run organizations, youth-run boards like For Youth Initiative for example, youth in serious decision-making, youth planning, implementing, fundraising, writing, the whole spectrum, full ownership (*b*).

Each of these methods has varying levels of youth participation, but the essence within this spectrum is that youth are provided with an opportunity to feel connected, involved.

[I]t's all about finding that connection and encouraging young people to use their own skills to contribute to a greater cause (J).

Four interviewees (two adults, two youth) reflected that youth engagement should be seen as a process that engages youth in all aspects of the decision-making process (*c*, *b*, *G*, *F*) and allows for building skill capacity (*b*).

[E]ngagement for me is a process that involves young people from the init[iation]- - not even from the initiation but the inspiration to the evaluation (*c*).

Six interviewees (one adult, five youth) believed that youth engagement was a concept where the youth are empowered to have equal decision-making power to the adults (*o*, *H*, *I*, *K*, *M*, *L*) and provided with the training and resources to be equipped to make those decisions (*M*, *K*).

[I]t requires that youth be allowed to you know say what they have to say, to have their equal, not only an equal presence but also an equal responsibility at the table (*H*).

What is Meaningful Youth Engagement?

From the focus group discussion and interviews, two themes emerged as to what makes youth engagement meaningful, the process and the outcome (see Table IV.a.).

Table IV.a. Aspects of Meaningful Engagement

Process (14 youth and 6 adults)	Outcome (15 youth and 5 adults)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth initiated (<i>b</i>; Focus Group Notes) 2. Learning and changing throughout the process¹⁷⁶ (<i>n</i>, <i>J</i>, <i>K</i>, <i>a</i>, <i>G</i>; Focus Group Notes) 3. Attending the weekly meetings (<i>G</i>, <i>H</i>, <i>F</i>) 4. Organizing from the beginning to the end (<i>J</i>) 5. Involved in the planning and decision-making (<i>c</i>, <i>d</i>, <i>e</i>, <i>H</i>, <i>L</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal Gain <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Other Incentives (<i>H</i>, <i>I</i>; Focus Group Notes)¹⁷⁷ b. Job opportunities (<i>a</i>, <i>H</i>; Focus Group Notes)¹⁷⁸ c. Networking opportunities and relationships built (<i>a</i>, <i>b</i>, <i>c</i>, <i>F</i>, <i>G</i>, <i>H</i>, <i>I</i>, <i>K</i>, <i>M</i>) d. Empowered¹⁷⁹ (<i>o</i>, <i>b</i>) e. Having fun (<i>J</i>, <i>K</i>) f. Recognition (<i>I</i>) 2. Having an impact on others <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Having changed others' points of view (Focus Group Notes) b. Provided more opportunities for youth (<i>F</i>; Focus Group Notes) c. Provided youth role models (Focus Group Notes)

From this Table, it is clear that you cannot simplify meaningful engagement, as it is individual to the person.

[M]eaningful participation is defined by the youth, I mean it's meaningful for them if they're getting something out of it (*n*).

However, what can be concluded from this table is that meaningful youth engagement involves the process and/or outcome for the individual.

History of Toronto's Youth Engagement

Before analyzing the history of Toronto's youth engagement initiatives through the two case studies, I have collated the data results from my interviews and document

¹⁷⁶ The focus group members repeatedly mentioned the phrase "Being the change you want to see", and even after an explanation I still didn't understand what it meant. While I was conducting my TYC document analysis I came across a photo-copied article in their training folder titled "Be the Change You Want to See" written by Olsen (2003). The article stated that the phrase is based on Gandhi's belief that in order for social change to occur one must first focus on improving his/her ability to create change (i.e. enhancing communication skills etc.) before going out to help others (Olsen, 2003). Going back to my Focus Group Notes, I understood that the youth meant that they enjoy a process in which they better themselves to eventually improve the surrounding environment (Focus Group Notes).

¹⁷⁷ This includes personal recognition, and food.

¹⁷⁸ This includes enhanced resumes.

¹⁷⁹ This includes having youth's marginalized experiences valued.

analysis on the underlying reasons why Toronto's organizations are engaging youth.

Two interviewees stated that the City of Toronto has been trying for many years to find ways to connect with youth (*n, e*). Six GU interviewees (3 adults, 3 youth) felt the reason why Toronto's organizations are engaging youth is because they believe that youth can help improve youth services (*a, c, d, G, H, I*).

[B]y getting youth involved in decision-making, it helps different [...] organizations, so like Parks and Rec to develop different programs and make sure their different activities they run will be well received by youth of different ages so hopefully that will get more youth to participate and be active (*G*).

Three interviewees (one adult, two youth) thought that it was because youth have become more vocal and organizations are starting to recognize their right to be at the table (*J, K, o*).

Toronto organizations are involving youth because they're starting to make more noise. The louder and more annoying we get the more convenient it is for them to simply listen to us. We have a lot to say and many of us are living very adult lives. (*K*).

The city of Toronto, I think there's a realization that youth, youth need to be at the table when it comes to addressing issues that affect them (*o*).

Six interviewees (one adult, five youth) felt that organizations were engaging youth in order to train them to become better leaders in the future (*e, F, G, I, L, M*).

[A] lot of the organizations within Toronto were realizing that there's you know that there's a lot of concern for youth and for the future of youth and that they are tomorrow's leaders, and that we've got to do something now to build these people so that they can take over and they can be functioning people within our cities (*e*).

However, two interviewees (one adult, one youth) were skeptical about Toronto's youth engagement initiative and hinted that Toronto's organizations may not be really engaging youth more (*H, n*).

I mean-you can see that-you just have youth or teenagers or people on board specifically for PR or something like that, I forgot the term exactly but it's called

tokenism [...] it's sort of like, oh we have youth involved they represent people you know, and I don't know whether to buy it or not (*H*).

Case Study on the Girls Unlimited

I have combined the primary data collected in the literature review with the interview results, document analysis, and participant observations to describe each organization's history, missions, structure, and programs and services.

History of Girls Unlimited

In 1989, the Ontario Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines mandated that physical activity promotion be placed under the public health sector's Health Protection and Promotion Act, in the area of chronic disease prevention (City of Toronto, 2003b). In the past decade, through the City of Toronto's Children and Youth Action Committee (CYAC), the TPH¹⁸⁰ has played a collaborative role in the recreation service-delivery system, researching the trends related to physical activity and helping community organizations improve their accessibility to physical activity services (City of Toronto, 2003).

In 2002, in response to growing evidence of the drop in physical activity levels in female youth over the age of 12 (*a*), the Youth and Physical Activity workgroup of TPH organized a community forum to discuss the Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative (Dubois, 2002).¹⁸¹ Female youth, youth service providers, parents, physical activity experts and other community leaders gathered to address the barriers to physical activity among teenage girls, to assess the community's assets and resources, and to discuss how to create a supportive environment to engage youth (*a, e*; Toronto Public

¹⁸⁰ TPH researched the trends to identify the barriers and underlying causes of physical inactivity (City of Toronto, 2003).

¹⁸¹ In preparation for the community forum, a focus group with a group of female youth was conducted to identify the issues that would be discussed at the forum (*a*; Dubois, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2003).

Health, 2002; Dubois, 2002).¹⁸² Following the forum, community agencies hosted regional meetings recapping what was discussed, outlining the format of GU, and planning new or enhancing existing physical activity and engagement opportunities for female youth (Toronto Public Health, 2002). This was the first of many GU network meetings.

Girls Unlimited Missions

From the GU interviews and document analysis, four missions of GU were identified: community mobilization, enhancing physical activity services for female youth, engaging female youth, and sustainability. Three GU interviewees felt that community mobilization is one of the missions of GU (*a, b, c*; Girls Unlimited, 2003; Girls Unlimited, 2006).¹⁸³ It consists of engaging more partners and enhancing the partnerships to strengthen the communities (*a, b, c*; Girls Unlimited, 2003; Girls Unlimited, 2006). All of the GU interviewees agreed that GU's mission is to increase accessibility to physical activity opportunities for female youth (Girls Unlimited, 2003). Only three GU interviewees mentioned engaging female youth in decision-making, project design, planning, implementation, evaluation and other leadership activities (*a, F, G*; Toronto Public Health, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2003).

[O]ver the last couple of years what has happened is the focus on youth engagement has increased and so I think that has become stronger in the project and it's still a work in progress (*a*)

¹⁸² In a few of my interviews and my documents the target age range was identified as between 12 to 19 but in general, including the promotional material, the age group is 13 to 17. Thus, in this document whenever I discuss the age group it will be kept between 13 and 17, realizing that participants may range a year or two below or above those figures. The forum started out as a citywide general discussion and then the participants were separated into their respective geographic Toronto regions (North, South, East, West) to identify their regional assets and what additional resources were needed to improve female youth physical activities levels (Dubois, 2002).

¹⁸³ Community mobilization occurs when community members recognize that everyone is being affected by a specific issue and thus must work together to address it (*a*).

Only through document analysis was sustainability revealed as one of GU's missions (Toronto Public Health, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2006). It includes creating strategies that will raise awareness, educate, create opportunities for skill development, lead to policy change and community mobilization (Toronto Public Health, 2002).

Organizational Structure of Girls Unlimited

GU is the main project of the TPH Youth and Physical Activity Work Group (*a*), consisting of a TPH physical activity program manager, a health educator, a community health officer, and four regional Public Health Nurses (Girls Unlimited, 2003b).¹⁸⁴ GU is divided into four regional networks (East, West, North, South) (*c, e, f*; Girls Unlimited, n.d.; City of Toronto, n.d.).

Before 2006, each network was comprised of a Public Health Nurse and community partners (Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Toronto Public Health, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2002). It was not until the end of 2005 that the organization members realized that youth were not being engaged consistently because the organizational structure was not youth-friendly (*a*). At the start of 2006, after receiving the Toronto Heart Health Partnership grant, each network was responsible for finding two GURLs to be engaged (*a*).¹⁸⁵ The community partners and female youth report to the TPH Physical Activity program manager and project grantors (Girls Unlimited, 2003b). There are two citywide committees. The Steering Committee was created in 2005 and is composed of one representative from each network (*a, c, d*) and one representative from the TYC; Toronto

¹⁸⁴ The roles and responsibilities of the physical activity program manager, health educator and community health officer are not discussed anywhere else and may only be within the Physical Activity Working Group of the TPH and not specific to Girls Unlimited. The four Public Health Nurses work directly with the networks and have the same responsibilities as the community partners (Girls Unlimited, 2003b).

¹⁸⁵ Toronto Heart Health Partnership grant (also be referred to as 'THHP') is further explained under "Girls Unlimited Monetary and In-kind Support" section.

Community Housing Corporation; Parks, Forestry and Recreation; and TPH (Girls Unlimited, 2006).¹⁸⁶ The second is the Citywide GURLs committee, which is comprised of the GURLs, a TPH staff member, and a couple of community partners who work closely with their network GURLs (*a, b, d, G*). The entire GU Coalition includes all four networks (and the partners), the GU Coalition Steering Committee (with the GURLs) and the four workgroups: Advocacy, Best Practice, Promotion, and Resource Generation (Girls Unlimited, 2006) (see Appendix H).¹⁸⁷ These workgroups are made up with Girls Unlimited Coalition members (Girls Unlimited, 2006) who report back to the chair of the Steering committee (Girls Unlimited, 2005).

Girls Unlimited Network Partner Responsibilities

Each network is composed of community partners, GURLs, and TPH nurses. In total, GU has 55 community partners including community centers, youth organizations, and youth serving organizations (Girls Unlimited, n.d.7).¹⁸⁸ As of 2005, each partner is required to sign a two-year partnership agreement with GU (Girls Unlimited, 2005). Their formal roles and responsibilities are outlined in each of the networks' partnership agreements and 'Terms of References' (*a, c*; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2006ax). There is a standard partnership agreement template but the networks are allowed to make their own (*a*). Each partner agency was asked how involved and committed they would like to be (Girls Unlimited, 2004). The partners' level of involvement varied from quite minimal (email only) to

¹⁸⁶ In Network 2's partnership agreement it states that the Steering committee includes the network representatives, the working group representatives, and the GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006). However, none of the interviewees mentioned the GURLs membership in the Steering Committee (*a, d, e, c, b, G, H, F, J*).

¹⁸⁷ Each network now has two TPH nurses facilitating the meetings (*a, d*).

¹⁸⁸ The number of community partners differs from one network to another and as of September 2006 ranges from 12 to 26 (Girls Unlimited, 2006m; Girls Unlimited, n.d.2; Girls Unlimited, 2006p; Girls Unlimited, 2006o).

heavily involved (*a*) (attending all the meetings and organizing events and/or programs).

Two of the community partners identified that they work on GU Network activities for about 2 to 3 hours a month (*c, b*), while another GU community partner representative stated that (s)he works on GU Network activities for about 4 to 10 hours a week (*e*).¹⁸⁹

In general, the documents and interviews reflect that the community agencies have the following responsibilities:

1. Attend network meetings (*a, c, d, e*; Girls Unlimited, 2004).
2. Plan, implement and/or evaluate network programs and/or events (*a, e, b*; Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006).
3. Facilitate the decision-making process for the GURLs (*a, c, d, b*; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2003).
4. Represent their agencies at the table (*a, c, d, e, b*).¹⁹⁰
5. Mentor the GURLs (*a, c, b, F*).¹⁹¹
6. Apply for grants and/or fundraise (*e, b, H, I*).
7. Recruit GURLs (*b, d*).
8. Share information and resources (*a, c, d, b*) and provide administrative support (*a, H, I*).
9. Create and implement work plans with the GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006).
10. Facilitate training and workshops for the GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006q) or facilitate training opportunities and workshops at the network programs and events (Girls Unlimited, 2003).

¹⁸⁹ This includes supervising the weekly Girls Unlimited program that runs out of his/her community center (*e*).

¹⁹⁰ They are responsible for bringing feedback to and from his/her agency and Girls Unlimited and vice versa (*a, c, d, e, b*). Some of the community partners also attend the GURLs meetings and bring feedback to and from the GURLs citywide meetings to the Network (*d, a*). Other network partners work with the GURLs and bring feedback to the network meetings (*b, c*).

¹⁹¹ Networks 1, 2 and 3 have community partners who are youth outreach workers assigned to work directly with the GURLs (*a, c, b, F*). For Network 1 there are three youth workers assigned to the GURLs, two female and one male (Girls Unlimited, 2006s).

11. Transport and supervise the GURLs at events and/or meetings (Girls Unlimited, 2006r; Girls Unlimited, 2006f).
12. Promote GU in the community (*b*; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2003).

The documents and interviews revealed that the Steering Committee Members have additional responsibilities including:

1. Represent the Network at the Citywide Steering Committee Table (*a, d*; Girls Unlimited, 2006), relaying information to and from the networks and the steering committee meetings (*a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2005).
2. Provide marketing material and promote all GU activities (*e*, Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006).
3. Finding, coordinating, and approving GU grant applications (*e*, Girls Unlimited, 2006g).
4. Coordinate the coalition, regional networks and workgroups (Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2005).
5. Establish new committees or workgroups (Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006).
6. Gather and implement best practices (Girls Unlimited, 2006g).
7. Create and implement evaluations (Girls Unlimited, 2006g).
8. Organize Coalition planning sessions (Girls Unlimited, 2006).

The documents and interview responses clearly identify TPH as the lead organization of GU (*a, c, d, b*; Ferris, 2004) with the following additional responsibilities:¹⁹²

1. Facilitate the Meetings (find meeting locations and coordinate the meetings) (*a, c, d, H*).
2. Communicate between partners (send the emails, including the meeting minutes) (*a, c, d, H*).

¹⁹² “[I]f you were to look up Girls Unlimited it has all of the Public Health contacts as the lead contacts” (*d*).

GURLs Structure and Responsibilities

In 2002, each network was asked to envision how it would engage youth within the next five years (Girls Unlimited, 2002b).¹⁹³ All four networks had envisioned engaging youth through consultation and at some level including the youth in the decision-making process (Girls Unlimited, 2002b). However, there was minimal interview or document information to support that female youth had been engaged at the tables.¹⁹⁴ In December 2005, the Steering Committee decided that each network would recruit two female youth leaders (thus eight in total across the city) by February 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2005b; Toronto Public Health, 2006).¹⁹⁵ The interviewees revealed that there are currently nine GURLs: Networks 3 and 4 have two GURLs (4X), Network 1 has four GURLs (2X), and Network 2 has one GURL (1X).¹⁹⁶ In addition, Network 2 has formed a GURL volunteer committee composed of community girls who support its GURL(s) in event organization, and meet with the GURLs on an as needed basis (Girls Unlimited, 2006t). Each GURL is expected to be part of GU for two years (Girls Unlimited, 2006u).

¹⁹³ The methods of youth engagement will be discussed further in the "Chapter IV: Sub-Problem#2".

¹⁹⁴ There was the exception of Network 2 and Network 4. Network 4 ran leadership programs where female youth were involved in planning the activities (Chin, 2006; Gauer & Chin, 2004). In addition Network 2 ran leadership programs that had a few of their leadership program participants attend five meetings from 2003 to 2004 with only a few partners and the leadership program facilitators (Girls Unlimited, 2004c; Girls Unlimited, 2004d; Girls Unlimited, 2003e; Girls Unlimited, 2004f; Girls Unlimited, 2004g). However, Network 2's meeting minutes reflected that during the planning of the leadership program, no youth were involved and the pilot leadership program was designed by the partners (Girls Unlimited, n.d.3), with the exception of the graduation ceremony, which was organized by the participants (Girls Unlimited, n.d.7).

¹⁹⁵ Originally the networks were given a deadline to recruit the GURLs by February 28th, 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2005b) but it was later extended to April 28th, 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2006j). There was no explanation for why this happened except perhaps to allow time to facilitate the March Break Training/GU Orientation. One of the networks ended up recruiting four GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006l). The position was originally called GUYA (Girls Unlimited Youth Ambassadors) but it was changed by the female youth leaders in June 2006 to GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006w). To avoid confusion, I will refer to the youth leadership positions within Girls Unlimited as GURLs even if it had been called GUYA in the documents previous to June 2006.

¹⁹⁶ For confidentiality, the interviewees have not been identified. One interviewee was confused about how many GURLs there were in her network and included the outside female youth volunteers.

Before the GURLs were recruited, the Steering Committee decided that the GURLs would be expected to volunteer 15 to 20 hours per month (Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006c). The GURLs would attend one three hour Citywide GURLs and one network meeting per month (possibly more when an event is approaching) to plan and organize one citywide and one network event per year (Girls Unlimited, 2006h). Network 1 was going to have its GURLs attend one event meeting per event (one seasonal event and one special event), totaling up to six to eight hours a month (Girls Unlimited, 2006v). However, the data results revealed that the GURLs volunteer more hours than Network 1 and the Steering Committee assumed they would be volunteering. The GURLs stated that they volunteer at least two to four hours a week on GURLs activities (*G, H, F, I*); one GURL stated that when an event was approaching, she volunteered 16 hours that week (*H*).

According to the documents and interviews, the youth have several roles and responsibilities including the following:

1. Provide program or event ideas (*c, e, G, H, F, I*).
2. Develop the promotional material for the GU Events and Programs (*a, e, G, H, F, I*; Toronto Public Health, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Girls Unlimited, 2006f).
3. Attend network and/or Citywide Meetings (*a*; Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Girls Unlimited, 2006x).¹⁹⁷
4. Represent either the girls in their network (*a, e, I, G*; Girls Unlimited, 2006t) or their Network or the GURLs meetings and vice versa (*c, G*).¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ The GURLs are supposed to be attending their network meetings (*a*) and have expressed a desire to do so, however documents and interviews reflect that only one Network consistently invites the GURLs to the meetings (*G, H, F, I*; Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Girls Unlimited, n.d.4; Girls Unlimited, 2006x). This is due to numerous reasons and will be explained in the consequent sub-sections. At the meetings they do attend, the minutes reflect that they also act as chair and minute taker (PO D; PO C; Girls Unlimited, 2006y; Girls Unlimited, 2006z).

¹⁹⁸ One GURL mentioned that she informally represents an organization at the network meetings (*H*). For example, if there is an event at the library (the organization) then she will share the news with GU but

5. Organize Network and Citywide activities or events (*b, d, c, a, G, F, I*; Girls Unlimited, 2005b; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Girls Unlimited, 2006x).
6. Develop the network work plans (*a, b*; Toronto Public Health, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2005b; Girls Unlimited, 2006u).
7. Act as leaders to the female youth in the community (*G*).
8. Peer conflict mediators (Girls Unlimited, 2006).
9. Attend training sessions (*c*; Girls Unlimited, 2006x).

Girls Unlimited Meetings

GU has six different types of meetings: GURLs citywide, Steering Committee, Networks (4), Coalition, and Workgroups. The 2003 Terms of Reference stated that the meetings would be at least once a month with more on an as-needed basis (Girls Unlimited, 2003b), however my interviews, documents and participant observations revealed that the GURLs citywide, steering committee meetings, and Network 1 meetings occur more frequently (see Table IV.b., p.97).¹⁹⁹

Frequency and location of the meetings are decided at the meetings (PO A; PO B; PO C; PO D; PO E; PO F). The 2006 GU Steering Committee, GURLs Citywide, Network 1 and Network 2 meeting minutes were analyzed starting from when the GURLs were chosen in March 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2006b) (see Appendix I). The results can be summarized as follows:

- For 2006 GURLs meetings: the GURLs attended 13 out of 13 meetings; at two of those meetings they were outnumbered by adults.

doesn't go to the meetings and exchange on a regular basis-only if something comes up (*H*). However, there isn't any formal reporting back process (*a*). Only one youth mentioned that she reports back to the female youth that she consulted (*G*). One community partner feels that the GURLs are only representing themselves, and it is more about their own self-development and self-engagement (*d*). My network meeting participant observation and one community partner did confirm that the GURLs do report back to their networks on issues discussed at the Citywide GURLs table (*c*; PO D).

¹⁹⁹ Two of these meetings are the ones that the GURLs either attend on a regular or occasional basis.

- For the 2006 Steering Committee meetings: the GURLs only attended three out of five meetings; at all of the meetings they were outnumbered.²⁰⁰
- For Network 1: the Network 1 GURLs attended 10 out of 13 meetings; at six of those meetings they were outnumbered by adults.²⁰¹
- For Network 2: the GURLs only attended 1 out of 8 meetings; at this meeting, they were outnumbered by adults.

Table IV.b. Girls Unlimited Meeting Schedule

Meeting	Frequency of meetings
GURLs City Wide:	Bi-Monthly (<i>G, F</i>) However, when close to an event it is weekly (<i>G, F</i>). ²⁰²
Steering Committee:	Bi-Monthly (<i>X</i>)
Network 1	Random (<i>X</i> ; North Network 2006 meeting minutes) ²⁰³
Network 2	Monthly (<i>X</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006e) But once programming begins there may be a need to meet more frequently (Girls Unlimited, 2006e).
Network 3	Every three months (<i>X</i>)
Network 4	Every Month and a half (<i>X</i>)
Coalition Meeting ²⁰⁴	Two Times a year (Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006f)
Workgroups	As-needed basis (Girls Unlimited, 2003b)

From the interviews it was revealed that Network 1 has its GURLs attend the meetings regularly ($2X$). Network 4 has its GURLs attend the network meetings

²⁰⁰ It is important to state that there was one other meeting that was at a youth-friendly time that the GURLs did not attend.

²⁰¹ It is important to state that there was one other meeting that was at a youth -friendly time that the GURLs did not attend.

²⁰² This is also supported by Girls Unlimited (2006d) meeting minutes. Before the meetings were regularly scheduled weekly (*G, d*) however they were changed to bi-monthly upon the request of the GURLs (PO C).

²⁰³ The GU Network 1 community partner stated that the meetings were weekly, however the Network 1 meeting minutes for 2006 supported the GURL's answer and that the meetings were random, sometimes every week, sometimes twice a week, and sometimes once a month. Before the GURLs were engaged, this network had meetings only once every three months (Ing, 2006).

²⁰⁴ None of the interviewees mentioned the Coalition meeting, which is for all GU members (partners, TPH staff and nurses and GURLs) (Girls Unlimited, 2006g; Girls Unlimited, 2006f).

occasionally (2X).²⁰⁵ Both Network 2 and Network 3 have their GURLs attend separate meetings with one or two of the community partners (i.e., the youth outreach workers) (*b*, *c*, *F*, *I*; Girls Unlimited, 2006c).²⁰⁶ The Youth Outreach Worker meets with the GURLs and then updates the partners at the network meetings (*c*, *b*; PO A; PO B; PO C; PO H; Girls Unlimited, 2006c).²⁰⁷

I conducted participant observation at each of the Network meetings, the Steering Committee meeting and the GURLs meetings. Three of the six meetings I attended included the GURLs: Network 1, the Steering Committee meeting and the Citywide GURLs meeting (PO A; PO C; PO F) (see Table IV.c.).

Table IV.c. Participant Observation Notes of Girls Unlimited Meetings

Meeting	Community Partners, TPH staff and nurses (all female unless otherwise noted)	GURLs
GURLs City Wide	3 (2 people of colour) ²⁰⁸	6 GURLs (+1 female youth) (5 youth of colour)
Steering Committee	5 (2 people of colour)	1 (1 youth of colour)
Network 1	4 (+ 2 guests) (3 people of colour)	4 (3 youth of colour)
Network 2	9 (5 people of colour)	0
Network 3	11 (6 females and five males) (5 people of colour)	0
Network 4	6 (3 people of colour)	0

All my participant observations confirmed that the meetings were accessible by car or Toronto Transit Commission (Girls Unlimited, 2005). At each of the meetings I

²⁰⁵ The Network 4 GURL interviewee stated that she has attended two to three network meetings in the past six months (X). She stated that at most there would only be one GURL who would be able to attend the network meeting because of the meeting schedule (X).

²⁰⁶ These meetings occur bi-weekly for Network 2 (*F*) and weekly for Network 3 and sometimes two to three times a week when an event is approaching (*c*, *I*).

²⁰⁷ To update the Network partners the youth workers either attends the meetings in person or updates the agency's supervisor who attends the meetings (*c*; PO E)

²⁰⁸ One of the GU partners (who was not an interviewee) was concerned about my perceived lack of experience in participant observation. For this reason, I limited my participant observations to the overt behaviours. I did not attempt to categorize the participants into specific ethno-cultural groups except to label individuals as 'people of colour' or 'youth of colour'.

observed that food and drinks were provided and the meetings that included the GURLs had more selection of food (more of a meal than a snack). I observed that each meeting followed an agenda and had a chairperson and a minute recorder. If for some reason an 'in-person' meeting could not be organized, then the Steering Committee would arrange to have a teleconference or email meetings (Girls Unlimited, 2005; Girls Unlimited, 2006g). Four interviewees identified instant messaging (i.e., MSN) as another method for gathering input from those who were not able to attend the meetings (*e, b, d, a*).

Girls Unlimited Monetary and In-Kind Support

In the four years that GU has existed, the coalition has received monetary and in-kind donations. GU received one grant from Ontario Works (*a*; Okonkwo-Mackenzie, n.d.) and three grants from Toronto Heart Health Partnership.²⁰⁹ The most current \$50,000 two-year THHP grant (January 2006 to December 2007) is being used citywide and within the four regional networks (Toronto Public Health, n.d.) for honoraria, child-care, transportation (TTC tickets), accessible and safe workplaces, healthy food for the meetings and/or events (*a*; Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Toronto Public Health, 2006), training (Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Toronto Public Health, 2006) and promotional materials (Toronto Public Health, 2006).²¹⁰ Most of the grant is allocated by TPH (Girls

²⁰⁹ The Ontario Works grant went towards hosting a community forum, providing an honorarium for the female youth forum participants, developing a forum report and evaluation, and funding the follow-up regional workgroup activities (*a*; Okonkwo-Mackenzie, n.d.). Network 2 was awarded a \$5000 THHP grant for phase two of their leadership program (Girls Unlimited, n.d.7; Girls Unlimited, n.d.). Network 4 has also received core funding from the THHP (Toronto Public Health, n.d.) but it is unclear what it was used for.

²¹⁰ A TYC member described honoraria as "when you are given a token of a portion of what you should have got for appreciation, but when you get paid, it's when you get in [paid] full" (L). The "[h]onoraria [were] based on how many hours the GURLs contributed to the projects, so there is a set amount of honoraria that is per year" (*a*). The THHP also paid for the first citywide March Break Training for female youth interested in becoming GURLs (*a*). The March Break participants received a \$16 per hour honorarium during the March Break training (Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006i) from the year-end dollars from the Ministry of Health Promotion (Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006j).

Unlimited, 2006), except for the GURLs' honoraria, which are allocated by the Network agency that houses the two GURLs (Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006g).²¹¹ In addition, each community partner agency is supposed to host the meeting(s) (Girls Unlimited, 2004) and provide staff, volunteer(s), facilities, and/or facilitate workshops and training for the GU programs and initiatives (Toronto Public Health, n.d.).

Girls Unlimited Programs and Services

Before the GURLs were engaged, the Network community partners were providing physical activity programs for youth. In 2003, Network 2 organized an eight week pilot leadership program (Girls Unlimited, 2003c; Girls Unlimited, 2006) that consisted of three parts: youth leadership training and life-skills, coaching or conditioning, and a practicum (Girls Unlimited, n.d.3).²¹² In 2004-05, Network 2 hosted numerous outreach events such as the Summer Olympics, box-fit, and ski trips (Girls Unlimited, 2006). Network 1 sponsored female youth events as well as hosted its own monthly GU network physical activity events (similar to Network 2) (Girls Unlimited, 2005c; Ing, 2006) and workshops (i.e., conflict mediation, self-defense) (Girls Unlimited, 2005c), nutrition, healthy living and sexual health (Girls Unlimited, 2005c).

Since the inception of the GURLs, the GU programs and services can be broadly separated into four different categories: supporting (through endorsement or sponsorship) non GU female youth programs and events (*a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006ab; Girls Unlimited, 2006ac); planning and running programs and activities (such as

²¹¹ The GURLs, the TPH staff, and the networks keep track of how many hours each of the GURLs were volunteering, in preparing for events and activities during and outside of meetings (*a*). In 2006, \$3400 was spent on honoraria between ten GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006l).

²¹² Participants were given the option to earn \$50 for their practicum in honoraria or use their volunteer hours (Girls Unlimited, 2003d).

leadership programs, traveling yoga schools etc.) (*a, e, G, F, H, d*); participating in other forums, events, or fairs (such as setting up information tables, making presentations at conferences) (*a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006ad); and planning and hosting annual Network and Citywide events (*a, c, d, e, b, G, H, F, I*) (see Appendix J)

Case Study on the Toronto Youth Cabinet

History of Toronto Youth Cabinet

In 1989, to address the rise in youth violence and unemployment, the City of Toronto investigated methods of engaging youth in decision-making and formed the Youth Task Force (Munroe, 1997). In 1991, the Youth Task Force produced a report called “Looking to the Future: Report of the Metro Youth Task Force” which highlighted the importance of engaging youth directly in the decision-making processes of policies that impact youth (Munroe, 1997; City of Toronto, 1991; Grebanier, 2002).²¹³ In response to the Youth Task Force Report, a number of youth councils were initiated across former Metro Toronto, including six local councils and one citywide council (Grebanier, 2002). In 1994, the former Metro Council established the Metro Youth Council (Munroe, 1997; Grebanier, 2002).²¹⁴ Even though the Metro Youth Council was under the Community and Social Service Planning Division, the group was provided with minimal financial, policy developmental, departmental and staff support (Munroe, 1997). As a result, there were limited opportunities to meaningfully engage youth in the first two years (Munroe, 1997).

²¹³ The Youth Task Force was composed of councillor department representatives and youth agents (Munroe, 1997).

²¹⁴ It was called former because all the municipal regions were amalgamated into the City of Toronto. The Metro Youth Council was composed of 24 youth (from youth advocate groups, priority neighbourhoods, and from each of the municipal regions) and staff (Munroe, 1997).

To ensure that youth advocacy would continue after the City of Toronto amalgamated, (i.e., East York, Central, North York, City of York, and Scarborough areas are now called “Metropolitan of Toronto” and have one mayor) the former youth councils and committees collaborated to establish the Youth Voice Toronto coalition (Munroe, 1997). The coalition developed a two-pronged Municipal Government youth-engagement strategy (Munroe, 1997). The first was to create a meaningful youth-engagement opportunity within the Municipal government so that partnerships could be formed between youth and government sectors (Munroe, 1997). The second was to train youth on civic engagement and networking so that partnerships could be formed with other youth agencies and organizations to create a sustainable civic engagement process (Munroe, 1997). In 1997, the Children Action’s Youth Sub-Committee wrote a Youth Engagement Strategy report for the City of Toronto (Munroe, 1997).²¹⁵ This report suggested that when the city amalgamated, the Municipal Government should not only create a space to engage youth but should also financially support their work with the new council, the task forces, the committees, and sub-committees (especially the Youth Sub-Committee) (Munroe, 1997). As a result, the City of Toronto designated to the Children and Youth Advocate the responsibility of creating that space (Grebanier, 2002).²¹⁶ In the fall of 1998, Councillor Olivia Chow, the Children and Youth Advocate, created the Toronto Youth Cabinet (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b; Tecsnher, 1999).

Toronto Youth Cabinet Missions

All five TYC interviewees identified two TYC missions. The first mission is to represent Toronto Youth at City Hall. Specifically, the TYC is the lead organization that

²¹⁵ I was unable to find the original report.

²¹⁶ The Children and Youth Advocate will also be referred to as the “Youth Advocate”.

advocates on behalf of Toronto's 300,000 youth on a variety of issues and presents them to the Mayor and the city councillors (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001).

"The city line is that they are the *official youth voice* at City Hall [...] and is mandated by city council" (o).

For example, if there is a youth issue, the members will contact the responsible councillor and the 44 other councillors, start letter and postcarding campaigns etc., thus creating a larger youth voice (o).

The second mission of the TYC is to civically engage Toronto's Youth (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000) by collaborating with youth communities and community partners (City of Toronto, 1991). "The TYC is about really supporting a voice and building capacity" (o) so that they can make changes within their own communities (J). The TYC hosts several events that encourage youth to be civically engaged (K, M; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b).

Organizational Structure of the Toronto Youth Cabinet

What makes the TYC unique among youth organizations is their space in City Hall and direct access to the City's councillors (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e).²¹⁷

The TYC members work with the city councillors and maintain partnerships with youth organizations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000) and youth serving organizations (K).²¹⁸

The TYC is made up of the TYC Coordinator (City Staff), TYC Executive members and TYC 'General' members (J).

²¹⁷ In the 2002 minutes it was noted that the TYC was going to be provided space within City Hall (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002b). Through an interview, I found out that in 2006 the TYC members had an office cubicle and then in December 2006 the TYC finally were given their own private office (o) where the Executive members have their own entrance and access (PO H).

²¹⁸ Currently there are only a few "official" partners (o) and they do not seem as integral to the TYC as the partners are in Girls Unlimited. As of 2002, the TYC had 11 partners consisting of youth agencies and organizations (Grebanier, 2002). There is no data supporting that partner representatives are not invited to attend the meeting on a regular basis.

The TYC is part of City Council in two ways. First they have TYC representatives on two of the Mayor's Roundtables (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e): the Children, Education and Youth Roundtables (CEYR), which reports directly to the Policy and Finance committee (City of Toronto, n.d.2); and the Access, Equity & Human Rights Roundtable (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005). The TYC also has an official relationship with the Mayor's Office and the Youth Advocate (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002). The TYC reports directly to City Councillors and to a committee of Council (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002). At a 2004 TYC meeting, it was clarified that the TYC was under the authority of City Council through the chair of the CEYR (Councillor Olivia Chow) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004f).

Toronto Youth Cabinet Staff Structure

The TYC staff structure has evolved since its inception in 1998. In 2001, a full-time TYC Coordinator was hired (Grebanier, 2002).²¹⁹ In 2002, the TYC had two part-time staff whose roles were to coordinate and advise TYC members on city policy, structure and process, and to provide administrative support (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002). The TYC also had additional support staff including the Community Development Officer (CDO), the TYC Community Relations Officer, and administrative staff (Grebanier, 2002).²²⁰ In 2003, they had one full-time and one part-time staff member (Bah, 2003). During the time of my data collection period there was only one full-time TYC staff coordinator (o, J).²²¹ The TYC Coordinator is hired and paid by the

²¹⁹ It is unknown what the staff situation was prior to 2001.

²²⁰ As the official staff lead, the CDO acted as the formal liaison between the Youth Advocate and the TYC members, monitored the TYC budget and expenses, and provided strategic planning and development (Grebanier, 2002). The Community Relations Coordinator assisted the TYC Coordinator and Outreach Director (Grebanier, 2002).

²²¹ In March 2007, I received an email about the resignation of the TYC staff coordinator. The coordinator had only been with the TYC since September 2006 (o).

City of Toronto (o). The interviews and document analysis have revealed that the TYC Coordinator has the following roles and responsibilities:

1. Facilitate the organizational process of the activities, projects, and events (J, K, o; Grebanier, 2002)
2. Provide workgroup support (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004h) and administrative support (o; PO G, PO I; Grebanier, 2002).
3. Communicate to City Hall and other youth organizations (K; Grebanier, 2002)
4. Empower the Youth (J, K, o).
5. Supervise (M, J)

One of the interviewees identified additional staff support from the City's Youth Advocate (o).²²² The roles and responsibilities of the Youth Advocate include:

1. Assist Youth to Navigate City Hall (o).
2. Support TYC Youth (o)
3. Supervise the TYC (Grebanier, 2002)

Toronto Youth Cabinet Membership Structure

Unlike Girls Unlimited, the TYC has engaged youth since its inception in 1998.

TYC is only for the youth, everybody else-me, city councillors, other public servers, we're stakeholders that have some invested interest, but TYC is-are these youth, they're the organization, it's the youth (o).

The TYC membership is extended to youth up to the age of 24 years old who work, live, play, and volunteer in Toronto (L; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The documents and interviews revealed that the TYC membership can be broken down into two different groups, the TYC 'General' members and the TYC Executive members.

²²² Since the TYC are accountable to the Youth Advocate (Grebanier, 2002), I will be discussing the Youth Advocate's roles and responsibilities.

General Membership

The documents indicate that the 'General' membership structure has remained consistent, with only the workgroups changing (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004i; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005c). Unlike Girls Unlimited, there is no limit on the number of TYC 'General' members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The earliest document describing the TYC membership size was written in 2002. It stated there the TYC membership has grown from 8 'active' members to over 70 (Grebanier, 2002).²²³ By 2004 there were 150 TYC members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004c). As of 2007, the TYC membership has grown to 250 youth, of which up to 50 are 'active' members (PO H).²²⁴

'General' TYC members can participate in the TYC meetings (both Executive and 'General') and in the TYC teams, workgroups, or initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e). In 2001 and 2002, every 'General' member was supposed to be involved in at least one workgroup (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j) and attend all general membership meetings (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

Currently, general members have the option to join none, one or more of the three teams: the Community Relations Team (CRT), the Council Relations Team (COURT)

²²³ One of my interviewees described being an 'active' member as a member who actually comes out to the events, is involved in organizing, and is more aware of and contributing to the TYC events and/or initiatives (M).

²²⁴ During my participant observation of the 'General' meeting, the Membership Director informed me of the current TYC membership numbers, since there were no other documents to reflect the numbers. In 2004, the term 'General' was dropped and the non-Executive members were referred to as 'TYC members' (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004K). However, for the purposes of this thesis the term 'General' will be used to differentiate from Executives, leaving the term 'TYC members' to include both Executives and 'General' members.

and the Media Relations Team (MRT) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b).²²⁵ Three TYC interviewees discussed how the responsibilities of the 'General' members are flexible and determined by the individual member (M, L, J). Members can come and go as they please and do not have any required expectations (J, M).

[I]f they find something that they are interested in then they-they show up, if they don't then you know then they don't, but it's a different expectation from the execs (J).

The members are asked how much (s)he is able to do and then gets delegated into a task that (s)he is able to do (K). Some can be quite involved and put in a lot of time and commitment (L), while others can be involved just enough to understand what the TYC does (L). For example, one TYC 'General' member stated that (s)he volunteers around 5 hours a month (M), while the other 'General' member stated that (s)he is at City Hall Monday to Friday and volunteers 30 hours a week (L).²²⁶

Executive Members

The documents revealed that the Executive structure has changed a lot since the year 2000 (see Appendix K). First it was called the Steering Committee and its structure was hierarchical (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The Chair was the highest position, whose responsibilities included speaking on behalf of the TYC, liaising between all groups within TYC (including the workgroups), and networking with youth organizations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The Vice-Chair was mainly responsible for the TYC Budget (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). Other positions included Communication Director(s), Council Liaison(s), TYC Ambassadors, and Regional Youth Council and/or

²²⁵ These are the same issue-based areas that Ross (2005) identified in her 2004 case study. However, according to the 2005-06 Executive list (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005c), there are more than three teams to join (see Appendix K).

²²⁶ This TYC member has been part of TYC for three and half years and attends the Executive meetings as well (L).

Organizational Representative(s) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). Each position had its individual responsibilities but the chair was the person who took on the most responsibility and made sure everyone else was fulfilling his/her responsibilities (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003). The issue-based workgroups had to provide the Steering Committee with a monthly report, and send a representative to attend the Steering committee and TYC membership meetings, as well as participate in TYC events and initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000).

The 2001 and the 2004 Constitutions reflect that the overall responsibilities of the Steering Committee were similar to those of the present Executive members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).²²⁷ In 2002, the workgroups were supervised by 12 Executives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003b) and the TYC staff members (Grebanier, 2002).²²⁸ In 2003, the Chair resigned and the TYC changed its organizational structure from hierarchical (with a Chair and Vice-Chair) to a rotating chair with all the Executives holding equal positions of power (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003). From 2004 to the present the number of Executives has changed from 12 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004c) to 14, now overseeing 8 teams that address the three issues (community relations, council relations and media relations) (see Appendix K).

Overall, the documents and interviews showed that the Executive members have more formal roles and responsibilities than the 'General' members.²²⁹ Currently, each Executive position has its own responsibilities (see Appendix L). In general, the TYC Executives are responsible for initiating and managing the project teams (J, K, o; Toronto

²²⁷ There were only minor terminology changes, such as 'workgroups' was changed to 'project teams' (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

²²⁸ The specific workgroups were not identified in any of the documents.

²²⁹ These are outlined in detail in the TYC 2004 Constitution (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

Youth Cabinet, 2006) and liaising between the project team and the Executive Council (o), as well as developing the work plans (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).²³⁰ In addition, the Executive interviewees recognized that they were responsible for booking and chairing Executive and 'General' membership meetings, advocating and lobbying on behalf of TYC (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j), and finding additional resources (K). The executives also play informal roles, including mentoring (K, J) and supporting each other's initiatives (J). Three of the interviewees recognized that the TYC 'Executive' Members are accountable to the TYC members (J, K, o). Both of the Executive interviewees stated that each 'Executive' member is required to dedicate 30 hours a month to working on TYC initiatives (J, K). However, when asked how many hours a week (s)he volunteers on TYC activities, one Executive member stated that (s)he volunteers 12 to 15 hours a week (J) and the other Executive member stated that (s)he is at City Hall three to four times a week and also works on TYC initiatives at home (K), both of which work out to be over 30 hours a month.

All of the TYC members mentioned that they represent an external organization at the TYC table (K, M, L, J). Four of the interviewees stated that if there are issues that overlap between their external organization and the TYC then they will discuss the issue at the TYC meetings (M, L, J, K) but only two of the interviewees stated that they would report TYC issues to the external organization meetings (M, L).²³¹ However, the TYC Coordinator stated that none of these representations are official TYC representations (o) and two TYC interviewees felt that the members only officially represented the TYC at the table (K, o).

²³⁰ Each team is required to have 5 to 7 TYC members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006).

²³¹ The two other interviewees indicated that they do not discuss TYC issues at the external organization's meetings (K, J).

Toronto Youth Cabinet Meetings

The documents and interviews revealed that there are three different types of TYC meetings, which are open to all TYC members: ‘General’ Membership, Executive and workgroup meetings. The workgroup meetings occur as needed (i.e., Budget, The Cause, Harmony) (J, K, L).

