Graduate Doctoral Dissertations   Doctoral Dissertations and Masters Theses

6-1-2014

Engaging Youth: Linking Design and Implementation Choices of Out-Of-School Time Programs in Boston to the Development of Political Engagement Attitudes in Youth Age 14 to 18

Felicia M. Sullivan
University of Massachusetts Boston

Recommended Citation

ENGAGING YOUTH: LINKING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION CHOICES

OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN BOSTON TO THE DEVELOPMENT

OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ATTITUDES IN YOUTH AGE 14 TO 18

A Dissertation Presented

by

FELICIA M. SULLIVAN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies,
University of Massachusetts Boston,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

June 2014

Public Policy Program

ENGAGING YOUTH: LINKING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION CHOICES

OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN BOSTON TO THE DEVELOPMENT

OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ATTITUDES IN YOUTH AGE 14 TO 18

A Dissertation Presented

by

FELICIA M. SULLIVAN

Approved as to style and content by:

_____
Donna Haig Friedman, Research Associate Professor
Chairperson of Committee

_____
Heather MacIndoe, Assistant Professor
Member

_____
Erin O'Brien, Associate Professor
Member

_____
Christine Thurlow Brenner, Chairperson
Public Policy and Public Affairs Department
Program Director, Public Policy Program

ABSTRACT

ENGAGING YOUTH: LINKING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION CHOICES

OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN BOSTON TO THE DEVELOPMENT

OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT ATTITUDES IN YOUTH AGE 14 TO 18

June 2014

Felicia M. Sullivan, B.A., St. Lawrence University
M.A., New School for Social Research
M.Sc., University of Massachusetts Boston
Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Boston

Directed by Research Associate Professor Donna Haig Friedman

Tens of thousands of youth in communities across the United States are engaged

every day in out-of-school time (OST) programs. These young people seek opportunities

to recreate and socially engage, enhance academic and leadership skills, express

themselves creatively, explore important issues in their communities, and work toward

affecting change. These programs provide important institutional learning environments

in which young people begin to assimilate their roles as political actors and citizens. As

the delivery of social services and public programs has increasingly devolved from the

government to the nonprofit sector, these programs also shape how young people come to

understand their role and function in the public policy arena. Yet it is unclear what

configuration of program designs and organizational environments might make for effective development of political engagement attitudes among youth participating in these out-of-school time programs.

Working with community-based organizations in Boston, this exploratory research looked at how out-of-school time (OST) program designs and implementations were related to the development of political engagement attitudes among youth age 14 to18. Using multiple case sites with multiple embedded units of analysis, the research examined the relationship between program features and elements, organizational environments, and youth served with an eye toward understanding more fully the interplay between these elements and the development of political engagement attitudes. The research looked at how organizational leadership, resource development strategies, organizational values, program design, pedagogical approaches, organizational structures, and youth development perspectives work to create environments that communicate to young people what role or roles they might play in the political life of their community.

This study contrasted two out-of-school time (OST) programs with clearly articulated youth engagement development orientations (e.g., social justice youth development and community youth development) with two OST programs with no clearly articulated youth development model. The research found that none of the programs was an exemplar. Programs that aimed to build strength in the individual, group, and community domains and those that used a variety of development models (not just youth engagement) were most likely to result in positive political engagement attitudes. Certain program and organizational features examined here also yielded

positive results. This research is intended to assist nonprofit agencies, private

foundations, and government agencies in evaluating programs that seek to strengthen and

improve the lives of young people through political engagement. It is also intended to

illuminate how important policy domains that affect youth (e.g., criminal justice,

education, workforce development, public health) might work to engage youth

constituencies through out-of-school time programming delivered by the nonprofit sector.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

been on similar knowledge journeys and as such provided inspirations, insights, and supports even if they didn't realize it.

I cannot thank enough the individuals at each of my case sites who were willing to share their valuable time and even more critical insights about the work they do. These passionate individuals, like so many youth workers, spend tireless hours working with amazing young people. They are so often under resourced, but continue to marshal on because not to do so is akin to selling our young people short. I am so fortunate that the young people interviewed for this study were so candid and comfortable in sharing themselves with me. I also thank the veteran insiders in the youth worker, funding, and academic worlds who helped provide context and richness to my site investigations.