[T]here are lots of meetings like again and then each-depending on the initiative- they break off into their sub-into their project groups, and they meet separately and come back and report to a larger group (o)

In 2000, the Steering Committee meetings were held on the first Saturday of each month and the ‘General’ membership meetings were held every 3rd Saturday for all workgroup members, all Steering Committee members, observers and guests (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The workgroup meetings were bi-monthly (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). In 2002-03, the TYC Executive membership meetings were scheduled every second Friday from 4pm to 9pm (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002c) and the General meetings were scheduled every third Saturday from 1pm to 4pm (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.).²³² From my interviews, document analysis, and participant observation I have created the current TYC meeting schedule (see Table IV.d.)

Table IV.d. Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting Schedule

Meeting	Frequency of meetings
General Meetings hosted at City Hall (M, o; PO H)	Third Saturday of each month from 1 to 4pm (o; PO H)
Executive Meetings hosted at City Hall (M, o; PO G)	Bi-monthly hosted on Friday, every other week from 6 to 10pm (o) ²³³
Team or Portfolio Specific Meetings (o)	Two to three hours (o) As needed

²³² This document had no date but it was formatted the same as the previous document with the Executive meeting schedule so the author is assuming that it was for the same year.

²³³ Both participant observations and interviews note that these meetings have gone on until 10:50pm (PO G), 11:30pm (PO I) and 12am (M).

During my data collection period, I analyzed the meeting minutes provided. From the year 2000 to 2005, I was able to summarize the meeting minutes into a table (see Appendix I). In general, except for the meeting minutes that are missing information (such as attendance and time indication), each meeting had the youth outnumbering the staff (adults) and it was hosted during youth-friendly hours. From my participant observations I found some differences between the Executive and the General membership meetings, which I have summarized in a table (see Table IV.e.).

Table IV.e. Participant Observation Notes of Toronto Youth Cabinet Meetings

Meeting	TYC Coordinator and other Adults	Meeting Participants: includes TYC members, guests (including City Council members and organization representatives) (M; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001c; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001d).
General Meetings	0 ²³⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended by 'General' and 'Executive' members • 11 (4 of which are Executives and 7 of which are 'General' members) (PO H) • 3 females (PO H) • 8 males (PO H) • 9 people of colour (PO G)
Executive Meetings	1	<p><i>First Meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended by 'General' and 'Executive' members (M; PO G) • 9 females and 9 males (PO G). • Unknown how many were guests, executives, or members (PO G). • 15 people of colour (PO G) <p><i>Second Meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 people (PO I). • Unknown how many were guests, Executives, or 'General' members (PO I). • Unknown number of people of colour and gender (PO I).²³⁵
Team or Portfolio Specific Meetings	0	Team or portfolio members (o, J, K, L)

²³⁴ In the past meeting minutes, in 2000-01, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 'General' and Executive membership meetings there were 1 to 3 staff members present.

²³⁵ I had not counted the number of visible minorities nor females, it was much harder to count in the over-crowded room (PO I).

The General meetings were smaller (usually 8 to 10 members show up) and more people were attentive during the meeting (PO H).²³⁶ TYC processes and workgroup updates were explained clearly to the new members (PO H). The members are given an update of what was discussed at the previous Executive meetings (PO H). Executive members did short presentation about their current projects and asked the new members to sign up where interested (PO H). The 'General' membership meeting was much more relaxed but seemed more *ad hoc* (no set agenda) (PO H).

During the meeting I noticed, as in all the other meetings where I conducted participant observations, that there were participants who are more vocal and those who sat and listened throughout the entire meeting (PO H). However, at this meeting I noticed that the non-vocal members were asked directly for their opinions (PO H).

The Executive meeting was much larger; however it was unclear how many were Executive members, 'General' members, and guests (PO H). There did not seem to be any order to how you could voice your opinions – some raised their hands and the Chairperson indicated permission to speak, while others just spoke out (PO G). Both meetings provided food.²³⁷ The meetings are generally run by the youth; the Executive council has a rotating chair and either a TYC member or the TYC Coordinator takes the minutes (PO G; PO I). The TYC Coordinator is there to assist the chair in maintaining order in the meeting, to ensure people were heard, and to move the agenda forward (PO I; PO G). The TYC Coordinator had a commanding voice and when (s)he spoke, many more people listened (PO I; PO G). In general, the meeting times are set up by the

²³⁶ At the meeting, the TYC Membership Director informed me that usually 8 to 10 members show up for the 'General' meetings (PO H). In 2000 to 2001, out of 10 meetings, six of the meetings had over 15 youth. In 2001 to 2002, out of 11 meetings, eight had over 15 youth.

²³⁷ For one Executive and one 'General' meeting there was snack food (chips, fruit, juice etc.) and for the second Executive meeting dinner wraps were provided (POH; PO I; PO G).

Executive members and hosted during youth friendly times so that as many people as possible can make it (J).²³⁸ However, when it comes to meetings with City Council members, the time of the meeting is up to the City Councillor's schedule (J). The TYC members also communicate, plan and organize via electronic mail and telephone (M). Sometimes other events will be venues of casual planning meetings:

I know they're having a Girls Night out this Friday, it's supposed to be fun, but I'm definitely a hundred percent positive that this Forum is going to come up and we're probably going to start talking about it (M).

Toronto Youth Cabinet Monetary and In-kind Support

Under the directive of the Youth Advocate, the TYC receives support from the City's Community Resource Unit (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004f), including staff support, budget and other resources²³⁹ (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b). In 2001, the CYAC had a \$50,000 budget (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b) for youth initiatives, of which the TYC received \$10,000 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e). In 2002, the CYAC received \$58,000 for a Youth Sub-committee, of which the TYC received \$16,000 (with an additional \$32,000 for the TYC Coordinator and part-time staff support) (Grebanier, 2002).²⁴⁰ The TYC also receives additional monetary support from sponsorship donations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b), research initiatives (Toronto Youth

²³⁸ 'Youth friendly' initially meant no earlier than 3:30pm during the school week. However, in Sub-Problem#3 the definition will include to accommodate those who work and/or have other extra-curricular activities.

²³⁹ These include city meeting and conference spaces (o; Grebanier, 2002), production of writing materials, work stations (computers, printers, fax, and phone) (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002), web-site, reimbursement for transportation costs (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002), audio-visual services, and promotional, publicity, and media support from the Department's Communications Unit (Grebanier, 2002).

²⁴⁰ However, it is important to note that the over \$24,000 designated to the youth component falls under TYC initiatives and projects; thus in total approximately \$72,000 is invested in the TYC (this excludes the additional in-kind resources but includes the staffing costs). Including the Levi Strauss grant, the TYC has \$121,000 to support and implement TYC initiatives.

Cabinet, 2005b) and charitable grants (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002), including two from the Levi Strauss Foundation (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) and a grant from the United Way (o).²⁴¹

Toronto Youth Cabinet Programs and Services

The documents and interviews have outlined the various programs, services, and initiatives that the TYC has hosted. One of the TYC interviewees stated that the TYC does not have the resources to create its own youth programs, so in the past the TYC was focused on improving the delivery and number of youth programs and services in priority neighbourhoods (o).²⁴² By 1999, the TYC had participated in several initiatives, including successfully campaigning against youth recreational “user fees”. They established and launched the Youth Committee’s website, facilitated focus groups and training sessions, petitioned, hosted events, and organized deputations and media releases (Tecsner, 1999). In 2001, the TYC had direct contact with City Councillors and participated in council-led initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001). The TYC provided a youth perspective on the youth violence prevention program, assisted in the development of Toronto’s 2001 Youth Profile, and worked with Councillors on Budget

²⁴¹ In 2001, the TYC received the Levi Strauss Grant (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) amounting to \$45,000 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b). It was used for a capacity building initiative that identifies youth issues (including barriers to participation) and relationship building with other municipal youth councils (Grebanier, 2002). In 2002, the TYC applied for another \$45,000 Levi Strauss Foundation grant for the 2002-03 year, to be used to pay staff salaries, participant resources/materials, food, youth honoraria, promotional materials, and sign language interpretation at proposed events (Grebanier, 2002). The honoraria are only for non-TYC Executive members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b), such as ‘General’ members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002d). In 2002 there was a discussion to give honoraria to the Chair or another TYC Executive position but it was tabled to another meeting (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002d). A decision was never made because the Chair resigned and the Chair position was eliminated (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003). The TYC receives money from the United Way because they engage youth from the 13 priority neighbourhoods (o). The TYC was given \$13, 100 to develop a youth consultation to get more youth to vote (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b).

²⁴² These are the 13 identified neighbourhoods that are considered a priority because they have the least amount of access to services (a). In general, these are the neighbourhoods where the lower socio-economic families live.

campaigns (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001). In 2002, the TYC co-sponsored events such as the Youth and Police Conference (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002f) and conducted a workshop at a conference (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002g).

Since the TYC was founded, it has shifted its focus from programs and program space to the broader issues that affect youth (o). Overall, TYC services and initiatives can be broken down into six categories: hosting events; hosting conferences and forums; developing youth reports and conducting youth consultations; advocating youth issues; providing grants and endorsements; and facilitating training and hosting open membership meetings (see Appendix M).²⁴³

The TYC has given out grants to youth organizations through “Identify and Impact” awards, and has released over \$150,000 in the past year (PO H).²⁴⁴ In addition, the TYC endorses projects, initiatives, and events by allowing other organizations to use its logo on their event brochures etc., and/or providing access to its listserv and/or providing in-kind donations (such as City space) (PO I; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001d).²⁴⁵

The TYC has facilitated training sessions (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l) and given youth engagement presentations (Toronto Youth Cabinet 2003h). As well, the

²⁴³ It is evident from the data results that conferences are gatherings of individuals/organizations to teach others about an issue, while forums are gatherings of individuals/organizations who work together to discuss and expand on one issue.

²⁴⁴ However, in my Executive meeting minutes, it is discussed how the Identify and Impact organizers no longer maintain communication with TYC and chooses the winners of the grants without their input (PO G).

²⁴⁵ At the ‘General’ membership meeting where I conducted participant observation, the Membership Director estimated there are 300 to 400 youth contacts on the listserv, thus including anyone who had provided his/her email address at a TYC event or initiative (PO H). “[B]eing on the listserv just means you get all the emails, you’d get messages calling out youth to come to this, to come to that, sort of telling them what’s on your agenda, on the TYC’s agenda” (M).

TYC hosts meetings for all Toronto Youth to discuss and update on TYC issues and initiatives (M; PO G; PO H). Currently, they are involved in hosting an on-line live chat meeting with ten other youth groups (PO H).

Demographics of GU and TYC Programs and Services Participants

The literature reflects that it is important to find out who is being engaged in the decision-making process (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998) to identify whether or not youth engagement resources are being centralized to a particular group (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). However, before doing so, first you need to find out what groups should be represented at the table by identifying which youth groups are under-represented among the participants of an organization's program or service (in this case, GU events and TYC initiatives). Since there are no records of all those who are participating in the programs and/or services, I asked the interviewees to identify who they thought were being under-represented. I have summarized the document and interview results for both organizations into one table (see Table IV.f., p. 117).

Organizations identified newly arrived youth, low-income youth, minority ethno-cultural groups and disconnected youth as those who were under-represented in their respective programs and/or services. One GU interviewee identified older youth while two TYC members identified younger youth as under-represented groups in their programs and/or services. GU interviewees also identified female youth, religious youth, youth with different interests, and differently-abled youth as those who were under-represented in their programs and events.

Table IV.f. Under-represented GU and TYC Program and Services Participant**Groups**

Girls Unlimited	Toronto Youth Cabinet
<i>Newly Arrived youth (b, K)</i>	
<i>Low income youth</i> Including youth with jobs (<i>I, b, M</i>) and living in priority neighbourhoods (<i>M, J</i>) ²⁴⁶	
<i>Ethno-cultural groups</i> Aboriginals (<i>L</i>) and other Youth of Colour (<i>K, L, b</i>), or cultural groups “who have issues around sweating” (<i>d</i>)	
<i>Disconnected Youth</i> Youth who are disconnected from their community (not involved in other organizations or agencies) (<i>H, F, I</i>). Living in the outskirts of Toronto far from downtown (<i>J</i>).	
Older aged youth (between 15 and 17) (<i>G</i>)	Younger aged youth (<i>K, M</i>)
<i>Female Youth</i> Those who are young mothers or have other family obligations (<i>d, F, H, I</i>)	
<i>Religious Youth</i> Youth who are closely affiliated to places of worship, either already involved in their programs or their religious beliefs do not support female physical activity (<i>a, d, H</i>),	
<i>Youth with different Interests</i> Dislike physical activity (<i>I</i>)	
<i>Differently-Abled (a, c, e)</i>	

Conclusion

In summary, youth engagement can be seen as a wide spectrum, process, or concept. Meaningful engagement can be separated into the process and/or outcome. The interviewees have revealed three underlying reasons why Toronto has engaged youth in decision-making and governance: to improve youth services, to recognize the right of youth at the table, and to build future leaders. The history of GU and TYC reflects that youth engagement was more youth services-oriented but now works to develop youth leadership and civic engagement. Even though they have completely different

²⁴⁶ Those who live in priority neighbourhoods are also disconnected youth (lack of services thus lack of agency affiliations).

organizational structures, the interviewees identified five similar youth groups who are under-represented in their programs, services, or events. By understanding the history of Toronto's youth engagement initiative and the TYC and Girls Unlimited, we can better identify the levels and methods of youth engagement. In addition, it will help to recognize which structures facilitate or inhibit youth engagement.

Sub-Problem #2

What level of participation and mechanisms for youth engagement are the Girls Unlimited Leaders (GURLs) and the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) members experiencing?

Introduction

To understand what the different methods and levels at which the organizations are engaging its youth, the TYC youth and the Youth Engagement Coordinator from the Laidlaw Foundation were asked to identify the different methods and levels of youth engagement. Based on the literature review, we also needed to understand how the youth are recruited (the outreach and application processes), what additional resources the youth were provided (training and documents), the decision-making process (including how they identify issues, plan, implement, and evaluate their programs and services) and in addition the youth's perceived decision-making power and ownership over the program. This assisted in identifying what methods and levels at which the respective organizations are engaging youth and identify the strengths and barriers to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement.

Methods of Youth Engagement

Since the literature review's methods and levels of youth engagement were generated from an adult perspective, I conducted a focus group with the TYC members to develop a youth-engagement "methods" framework from a youth perspective. After reviewing the youth-engagement methods outlined by Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and the Laidlaw Foundation (2000), the focus group members decided to keep the methods I had presented: youth surveys, youth conferences, focus groups, youth governed organizations, youth governed programs, youth advisory to governing boards, and youth on governing bodies. They also decided to expand on the list by adding, 'edutainment' and 'recreation and leisure activities' (Focus Group Notes). 'Edutainment' was described by the focus group members as 25% education and 75% entertainment (Focus Group Notes).²⁴⁷ The second method they identified was engaging youth through recreation and leisure activities; examples included eating, sitting, movies, sports, and knitting – any activity that is recreational or leisure oriented (Focus Group Notes).

One of the interviewees provided an interview supplement (a speech the interviewee has presented at a conference) and the Youth Engagement Continuum by Listen (2003) to further elaborate on different youth engagement methods (see Appendix N).²⁴⁸ The first method is the 'service delivery approach,' where the youth are the clients or consumers of a service and viewed as problems that need to be solved (Listen, 2003;

²⁴⁷ Media and entertainment, especially hip hop and poetry, is used because they believe that every cultural group can connect to music, especially hip hop (Focus Group Notes). The TYC members found hip hop an effective way to get the message across and to motivate the youth to join the TYC or get involved in their community (Focus Group Notes). Other examples given included assemblies, workshop, emails and making politics fun (Focus Group Notes).

²⁴⁸ The interviewee provided the Youth Engagement Continuum written by the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (published by Listen Inc, 2003). However the interviewee elaborated on some of the methods and thus I have used them as two separate sources, the original and the interviewees' supplement.

Ilkiw, 2007).²⁴⁹ The second method is ‘youth development,’ where their assets are focused on, rather than their deficits; facilitators are working to develop their social, psychological and physical well-being (Listen, 2003; Ilkiw, 2007).²⁵⁰ The third youth engagement mechanism is ‘youth leadership’, where youth are provided leadership training or opportunities in planning, implementing, and evaluating a program (Listen, 2003; Ilkiw, 2007).²⁵¹ The last method is ‘youth organizing,’ examples include youth-run youth-led organizations (Listen, 2003; Ilkiw, 2007).²⁵²

Levels of Youth Engagement

To gain a youth perspective on the different levels of youth engagement, I asked the focus group members to either expand or change the levels identified by Arnstein (1969) and Hart (1992). TYC focus group members decided to keep some of the levels the same and change others. The results are summarized in table below (see Table IV.g., p. 121). At the fourth level, the members were going to name it as Hart did (1992) “Consulted and Informed” but the members decided to call it facilitation because they felt it was the adult that facilitates at this level, only involving the youth by informing and consulting them (Focus Group Notes). For participation to be genuine, the youth need to be empowered

²⁴⁹ Usually these are done through intervention or prevention programs that have the purpose of building resilience (Listen, 2003). This document was the second interview supplement provided by the interviewee. This document was also provided to me by a TYC interviewee.

²⁵⁰ The youth are provided peer and/or adult support, capacity building and youth-adult partnership opportunities (Listen, 2003).

²⁵¹ Youth also explore broader issues including community and societal issues and learning the decision-making process of the organization (Listen, 2003). “Youth in this setting are sometimes hired, often volunteers and program participants and may be invited as ‘observers’ on the Board (as they are leaders in training)” (Ilkiw, 2007, p. 4).

²⁵² It entails a membership base, youth as core staff or governing body, engaged in civic engagement and coalition (Listen, 2003). Examples within the GTA include Remix, San Romanoway, the 411 initiative for change, and the Canadian Tamil Development (Ilkiw, 2007). The Toronto Youth Cabinet was not listed as an example of a Toronto youth organization.

Table IV.g. Levels of Participation (based on Hart, 1992; Arnstein, 1969; Focus Group, 2007)

8	Youth in Control (Focus Group Notes)	Degrees of Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth initiated (Focus Group Notes) Youth can choose to involve adults at a minimal level and can choose to kick the adults out (Focus Group Notes) Young people in politics (Focus Group Notes)
7	Delegated Power (Arnstein, 1969)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth delegate power to other youth (Focus Group Notes) Partnership between each other (with other youth) (Focus Group Notes) Youth delegate power to adults (thus involve adults) (Focus Group Notes)
6	Partnership (Arnstein, 1969)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50-50 decision-making power (Focus Group Notes) Either youth or adults can initiate (Focus Group Notes) Also have partnerships with community (Focus Group Notes)
5	Placation (Arnstein, 1969)	Degrees of Tokenism (Focus Group Notes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not having the resources/knowledge to be part of the process properly (Focus Group Notes) Amount of power to press for issues depends on the ability of marginalized to articulate their priorities, thus powerholders can still make the final decision (Arnstein, 1969)
4	Facilitation (Focus Group Notes)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults inform and consult the youth for their opinions (Focus Group Notes) Occurs when children are consulted and involved in the analysis and discussion of the results of adult designed and run projects (Hart, 1992)
3	Informing (Arnstein, 1969)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One way communication, adults tell the youth (Focus Group Notes) Given no opportunity for feedback or power for negotiation (Arnstein, 1969)
2	Decoration (Hart, 1997)	Degrees of non-participation (Focus Group Notes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are told to: "use this/wear this/you're special" (Focus Group Notes) Children are used to promote a cause on the adult's agenda. But unlike manipulation, the adults do not deny their intentions (Hart, 1997)
1	Manipulation /Deception (Hart, 1997)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deception: Occurs when adults deny any involvement in the project/event etc. to make it seem that it was completely the children's idea and work from the beginning to the end (Hart, 1997). Manipulation: "Adults consciously use children's voice to carry own messages" (Hart, 1992, p. 40) and do not make explanations to participant in terms that they can understand (Hart, 1992)

to have at least 50% of the decision-making power; anything less than that would involve a degree of tokenism (Focus Group Notes). At the highest level, the youth adamantly stated the importance of having youth in politics to ensure that their needs are met and that they have the power to disengage adults (Focus Group Notes).

GU and TYC Outreach Process

Even though GU and the TYC have distinctly different methods of youth engagement, the interviews and documents revealed that the methods the organizations use to reach out to youth are similar. Both organizations used youth events, youth organizations and/or youth serving organizations, and the media to get youth interested in their organizations. Youth from both TYC and GU heard about their respective organizations from attending other youth events (J, M, o, H; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.4; Teschner, 1999b). Both organizations would set up booths at youth organizations for youth to find information (H; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.4; Teschner, 1999b).

I went to an event called the Toronto youth summit and that was about three years ago and that's when I met some members of the Toronto Youth Cabinet and that's when I was encouraged to join up (J)

Another method that both organizations used for outreach was through other youth organizations and/or youth serving organizations. Six GU interviewees and one TYC member discussed the partnerships made with youth serving organizations to outreach (K, a, d, e, d, c, H; Teschner, 1999b).²⁵³ The TYC would send out 'TYC Recruitment' packages to youth organizations, as well as invite the youth members to a TYC information session (Teschner, 1999b). The GU community partners were asked to recruit potential female youth (a, d, e; Girls Unlimited, 2005e; Girls Unlimited, 2005b)

²⁵³ Examples included partnering with agencies that work specifically with differently-abled youth (e, d) and with young mothers (c, H).

and post up job descriptions (Girls Unlimited, 2005e; Girls Unlimited, 2006am; Girls Unlimited, 2006ak) in their community centers, local libraries and schools (*a, d, e*; Girls Unlimited, 2005e; Girls Unlimited, 2005b). Three GURLs interviewees had been recruited by the community partners personally, either because they were volunteering at the community center or participating in the programs (*G, F, I*).²⁵⁴

I attend my recreational centre on a regular basis, [m]y youth coordinator recommended this opportunity to become a Girls Unlimited Real Leader Ambassador [and] showed me the flyer (*I*).

The partners were also asked to contact parents and explain to the parents the roles and responsibilities of the GURLs (Toronto Public Health, 2006h).

Both organizations used media as an avenue of outreach to youth (through the newspapers, television exposure, and internet) (*X, o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e; Teschner, 1999b; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; City of Toronto, n.d.). However, the data results indicate there are methods only TYC uses for outreach to Toronto Youth. Three TYC interviewees revealed that ‘word-of-mouth’ was another way Toronto Youth found out about the TYC (*K, M, o*).

I heard about the Toronto Youth Cabinet through friends. The first time I heard about it actually was through my little brother who was doing this gun—anti-gun violence thing (*M*).

Another outreach method that only the TYC interviewees revealed was going out to the communities and schools. Two TYC interviewees mentioned the ‘Youth Speak Outs’ in which the TYC members go out to the isolated neighbourhoods to engage youth in identifying their local issues (*J, K*). In addition, the focus group members and a TYC

²⁵⁴ One of the Networks only has one GURL and is currently in the process of recruiting another GURL (*X*).

interviewee discussed that TYC members would do personal appearances at the schools to recruit youth (Focus Group notes; L; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e).

[T]his year we have a hip hop thing, one of the—the community engagement director...one of his projects is a hip hop tour, where he goes around to the schools to engage youth through urban music and urban culture (L).

Application Process

GU Application Process

As mentioned earlier, the interviews and documents revealed that the TYC and GU's application processes are different. Three GU interviewees mentioned March Break Training as part of the youth engagement process (*a, H, I*). In February 2006, each of the networks were asked to invite the GURL interviewee candidates (a maximum of six per network) to attend the March Break training (*a*; Toronto Public Health, 2006h).²⁵⁵ Even though the document analysis revealed that the networks were asked to follow a standard selection process, the interviews revealed that the networks still had some flexibility in how they recruited the GURLs (*a, H, G, F, I*).²⁵⁶ Three out of the four

²⁵⁵ Only two of the GURLs I interviewed had participated in the March Break training (*I, H*). In total 15 female youth, from across the city, participated in March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006j). Networks were allowed to still consider applicants who had missed the March Break training, but it was recommended that the network facilitate an orientation session similar to the one at the March Break training (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006b). Network 1 created a two hour orientation for those who couldn't make the training session (Girls Unlimited, 2006ae).

²⁵⁶ The Steering Committee members created a standard selection process, asking each network to have its applicant submit a resume as part of the application (Girls Unlimited, 2005b) and create a selection panel to interview the applicants (Girls Unlimited, 2006j; Girls Unlimited, 2005b). The interview was to include the following questions: how long have you been involved in Girls Unlimited, what does Girls Unlimited mean to you, and how involved have you been in your community? (Girls Unlimited, 2005b). Network 1 created a GURL Selection Committee package, including the interview questions, outline of GURL roles and responsibilities, GURL volunteer agreement (outlining commitment), and contract (signed by volunteer, parent/guardian, designated community partner, and TPH staff) (Girls Unlimited, 2006ap). Network 3 created a GURLs application form which asked for personal experience and a few questions about why the applicant wants to apply (Girls Unlimited, n.d.5).

GURLs I interviewed went through an interview (*H, G, F*).²⁵⁷ The interviews ranged from formal (both a written and verbal interview) (*a, H*) to more casual (*a, G, F*).

[I]t's not a deep interview, but they just like to see who you are, [your] understanding, if you're good with kids (*F*).

TYC Application Process

Interviews and document analysis revealed that the TYC has two separate application processes: one to become a 'General' member, and one to become an Executive member. To become a general member, the youth are self-selected and choose to volunteer their time for the TYC (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e). According to the interviewees there are three ways to become a 'General' member: sign-up in person (*J*), register on-line (*M, o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b), or call the TYC office (*o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b). Once registered, three of the TYC interviewees stated that participants are added onto the listserv and sent emails about events, initiatives and meetings that he or she can attend or organize (*M, o, K*). 'General' members can also get recruited by Executive members to help out with events and initiatives (*M, J, PO H*).

Four TYC interviewees mentioned that 'General' members must attend the meetings, the orientation and the anti-oppression training to be full voting members for elections and decisions (*K, M, J, o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b).²⁵⁸

[To] become a member you have to attend [the] orientation session and anti-oppression session and I got those done in like the first two months and then I was considered a full member (*K*).

²⁵⁷ One of the GURLs did not have an interview process because only two female youth in her Network applied for the position and she got the position by default (*I*).

²⁵⁸ To be eligible to vote, the member must have attended at least two out of the last six 'General' meetings (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005v; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i). However, I have not found any data supporting that eligibility is actually verified.

In 2002, 'General' members attending the orientation training session received a training kit, which included a welcome letter from the Toronto Youth Advocate and the Chair, registration form and information about TYC, contact information for the Director of Membership and for Toronto's youth services; lists of City Councillors and upcoming meeting dates and contact information, orientation evaluation, and a personal commitment form (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002j).²⁵⁹ The actual orientation session informed the new members on TYC past successes and explains to them how members can change policies and help City Council (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005d).

The documents and interviews revealed that there is a much more formal process to become an Executive member. Both the Executives I interviewed went through an election process (J, K).

I was a member for, I'd say a couple of months, 3-4 months before I became an executive and even then I didn't come [for] 3 consecutive months, I—it was just 3 or 4 months within the year that I had attended the meeting or something like that (J).... I had to go through an election process to become an executive, I think [I] became an executive member right away (J).

To be eligible to run for the Executive position, the member has to have at least one year experience with TYC or work experience with youth organizations, attended at least three cabinet meetings in the past six months, attended a candidate orientation session and successfully passed the TYC test (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005v).²⁶⁰ Members either are nominated or nominate themselves for

²⁵⁹ The personal commitment form asks members to commit to supporting the TYC mission, to attend General Meetings held every third Saturday and to fill out the member's availability, experiences and interests (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). None of the interviewees mentioned signing a commitment form when they joined the TYC as a 'General' member, however in the 2004 Constitution it states that each member is to sign a commitment form (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j)

²⁶⁰ To make eligibility easier, anti-oppression training is provided once every three months (o) and there is a TYC Orientation session scheduled before the nomination period (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004m). The constitution also stated that all eligible members for Executive must have attended an anti-oppression

only one position and submit nomination by fax, email, or in-person to the TYC staff member (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005v; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i). The formal Election process is hosted at the ‘General’ membership meetings (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001c; Girls Unlimited, 2006ak; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004w; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004x).²⁶¹ On Election Day, each candidate presents a three minute speech before the TYC members vote (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005v).

Training

GURLs Training

The documents and interviews revealed the training structures for GU. All the GURLs stated in their interviews that they had received both formal and informal training while being part of Girls Unlimited. The interviews and documents identified several formal training opportunities for the GURLs from March 2006 to December 2006 (see Table IV.h.). All of the GURLs training was held at the downtown Citywide GURL location (*a, H, G, I*).

Table IV.h. GURLs Training Summary

Training	What skills gained	When	Who Participated
Barriers to Physical Activity (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Meetings (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	How to make the meetings youth friendly (<i>a</i>)	March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Communication (<i>a, H, I G, F</i> ; Girls	Two GURLs mentioned that they	March Break Training (Girls Unlimited,	Citywide Female Youth

training session within six months of being a TYC member (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). The TYC test consists of general questions about the TYC (K).

²⁶¹ The annual election process is outlined by the 2002 and 2004 Election Protocols (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005v, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i). However, the meeting minutes revealed that there have been Executive members that have been elected at an Executive meeting and not at the ‘General’ membership meeting (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004y; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004q).

Unlimited, 2006aq); Girls Unlimited, 2006z)	learned how to be more articulate (<i>H, I</i>)	2006aq)	
		December at GURLs meeting (<i>G</i>)	Citywide GURLs
Conflict Resolution (<i>a, H</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
The City and the TYC (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006b)	Learned about TYC, civic engagement, how to access community resources, and demographical information (<i>a</i> ; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006b)	March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Body Image and Nutrition (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Media Criticism and Messaging (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Taking Action on Chlamydia (<i>a</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Anti-Oppression (<i>a</i> , <i>H, I</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Cuban Dance, Ty Belly Fusion, Nia Movement (<i>H, I</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006q)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Work Safety (Girls Unlimited, 2006k; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)		March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006aq)	Citywide Female Youth
Kicking Aids Out (<i>a</i> , <i>H, I</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006w)	Three day Kicking AIDS Out training and workshop (Girls Unlimited, 2006w).	August (Girls Unlimited, 2006w)	Citywide GURLs
Leadership Training (<i>X</i>)	Weekend retreat (<i>e</i>)	unknown	Network 4 Female participants in the Leadership Program and the two Network 4 GURLs (<i>X</i>)
Money Handling (<i>I</i>)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

All the GURLs felt they received informal training though attending the meetings and organizing events, such as teamwork skills, communication skills (*G, I*), meetings (*H, I*), event planning skills (*H*), and how to be assertive (*F*).

I've learned how to act, like how to separate my business life from my personal life, I've learned how to think for myself, I was a very shy and quiet person. They broke me out of that, and I'm very comfortable to be around now, I feel comfortable around other people and they have taught me not to let other people to take advantage of me and I'm very thankful of that actually (*F*).

In addition, Network 2 documents revealed that they gave their GURLs an opportunity to attend an event to learn the “how-tos” and “what-nots” of event planning (Girls Unlimited, 2006i). All the GURLs felt competent when planning, implementing, or evaluating their events. In fact, one of the GURLs felt that some of them already had the skills (*H*).

[S]ome of them already had previous leadership roles that they've been involved, they had already organized events, they may already have from experience making decisions, and really putting something together to see how it would work and interacting with people in different things (*H*).

Interviews revealed that most of the documents that they received were supplements to the training sessions they attended (*a, H, I*). One GURL did mention that she receives minutes from the meetings (*G*) and from my GU participant observations, all people present at meetings get the minutes either in person or via email. The GURLs do get to identify what training they would like to receive.²⁶²

TYC Members Training

The TYC documents were able to elaborate on some of TYC's past training sessions. In 2002, the Executives received an “I-We-Us” training day, where they personally reflected on their roles and responsibilities and had team building and

²⁶² This is discussed in the next section.

communication components (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002k). The TYC also had a capacity-building workshop series, which included meeting facilitation, media skills, anti-oppression, and communication (Bah, 2003). In 2003, the TYC had a retreat where guest speakers came in and discussed Summit Training and Facilitation (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003f).

TYC members who are on the listserv (both Executive and ‘General’) can find out about the free training from emails (o). Training is hosted either at City Hall (J, K, M, L, o) or Metro Hall (K, o). In general, the Executives receive the majority of the training opportunities because in 2005, the Executive Council decided that training would be mandatory for all Executive members (J).²⁶³ Training for TYC can be separated into formal training provided for all TYC members, training provided only to the Executives, and informal training. I have summarized the formal training the TYC members have received (see Table IV.i.).

All the TYC members I interviewed felt they had received informal training. The ‘General’ members receive most of the skills informally from attending the meetings (M, L). One ‘General’ member stated that (s)he received informal training on good governance and media (L). Executive members received informal training from the informal mentorship process of past Executive members (J, K).

[Y]ou could even say that I was trained last year by last year’s council relations, I mean him carrying me around you know, and to the different council meetings and teaching me you know, at least you know to see how it’s done (J).

Most of the documents provided to the TYC members were training supplements (J, M, o), and only two interviewees recognized that there are additional document resources at City Hall (K, o)

²⁶³ A TYC Executive interviewee stated that (s)he had received most of his/her training in 2006 (J).

[I]n terms of resources you know we're located within City Hall so we have access to a lot of you know documents such as, you know when they would do studies on you know youth engagement, or you know, which neighbourhoods are missing community centers like we have a lot of access to that (K).

Table IV.i. TYC Training Summary

Training	What skills gained	When	Who Participated
Anti-Oppression (J, K, M, o) Facilitated by different groups (J)	"I learned about power and privilege and how that plays in society and I learned to own my privileges and then to-oh I also learned how to identify a privilege" (L). "[Learn] to view everyone as equals and to see how society views them sometimes as unequals" (K).	Supposed to be monthly (K) but often occurs quarterly (every three months) (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004z)	Open to all Members (o, J, K, M)
Peace Circle Training (o, M)	"[B]asically learning of how to facilitate groups that have serious issues or problems to resolve and how to do that and you know get through that in a way that is effective and gets results" (M).	February 2007 (M)	Open to all Members (M, o)
Conflict Resolution (o)	No skills were identified by the interviewees.		Open to all Members (o)
Media (J, o, K, L)	[L]earning how to talk to media, learning how to do interviews, learning how to- learning how to respond to-to media (J). [T]here's running press releases, issuing press releases, or holding a press conference (o).	2006 (J)	Only the Executives (J, o, K)
Good Governance and Meetings (J, K)	Once in a position of power, learning how to make the meetings inclusive for everyone (K). Facilitating and decision-making (such as consensus building) (J).	2006 (J)	Only for the Executives (J, K)

While I was doing my participant observation of the General Meetings, I saw a cabinet full of documents on various topics (to which I was later given access too for the document analysis), such as youth engagement, conference forums, training material,

planning etc. (PO H), however none of my interviewees directly mentioned the shelves of resources.²⁶⁴

Three of the TYC member interviewees felt competent in conducting their roles and responsibilities (J, K, L); however, one of the interviewees stated that it was because (s)he had the skills before hand (J). One 'General' member felt that (s)he did not have the skills to feel competent in what (s)he is doing and wished there were more training opportunities (M).

Decision-Making Process

GU Decision-Making Process

The decision-making is decentralized to respect each network's unique composition, strengths and challenges (Girls Unlimited, 2006g). The decision-making processes are outlined in the partnership agreements (Girls Unlimited, n.d.1; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2006ax). My participant observations and all the GU interviewees identified consensus as the method by which their decisions are made (*a, c, d, e, b, F, I, G, H*; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2006d; PO A; PO B; PO C; PO D; PO E; PO F).

[I]f somebody wasn't sure, we'd talk about it, then asked them why they were concerned, what their concerns were then they'd talk about those and we'd just try to work so that those concerns would be taken care of and then we'd vote again with the idea to keep that in mind, and usually it was an entire consensus (*G*).

However, I did observe that the decisions made by 'consensus' were in fact made by the more vocal members while the others members remained silent (PO D; PO C; *b, d, G*).

There was not a formal process asking everybody around the table for their opinions or

²⁶⁴ There were documents on how to design a website (IMPACS, n.d.), media and communications training (Higgins & Luism, 2002), City Hall and bureaucracy training (a training session giving tips on how to influence decision makers and work the politics and bureaucracy) (City of Toronto, n.d.3), and anti-oppression Training (Bishop, 2002).

raising their hand to vote (PO D; PO C; *b, d, G*). Four interviewees mentioned that if a consensus could not be reached, the decision would then be made by majority rules (*c, F, H, G*).

[O]ur decisions are always made as a group, everybody gets to put in their opinions and what we'll do if it comes down to the point where we can't decide then we'll take everybody's opinion and then we'll vote on—on the opinions (*F*).

At the meetings that the GURLs attended (the GURLs meetings and Network 1), I observed that the partners would ask the GURLs to make the initial decisions and then the partners would discuss further until everyone agreed (PO D; PO C). For the Networks that do not engage the youth at their meetings, two community partner interviewees stated that decisions would be made by the GURLs with the youth out-reach worker, and then the decision would be brought back to the Network meeting to be discussed and agreed upon by the network partners (*c, b*).

[W]ell the GURLs decide on everything and then...[the decision will be brought] back and then we'll go around about what do we feel about it, talk about it and then we'll go back and forth, there's not much debate but we'll just thinking if that's something that-our youth want to go, I think it's mostly consent and then we'll just go along with it (*b*)

In general, I observed that at the Network meetings without the GURLs, the meetings were more productive because their discussions were shorter and decisions were made quicker (PO A; PO B; PO E). Even though the GURLs meetings have an agenda, I observed the meetings moving much slower, the discussions were longer and the conversations sometimes got side-tracked (PO D; PO C).

Not everyone can attend the meetings and for those cases the documents and interviews revealed several protocols to include those members in the decision-making process. Network 2 partnership agreement outlines that the important but non-urgent

decisions are made by email voting and urgent decisions are made at the meetings by those in attendance (Girls Unlimited, 2006). If there is no quorum at the Network 2 and 4 meetings, each network sends out information concerning decisions, and then conducts an email vote (*b, e*; Girls Unlimited, 2006g).²⁶⁵ One interviewee stated that the community partners in his/her network decided that “some of the issues will [...] be determined at maybe more at the top level, where only a couple of partners are involved” (*e*)

TYC Decision-Making Process

The TYC documents outlined formal decision-making procedures in the TYC. In 2000, the decision-making process was clearly outlined in the TYC Operational Structure document, stating that all decisions for TYC were made by the Steering Committee present at the meetings and would be made through consensus (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The workgroups determined their own decision-making processes (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). In 2001, the first TYC Constitution was created (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f) and was revised in 2002 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e), and 2004 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).²⁶⁶ The TYC constitution outlined the decision-making processes (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). The constitution stated that decisions are made by consensus or by majority rules (50% +1) when consensus cannot be reached (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet,

²⁶⁵ In 2005 it was decided that quorum would be 50% + 1 (Girls Unlimited (2005)). Quorum for the citywide meetings is if there is at least one GURL representative from two different networks (Girls Unlimited, 2006w). Quorum for the Steering Committee Member is a minimum of one member from each organization, with two of the four networks represented (Girls Unlimited, 2006g).

²⁶⁶ To make constitutional amendments, two-thirds of the entire Executive have to be in agreement (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

2004j). A quorum of five members must be present for a decision to be passed (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). Only those present at the meetings can make the decisions, but those who were not will receive meeting minutes and can bring up any concerns or problems at the next meeting (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

The 2001, 2003, and 2004 meeting minutes noted that external organization representatives would attend 'General' meetings to ask for TYC support or endorsement (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001i; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001d; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004aa; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004w; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ab). In addition, generally the Executives consulted the 'General' members before they made final decisions (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001k; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001g). However, by 2004 the minutes revealed that the Executives were making more decisions without consulting the 'General' members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005e, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005f, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005g). In fact, in the second Executive meeting I attended, there were external youth organizations asking for TYC endorsement and sponsorship and the members present voted and made the final decision (PO I). There was not a formal criteria being followed to make endorsement or sponsorship decisions (PO I).²⁶⁷

Interviews and participant observation revealed the current decision-making process. Three interviewees stated that the meeting decision-making procedures are the same for all meetings (J, K, L). Decisions are made through motions, where a person

²⁶⁷ Some decisions were made immediately while others were held off until next meeting (PO I). In my document analysis I saw a donor/endorsement criteria list (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ac).

raises a motion to be passed, it is seconded, and then there is a vote, noting those for and against the decision and those who abstain (PO G). The portfolio or team meetings are more consensus-based and will go to voting only if a consensus cannot be reached (K, o)

[W]e try to come to a consensus, if we can't come to a consensus then we need to vote, right? If it's voted on, and let's just say that you are not pleased with the outcome like you voted – we all voted yeah and you voted nah right, we can reflect in the minutes that you voted nah (o).

Perceived Level of Decision-Making Power

GURLs Perceived Level of Decision-Making Power

Two of the community partners stated that the GURLs are supposed to have more decision-making power than the combination of the partners (including Toronto Public Health) (*d, a*). However, the GURLs interviewees revealed that the degree they felt that their opinions were received depended on which meeting they were attending. At the GURLs meetings, all of the GURLs felt that their opinions were equally received with the Toronto Public Health staff and the community partners. At the network level, both of the GURLs that work with the youth worker in their networks felt that their opinions were received equally (2X).²⁶⁸ The GURLs that attend their network meetings (either on a regular basis or occasionally) had opposing responses regarding their perceived decision-making power at their respective network meetings. One GURL did not feel that her opinions were received equally to the community partners in her network meetings.

I don't think so just because there's so many more of them and I think they tend to overlook the fact that my role there is to tell them what the youth want and that I've been speaking to the youth so I do know what their opinions are, and it just seems to be more them controlling the decisions and then telling us sort of what was going to happen instead of asking us our opinions, which is what they chose us to do – so it's strange (X).

²⁶⁸ To maintain confidentiality I have used "X" instead of identifying the two GURLs interviewees.

The other GURL felt that her opinions were received equally as well as the community partners but only as long as she was confident and assertive.

I think that as long as I was confident with what I was saying and I wasn't mumbling or—or if I wasn't unsure, if I—I stuck to my opinion, it was taken – because it's not like they wouldn't encourage us (X).

However she did feel that sometimes the GURL's opinions were not taken because of the perceived practicability of the opinion (X).

TYC Members Perceived Decision-Making Power

Three TYC members feel that their opinions were very well received at the meetings (J, K, L). However, two interviewees did discuss the existence of unequal decision-making power between the members – either gender related (K) or experience related (veterans versus rookie Executives) (K, M; PO G).

[I]f you've been there for a long time I do think that your ideas and your opinions have more weight than somebody who has just walked in there and does not know what's going on, and so yeah that's how I feel that it's been received (M).

One TYC interviewee felt the TYC members' opinions were received equally with other organizations and with the TYC Coordinator and the members get to decide whether or not they want to take the advice (o). The same TYC interviewee felt that the TYC members' opinions were well received by the Mayor, especially on issues in which the Mayor was particularly interested in (o). The Mayor's staff would then follow-up on the issues discussed during those meeting within the following week (o). One TYC member disagreed and felt that the TYC staff and city councillors had more decision-making power (M). However, the documents do support that the TYC members have the power to go against City Council 'recommendations' and suggestions. For example, the TYC members were informed by the CDO that any constitutional amendments would have to

be approved by the City Youth Advocate (in addition to the TYC members) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004w) but the TYC members went against that position and decided to keep amendments under the discretion of TYC members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004w; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). Another example occurred when a city councillor did not want to have a youth event at Albert Campbell square, but TYC decided to have one anyway (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004y). TYC members also have the decision-making power to approve the sponsorship solicited for TYC by City Staff (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004f).

How Issues are Identified

GU Issues

Several themes that emerged when discussing how issues were identified were contradictory. Only three interviewees (*a, c, I*) identified that the events and programs were initiated because it was a condition of the THHP Grant that they have a minimum of one event per network per year and one Citywide event.

Well [the Toronto Public Health Staff] gave every Network an opportunity to host an event within our Network and if we didn't finish the planning for the event by a certain date we wouldn't get the funding (*I*).

While this is the case, the rest of the interviewees discussed how the ideas of the events and the programs were driven by the GURLs or other female participants. Five interviewees and documents revealed that for three of the Networks (Network 2, Network 3 and Network 4) and the Citywide GURLs events, the GURLs consulted female program participants about what they would like to see in their events and programs (*a, c, I, e, G*; Girls Unlimited, 2006w; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao; Girls Unlimited, 2006ar). Two of the GURLs interviewees responded:

We prepared surveys and visited different community centers and ask[ed] the girls to fill out our surveys and give us back feedback. Once we tabulated the surveys we got a view on what the girls really wanted to participate in on this day (*I*).