My family and friends have kindly endured declined invites and absent support while I toiled away at analysis and writing. My good friend Lori El-Hakim should have disowned me by now and my dear siblings Colleen Sullivan Fullerton and Kevin Sullivan have cheered me all along. My partner Eric Sack has walked alongside with sardonic good humor. I am fortunate to have such close confidants in my life.

Finally, so much of what I have accomplished is the result of the incredibly positive, supportive, and stable environment provided by my parents Harold and Patricia Sullivan. I am also fortunate to be a member of an extended family replete with countless positive adult role models, chief among them my aunt, Margaret McCarthy. My only sadness is that these well-loved individuals are not here to see the fruit of their love and effort.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Energized by Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* in 2000, numerous studies have examined the root causes (i.e. loss of trust, weakened social bonds) of civic and political disengagement in democratic societies (Farrell and Knight, 2003; Lowdnes and Wilson, 2001). Citing declined involvement in civic associations, decreased voter turnout, and waning knowledge about and interest in public policy and politics, young people are said to be particularly apathetic and civically uninvolved (Galston, 2001; Macedo et al., 2005; Putnam, 2000). Further, mass media and computer technologies are faulted for engaging their interest and eroding their ability to be civically involved (Putnam, 1995). This civic plight is often accompanied by increased concerns over youth violence, drug addiction, teen pregnancy, family disintegration, and a whole host of other social problems in which youth are prominently at the center (Fernandes and Gabe, 2009; Shihadeh and Thomas, 2007; Center for Labor Market Studies, 2004).

Other researchers have challenged that such disengagement exists to the degree expressed (Edwards, 2009; Fahmy, 2006; Skocpol, 2003). For instance, research documenting lower civic engagement among young people (Galston, 2001; Marcedo et al., 2005; Putnam, 2000) is countered by recent surveys showing that select engagement

indicators (i.e., voting) are trending up or remaining steady among youth age 18 to 29 (Kirby and Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2009; CIRCLE, 2010). Additionally, learning environments that focus on increasing civic and political knowledge have been shown to impact engagement outcomes for young people (McAdams and Brandt, 2009; Putnam 2000; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1998; Niemi and Junn,1998; Nie et al., 1996) and many young people today have been the beneficiaries of such programs. During the same time, many youth "problems" have waned (YRBS, 2009).

At the core of these debates is an underlying assumption that participation in civic and political life is desirable and possible. This assumption is bolstered by additional assumptions: renewed interest and engagement rests with building community bonds (Putnam, 2000; Coleman, 1988, Bourdieu, 1986) and revitalizing our institutions (Siriani and Friedland, 2001; Skocpol, 2003). Harkening back to earlier political philosophers like Rousseau and de Tocqueville, these ideas envision political participation arising out of human nature and natural inclination toward association (Pateman, 1970). This research works from these normative traditions and is grounded in the general concept that political participation and engagement are key ingredients for an active citizenry and for a democracy that is informed by and serves the needs of all its members. It works from a belief that those who are affected by public policy decisions should have the capacity and ability to understand and participate in those decision-making processes. More specifically, it looks at the ways institutions promote, dampen, or even co-opt our ability to be political actors and change agents. In this case, the institution is the nonprofit sector

and its delivery of out-of-school time programs and the relationship these entities have to political engagement outcomes for young people.

One might question the relevance of nonprofits as sites of public policy research. As stewards of public funds and private dollars donated for public benefit, nonprofits provide a range of public goods and services. Health care, housing, education, workforce development, environmental protection, poverty alleviation, and artistic presentation are a few of the arenas in which nonprofits play public roles. Given this, nonprofits are as important to understand from a public policy perspective as any government program or agency. How these organizations use resources, design and implement programs, and are held accountable is worthy of understanding and exploration. This study is specifically interested in out-of-school time programs as entities related to other policies implemented for the benefit of youth.