One of the interviewees said that the ideas came from the GURLs.

[A]ll of our programs, initiatives, activities, come from the GURLs, they introduce with, at our Network meetings, what they want to do and so we try to build on their ideas (*d*).

However the interviewee continued to say that

I guess everyone's added piece gets added on to the master idea so it becomes the group's master idea versus than just a single person's (*d*).

TYC Issues

Issues are identified through two means. They are determined by TYC members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002) such as the Executives (J, K, M) and the 'General' membership (*o*), or they are voiced by Toronto Youth (i.e., through Youth Speak Outs) (K, *o*), as well as suggested by City Council (through the Youth Advocate) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002j)

In 2004-05, the Executives decided that the priority issues would be based on the current and relevant issues that TYC youth face, the current needs of the cabinet, the issues that TYC can change and make a local impact on (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004m; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ad) and those issues identified in collaboration with youth community partners and TYC members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ad). The three priority issues that were identified for the 2004-05 year were youth safety (including police-youth relations, safe communities, gang violence), street level services (poverty, homelessness, affordable and transitional housing, shelter supports, hunger, addiction & mental health), and community service (including

recreation, employment, transportation, newcomer youth services, public health & community use of schools) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e).²⁶⁹

[T]he entire membership, broadly, they look at the, what is the path that the TYC needs to be on – right, this year we did a strategic plan and about 30 youth [were] there, we discussed what is a positive vision for the City of Toronto so that it is a great place for youth, what would be the role of TYC in that, in supporting the creation of the great city, in the building [of] that great city (o).

One of the TYC interviewees stated that issues are also identified through the community Youth Speak Outs (K). After the Speak Outs, the TYC members will go back to City Hall and voice the issues identified by the neighbourhoods (K).

[T]hey bring up issues like you know youth viol—I mean police violence against youth and certain things like – any sort of rally that is going on in Toronto, we're made aware of (M).

Planning, Implementation and Evaluation Processes

GU Planning Process

Each of interviewees was given the option to choose one event to discuss. Two of the GURLs chose to discuss their network event (*H, I*), while the other two GURLs discussed the citywide event (*G, F*). Out of the network partners, three of the partners chose to talk about the citywide event (*d, b, a*) and two of the partners chose to discuss their network event (*c, e*).²⁷⁰

Each of the networks created their own work plans or critical paths, which guides them in what they are going to do and when (*a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006g).²⁷¹ Overall, the

²⁶⁹ The TYC website is still not updated, so it is unknown whether or not the issues have changed since 2004.

²⁷⁰ The TPH staff member is included because TPH is also a partner of GU.

²⁷¹ The Network 1 and Network 2's critical path includes goals, desired outcomes and a table with headings: Key Strategy, Month/Year, Actions, Deliverables, Completion Date, Responsibility, notes/status/lessons learned (Girls Unlimited, 2006a; Girls Unlimited, 2006x). For Network 1 most of the responsibility goes to the partners, except for the Girls Only conference where the GURLs are responsible for using their learned skills to develop the conference (Girls Unlimited, 2006x). In one of the networks,

planning occurred in three ways. The first method involves working with the youth worker and then having the youth worker report back to the Network Meeting (*b, c, I, F*).

Real Leaders designed most of it, and there was one of the partners who was a city staff who I know is in charge of it and then she reported back and forth and when it came to the meeting we went along with it and decided on it and then followed up on it (*J*).

The second method of planning occurred at the meetings with the GURLs and partners planning together (*d, G, a, F*). The GURLs were responsible for identifying what needed to be done, by whom, creating the promotional items, and/or planning out the details of the day (*G, d, F, H*).

[T]he GURLs decided who was going to do what, and we just documented what they wanted us to do, and we signed up wherever we could fit in within our regular schedule (*d*).

[W]e talked about how things should run, how—how many girls would be able to come, what type of food would be served there, whether or not we wanted to do glow-in-the-dark bowling,...just every detail of the day that had to go smoothly to make it work (*G*).

The last method of planning that emerged was mostly the partners planning at the Network meetings with the GURLs attending only one of those meetings (*e*).²⁷²

I felt that with my own network there's really not as much of the [GURLs] getting involved. I felt that it was a lot of the partners, their kind of ideas for the event were what they felt the youth would want, so it's really them that decided what the event would be, when it would be, where it would be, they did tell us what the event was and sort of get our opinions, but it was mainly the partners that decided (*X*).

both the GURL and the Community Partner mentioned the work Critical Path, which seems to be similar to the work plan, which outlines when the money is spent for the year (*H, d*).

²⁷² Both the community partner and GURL for that Network did not elaborate on the GURLs' responsibilities for that event. In fact the community partner for that network stated that the GURLs had a bigger role in organizing the citywide event (*e*).

GU Implementation Process

The themes that emerged from the interviews were that, in general, it was the partners' responsibility to create the registration system and handle the money transactions (*e, H*). Most of the GURLs' responsibilities prior to the events included booking the locations, transportation and/or the facilitators (*a, I, c, F*) and creating the promotional items (*H, e*; Girls Unlimited, 2006w; Girls Unlimited, 2006z).²⁷³ On the day of the event, four interviewees identified that the GURLs were responsible for setting up and cleaning up the facilities, welcoming the girls, registration, acting as emcee and giving out prizes (*d, a, F, G*). At Network 1's event, two of the GURLs conducted a workshop (*X*).

GU Evaluation Process

The documents and interviews revealed that there are no formal evaluation forms, just feedback questionnaires and surveys that are given out to the participants of the programs and/or events. Surveys and feedback forms are used instead of evaluations because evaluations require a formal procedure (Girls Unlimited, 2006am). Some of the feedback forms were created by the GURLs (*a, c, I*; Girls Unlimited 2006J) and some were created by the community partners (*b, e*). The feedback forms ask the participants to rate the workshop, identify what they have learned, what they still want to learn, what they want to take from it, what should be kept in or left out next time, whether or not they would recommend it to another friend, and pertinent suggestions about what could make it better. The form also asks them with what school, community center or other affiliations they are associated (Girls Unlimited, n.d.6).

²⁷³ Also supported by Girls Unlimited (2006f) documents.

There was a discrepancy in the interviews regarding the existence of a feedback form for one of the events. One of the interviewees replied “yes” (*d*) and the other two interviewees stated “no” (*a, G*).

[T]here wasn’t a formal one [evaluation] but it was more like the girls told, the people who ran the drop in program whether they liked it or not, and they said sort of word of mouth said oh yeah they liked it, or no—oh no they didn’t, it was more like that type of idea and asking them at the end of the day, oh do you think it was good, was it something that you’d do again (*G*).

Regardless of how the information was collected, all the interviewees mentioned a debriefing at the meetings following the events (*a, G, F, c, d, e, H*; Girls Unlimited, 2006d). Everyone at the meeting is given an opportunity to reflect on what they learned and what they liked most about the event (Girls Unlimited, 2006d).

[W]e followed up, we talked about what could have gone better ... and then we took the suggestions from the girls that we had heard that day and that was basically the follow-up to see what we could improve on (*G*).

TYC Planning Process

In general, the planning process was guided by the work plans created by Executives with the TYC Coordinator (*o*).²⁷⁴ Once the overall TYC vision is identified, the TYC Coordinator sits with each Executive individually to help develop his or her work plan, identifying what the project is, who is involved, the goals and objectives, the tasks, the outcomes, and the time lines (*o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006c). Based on the team budget and work plan, the TYC members plan everything including choosing the venue and date of event and/or initiative (*o*). The Executives take the lead in the planning and work with the team members (consisting of ‘General’ and Executive members) (*J, K*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006). TYC members delegate to each other

²⁷⁴ In 2002, the work plans for the work groups were developed by the General members and approved by the executives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002f).

the responsibilities for each task (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ae; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004af). Depending on the event, sometimes the teams collaborate with outside organizations (L).

TYC Implementation Process

In general, the TYC members do everything. They *are* the organization and they are the ones who implement the events and initiatives. For example, TYC members develop the promotional material for the TYC events and initiatives, recruit partner organizations to participate in the events and initiatives, obtain permits, insurance, and identify the legal issues and get the food and entertainment (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004h). When advocating at City Hall, the TYC members conduct deputations in front of City Council (J), make the necessary phone calls (K), run errands and write speeches (M).

TYC Evaluation Process

Two interviewees identified that evaluations were done through debriefs (J, K). Documents revealed that TYC do conduct debriefs after events. For example, after an event, they discussed what went well, identified issues with the structure of the day, the setting up, and the outreach (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003g). Executives do evaluations on each other as a mid-term progress report to highlight their achievements, set some goals and receive and provide peer evaluations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005f).

Perceived Level of Involvement

Overall, the interviews reflected how much the GURLs were involved in organizing their Network or Citywide events. Three GURLs felt that they were involved in all three of the aspects – planning, implementation, and evaluation (*H, G, I*). Only one

GURL (*F*) was not involved in the planning aspect because she had become an official GURL after the planning and during the implementation of the Citywide event.

However, she stated that she was provided with updates in the aspects that she missed out on.

[A]t the Girls Unlimited meetings they let me know the West side is responsible for this, the East side is responsible for this, and the North and South side is responsible for this (*F*).

Three GURLs felt that they were involved as much as they wanted to be (*G, F, H*).

I was *really* involved, it was really good actually, personally myself I like being involved in sort of fast pace stuff, so it was really wasn't too much, I thought it was a good amount (*G*).

However, one GURL felt that she was involved too much. She stated "I guess we had more roles because there were less people to work with" (*I*).

For the TYC, how much you were involved depended on how much time and commitment you are able to give (*L*). Three TYC members felt that they were involved in all three aspects of the planning, implementing, and evaluation (*J, K, L*). One TYC member was not as active before and had not been involved in an initiative, but is currently involved in an initiative and is still in the planning process (*M*). However three TYC members discussed the issue of members being involved too much (*J, M, L*).

I think [*I*] was involved in too much, because sometimes what happens is – as much as you want other people to be involved, you know, the job needs to get done and sometimes you end [up] doing more than you want to, or more than your body can handle or your mind (*L*).

One of the interviewees has not been very active in the TYC but is nervous because she has seen her fellow TYC members being overloaded with work (*M*). However, another interviewee felt that the TYC members should not feel like they are involved too much because they define how much they do (*o*).

Perceived Level of Ownership

The interviews revealed that it did not matter if they were youth or adults: ownership depended on the size of the initiative or event (how many people were involved), if (s)he was involved in all three aspects, or if (s)he was really invested (put in a lot of time and resources). For the big events or initiatives (such as the Budget, the Cause or the GU citywide event), two of the TYC members and one of the GURLs felt they shared the ownerships with everyone else (*G, J, K*).

[W]e'd all been in on the planning, of course there were a few girls who had done a bit more planning than others, but I didn't feel like it was *my* event as you said, I felt like it was a really good event which was everybody contributing to it fairly equally (*G*).

However, two TYC members, one GURL and one community partner felt ownership over the project or initiative because they were the ones who were present from the beginning (*H, e, K, L*).

I mean if you're going to be involved in it right from the planning stages you do tend to buy into it, so you're going to take ownership over it (*e*).

Two of the partners (*a, d*) felt that only the GURLs should feel ownership over the project

[The GURLs] showed [pause] like they were in command, they were in control, they took initiative, wherever there was a gap they filled the gap wherever the need was, and we appreciated that and we told them that too, that we really liked how they stepped up to the leadership roles and we sat back and laughed and watched and just enjoyed the events (*d*).

However, one TYC interviewee and two GU interviewees did not feel any ownership over the projects or initiatives because they were not involved as much (*b, F, M*). They had arrived late in the planning and or implementation of the event.

[P]revious years maybe a little not as much, but I think everything that is coming up – I think I will be more involved now (*b*).

I haven't really done anything besides give ideas and sort of, it's still in the beginning stages, there's been no concrete work on it yet (M)... [so] no not yet, but hopefully by the time it comes around I think I will, because I 'm—I'm definitely excited about this (M).

Who Are Not Being Engaged

The TYC interviewees and documents revealed that the TYC membership has changed over the years.

[W]hen the TYC started it wasn't that diverse of a group, certain members of the TYC came from communities that were considered marginalized or on the fringe, but the TYC as a – as a whole in the past was very much downtown youth, right? [O]r white urban you know, not urban but white youth mostly (o).

The earliest document I was able to find addressing the composition of the Executive members was 2004. In 2004, out of 12 Executives only three were female and six of the Executive members were from Scarborough (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004c). Youth of colour were very under-represented in the TYC especially among the Executives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l). In 2005, the TYC orientation package stated that the TYC members lived in 42 out of 44 wards of the city and the Executive members were composed of youth who had experienced poverty, homelessness, homophobia, sexism, racism, and Islamaphobia (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005d).²⁷⁵ One interviewee stated that the composition of the TYC membership depends on what issues TYC was addressing.

[A] couple of years ago TYC was really pushing a good pay – pushing around supporting youth who are homeless or street involved [...] at that point they had

²⁷⁵ Even though there are forms that collect the information, such as the registration form, which asks for address, telephone, email, school, grade, and age (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.4) and the TYC website registration, which asks for address sign up for Community Relations Team, Council Relations Team, and Media Relations Team (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ag), I have not found any demographic records of the TYC memberships present or past. This was supported by the Director of Membership (during my participant observation of the 'General' member) when (s)he stated that such a document does not exist yet (PO H).

lots of youth who were homeless and street involved who were involved in TYC (o).

When the GU and TYC interviewees were asked to describe the current characteristics and attitudes of the youth being under-represented, five GU interviewees believed that the GURLs were culturally diverse (*a, c, d, e, G*), four GU interviewees felt that the GURLs were socio-economically diverse (*a, H, F, I*) and four GU interviewees felt that the GURLs' attitudes were diverse (*a, H, F, II*).²⁷⁶ Only one of the TYC interviewees felt that the TYC membership was socio-economically diverse and representative of Toronto's multi-ethnic youth population (o).

Two GU interviewees recognized that it is really quite hard to ensure a full representation at the table (*c, H*), especially since there are only supposed to be eight GURLs. One community partner, who had not met any of the GURLs, felt that the GURLs were not diverse enough (*b*).

I believe mostly they are Black, Black youth and I think some, I think there is one Chinese youth.... I think economic status, I think most of them are middle class, that's what I understood (*b*)

During my participant observation of the GURLs meetings and the Network 1 meeting, I was able to meet eight of the nine GURLs, and nine of the GURLs were youth of colour (*F, I; PO H; PO D*).²⁷⁷ During my participant observations of my first TYC Executive meeting (which included guests, 'General' members and Executive members), out of 18 people who were present, nine of the members were females and 15 of the members were

²⁷⁶ Three of the Girls Unlimited community partner interviewees had never met all the GURLs in person (*c, e, b*), and based their answers on what they had seen in their own network GURLs and had heard from others.

²⁷⁷ Due to my inexperience in labeling people's cultural backgrounds, I do not want to attempt to further differentiate except to say that there were youth of colour at table.

‘youth of colour’ (PO G).²⁷⁸ In my participant observation of the ‘General’ membership meeting (where both Executives and ‘General’ members attended), out of 11 members who attended, three were females and six were youth of colour (PO H).

One interviewee stated that generally the youth who are not being engaged are those who are disenfranchised and marginalized (n). Overall, the youth of both organizations were able to identify many characteristics and attitudes that were being under-represented in their organizations. Seven of the GU interviewees identified that young mothers were not being engaged (*a, c, d, G, H, F, I*), even though there are young mothers being engaged in the TYC ‘General’ members. Six GU interviewees (*a, b, c, H, I, G*) and two TYC interviewees (*J, M*) felt that youth who are not already engaged in youth organizations or youth serving organizations (i.e., schools and community centers etc.) were under-represented in their organizations.²⁷⁹

[T]here’s this standard issue of getting girls that are already in general very involved in their community, very involved like in their schools, they’re part of sports teams, they’re very active (*a*).

Interviewees from both organizations – four from GU and five from TYC – identified that low-income youth were under-represented (*a, b, I, c, K, J, L, M, o*). Specifically, three GU and one TYC interviewee identified youth with part-time jobs (*a, c, I, M*). As well, one TYC and one GU interviewee specifically identified street-involved youth were under-represented (*a, L*). The TYC interviewee also added that youth living in Toronto Community Housing were under-represented (*L*). Four TYC interviewees identified that youth from specific geographic areas, such as those living in the outskirts of Toronto (*J*)

²⁷⁸ Due to the size of the group and the multi-ethnic nature of the group, I was unable to differentiate ethnic backgrounds and did not attempt to do so.

²⁷⁹ Seven out of the eight youth I interviewed were involved in other community or school organizations (*G, H, F, I, K, M, L*).

and those living in the priority neighbourhoods (K, M, o), are under-represented in the TYC.

I know that there is a couple of them that claim to have come from them [...] priority neighbourhoods, which is good, but I think, those people from those neighbourhoods are *very* under-represented (M).

Both the GU and TYC interviewees identified that youth who had different interests were being under-represented. Four GU interviewees and three TYC interviewees discussed the difficulty of engaging those who are disinterested in their organization's mission (i.e., civic engagement or physical activity), volunteerism, and/or leadership (*a, d, e, I, J, K, M*).

[S]ome people just, you know – you know don't really care about volunteering. I guess they have a very mellow attitude, especially, you know, city politics [they may think that it's] [...] not exciting (K).

Two GU and three TYC interviewees agreed that youth of colour were still under-represented at the TYC (*b, d, J, L, M*). Three of the interviewees specifically identified Aboriginal youth as under-represented (*J, L, o*), and four of the interviewees specifically identified Black youth as being under-represented (*J, K, M, o*). One GU interviewee specifically pointed out that Muslims and Persians were under-represented (*d*).

Interviewees from both GU and TYC identified age groups that were being under-represented. One GU interviewee felt that youth from the older and younger age spectrums were being under-represented, and that the majority of the GURLs currently engaged were 15 years old (G).²⁸⁰ Two TYC members recognized that the middle school and younger high school students were under-represented and the majority of the TYC membership were those who were in grade 12 or in university (*J, K*).²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ Three out of four GURL interviewees were 15 years old.

²⁸¹ Three out of four of the TYC interviewees were 20 years old.

Both organizations mentioned certain personalities missing from the TYC and GU youth leaders. Two GU interviewees felt that shy female youth were under-represented (*F, I*). One TYC member felt that aggressive youth were under-represented (*L*), while another interviewee disagreed and felt that there were too many aggressive ‘do-it-my-way’ youth and instead there needs to be more patient youth sitting at the table (*M*).

There were some youth characteristics and attitudes that GU interviewees identified and the TYC interviewees did not. Two GU interviewees identified the differently-abled youth as being under-represented (*a, e*), two GU interviewees recognized that youth with a strong religious affiliation are under-represented at the table (*d, a*), one GURL interviewee recognized that youth with little leadership experience are under-represented at the table (*G*), and one GURL felt that at the Citywide GURLs table her network was under-represented (*I*).²⁸²

When it came to the gender ratio within the TYC Executives, the two interviewees disagreed. One interviewee felt that the executive membership was dominated by females in the past two years and this year is more balanced (*J*), while the other interviewee felt that it was balanced in the past but now there are fewer females (*K*).²⁸³

Conclusion

The TYC focus group members agreed with many of the methods of engagement that were described in the literature review, with the exception of adding ‘Edutainment’

²⁸² This interviewee mentioned that the other GURL representative has a busy schedule and is unable to make it down to the Citywide GURL meetings (*I*).

²⁸³ My participant observation at the first Executive meeting I attended was that half the members in the room were female; however, I could not differentiate who were Executive members, ‘General’ members, or guests (PO G). In 2004, it was noted in a meeting minute that the Executives were male dominated (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004u).

and 'Physical Activity'. When developing the 'Levels of Youth Engagement' framework, the focus group members were just as critical as Arnstein (1969) about the amount of decision-making power adults would be willing to share. 'Youth in control', including youth in politics, was designated the highest level of participation. With regards to outreach, both organizations used similar methods, with the exception that GU placed more responsibility on their community partners while TYC members went out into the schools and communities to recruit youth. The application processes of GU and TYC were very dissimilar; GURLs went through a selection process conducted by the community partners, while the TYC 'General' members were self-selected and the Executives went through a formal election process.

Planning, implementing and evaluation processes varied from community-partner controlled to shared within Girls Unlimited, while within the TYC only the planning process included the TYC coordinator, while the rest was conducted by the TYC members. Generally, both organizations felt that they had equal decision-making power and ownership, or at least shared ownership, over the events. Both organizations identified similar youth groups who were under-represented in their membership (GURLs or TYC) thus signifying that some marginalized youth perspectives are still missing at the table.

Sub-Problem #3

What recommendations should be made to enhance youth engagement so that physical activity services for marginalized youth are improved?

Introduction

In this section, I used documents, participant observation, and interviews to outline the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for each of the organizations related to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement. Similar to the literature, I have separated the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations into three different categories: ‘Organizational Related’, ‘Intergenerational Related’ and ‘Youth Related’.²⁸⁴ As mentioned in the “Chapter II: Sub-Problem #3” the barriers and recommendations outlined in the literature review were ambiguous and vague. The data results were more specific, thus, within each of these categories the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations have been broken down into sub-categories (i.e., organizational related was broken further down into the outreach process, application process, and meeting locations and schedules).

Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Youth Engagement

Organizational Related

Outreach Process

Both organizations used similar outreach processes: youth events, youth organizations and/or youth serving organizations, media and word-of-mouth to get youth interested in their organization. Both organizations were able to recruit youth by sending other members or setting up booths at youth events, as well as through their partnerships

²⁸⁴ However with ‘Strengths, Weaknesses, and Barriers to Youth Engagement, I was only able to find data results under organizational related and youth related.

and using the media (J, M, o, H, Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.4; Teschner, 1999b). The TYC membership is open to all Toronto Youth (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b) and even though there are limited GURL positions, the GU networks were asked to not turn away members who are interested in volunteering and instead provide other opportunities (Girls Unlimited, 2006q).²⁸⁵ In fact, Network 2 has formed a GURL volunteer committee to support the GURLs in the event organizing (Girls Unlimited, 2006t).

However, the interviews and documents revealed that there were still some problems with the outreach process. Three GU interviewees and one TYC interviewee discussed that there has not been enough youth going for the leadership positions available (*a, c, I, M*). For the Girls Unlimited, both of the interviewees from Network 3 discussed that their network was only able to recruit two females to apply for the GURLs position (*2X*). Five interviewees identified that a lack of resources was a barrier (*a, d, H, K, n*) because not enough was invested in outreach (*K*) and there were not enough resources to provide as many opportunities for female youth to be engaged as they wished (*n, a, d, H*; Toronto Public Health, n.d.).

[T]he funding that we had originally asked for from the Heart Health was to have at least three GURLs from each network [but] they cut back the funding that we originally wanted (*a*).

Even though GU community partners are responsible for outreach, two GU interviewees felt that some of the partners are not following through with their outreach responsibilities (*b, d*).

I think it is with all the partners, I think we haven't taken the time to refer to our possible leaders into the program, so I think, I think our partners need to be encouraged and say yes, you can sit on the tables (*b*).

²⁸⁵ However, only Network 2's documents revealed that female youth were being engaged outside the GURLs positions.

[W]e have interpreters so that can be translated, we asked our partners to translate, but if they don't follow through, because we don't go to each site to make sure that they follow [through] (*d*).

A GU meeting minutes also identified that the community partners and GURLs did not find the GU Website very “youth friendly” and indicated that it could be because it is controlled by TPH and had to meet certain standards (Girls Unlimited, 2006q).

To address these barriers, several recommendations were identified by the interviewees and documents. Enhancements to the outreach methods included investigating the cost of finding an external website domain to host the GU Website so that it could be made more ‘youth friendly’ (Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ai). Two GU interviewees suggested reminding the partners to follow through with their outreach responsibilities (*b*, *d*).

Two GU interviewees made recommendations to create another type of program for the younger female youth who did not get accepted into the GURLs position (*G*, *c*). Ideas included inviting these youth to the GU meetings to and have their opinions and ideas heard (*G*) or creating within each region a female youth table where they are formally in charge of not only a few events, but also in developing an ongoing regional activity (*c*).²⁸⁶ One TYC interviewee suggested creating more mediums for youth to voice their issues, such as the newsletters (*K*).

Two TYC interviewees suggested going out and advertising where the low-income youth are, such as where youth work (either fast food restaurants, factories) and advertise (*M*) in the shelters and Toronto Community Housing areas (*L*). Another TYC interviewee suggested using different media outlets (*M*).

²⁸⁶ These can also be recommendations to address the barriers that inexperienced youth face because of the application eligibility.

Application Process

Two youth from TYC and one youth from GU felt that their organization's application processes were made more accessible because they provided TTC tickets and food (H, K, J).

I think that the organization really tried to make it really easy to become a member because you know they—they provided TTC tickets, they provided food, they provided the information, if you didn't know how to put together a resume, they told you how to put together a resume [...] they just told us, like you know you don't have to have a formal résumé but you know just tell us what you thought (H).

In addition, TYC 'General' members are self-selected; therefore any Toronto Youth who is interested in being a TYC member can join. Before the selection process began, GU provided a March Break week-long training session to try to ensure that each interviewee enters the interviews for the GURLs positions with the same skills and knowledge (including background knowledge on Girls Unlimited) (Toronto Public Health, 2006h). In addition the community partners assisted the female youth candidates with their résumés (I).

However, the interviews and documents have identified that there are some barriers to the application processes of both organizations. One interviewee felt that application processes discourage youth if they are not chosen and if they are not provided feedback (n). One TYC interviewee felt that the TYC application process was unclear (M).

I remember every time I would go out to their picnics or anything, they'll, everybody would be like you should join you should join, but nobody really told me how to join so that—that was an obstacle (M).

In the TYC meeting minutes, it was noted that the election process for the Executive position is not as accessible to 'General' members (Girls Unlimited, 2006q).²⁸⁷

Two interviewees identified that the application criteria (such as previous leadership experience) would also discourage youth from applying (G, n).²⁸⁸

[T]hese organizations like Girls Real Leaders, like they pick people who have prior skills to get involved so it's not really giving a fair opportunity to the other people who want to get involved, but, well they can't because they haven't had any experience [...] I think that's one of the main factors that stops people who are youth age from getting involved because they have to start somewhere but there aren't as many programs that will say, "This is where you get the experience to do other things" – a lot of it is based on past experience (G).

Both GU and TYC had eligibility criteria. Network 1 outlined the job requirements, which included: having experience working with groups (youth and volunteers) in a diverse multi-cultural environment; having strong group facilitation, communication and organizational skills, having knowledge of youth issues (Girls Unlimited, n.d.4). In 2001 and 2002, the TYC documents revealed that youth were required to have at least one year of experience working or volunteering with youth organizations to become a 'General' member (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e). A TYC meeting minutes revealed that TYC members were not eligible to run for the Executive position because they had not participated in the anti-oppression training (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004m).²⁸⁹ Two of the GU interviewees felt that the March Break Training was a barrier because the location was far for some of the youth (*I, H*) and the week long

²⁸⁷ However, now the TYC has the Election process on-line (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004b).

²⁸⁸ This could also be identified as youth related barriers, as youth who are inexperienced are less likely to be engaged.

²⁸⁹ The anti-oppression training only became mandatory after 2002 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). Before then, all new members only had to attend an orientation session and the bi-monthly membership meetings (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002e, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j).

commitment was too much (Girls Unlimited, 2006ae).²⁹⁰ One of the GURLs stated that her interview was an hour drive from her house, even though it was within her Network area (G).

Only a few recommendations were identified in the documents and interviews. Two interviewees recommended that the organizations provide clear descriptions of what the position entails so that both the youth and supporting staff understand what is expected of each other (n, e). In the TYC meeting minutes, it was recommended that the requirements, process and timelines concerning TYC elections be made more accessible, such as by promoting them on-line and on the TYC's general mailbox voicemail (e.g., about the anti-oppression and orientation trainings) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004r).

To make the application process more accessible for those who are inexperienced, one interviewee suggested that these types of programs should not be called 'leadership' because they will discourage potential youth who may not feel like he/she is a 'leader' (n). It was also suggested that before the GURLs were chosen, that they attend a couple of GU events to learn how the organization's events are planned (Girls Unlimited, 2006d). TYC should also provide an anti-oppression training session in September before nominations are due (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004r).

Meeting Location and Schedule²⁹¹

The documents and interviews identified a few strengths regarding the organizations' meeting location and schedule. GU hosts the meetings in each of the

²⁹⁰ There wasn't as many participants as the facilitators had anticipated, thus resulting in the larger March Break training honoraria (Girls Unlimited, 2006i)

²⁹¹ Meeting schedule and location are barriers to both youth engagement and to meaningful youth engagement, but because the data results also reflect that there are some barriers specific to youth engagement, to make this thesis more understandable for the reader, I have decided to keep all the meeting location and schedule issues together in this sub-section. Barriers related to meeting location and time (schedule) are closely related.

Networks to reduce the travel time for its members (Girls Unlimited, 2006c). After the GURLs positions were filled, the networks were told by TPH to change their meeting schedule to accommodate the GURLs (*a*, Girls Unlimited, 2006e). The GU Citywide and Network 1 meetings have consistently scheduled their meetings during ‘youth friendly times’ (see Appendix I). In the GU meeting minutes, it was revealed that the community partners are responsible for ensuring that the GURLs have safe transportation to and from the GURLs Citywide meetings that finish after dark (such as providing taxi chits or personally escorting the GURLs) (Girls Unlimited, 2006f). The TYC meetings are hosted at City Hall where they have direct access to its resources, including City Councillors (*o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b). In general, the ‘General’ and Executive meetings are scheduled by youth and for youth and hosted during ‘youth friendly’ hours (see Appendix I). For the meetings that engage youth, both the organizations provide TTC tickets and food at the meetings (*a*, *H*, *K*, *J*, *o*; *PO D*; *PO C*; *PO G*; *PO H*; *PO I*). In addition, both organizations use alternative methods to communicate and make decisions, including electronic mail, instant messaging, and/or telephone (*e*, *b*, *d*, *a*, *M*; *PO H*; Girls Unlimited, 2005; Girls Unlimited, 2006g).

However, the documents and interviews have identified weaknesses in the meeting locations and schedules. Four TYC and three GU interviewees discussed how the location of the meetings created barriers to youth engagement. GU’s interviewees and documents identified that two networks had difficulty recruiting female youth because of the travel time to the GU meetings or to March Break training (which was also located downtown) (*H*, *I*, *e*; Toronto Public Health, 2006h).²⁹² Four GU interviewees and

²⁹² This is also an application related barrier because the Girls Unlimited March Break training was part of the application process. Even though it was stated in the GU documents that networks could extend the

two TYC interviewees discussed the travel time to get to meetings (*I, G, b, K, L*).

Parents and GURLs were concerned about the travel and safety related to the Citywide meetings (*e*; Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006f).

[A] lot of the parents didn't want the GURLs to be traveling that distance, the time again involved, in the travel – not only the—the meetings themselves but the traveling time²⁹³ was real barrier, is a concern (*e*).

One of the community partners stated that the networks were still too large and that it could take an hour to get to a Network meeting location (*b*). During the time of the data collection period, I lived in the East York area (which is a fairly central part of Toronto), but the drive to each of the meetings still averaged an hour (except for the Steering Committee and the GURLs meetings, which would take half an hour of travel time).

Two GU interviewees (one GURL and community partner) and TYC participant observation (PO H) revealed that participants have missed meetings or arrived late because of lack of transportation (*b, G; PO H*).²⁹⁴ Every GU meeting I attended had at least three or four members showed up late, ranging from 5 minutes to an hour late (PO A; PO B; PO C; PO D; PO E; PO F). Each of the TYC meetings had late arrivals. In general, most of the members arrived from half an hour late up to two hours late (PO G; PO H; PO I).²⁹⁵ One interviewee revealed that if the meeting was supposed to start at 6pm for members and if you do not show up until 8pm, nothing is missed because the meeting did not really start until 7:30pm (M).

positions to female youth who could not make it to the March Break Training (Girls Unlimited, 2006av), it is unknown how many of those youth were given the position without doing the training

²⁹³ It takes an hour to get to the GURLs meetings downtown from Network 4 (*G; PO A*)

²⁹⁴ Transportation is especially difficult for those who live on the outskirts of Toronto and where TTC doesn't run as frequently (PO H).

²⁹⁵ During my participant observation, the TYC Director of Membership explained to the 'General' members that Executive meetings run late because they start late due to members working until 6pm or 6:30pm (PO H). This can also be a barrier for low-income youth who have to work.

Transportation was not the only meeting location issue for the TYC. Three TYC interviewees recognized that City Hall is an intimidating meeting location, and that youth may not feel welcomed there (J, K, o).

[P]eople don't feel that it's for them, that's where politicians go, why would I go there? (K).

[W]e're downtown but people are coming from Scarborough or wherever, it takes a while (K).²⁹⁶

During the participant observations of the TYC Executive meetings, I noticed the meeting room was too small to have everyone sit around the oval table which excluded people from sitting at the table (PO I). The temperature of the TYC meeting room temperature was too low and was often cold (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003e; PO H; PO G).²⁹⁷ TYC 'General' members also had problems accessing the meeting rooms during non-office hours and needed to know an Executive member's cell number and call them to come down to give them elevator access (PO H; PO I; PO G).²⁹⁸

Both organizations' interviewees and documents identified barriers to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement related to the meeting schedule. In the GU meeting minutes, it was recommended by the Network's TPH nurse to record on the meeting minutes the time and name of those who arrive late (G; Girls Unlimited, 2006q). The interviews and documents revealed that before the GURLs were engaged, the meetings were scheduled during the weekdays (Girls Unlimited, 2003d; Girls Unlimited, 2004e; Girls Unlimited, 2006t; Girls Unlimited, 2006b; Girls Unlimited, 2006af). Even though in July, 2006 the GURLs announced their desire to attend the Network meetings

²⁹⁶ This is also a youth characteristic barrier, for youth who are geographically isolated.

²⁹⁷ The data collection period was during the winter and because the meetings were scheduled outside office hours the temperature had been turned down.

²⁹⁸ Most of the Executives have elevator passes that can be used after office-hours (PO G; PO I).

(Girls Unlimited, 2006w), my participant observations, document analysis (Appendix I) and interviews revealed that only one of the networks has made its network meetings consistently during youth friendly hours (*c, d, e, b, G, H, F, I*; PO A; PO B; PO D; PO E).²⁹⁹ However, three GU community partner interviewees identified that scheduling meetings after school was not feasible because they do not have enough staff to cover their after-school programs and can not make those meetings (*b, c, e*) and the interviewees identified that the GURLs do not show up anyways (*b, c, e, a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006ag).

*[M]ost of our partners are involved in programs in the evenings so that's—it's been diffi[cult]— it's been a challenge, it's been difficult to try and come up with a convenient date and time – so we don't have a set date and time, we go meeting to meeting to plan our meetings (*e*).*

Three GU interviewees discussed the issue that there have been too many meetings scheduled for the GURLs (*G, c, e*; Girls Unlimited, 2006ah). Three of the GURLs stated in their interviews that they have two to four weekly meetings, especially if an event is approaching (*H, I, F*). Meanwhile the GU partners stated in their interviews that they have meetings once a month (*X*), once every month and a half (*X*) and once every three months (*X*). The GU meeting minutes revealed that even though electronic mail has been used as a solution for those who are unable to come to meetings, it may send the message that attending meetings is not important (Girls Unlimited, 2006e). My GU participant observation and the TYC meeting minutes also revealed that there is an issue booking meetings that overlap each other, making it impossible for a person to attend both (i.e., for GU the network meetings and Steering Committee meetings, and for the TYC the different work group meetings) (PO F; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003e).

²⁹⁹ It is important to note that this is not only due to the partners but to the youth characteristics as well. As well, at one of the Network 4 meetings the network partners decided to have the next meeting scheduled by their network GURLs so that they could attend the meeting (PO B), however, I wasn't sure if it was because of my presence at the table.

Several recommendations have been identified in the interviews and documents. Both organizations' interviewees and/or documents suggested alternative meeting places other than downtown and that were more convenient for youth (i.e., hosting GU meetings at North York Civic Center or hosting TYC meetings in locations other than City Hall) (o, e; Girls Unlimited, 2004n; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.3; Girls Unlimited, 2006f). In the TYC documents there was a recommendation to acquire City funding and support to build a Youth Center to be the new TYC location.³⁰⁰ However, if location change is not possible, one recommendation was to make City Hall more 'youth friendly'. One TYC interviewee suggested bringing more youth to City Hall for reasons other than school trips (o).

[H]ave urban youth, like you know arts exhibitions, have – plan more consistent things, meaningful things for youth at City Hall number one, plan youth friendly tours at City Hall, and not just tours, bring youth through City Hall, I think if youth start to [...] roam through City Hall [they will discover] how engaging City Hall [is] (o).

The GU meeting minutes also recommended that different communication methods should be used to engage youth (i.e., surveys, email or phone) instead of having them travel downtown (Toronto Public Health, 2006h).

One TYC interviewee recommended that the meetings have a more consistent schedule (J). The TYC meeting minutes revealed the recommendation that the TYC have an on-line event calendar posted to keep members up-to-date and to reduce meeting overlap (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003e).³⁰¹ One GU interviewee and GU meeting

³⁰⁰ During the Olympic Bid period, to gain the youth support the City Councillors were going to look into building a World Olympic Youth Center but when Toronto lost the bid the discussion was dropped (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.3). In 2002, the TYC was trying to once again pressure the City Councillors to follow through and build the youth center (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.3).

³⁰¹ This would also be a solution to engage youth meaningfully because youth are able to find out what issues interest them and how to be involved.

minutes discussed reducing the number of meetings the GURLs have to attend by asking the GURLs how frequently they want to meet (c).

Both GU and TYC data results revealed that each respective organization recommends making the meeting during more youth friendly hours (J, M; PO B; PO H; Girls Unlimited, 2006an; Girls Unlimited, 2006aj; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004p). In August, 2006 at the Network 1 meeting, the GURLs recommended that after the summer the meetings should be on the weekend so they would not conflict with after-school events (Girls Unlimited, 2006aj).³⁰² During the TYC 'General' membership meeting, participant observation and meeting minutes revealed recommendations were made to have the Executive meetings scheduled between 5 and 8pm during the week (PO H) or on the weekends (Girls Unlimited, 2006aj).³⁰³

Youth Related

Low Income Youth

The organizations use a variety of methods to engage low-income youth. Both provide TTC tokens and food at the meetings (a, H, K, J; Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Toronto Public Health, 2006). Each organization has its own strengths in recruiting low-income youth. Not only do the TYC members go to isolated communities and schools; in 2002 the TYC created a food policy where TYC members are provided with a meal allowance (no more than \$10) for TYC members who work for a minimum of four hours on behalf of TYC at City Hall or Metro Hall (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002n).

³⁰² However, the meetings for Network 1 only had one weekend meeting before changing back to the weekday meeting schedule (Girls Unlimited, 2006ah; Girls Unlimited, 2006ak). It could have been changed back to the weekday because only one out of the four GURLs attended the Saturday meeting.

³⁰³ Thus expanding 'youth friendly' hours to not only being limited to non-school hours but also to non-work hours (during the day on the weekends) (M) or not during the weekdays when there are school extracurricular activities (Girls Unlimited, 2006aj).

Meanwhile, GU provides honoraria for its GURLs (*a*; Toronto Public Health, n.d.; Toronto Public Health, 2006).

However, barriers to youth engagement still exist for low-income youth. The TYC only provides honoraria for youth who are not part of the TYC Executive membership (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002d).

Two GU interviewees and two TYC interviewees identified that youth who are low-income have to work and do not have the time to be engaged (*a, c, J, M*; Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006w).

[T]he honorarium was just too small because you know all the young women that we serve, we have some from lower economic background, and so you know, if it's between, sometimes, if it's between an extracurricular activity and a part-time job, the part-time job wins (*c*).

[H]ow do you access these people that are struggling to—to make a living, and how do you say come up to the Toronto Cabinet meetings you know (*M*).

Five of the TYC interviewees discussed the issue that low-income youth do not have the money or access (*L*) such as internet (*M*) or transportation (*M, K, o; PO H*) or do not live in safe enough neighbourhoods to be able to attend the late meetings (*M*).

[W]hile we provide TTC and bus tickets right, you [got to] get here to get a bus ticket, so if you are not here – so if you don't have *a* bus ticket [pause], that sucks then how are you going to get here (*o*)?

[The] meetings are late, who wants to be walking through their neighbourhood at – sometimes their meetings go until 11-12 o'clock, I know some people are wary about walking through their neighbourhoods at that time, so why—why would a young female per se wanting to get home at that time (*M*)?

Several recommendations were identified in the documents and interviews. Both TYC and GU interviewees discussed honoraria as recommendations. Three GU interviewees recommended that the honoraria match the income of a part-time job and that food is provided at the meetings (*c, a, d*; Girls Unlimited, 2006aa) and one TYC interviewee

suggested making some of the TYC positions paid or provide honoraria (L). Another TYC interviewee suggested avoiding TYC meetings during the day on the weekends when youth have to work (M) so there would be no loss of money. One TYC interviewee suggested making TTC free so that youth could *get* to City Hall (o). In the 2004 meeting minutes, it was suggested that Executive members be provided with monthly TTC metropasses and cell phones (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004q).

Gender

GU is an organization that specifically targets female youth (*a, F, G*; Toronto Public Health, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2003). The THHP Grant also provides funding for child-care for young mothers (*a, d*); in addition, one of the partners of GU works specifically with young mothers (*c, H*). The TYC has an initiative targeting girls specifically (i.e., girls night out and a women's forum) (M).

However, the documents and interviews also identified barriers for female youth to be engaged. Three GU interviewees and one TYC interviewee indicated that family responsibilities were a barrier to the GURLs applying for positions (*c, H, K, M*; Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Toronto Public Health, 2006h; Girls Unlimited, 2006w).³⁰⁴ Even though providing childcare is an area that the THHP grant can address (*a, d*), GU has not provided childcare because there were concerns that parents would feel that GU was encouraging youth pregnancies and the issue was put on hold until the next event (*d*). Two TYC interviewees recognized that it was difficult for young mothers to become engaged because they can not leave the child at home to attend meetings (K) or bring the child because the child might be disruptive (M).

³⁰⁴ This is not limited to young mothers, but to female youth who have other family responsibilities.

The documents and interviewees provided very few recommendations. One TYC interviewee and one GU interviewee made a recommendation for young mothers, which was to provide childcare (c, M). However, one GU interviewee stated that it should not just be about providing childcare, but providing quality childcare is important as well (d). One GU interviewee also suggested connecting with young mothers through other community agencies that are not limited to just programming (i.e., day-care and community health centers) (c).

Youth with Different Interests

The history of both organizations revealed that the organizations have evolved from focusing on enhancing youth services to engaging youth and developing youth leaders (a, F, G; Toronto Public Health, 2002; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2003) and civically engaging youth (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000). The Toronto Youth Cabinet also advocates for youth on all issues at City Hall (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001) and GU also works to improve physical activity services for female youth (Girls Unlimited, 2003). For Girls Unlimited, the GU programs and events are not only limited to engaging female youth in organizing mainstream sport events but they also help organize health promotion discussions (i.e., sexual health and nutrition) and other types of physical activities (i.e., rock climbing, roller skating) (see Appendix J). The TYC also has many different events and initiatives in which the TYC members can be engaged organizing (i.e., organize conferences, participate in research, host national events, budget campaigns) (see Appendix M).

Even with these strengths, two TYC interviewees felt that the TYC's mission and vision as being too narrow (M, o) and thus youth "might feel that what we are working on

is not relevant to them” (o). One TYC and six GU interviewees stated that youth who have different interests may not be interested in becoming engaged with their respective organizations (*a, d, b, F, I, e, J*). For GU it may be youth who are highly competitive and disinterested in the organization itself (i.e., Girls Unlimited) (*b, F, I*). Also, one of the GU interviewees felt the kinds of activities that GU promote and run are not of interest to young mothers and instead attract a younger age spectrum (i.e., 12 to 14) (*c*). For the TYC it would be those who are disinterested in politics (*K*). One interviewee also identified that the TYC’s method of doing issue-based work is difficult because then members are stuck addressing whatever is happening at that moment (*o*).

Both GU and TYC interviewees identified recommendations for outreach to youth with different interests. Three GU interviewees suggested using diverse marketing techniques (*b, I, e*), such as going to the recreation centers (*I*) and advertising the benefits that can be gained from being a GURL (*e*). For the TYC, the specific suggestions made were contradictory; one said to expand the mission away from politics (*K*) and the other to expand more in politics, into the Provincial and Federal levels of government (*J*). Two TYC members recommended that TYC expand its mission to engage youth in all aspects of community and social life (*o*) and be more action oriented (*L*). Another suggestion was to find out what issues Toronto Youth want to be involved in, either by going out to the communities (*J, L*) or asking at the ‘General’ membership meetings (PO H).³⁰⁵

Differently-abled

One of GU’s strengths is the opportunity to reach out to those with whom the organizations specialize in working. Two GU interviewees mentioned that currently one of the partnering agencies has staff that work specifically with differently-abled youth

³⁰⁵ This can also be a recommendation to engage youth who are younger.

and bringing these youth to the events (*e, a*). However, one GU interviewee still identified that having special needs acts as a barrier to being engaged (*a*). No further steps have been made to engage these youth have been made yet (*a*).

Age Related

GU has been able to engage younger aged youth (15 years old) (*G*). GU's engagement process includes the parents and guardians; the partners contact the parents and explain the roles and responsibilities of the GURLs (Toronto Public Health, 2006h). One of the GU interviewees stated that the programs and services are more interesting to younger youth (*c*). TYC has been successfully able to engage older youth – older high school students as well as university students (*J, K*). It was suggested by a TYC interviewee that the TYC missions are more of interest to older youth (*M*).

However, the interviewees and/or documents from both organizations identified barriers to engaging older youth and/or younger youth. Two GU interviewees and one TYC member identified the barriers to engage older youth as school responsibilities (*G, b, J*; Girls Unlimited, 2006f), jobs (*b*; Girls Unlimited, 2006f), home responsibilities (Girls Unlimited, 2006a) and the fact that the programs are run in the elementary schools and the older youth are not interested in or do not know about GU (*G*). Two TYC interviewees felt that younger youth were not being engaged because they have parents who do not trust youth enough to allow them to join an organization, City Hall is intimidating to younger youth (*K*) or the TYC does not interest or meet the needs of younger youth (*M*).

Both organizations made recommendations; for GU it was to engage more older youth and for TYC it was to engage more younger youth. One GU interviewee

recommended that the networks coordinate and ensure that out of the four networks there is at least one GURL from each of the age groups, and to do outreach to the high schools through the principals or Ministry of Education (G). Another GU interviewee also suggested that younger GURLs should be recruited because they are less likely to have a job (Girls Unlimited, 2006w). Three TYC interviewees recommended expanding their cause to better meet the needs and interests of younger youth (M, J, K). One GU interviewee felt that GU should invest more resources in recruiting younger youth instead of older youth (b).

[W]e try to recruit all these volunteers who are in grade 12 and not realizing that we spend a lot of energy training them and stuff, not realizing in a year or two that they're going to go into school, university, whatever it is and work and they'll be lost, I think we have to invest in getting younger kids who are in grade 9, grade 10, it will take us a little bit more work because we need to train them, you know, you need to coach them a little bit more, but you know in [the] long term it's a good investment for us, at least they'll be here for two to three years (b).

Disconnected Youth

To reach out to youth living in isolated communities, the TYC has gone out to the communities to host 'Youth Speak Outs' (J, K) as well as assemblies at schools (L; Focus Group notes; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e). TYC has been effective in reaching out through the media; for example one interviewee had been living in the shelters when (s)he heard about the TYC in the newspaper (X).³⁰⁶ Word-of-mouth recruiting was mentioned by two TYC interviewees (K, M).

However, seven interviewees recognized the difficulty of providing outreach to disconnected youth (n, c, H, a, I, F, M) who are not already involved in youth organizations or youth serving organizations (i.e., school and community centers) (n, c,

³⁰⁶ To maintain confidentiality this interviewee has been labeled 'X'.

H, a, I) or do not have the social connections (*F*). Three TYC identified difficulties with outreach to marginalized communities and building marginalized youth's trust (*J, L, K*).

[I]t's hard to build up that trust and it's hard to prove to young people that you know you are going to do exactly what you are going to say that you are going to do, only because for years people have been coming in swooping into the communities and saying you know that we're going to do this and this and then the issue drops (*J*).

[A] lot of people view TYC as kind of [a] sub-division kind of City Hall and like oh look youth, you know so I don't think – I don't think people realize that we're not always connected to the City in that you know if they want to come in and complain about the city that they can and that we're right there, so I think that just a lot of youth don't know I guess (*K*).

Eight interviewees (including those from GU and TYC) made the recommendation that more partnerships should be made with existing local community youth organizations who have already established trust with the marginalized youth groups (*M, J, L, H, a, c, e, n*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004n) or are located in the suburbs so that strategies can be developed together to increase youth membership (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004n).

[I]t's important for us to build that—that trust with young people because without it we're going to get nowhere...we need to outreach to these marginalized communities and these interests that are missing, so we need to actively engage them (*J*).

[M]ore communication between TYC and the community because we're here to represent the community – sometimes we're lacking that official connection to members in the community, so if there was dialogue between community and TYC and that was supported, that would be good (*L*).

TYC needs to allocate a certain amount of money every year, maybe \$10,000, in partnership developing in community organizations (*L*).

Shy Youth

From those I interviewed, I got to interact with a variety of personalities from both organizations. Some were very articulate and confident, some were extremely friendly and enthusiastic, and some were shy and thoughtful. One of the GU

interviewees stated that the community partners were really good at mentoring and teaching the GURLs how to strengthen their assets and work on their weaknesses (F). As many strengths GU may have, two GU interviewees recognized that being shy can act as a barrier to youth engagement (F, I) because the youth would not feel comfortable speaking to other people (F). One GU interviewee recommended that GURLs' advertisements be clear that the GURL position is all about teaching and planning events and that the female youth will be given many opportunities to overcome their shyness (F).

Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Meaningful Youth Engagement

The interviewees identified what was meaningful to youth engagement. The documents and interviews also identified the benefits of youth engagement for the youth, the organization, and the community (see Appendix O). For the youth, it included capacity building, networking opportunities and great access to resources. For the organization, it included enhancing youth services and enhancing youth engagement mechanisms. For the community, it included creating more youth services within the community and vocalizing community issues. However, one interviewee did state that (s)he has not seen any benefits in the community (M).

[F]or my community I don't really see anything that the TYC is doing or has done and sort of benefit, but I think that if they keep on going strong that one day I will see the benefits in the community and I will see the benefits of the TYC member (M)

The documents and interviewees from GU and the TYC identified several strengths, barriers, and recommendations to meaningful youth engagement. These were separated into three different categories: organizational, intergenerational, and youth

related. Similar to ‘Strengths, Barriers and Recommendations to Youth Engagement, within each category there are sub-categories.

Organizational Related

Unclear Roles and Responsibilities

Both organizations clearly attempted to make the roles and responsibilities clear. GU community partners created GURLs job descriptions (Girls Unlimited, 2005e; Girls Unlimited, 2006am; Girls Unlimited, 2006ak). In fact, Network 1 had outlined the exact roles and responsibilities and expectations from its GURLs (Girls Unlimited, 2006ap). The GU community partners also have their roles and responsibilities outlined in their network’s partnership agreement and ‘Terms of References’ (a, c; Girls Unlimited, 2003b; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2006ax). The TYC had a constitution (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j) as well as work plans that outlined the Executives’ individual roles and responsibilities (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006).

However, participant observation, document analysis and interviewees revealed that there are still unclear roles and responsibilities in the organization. Six GU interviewees felt that there were unclear roles and expectations of the youth and/or community partners (a, G, e, d, b, c; Girls Unlimited, 2006am) resulting in the partners and GURLs feeling frustrated and disappointed (G, e; Girls Unlimited, 2006am). Two community partners identified that they did not feel that their roles and responsibilities were clear (c, d). Although these partners did not directly identify how this would impact the GURLs youth engagement experience, all of the community partners (including the TPH staff) discussed how it was their responsibility to provide leadership and a support

system for the GURLs (*c, d, e, a, b*) and therefore unclear roles and responsibilities would directly impact the GURLs' experience because of the confusion about who is responsible for providing what the GURLs need.

[A] process that is not well thought out and sets youth up (negative experience) (n).

Although none of the TYC interviewees discussed this issue, my participant observation of the Executive meetings identified that it is unclear who should be taking the lead in the meetings and the meetings end up being unproductive and long (PO I; PO G). In 2003, when the TYC Chair resigned, the organization decided to not replace the chair and to have a rotating chair (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003), however the meeting minutes and participant observations revealed that the current structure is not providing enough leadership support and accountability from the Executive to the 'General' members and thus it is not engaging youth meaningfully (PO I; PO G; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l).³⁰⁷ The chair positions are not taken seriously and the TYC Coordinator has to interject to get the discussion back on the issue at hand, because people are talking out of order and the more vocal members are taking too much discussion time (PO G; PO I).

The documents and interviewees also identified recommendations to address this issue. One interviewee recommended that organizations have a clear idea of what roles youth should play, what resources (whether it's training, mentoring, orientation, honoraria, meeting costs) are required to ensure a meaningful experience and to be conscious of the organization's intentions (n). Four interviewees recommended that the

³⁰⁷ The 'General' meeting was not included because it was clear that the Director of Membership of Engagement was in charge of the meeting (PO H).

roles and responsibilities be transparent so the youth can identify what they can or cannot do (n, e, a, G; Girls Unlimited, 2006am).

[R]eally lay out exactly how much time is going to be needed, so if it gives the GURLs a better opportunity in advance how much time they are going to be needing to dedicate if they want to be involved in something like this (e).

As well, the TYC meeting minutes recommended going back to the old structure of Chair, Vice, Executive, and Working Groups (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l).

Decision-making Process

The documents and interviews revealed several strengths for both GU and TYC. Both organizations use the meetings to plan, implement, and evaluate its programs and services (including events and initiatives) and tried to make their decision-making process clear. The GU decision-making process is outlined in Partnership Agreements (Girls Unlimited, n.d.1; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2006ax). The TYC's decision-making process is clearly outlined in the TYC Constitution, with the exception of the workgroups (project teams), where the members get to decide their own decision-making process (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004j). Both organizations are youth driven (with the youth generating the ideas for the events and initiatives). Generally, the interviewees and participant observations confirm that the GURLs make the initial decisions and then partners would further discuss the ideas until everyone agreed with the decision (c, b; PO D; PO C). Having the partners sit at the table is a great strength for GU, because when the GURLs have ideas about what they would like to do (training or event wise), the partners are there to provide immediate feedback as well as identify what resources the partner's agency may have to facilitate their ideas (i.e., facilities, transportation, staff, or knowledge) (PO C; PO D).

Even though having the partners at the table is a strength for GU, the opposite is a strength of the TYC. Unlike GU, the adults only play a small role in their planning. The TYC staff coordinator assists each Executive to develop the work plan (o), and then the rest of the planning, implementing, and evaluating is youth driven (J, K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003g). This improves the chances that the events and initiatives that TYC host are for youth by youth with no other organizational or adult agenda.

Besides the barriers identified above section (“Meeting Location and Schedule”), both organizations’ documents and interviewees also identified barriers to meaningful youth engagement regarding the meeting’s decision-making process. For the TYC, the decision-making process has been identified as taking too long and as a result the ‘Executive’ meetings run late (K, M; PO G; PO I). The decision-making process is long because there are some members who take too much time talking and others are not given time to voice their concerns (K, M; PO G; PO I). One issue was discussed for over an hour by only a third of those who attended the meeting (PO G). During my participant observation, I noticed that there were at least five members who did not speak once throughout the entire meeting (three females and two males), while there were four to five members (out of 18 for the first meeting and 23 for the second meeting) who consistently dominated the discussions (PO I; PO G). At the first meeting, some of the members brought up the issue that they did not feel like they could bring issues to the table because they are shut down or dismissed (PO G).

Besides taking too long, one TYC interviewee recognized that constitutions can act as a barrier to the decision-making process.

[C]onstitutions, they're empowering and they're inhibitive because sometimes you want to move forward and somebody will say oh but the constitution says [laugh] and they lock you into something and that wasn't in the spirit of the constitution when it was written (o).

The TYC interviewee felt that the constitutions force people into a process that they do not really understand and can not connect to because they do not make decisions like this on a normal basis (o). During my participant observation of the Executive meetings, I noticed that only the initial process of the motions was clear (PO G; PO I). The chairperson would read out the motion, a person will second it and then the rest of the process was unclear. Sometimes people would just shout 'aye' or 'yea' while others would raise their hands and somebody would count and other times the motion was passed before everyone at the table got to voice their opinion, thus allowing the decisions to be made by those who vocalize the most (PO G; PO I). There was one attempt to go around the table to get everyone's opinions, but it stopped because some people took too long and the issue was taken over once again by those who were more vocal (PO G).

The decision-making process is not the only meeting barrier. Both organizations recognized that the meetings are not inclusive enough. One GURL interviewee and meeting minutes identified that the communication system has not been used effectively, because GURLs are missing meetings or programs because they are not informed or are not being informed until the day before or at the last minute (G; Girls Unlimited, 2006ag). The TYC documents and interviews also identified this barrier indirectly, by making recommendations on how to make the meetings more inclusive for the 'General' members.

One TYC interviewee and several GU and TYC documents recommended that the meetings be more inclusive to all members (K; Girls Unlimited, 2006ag; Toronto Youth

Cabinet, 2001e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004r; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l). One suggestion was to ensure that everyone is notified of the meetings (Girls Unlimited, 2006ag; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004k) for example designating somebody to do it (i.e., for GU it was the TPH nurses and staff) (Girls Unlimited, 2006ag). The TYC documents identified several other recommendations to make the Executive meetings more inclusive for 'General' members. During my participant observation of the first Executive meeting, it was suggested that the title 'Executive' meeting be changed to a name that sounded more inclusive to all TYC members (PO G). Another suggestion was to ensure that the meeting minutes were being updated on the website (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004r). It was also suggested that an amendment be made on the 2004 TYC Constitution so that the 'General' members are consulted more often for their feedback before Executives make final recommendations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004l).³⁰⁸

The documents and interviewees also identified recommendations to make the meetings more productive. Three TYC interviewees recommended being more time sensitive so the meetings do not run too long (M, J, K) and more people participate in the discussion (K, M).

[M]ore discipline and more respect, just from the numbers, and realize that they can't keep talking and debating over issues, when people, you know a lot of people just want to go home (M).

I think that it is very important to first point out those who are taking up, you know, a lot of space (K).³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ In the past, the Executives had consulted the 'General' members more often (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001k; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001g), however by 2004, more decisions were made at the 'Executive' level (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005e, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005f, Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005g; PO G; PO I).

³⁰⁹ 'Space' is a term that the TYC members learned in anti-oppression training; how there are certain people who speak so much that they take away opportunities for others to voice their concerns (K).

I think sometimes it helps to maybe go around the circle if we're doing about something very heated and you know just to make sure that everyone has their say even if they think it's not important to just you know you are important, you need to contribute, in terms of, we also encourage, we know some members are really shy (K).

Other suggestions included sticking to the agenda, and creating a timeline on the length of time agenda items can be discussed (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e).³¹⁰ One TYC interviewee suggested using the voting process more often to make sure that the decisions are made by the majority of the members (K) and thus not just the few vocal members.

There were TYC documents that identified recommendations to engage more TYC members at the 'General' membership meetings. One suggestion was to invite the new TYC members personally (via email) and to have a TYC 'Question and Answer' session and then have the Executives separate the 'General' members into smaller groups, based on their interest in specific issues or initiatives (for example the Cause, Budget Campaign etc) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b). To create a more inclusive environment, the TYC meeting minutes suggested that the 'General' membership meetings conduct icebreakers, have professional and enthusiastic presentations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003c) and focus on one specific topic (that is announced well in advance) to discuss or learn about during that meeting (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003c).

Staff Turnover

Both organizations provide the engaged youth with support staff. The roles and responsibilities of the GU community partners include, but are not limited to facilitating

³¹⁰ In one of the 2001 TYC meetings, the minute taker had actually recorded how long each issue took to discuss in the meeting (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001f).

the decision-making process for the GURLs (*a, c, d, b*; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2003), mentoring the GURLS (*a, c, b, F*), sharing information and resources (*a, c, d, b*) and providing administrative support (*a, H, I*). The TYC also has a few staff to support their events and initiatives, including the TYC Coordinator (*o, J*) and City of Toronto's Youth Advocate. The TYC's roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to facilitating the organizational process of the activities, projects, and events (*J, K, o*; Grebanier, 2002), providing workgroup support (*o*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004h) and administrative support (*o*; PO G, PO I; Grebanier, 2002), and empowering the youth (*J, K, o*). The Toronto Youth Advocate supervises the TYC (Grebanier, 2002) and guides TYC members to the appropriate City Councillors (*o*).

As facilitative as the staff can be to meaningful engagement, the high staff turnover is a problem. Unfortunately, I had not systematically recorded the changeover of community partners, staff, or youth leaders. In any case, two GU interviewees stated that there are community partner representative and/or agency turnovers (*c, a*) and new representatives and/or agencies are constantly coming in (*a*). The community partners are leaving because of confusion about their roles and responsibilities in the organization (*c*) or because of maternity leave or the representatives are working on contracts and part-time positions (*a*). Sometimes the representative is replaced by new staff (i.e., two of the GU partner interviewees indicated that they were replacement staff (*c, d*) and sometimes the agency does not send another representative (*a*).

Staff turnover is an issue, especially if it is the staff who has been working with the GURLs who do not attend the network meetings (*a*). During my participant observations, I noticed that of the community partners who attend the meetings, some of

them have large roles (such as on the selection committee and/or work one-on-one with the GURLs) and thus if they leave it will have an impact on continuity. During my data collection period the TYC Coordinator and one GU community partner resigned, while another community partner was getting relocated to another network. All three of these members had important roles; one was going to be part of the selection committee for his/her network and on the grant working group, while the other two worked really closely with the youth.

The only recommendation revealed in the interviews is currently been implemented. One GU interviewee stated that currently the GU community partners are being asked to sign the partnership agreements (*a*) which commit the partner agency to be part of GU for at least two years (Girls Unlimited, 2005).

Partnerships

Even though both organizations have partnerships, the documents and interviews revealed that only GU utilizes the partners on a regular basis. GU's partnerships have enabled them to share resources (i.e., facilities and staff) which facilitates the GURLs' training and event planning (*a, c, d, b*; Girls Unlimited, 2006; Girls Unlimited, 2004; Girls Unlimited, 2003). In GU, the decision-making process is decentralized to each of the networks to ensure that the issues discussed address the local concerns (Girls Unlimited, 2006g).

However, the interviews and documents have revealed that the partnerships themselves can create barriers. Two interviewees felt that certain partner agencies only concentrate on the outcome rather than the process (*c, d*). Three interviewees identified

that the partnerships themselves created barriers because every organization comes to the table with its own agenda (*a, c, d*).

[S]ometimes you do get a sense that [the partner agency] also [has] a direction of where they'd like to go, and so discussions around the table become around trying to convince you of the decision as opposed to facilitating a process to get a decision made from the table – around the table (*c*).

In a study done by Ferris (2004) on GU partnerships, it was found that the TPH planning process acts as a barrier for the project because they are too bureaucratic and time consuming (Ferris, 2004).³¹¹ Three GU interviewees felt that there were too many guidelines that must be followed (*c, d, e*).

[T]here's always, as I was mentioning, the approvals, so there was a process that had to be followed, so there was the process to go through and I think because there are so many people involved that that's just the time consuming part (*e*).

I'm not sure how much space there is at some of those tables for actual critique or for actually changing up something that's already structured, so I think sometimes young people are—are kind of plugged into an existing structure as opposed to helping to develop and build the structure (*c*).

Only one recommendation was identified to address the partnership barriers. One of the GU interviewees discussed possibly dividing the networks even further into neighbourhoods, so that these partners could meet more frequently (*c*), thus decentralizing the decision-making process even further.

Training

Both organizations provide the youth with a variety of training (see Table IV.h., p. 127 and Table IV.i., p. 131). GU provided a training week before the GURLs were chosen, including how to participate in meetings (*a*; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq), conflict resolution (*a, H*; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq), and anti-oppression (*a, H, I*; Girls Unlimited,

³¹¹ More partnership barriers were identified, however it is beyond the scope of this thesis. I will only be discussing the barriers that directly impact the youth engagement process. Although I recognize that cross-sectoral partnerships can be a hindrance to the youth engagement process, it will only be discussed briefly.

2006aq). Since the GURLs have been engaged, GU has also provided additional training including leadership Training (*e*), sexual health (*a, H, I*; Girls Unlimited, 2006w), and Communication (*a, H, I G, F*; Girls Unlimited, 2006aq; Girls Unlimited, 2006z). In addition, the GURLs felt that they received informal training (from attending the meetings and organizing events) including building teamwork skills, communication skills (*G, I*), how to participate in meetings (*H, I*), how to plan events (*H*), and how to be assertive (*F*). The GURLs also get to identify what training they would like to receive (Girls Unlimited, 2006q).

The TYC also provides training for its members, including anti-oppression (*J, K, M, o*), conflict resolution (*o*), media (*J, o, K, L*), and good governance and meetings (*J, K*). In fact, anti-oppression is open to all TYC members every three months (*o*).

Both organizations provide the engaged youth with document support, such as meeting minutes (*G; PO C; PO D*), training supplements (*a, H, I, J, M, o*). In addition, the TYC has shelves of documents (training and previous research documents) at City Hall (*K, o*).

However, two of the interviewees recognized that not all of the current GURLs have received the March Break Training (*G, d*). In addition, from the TYC interview results, it is evident that the formal training is only provided to the Executive members.

Interestingly, everyone agreed that the GURLs and TYC members needed more training (*c, a, e, b, d, G, I, H, L, M, J, K, o*), which was also supported in the documents.

[A]lways is great to, to give them as much as, as they can, now on a citywide level to be perfectly honest with you (*e*).

I think young people can always benefit from—from workshops and training opportunities, in terms of specific topics, I can't give you specific topics (*c*).

Both organizations' documents and interviewees identified the need to provide more training for the youth (see Table IV.j.).

Table IV.j. Youth Training

GURLs	TYC Members
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-Oppression (<i>a</i>) 2. Money Management (<i>a, n, H</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 3. Conflict Mediation/Resolution (<i>a, d, b, G</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 4. Communication (<i>b, G</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 5. Leadership (<i>d, e, a, G</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 6. Organizational/Bureaucracy Training (<i>n, b, H</i>) 7. Professional Certificate Training (i.e., First Aid and CPR, Coaching, Babysitting) (<i>a, I</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 8. Event Planning (<i>b, G</i>; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 9. Networking (<i>d</i>) 10. Provided more Mentoring (<i>n, d</i>) 11. Grant/Sponsorship Writing (<i>n, a, d</i>) 12. Stress Management (Girls Unlimited, 2006q) 13. Time Management (Girls Unlimited, 2006q) 14. Problem Solving (Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 15. Making a DVD (Girls Unlimited, 2006o; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 16. Making a Portfolio (Girls Unlimited, 2006o) 17. Public Speaking (Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 18. Media (Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 19. Resume and Cover Letters (Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) 	<p>One TYC member suggested regular training with more mentorship of past and experienced Executive members (J). Training the TYC members suggested include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-Oppression (learning how to share power among themselves and enhance group dynamics) (<i>o, K</i>) 2. Budget Training (<i>K</i>) 3. Conflict Resolution (<i>M</i>) 4. Communication Training (<i>M</i>) 5. Leadership (<i>M</i>) 6. Organizational (understanding bureaucracy and City Hall as well as learning how to network) (<i>M, J, L</i>)³¹²

Some GU interviewees discussed that they would like more opportunities to experience different physical activities such as Aqua-fit and Self-Defense (*G, I*; Girls

³¹² This is both training and document information on the City

Unlimited, 2006o). One of the GURLs mentioned that she thinks there should be more fun activities planned for the GURLs, such as retreats where they can get to know each other better (*G*; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006ad).

I think that once they choose the two new representatives, I think that something like getting the girls together and going through say a ropes course (*G*).

I think if they had different, more events to get the GURLs by themselves to get to know each other beforehand basically the situation is where they would be forced to talk to those GURLs they don't usually talk to (*G*).

Two GU interviewees agree that the training should be done at a Citywide level because it was a waste of resources to do network training and train only two GURLs (*e*, *F*). One of the interviewees felt that the training should include more than just the GURLs, involving female youth as well (*e*).

Many of the GU interviewees stated that the training should be located somewhere convenient and accessible (*a*, *n*, *c*, *d*, *b*, *H*). Two GURLs suggested that the training be held at the GURLs meetings (*F*, *I*) or GU events (*I*), while another believed the training should take place at different locations, such as a retreat area (*G*). Several of the interviewees felt that a variety of the service providers should facilitate the training (*a*, *c*, *b*, *G*, *F*, *I*) while one interviewee thought it should be the TPH (*d*).

Three TYC interviewees suggested that the location of the training should be across the city in different community centers (*J*, *K*, *o*).

I think it should take place all over the city, I mean it doesn't work if we're always having it in a central location, I mean there are some things that we do as a TYC that I strongly feel that being here at City Hall is a lot better, but for things like training I think that we could definitely spread out and go to the different communities and do it for, you know, for different groups of youth (*J*).

Three TYC members felt that youth should be facilitating the training for youth (*J*, *K*) and adults (*L*).

I think the most effective training are—are the youth-led training, so basically, I'm a strong believer in [...] us being trained to be able to train, and I think that it's more effective that way, you know when we go out to young people, it's not like adults talking down to—to youth, you know we're youth talking to youth, it's a lot more effective that way [...] you'll get a lot better response that way (J).

Two other interviewees felt that City staff should provide the training (o, M), or outside facilitators (o).

Barriers due to Limited Resources

Both organizations have resources that are used to engage youth. GU has received three THHP grants to fund and provide support to engage eight GURLs (two in each network) (Toronto Public Health, n.d.). GU has community partner agencies that provide additional in-kind support, including staff to recruit GURLs and support the GURLs (Toronto Public Health, n.d.). GU also has a 'Resource Generation' workgroup that is dedicated to finding other resources (Girls Unlimited, 2006); in addition, the Steering Committee ensures that the grant applications are coordinated across networks (e, Girls Unlimited, 2006g). The TYC was provided with City resources (including staff support and a budget) (o; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001b) as well as the Levi Strauss grant to engage Toronto Youth.

However the interviews, participant observations and document analysis still identified barriers due to lack of resources. Two GU interviewees and three TYC interviewees discussed how limited resources have made it harder for the GURLs and TYC members to implement their program ideas (a, e, M, L, J; PO I). The three GU interviewees discussed examples of events that the GURLs wanted to do but could not because of lack of resources (money or staff) (G, H, e). For example, the GURLs wanted to organize Citywide roller skating for the skating event but the arena only had enough

equipment for 75 girls; however, the conditions of the THHP grant stated that they had to have at least 100 participants (Girls Unlimited, 2006aa).

During my participant observation of the Executive meeting, they had a discussion about the City's budget cuts, and how each Executive would have to review their team portfolio's budget and find ways to cut back; for example, the TYC youth retreats were cut out (PO I). At the 'General' meeting I observed, a few of the members suggested that they get paid or be given incentives to participate in the leadership training, however, due to budget cuts they are unable to do this (PO H).

One weakness about being a recipient of grants is that there are conditions that were determined by outside organizations that must be followed. For example, the Networks were pressured to host their events before the end of 2006 and outreach to at least 500 female youth before the year was over to secure THHP funding (Girls Unlimited, 2006am; Girls Unlimited, 2006ag). As a result, all the events were planned in the last three months (see Appendix J), and some of the GURLS felt that there were too many initiatives (citywide and network events) being planned at once (Girls Unlimited, 2006ag; Girls Unlimited, 2006f).

To address the lack of resources problem, the TYC meeting minutes revealed that the TYC Executives were considering developing a presentation package and charging a service fee for future consultations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003h). Two GU interviewees stated that the networks have been researching for more grants (*e, b*), not only for programming but to show the GURLs some more appreciation (*b*).

I think we really need to invest in maybe finding funding – further funding to really recognize them or give them sort of [a] little more appreciation of things I think, sometimes we forget to, that even though there is very limited funding we

have, I think that is something that we could do to just empower them and make them feel like they're valued (b).

Intergenerational Relationships

One unique strength of GU is that the community partners have been provided training by GU. When GU was first initiated, the TPH staff and community partners participated in an "On the Move Workshop" which was facilitated by the Canadian Association for Advancement of Women in Sport/Physical Activities (a, e). In addition, there was a citywide GU community partner training session (d). The training included conflict mediation, leadership (b, c, d; Girls Unlimited, 2006q) and public speaking (d).³¹³ The partners have also received information on conflict mediation and public speaking, information from YouCan, as well as GU partnership information (outlining who to contact, frequently asked question etc.) that was put together by the Steering Committee representatives of each network (d). Other documents include promotional material, leadership program ideas (b, e), and training material (b). Five community partners felt that they received informal training (i.e., from attending meetings), especially networking and collaboration (sharing resources and expertise in youth engagement) (a, b, c, d, e; Girls Unlimited, 2006i).

Adult to Youth Ratio

One strength of both organizations is that either all or some of their meetings have more youth or at least equal youth to adult ratios. The Citywide GURLs 2006 meetings consistently had either an equal adult to youth ratio or more youth than adults (Appendix I). Even though the Network 1 generally had more adults than youth attend the 2006 meetings, this network engaged four youth, which increased the chance that at least one

³¹³ Even though three community partners mentioned the two-day conflict resolution training, only one of the three GU partner interviewees attended both sessions (b, c, d).

GURL would be present during the meetings that were during youth friendly times. The GURL interviewee from Network 1 stated that she felt comfortable at her table (X).³¹⁴ At the Network 1 meeting I observed, the GURLs were consulted for their opinions often and the GURLs were quite vocal during the discussions, even though they were outnumbered by adults (PO D). To prevent the youth from feeling outnumbered by the adults at the meetings, the Steering Committee members suggested that only one representative from each network was present at the Steering Committee table, with a back up in case of an absence, in order to not overwhelm the meeting with too many adults (Girls Unlimited, 2006f). In addition, the GURLs were given the option of bringing their friends to the meetings as non-voting participants (Girls Unlimited, 2006f).

The 2000 to 2004 TYC 'General' and 2000 to 2005 Executive meetings consistently had an equal adult to youth ratio or more youth than adults (see Appendix I). The only adults that attend the TYC meetings are TYC staff (which currently consists of one person), and guests (who are both adults, such as City Councillors who visit once or twice a year and non-TYC youth) and in general they are out numbered by TYC members (see Appendix I). As well the TYC Coordinator does not generally attend the workgroup meetings (X).

Both GU documents and interviewees reflected that there are existing barriers to meaningful youth engagement caused by the adult to youth ratios. One issue that was identified by a GURL interviewee and my participant observation of the Steering Committee meeting was that at the meetings where there were more adults than GURLs, the GURLs were not as vocal. One GURL interviewee stated that there are usually five

³¹⁴ Interestingly, seven out of ten of the Network 1 meetings the GURLs attended, at least two GURLs showed up (see Appendix I).

to six community partners and at most one GURL that attended her network meetings (X).³¹⁵

[A]t those meetings I would sit there and I would contribute sometimes but not as often as I do with the GURLs downtown, I'm not sure why that is but it just doesn't happen there, I think it's just a different environment, and so it's a lot – yeah it's a lot of the adults who are there who are making the decisions, so the GURLs don't get involved as much, especially if, if it's only one of us there at a time (X).

During my participant observation, I noticed that the GURLs were much more vocal at the Citywide GURLs meetings as compared to the Steering Committee meeting, where there were more community partners than youth present (PO C; PO F).³¹⁶ It turns out that it was not just limited to youth feeling uncomfortable. One of the younger and newer community partner interviewees stated that at the beginning (s)he felt intimidated and was not able to feel comfortable enough to contribute as much as (s)he could have (X).

Only one recommendation was identified. One of the GURL interviewees suggested that more female youth should be able to attend the network meetings – either the program participants or the actual young women who run the programs (X).³¹⁷

Too High Expectations

The youth interviewees from both organizations seem to be quite energetic and committed to their roles and responsibilities. For GU, one of the GURLs stated that,

[A]t any point if I was over-burdened, like I could just tell them, oh I can't – like I can't – can someone help me with this and somebody would (H).

However, the GU documents and interviews have reflected that the GURLs are volunteering a significant amount of time as compared to the community partners. The

³¹⁵ This was one of the networks where the GURLs did not regularly attend the meetings (2X).

³¹⁶ However, I had arrived an hour late to the Steering Committee meeting because one of the Network meetings overlapped.

³¹⁷ The GURL stated that these program staff were generally younger and would have a better idea of what the female youth want in a program than the partner representatives that sit at her table (X).

interviews revealed that the GURLs attend at least one meeting every two weeks, usually two (a network meeting or a meeting with their youth outreach worker and then the GURLs citywide meeting) (see Table IV.b., p. 97). When the GURLs were asked how many hours each GURL commits, all the GURLs stated that they volunteer at least two to four hours a week on GURLs activities. In fact, one GURL stated that when an event was approaching, she volunteered 16 hours that week (*H*). Meanwhile, the networks that do not engage the GURLs on a regular basis meet once a month or once every three months (see Table IV.b., p. 97). When the community partners were asked how many hours they commit, two GU partners stated that they only work on GU activities for about 2 to 3 hours a month (*c, b*), while another GU partner stated that (s)he spends about 4 to 10 hours a week (but this includes the GU program that runs out of his/her community center (*e*). While the GURLs positions are volunteer, five of the community partners I interviewed stated that this is part of their job responsibilities (*e, c, d, a, b*). One GU interviewee felt that the GURLs were expected to commit too much time (*e*).³¹⁸

Two of the TYC interviewees discussed that there is quite a lot of work; almost too much work is expected from the Executive members (*J, M*) and many of the TYC members have suffered academically.

[M]any TYC members comment on [...] their grade average, I mean when they become part of the TYC, you know maybe they're A before and now maybe it's a B, and I mean they call it the TYC average (*J*).

When I asked one of the members whether or not she felt that she was involved too much or too little, she answered

³¹⁸ Before the GURLs were engaged, a few of the GU community partners felt that 15 to 20 hours per month was too much of a commitment for younger youth because this would also exclude the travel time to GURLs Citywide meetings, which was much more for the GURLs from Network D (Toronto Public Health, 2006h).

I'm scared, you know, because I know that with the TYC once you start getting involved they sort of dump a lot of stuff on you and say take it on, and I've seen it happen with people and I really can't be doing that (M).

The only recommendation, made by one GU partner, was that the partners should remember that the GURLs are still in school and emphasize that school should come first (e). If there is a conflict between school and a GU meeting or event, then the GURLs need to be honest and not commit to anything that she does not have the time to follow through (e). One of the TYC interviewees stated that Executives need to have excellent organizational skills to balance school and TYC (J).

Inability to Let go of Decision-Making Power

At the GURLs citywide meeting and the Network 1 meeting, the GURLs were constantly asked for their opinions, input, and to make the decisions (PO D; PO C). At the TYC Executive meeting I observed, at one point the TYC Coordinator was really empowering and asked if the members would feel more comfortable having a discussion with him/her out of the room (PO G).

However, the interviews and documents identified that two main barriers prevented adults from empowering youth. First it was the adult's perception of youth and/or how youth felt adults perceived them. Seven interviewees mentioned indirectly that adults still consider youth as future citizens (e, G, F, I, M, L, n).

I think the reason why organizations are involving young people today is because they see the importance of have young people at the table because they're tomorrow's leaders (n).

[Youth engagement] helps youth build themselves into being very positive leaders for the future of our society, country and world. Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders (e).

As well, two of the community partners did not feel that it was relevant to have the youth come to attend the network meetings on a regular basis (*c, b*).

[F]or me it really needs to be [pause] relevant, I think there is an idea that it would be really nice to have these GURLs to come to these meetings, but I think it's enough for the GURLs to go to the wider network meetings with other GURLs (*c*)

Two TYC interviewees felt that they are not being taken seriously, that adults think that youth are fooling around and wasting resources (*K, M*).

[W]ell the councillors think like, you know, we're just messing around, we're bothering them you know, we're asking for these youth community when we could be using the money for other things right, so I guess we can get kind of bothersome but I think that we need to be there (*K*).

Unfortunately [...] the funding does come from adults, I would really hope that they sort of realize the importance and the change that the youth can make and value it (*M*).

One GURL felt that adults would not take her seriously by neither grant foundations nor banks (*H*).

I understand that we should-like you know we should-we probably shouldn't be able-allowed to be this close to handling money just because the banks or whatever won't take us seriously (*H*).

Five GU interviewees recognized and three TYC interviewees felt that the adults have an inability to let go of the decision-making power (*n, a, c, G, H, L, M, o*).

[N]ot everyone believes in youth-led youth engagement processes right? It is what it is, and some people think like that – I grew up in a time where young people were seen not heard right, speak when you're spoken to, answer when you are called (*o*).

Two interviewees felt that the GURLs ideas on the events were ignored because adults had other ideas of what they expected out of the events (*c, G*).

[I] felt that it was a lot of the partners, their kind of ideas for the event were what they felt the youth would want, so it's really them that decided what the event would be, when it would be, where it would be, they did tell us what the event was and sort of get our opinions, but it was mainly the partners that decided (*G*).

Another example of the GURLs decisions being ignored, was when the promotional club card that had been approved by the GURLs was changed by the TPH Communications at the last minute to make it more in line with the poster and brochure (Girls Unlimited, 2006d).

The interviewees identified recommendations to address the adults' inability to empower. Three TYC interviewees and two GU interviewees felt that adults need to invest more time and understand that youth voices need to be listened to, respected, and empowered (M, L, o, c, G)

[L]et them plan it, then let's let them plan and let's support their decision-making and support the direction and we'll evaluate it and see where it goes and then at that point can make some suggestions (c).

[T]hey need to treat young people as equal partners, they also need to give young people a spot at the table when decisions are made, or like-or you want more like concrete recommendations, I know one would be, you know, hiring young people over the summer and then having meaningful placement in [the partner agencies] (i.e., community centers) (L).

Another GU interviewee suggested that there be more mentorship opportunities between the youth and partners so that relationships can be developed (a). One GU interviewee felt that in order to make your opinions

as equally received as somebody who's well-spoken, you also have to be well-spoken, and it's not just well-spoken you have to be confident, right, you have to make sure that it's – that you're being heard (H).

Five GU interviewees felt the community partners and TPH staff and two TYC interviewees felt the TYC Coordinator or City Council members did not need to receive any additional training (e, c, b, F, I, o, M).

[T]he staff that have gotten involved in it, obviously have a strong background otherwise they wouldn't be in this area, and so a lot of them do come from obviously the area of nutrition and physical activity and – so they have the skill

sets otherwise they wouldn't have been given – in my opinion they wouldn't have been given the job role to—to provide that if they didn't have the skill sets (*e*).

[T]hey are elected officials right, they're elected because they know what they know, and people feel that they represent them (*o*).

However, both the documents and interviews suggested the need for additional training for the adults involved in GU (community partners and TPH staff) and the adults involved in the TYC (City Council members).³¹⁹ I have summarized the suggested training. East Network documents reflected that the partners would like staff training (Girls Unlimited, 2006an) (see Table IV.k.).

Table IV.k. Support Staff Training

Community Partners and Toronto Public Health Staff	TYC: City Council
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-Oppression (<i>d</i>) 2. Youth Engagement Training (<i>a</i>, <i>n</i>, <i>G</i>) 3. Networking (<i>a</i>) 4. Grant Writing (<i>d</i>) 5. How to Facilitate Training (<i>d</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-Oppression for City Council Members (<i>J</i>, <i>K</i>, <i>L</i>) 2. Youth engagement training (<i>L</i>) 3. TYC Orientation (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004p)

Youth Related

Similar to youth engagement there are some barriers that are related to specific youth related characteristics and attitudes.

Youth Characteristics and Attitudes

Irresponsible

Four of the interviewees (including two GURLs) and TYC meeting minutes revealed that accountability and responsibility was a problem with some of the youth (*e*, *I*, *G*, *a*; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001g; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004s).

³¹⁹ The TYC Coordinator did not receive any additional training for this position (*o*).

[There are some GURLs] who still show up late for the meetings and kind of have an offhanded attitude about the program and they're not really dedicated (*G*).

[S]ometimes the GURLs don't show up, like the times will be changed and in all honesty they're really trying their best, and they'll have food ready you know etc. etc. but GURLs do not show up for whatever reason (*a*).

The TYC meeting minutes revealed that the Executives are not fulfilling their roles (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004s).

Two GU interviewees suggested that the GURLs realize the importance of following through with their responsibilities (*I, e*). This can be done by constantly communicating with the youth that they need to follow through with their commitments and that before they take on a task they need to think first about whether or not they can really do it (*e*). Two of the TYC meeting minutes revealed suggestions, such as holding Executive members accountable, enforcing the Participation Policy (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001g)³²⁰, and getting the Executives to fill out questionnaires that make the Executive reflect on what he/she has/has not done (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004t).

Student

Four GU interviewees (*d, e, b, H*) recognized school as a barrier to the amount of time the GURLs can contribute to their GU responsibilities.

GURLs had other responsibilities, they had exams so we as partners had to take that in[to] consideration so there was some fumbling back and forth for the GURLs that couldn't be there to make the massive decisions and there was also for the Steering Committee (*d*).

[W]e're in high school and we're doing other things – we're busy and we can't make it necessarily every—every meeting and I think it's easier for the community partners to make it to every meeting because they're the ones who, you know, have the time allotted to them to take these meetings, right? (*H*).

³²⁰ There is no description of the "Participation Policy".

One partner recognized that engaging the older youth who are about to enter into University and will leave the organization before the end of their commitment was a barrier (*b*).

The only suggestion made to address the school issue was to ensure that the meeting facilitators provided adequate food because the youth will be hungry and will need the extra boost of energy to do more work (*b*).

Very Busy Youth

Five GU interviewees identified that youth who have many other commitments are not able to invest as much time as they would like in the organization (*e, G, I, H, F*). One GU interviewee and meeting minutes from both organizations identified that youth had to withdraw from their positions because of too many commitments (*b, Girls Unlimited, 2006a; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005j*). All the GURLs interviewed are actively involved in other organizations (*G, H, F, I*). One GURL I interviewed leaves her house at 6:45am and gets home at 7 to 8pm everyday because of her extracurricular activities. As a result, there is not enough time for them to participate as much as they would like. Two meeting minutes revealed that the GURLs have identified the training and there have been training sessions planned but there was not enough time to do the training (*Girls Unlimited, 2006f; Girls Unlimited, 2006f*).

[W]e also had an opportunity to become a martial arts instructor but none of us took advantage of it because it's a pretty big time commitment (*H*).

[I]f I – like could put more time and committed more into it, like and—and you know was more heavily involved in the process, but that's really difficult with things today, sometimes, just like, I'm really busy and you know it's difficult (*H*).

[A] problem I had was making the meetings every week. It was a problem because sometimes other things would come up and it would be very difficult to attend (*I*).

Two of the interviewees suggested that the roles be clarified and the time commitment reduced for the youth (e, G).

Inexperience

During my participant observation of the Executive Meetings, they discussed the exclusionary atmosphere of TYC, how it seems that the male members stick together and leave out the female members (PO G). However, someone said that maybe it was not a gender issue but more of a veteran issue; how those who have been with the TYC longer have not taken the time to teach the new members and thus exclude them from initiatives (PO G). Two interviewees discussed how they felt inhibited from being vocal because they were not as experienced (2X) and worried that people would not take him/her seriously (X).

I'm generally a pretty quiet person and for me to sit at the tables and you know sometimes when there are pretty powerful people sitting at the table, they – you know and it's not always their fault but they don't realize that you know someone has something to say and you know that was definitely a problem for me, trying to get my voice heard at the beginning because I didn't know how to approach that and it was very intimidating because there are people you know, university students who have been doing this for several years, and you know, use big words and I'd just be sitting like oh grade nine-grade nine (X).³²¹

During the meeting where I conducted participant observation, it was found that the reason why some of the female Executives were excluded from certain meetings was because the TYC Coordinator did not think it was relevant to his/her portfolio and therefore did not invite all the Executives (PO G).

One of the TYC members felt that the more experienced members have forgotten how to communicate with youth because they are trying too hard to sound like politicians (M).

³²¹ To maintain confidentiality the interviewees were not identified.

I feel that a lot of TYC members just, [pause] don't really speak to youth, they sort of speak like-and when I-when I brought it up, what was said was well we're all learning to be politicians, [laugh] so I was like great but right now you're speaking with youth, you're not talking to adults and if you can't say what you have to say in a way that is going to be understood by youth [...] then how are they going to get their points across and how are they going to get any help, any involvement, any support from regular youth who don't use that type of words (M).

At the Executive meeting it was suggested that there be more mentorship between old and new members, as well as partnering up of males and females (PO G). One of the TYC interviewees suggested that members remember that they are supposed to be there to represent the youth and they need to communicate to them (M).

I think those people need to realize that they're there for youth and they're youth themselves, and just because they know how to speak better per se in parenthesis, doesn't mean that, doesn't mean they can do it (M).

Personality Conflicts

Three TYC meeting minutes noted that there have been personality issues that have influenced the decision-making process (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004u) and the reputation of TYC (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b). It questioned the members' ability to communicate with each other with respect (especially when frustrated) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004u) and how to separate personal opinion from TYC opinion when communicating with City Council members (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b).

During my 'Executive' meeting, I noticed that there was a variety of personalities (PO G). Some were more assertive and vocal; for example, during one of the discussions, while there were 18 people there, only 6 members were discussing the issue (PO G). I observed some very disrespectful behaviour between the members, especially from the Chairperson of that meeting (PO G). The issue on the table was about exclusion, and how certain members do not feel like they (the females) are given enough

opportunities to be heard or given respect (PO G). During the time the issue was being discussed, other members were having their own side conversations and the Chair was standing behind one of the male members (to whom part of the accusation was directed) and playing with his hair, whispering and laughing (PO G). The general response from the vocal males was that the female members needed to justify their feelings. They asked for more examples and said the females need to take more initiative to get involved (PO G), thus putting the onus on the women to get involved. The issue was not resolved very well and was put on the table for a month to see if any progress could be made; however, five of the most vocal females over this issue, ended up leaving the meeting and having their own meeting outside for 10 minutes (PO G).

One of the TYC meeting minutes had many recommendations on how to reduce the impact of personality conflicts (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b). These include using ‘meeting terms’ such as speaking only to the ‘chair’ instead of attacking the individual speaker to de-personalize the criticism, as well as being aware of one’s body language (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b). Additional suggestions included pursuing one on one conflicts outside the meeting to avoid embarrassing somebody, and starting off each meeting with a moment of self reflection on why each member is at the table and who they serve (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005b).

Conclusion

The documents, interviews and participant observations have identified GU and TYC’s strengths, weaknesses and recommendations. These were divided into two categories: youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement. The data results showed that the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations were centralized around

organizational related and youth related factors for youth engagement. Meanwhile, the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for meaningful youth engagement were centralized around organizational related, intergenerational related and youth related factors.

CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS

Sub-Problem #1

What is the history of youth engagement and what is the history and organizational structure of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet?

Introduction

In this analysis, I discussed how the findings in the data results expand on, agree or disagree with the literature review. In general, the data results supported and extended the literature on how stakeholders perceive youth engagement, meaningful engagement, and the history of youth engagement.³²² Since the GU and TYC have only briefly been included in previous literature, the data collected extended the previous findings as well as disagreed with some of the literature's historical analysis of one of the case studies (the TYC).

What is Youth Engagement?

The literature review limits the definition of youth engagement to being a process for engaging youth in decision-making (Driskell, 2002; Laidlaw Foundation, 2003; Hart, 1992). This perspective was supported by four of the interviewees and expanded upon by eleven others. Five interviewees (both adults and youth) believed that youth engagement should be understood as a continuum of methods, from having youth participate in youth services, to having youth run organizations. Five out of eight youth interviewees felt that youth engagement should be understood as a concept, wherein power needs to be exchanged from adults to youth so that there is equal decision-making power. Hart

³²² The Laidlaw Youth Engagement Coordinator was also asked for his/her opinion on the definition of youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement, as well as the history of Toronto's Youth Engagement initiative.

(2002) recognized that youth engagement cannot be understood without considering the underlying power struggle between youth and adults, yet only one out of six adult interviewees defined youth engagement as a transfer of power. The other adults focused more on the process (i.e., including youth in the decision-making process) and the methods (youth on boards etc.). This suggests that youth still feel that youth empowerment is not automatically implemented by adults as part of the youth engagement process, and thus needs to be clarified and included as part of the definition.

What is Meaningful Youth Engagement?

Before making recommendations on how to make youth engagement more meaningful, I first had to identify what aspects of youth engagement were meaningful to youth. Both the TYC focus group members as well as the GU and TYC interviewees were asked to identify what made their youth engagement experience meaningful. The adult GU and TYC interviewees were asked so that a comparison could be made between the perspectives between youth and adults.

The TYC and GU data results showed that both the youth and adult responses could be divided into two different categories, the process and the outcome. From the data results, it can be concluded that meaningful youth engagement does not focus solely on the tangible outcomes, but includes the process as well. For the comparisons between youths' and adults' perspectives on what was meaningful to youth about the engagement process, the youth were able to identify a broader range of aspects. Out of 14 aspects of youth engagement, the adults only identified six. This could be because of two reasons. First, youth have a better understanding of what they are experiencing and what is meaningful to them because, according to Driskell (2002), those who live the experience

are better able to identify what they're experiencing. Second, because there was a greater number of youth who were interviewed and participated in the focus groups than adults, more youth were able to identify different aspects of what they felt was meaningful youth engagement. Since this is the case, a proper comparison could not be done. However, it does suggest that the meaningful aspects of youth engagement are based on the individual and cannot be defined broadly for all youth.

There were also differences between the GURLs' responses and the TYC members' responses. All the GURLs focused on the social aspect of youth engagement as being meaningful, such as attending the meetings (the process), or the relationships they made (outcome). Meanwhile, the TYC members' responses focused more on the civic engagement aspects, such as learning and creating change (the process) and having an impact on others (the outcome). This is because the TYC's mission is civic engagement; they focus on learning and changing their capacity to mobilize other youth to create social and political change (Listen, 2003). This reflects that some meaningful aspects of youth engagement can be generalized to youth in the same organizations.

Much of the literature on enhancing the youth engagement experience focused on the intergenerational relationships (Driskell, 2000; Davies & Markham, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al, 1998 Hart, 1997; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), but only one interviewee felt that it was meaningful meeting City Councillors etc. (K), the relationship benefits were mostly focused on meeting other youth. The only other mention of adults was to emphasize that the events and initiatives should be youth initiated and *not* adult-initiated. When the interviewees discussed the importance of being part of the process and "being the change", they extended the literature. Before my data collection period, I had not come

across the phrase “Be the change you want to see”; however, it was important to the youth to learn through the process and evolve while creating a positive impact. Other aspects that made their experience truly meaningful was seeing the impact they had on others, expanding the person’s view on the world, and providing more youth role models and opportunities for youth. This supports the recommendation that Mullahey et al. (1999) and De Winter (1997) made – that youth should be given opportunities to influence other things besides their own lives, and thus have an impact on issues concerning the community as well.

The literature emphasized the importance of ensuring that the youth are trained in the skills they need to have in order to successfully complete the project (e.g., policy training and technical training skills) (Davies & Markham, 2000; Mullahey et al., 1999, Hart, 1997). The data results showed that skill and knowledge acquisition is important but not in the sense of training provided to complete a project. Rather, it is the actual process of completing the project that teaches the youth the skills and knowledge they need to get a job.

History of Toronto’s Youth Engagement

To further elaborate on the history of Toronto’s youth engagement initiative, I conducted GU and TYC interviews, document analysis, and participant observations. From the literature we know that the youth engagement concept came from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which legitimized the child/youth’s right to make the decisions that concern their life (United Nations, 1992; Driskell, 2002; Hart, 1997). The data results showed that when these case study organizations were initiated, the purpose was to improve the delivery of youth programs and services in priority

neighbourhoods. The interview supplement stated that youth services focused on the inadequacies of youth and tried to improve them; thus, youth are considered clients instead of people with rights at the table (Listen, 2003).

The history of GU suggests that the TPH Physical Activity Working Group was responsible for addressing the issue persistent physical inactivity for girls. GU was initiated to increase physical activity levels of female youth through community mobilization (Zacher & Chin, 2004; Gauer & Chin, 2004; Hey, 2002, Dubois, 2002).

The data results showed that the community partners did focus on enhancing the physical activity services in their regional areas. For the first four years of GU, female youth were only engaged occasionally as consultants on how to strengthen GU programs and events. Generally the female youth were engaged as participants in the GU programs and events. When the GU stakeholders were asked to identify the mission(s) of Girls Unlimited, all of the interviewees agreed that it was to enhance youth services (in this case physical activity services). All six of the GU interviewees also identified that enhancing youth services was the underlying reason why Toronto's organizations were engaging youth. A TYC interviewee stated that generally, new youth organizations start off focusing on enhancing youth services before expanding onto other youth issues.

The TYC's history also reflected that civic engagement was initiated to address the problems of youth crime and unemployment (Munroe, 1997). The TYC history showed that they were not the first youth group integrated into City Hall. Initially, a Metro Youth Council was formed but the City of Toronto failed to provide enough resources (staff and policy support) for the Metro Youth Council to make an impact on Toronto youth and to provide a meaningful youth engagement experience. The TYC was

initiated after a report was released to the Municipal governments on how to genuinely engage youth civically. Since 1998, the TYC has been part of the Municipal government. Even though TYC was located within City Hall with the purpose of civically engaging youth, the early TYC initiatives reflected that the TYC was generally focused on enhancing youth services and were adult driven (as suggested by City Councillors). Early initiatives included increasing the City of Toronto's budget spending on youth services and programs and keeping the Toronto District School Board swimming pools open.

However, both GU and the TYC organizations have undergone structural changes reflecting a change in the focus of youth engagement. The City of Toronto eventually recognized the right of youth to be at the table making decisions and the need for their presence to make organizations sustainable and more effective. Although only three of the interviewees mentioned youth engagement (i.e., involving youth in decision-making, empowering youth) as one of GU's missions, the documents reflect that in 2006 the Steering Committee decided to actually create and support the roles of the GURLs. These positions were created to provide female youth with a more genuine youth engagement experience. Coincidentally, during that time the City of Toronto released their 2006 report on how to engage youth in a more genuine way (City of Toronto, 2006). This may have sparked the TPH's interest in ensuring that youth were being engaged meaningfully within their organization. In 2006 GU engaged female youth more consistently, providing the GURLs with staff, financial resources, and training opportunities. One of the networks changed their meeting times to consistently engage

youth at the table. A citywide GURLs table was created to provide the GURLs with more opportunities to be meaningfully engaged.

The TYC membership composition, programs, services, and initiatives have changed and grown. Now the TYC focuses on all aspects of youth issues, such as enhancing civic engagement, and is not limited to improving youth services and programs. All the TYC interviewees agreed that one of TYC's missions was to advocate on behalf of Toronto's youth on all issues that affect youth. In addition, all of the TYC interviewees recognized that the TYC's second mission was to civically engage Toronto's youth. These two missions reflect that youth engagement is now about youth empowering youth and no longer limited to adults empowering youth. To facilitate this, the TYC hosts meetings and events that Toronto Youth can attend to create opportunities for civic engagement.

Although youth engagement is the mission of both organizations, currently GU actively engages only nine female youth, and the TYC actively engages 50 Toronto youth in meaningful decision-making opportunities. This is not a large number, especially for the TYC, which is supposed to be civically engaging Toronto's youth. Interestingly, two interviewees (one adult and one youth from different organizations) were skeptical about whether or not Toronto's youth organizations were really engaging youth. This supports Hart's (1992; 1997) and Arnstein's (1969) findings that empowerment is not a passive process and cannot be done by simply allowing youth to be part of the organization. Both the data results and literature reflected that it is much more complex, and without the right resources, youth engagement can end up being a disempowering and token experience (Hart, 1992; Arnstein, 1969). Regardless, both TYC and GU data results do

reflect that engaging youth and ensuring their rights at the table has become a greater focus for both of these organizations.

GU and TYC History and Organizational Structure

There is not a lot of literature on the TYC and GU. GU had two reports written on the organization. The first report focused on the partnerships (interviewed two partners for each network) and identified the partnership problems (Zacher & Chin, 2004). The second report focused on the participants of GU West Network's leadership program (Gauer & Chin, 2004; Chin 2006). Until the data collection period, I had not come across anything that had officially mentioned the GURLs, including the GU research papers (which did not include the GURLs because the GURLs' positions had not been created yet) and the website. Therefore the data results greatly expanded on the literature of GU, describing the roles and responsibilities of the GURLs and the events that the GURLs plan, implement and evaluate.

The TYC was briefly mentioned in youth engagement papers and books as examples of youth councils (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). Two other researchers included the TYC in their case studies but only wrote a brief history and structure of the TYC (Ross, 2005; Mullahey et al., 1999). Therefore, the detailed TYC data results expanded on the TYC structure by outlining the funding, the TYC programs and services, TYC's official connection to City Council, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the TYC coordinator and members. My data results regarding the TYC history contradicted both Mullahey et al. (1999) and Ross (2005). Mullahey et al. (1999) stated that the TYC started as a two-year pilot program called the Toronto Young Peoples' Advisory Board. The data results refer to a two-year program called the Metro

Youth Council (not the Toronto Young Peoples' Advisory Board). Comparing the literature to my data results, it seems that the authors Mullahey et al. (1999) were actually discussing the creation of the Children and Youth Action Committee. The Toronto Young People's Advisory Board was more likely the older version of the CYAC before the city amalgamated. Ross (2005) also presented a contradictory report, stating that the TYC Executive changed from a hierarchical to consensus approach in 2004, but the meeting minutes showed that it happened in 2003.

Conclusion

The data results expanded the definition of youth engagement to include a continuum of methods and a transfer of decision-making power from adults to youth to make it equal. It is evident that youth still do not feel that youth engagement automatically entails youth empowerment, and thus feel the need to emphasize the power transfer. The aspects of youth engagement that are meaningful to them are specific to each individual and cannot be generalized for all youth. However, there will be similar aspects of youth engagement that are meaningful to youth who work in the same organization. The history of the TYC and GU reflect that Toronto's youth engagement mission was to enhance youth services only; youth were perceived as having inadequacies that needed to be fixed. However, structural changes were made in both organizations – for GU the GURLs positions were created and for the TYC the services and initiatives were expanded to include all youth issues. These changes reflect that Toronto's Youth Engagement approach has become more focused on recognizing the youth's right to sit at the table.

Sub-Problem #2

What level of participation and mechanisms for youth engagement are the Girls Unlimited Leaders (GURLs) and the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) members experiencing?

Introduction

In this data analysis I identified methods and at what levels the youth are engaged by analyzing the method and level of engagement frameworks developed from the focus groups and the organizations' youth engagement processes (both outreach and decision-making process).

GU and TYC's Methods of Youth Engagement

Initially, the TYC focus group members were asked to create a methods of youth engagement framework. I provided them with a modified framework based on findings from the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) and Fitzpatrick et al. (1998). The youth decided to add two methods only, 'edutainment' and 'recreation and leisure activities'.³²³ The last method signifies that the youth did not view youth engagement as solely being involved in governance and decision-making, but also as being involved in the activity itself.

Since the publication of "Youth in Decision-Making" (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), the Laidlaw Foundation has changed its perspective on the methods of youth engagement and uses the "Youth Engagement Continuum" created by the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing (Listen, 2003) to elaborate on the methods of youth

³²³ "Edutainment" was seen as more of an outreach method (to get youth involved) than a youth engagement method (involving youth).

engagement.³²⁴ The Continuum is much more comprehensive than the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) typology of (i) youth advisory to governing boards, (ii) youth on governing body, (iii) youth governed organizations, and (iv) youth governed programs. It elaborates on the Laidlaw Foundation's youth engagement methods by indicating the purpose of each method and what supports are required for each method; thus answering what the method encompasses and how to utilize it. Since none of the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) or the Laidlaw Foundation interviewee, or the TYC focus group members elaborated on the Laidlaw Foundation's (2000) youth engagement methods, I incorporated the Continuum into the TYC methods of youth engagement framework to identify the methods that were outlined by the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing (Listen, 2003).³²⁵ The framework also includes Fitzpatrick et al.'s (1998) methods, youth consultation methods (focus groups and surveys), youth conferences, and the methods expanded on by the TYC focus group members ('edutainment' and 'recreation and leisure').

The data results reflect that one of the literature's typologies was incorrect. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and Mathews (2001b) identified youth councils and youth forums as interchangeable; however, both GU and TYC documents described forums as more similar to youth conferences. According to the GU and TYC, youth forums are large conferences that consist of youth organizations gathering to discuss a common topic, which may include a capacity building component and/or speakers. Therefore, youth

³²⁴ A TYC interviewee also provided me with this document.

³²⁵ This is also the current youth methods framework to which Laidlaw Foundation now uses as a reference.

councils and forums are not the same and should not be used interchangeably as they are not similar methods.³²⁶

Both organizations use many different methods to engage youth. They use consultations methods (focus groups and/or surveys) when engaging youth outside their organizations. GU conducted consultations with female youth through the community forum when GU was first conceived. Female youth participated in focus groups to discuss their physical activity experiences, brainstorm methods to increase female youth physical activity levels, and identify how to make their community more youth friendly. The interviews also revealed that the GURLs conducted informal focus groups with female youth participating in other community programs to obtain event ideas. The TYC would conduct youth consultations for research (Toronto Youth Cabinet, March 2005h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a; Teschner, 1999; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) and uses 'edutainment' to engage youth at the 'Youth Speak Outs' and other TYC events and/or initiatives (i.e., the Cause).

All four Networks offer youth services by providing physical activity opportunities to enhance their physical activity levels. Network 2 and Network 4 both provide youth development opportunities to female youth (non-GURLs) through their leadership program, where they build individual capacity by providing support and training as well as opportunities to build partnerships with adults and to become engaged. The TYC provides neither services nor programs, but they do host conferences and forums to engage other youth and/or youth organizations.

³²⁶ Instead, youth conferences and youth forums should not be used interchangeably.

Each organization also uses different methods of engaging youth within its organization. According to the Youth Engagement Continuum (Listen, 2003), GU engages its GURLs through 'Youth Leadership'.³²⁷ GU can be separated into seven different divisions: GURLs Citywide, each of the four networks, the steering committee and the workgroups, but the GURLs are only consistently engaged in five of these divisions.³²⁸ The data results showed that at the GURLs Citywide table and at Network 1's meetings, the decisions are made together with the community partners. In Networks 2 and 3 the GURLs attend meetings with the youth workers who facilitate the planning and decision-making process for the GURLs, then bring back the decisions to the network tables for the partners to discuss and make the final decision to accept or deny the GURLs' ideas. In Network 4, the GURLs attend the network meetings only occasionally. Even though GU has two different decision-making processes, GU still use Youth Leadership mechanisms because both processes provide GURLs with genuine leadership opportunities within the organization. The data results showed that the GURLs' responsibilities include organizing the GU's network and citywide events and developing GU promotional materials. The GURLs are provided training to enhance their decision-making and event planning skills. They are also provided in-kind support (through the community partners) and monetary support (from the GU grants and TPH). The GURLs interview results reflect that they have gained knowledge about the cultural and structural barriers to physical activity that female youth face. They are also given

³²⁷ The characteristics of youth leadership are: the youth are provided with youth development components in addition to authentic leadership opportunities within the organization or program, capacity building (especially in decision-making and problem solving), cognizance of youth and community issues and youth participation in community projects (Listen, 2003).

³²⁸ With respect to the workgroups and steering committee, there is currently very limited evidence that the GURLs are engaged in these two areas so they will not be discussed further.

opportunities to consider what additional training they need to improve their event planning and leadership skills.

The TYC has a different organizational structure and uses a different youth engagement method. The TYC can be divided into three different sections: 'General' members, Executive members and workgroups. All three meetings are attended by both 'General' and Executive members. According to the TYC meeting minutes, though the TYC coordinator regularly attends the Executive and 'General' membership meetings, the youth consistently outnumber the adults and make up the majority of the organization. The TYC interviews and documents showed that the youth make the decisions at the meetings and the decision-making processes are generally the same (even though according to the constitution the workgroups can decide their own process). The TYC documents reflect that in the past, the Executives consulted the 'General' members more frequently, while at present, decisions are made more often by those who attend the Executive meetings. According to the literature, interviews, and documents, the TYC is 'Youth Organizing' (i.e., a youth council) because the youth members come together to work with what resources and strengths they have to collectively improve their communities (Listen, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Mathews, 2001b). One of the common characteristics of youth organizing groups is that their broader mission extends beyond meetings, training, and rallies that focus on the barriers and weaknesses of youth (Listen, 2003). From one of the interviews, TYC's programs and services extend to 'Asset Based Research', which looks at collecting information about the current strengths and resources Toronto Youth have, and finding ways to build on their resources and strengths to improve their neighbourhoods (o). In addition, its members were recruited

from youth conferences or other youth organizations and have a voting membership with an Executive council. The TYC is also integrated into the municipal government. It is clearly stated that the TYC is under the supervision of the Child and Youth Advocate (thus under the Mayor's Roundtable on Children, Youth and Education) and has to report back to the Child and Youth Advocate. The TYC is also provided in-kind and monetary support from the Municipal Government. "Youth Organizing" encompasses youth development, youth leadership, and civic engagement components. In addition to what the literature has stated about youth councils, they also include creating alliances and coalitions (Listen, 2003). The data results reflect that the TYC members advocate for youth on political issues such as the budget campaign (bringing more money into the youth organizations and services), improving youth living standards and hosting events and conferences to civically engage more youth. TYC members are also provided training opportunities, although not as many as the GURLs. This could be due to the number of members; there are 50 active TYC members and only 10 GURLs at all times and the GURLs utilize their in-kind resources from their community partners more often (including trainers and meeting locations).³²⁹

GU and TYC's Levels of Youth Engagement

As stated in the literature review, the method of youth engagement does not define the level of meaningful engagement (Arnstein, 1969; Hart, 1992; Hart, 1997). To address the limitation of the ladders created by Arnstein (1969) and Hart (1992; 1997), a focus group was conducted with the TYC members to get a youth perspective. Overall, they seemed to relate to Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation, were cynical about the

³²⁹ The TYC documents and interviews show that the TYC have community partners but they are not as integral to the TYC and are involved more on an as-needed basis, to assist through sponsorship or marketing of their events.

adults' desire to truly empower them, and had a desire to form their own organizations and initiatives (Focus Group Notes). Arnstein's (1969) ladder incorporated the power struggle between the "haves" and "have-nots" and observed that it was unlikely that full empowerment would occur. The TYC focus group members agreed with Arnstein (1969) that youth engagement was only considered non-token when there is a partnership, with shared decision-making power and responsibilities.³³⁰ The second highest level combines Hart (1992) and Arnstein (1969), in that they are still youth initiated (just like Hart's (1992) child-initiated and directed), but they also still have to involve the adult (similar to Arnstein (1969)). The focus group members further expanded on the literature by creating their own top level of participation, 'Youth in Control'. Even though it agrees with Hart's (1992) highest level of youth engagement, in which youth are empowered enough to choose to involve adults, it also expands on the literature because it discusses youth in politics, which neither Hart (1992) nor Arnstein (1969) mention. Hart (1992) and Arnstein's (1969) levels seem to be limited to neighborhood corporations and project management, while the focus group members extended it to being in government and policy-making roles.

Although both organizations use complex and highly resourced methods of youth engagement, it does not mean that their methods are at the highest level of youth engagement, or non-tokenism. Based on the levels of youth engagement frameworks and the literature (Hart 1997; Hart, 1992; Arnstein, 1969; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Driskell, 2002; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), to identify the level of genuine participation

³³⁰ The TYC focus group members didn't feel it was important who initiated the project, as long as they both share the planning and decision-making responsibilities equally.

at which the youth are engaged, or in other words, the degree to which youth are empowered, the following questions should be asked:

1. How are youth engaged (democratic, transparent process)?
2. Why are you engaged in the organization (i.e., mission of the organization, do they represent a constituency)?
3. Who initiates the projects, events, initiatives?
4. How transparent is the project, event, initiative? Do the youths understand the purpose?
5. What roles and responsibilities do the youth have in the planning, implementation, or evaluation?
6. How transparent and flexible is the decision-making process?
7. What resources and support are provided (including staff and training)?
8. What is the youth-perceived decision-making power (did (s)he get to define the amount of involvement, the outcome of the decisions?)
9. What is the perceived ownership?

Hart (1997) stated that to avoid tokenism and ensure a meaningful youth engagement experience, youth chosen to be representatives should undergo a fair and transparent process, like an election. The GURLs went through a clear process decided by their network's selection committee, and three of the networks selected the GURLs based on their experience and interviews. The TYC members, although initially self-selected, go through an election process that is clearly guided by their election protocol to become the Executive members.

Hart (1992) stated that to avoid token engagement, youth should understand their role in the organization. Also, if youth are representing a constituency, they should be accountable and be provided avenues to report back to those they represent (Hart, 1992; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). The data results showed that all the GURL interviewees understand that they are part of the organization to enhance the physical activity

programs for female youth. Although three of the GURLs felt that they represent other female youth, only one of the youth indicated a report back process, and it was very ad hoc. Two GU interviewees stated that there is no formal process and that the youth are, in the end, only representing themselves. However, the documents and interviewees revealed that there is a process for reporting between the networks and the GURLs; at each of these respective meetings, they are given opportunities to give updates.

The data results showed that all TYC member interviewees understand that they represent the voice of Toronto's youth and are there to advocate on their behalf. Even though there are various methods to get Toronto youth's opinions and issues, the report back process was not identified. All the members felt that they represent another youth organization at the table; however there is no evidence from interviews or documents that they are official representatives. Only two of the members go to other organization's meetings regularly to report back.

According to the adapted ladder of participation as well as Hart (1992), the person or organization who initiated the project, event, or initiative is one indicator of level. Historically, GU was started by the TPH, the GURLs positions were initiated by the GU community partners, and hosting the network and Citywide events were a condition of the THHP grant and therefore not initiated by the GURLs. However, some interviewees felt that it was the GURLs who are responsible for developing the work plans with the network partners and for identifying the event ideas. The historical analysis of TYC reflects that the organization was initiated by a City Council member and that their initial campaigns (i.e., the budget campaign, the Save the Pool campaign) were also initiated by City Council members. However, the TYC interviews and more recent documents

showed that the initiatives are youth driven (i.e., Harmony). This reflects that TYC is moving away from adult-initiated to youth-initiated, which is a higher level of youth engagement.

Hart (1997) stated that for genuine participation, the youth should have the right to participate in all areas of the project (planning, implementation, evaluation) that he/she desires. Three of the GURLs and three of the TYC members stated that they were involved in all three aspects (planning, implementing, and evaluation).³³¹ However, the amount of involvement was different between GU and TYC members. The GURLs were assisted much more by the community partners; they either planned with the youth outreach worker or with the community partners at the network meetings. The GURLs were assisted in the implementation and evaluation of the events by the community partners as well. The TYC members were assisted by the TYC coordinator in developing the work plan, but once that was completed the TYC members planned, implemented, and evaluated their events or initiatives on their own. The interview results showed that one of the GURLs and two of the TYC members felt that (s)he was involved too much. Another TYC member discussed seeing his/her friends being delegated too much responsibility and was worried about the same thing happening to him/her. Interestingly, the TYC Coordinator felt that this would not occur because the members get to choose how involved they want to be. Interviews reflect that the 'General' members decide the initiatives in which they want to participate and what they want delegated to them, while the Executives design the work plans and plan how much they want to accomplish.

³³¹ The other GURL was not part of GU at the beginning and missed out on the planning but did state that she was updated. The other TYC member has only recently become an active member and the project (s)he is working on is still in the planning stage.

According to Hart (1997) and Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) the power relations should be clear for genuine participation. The GU interviews revealed that it is unclear how much decision-making power the GURLs have within the organization. Two GU community partners felt that the GURLs are supposed to have more decision-making power than the community partners; however, the GURLs only felt that they had equal decision-making power at the GURLs Citywide meetings, and one GURL felt that she had less decision-making power than the community partners. Meanwhile, three TYC members felt that their opinions are received equally to those of the staff and City Council members, while one member disagreed and felt that the City Councillors and staff have the final decision-making power. The documents supported the three TYC members, showing that there are occasions when they had successfully gone against recommendations made by City Councillors.

Hart (1997) also discussed that for meaningful participation to occur, youth should be educated in the different models of decision-making and allowed time to decide before the final decision is made. This ensures that decisions are not made on an ad hoc basis and the decision-making process is not defined by the adults (Hart 1997). The GU partnership agreements that outline the decision-making process were developed by the community partners, whereas the TYC's constitution (that outlines the decision-making process) was developed by the members. Even though both organizations' interviewees stated that decisions are made by consensus (with a majority vote if consensus cannot be reached), the literature showed that decisions are, in fact, reached through different ways. Hart (1997) identified several models of decision-making: authoritarianism (where the decision rests on one person or small group), delegation of

responsibility (authoritarianism combined with democracy), random choice, direct democracy (everyone votes, majority rules), representative democracy (where representatives are elected through votes), and consensus. Three interviewees stated that their network GURLs made the decisions (*c, d, b*), so it seems like it is a more authoritarian system. However, two GU interviewees stated that the community partners would listen to what the GURLs had decided, but at times over-ruled it with their own ideas (*c, G*), so therefore it was authoritarianism with decisions made by the adults. At the GURLs and Network 1 meetings, my participant observation does reflect that the decisions were made by consensus (even though Network 1 consults the GURLs first before discussing it further all together). However, Hart (1997) does make the point that consensus does not mean that everyone agrees, and that the process silences those who are against the decisions. Both points are supported by my participant observation.

Similar to GU, the decisions in the TYC are made through consensus (and voting if consensus cannot be reached). However, according to Hart (1997), since the Executives are voted in by the General members and as such make decisions for TYC, the Executive members make decisions through representative democracy. One pitfall with this method is that there are a limited number of people the members can vote into the positions, which means that the elected are not necessarily representative of the people (Hart, 1997). In the past, the TYC referred to the TYC Operational Structure document, which clearly stated that the decision-making power was given to the Steering Committee. However, the meeting minutes reflect that informally, decisions were made through consultations with the 'General' members. In fact, when organizations wanted to be endorsed or sponsored by the TYC they made presentations at the 'General'

membership meetings. From my participant observation of both meetings, however, it seems that decision-making has become more centralized with the Executives (or those who attend the Executive meetings, such as other youth organizations and 'General' members and external organizations go to these meetings instead.

The literature reflects that if empowerment is to be genuine, the marginalized need to be provided sufficient resources (i.e., staff support and training) to make informed decisions and actions (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Arnstein, 1969). The data results reflect that the GU is provided substantial staff support (youth workers) and community partners to provide guidance and to help facilitate the event planning. In addition, GU has received grants and in-kind resources (facilities, staff, trainers etc.) from the partnering agencies. The TYC is housed in City Hall and are also provided funds, staff and in-kind resources from City Hall. Currently, however, they have only one TYC Coordinator.³³² The TYC also receives grants and sponsorships from outside organizations.

If the youth are truly being empowered, the youth should perceive a level of ownership over their program, event, or initiative (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Interestingly, the data results showed that for anyone (GU community partners, TYC youth or GU youth) to have felt ownership over the projects, one of the following factors had to have been in play: (i) they were involved in all three aspects of planning, implementation and evaluation; (ii) they invested a lot of time and resources; (iii) the size of the project, event, or initiative mattered (i.e., a larger project generally meant reduced

³³² Although one interviewee did state that the TYC members have access to other City Staff and the Youth Advocate (o).

ownership). All but one GURL and one TYC member felt some sort of ownership. The two who did not feel ownership were the only ones not involved in all three aspects.

Comparing the results to the level of participation adapted by the TYC focus group members (see Chapter IV: Sub-Problem #2), overall the GURLs are being engaged at 'Placation' (level of tokenism), because even though they are provided ample staff and training support, they are not being engaged as equal partners in all the networks. They did not determine the decision-making processes, nor did they make decisions regarding their participation in the events (or even initiate the events). The GURLs do not really have a equal decision-making power or responsibilities over the programs or events nor are they provided as many opportunities to be part of the decision-making process (some networks do not engage youth at their network meetings where decisions are made). However, some areas do engage the youth more at a "Partnership Level" (Network 1 and GURLs Citywide meeting), because the youth are given opportunities to delegate to adults and have a lot of responsibilities when planning and implementing. In general, it is still very much adult-driven, and the interview and documents reflected that final decisions are still made by the community partners. However, these youth are younger and perhaps not looking for more responsibility; they have stated that they are happy with their experience in GU (*G, H, F, I*).

According to the level of participation framework (that was adapted by the TYC focus group members), the TYC members are being engaged at "Delegated Power". Although in the past the events or initiatives were initiated by City Council, they are now youth-initiated and the youth have the power to reject recommendations made by staff. It is mostly the youth who do all the planning, implementing, and evaluation (except for

when they solicit help from staff), and they are provided or facilitate training themselves. Partnerships are formed with other youth, and they delegate power among themselves (create new Executive positions etc.) and for the adults (i.e., choose how involved they want adults to be). The TYC members are not being engaged at “Youth in Control” level yet because they are still a big part of City Hall (funded, housed, and supported by City staff); thus, they do not have the full decision-making power to decide whether or not to involve adults. Overall, I get the sense that these members would like to have more control and independence.

Who is Engaged

The documents and interview results of both organizations showed that similar youth groups were under-represented among those who are participants in the GU and TYC programs and services. These included youth who were low-income, first generation youth (youth who are newcomers to Canada), and youth of colour (specifically Aboriginal, Black, Filipino). There were some demographics identified as under-represented in GU programs and events and these included older youth (over the age of 15), youth who have a strong affiliation with a religious group, youth from cultures who do not like sweating, female youth with family obligations, youth with different interests, youth who are differently-abled, disconnected youth³³³ and youth who are disinterested in physical activity. The TYC also had additional groups of youth who were under-represented in their initiatives and events; these included youth living in priority neighbourhoods and younger-aged youth.

³³³ Disconnected youth are youth who are not affiliated with any (or very few) youth organizations (including school, community centers etc.).

According to the literature, the purpose of youth engagement is to empower those who are marginalized. Those who do not have equal access to resources need to be included in decision-making processes because it is their right as citizens and they are then more able to address their needs and issues to better enhance programs and services (City of Toronto, 2004b; United Nations, 1989; Driskell, 2002l; Arnstein, 1969; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Hart, 1992; United Nations, 1992). Both GU's and TYC's interviewees agreed that that the purpose of Toronto's youth engagement initiative was to enhance youth services. When looking at the history of these case study organizations, both were created to enhance youth services, realizing that certain youth are continuously marginalized from programs and services which can only be enhanced through youth engagement. Even though the initial idea of youth civic engagement (eventually creating the TYC) was sparked by Toronto's increasing youth violence and unemployment, strengthening the youth voice, advocating on behalf of youth, and engaging youth to ensure that Toronto's services address all youth issues are the missions of the TYC. GU may have been started to increase the physical activity level of female youth, but its short history has shown that the organization has recently realized the importance of engaging youth in the decision-making process in order to really enhance these services and programs. Both organizations' interviewees felt that their organization's (GU or TYC) mission included enhancing youth services (whether it is physical activity or on a broader scale, social services etc.) through youth engagement. As well, when the TYC and GU interviewees were asked what the benefits of youth engagement were, almost all the interviewees agreed that it would enhance youth services. Based on the literature, the under-represented (marginalized) groups who are currently not able to participate in

GU's and TYC's programs, services, events, and/or initiatives, should be represented in the decision-making processes.

Unfortunately, the data results of both organizations support the literature in that these marginalized groups are not being represented at the decision-making table.

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and Laidlaw Foundation (2003) both conducted studies and came to the same conclusion – that natural leaders or 'over achievers' are those who are being engaged. Three interviewees recognized that it is the youth who have the leadership experience already and are already involved in other organizations who are being engaged. The data results for both organizations showed that those who are under-represented (out of those who are engaged and involved in the decision-making process) in their organizations are very similar to those who are under-represented in their programs, services, events, and/or initiatives.

Both organizations identified that those who were not engaged as members in their organization had the following characteristics and attitudes:

1. Young mothers
2. Disconnected youth (youth who are not already affiliated with another youth organization or youth serving organization)
3. Low-income youth (including youth who have jobs; live in community housing; street-involved youth; living in the priority neighbourhoods)
4. Youth with different interests (i.e., from volunteerism, leadership roles, physical activity or politics)
5. Youth of colour (Aboriginal, Black, Persian, Muslim etc.)
6. The extreme ends of the age spectrum (for GU the older and younger youth and for TYC the younger youth)

TYC interviewees identified several youth characteristics and attitudes that were missing, including aggressive and patient youth and female youth.³³⁴ For the GURLs specifically, they identified shy youth, differently-abled youth, youth with strong religious affiliations, and youth who are inexperienced in leadership positions. These are very significant results because it explains why these specific youth groups are not participating in the organization's programs, services, events, or initiatives. As the literature stated, marginalized people understand their own situation best and will be able to create strategies and structures that better suit them (Driskell, 2002). Therefore, the youth groups who are under-represented as participants in GU's or TYC's programs and services should be engaged as policy-makers at their table.

Another unfortunate outcome from having the same groups under-represented in youth engagement, is that these youth organizations (especially the high profile ones) get a disproportionate share of the resources for youth and thus further marginalize the youth who do not get a say in where these resources are invested (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). The data results support this concern, as the in-kind and monetary support both of these organizations received is decided by a very limited number of youth, most of whom are not representative of those who are marginalized. Currently there are nine GURLs who 'decide' how the money and in-kind resources will be used in the networks and citywide events. Though I would agree with the interviewees that it is difficult to be representative of Toronto's population, their vast numbers of partners and resources do not seem to be used effectively if marginalized female youth are still not participating in the events and

³³⁴ There was a contradiction in this area. One TYC interviewee believed there was an equal ratio of female to male Executives, while the other interviewee believed that there were fewer females than males. My participant observation shows that there was an equal ratio; however, I do not know how many were members or guests (PO H).

programs. The same goes with the TYC, which is provided with an incredible amount of resources from City Hall (both monetary and in-kind). In addition, being part of City Hall has legitimized their organization and they have received grants and/or sponsorships to host their events or support their initiatives. One of their grants requires that they engage those who live in the priority neighbourhoods; however, my data results indicate there is not a current record being kept of the demographics of those either participating or being engaged by the TYC.

Conclusion

The TYC focus group members expanded upon youth engagement methods, and added two additional methods ('edutainment' and 'recreation and leisure'). According to the literature and data results, both GU and TYC use many different methods to engage youth. TYC and GU use consultation methods to engage youth who are not part of their respective organizations. In addition, TYC uses 'edutainment' to engage youth in schools and communities and at TYC events. GU engages its GURLs through 'Youth Leadership' while the TYC is an example of 'Youth Organizing' and/or 'Youth Council'. The TYC focus group members made adjustments to the 'Levels of Participation' framework by combining aspects from Arnstein (1969) and Hart (1992). Based on the framework, the GURLs are engaged at 'Placation Level' while the TYC members are engaged at the 'Delegated Power Level'. The data results revealed that those who are under-represented in each of the organization's programs and services are similar to those who are under-represented among the youth the organizations engage in decision-making. The literature and data results identify that the purpose of youth engagement is to get a local level of understanding of the barriers to accessing youth services. If

organizations do not engage those who are marginalized, it limits the organization's understanding of the needs and barriers that marginalized groups experience when accessing the services provided.

Sub-Problem#3

What recommendations should be made to enhance youth engagement so that physical activity services for marginalized youth are improved?

Introduction

In this section, the barriers and recommendations identified by the literature are compared to the GU and TYC data results to provide a comprehensive view of the each of the organization's strengths, barriers/challenges, and recommendations. In terms of youth engagement, the table identifies which barriers and recommendations in the literature were also discussed in each of the organizations. If the literature review identified the same barrier or recommendation as either one of the organizations, it was signified with a check mark. There were instances where one or both of the organizations had already addressed a barrier that was discussed in the literature. There were also instances where the organization already implemented the recommendation discussed in the literature. These instances were perceived as strengths for the organization and be signified as '☺'. However, there were barriers and recommendations that the literature had identified and one or both of the organizations had not identified -- this was signified with a '-'. Similar to the data results, the barriers and recommendations were first discussed as 'Barriers and Recommendations to Youth Engagement'. The barriers and recommendations to meaningful youth engagement were discussed in the second section in relation to literature. Both sections were separated into categories: organizational,

intergenerational and youth related. Similar to the data results, the recommendations were placed immediately following the barriers identified by either the literature and/or the data results.

Strengths, Barriers and Recommendations to Youth Engagement

Organizational Related	GU	TYC
<i>Outreach Barriers</i>		
Lack of resources to provide youth engagement opportunities (Mathews, 2001b).	✓ ³³⁵	☺ ³³⁶
Lack of resources to outreach to as many youth as they would like (TYC).	☺ ³³⁷	✓
Community partners are not following through with their outreach responsibilities (GU).	✓	-
The website is not 'youth friendly' and unable to change the appearance of the website because of City of Toronto domain web standards (GU). ³³⁸	✓	-
Unable to recruit as many youth to organization (GU and TYC).	✓	✓
<i>Outreach Recommendations</i>		
Extend outreach to anywhere youth hang out (i.e., bus shelters, youth shelters, parties etc.) and do not just limit it to community centers and schools (GU and TYC)	✓	☺ ³³⁹
To show respect to youth culture, incorporate hip hop in the outreach strategy (Listen, 2003).	-	☺ ³⁴⁰
Organizations should provide more youth engagement opportunities (Mathews, 2001).	☺ ³⁴¹	☺ ³⁴²
Create an external website that is not part of the City of Toronto domain so that that the youth can make the changes they want (GU).	✓	-
Remind the partners of their responsibilities to outreach to the youth (GU).	✓	-
<i>Application Barriers</i>		
Non-democratic application process will reinforce cliques (Fitzpatrick et al, 2003)	✓	☺ ³⁴³

³³⁵ Even though the networks are told to engage all youth who are interested in volunteering, only one organization has created this space (the GURL support group) and only the GURLs are provided honoraria.

³³⁶ The TYC has an open 'General' membership where any number of youth can join the TYC. In addition, the TYC has been expanding its Executives positions as well as creating new TYC teams.

³³⁷ This issue has already been addressed because GU has formed partnerships so that resources and access to youth can be shared. For example, the community partners are responsible for putting up posters and flyers around the community (in schools, library, community agencies etc.).

³³⁸ 'Youth friendly' in this case means that youth will not find the website appealing and thus will be disinterested in looking at the website.

³³⁹ TYC does outreach in the isolated communities through their 'Youth Speak Outs'. In addition they use 'edutainment' to recruit youth at schools.

³⁴⁰ The TYC interviews revealed that hip hop is used in their outreach strategy in schools and at their youth events (i.e., the Cause).

³⁴¹ GU has looked at trying to expand youth engagement opportunities (by allowing non GURLs to attend the meetings). In addition, one of the Networks has created a GURL support committee.

³⁴² The TYC has created a newsletter to create another avenue for youth to be part of TYC and voice their issues.

The application criteria (i.e., previous leadership experience, attended mandatory training sessions) may prevent youth from applying for the position (GU).	☺ ³⁴⁴	✓
An unclear application process makes it harder for youth to join the organization (TYC).	-	✓
<i>Application Recommendations</i>		
The selection process should be clear and transparent to youth and similar to an election process (Hart, 1997). ³⁴⁵	☺ ³⁴⁶	✓
The roles and responsibilities of the youth should be clear to both the youth and support staff (GU).	✓	-
Positions should not include the word 'leader' so it does not discourage those who do not feel like they are 'leaders' (Ilkiw, 2007).	-	-
Provide opportunities for youth to gain experience in event planning before being engaged (GU).	✓	-
<i>Meeting Location and Schedule Barriers</i>		
Travel time to meeting location is too long (GU and TYC)	✓ ³⁴⁷	✓
Finding safe transportation to meetings is difficult for youth (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000)	☺ ³⁴⁸	✓ ³⁴⁹
Meeting location was too small for the number of people who attended the meetings (TYC).	-	✓
Access to the meeting floors was difficult for those who did not have elevator passes (TYC).	-	✓
Meetings start late because people arrive late to the meetings (GU and TYC)	✓	✓
Meetings are not hosted during 'youth friendly hours' (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000)	✓ ³⁵⁰	☺
Too many meetings have been scheduled for the youth (GU) and meetings are overlapping, thus you cannot be engaged attend both meetings (GU and TYC)	✓	✓
<i>Recommendations to Meeting Locations and Schedule Barriers</i>		

³⁴³ The data results reflect that only the 'General' membership is self-selected. However because it is open to all youth from all across Toronto and there is no limit to how many can join, it will not reinforce cliques. In addition, the Executive membership process is democratic.

³⁴⁴ GU provided March Break training to try to ensure that youth applying for the GURLs positions would have the same skill sets. However, two interviewees stated that some youth were not able to attend the training session because of its location.

³⁴⁵ In the literature, it was assumed that the youth selection process would be facilitated by adults and therefore listed under Intergenerational Recommendations to Youth Engagement. However, the TYC data results show that the youth selection process is facilitated by the TYC members, therefore it has been placed under Application Recommendations to Youth Engagement.

³⁴⁶ Network 1 created a GURL Selection Committee package to outline the application process to ensure that it was clear and standard. In addition, the GU Steering committee created a standard selection process for all the networks to follow.

³⁴⁷ GU has tried to address this issue by hosting network meetings, however the data results show that the GURLs are still required to travel to downtown Toronto twice a month. As well as the networks are still too large and travel time is still an issue.

³⁴⁸ GU community partners are responsible for ensuring that the GURLs have safe transportation to and from the meetings. In addition, the GURLs are provided TTC tokens.

³⁴⁹ The TYC provides TTC tokens but still realizes that youth need to have at least one to get to the meeting before being reimbursed.

³⁵⁰ Only Network 1 and the citywide GURL meetings host their meetings during 'youth friendly' hours. However, there are additional difficulties because the community partners run after-school programs and cannot attend meetings during after-school hours.

Move to meeting locations that are more convenient to youth (GU and TYC)	✓	✓
Different communication methods should be used (such as electronic mail and instant messaging) (GU)	☺ ³⁵¹	-
Make the current meeting location more 'youth friendly' (TYC). ³⁵²	-	✓
Post up meeting schedule and up-to-date meeting minutes on-line to reduce meeting overlap (TYC).	-	✓
Reduce the number of meetings and ask the youth how many they would like to attend (GU)	☺ ³⁵³	-
Make the meeting at 'youth friendly' meeting times to accommodate not only those who are in school but those who have other extra-curricular activities and jobs (TYC and GU).	✓	✓

Even though the literature did not identify many barriers related to the outreach process, the data results reflect that they do exist. Both organizations recognized they had a problem with lack of resources. Since the literature reflected that the adults implemented the selection process it was initially placed under the 'Intergenerational' barriers; however, since one of the organizations has youth recruiting youth, it is now located under 'Organizational Related'. Even though both organizations provided TTC tickets and food to participate in the training and/or meetings, the data results reflect that both organizations have barriers due to their application process. The TYC had its own specific barriers due to meeting location. Interviewees recognized that City Hall is not perceived as a 'youth friendly' place and may discourage youth from joining. The data results showed that even though all the meeting locations are accessible by TTC and car, travel time is an issue for both organizations because both organizations host their main youth meetings in downtown Toronto.

Intergenerational Relationships	GU	TYC
<i>Intergenerational Barriers</i>	GU	TYC
Adults perceive youth as incapable of electing peer leaders, so adults select the youth (Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.)	✓	☺ ³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Electronic mail and instant messaging have been used to include the GURLs, who were unable to attend the meeting, into the decision-making process.

³⁵² In this case 'youth friendly' mean more welcoming to youth.

³⁵³ Upon request of the GURLs, the citywide meetings have been reduced from once a week to once every two weeks.

Parents(s) or guardian(s) may not feel comfortable allowing his/her/their youth to join youth organizations (TYC).	☺ ³⁵⁵	✓
Adults feel that it is their responsibility to direct and control youth and thus do not provide the opportunities to engage youth (Hart, 1992; Mathews, 2001b; Mullahey et al., 1999; Driskell, 2002; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).	☺ ³⁵⁶	☺
Adults who are not empowered themselves may find it difficult to understand the importance of empowering youth (Hart, 1992)	-	-
<i>Intergenerational Recommendations</i>		
Adults need to realize that youth are important stakeholders and should provide youth with opportunities to be engaged in the decision-making processes (Mathews, 2001b).	☺	☺
Involve the adults into the youth engagement process so that they can be supportive to youth empowerment and do so in a manner that is consistent with their cultural background (Hart, 1992)	-	-

With the exception of one barrier that was identified by a TYC interviewee (located under “Youth Related: Age-related Barriers”), the data results of both organizations did not identify any intergenerational barriers, even though the literature raised various concerns in this area. This difference could be due to the fact that the literature was written five to ten years ago, and youth engagement has become much more mainstream. Thus, adults now realize that youth need to be engaged and are providing youth with engagement opportunities; organizations like TYC and GU are now much more common.

Youth Related	GU	TYC
<i>Disconnected Youth Barriers</i>		
Youth who live in marginalized communities have difficulty trusting organizations (Wyllie, 1999; Arnstein, 1969; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998)	-	✓
Volunteerism is perceived as ‘uncool’ to youth and therefore youth will not apply (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998).	-	☺ ³⁵⁷
<i>Disconnected Youth Recommendations</i>		

³⁵⁴ For the ‘General’ membership, the TYC application process is self-selected and for the Executive membership, youth are elected by the TYC members. In addition, the TYC members created the Election protocol (the rules and regulations for the TYC election process).

³⁵⁵ The GU community partners were asked to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) explaining the roles and responsibilities of the GURLs.

³⁵⁶ Both organizations were initiated by adults, thus reflecting that adults in these organizations recognize the value of engaging youth and have provided space.

³⁵⁷ The data results from neither organization agreed with the literature in stating that youth perceive volunteerism as ‘uncool’. I believe it is because of the hip hop has been incorporated into the outreach process and changed the image of volunteerism to being more mainstream and very ‘cool’.

Build partnerships with organizations that have already built trust with marginalized youth groups (TYC)	-	✓
Youth who have drug addictions, family violence and psychological problems will have difficulty in becoming engaged (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).	✓ ³⁵⁸	✓
Youth Attitudes Barriers		
Shy youth are not comfortable with communicating with others (GU)	✓	-
Youth who have low self-esteem will not have the confidence to join organizations to become engaged (Hart, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998)	- ³⁵⁹	-
Youth Attitude Recommendations		
The organization should provide an environment that will nurture self-esteem (Hart, 1992; Mathews, 2001b).	😊 ³⁶⁰	
Gender Related Barriers		
Female youth are provided fewer opportunities to be empowered because they are perceived as the “other” (Hart, 1992; Hart 1997; Youth Participation Challenges, n.d.).	😊 ³⁶¹	-
Gender roles may be enforced (especially in low-income families) and female youth have less free time to be engaged because they have more family responsibilities (i.e., domestics chores and baby-sitting siblings) (Hart, 1997).	✓	-
Young mothers have fewer opportunities to be engaged (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Organizations do not provide childcare (GU)	✓	-
Female Muslim youth cannot interact with males after puberty has been reached (Fitzpatrick et al., 1997).	😊 ³⁶²	-
Gender Related Recommendations		
Provide quality childcare	✓	-
Create partnerships with agencies that connect with young mothers (i.e., day-care and health centers) (GU)	😊	-
Youth with Different Interests Barriers		
Youth who are disinterested in the formal political processes (Mathews, 2001b; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000)	-	✓ ³⁶³
Youth who are highly physically competitive (GU)	✓	-
Young mothers are not interested in the organization (GU).	✓	
Issue-based work prevents the organization from being more flexible to the immediate youth issues (TYC).	-	✓
Recommendations to Youth with Different Interests		
Outreach should include the benefits of being engaged (TYC).	✓	
Identify youth’s interests and motivations to be engaged and incorporate the findings (Laidlaw, 2000; Driskell, 2002) into the organization’s missions	-	😊 ³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸ Both organizations recognized that street youth and youth living in priority neighbourhoods face barriers to youth engagement.

³⁵⁹ The data results from GU and the TYC did not support the literature, however if the majority of those who are engaged are ‘over-achievers’ and confident people then this is a barrier that should be addressed.

³⁶⁰ One GURL interviewee discussed how the community partners provide a very supportive environment that helped her overcome her shyness.

³⁶¹ GU is an organization that specifically targets and provides female youth with youth engagement opportunities.

³⁶² GU is an exclusive girls-only youth engagement program where only female youth are engaged in the decision-making process and participate in the programs and events.

³⁶³ It was identified by interviewees that youth may not be interested in the political focus of the TYC nor in the formal decision-making process.

Expand the mission of the organization to include all youth aspects (including different levels of government as well as non-political issues) (TYC).	-	✓
Youth who are Differently-abled Barriers		
Youth who are differently-abled are perceived as incapable of handling the additional stress of being engaged (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).	-	-
Recommendations to Engage Differently-abled Youth		
Partner with organizations that work with differently-abled youth (GU)	☺	
Cultural and Socio-economic Barriers ³⁶⁵		
Youth who have to work do not have the time and/or interest to become engaged (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.)	☺	✓
Youth from low-income backgrounds have less freedom to be engaged because the family structure is more authoritarian and obedience is valued rather than equal decision-making power between adults and youth (Hart, 1992).	-	-
For youth who grow up in a class driven culture, (s)he may not be allowed to interact with those who are in a different class group (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).	-	-
Youth who do not have the money or access (transportation and internet) to attend meetings or find out about the organization (TYC).	-	✓
Youth who do not live in safe neighbourhoods and are not comfortable walking home late after the meetings (TYC). ³⁶⁶	-	✓
Cultural and Socio-economic Recommendations		
The methods used to engage youth should be flexible to accommodate for their diverse cultural needs (Mathews, 2001b; Hart, 1997; Mullahey, et al., 1999; Driskell, 2002).	-	-
Various youth engagement methods (besides youth councils) should be used to engage youth (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998)	-	☺ ³⁶⁷
Either make some positions paid or provide honoraria (TYC) that match income of part-time jobs (GU).	✓	✓
Engage younger youth who most likely will not have jobs (GU)	✓	-
Age Related Barriers		
Youth in school (especially grade 12s and university students) do not have time to be engaged (GU and TYC).	✓	☺
Older youth have jobs and home responsibilities (GU)	✓	
Older youth do not know about the organizations (GU)	✓	☺
Parents of younger youth are concerned and will not allow them to be engaged (TYC)	☺	-
Age Related Recommendations		
Each GU network should coordinate and ensure that each age group is being represented among the GURLs (GU)	✓	-

³⁶⁴ TYC goes out into the communities and host Youth Speak Outs to identify the youth issues that the TYC needs to address.

³⁶⁵ The literature in this area was vague. Several authors recognized that cultural and socio-economic factors can act as barriers (Ross, 2005; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Hart, 1997; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Driskell, 2002)

³⁶⁶ This can also be a barrier caused by the meeting schedule, because they extend late into the night.

³⁶⁷ Even though the TYC is a youth council, the data results reflect that the TYC uses different methods to engage its TYC 'General' members and non-TYC members, including youth consultations (Youth Speak Outs) and conferences.

The literature reflected many more youth characteristic and attitude barriers than organizational barriers. However, from the data results and the ‘Organizational Related’ barriers analysis, the impact that youth related barriers have on facilitating or acting as barriers to youth engagement is very dependent on the organization’s structure (meetings, mission, and youth engagement process). The literature review did not discuss the barrier of age, and thus the data results extended the literature. Interestingly, the age barriers were different for each case study, which again supported the need for case study analysis to identify the organization’s unique barriers. The literature did not directly identify shy or disconnected youth as being a barrier to engagement, but did discuss the barriers for those who have low self-esteem. While the literature was quite broad with the barriers, the interview and document results were able to be more specific. I think the reason the interviewees and documents identified more specific examples of barriers was because a few of the interviewees happened to be representative of those marginalized groups – low-income, visible minorities, females etc.³⁶⁸ However, similar to the literature, there were no specific examples provided for the areas in which the interviewees did not have direct experience (such as differently-abled).³⁶⁹

Conclusion

The data results expanded on the literature about barriers and recommendations to youth engagement. Even though the TYC and GU have a comparable number of organizational related strengths and barriers, some of the strengths and barriers evident in the GU were found in the TYC and vice versa. This emphasizes the importance of doing

³⁶⁸ As noted in methodology, because of the limited number of interviewees, I tried to gain a wide range of perspective by choosing interviewees from different visible minority groups.

³⁶⁹ There was one interviewee who indicated that (s)he had a very minor disability and stated that it did not affect his/her ability to be engaged at all.

case study analysis to identify the specific strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations. This table will be used to facilitate the discussions with the GU and TYC members. The organization should continue to take the actions that are indicated by the ‘☺’, while addressing barriers they have identified and considering barriers and/or recommendations that are not linked to their organization, to see if they might have relevance.

Strengths, Barriers, and Recommendations to Meaningful Youth Engagement

The literature identified the barriers to meaningful youth engagement and these were divided into three different categories: organizational, intergenerational, and youth related. The literature reflected that there were many more intergenerational and organizational barriers to meaningful youth engagement and the data results supported this.

Organizational Related

The majority of the organizational barriers identified were due to meetings. The literature stated that the organization’s decision-making processes are time consuming and complicated (Mathews, 2001b; Fitzpatrick et al., 2003). This is supported by the data results, which identified that the decision-making process takes too long. The TYC meetings go for four hours (sometimes without breaks), and issues are discussed for too long (I observed one issue being discussed for almost an hour).

The GU and TYC documents and interviews did not directly support the issue about the organizations developing projects quickly and haphazardly (Mathews, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998), however it is evident that this is a risk for GU because their funding structure is based on grants they receive. In 2006, under the grant conditions, each network had to host an event before December, otherwise they would lose the

funding. Three events were eventually hosted in December and the interviews reflect that it was a really busy time for the GURLs and they felt overwhelmed.

The GU and TYC interviewees do reflect that there has been staff turnover (for the TYC Coordinator position and the GU community partners), however the interviewees did not identify how this would act as a barrier. The literature and documents were able to expand on it, stating that there is nobody to follow-up with the youth to ensure their youth engagement experience remains meaningful (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.).

The literature and the data results identified that unclear roles and responsibilities for both staff and youth is a barrier to meaningful youth engagement (Mathews, 2003; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998) because the data results showed that it impacts the amount of support the youth receive. The TYC data results showed that unclear roles and responsibilities have deprived the Council of leadership and accountability from the Executives to the 'General' members. Both Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and Mathews (2001b) stated vaguely that the participatory processes of youth councils do not meaningfully engage youth. The TYC documents support this, as there is increasingly less accountability to and involvement of, the 'General' membership. However, the data results reflect that the TYC is currently working to address this issue.

Although Mathews (2001) and Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) believe there are many flaws to the youth council structure (including their methods of engagement), the data results showed that the TYC has many opportunities for at least the current members to be engaged genuinely, by allowing the members to choose which youth driven events or initiatives they would like to be involved in planning, implementing or evaluating. As

well, the Executives (for the most part) are elected democratically. However, the TYC data results do agree with Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) that in youth councils there still does not seem to be any true accountability to the broader youth who the council is supposedly representing.

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) discussed the difficulties linked to making decisions in meetings. They identified barriers due to unfamiliarity with the political process and the data results support this matter. Both the TYC and GU do not have consistent decision-making processes. GU and TYC participant observations and interviewees state that decisions occur through consensus; however, I found that in each meeting there were those who were completely silent and not voicing their opinions. It was not clear how consensus was determined. Sometimes there would be voting and other times it was decided by the most vocal person.

The biggest issue with the TYC meetings (identified from the documents, participant observation, and interviews) are the lengthy late Executive meetings. The meetings start at least a half an hour late to an hour later, and end around 10:30pm to 11:30pm. There are members who take too much time talking on one issue. In addition they make decisions through “motions” that are sometimes used and sometimes not. The literature supports this, identifying that long decisions-making processes hamper the meaningful experience (Mathews, 2001b; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). One interviewee stated that the TYC members are forced into a process about which they neither understand nor can relate. This is supported by the findings of Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) that the youth do not understand the political decision-making process. This acts as a

barrier, because not everyone participates in the process: voices are ignored and decisions are made by those who are able to articulate and understand the process the best.

The literature indirectly and vaguely discusses how bureaucracy can act as barriers (Mathews, 2001b; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). However, the TYC and GU documents and interviews were able to identify specific examples of how bureaucracy acts as a barrier to meaningful youth engagement. GU has many different community partners, who each have their own agenda and potentially conflicting agendas. This makes it harder to ensure that the GURLs ideas and initiatives are respected and carried out. Neither the TYC members nor their documents identified any bureaucratic barriers. This could be because the youth are empowered to make most of the decisions (with the exception of how much of the budget they receive from CYAC and who gets hired for the Staff Coordinator position).

Another barrier to meaningful youth engagement that the literature did not discuss was the training schedule. Out of the four GURLs I interviewed, two of the GURLs who had been recently engaged in the organization (within the last six months) missed out on the March Break Training and have not received as much training as the others.

The data results for TYC and GU also revealed that there were barriers to meaningful youth engagement due to lack of resources. This was something that was not discussed by the literature. Both GU and TYC documents and interviews revealed that the youth are not able to follow through with their initiatives because of either budget cuts or limited resources (staff and monetary).

Hart (1997) discussed how the consensus approach in decision-making tends to silence those who disagree because they just want the decision to be made. This is

supported by my participant observations with both organizations, as there were members who rarely voiced their opinions; decisions were instead made by the most vocal people.

Unlike the literature review, the recommendations identified in the data results were specific to the organization. This is possible because they are being made by the youth and adults who are involved in the process and understand exactly what areas need to be improved. There were some broad recommendations identified by both organizations, such as ensuring that the youth's roles and responsibilities were clear and transparent. However, there were also some recommendations that addressed the organization's specific barriers. For example, the TYC members were able to identify that the members needed to be cognizant of the time and be more inclusive in their discussions. This was suggested by creating a timeline in the agenda and utilizing the voting process more often to ensure everyone gets a voice. For GU, the data results identified that further decentralizing the decision-making process was needed and the networks should be divided into community area groups (which would have their own meetings).

Intergenerational Relationships

Mathews (2001b), Arnstein (1969), and Hart (1992) discussed the problems that adults have in letting go of decision-making power and allowing the youth to take control of the process. Eight interviewees (including adults) recognized the inability of adults to let go of their decision-making power. This changed the youth's role from being equal decision-makers to youth who were consulted for their ideas, with the adults making the final decisions. The literature reflected that this could be due to adults perceiving youth as incapable and therefore not taking youth seriously (Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Mathews,

2001b; Driskell, 2002), instead considering them as future citizens who do not deserve to be fully engaged (Ross, 2005). The literature discussed how adults and the youth themselves perceive youth as future citizens (Ross, 2005; De Winter, 1997). The data results supported this finding; in fact, eight interviewees made references of youth being future citizens or future leaders. Ross (2005) had stated that only those who are considered present citizens will be empowered enough to fully participate in decision-making and governance. The interview results agreed with this and showed that some adults had low expectations of the youth.

Many of the partners are doing GU work during their work time because it is part of their job description, and thus they are seen as professionals, while the youth are seen and treated as volunteers, who only receive tokens of appreciation instead of getting paid for what they do. In addition, some youth interviewees felt that adults did not take them seriously and felt that adults perceived them more as a nuisance. This has limited them in how much they can do, such as participate in the network meetings or be provided more resources to implement youth programs or services.

The data results expanded on the literature, identifying that the adult to youth ratio can be intimidating (Hart, 1997; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000), by revealing that it has impacted the level of contribution that both youth and the young community partners have made in the meetings. The data analysis showed that only at the GURLs meetings (with the exception of four Network 1 meetings) is the ratio of youth to adult equal or youth dominated. GU's recommendations and actions agree with the literature, that at least three to four youth are needed to ensure a strong youth voice at the table (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

One barrier that was not discussed by the literature with respect to intergenerational relationships is the ‘over-expectation’. For Girls Unlimited, even though they are volunteers they are required to attend more meetings than the partners. TYC interviewees felt that the time commitment was too much and even discussed how their commitment affects their school grades. However, it is not only the adults who are driving the youth to take on more than they can handle; each organization is expected to provide large-sized events and initiatives for Toronto’s youth and that takes time and commitment to get it done.

In general, the data results agreed with the literature, suggesting that the roles and responsibilities are clear and transparent for both youth and adults so that decision-making power can be identified and shared (Driskell, 2002; Davis and Markham, 2000). Adults need to understand that the youth perspectives are important and thus they should empower the youth (Hart, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). Even though the literature did not directly identify adult to youth ratio as a barrier, the literature did recommend making the meetings smaller (Hart, 1997; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) with one on one meetings beforehand to problem solve (Hart, 1997). This latter part was supported by the data results as well, as the increased one-on-one mentorship opportunities between youth and adults would help to build more meaningful relationships. GU documents also revealed that GU has allowed the GURLs to bring their friends to the meetings to make the atmosphere more comfortable. In general the same recommendations were identified through data results of both GU and the TYC. The reason they are similar is because adults and youth will have a power relation dynamic regardless of which organization they are. As long as

there are unequal power relations, there will be existing power struggles that can be generalized to all organizations.

Youth Related

The TYC and GU documents and interviews revealed that even though there are barriers that are attributed to the organization or the adults, these barriers can also be due to individual characteristics and attitudes. These included being irresponsible and not following through with his/her commitments, having too many other commitments, being inexperienced, and personality conflicts. Similar to the literature, the data results showed no specific gender related barriers to meaningful youth engagement.

Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and Laidlaw Foundation (2000) supported the findings that there are turnovers among the youth, especially with the older youth who become more work oriented. The interviewees identified two barriers to meaningfully engaging older youth: heavier school responsibilities and leaving for University before the commitment was over. The literature had identified specific cultural barriers to meaningful youth engagement (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.), however the interviews and documents did not identify any specific barriers due to culture. This could be due to the fact that these research findings were in Asia; living in Canada, the cultural issues are not yet considered significant. If they do act as barriers, it is more likely to be evident earlier on in the engagement process, preventing the youth from being engaged in the first place.

The TYC interviewees identified a barrier that was preventing them from working with each other (i.e., between the youth) - the power struggle between the more experienced youth and those who are new to the organization. This was another barrier

that was not discussed in the literature review. One of the biggest things that impressed me about the TYC members was how articulate they were. Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) and Mullahey et al. (1999) discussed how youth may feel like they have to act like adults to be engaged meaningfully. Even though this was identified in the literature review as an intergenerational barrier, in the data results it was a youth related barrier. One of the TYC members felt that these members have forgotten that they are there for the youth; youth need to be able to understand what they are saying.

Even though it was not recognized by any of the TYC interviewees, through documents and participant observation I did discover that there are personality conflicts within the organization. With GU I did not notice this as much; the meetings were smaller, there were fewer youth and there was a general respect for the speaker. However, the TYC meetings were larger with more personality differences, and there were several instances of disrespectful behaviour. This result is partially supported by Hart (1997), who realized that youth's friendship 'change and the youth engagement methods should be flexible to accommodate the changes.

Mathews (2001b) and Hart (1997) made the broad, vague recommendation that the organization should be flexible to meet the diverse needs of the youth. The recommendations made by the GU and TYC interviewees were more specific to their own organization. For GU, the suggestion was that the community partners constantly communicate with youth. With the TYC, the suggestion was that they enforce the 'Participation Policy' and conduct progress reports. Again, because these interviewees are more aware of what is going on in their organization, they can identify more specific recommendations. Another recommendation from both organizations agreed with the

literature (Driskell, 2002), which stated that the conflicts need to be handled with impersonal and constructive criticism.

Training

The literature on training reflected that it was important to train adults in how to engage youth (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) and how to communicate with youth (Youth Participation: Challenges, n.d.; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000). The GU data results expanded it to include anti-oppression training (how to be more inclusive and be cognizant of the power struggles), grant writing, networking, and how to facilitate training. The TYC interviewees felt that the City Staff and Councillors should also receive a TYC orientation to have a better understanding about what they do and how the organization operates. What was interesting in these data results was that only a few interviewees and documents, and only two of the literature review documents suggested that adults require additional training. Instead, many of the interviewees and some of the literature indicated that staff are/should be chosen based on their previous experience working with youth and the relevant skill sets they already have (Driskell, 2002; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000).

In contrast to this, many of the researchers (Hart, 1997; Davies & Markham, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000) and all the interviewees recommended that the youth be provided with additional training. The literature suggested training on decision-making methods (Hart, 1997), on how organizational and community structures work (Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Davies & Markham, 2000), and on policy making (Davies & Markham, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998). Neither of the organizations recommended training on decision-making or policy-making. This could

be because the decision-making process has already been determined and policy-making is outside the scope of both organizations, although the political focus of TYC suggests that policy training should be included. The GU interviewees and documents provided several more training recommendations, possibly because there have been many meetings used to discuss what additional training they would like to receive.

Conclusion

The data results were able to expand on the literature and identify specific organizational, intergenerational, and youth related barriers to meaningful youth engagement for each organization. This conclusion reinforces the need for a case study analysis to effectively identify the unique strengths and barriers to meaningful youth engagement. This allows for recommendations to be generated that will enhance the strengths and address the particular barriers of that organization.

Chapter VI: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This thesis explores how an organization's capacity can be constructed to enhance youth engagement when addressing barriers to physical activity services. To explore this question, a critical case study analysis was conducted on Toronto Youth Cabinet and Girls Unlimited. The research design involved three sub-problems: what is the history of youth engagement (as well as differentiating between youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement) through a case study analysis of Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet; what are the different methods and levels of youth engagement for these organizations; and what are the strengths, barriers, and recommendations for youth engagement.

The documents (i.e., meeting minutes, programs and services outlines) of both GU and TYC were analyzed. I conducted interviews with 9 GU key stakeholders (youth, TPH staff, and community partners), 5 TYC stakeholders (youth and TYC coordinator), and the Laidlaw Youth Engagement Coordinator. In addition, I conducted participant observation over a period of one month at GU (each network, Steering Committee, and Citywide GURLs) and TYC (two TYC Executive and one 'General' membership) meetings. As well, I conducted focus groups with eight TYC members (two females and six males). Data results were analyzed to see how they agreed with, contradicted, and extended the literature, as well addressed each sub-problem.

Conclusion

In sub-problem one, interviewees defined youth engagement as a process for engaging youth in decision-making as part of a continuum of youth engagement methods,

and as the concept of empowering youth to be equal decision-makers. What makes youth engagement meaningful is individually determined and cannot be assumed broadly for all youth, however, similar aspects can be found from those who are engaged in the same organization. Both organizations were founded in response to perceived youth inadequacies (i.e., low physical activity levels or high youth crime rate). GU now engages youth on a consistent basis and provides youth leadership development opportunities. The TYC has moved away from focusing on enhancing youth services in marginalized areas, to now addressing all youth issues including advocating at City Hall and providing civic engagement opportunities for other youth.

The focus group refined the levels and methods of youth engagement frameworks generated from existing literature, which was then used to identify the methods and levels of each organization. Each organization's structure and youth engagement processes affect the levels and methods at which its youth are engaged. Results suggest that the GURLs were being engaged through 'Youth Leadership', as they were provided with leadership and capacity building opportunities. The data results showed that the TYC members were being engaged through 'Youth Organizing', which encompasses youth development, youth leadership, and civic engagement components.

Even though the GU community partners provided some positive support to the GURLs, critical analysis of the data results suggests that the GURLs were being engaged at a level of 'Placation'. The GURLs are not empowered as equal decision-makers at the table yet, and generally have not been invited to the meetings where the final decisions are made. Although the GURLs have been provided with training, this does not mean they have been provided with adequate resources to make informed decisions. TYC was

found to be engaged at the level of 'Delegated Power'. The youth were empowered enough to be able to delegate power to the adults (the TYC Coordinator) and to the other youth (TYC members), and to initiate partnerships with other organizations. The results suggest that those who are under-represented in each of the organization's programs and services are likewise under-represented among the youth the organizations engaged in decision-making within the organization. As a result, certain youth groups remain marginalized as resources continue to be concentrated with these organizations, which then use these resources in ways that do not address the marginalized youths' needs or barriers to youth services and to youth engagement opportunities.

Results from the final sub-problem suggest that the strengths, barriers, and recommendations need to be specifically identified for each organization to enhance its capacity for youth engagement. There were similarities, but also quite a few differences between each of the organization's strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations to enhance these strengths or address the weaknesses were much more specific than the literature because they were identified by those who understood exactly what needed to be addressed and how. The results showed that organizational related and youth related barriers are dominant to youth engagement, while organizational, intergenerational, and youth related barriers are all important and need to be addressed when enhancing meaningful youth engagement.

Recommendations for Future Research

This section identifies theoretical and practical recommendations that have been generated from the research. These recommendations could be used for future research

to extend our understanding about how to enhance an organization's capacity to engage youth in decision-making and governance.

Theoretical Recommendations

Future research within this area could explore the impact that family has on a youth's ability to be engaged. In this thesis, I discussed briefly how younger youth may be prevented from being engaged because parents may not trust them, or they may live in low-income families that have authoritarian structures. GU was able to successfully engage younger youth because the partners spent the time to outreach to parents/guardians to ensure that they understood what the organization was about, what their child's responsibilities would be, and solicited consent from them (the parent/guardian). Meanwhile TYC data results reflected that they had difficulty recruiting younger youth and did not have any outreach processes to parents/guardians. So families do have an impact, but it is unknown to what degree they matter. If youth engagement is truly to be inclusive, this needs to be explored further.

Even though this study included a female-only youth engagement organization, and six female youth participated as interviewees and two in the focus group, only two gender-linked barriers were identified from the documents, interviewees, and participant observations. They were motherhood and gender roles. Interviewees felt that young mothers would be disinterested in the organization's mission. In addition, interviewees identified that young mothers would not be able to attend meetings and/or events because of difficulties finding quality childcare. Gender roles were identified in the GU meeting minutes and in interviews as female youth having to miss meetings because of family responsibilities.

In the data results of the TYC Executive membership male to female ratio, there were contradictory findings in both the literature and data results. One interviewee felt that there were more males and the other interviewee felt that the male to female ratio was relatively equal. When the Laidlaw Foundation (2000) conducted case study analysis they found that more females than males were being engaged, while Fitzpatrick et al. (1998) found that less females were being engaged. These contradictory findings could be due to contributing factors other than family responsibilities and young motherhood. If unequal female to male ratios exists, then the underlying reasons need to be further explored. For example, it should be investigated how much of a factor the roles and responsibilities and/or the organization's programs and services play in determining gender ratios.

There was one more gender related barrier that later was decided by the members to be more of an 'inexperience' issue. If female youth are provided fewer opportunities to be engaged at the higher leadership positions (i.e., Executive or Steering Committee positions), then they will be more inexperienced than their male counterparts. Lower levels of perceived decision-making power by engaged females should be further explored to identify whether or not it is due to gender roles (males are dominant decision-makers and females are to be submissive) or inexperience (those who are more experienced are more vocal and controlling and vice versa).

Even though the organizations were culturally diverse, it was out of the scope of my experience to identify the different cultures of the participants I observed. I was unable to identify exactly how diverse the organizations were culturally. A few of the interviewees stated that diversity is not having the same cultural minority group making

up the organization. For example, it is not diverse if there are 10 Muslim females out of 12 Executives. Therefore, a further study needs to be done to analyze how culturally diverse the organizations are and which specific cultural groups are under-represented. In my data results, a few of the interviewees made a broad reference to ‘youth of colour’, which can include many different cultural groups. However, the literature has shown that different cultural groups have different barriers, so a further study identifying the specific cultural groups and their specific barriers to youth engagement would be valuable.

In this thesis I had put general societal perspectives under adult perceptions, because it was the views of the adults who either facilitated or inhibit youth engagement. However, future research should focus on understanding the social constructions of youth and the hegemonic discourses that prevent equal power relations, so that unequal power relations can be deconstructed in a way that can be facilitative to youth engagement.

Practical Recommendations

One of the issues raised within the youth engagement literature review, is that they are written by adults for adults (Hart, 1992; Hart 1997; Laidlaw Foundation, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 1998; Driskell, 2002 etc). I have only uncovered one document that was written by youth. The TYC has written one manual for youth by youth called the “Youth Guide to Making Change in Your Community”, developed by the TYC (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a). To keep with the youth centered approach, my recommendation is that the TYC and GU should collaborate with representatives from several other youth engagement organizations in Toronto and apply for a research grant.³⁷⁰ This research grant should be used to develop a youth

³⁷⁰ The representatives should be diverse relative to the methods and levels their respective organizations engage them at.

engagement manual for organizations interested in or currently engaging youth. It would be a manual written by youth for youth or for adults and based on their lived youth engagement experiences to identify best practices.

The recommendations identified in the third sub-problem were specific to each organization and arranged into organizational, youth related and intergenerational categories. As Driskell (2002) suggested, those who are living the experience have a better ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses. The recommendations made should therefore be discussed further by both organizations, to identify if they have enough resources to enhance youth engagement, meaningful youth engagement or both. Based on the ambiguous nature of the recommendations provided in the literature review and some of the data results, I recommend that both organizations use the model developed by the United Nations (2003).³⁷¹ With each recommendation they want to address, they should identify the goals with targets and indicators as well as other details such as timeframes, how it should be met, and what resources are required.³⁷² The organizational support staff and youth leaders will be kept accountable to the recommendations by creating goals, targets, and indicators so that actions to improve youth engagement are taken and evaluated.³⁷³ As a result, both of the organizations

³⁷¹ To deal with the issues surrounding poverty in the non-industrialized countries, the United Nations developed the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2005bb). Their recommendations were separated into goals, targets, and indicators to ensure that all the countries were accountable for reaching the goals by 2015 (United Nations, 2005bb). The same should apply with increasing youth engagement and meaningful participation.

³⁷² The goals and targets will be structured in a similar way to the United Nations identification of their Millennium Development Goals and targets (visit: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/OfficialList.htm> (United Nations, 2003). It will be good for evaluation purposes to see when and how successfully the goals (and their individual targets) were accomplished. The United Nations use target indicators to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2005), to identify when each goal should be accomplished.

³⁷³ An example of goals can be to address the barriers related to culture. To reach the goal, the targets could be doubling the number of youth participants from minority ethnic groups. An example of indicators could be tracking the number of minority ethnic participants for the next five years.

should come out with specific, research-based recommendations that can be used to apply for the funding grants such as the Laidlaw Foundation's grant for Building Organizational Capacity for Youth Engagement.

Appendix A

Barriers to Participating in Physical Activity Programs and Services

Barriers	Citations
<i>Socio-Economic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of money for registration fees, equipment, travel expenses 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association , 1995; Duck, 1998; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002; Quinn, 1999; Brunton, Harden, Rees, Oliver and Oakley, 2003; Donnelly & Coakley, 2002
<i>Services</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of transportation (private and public and safe) 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association , 1995; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002; Brunton et al., 2003
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of information (do not know where to find it or language barrier) 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association , 1995
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of physical activity services and facilities³⁷⁴ (budget cuts) 	City of Toronto, 2003; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002; Quinn, 1999
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social assistance process³⁷⁵ 	City of Toronto, 2004b; Frisby, W., Crawford, S., & Dorer, T., January 1997; More, T., & Stevens, T., 2000
<i>Program structure</i>	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> insufficient variety of program services³⁷⁶ (beyond traditional) 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998; Brunton et al., 2003
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules and regulations³⁷⁷ 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult run and focused 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally insensitive 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of coordination between sectors and across sectors³⁷⁸ 	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998; City of Toronto, 2003;

³⁷⁴ This is found especially in the lower-income areas, as the marginalized groups are pushed out of the city away from the central services and facilities (Quinn, 1999; City of Toronto, 2003; Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 2002 etc.)

³⁷⁵ Research has shown that the application process has been found demeaning and the process and/or fee itself can inhibit participation for low-income people (City of Toronto, 2004b; Frisby, W., Crawford, S., & Dorer, T., January 1997; More, T., & Stevens, T., 2000).

³⁷⁶ Programs available don't meet the interests of marginalized youth (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995)

³⁷⁷ This is especially a barrier to marginalized youth, where the regulations prevent them from smoking, being hired, being able to participate due to dress codes, program times etc. (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998)

	Quinn, 1999
• inadequately trained staff	Duck, 1998; Quinn, 1999
• lack of trust between youth and staff	Duck, 1998
• lack of utilization of “best practices” ³⁷⁹	Quinn, 1999
<i>Gender and Sexual Orientation</i>	
• Gender bias (fewer female leaders, and less free time due to gender guided responsibilities)	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998; Brunton et al., 2003
• Heterosexual bias (fewer homosexual leaders)	Duck, 1998
<i>Cultural</i>	
• Racial discrimination (marginalization)	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995
<i>Family</i>	
• Lack of family support	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995 ; Duck, 1998; Brunton et al., 2003

³⁷⁸ Duplications and gaps to services needed for marginalized youth to participate in physical activity, including day-care, transportation services etc. (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1995)

³⁷⁹ There is contradicting literature on using “best practices” as they expect programs should be generalized across to every city. Another issue with “best practices” is that normally they are not implemented and higher profile programs which haven’t really shown any significant impact have been duplicated nation wide.

Appendix B
Information Email for GU/TYC

Hello Toronto Youth Cabinet and Girls Unlimited,

My name is Sara Somerset and I am a Masters Candidate with the Department of Human Kinetics, at the University of Windsor. The purpose of this study is to explore your organization's methods and levels of youth participation (youth engagement) in decision-making, and to identify the barriers and recommendations to youth engagement and meaningful youth engagement.

[SECOND PARAGRAPH SEE NEXT PAGE]

Involvement in this study will provide each of the stakeholders in the organizations (the youth, the community partners and the administrators) an opportunity to voice their thoughts and/or concerns about the youth engagement processes. If you have been involved with [Toronto Youth Cabinet or Girls Unlimited] for six months or more, you are being asked to participate in an interview for this study. The results of this study will be used to provide each of the organizations with detailed recommendations on how to enhance the strengths and address their weaknesses in their youth engagement processes. These recommendations can be used to apply for grants, such as from the Laidlaw Foundation.

If you have other questions regarding this study please do not hesitate to call me at (###-####) or by email at somerses@uwindsor.ca or contact my advisor Dr. Vicky Paraschak by email at parasch@uwindsor.ca . Your input in this study is invaluable and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Sara Somerset
Graduate Student Human Kinetics
University of Windsor

Paragraph Two of Information Email

1) FIRST FOCUS GROUP: As this research is exploratory in nature, it is vital to develop a thorough understanding of this topic through **focus groups** with TYC Executive members. You are being asked to participate in a TYC Executive member focus group, which would involve developing as a group the definition of youth participation in decision-making. As well, as a group you will be developing a “Methods of Youth Engagement Framework” (for example methods can be youth surveys or youth councils) and provide descriptions for each method. You will assist in developing a “Youth Participation Ladder” that will identify the different levels of youth engagement (for example, manipulation, tokenism, youth initiated-shared decisions with adults) and provide descriptions for each level. The focus group will be run as an extension and at the location of your TYC Executive meeting on [DATE]. It will be one hour long.

2) Document Analysis: As this research is exploratory in nature, it is vital to develop a thorough understanding of this topic through **document analysis** of the relevant documents that will explain [GU or the TYC] history, programs and services, profile of youth served and engaged, structure, youth engagement process(outreach and application), resources and support (training, funding) and decision-making processes. I can photocopy or borrow or analyze the documents on the premises.

3) PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION: As this research is exploratory in nature, it is vital to develop a thorough understanding of this topic through **participant observation** of the [GURLs, GU Network, GU steering committee or TYC Executive, TYC Member] meetings. You are being asked to allow me to record your actions and behaviours throughout the meetings and/or events.

4) INTERVIEWS: As this research is exploratory in nature, it is vital to develop a thorough understanding of this topic through **interviews** with the [GURLs, GU Community Partners, GU key staff members, the TYC Executive members, the TYC Members, TYC key staff members]. If you have been involved with [Girls Unlimited or Toronto Youth Cabinet] for six months or more, you are being asked to participate in an interview for this study. The interview would involve you answering questions about your experiences in the organization. It will be a single interview lasting no longer than an hour. The interview will be hosted at the location and time most convenient for you. [As a thank you for participating in the interview, you will receive a 500 mL re-usable water bottle.—ONLY FOR YOUTH].

Appendix C

Focus Group Handout

Introduce self: My name is Sara Somerset and I am a University of Windsor Master of Human Kinetics Candidate.

My research is investigating how organizations engage youth in decision-making in planning, implementing (putting into action), and evaluating programs, projects, initiatives and/or events. I will be investigating the Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization Initiative and the Toronto Youth Cabinet's decision-making processes and organizational structures to explore the methods and levels of youth participation in decision-making, to identify barriers and to create recommendations to increase youth engagement and to facilitate genuine (meaningful) youth engagement.

You have all been invited to develop together the following:

- 1) The definition of youth engagement from your perspective.
- 2) "Methods of Youth Engagement Framework" (for example methods can be youth surveys or youth councils etc.) providing descriptions for each method
- 3) "Youth Participation Ladder" that will identify the different levels of youth engagement (for example, manipulation, tokenism, youth initiated-shared decisions with adults), providing descriptions for each level.

Please feel free to let me know when you need to take a break. If you need to use the restrooms, just go ahead.

The adult's perspective of youth engagement or participation is: the process of involving youth in governance and decision-making. Governance is being a member of an organization or community and contributing to the policy (rules and regulations) decisions. Decision-making is the act of making judgments, conclusions, and/or choices.

From an adult's perspective of what meaningful/genuine participation is: the youth is participating at the highest level that he/she desires, fully understands his/her role and responsibilities in the organization, is trained in the knowledge and skill area to make informed decisions and actions, and that decisions are made in a democratic way

Level of Participation (Based on Arnstein, 1969)

Rungs ³⁸⁰			Level of Power for Marginalized	Consequences
8	Citizen control		Obtain majority of decision-making seats or full managerial power (i.e., a neighbourhood corporation with direct access to funding source).	Guarantee participation, responsibility and control over policy and managerial aspects; ability to negotiate conditions under which changes can be made by
		Degrees of		

³⁸⁰ The levels are in ascending order, with the lowest level of participation at one and the highest at eight.

		citizen power		original powerholders
7	Delegated power		If heavy clash with powerholders, marginalized may form their own "government" with the power to "veto" any differences in opinion unresolved through negotiation.	Achieve dominant decision-making power, given clear majority seating, ability make original powerholders accountable.
6	Partnership		Power to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with powerholders.	Power is redistributed to share planning and decision-making responsibilities.
5	Placation	Degrees of Tokenism	Amount of power to press for issues depends on the ability of marginalized to articulate their priorities, thus powerholders can still make the final decision.	Marginalized continue to be out-powered if the powerholders do not have to be accountable to a community constituency or have the majority voting seats.
4	Consultation		Allowed to be heard and to have a voice.	Time wasted from repeated surveys and because results do not lead to action.
3	Informing		One way information from powerholder to citizen.	Given no opportunity for feedback or power for negotiation.
2	Therapy	Non-participation	Recipients of education, advice, and persuasions from powerholders.	Places blame on individual and not on society.
1	Manipulation			Decisions made are not in the best interest of marginalized but for the powerholders.

Level of Participation (based on Hart, 1992 unless otherwise stated)

Rung	Level	Degrees of Participation	
8.	Child-initiated shared decisions with adults	Degrees of Participation	Teenager feels competent and confident enough in his/her community roles to recognize and seek out the need for collaboration with others, (including adults in positions of power) at certain stage(s) of the project.
7.	Child-initiated and directed		Only found in children's play and requires very observant adults to recognize children's initiatives and foster their growth without taking over.
6	Adult-initiated shared decisions with children		Adults do not assume to know what children want and ask them to identify their own needs. The children are also informed of the constraints to addressing the needs in an open discussion at the initial part of project planning.
5.	Consulted and informed		Occurs when children are consulted and involved in the analysis and discussion of the results of adult designed and run projects.
4.	Assigned but informed Or <i>Social mobilization</i> (this		At this level the child is fully informed, feels a sense of project ownership (even if they were not involved in the project's initiation), volunteers for the position (not regime instigated), and might partake in critical reflection.

	was added in Hart's 1997 Ladder of Participation)		
3.	Tokenism	Non-Participation	Occurs in many of forms of youth participation, including youth representatives on boards. This level results when explanations are not made in terms that children and youth can fully understand. As well, children/youth are not provided with opportunities or resources to confer back to the peers whom they are supposedly representing.
2.	Decoration		Children are used to promote a cause on the adult's agenda. But unlike manipulation, the adults do not deny their intentions.
1.	<i>Deception</i> (this was added in Hart's 1997 Ladder of Participation)		Occurs when adults deny any involvement in the project/event etc. to make it seem that it was completely the children's idea and work from the beginning to the end.
	Manipulation		"Adults consciously use children's voice to carry own messages" (p. 40) and do not make explanations to participant in terms that they can understand.

Methods of Youth Engagement (based on Laidlaw, 2000 and Fitzpatrick et al. 1998)

Youth Surveys	structured questionnaires used to explore the needs and desires of youth
Youth Conferences	generally one-day events involving 40 to 80 youth that included a capacity-building component and provided an opportunity for political impact
Focus Groups	Focus groups are small groups that involve a select group of individuals who have something in common, where views and feelings are expressed in their own words about an issue or topic, and opportunities are provided to respond to input given by other participants.
Youth Governed Organizations	i.e., Youth councils Facilitated by staff, possibly addressing all youth issues and not just recreation; usually act as advisory to other committees, councils or boards
Youth Governed Programs	Recreation programs organized by youth but within an adult organization such as the parks and recreation Facilitated by youth workers and the youth plan and implement recreation programs (or programs with a recreation component), by partaking in a variety of roles such as advocacy, management, fund-raising, staffing, etc.
Youth Advisory to Governing Boards	Youth advise the boards that make the formal decisions and do so as outsiders.
Youth on Governing Body	Youth work with adults who are on formal decision-making bodies.

Appendix D

Document Analysis Chart

Date:

Name of Organization:

Case Study Analysis Based on Laidlaw (2000)

Subject	Notes	Sources
History		
Mission		
Programs/Services		
Profile of Youth Served		
How are the youth engaged?		
Profile of Youth Engaged		
Roles and Responsibilities		
Nature of Support (Staff, Monetary, In-Kind, Training)		

Decision-Making Processes Based on Driskell (2002)

How do they?	Notes	Sources
Identify Issues		
Planning		
Implementation		
Evaluation		

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Recommendations

Strengths	Weaknesses	Recommendations
	<i>Intergenerational Relationships (Adult Perceptions, Attitudes, Behaviour):</i> <i>Youth: Culture/Socio-economic status</i> <i>Gender</i> <i>Attitudes and Characteristics:</i> <i>Organizational:</i>	

Appendix E
Participant observation Data Collection Chart

Date:
Investigator:
Organization:
Decision-making Process

How do they?	Notes
Identify Issues	
Planning	
Implementation	
Evaluation	

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Recommendations

Strengths	Weaknesses	Recommendations
	<i>Intergenerational Relationships (Adult Perceptions, Attitudes, Behaviour):</i> <i>Youth:</i> <i>Culture/Socio-economic status</i> <i>Gender</i> <i>Attitudes and Characteristics:</i> <i>Organizational:</i>	

Appendix F
Interview Guides

Interview Questions for the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders and Community Partners

1. What is your full name?
2. What pseudonym would you like me to use in my thesis when I talk about your ideas?

A. Organization Questions

1. Why do you think Toronto's organizations are involving youth in decision-making?
2. What do you know about Girls Unlimited?
 - *What is the purpose of Girls Unlimited?*
 - *What activities and initiatives does Girls Unlimited have?*
 - *What types of people are these programs/services/events for?*
 - *Age, gender, cultural background, socio-economic status etc.*
 - *What types of people do not participate or are underrepresented?*

B. Experience in the Organization

1. Tell me about how you became a Girls Unlimited Real Leader (Community Partner)?
 - *How did you hear about Girls Unlimited? How long have you been a member?*
 - *Why did you want to be a Girls Unlimited Real Leader?*
 - *What was the application process?*
 - *Were there any obstacles to becoming a member? How did you attempt to overcome them?*
2. What are your current formal and informal roles in the organization?
 - *Position title? Network?*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to your role(s) in the organization?*
 - *Do you represent any other groups or organizations? Who?*
 - *How do you represent them?*
 - *Do you communicate GU issues with the group(s)/organization(s) you represent? How?*
 - *How do your roles and responsibilities compare to the other members of the organization?*
3. Think about one GU program/service/event you were involved in planning, implementing (putting into action) or evaluating.
 - *What was the name of the program/service/event?*
 - *When were you involved?*
 - *Who initiated the program/service/event?*
 - *How did you get involved?*
 - *How were you involved? (planning, implementing, evaluating)*
 - *Why weren't you involved in (planning), (implementing), or (evaluating) aspects of the event?*
 - *Were you provided with information on the areas that you were not involved in? How? Or why not?*
 - *Did you feel that you were involved as much as you wanted to be? Or involved too much? Why or why not?*
 - *Did you feel any sense of ownership over the events, programs, or services? Why or why not?*
4. Tell me how the program/service/event's decisions were made?
 - *Where? When? (Daytime/evening meetings?)*

- *Were the decisions made in a similar or different way as the other program/service/event you were involved in? How so?*
 - *How do you feel your opinions were received compared to other people involved in the project (such as the TPH staff or community partner representatives)?*
 - *Do you feel that they were equally or well received or poorly received?*
5. What kinds of informal or formal skills training and/or information (documents/books) have been provided to you by the organization since you became a Girls Unlimited Real Leader (Community Partner)?
 - *When were you trained?*
 - *Where were you trained?*
 - *What skills did you learn?*
 - *What kind information were you given?*
 - *Did you have the skills and information that you felt you needed to feel confident to do the job?*
 6. What additional informal or formal skills training and/or information do you feel would benefit you as a GURL (Community Partner)?
 - *What about additional training for the TPH staff and community partner representatives (GURLs)?*
 - *Where should the training take place?*
 - *Who do you think should be providing the training?*

C. Barriers:

1. What are the characteristics of the youth who are not being engaged or underrepresented in Girls Unlimited?
 - *Age?*
 - *Cultural background? etc.*
 - *Attitudes? (patient/impatient, driven/passive etc.)*
 - *Interests?*
 - *Children?*
2. What difficulties stop potential Girls Unlimited Real Leaders from getting involved?
 - *How do these difficulties prevent youth from being engaged?*
 - *What about the youth outreach process?*
 - *What suggestions do you have to help overcome these difficulties?*
3. What parts of your GU experience have you found to be meaningful?
 - *Did you face any difficulties in making this/these experience(s) meaningful?*
 - *What could make your experience as a GURL more meaningful?*
 - *What is youth engagement?*
4. What are the benefits of being a GURL – of having youth involved in decision-making?
 - *For you?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What recommendations would you make to enhance these benefits?*

5. Were there any problems from being a GURL – of having youth involved in decision-making?
 - *For you?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What suggestions would you make to address these problems?*
6. Aside from what we have discussed, do you have anything else you want to say about youth engagement?

D. WRAP-UP

1. Can you tell me about your personal background? How would you describe yourself?
 - *Gender*
 - *Age*
 - *birth Country*
 - *number of years living in Canada*
 - *cultural heritage*
 - *Socio-economic status*
 - *Physical/emotional/mental challenges*
 - *any children?*
 - *Any hobbies? Interests?*
2. How involved are you in your community and school?
 - *involvement in various clubs or organizations*
 - *Typical weekly schedule*

Thank you for participating in the interview.

Interview Questions for the Toronto Public Health Staff Member

1. What is your full name?
2. What pseudonym would you like me to use in my thesis when I talk about your ideas?

A. Organization Questions

1. Why do you think Toronto's organizations are involving youth in decision-making more?
2. What do you know about Girls Unlimited?
 - *History? When and how did the Girls Unlimited get started?*
 - *What is the purpose of Girls Unlimited? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *What activities and initiatives does Girls Unlimited have? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *What types of people are these activities and initiatives for? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *Age, gender, cultural background, socio-economic status etc.*
 - *What types of people do not participate or are underrepresented? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*

B. Experience in the Organization

1. What are your current formal and informal roles in the organization?
 - *Position title? How long have you been with Girls Unlimited?*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to your role(s) in the organization?*

- *How do your roles and responsibilities compare to the other members of the organization (Girls Unlimited Real Leaders and project members)?*
2. Tell me about how community partners became involved in the Girls Unlimited Community Mobilization initiative?
 - *How did they hear about Girls Unlimited?*
 - *What was the application process? Are they different for each network? Please specify how.*
 - *Are there any major differences between the networks? Structurally? Decision-making processes? Youth engagement methods?*
 3. Tell me about how youth become involved in Girls Unlimited?
 - *How did they hear about Girls Unlimited?*
 - *What was the application process?*
 - *What are the demographics of the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders? What have been the demographics of the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders?*
 - *Were there any problems that arose in the youth recruitment process?*
 - *How were they addressed?*
 4. What roles do others assume in Girls Unlimited?
 - *GURLs?*
 - *Community Partner Representatives*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to their role in the organization?*
 - *Do they represent a group or an organization? Who?*
 - *How do they represent them?*
 - *Do they communicate with the group/organization they represent? How?*
 - *How do their roles and responsibilities compare to the other members of the organization (GU staff and community partner representatives/GURLs)?*
 5. Think about one GU program/service/event youth were involved in planning, implementing (putting into action) or evaluating.
 - *What was the name of the program/service/event?*
 - *When were they involved?*
 - *Who initiated the program/service/event?*
 - *How were the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders involved? (planning, implementing, evaluating)*
 - *Why weren't the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders involved in (planning), (implementing), or (evaluating) aspects of the event?*
 - *Were the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders provided with information on the areas that they were not involved in? How? Or why not?*
 - *Are they involved as much as they wanted to be? Or involved too much? Why or why not?*
 - *Should the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders feel any sense of ownership over the events, programs, or services? Why or why not?*
 6. Tell me how the program/service/event's decisions were made?
 - *Where? When? (Daytime/evening meetings?)*
 - *Were the decisions made in a similar or different way as the other program/service/event they are involved in? Different for each network? How so?*

- *How do you feel the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders' opinions were received compared to other people involved in the project (such as the GU staff and community partner representatives)?*
 - *Do you feel that they were equally or well received or poorly received?*
- 7. What kinds of formal or informal skills training and/or information (documents/books) have been provided to the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders by the organization?
 - *When were they trained?*
 - *Where were they trained?*
 - *What skills did they learn?*
 - *What kind information were they given?*
 - *Do you feel that they were provided the skills and information that they needed to feel confident to do the job?*
- 8. What kinds of formal and informal skills training and/or information have been provided to the Girls Unlimited staff and community partner representatives?
 - *When were they trained?*
 - *Where were they trained?*
 - *What skills did they learn?*
 - *What kind information were they given?*
- 9. What additional formal or informal skills training and/or information do you feel would benefit all the members of Girls Unlimited?
 - *What about additional training for the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders, the Girls Unlimited staff, and the community partner representatives?*
 - *Where should the training take place?*
 - *Who do you think should be providing the training?*

C. Barriers:

1. What are the characteristics of the youth who are not being engaged or underrepresented in Girls Unlimited?
 - *Age?*
 - *Cultural background? etc.*
 - *Attitudes? (patient/impatient, driven/passive etc.)*
 - *Interests?*
 - *Children?*
2. What difficulties stop potential Girls Unlimited Real Leaders from getting involved?
 - *How do these difficulties prevent youth from being engaged?*
 - *What about the youth recruitment process?*
 - *What suggestions do you have to help overcome these difficulties?*
3. What parts of Girls Unlimited experience do you believe are meaningful for the Girls Unlimited Real Leaders?
 - *Do you think they face any difficulties in making this/these experience(s) meaningful?*
 - *What suggestions do you have to address these issues to help make their experience as a youth leader more meaningful?*
 - *What is youth engagement?*

4. What are the benefits of engaging youth in decision-making?
 - *For the youth?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What recommendations would you make to enhance these benefits?*
5. What are the problems that have arisen from engaging youth in decision-making?
 - *For the youth?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What suggestions would you make to address these problems?*
6. Aside from what we have discussed, do you have anything else you want to say about youth engagement?

D, WRAP-UP

1. Can you tell me about your personal background? How would you describe yourself?
 - *Gender*
 - *Age*
 - *birth Country*
 - *number of years living in Canada*
 - *cultural heritage*
 - *Socio-economic status*
 - *Physical/emotional/mental challenges*
 - *Any hobbies? Interests?*
2. How involved are you in your community?
 - *involvement in various clubs or organizations*
 - *Typical weekly schedule*
 - *Present or past experiences working with youth?*

Thank you for participating in the interview.

Interview Questions for the Toronto Youth Cabinet Members

1. What is your full name?
2. What pseudonym would you like me to use in my thesis when I talk about your ideas?

Organization Questions

1. Why do you think Toronto's organizations are involving youth in decision-making?
2. What do you know about the Toronto Youth Cabinet?
 - *What is the purpose of The Toronto Youth Cabinet?*
 - *What activities and initiatives does the Toronto Youth Cabinet have?*
 - *What types of people are these activities and initiatives for?*
 - *Age, gender, cultural background, socio-economic status etc.*
 - *What types of people do not participate or are underrepresented?*

Experience in the Organization

1. Tell me about how you became a Toronto Youth Cabinet member?
 - *How did you hear about The Toronto Youth Cabinet? How long have you been a member?*
 - *Why did you want to be a Toronto Youth Cabinet member?*
 - *What was the application process?*

- *Were there any obstacles to becoming a member? How did you attempt to overcome them?*
2. What are your current formal and informal roles in the organization?
 - *Position title?*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to your role(s) in the organization?*
 - *Do you represent any other groups or organizations? Who?*
 - *How do you represent them?*
 - *Do you communicate TYC issues with the group(s)/organization(s) you represent? How?*
 - *How do your roles and responsibilities compare to the other members of the organization (TYC staff and other project members-council members)?*
 3. Think about one TYC activity or initiative you were involved in planning, implementing (putting into action) or evaluating.
 - *What was the name of the activity or initiative?*
 - *When were you involved?*
 - *Who initiated the activity or initiative?*
 - *How did you get involved?*
 - *How were you involved? (planning, implementing, evaluating)*
 - *Why weren't you involved in (planning), (implementing), or (evaluating) aspects of the event?*
 - *Were you provided with information on the areas that you were not involved in? How? Or why not?*
 - *Did you feel that you were involved as much as you wanted to be? Or involved too much? Why or why not?*
 - *Did you feel any sense of ownership over the events, programs, or services? Why or why not?*
 4. Tell me how the activity or initiative's decisions were made?
 - *Where? When? (Daytime/evening meetings?)*
 - *Were the decisions made in a similar or different way as the other activity or initiative you were involved in? How so?*
 - *How do you feel your opinions were received compared to other people involved in the project (such as the TYC staff or city council members or project members)?*
 - *Do you feel that they were equally or well received or poorly received?*
 5. What kinds of informal or formal skills training and/or information (documents/books) have been provided to you by the organization since you became a Toronto Youth Cabinet member?
 - *When were you trained?*
 - *Where were you trained?*
 - *What skills did you learn?*
 - *What kind information were you given?*
 - *Did you have the skills and information that you felt you needed to feel confident to do the job?*

6. What additional informal or formal skills training and/or information do you feel would benefit you as a TYC member?

- *What about additional training for the TYC staff-city council?*
- *Where should the training take place?*
- *Who do you think should be providing the training?*

Barriers:

1. What are the characteristics of the youth who are not being engaged or underrepresented in the TYC?

- *Age?*
- *Cultural background? etc.*
- *Attitudes? (patient/impatient, driven/passive etc.)*
- *Interests?*
- *Children?*

2. What difficulties stop potential Toronto Youth Cabinet Members from getting involved?

- *How do these difficulties prevent youth from being engaged?*
- *What about the youth outreach process?*
- *What suggestions do you have to help overcome these difficulties?*

3. What parts of your TYC experience have you found to be meaningful?

- *Did you face any difficulties in making this/these experience(s) meaningful?*
- *What could make your experience as a TYC member more meaningful?*
- *What is youth engagement?*

4. What are the benefits of being a TYC member – of having youth involved in decision-making?

- *For you?*
- *For the organization?*
- *For the community?*
- *What recommendations would you make to enhance these benefits?*

5. Were there any problems from being a TYC member – of having youth involved in decision-making?

- *For you?*
- *For the organization?*
- *For the community?*
- *What suggestions would you make to address these problems?*

6. Aside from what we have discussed, do you have anything else you want to say about youth engagement?

WRAP-UP

1. Can you tell me about your personal background? How would you describe yourself?

- *Gender*
- *Age*
- *birth Country*
- *number of years living in Canada*
- *cultural heritage*
- *Socio-economic status*
- *Physical/emotional/mental challenges*

- *any children?*
 - *Any hobbies? Interests?*
2. How involved are you in your community and school?
 - *involvement in various clubs or organizations*
 - *Typical weekly schedule*

Thank you for participating in the interview.

Interview Questions for the TYC Staff Member

1. What is your full name?
2. What pseudonym would you like me to use in my thesis when I talk about your ideas?
3. Can you tell me about your personal background? How would you describe yourself?
 - *Gender*
 - *Age*
 - *birth Country*
 - *number of years living in Canada*
 - *cultural heritage*
 - *Socio-economic status*
 - *Physical/emotional/mental challenges*
4. How involved are you in your community?
 - *involvement in various clubs or organizations*
 - *Typical weekly schedule*
 - *what do you do in your free time?*
5. Tell me what you know about the history and structure of Toronto's Youth Engagement Initiative?
 - *Why do you think Toronto's organizations are involving youth in decision-making more?*
 - *Do you believe the organizations in Toronto have involved youth more in decision-making?*
 - *Do you know of any documents that mention "youth engagement or participation" or "involving youth in decision-making"?*
 - *From your experience, do you believe that these documents have been put into practice?*
 - *Do you know of any other youth engagement initiatives? How do you believe the Toronto Youth Cabinet is similar to/different from those initiatives?*

Organization Questions

1. What do you know about the history of the Toronto Youth Cabinet?
 - *History? When and how did the Toronto Youth Cabinet get started?*
 - *What is the purpose of The Toronto Youth Cabinet? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *What programs/services does The Toronto Youth Cabinet offer? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *Who are these programs and services for? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*
 - *What types of people participate in the programs and services? If it has changed please explain in chronological order.*

Experience in the Organization

1. What are your current roles and responsibilities in the organization?
 - *What do you do as part of this organization?*
 - *Why do you think the organization decided to involve youth in decision-making?*
 - *Have you held other roles or assumed other responsibilities before taking this one on? What were they? Were they under a different title or department?*
2. Tell me about how youth become involved in the Toronto Youth Cabinet?
 - *How was it decided that the youth were to become Toronto Youth Cabinet members?*
 - *How did they hear about Toronto Youth Cabinet?*
 - *Why did the organization decide to involve youth in decision-making?*
 - *What was the application process?*
 - *What are the demographics of the Toronto Youth Cabinet members? What have been the demographics of the Toronto Youth Cabinet members?*
 - *Were there any problems that arose in the youth recruitment process? How were they addressed?*
3. What roles and responsibilities do others assume in the Toronto Youth Cabinet?
 - *Do they represent a group or an organization? Who?*
 - *How do they represent them?*
 - *Do they communicate with the group/organization they represent? How?*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to their role in the organization?*
 - *How do their roles and responsibilities compare to the TYC staff?*
 - *How do the Toronto Youth Cabinet members get involved in the planning, implementation, evaluation of the programs or services?*
 - *Are they involved as much as they wanted to be? Or involved too much? Why or why not?*
 - *Why aren't they involved in (planning), (implementing), or (evaluating) aspects of the program or service?*
 - *Were they provided with information on the areas that they were not involved in?*
 - *How? Or why not?*
 - *Should the Toronto Youth Cabinet members feel any sense of ownership over the events, programs, or services? Why or why not?*
 - *Have the Toronto Youth Cabinet members made any real contribution to/impact on the services or programs? How?*
4. Tell me how decisions were made?
 - *How were the decisions made? (where, when)*
 - *Were the decisions made the same way for each event, program or service?*
 - *How do you feel the Toronto Youth Cabinet members' opinions were received compared to the TYC staff?*
5. What kinds of skills training and/or information have been provided to the TYC youth members?

- *When were they trained?*
 - *Where were they trained?*
 - *What skills did they learn?*
 - *What kind information were they given?*
6. What kinds of skills training and/or information have been provided to the TYC staff?
- *When were they trained?*
 - *Where were they trained?*
 - *What skills did they learn?*
 - *What kind information were they given?*
7. What additional skills training and/or information do you feel would benefit all the members of The Toronto Youth Cabinet?
- *How valuable were the ways they have already been trained?*
 - *What about additional training for the Toronto Youth Cabinet members and the TYC staff?*
 - *Did they have the skills and information that are needed to feel confident to do the job?*
 - *Where should the training take place?*
 - *Who do you think should be responsible for providing the training?*
8. What parts of the Toronto Youth Cabinet experience do you believe are meaningful for the Toronto Youth Cabinet members?
- *Why were they meaningful?*
 - *Do you think they face any difficulties in making this experience meaningful?*
 - *How could you make their experience as a Toronto Youth Cabinet member more meaningful?*

Barriers:

1. What do you think should be the characteristics of The Toronto Youth Cabinet members?
- *Age?*
 - *Cultural background? etc.*
 - *Attitudes? (patient/impatient, driven/passive etc.)*
 - *Interests?*
 - *Children?*
 - *Do you believe these are the characteristics of the Toronto Youth Cabinet members?*
2. What difficulties stop potential Toronto Youth Cabinet members from getting involved?
- *How would these difficulties prevent youth from being engaged?*
 - *What suggestions do you have to help them overcome these difficulties?*
3. What are the benefits of having Toronto Youth Cabinet members?
- *What recommendations would you make to enhance these benefits?*
4. Did you see/have any problems with the Toronto Youth Cabinet members?
- *What suggestions would you make to address these problems?*
5. Based on your experience, how should youth be involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating youth programs and services?
- *Should there be an application process?*

- *What kinds of problems can arise in the youth recruitment process? How should these be addressed?*
- *Why should youth be engaged?*

Thank you for participating in the interview.

Interview Questions for the Laidlaw Foundation

1. What is your full name?
2. What pseudonym would you like me to use in my thesis when I talk about your ideas?

Youth Engagement

1. Tell me what you know about the history and structure of Toronto's Youth Engagement Initiative?
 - *Why do you think Toronto's organizations are involving youth in decision-making more?*
 - *Do you believe the organizations in Toronto have involved youth more in decision-making?*
 - *Do you know of any documents that mention "youth engagement or participation" or "involving youth in decision-making"?*
 - *From your experience, do you believe that these documents have been put into practice?*
 - *Do you know of many youth engagement initiatives in Toronto? How do you believe they are similar to/different from each other. If there are too many, just choose a few to discuss.*
2. What are the different methods of youth engagement?
 - How would you identify and describe each method of youth engagement? Please differentiate between youth advisory to governing, youth on governing body, youth governed programs, and youth governed organizations
 - Is there a particular type of youth engagement method that should be used for certain organization or purpose?
3. What are the different levels of youth engagement? Which model does the Laidlaw foundation relate too?
 - *How would you identify which level the youth is being engaged at?*
4. Based on your experience, how should youth be involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating youth programs and services?
 - *What kinds of responsibilities should the youth have?*
 - *What roles and responsibilities should they have in the organization?*
 - *How do you believe the youth's roles should be similar to/different from the other members of organization?*
 - *How much responsibility should they be delegated? How many hours a week? Why?*
 - *Should there be an application process?*
 - *What kinds of problems can arise in the youth recruitment process? How should these be addressed?*
5. What kinds of formal or informal skills training and/or information (documents/books) you feel would benefit the members of the organizations that engage youth?

- *What about staff?*
- *What about the youth?*
- *When should the training take place?*
- *Where should the training take place?*
- *What skills should they learn?*
- *What kind of information should they be given?*
- *Who do you think should be responsible for providing the training?*

Barriers:

1. What are the characteristics of the youth who are not being engaged or underrepresented in organizations?
 - *Age?*
 - *Cultural background? etc.*
 - *Attitudes? (patient/impatient, driven/passive etc.)*
 - *Interests?*
 - *Children?*
2. What difficulties stop potential youth from getting involved in decision-making and governance?
 - *How would these difficulties prevent youth from being engaged?*
 - *What about the youth recruitment process*
 - *What suggestions do you have to help them overcome these difficulties?*
3. What parts of the youth engagement experience do you believe are meaningful for the youth leaders?
 - *Do you think they face any difficulties in making this experience meaningful?*
 - *What suggestions do you have to address these issues to help make their experience as a youth leader more meaningful?*
 - *What is youth engagement?*
4. What are the benefits of engaging youth in decision-making?
 - *For the youth?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What recommendations would you make to enhance these benefits?*
5. What are the problems that arise from engaging youth in decision-making?
 - *For the youth?*
 - *For the organization?*
 - *For the community?*
 - *What suggestions would you make to address these problems?*

Organization Questions

1. What are your current informal and formal roles in the organization?
 - *Title?*
 - *What responsibilities are attached to your role(s) in the organization?*
2. Tell me about the Youth Engagement Program.
 - *What suggestions do you have for organizations interested in applying for youth engagement grants?*
 - *From your experience, what makes one person/organization's application stand out more than others?*

3. Aside from what we have discussed, do you have anything else you want to say about youth engagement?

WRAP-UP

1. Can you tell me about your personal background? How would you describe yourself?

- *Gender*
- *Age*
- *birth Country*
- *number of years living in Canada*
- *cultural heritage*
- *Socio-economic status*
- *Physical/emotional/mental challenges*
- *Any hobbies? Interests?*

Thank you for participating in the interview.

Appendix G

Researcher Autobiography

I had a wonderful, active childhood. I grew up in London, Ontario. In the summer I went on family trips and hung out with friends. My friends and I would go biking, rollerblading and play baseball, basketball, and football. In grade eight I moved to Toronto and I was provided with more opportunity to be physically active. I played a lot of sports in highschool, both competitive and intramural. In University, I switched from team sports to individual (such as squash and working out at the gym). A year later I made another switch, from participant to administrator. I spent the last two years as the sports manager for an intramural league. I am passionate about physical activity and I truly believe in the benefits of participating in physical activity. I believe that every man, woman, child and youth should have universal access to substantial physical activity services.

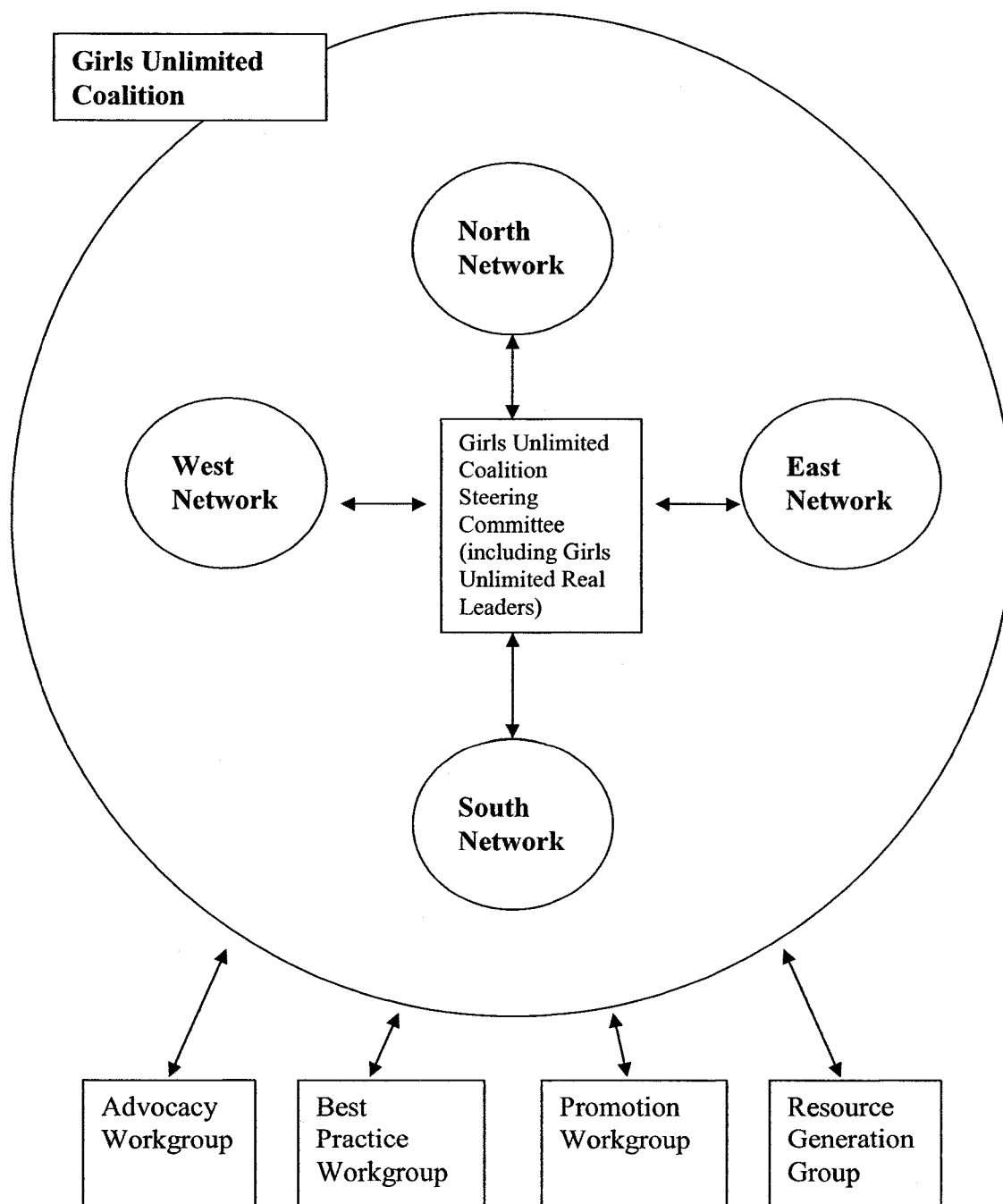
I have worked with children and youth for over eight years ranging from four year olds to 24 year olds, including children and youth with special needs and various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. My roles included camp counselor and supervisor, coach, University graduate assistant, and highschool special education and physical education teacher's assistant. I have used physical activity to break the language, physical, and social barriers that existed between me and the children and youth. These are my two passions: children/youth and physical activity.

Working with children at the London Y and the Toronto Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club helped me to understand how our social system has marginalized children of socio-ethno-cultural backgrounds. I learned that resources for programs were insufficient because they did not compensate for the additional support services marginalized groups

needed. The support services include the snack program, cooking classes, and life-skills programs. I found it disturbing to see the differences in the available resources and the program quality between the more affluent areas of Toronto and the lower income areas. Just this past summer I lived in Scarborough, close to one of the “high risk” neighbourhoods. All I could see were rundown high-rise apartments, a few stores and one park without any nighttime field lights. There was nothing to do within walking distance for any child or youth except for the small playgrounds in the high-rise complexes. Yet, when I was growing up in my parent’s house in the ‘Toronto Beaches’ area, there were five different community centers that were within walking distance. I believe Toronto needs to reduce the inequities between these two groups. I entered into my graduate studies wanting to learn ways to improve physical activity services for youth. I have learned secondhand what kind of future there can be for a person who grew up in a low-income minority life without access to substantial services, including physical activity. I hope my research contributes to improving youth engagement when enhancing physical activity services for youth.

APPENDIX H

Girls Unlimited Organizational Structure



(Girls Unlimited, 2006ay)

Appendix I

Girls Unlimited and the Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting Summary Analysis

A: Type of Meeting

B: # Meetings

C: # Meetings where GURLs or TYC members attend

D: # of Meetings of at least equal ratio of GURLs or TYC members and Adults (excluding guests)

E: # of Meetings hosted during 'Youth Friendly Hours'³⁸¹

A	B	C	D	E
GURLs Citywide Meeting Minutes (June 2006-Dec 2006) ³⁸²	13	13	11	12 ³⁸³
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes (April 2006-September 2006)	5	3	0	4
Network 1 Meeting Minutes (May 2006 to October 2006)	13	10	4	11 ³⁸⁴
Network 2 Meeting Minutes (April 2006-November 2006)	8	1	0	1
TYC General Meeting Minutes (June 2000- December 2001)	10	10	10	10
TYC Executive Meetings (March 2001 – December 2001)	8	8	8	5 ³⁸⁵
TYC General Meetings (January 2002-December 2002)	11	11	11	11
TYC Executive Meetings (January 2002- December 2002)	12	9 ³⁸⁶	9	6 ³⁸⁷
TYC General Meetings (January 2003-July 2003)	6	6	6	6
TYC Executive Meetings (January 2003 to September 2003)	9	8 ³⁸⁸	8	7 ³⁸⁹
TYC General Meetings (February 2004 to November 2004)	10	3 ³⁹⁰	3	10
TYC Executive Meetings (February 2004 to December 2004)	15	12 ³⁹¹	11 ³⁹²	11 ³⁹³
TYC Executive Meetings (January 2005 to June 2005)	10	10	10	6 ³⁹⁴

³⁸¹ These are any meetings that were scheduled 3:30pm and later. Highschool generally ends at 2:30pm and then there is an hour for travel time.

³⁸² These also included the Steering Committee and GURLs combined meeting minutes.

³⁸³ One of the minutes did not indicate time.

³⁸⁴ One of the meeting minutes did not indicate time.

³⁸⁵ Three of the meeting minutes did not indicate time.

³⁸⁶ Three of the meeting minutes did not record attendance.

³⁸⁷ 6 of the meeting minutes did not indicate time.

³⁸⁸ One of the meeting minutes did not record attendance.

³⁸⁹ Two of the meeting minutes did not indicate time.

³⁹⁰ Seven of the meeting minutes did not record attendance.

³⁹¹ Three of the meeting minutes did not record attendance.

³⁹² Four of the meeting minutes did not record staff attendance.

³⁹³ Three of the meeting minutes did not indicate time and one of the meetings was not at a 'youth friendly' time.

³⁹⁴ Four of the meeting minutes did not indicate time.

Appendix J

Girls Unlimited Programs and Events

	2006 Events ³⁹⁵	GU or Non-GU Labeled Activities
Network 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spa-tivity in August (2X; Girls Unlimited, 2006au; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao): • Nia Training (which includes dance, karate, and motivational speeches), reflexology, beatifying and belly dancing workshops (2X; Girls Unlimited, 2006q; Girls Unlimited, 2006w; Girls Unlimited, 2006ao) • As well as a Tobacco Don't Own Toronto clinic (X) • Another Event: Oct 27th and 28th - local entertainers, competitive sports (tennis, football, basketball), sexploitation (videos and self-image vs. public image) (Girls Unlimited, 2006f) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GU funds traveling Yoga classes and Nia classes that go to schools and teach to female youth (X)
Network 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither interviewee had been involved in the network event because it was hosted before they joined (over five months ago) (2X). • In the process of planning an event: rock climbing or some other physical activity (X) • Roller Jam, Dec 9th, 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2006an) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GU supports Girls Programs running out partnering community agencies (X) • Ran 17 summer programs in 2006 (Girls Unlimited, 2006f) • Youth leadership program (PO E)
Network 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls Day Out: box fit and belly dancing workshops, and sexual health and nutrition question and answer sessions (2X; Girls Unlimited, 2006f) happened Early November (X) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Community events (X)
Network 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock Climbing in December (2X; Girls Unlimited, 2006f) • Participants wall-climb (Girls Unlimited, 2006f) • This network hosts events every season except summer (X) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Leadership program (2X)
Citywide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Your Bowl On³⁹⁶ in December 9th, 2006 (<i>a, d, G, f</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for GURLs (<i>e, F</i>)

³⁹⁵ To maintain confidentiality the interviewees were identified as 'X' for those that discussed their network events.

³⁹⁶ Year 2006 was the first time GU hosted a city wide event (*a*).

Appendix K

TYC Organizational Structure Throughout its History

2000³⁹⁷ (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2000)

Steering Committee	Working Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair • Vice Chair • Issue Based Working Groups Steering Committee Representative(s) • Communication Director(s) • Council Liaison(s) • TYC Ambassadors • Regional Youth Council/Organizational Representative(s) 	<p>The Working Groups are composed of a minimum of two TYC members interested in working on a particular issue (for example policing, unemployment, homelessness etc.)</p>

2001 or 2002³⁹⁸ Executive Council Contact List (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.6)

Executive Positions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson • Vice-chairperson • Director of media relations • Director of council relations • Director of outreach • CYAC rep (2) • CYAC alternate rep (2) • Director of special events • Director of membership • Past chair

2003-2004 Toronto Youth Cabinet Exec (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2003b)

Executive Positions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Council Relations • Director of special events • Director of membership • Director of media relations • Public Education Advocate • Youth Safety Advocate • Housing Advocate • CYAC (2 reps)

2004-2005 Toronto Youth Cabinet Executives

Executive Positions (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004i; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004c)	Main Teams (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004i)
<p>Exec positions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYE Roundtable • Access & Equity Roundtable • Director of Special Events • Street Level Service Advocate • Director of Outreach • Beautiful City Roundtable rep • Director of Council Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Relations team • Media relations • Access & equity working group • Outreach team • Street-level services • Fundraising finance team • Community services team

³⁹⁷ This was the earliest I was able to find documents concerning the structure of the TYC.

³⁹⁸ The exact year is unknown but because the 'Chair' position still exists and the similarity of the CYAC positions to the more recent Executive positions (2003) makes it after the year 2000 but before 2003.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Media Relations • Director of Membership • Director of Finance • Community Services Advocate • Youth Safety Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth safety team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special events/membership team (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e) • access & equity working group (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e) • beautiful city working group (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004e)

2005-06 Executive (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005e)

Executive Positions ³⁹⁹	Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Youth and Education Roundtable Representative (1, 2) • Director of Access & Equity Roundtable on Access and Equity Representative (3) • Director of Special Events (4) • Youth-Police Relation Advocate (5) • Director of Community Engagement (6) • Director of Council Relations (1) • Director of Media Relations (2, 1, 4) • Director of Membership Engagement (4) • Director of Internal Affairs (8) • Employment and Training Advocate (9) • Public Space and Program Advocate (10) • Youth Safety Advocate (11) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Relations Team 2. Media Relations Team 3. Access & Equity Working Group 4. Outreach Team 5. Youth-Police Advocate 6. Director of Community Engagement 7. Council Relations Team 8. Fundraising/Finance Team 9. Employment and Training Advocate 10. Public Space and Program Advocate 11. Youth Safety Team

2006-07 TYC Executive

Executive Positions	Projects/Initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) ⁴⁰⁰
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director of Council Relations (J) 2. Director(s) of Internal Affairs (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) 3. Director of Special Events (K) 4. Director(s) of Membership engagement (2) (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) 5. Director of Youth Safety (M) 6. Director of Access and Equity (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) 7. Director of Community Services (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) 8. Director of Education & Training (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) 9. Director of Media Relations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006j) 10. Director of Community Engagement (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006g) 11. Director of Youth and Police Relations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006k) 12. Director of Toronto Youth Strategy (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006l) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Sexual Health Education (6) • Youth Services Scan (7) • Youth Asset Assessment (7) • Youth Unemployment and Homelessness awareness campaign (8) • TYC Newsletter (2, 9) • TYC Media Strategy (9) • Youth in Council (4) • Student Engagement Assessment (5)

³⁹⁹ Each executive was the lead and was responsible for the following corresponding teams.

⁴⁰⁰ The numbers next to the project team correspond with the Executive position that is the team lead.

Appendix L
2006-07 Executive Responsibilities

Executive Position	Responsibilities
Director of Council Relations (J) ⁴⁰¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to “date on everything going on with council and generally with other levels of government, provincial or federal you know keeping an eye out for you know for anything that has to do with youth so that we are able to respond” (J) • organizing the Budget Campaign (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006d), and advocating to City Hall for the younger youth voting age and ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Policy’ (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006d)
Director of Internal Affairs (K) (two Executives) (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage TYC budget, “just keeping track of things like receipts, budgets, numbers stuff like that, making sure money goes out on time, also I have to make sure I know who the money is going to (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006e) • Administrative duties include photocopying, computer management, make phone calls (K) • Also in charge of maintaining of the TYC website (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006e) • Create Internal TYC media outlets such as newsletters (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006e) to update members on TYC initiatives and events and provide opportunities to be engaged (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)
Director of Special Events(K) ⁴⁰²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and organize the Cause (K)
Director of membership engagement (2) (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In charge of emailing members meeting notifications (K) • Initiate Youth in Council Team to increase youth membership and TYC awareness among high school students (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006f) • Responsible for organizing TYC orientation and membership appreciation events (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006f)
Director of Youth Safety (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate and organize Women’s Forum (M) • Initiate a team that will work on the Student Engagement Assessment that works to assess and enhance youth engagement in high schools (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)
Director of Access and Equity (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate Peer Sexual Health Education Project Team who develop a high school peer sexual education model (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006h) • Organize Anti-Oppression Training

⁴⁰¹ Use to be only one executive but now is a two executive position (J)

⁴⁰² No longer a TYC Executive Volunteer position but now a paid job positions (K)

Continued

Executive Position	Responsibilities
Director of Community Services (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate Youth Services Scan team that creates a list for Toronto Youth about all Toronto's programs, initiatives, services, associations, and youth groups (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006i) • Initiate Youth Asset Assessment team to collect data on Toronto Youth's skills and assets to support mobilization (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006i) • Maintain collaboration with Student Vote Canada (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006i)
Director of Education & Training (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate Youth Unemployment and Homelessness awareness campaign team is responsible for raising awareness of and advocating for Toronto's unemployed and homeless youth (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006)
Director of Media Relations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006j)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate TYC Media Strategy team which directs media inquiries to appropriate Executives or members and facilitate informal media training (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006) • Maintain media contact list and co-lead in maintaining TYC Website (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006j)
Director of Community Engagement (J; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006g)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities include Developing Partnerships With Youth-Led Organizations, organizing and coordinating Youth Speak Out – Asset Forums and Hip-Hop High School Tours (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006g)
Director of Youth and Police Relations (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates a project to support youth living in Moss Park to develop a sustainable positive relationship with Toronto Police 51 Division (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006k)
Director of Toronto Youth Strategy (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006l)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize Pan-Canadian Youth Cabinet/Council Network (Munroe, 1997) • Take the lead on the Toronto Youth Strategy Panel, Migrant Rights Support Work, TYC Infrastructure and Resource Development and co-lead on the Youth Asset Assessment (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2006l)

Appendix M

Toronto Youth Cabinet Events and Initiatives

TYC Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Speak Outs⁴⁰³ (J, K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004c) • the Pan Canadian Youth Network⁴⁰⁴ (PO H). • the Cause (J, K, o; Bah, 2003; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005i)⁴⁰⁵ • Girls Night Out and the Women's Forum⁴⁰⁶ (M) • Harmony (L; PO H).⁴⁰⁷
TYC Conferences and Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Greater Toronto Area Youth Conference: For Young People Working with Local Governments in 2002" (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002m) • "Identify and Impact Conference" in 2002 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002; Bah, 2003) • the "Youth Leaders Assembly" in 2002 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002i; Bah, 2003; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002f) • the "Toronto Youth Summit" in 2003 (Kinnear, 2003) • "Impact 101 in 2002 (Bah, 2003)" • Hosted visits from international youth groups in 2002 (Bah, 2003).⁴⁰⁸
TYC Reports and research collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Forever Young: A Toronto Youth Cabinet's Vision for Urban Planning" in 2002 (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) • "Youth Guide to Making Change in Your Community" (Grebanier, 2002; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a)⁴⁰⁹ • "Youth Report Card on Council" (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • "The TYC Report on Youth Homelessness 'Catch us before we fall'" in 2005 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005h; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • "Youth Profile and Youth Power 2001" video (Teschner, 1999; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) • "Youth Action Website"⁴¹⁰ (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2) • "Asset Assessment" (o).⁴¹¹

⁴⁰³ These are hosted in numerous communities so that youth can voice their issues and start organizing together to address the issues that directly affect their neighbourhoods (K).

⁴⁰⁴ This event is hosted in August to bring together youth councils across Canada (PO H).

⁴⁰⁵ Since 2002, the TYC has hosted annually one of the largest annual summer youth events (Bah, 2003). The Cause has three main components, first a forum where Toronto's youth, youth-led organizations and youth serving organizations get together to showcase their organizations and services so that youth decide where they want to join (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005i). The second component is the Identify 'n' Impact Awards where youth are recognized and awarded for the roles they have played as advocates, visionaries, and agents of social change (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005i). The final component is where youth are provided opportunities to showcase their diverse musical skills (K; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2005i).

⁴⁰⁶ This forum includes guest speakers and workshops (M).

⁴⁰⁷ This event is targeted specifically to Toronto's youth of colour (L). Harmony is a leadership retreat that includes an anti-oppression training session and a banquet that celebrates their accomplishments (PO H) and provides more engagement and networking opportunities (L).

⁴⁰⁸ These are youth groups from different countries coming to visit to see how municipal governments can engage youth (Bah, 2003).

⁴⁰⁹ This report was developed from the discussion results of the "Identify and Impact" conference in 2002 (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a).

⁴¹⁰ This website would list the TYC and CYAC events and initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2)

⁴¹¹ This is a current research project and will focus on the 13 priority communities to identify the strengths of the youth living in those areas and how the TYC can create a supportive environment to enhance those strengths (o).

Issues TYC Have Advocated to City Councillors (including the Mayor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Campaign (J).⁴¹² • ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell’ policy (o) • “lowering the voting age to 16”⁴¹³ (o) • “Rush the Vote” (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • “Own Your City” (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • “Call for Action”⁴¹⁴ (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • “Youth Employment Policy Strategy” (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2002a) • “Save the Pools (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2; Bah, 2003).
--	---

⁴¹² Since 2000 TYC has been involved in the budget campaign (Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2001). In this campaign, TYC members advocate for the City to invest more into youth organizations and youth serving organizations (Bah, 2003; Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2; Toronto Youth Cabinet, 2004ah).

⁴¹³ This campaign was to push for policy change in the voting requirements so that they were more inclusive (o)

⁴¹⁴ This initiative was to push for more investment in anti-violence youth initiatives (Toronto Youth Cabinet, n.d.2; Bah, 2003).

Appendix N
Youth Engagement Continuum (Listen, 2003, p. 10)

Intervention	Development	Collective empowerment		Systemic Change
Youth Services	Youth Development	Youth Leadership	Youth Civic Engagement	Youth Organizing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide service to address individual problems & pathologies of young people • Programs defined around treatment and prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services & supports, access to caring adults and safe spaces • Provide opportunities for growth and development of young people • Meets young people where they are at • Builds young people's individual capacity • Provides age appropriate support • Emphasizes positive self identity • Supports youth-adult partnerships 	<p><i>Includes components of youth development approach plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds in authentic youth leadership opportunities within program and organization • Helps young people deepen historical & cultural understanding of their experiences and community issues • Builds skills & capacities of young people to be decision makers and problem solvers • Youth participate in community projects 	<p><i>Includes components of youth development & youth leadership plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages young people in political education and awareness • Builds skills and capacity to do power analysis & action around issues youth identify • Begins to help young people build collective identity as social change agents • Engages young people in advocacy & negotiation 	<p><i>Includes components of youth development, youth leadership & civic engagement plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds a membership base • Involves youth as part of core staff & governing body • Engages in direct action & political mobilizing • Engages in alliances & coalitions

Appendix O

Benefits of Youth Engagement

Benefits for Youth
Capacity Building (<i>a, d, e, I, J, L, o</i> ; Ilkiw, 2007; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Tecshner, 1999)
Build Self-Confidence (<i>c, b</i>) and Feeling Empowered (<i>M</i>)
Networking and/or Develop Meaningful Relationships (<i>a, G, K, L</i> ; Girls Unlimited, 2006u; Tecshner, 1999)
Greater Access to Resources and Information and Gaining a Wider Perspective (<i>H, F, J</i>)
Fulfill Community Service Hours (Girls Unlimited, 2006u)
Receive \$425 honorarium per year (Girls Unlimited, 2006u)
Benefits of the Organization
Enhance Youth Services (<i>n, a, c, G, H, F, I, d, e, b, o, M</i>)
Enhance Youth Engagement Mechanisms (<i>n, b, G, L, K, J</i>)
Trains Future Employees (<i>e</i>)
Benefits for the Community
Vocalizes the community's needs thus building a stronger and more positive community (<i>a, d, c, e, n, b, J, L, o, K</i> ; Ilkiw, 2007)
Encourage more Youth Engagement (<i>G, o</i> ; Ilkiw, 2007)
Create More Youth Services Within the Community (<i>F, I</i>)

Bibliography

- Alparone, F.R., & Risotto, A. (2001). Children's citizenship and participation models: Participation in planning urban spaces and children's council. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11(6), p. 421-434. Retrieved October 18, 2006 from Scholars portal database (e-journals): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06091817380509212.pdf>
- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35(4), p. 216-224.
- Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Babbie, E. (1989). *The practice social research* (5th ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Babbie, E. (1992). *The practice of social research* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Bah, K. (2003). City of Toronto: Toronto Youth Cabinet. In City of Toronto (Eds.), *Toronto youth profile 2003 report* (pp. 20-23). Toronto: City of Toronto.
- Bishop, S. (November 2002). "Anti Oppression Resource/Training Materials".
- Bembry, R. (1998). A youth development strategy: Principles to practice in re-creation for the 21st century. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 16 (2), p. 15-34.
- Bungum, T.J. & Vincent, M.L. (March-April 1997). Determinants of physical activity among female adolescents. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 13(2), p. 115-122.
- Brunton, G, Harden, A., Rees, R., Kavanagh, J., Oliver, S., & Oakley, A. (2003). *Children and physical activity: A systematic review of barriers and facilitators*. London: EPPICentre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. (2002). Progress in Prevention: Helping Kids to Be Active. Bulletin No. 30. Retrieved November 20, 2006 from CFLRI database (publications): <http://www.cflri.ca/pdf/e/pip30.pdf>
- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (1995). *Impact and benefits of physical activity and recreation on Canadian youth-at-risk*. Retrieved September 15, 2006 from Lifestyle Information Network database (LIN Resource): <http://www.lin.ca/lin/resource/html/impact.htm>

- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1995). *Great transitions: Preparing adolescents for a new century*. Retrieved October 17, 2006 from Carnegie database (Publications and Multi-media): http://www.carnegie.org/sub/pubs/reports/great_transitions/gr_exec.html
- Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement. (April 2003). *Youth engagement and health outcomes: Is there a link?* Retrieved October 21st, 2006 from <http://www.eya.ca/yaec/docs/news/Youth%20Engagement%20and%20Health.pdf>
- Chin, A. (June 2006). "Girls Unlimited West Network Process Evaluation of the Youth Drop-In Program".
- City of Toronto. (n.d.). *Girls Unlimited*. Retrieved October 12, 2006 from <http://www.toronto.ca/girlsunlimited/>
- City of Toronto. (n.d.2). "Council-Committee Structure and Mandates References made to Municipal Code-Ch 27 Council Procedures".
- City of Toronto. (n.d.3). "City Hall Savvy!! City of Toronto-TYC".
- City of Toronto. (Spring 1991). "Metro Youth Task Force: Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto".
- City of Toronto. (June 2003). *Call to action on physical activity*. Retrieved September 17, 2006 from City of Toronto database (Health): http://www.toronto.ca/health/pdf/pa_boh.pdf
- City of Toronto. (2004a). *Involve youth: A guide to involving youth in decision-making*. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from <http://www.toronto.ca/involveyouth/pdf/guide.pdf>
- City of Toronto (2004b) *Our common grounds: Parks and recreation strategic plan 2004*. Retrieved September 16, 2006 from City of Toronto database (Parks and Recreation): http://www.toronto.ca/parks/reactivate/ourcommongrounds/text_ourcommongrounds.pdf
- City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis & Research 200x from Census 2001. (March 2004c). *Toronto social profile #3-neighbourhoods households & income*. Retrieved November 24, 2006 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf3/all_toronto.pdf
- City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis & Research 200x from Census 2001. (May 2005). *Toronto Social Profile #4 – Neighbourhoods Youth*. Retrieved November 13, 2006 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf4/alltoronto_full.pdf

- City of Toronto (September 2006) *Involve youth 2: A guide to meaningful youth engagement*. Retrieved September 17, 2006 from <http://www.toronto.ca/involveyouth/pdf/youth2inal.pdf>
- Coe, D.P., Pivarniki, J.M., Womack, C.J., Reeves, M.J. & Malina, R.M. (August 2006). Effect of physical education and activity levels on academic achievement in children. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 38(8), 1515-1519. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from Wilson Web database (Wilson Web): http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/hww/shared/shared_main.jhtml?_requestid=128606
- Davies, B. & Markham, M. (2000). All those in favour. *Young People Now*, 132(), 30-32.
- De Winter, M. (1997). *Children as fellow citizens: Participation and commitment*. New York, NY: Radcliffe Medical Press.
- Donnelly, P., & Coakley, J. (December, 2002). *Perspectives on social inclusion: The role of recreation in promoting social inclusion*. Toronto, ON: The Laidlaw Foundation.
- Driskell, D. (2002). *Creating better cities with children and youth*. United Kingdom: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Dubois, N. (August, 2002). *Girls Unlimited: Empowering girls to be physically active in our communities* (Report prepared for Youth and Physical Activity Workgroup, Toronto Public Health). Scotland, ON, Canada: DU B FIT.
- Duck, R.A. (1998). *A report on youth at risk: Resource needs assessment*. Retrieved September 15, 2006 Lifestyle Information Network database (LIN Resource): <http://www.lin.ca/resource/html/yourisk.htm>
- Dyck, L. (2000). Psychosocial health and well-being. In Reid, C., Dyck, L., McKay, H., & Frisby, W. (Eds.) *The health benefits of physical activity for girls and women* (Report No. RA778.B49 2000) (pp. 23-59). Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Center of Excellence for Women's Health. Retrieved November 14, 2006 from CAAWS database (Publications and Resources): http://www.caaws.ca/e/resources/pdfs/health_benefits.pdf
- Espericueta-Schultz, L., Crompton, J.L., & Witt, P.A. (1995). A National Profile of the Status of Public Recreation Services for At-Risk Youth. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 13(3), 1-26.
- Family Practice Notebook. (2000). *Exercise energy expenditure*. Retrieved November 30, 2006 from <http://www.fpnotebook.com/SPO32.htm>

- Federal-Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Fitness and Recreation. (January 1997). *Physical inactivity: A framework for action: Towards healthy, active living for Canadians* (Report). Retrieved November 20, 2006 from <http://www.lin.ca/resource/html/31100300.pdf>
- Ferris, J.D. (May 2004). "Girls Unlimited Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future: Results of Interviews with Youth and Physical Activity Staff".
- Fine, G.A. & Glassnor, B. (1979). Participant Observation with Children: Promises and Problems. *Urban Life*, 8 (), 153-174.
- Fine, G.A. & Sandstrom, K.L. (1988). *Knowing Children: Participant Observation with Minors*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Fitzpatrick, S., Hastings, A., & Kintrea, K. (1998). *Including Young People in Urban Regeneration*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Forsyth, A. (2002). Involving youth in planning: The progressive challenge. *Planners Network: The Magazine of Progressive Planning*, 150(), 4-5.
- Frisby, W., Crawford, S., & Dorer, T. (January 1997). Reflections on participatory action research: The case of low-income women accessing local physical activity services. *Journal of Sport Management*, 11 (1), 8-28. Retrieved September 18, 2006 from EBSCOHost database (EBSCOHost): <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/ehost/pdf?vid=16&hid=107&sid=e2b279e7-83a3-4a74-aef4-441ca2059b51%40sessionmgr101>
- Frisby, W., Tirone, S., Harvey, J., Alexander, T., Watson, C., Laplante, D., & Taylor, J. (September 2005). *Bridging the recreation divide: Listening to youth and parents from low income families across Canada*. Retrieved September 17, 2006 from Canadian Parks and Recreation database (CPRA Reports): http://www.cpra.ca/e/initiatives/documents/BridgingtheRecreationDivideFINALREPORT_000.pdf
- Gauer, V. & Chin, A. (NOT PUBLISHED but written December 9, 2004). "Girls Unlimited West Network Pilot Project: Process Evaluation (Report). On behalf of Girls Unlimited West Network".
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Girls Unlimited. (n.d.). "East Region Girls Unlimited Network Workplan for THHP Grant Period April 2004 to December 2005".
- Girls Unlimited. (n.d.1). "Girls Unlimited North Network Partnership Agreement Girls Unlimited".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.2). "South Region Girls Unlimited Partnership: Partners Involved in the South Region Girls Unlimited Network".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.3). Minutes of the Meeting of "East Region Girls Unlimited Network, Agincourt Recreation Center 31 Glen Watford Drive".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.4). "Girls Unlimited Empowering Girls to be Active".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.5). "Girls Unlimited Youth Ambassador Application".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.6.). "Girls Unlimited Feedback questionnaire".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.7). "Girls Unlimited: Empowering Girls to Be Active".

Girls Unlimited. (n.d.7). "East Region Girls Unlimited Project".

Girls Unlimited. (October, 2002). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited East Region Network Meeting, Monday, October 28, 2002".

Girls Unlimited. (November 2002b). "Girls Unlimited (Nov 27, 2002) Summary Chart".

Girls Unlimited. (June 2003). "Logic model for GU initiative (Draft)".

Girls Unlimited. (October, 2003b). "Girls Unlimited project: Citywide committee terms of reference 2003 (Draft-Version 3)".

Girls Unlimited. (July 2003c). Girls Unlimited East Network Female Youth Leadership Pilot Project – Workplan Draft –July 7, 2003 (meeting minutes).

Girls Unlimited. (July 2003d). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited East Network, YWCA 3090 Kingston Rd, Wednesday, July 16, 2003, 1:30-4:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (March 2003e). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited East Network, West Scarborough Boys and Girls Club 313 Pharmacy Avenue, Wednesday, March 5, 2003, 4:30-6:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (April 2004). "Girls Unlimited East Network Partnership Agreement April/04".

Girls Unlimited. (October 2004c). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Peer Leader's Meeting, Tropicana Community Services, Thursday, October 14, 2004, 4:30pm -6:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (February 2004d). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited East Region Network Girls Planning Meeting, Tropicana 670 Progress Unit 14, Thursday, Feb 19, 2004, 5-6:30pm".

- Girls Unlimited. (September 2004e). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited East Region Network Meeting, Heron Park Community Center, September 29, 2004, 12-1:30pm”.
- Girls Unlimited. (January 2004f). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited East Region Network Girls Planning Meeting, Tropicana 670 Progress Unit 14, Friday, January 16, 2004 5:30-7pm”.
- Girls Unlimited. (November 2004g). Minutes of the Meeting of “East Region Girls Unlimited Network Meeting, YWCA, Tuesday November 8, 2004”.
- Girls Unlimited. (March, 2005). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Coalition Meeting, North York YMCA, March 10th, 2005”.
- Girls Unlimited. (December 2005b). “Guidelines for Selection of Girls Unlimited Youth Ambassadors* By GU Steering Committee Dec. 2005”.
- Girls Unlimited. (2005c). “Girls Unlimited Empowering Girls to be Active Presents Dance and be Healthy”.
- Girls Unlimited. (2005d). “Girls Unlimited Empowering Girls to be Active Presents Keeping the Peace”.
- Girls Unlimited. (2005e). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting: Review of THHP Grant, For Youth Initiative, Tuesday, December 13, 2005, 10am-12pm”.
- Girls Unlimited. (July 2006). “Girls Unlimited East region partnership agreement: To be reviewed annually”.
- Girls Unlimited. (April 2006b). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited North Network Meeting with Mental Health Focus, April 4, 2006”.
- Girls Unlimited. (March, 2006c). Minutes of the Meeting of “East Network, Boys and Girls Club of Scarborough, Friday, March 3, 2006”.
- Girls Unlimited. (December 2006d). Minutes of the Meeting of “GURL Meeting Wednesday, December 13, 2006”.
- Girls Unlimited. (February, 2006e). Minutes of the Meeting of “East Network, YWCA 3090 Kingston Road, Thursday, February 9, 2006”.
- Girls Unlimited. (November, 2006f). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Combined Steering Committee and GURL Meeting, Wednesday, November 08, 2006”.

Girls Unlimited. (October, 2006g). "Girls Unlimited Coalition Steering Committee Partnership Agreement Date: October 13th, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (February, 2006h). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee, Amesbury Community Centre, Monday, Feb 20th, 2006, 2– 5pm".

Girls Unlimited. (April 2006i). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited North Network Partnership Meeting, Black Creek CHC, April 10, 2006, 3-4:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (April 2006j). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting, For Youth Initiative 1652 Keele Street, April 4th, 2006, 10am – 12:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (2006k). "Health and Safety for Youth Volunteers, GUYA March break training March 13th-17th".

Girls Unlimited. (2006l). "GURL Honorariums August 1st to Dec 1st 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (2006m). "Girls Unlimited: West Network September, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (October 2006o). Minutes of the Meeting of "GURL Meeting, 277 Victoria Street Room # 502, October 25th, 2006, 5– 7pm".

Girls Unlimited. (July 2006p). "East Region Girls Unlimited Network Contact List July 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (August 2006q). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting, 277 Victoria Street Room 506, Wednesday, August 24, 2006, 12 – 2:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (June 2006r). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited North Network Partnership Meeting, Black Creek Community Health Center, June 22, 2006, 1:30-3:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (May 2006s). Minutes of the Meeting of Girls Unlimited North Network Partnership Meeting with GUYA, May 2, 2006, 5-7pm".

Girls Unlimited. (April, 2006t). Minutes of the Meeting of "Minutes Draft Girls Unlimited East Network, Westhill C.I., April 27, 2006, 1:30 – 4pm".

Girls Unlimited. (January 2006u). "Girls Unlimited Youth Ambassadors (GUYA) Roles and Responsibilities Revised Jan 5th, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (February 2006v). "GUYA Section Committee Thursday Feb 23, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (July 2006w). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting, North York Civic Centre, Thursday, July 20th, 2006, 12 – 2:45pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (August 2006x). “Critical path: Girls Unlimited North Network Developed”.

Girls Unlimited. (May 2006y). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting, St. Stephen’s Community House Augusta Ave, May 9th, 2006, 6-8:30pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (November 2006z). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Real Leaders Meeting, 277 Victoria Street, Rm #502, Wednesday, November 1st, 2006”.

Girls Unlimited. (September 2006aa). Minutes of the Meeting of “GURL Meeting, 277 Victoria Street Room # 502, September 27th, 2006, 5 – 7pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (November 2006ab). Minutes of the Meeting of “GURL Meeting Wednesday, 277 Victoria Street, Room # 502, November 22, 2006, 5 – 7pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (September 2006ac). Minutes of the Meeting of “GURL Meeting Minutes, 277 Victoria Street Room # 506, September 13th, 2006, 5 – 7pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (October 2006ad). Minutes of the Meeting of “GURL Meeting, 277 Victoria Street Room # 502, October 11th, 2006, 5 – 7pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (February 2006ae). “GUYA Section Committee Thursday Feb 23, 2006” [North Network].

Girls Unlimited. (April 2006af). Minutes of the Meeting of “GU North Network, North York Civic Centre-Committee Room #2, April 5, 2006, 9:30am-12pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (June 2006ag). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited North Network Partnership Meeting, NYCC Committee Room 4, June 5, 2006”.

Girls Unlimited. (September 2006ah). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited North Network Meeting, NYCC 510 Yonge Street, CR #2, September 16, 2006”.

Girls Unlimited. (July 2006ai). Minutes of the Meeting of “Girls Unlimited Website Meeting with Denyse and Julia, North York Civic Centre, July 26th, 2006 10 – 12pm”.

Girls Unlimited. (August 2006aj). Minutes of the Meeting of “Notes Girls Unlimited

Meeting to Debrief and Plan After Spa-tivity, Black Creek CHC, August 25, 2006".Girls Unlimited. (October 2006ak). Minutes of the Meeting of "North Network, NYCC – Public Health Conference Room, Wednesday, October 4th, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (2006al). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Meeting: Review of THHP Grant, Tuesday,10 a.m.-12 pm".

Girls Unlimited. (July 2006am). Minutes of the Meeting of "East Network, YWCA 3090 Kingston Road, July 19, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (September 2006an). Minutes of the Meeting of "East Network, YWCA 3090 Kingston Road, September 20, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (August 2006ao). Minutes of the Meeting of "GURL Meeting, North York Civic Centre 5100 Yonge Street 2nd Floor, August 30th, 2006, 2:30 – 4:30pm".

Girls Unlimited. (2006ap). "GUYA Selection Committee".

Girls Unlimited. (2006aq). Minutes of the Meeting of "GUYA March Break Training Schedule from March 13th to March 17th, 277 Victoria Street".

Girls Unlimited. (June 2006ar). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Youth Ambassadors (GUYA) Meeting, June 14th, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (June 2006as). "Critical Path Program/Department: Date Developed: June 06 2006 Developed by: TPH, TPR, TCHC, E.S. Storefront, Crescent Town C.C."

Girls Unlimited. (2006at). "Interviews: GURLs Unlimited Youth Ambassadors (GUYA) From Healthy Living Cons".

Girls Unlimited. (2006au). Minutes of the Meeting of "Notes Girls Unlimited Meeting to Debrief and Plan After Spa-tivity, Black Creek CHC, August 25, 2006".

Girls Unlimited. (March 2006av). Minutes of the Meeting of "Girls Unlimited Coalition Interim Steering Committee Minutes, West Scarborough Boys & Girls Club 313 Pharmacy Avenue, Tuesday, March 7th, 2006, 10 a.m. – 12 pm".

Girls Unlimited (June 2006aw). Minutes of the Meeting of "East Network YWCA, 3090 Kingston Road, June 14, 2006".

Girls Unlimited (2006ax). "Girls Unlimited partnership agreement North network revised June 23, 2006".

- Girls Unlimited. (2006ay). "Girls Unlimited Citywide".
- Government of Canada (n.d.). Department of Justice Canada. *The youth criminal justice act: Summary and background*. Retrieved September 12, 2006, from <http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/yj/ycja/explan.html>
- Grebanier, L. (May 2002). "Levi Strauss Foundation Grant Application May 29, 2002".
- Harrison, P.A. & Narayan, G. (March 2003). Differences in behavior, psychological factors, and environmental factors associated with participation in school sports and other activities in adolescence. *Journal of School Health*, 73(3), 113-120.
- Hart, R.A. (1978). *Children's experience of place: A developmental study*. New York: Irvington Publishers, Inc.
- Hart, R.A. (1992). *Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship*. Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.
- Hart, R.A. (1997). *Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*. New York, US: UNICEF.
- Hartmann, D. (2001). Notes on midnight basketball and the cultural politics of recreation, race, and at-risk urban youth. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 25(4), 339-371.
- Hey, S. (April, 2002). "Shirley Hey, Commissioner, City of Toronto" [cover letter].
- Higgins, D. & Luis, D. (June 2002). *Making the media work for you! A media relations handbook*. Toronto: City of Toronto.
- Ilkiw, V. (March 2007). "Safe Cities Plenary Notes: Safe Cities for Youth".
- IMPACS. (n.d.). "Working the Web: Building Strategic Websites for Not-for-Profit".
- Ing, G. (June, 2006). "Girls Unlimited North Network Meeting" [email].
- Johnson, D.A. (1999). *Grants-personship: Funding community-based physical activity programs for underserved at-risk youth Dissertation*. Retrieved from October 4, 2006 from ProQuest Dissertation & Theses database (Dissertation & Theses): <http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pqdweb?index=0&sid=2&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fint=13&startpage=1&clientid=2241&vname=PQD&did=731817831&scaling=FULL&ts=1159990343&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1159990556&clientId=2241>

- Katzmarzyk, P.T., Gledhill, N., & Shephard, R.J. (November 2000). The economic burden of physical inactivity in Canada. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 163(11), 1435 -1440. Retrieved October 23, 2006 from CMAJ database (E-Journals): <http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/reprint/163/11/1435>
- Kinnear, A. (April, 2003). "Toronto City Summit Alliance Event" [email].
- Kinsella, N. (1979). *Some human rights implications of leisure*. Contemporary Leisure Research: Proceedings of the 2nd Canadian Conference on Leisure Research.
- Laidlaw Foundation. (2000). *Youth as decision makers: Effective strategies for youth engagement in governance and decision-making in recreation* (Report). Retrieved October 16, 2006 from PROntario database (resources): <http://www.prontario.org/YADMFullRep.pdf>
- Laidlaw Foundation. (2003). Laidlaw Foundation. *Granting process: Glossary of terms*. Retrieved November 22, 2006 from Laidlaw Foundation database (Youth Engagement): <http://www.laidlawfdn.org/cms/page1394.cfm#socialengagement>
- Laidlaw Foundation. (July 2006-not published). Laidlaw Foundation. *Youth engagement program building*. Organizational Capacity for Youth Engagement. Retrieve November 25, 2006 from http://www.laidlawfdn.org/cms/File/YEP_OrgCap_Build_PROPOSAL_PACKAGE_july_2006.pdf
- Listen, Inc. (2003, February). *An Emerging Model for Working with Youth: Community Organizing + Youth Development = Youth Organizing*. Occasional Papers Series on Youth Organizing, No. 01. New York, NY: Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing. Retrieved April 2, 2004, from www.fcyo.org/attachments/Papers_no1_v4.qxd.pdf.
- Mahoney, J.L., & Stattin, H. (2000). Leisure activities and adolescent antisocial behavior: The role of structure and social context. *Journal of Adolescence*, 23(2),113-127. Retrieved September 11, 2006, from Scholars Portal database (Scholars Portal): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/>
- Mathews, H. (2001a). *Children and regeneration*. London: Save the Children and Groundwork (in press).
- Mathews, H. (2001b). Participatory structures and youth of today: Engaging those who are hardest to reach. *Ethics, Place and Environment* 4(),153-159.
- Mathews, H. (2003). Children and regeneration: Setting an agenda for community participation and integration. *Children and Society*, 17(4), 264-276. Retrieved October 18, 2006 from Scholars portal database (e-journals): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06091816360520995.pdf>

- McCracken, G. (1988). *The Long Interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Metcalf, L. (2003). *Exploring empowering education for marginalized youth in Toronto* (Report). Retrieved November 18, 2006 from For Youth Initiatives database (reports): http://www.foryouth.ca/resources/downloads/empowering_report.pdf
- Munroe, M. (Spring 1997). "Proposed youth engagement strategies for the City of Toronto. Access and Equity Center".
- More, T., & Stevens, T. (2000). Do user fees exclude low-income people from resource-base recreation? *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32(3), 341-357. Retrieved September 18, 2006 from EBSCOHost database (EBSCOHost): <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/ehost/pdf?vid=16&hid=107&sid=e2b279e7-83a3-4a74-aef4-441ca2059b51%40sessionmgr101>
- Mullahey, R.K., Susskind, Y., & Checkoway, B. (June 1999). *Youth participation in community planning* (Planning Advisory Service Report #486). Chicago, IL: American Planning Association.
- Okonkwo-Mackenzie, C. (n.d.). "Physical Activity OW Imitative Proposal Revision#1: Incentive Fund Proposal".
- Olsen, K (2003). Be the change you want to see: Political strength begins with people skills. *UTNE Magazine* (). Retrieved May 18, 2007 from http://www.utne.com/issues/2003_116/cover_story/10356-1.html⁴¹⁵
- Pace, D.A. (2003). "Increasing protective factors in "at-risk" youth through an after-school program that combines caring adults, physical activity and sports, and initiative building" [Dissertation]. Retrieved September 20, 2006 from ProQuest database (ProQuest): <http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pqdweb?index=20&sid=4&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=13&startpage=-1&clientid=2241&vname=PQD&did=765267011&scaling=FULL&ts=1158764932&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1158764942&clientId=2241>
- Parks and Recreation Ontario (September 1999). *Together with youth: Planning recreation services for youth-at-risk*. Retrieved October 16, 2006 from PROntario database (Resources): <http://www.prontario.org/pdf/twy.pdf>
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Perkins, D. & Zimmerman, M.A. (1995). *Empowerment theory, research, and*

⁴¹⁵ The original copy I read at the TYC office did not have any citation information, so I retrieved the article from on-line.

- application. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), 569-579. Retrieved November 23, 2006 from <http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/~douglas.d.perkins/empintro.proquest.pdf>
- Pitter, R. (2004). Midnight Basketball. In Kidd, B. & Phillips, J. (Eds.), *Research in Community Safety* (pp. 170-181). Toronto, ON: Centre of Criminology.
- PO A, PO B, PO C, PO D, PO E, PO F, PO G, PO H, PO I (2007). "Participant Observation notes by Sara Somerset between the month of January 2007 and March 2007".
- Quinn, J. (1999). Where need meets opportunity: Youth development programs for early teens. *The Future of Children*, 9(2), 96-116. Retrieved November 13, 2006 from ProQuest database (Nursing Journals): <http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pqdweb?index=0&sid=1&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=6&startpage=-1&clientid=2241&vname=PQD&RQT=309&did=47854651&scaling=FULL&ts=63439044&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1163439053&clientId=2241>
- Ross, L.U. (2005). Voices of Aboriginal Youth Participation and Planning in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Retrieved from ProQuest database (thesis and dissertation): <http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pqdweb?index=12&sid=3&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&fmt=13&startpage=-1&clientid=2241&vname=PQD&did=1034633321&scalingFULL&ts=1161052067&vtype=PQD&rqt=309&TS=1161052094&clientId=2241>
- Sallis, J.F., Prochaska, J.J., & Taylor, W.C. (May 2000). A review of correlates of physical activity of children and adolescents. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 32(5), 963-75. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from Wilson Web database (Wilson Web): http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/hww/shared/shared_main.jhtml?_requestid=130329
- Sallis, J.F., Zakarian, J. M., Hovell, M. F., Hofstetter, C. R. (February 1996). Ethnic, socioeconomic, and sex differences in physical activity among adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 49(2), 125-134. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from Scholars Portal database (Scholars Portal): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06081923353003336.pdf>
- Sothorn, M.S., Loftin, M., Suskind, R.M., Udall, J.N., Blecker, U. (March 1999). The health benefits of physical activity in children and adolescents: Implications for chronic disease prevention. *European Journal of Pediatrics*, 158(4), 271 – 274. Retrieved September 19, 2006 from Scholars Portal database (Scholars Portal): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06081923492905446.pdf>
- Statistics Canada. (2004a). *Canadian community health survey (CCHS)*. Retrieved

November 13, 2006 from <http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SurvId=3226&SurvVer=0&InstaId=15282&InstaVer=2&SDDS=3226&lang=en&db=IMDB&dbg=f&adm=8&dis=2>

Statistics Canada. (2004b). *Leisure-Time physical activity, by age group and sex, household population aged 12 and over, Canada, 2003* (Catalogue no. 82-221, Vol. 2004 No. 1). Retrieved November 13, 2006 from http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/82-221-XIE/00604/tables/pdf/2167_03.pdf

Selman, R.L. (1980). *The growth of interpersonal understanding: Development and clinical analysis*. New York: Academic Press

Stoneman, D. (1998). *Leadership development: A handbook from the youth action program of eat Harlem block schools*. New York: Youth Action Program.

Sulemana, H., Smolensky, M.H. & Lai, D. (June 2006). Relationship between physical activity and body mass index in adolescents. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 38(6), 1182-6 Retrieved September 19, 2006 from Wilson Web database (Wilson Web): http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/hww/shared/shared_main.jhtml?_requestid=131512

Sylvia, S.N.; Baldwin, C.K. (2003). Enhancing the physical activity levels of youth: a review with implications for leisure programming and evaluation. *World leisure journal*, 45(3), 43-52.

Tammelin, T., Nayha, S., Hills, A.P. & Jarvelin, M.R. (2003). Adolescent participation in sports and adult physical activity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 24(1), 22-28. Retrieved October 21, 2006 from ScholarsPortal (uwindsor): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06092118535001609.pdf>

Teschner, R. (1999). "Introduction the City of Toronto Youth Cabinet".

Teschner, R. (October, 1999b). "City of Toronto Youth Cabinet, Recruiting Plan, 1999, 2000. Toronto Youth Cabinet".

Thomas, J.R. & Nelson, J.K. (2001). *Research methods in physical activity* (4th ed.). Windsor, ON: Human Kinetics.

Tonucci, F., & Rissotto, A. (2001). Why do we need children's participation? The importance of children's participation in changing the city. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11(6), 407-419. Retrieved October 18, 2006 from ScholarsPortal (e-journals): <http://scholarsportal.info.ezproxy.uwindsor.ca/pdflinks/06091822465822547.pdf>

Toronto Public Health (n.d.). "Toronto Heart Health Partnership Core Project Funding Application Package (January, 2006 – December, 2007)".

- Toronto Public Health (September, 2002). "Girls Unlimited: Empowering Girls to be Physically Active in Our Communities".
- Toronto Public Health. (January 2006). "Toronto Heart Health Partnership (THHP): Girls Unlimited Grant Summary, Revised Jan 16, 2006".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet General Meetings" [2002 or 2003].
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.2). "Toronto Youth Cabinet" [2001-2002].
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.3). "Letter to Mayor Mel Lastman" [post Olympic Bid].
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.4). "Taking Youth Voices to the Next Level, TYC".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.5.). "Donor Protocol, TYC".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (n.d.6). "Executive Council Contact List".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (January 2000). "Toronto Youth Cabinet Operational Structure: Effective January, 2000".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2001). "Letter to Councillor Michael Prue, Oct 29, 01".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (December 2001b). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive, December 7, 2001".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (September 2001c). Minutes of the Meeting of "General Meeting –TYC Election, Members Lounge – City Hall, Saturday September 15, 2001, 11:30 a.m. – 3pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (July 2001d). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting, Members Lounge, Saturday July 21, 2001 11:30-2:30pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (June 2001e). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet, Minutes March 17th, 2001".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (April 2001f). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Minutes April 21, 2001".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (November 2001g). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive Minutes – November 9, 2001".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2001h). "Toronto Youth Cabinet-Constitution Effective August 29, 2001".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March 2001i). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive Minutes March 9, 2001”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (June 2001j). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive, City Hall Comm. Rm. 4, June 8, 2001, 4:30-7pm”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (September 2001k). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive Meeting, Friday September 14, 2001, 4:30– 7:30pm”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (December 2001l). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet General, December 17, 2001”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2002). “What We Have Learned Along the Way: A Best Practices Questionnaire: For Youth Working with Municipal Governments in Greater Toronto Area”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2002a). “Identify and Impact: Youth Guide to Making Change in Your Community, Developed by the Toronto Youth Cabinet 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2002b). Minutes of the Meeting of “TYC Executive Minutes August 9, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2002c). “Toronto Youth Cabinet Schedule 2002-03”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2002d). Minutes of the Meeting of “TYC Executive Minutes July 5th, 2002 – a week earlier”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (September 2002e). “Toronto Youth Cabinet Constitution As Amended and Adopted: Sept 13, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February, 2002f). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet General, February 16, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (January 2002g). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive, January 11, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (July 2002h). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet General Meeting Minutes, July 20, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2002i). “Toronto Youth Cabinet Vote 2002 Election Protocol”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (January 2002j). “Orientation Kit, Saturday January 12, 2002”.

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March 2002k). Minutes of the Meeting of “Toronto Youth Cabinet Meeting March 23, 2002, 9:00a.m.-6:00p.m”.

- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (January 2002l). "Youth Leader's Assembly, January 2002".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (June 2002m). "Greater Toronto Area Youth Conference: For Young People Working with Local Governments, Saturday June 22, 2002".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (May 2002n). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Friday May 10, 2002, 4 to 9pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2003). Minutes of the Meeting of "TYC Emergency Executive, Metro Hall Room 305, Thursday, January 23, 2003, 5– 8pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2003b). "Toronto Youth Cabinet Exec 03-04".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2003c). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet Executive, January 10, 2003, 4:30 – 9pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2003d). Minutes of the Meeting of "TYC Executive Meeting Minutes Tuesday April 8, 2003".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2003e). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Cabinet General Meeting, January 25, 2003, 11:30am- 3:30pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (April 2003f). "Toronto Youth Cabinet: Capacity Building, Skill Development and Strategic Planning Retreat, April, 2003".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (September 2003g). Minutes of the Meeting of "The Cause Volunteer De-brief, September, 2003".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February 2003h). Minutes of the Meeting of "Toronto Youth Executive, Metro Hall Commissioner's Board Room, February 12, 2003, 5-9pm".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004a). Toronto Youth Cabinet. *About the TYC*. Retrieved September 25, 2006 from http://www.torontoyouth.com/youth_cabinet/about/index.php
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004b). Toronto Youth Cabinet. *FAQ about TYC*. Retrieved December 2, 2006 from http://www.poss.ca/youth/youth_cabinet/about/faq.php
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004c). Toronto Youth Cabinet. Member Profiles. Retrieved December 2, 2006 from http://www.poss.ca/youth/youth_cabinet/about/member.php
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004d). Toronto Youth Cabinet. *Toronto Youth Cabinet policy*

and position statements. Retrieved December 2, 2006 from http://www.poss.ca/youth/youth_cabinet/about/positions.php

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2004e). "Toronto Youth Cabinet: 2004-05 Priorities".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (October 2004f). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive Meeting, City Hall Commissioner's Board Room 14th floor East Tower, October 7, 2004, 6:15 – 10:30pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (December 2004g). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 2, Friday, December 10, 2004, 5– 8pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004h). "The Cause 2004".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004i). "Toronto Youth Cabinet 2004-05 TYC Exec".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004j). "Toronto Youth Cabinet Constitution As amended and adopted: June 11, 2004".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004k). Minutes of the Meeting of "TYC Membership, City Hall Members Lounge, Saturday, July 17, 2004, 1pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (July 2004l). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Sunday, July 11, 2004, 6 – 9pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2004m). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Thursday, August 19, 2004, 3-5 pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (June 2004n). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, June 11, 2004 Committee Room 4, City Hall 4:30-9:30 pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (May 2004o). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, May 7, 2004".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (October 2004p). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, Metro Hall Committee Room, Saturday, October 2, 2004 12:30-3:30pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (November 2004q). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 1, Friday, November 26, 2004, 5 – 7pm".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2004r). Minutes of the Meeting of "General, August 21, 2004".

Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February 2004s). Minutes of the Meeting of "Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, February 13th, 2004".

- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (September 2004t). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Friday, September 10, 2004, 5 – 10:30pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (November 2004u). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Friday, November 12, 2004 5:00 – 8:30pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004v). “Toronto Youth Cabinet Vote 2004/2005 Election Protocol”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004w). Minutes of the Meeting of “TYC Membership, City Hall Members Lounge, Saturday, October 16, 2004, 1- 4pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004x). Minutes of the Meeting of “Welcome to the TYC Membership, City Hall, Members Lounge, Saturday, September 18, 2004, 1- 4pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (October 2004y). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Friday, October 22, 2004, 5:00 – 8:30pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004z). “2004-05 TYC Work Plan: Calendar of Issues”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March 2004aa). Minutes of the Meeting of “General, Metro Hall, Saturday, May 15th, 2004”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March, 2004ab). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, March 12, 2004”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2004ac). “Community Partnerships and Initiatives Guidelines & Criteria (adopted August 2004)”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (August 2004ad). Minutes of the Meeting of “Welcome to the TYC Membership, City Hall Members Lounge, Saturday, August 21, 2004, 2- 4pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (June 2004ae). “The Cause Meeting Agenda, June 24, 2004”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (July 2004af). “Agenda the Cause Meeting, July 8, 2004”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004ag). Toronto Youth Cabinet. *Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) membership sign-up form*. Retrieved, March 31st, 2007 from http://www.poss.ca/youth/youth_cabinet/contact/getinvolved.php
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2004ah). “Toronto Youth Cabinet City of Toronto Youth Action Plan Budget Recommendations for 2004” [Draft].
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February 2005). “TYC Council Orientation 2005”.

- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February 2005b). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Meeting Minutes Friday, February 25, 5 – 8pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2005c). “2005-2006 TYC Executive”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (February 2005d). “TYC Council Orientation 2005”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (April 2005e). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Committee Room 4, Wednesday, April 15th, 2005, 5 – 8pm”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (April 2005f). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, City Hall Commissioner’s Boardroom, 14th Floor, Friday, April 29, 2005”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (May 2005g). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive, Committee Room 4, May 13th, 2005”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March 2005h). *The TYC report on youth homelessness: Catch us before we fall*. Editorial assistance: Community Outreach Support Unit Social Development and Administration. Toronto, Canada: City of Toronto.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2005i). “Backgrounder: The Cause”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2005j). Minutes of the Meeting of “Executive Meeting Minutes June 10, 2005”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Project Teams Overview 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (March 2006c). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan Template 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006d). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Council Relations 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006e). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Internal Affairs 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006f). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Membership Engagement 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006g). Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Community Engagement 2006-07 Work plans”.
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006h). “Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Access and Equity 2006-07 Work plans”.

- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006i). "Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Community Services 2006-07 Work plans".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006j). "Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Media Relations 2006-07 Work plans".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006k). "Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Youth & Police Relations 2006-07 Work plans".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006l). "Toronto Youth Cabinet – Work Plan: Toronto Youth Strategy 2006-07 Work plans".
- Toronto Youth Cabinet. (2006m). "2006-2007 TYC Executive".
- United Nations. (1981). *International youth year: Participation, development, peace*. Retrieved November 18, 2006 from <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/36/a36r028.htm>
- United Nations. (December, 1987). *Report of the world commission on environment and development: Our common future*. Retrieved on November 17, 2006 from http://www.are.admin.ch/imperia/md/content/are/nachhaltigeentwicklung/brundtland_bericht.pdf?PHPSESSID=fb2f6fcec77988b453fd1e9885393ffc
- United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. Retrieved October 18, 2006 from <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf>
- United Nations. (2003). *Millennium development goals*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicator Database (Official List of MDG Indicators): <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/OfficialList.htm>
- United Nations. (2004). *Sport of development and peace: Our mandate*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from <http://www.un.org/themes/sport/intro.htm>
- United Nations. (2005a). *About the millennium development goals*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicator Database (About MDG Indicators): [Indicatorshttp://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/About.htm](http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/About.htm)
- United Nations. (2005b). *Millennium development goals*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>
- United Nations. (2006). *Conventions on the rights of the child: Committee on the rights of the child*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/81d82a8c18aa406ac1257192005cccc6/\\$FILE/G0642367.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/81d82a8c18aa406ac1257192005cccc6/$FILE/G0642367.pdf)

- (UNOHCH) United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (1966). *International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights*. Retrieved November 26, 2006 from http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm
- (UNDES) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (December, 2004). *Documents*. Retrieved on May 2nd, 2006 from <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm>
- Weed, M. (2003). Why the two won't tango! Explaining the lack of integrated policies for sport and tourism in the UK. *Journal of Sport Management*, 17(3), 258-283.
- Witt, P.A. & Crompton, J.L. (1996) Major themes emerging from the case studies. In Witt, P. A.& Crompton, J. L. *Recreation Programs that Work for At-Risk Youth: The Challenge of Shaping the Future* (pp. 8-33). State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc.
- Wyllie, T. (1999). Outward and upward: Youth work and social inclusion. *Young People Now*, 123(), 30-31.
- The World Bank. (May 2002). *Empowerment and poverty reduction: A sourcebook*. Retrieved October 25, 2006 from The World Bank Group database (Tools and Practices): <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEMPOWERMENT/Resources/486312-1095094954594/draft.pdf>
- The World Bank Group. (2006). *Empowerment*. Retrieved October 25, 2006 from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTEMPOWERMENT/0,,contentMDK:20272299~menuPK:546167~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:486411,00.html>
- (YEPP) Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme. (n.d.). *Youth empowerment partnership programme YEPP: Theory and concept of change*. Retrieved November 23, 2006 from http://www.yeppcommunity.org/downloads/sonstiges/Theory_of_change_Oct2006.pdf
- Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Youth Participation: Challenges and Opportunities, 1996 Meeting Report*. Retrieved November 18, 2006 from <http://www.iyfnet.org/%5Cuploads%5C71.pdf>
- Zacher, L.J., & Chin, A. (September, 2004). "Interviews with Network Partners City-Wide: A Summary Report".

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Sara Somerset

PLACE OF BIRTH: Korea

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1979

EDUCATION: Riverdale Collegiate Institute, Toronto, Ontario (1992-1998)

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario 1998-2001 B.A.,
2003-2004 B.A. Honors

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario 2005-2007 M.H.K.