Depending on policy design and implementation, different outcomes may result from a single policy goal or directive. This research assumes that institutional and policy design are influenced by how the intended target population is socially constructed by designers. It is this social construction that determines the benefits or burdens experienced by that population as a result of the policy and in turn shapes attitudes about expected political roles for individuals in the policy arena (Ingram, Schnieder, and DeLeon, 2007; Soss, 2002). In other words, if we have a passive and hopeless citizenry, it is because our institutions and polices have constructed and enforced such behaviors. However, roles can be shifted and reshaped by creating new institutional and policy environments. For example, environments could be designed that create citizens who

3

bring critical thinking and a critical perspective to public decision-making (Johnson and Morris, 2010). The challenge is to understand what institutional designs can create such an active and engaged citizenry. Specifically, how might programs serving youth work to create individuals who are informed and engaged to act on their own interests as well as that of the common good?

There is a very real critique that political socialization processes may act as mechanisms to control young people in support of larger social, economic, and political realities rather than youth's "own power as critically engaged citizens" (Giroux, 2010: 192). Programs that seek to create well-informed voters as the ideal form of political engagement will look very different than programs that prepare young people to confront social injustice and inequities. Additionally, the research recognizes that the varied identities and social realities of young people work as mitigating forces in any learning environment and that interventions will have varied outcomes based on the youth population served (Haste, 2010). In fact, youth from traditionally marginalized, disenfranchised, and oppressed groups may find themselves confronted by socially controlling environments that shape and constrain agency in a manner that supports the overall hegemonic system (Giroux, 2010; Giroux, 2003, Friere, 1972, Gramsci, 1971).

Still, as part of human development processes, political and civic norms are linked to identity formation and the building of associative ties (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Tarifa et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2008; Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007; Watts and Flanagan, 2007). Community-based experiences, like out-of-school time programs, can work to support these developmental processes and in turn shape the future engagement prospects

youth have with the political system (Davidson et al., 2008; Harre, 2007; Williams, 2007; Yohalem and Martin, 2007; Kahne et al., 2006). If designed well, these experiences promise opportunities to link self-interested goals to larger social and collective outcomes (Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Lerner, 1982). However, these experiences may also prove to be sites of political co-optation or work to socially control.

With the understanding that community-based settings can create important institutional learning environments (Fung and Wright, 2001; Smith and Ingram, 2002; Siriani and Friedland, 2001), this research examines the range of out-of-school time (OST) programs available to youth in Boston-based nonprofit organizations. The research pays particular attention to the design and implementation of programs offered to youth aged14 to 18. By examining varied youth programs, it is hoped that increased understanding can emerge about how institutional norms and structures are linked to program design and implementation and how these interactions work to impact the political engagement attitudes of young people.

Youth Political Engagement

In the 2008 election, 51 percent of young people, ages 18 to 29, went to the polls (CIRCLE, 2012a) and people under 30 worked on campaigns at rates not seen since the early 1950s (Hein, 2010). While the youth vote in the 2012 presidential election did not match these levels, nearly 45 percent of this age cohort nationally and 54 percent in Massachusetts turned out (CIRCLE, 2012c). Yet there exist sharp differences among youth with education and social status creating a wedge between those engaged and those disengaged with the political system (Flanagan et al., 2010). In a recent national study of

5

youth age 18 to 29, 37 percent of youth with no college experience were completely

disconnected from many indicators of civic life from voting to participation in public

meetings (Godsay, 2012). Of young people who voted in the 2012 presidential election,

71 percent had some college experience (CIRCLE, 2012a). Yet, 40 percent of 18 to 29

year olds have no such educational background (CIRCLE, 2012b).

While voting is the traditional hallmark of political engagement, it is not the only

way in which concerns for public issues can be measured. Non-voting activities such as

issue advocacy, lobbying elected officials, volunteering, mobilizing others, protesting,

signing petitions, and educating oneself and others about issues are other ways in which

political engagement can be measured (MacIndoe and Barman, 2010; Lopez et al., 2006).

These activities become particularly important for groups that are not able to express

their political engagement through the ballot box (i.e. minors and non-citizens). The 2006

Civic and Political Health of the Nation (Lopez et al., 2006), working from a national

survey of youth (15 to 24 years of age), found the following levels of youth political

engagement:

- forty-seven percent of high school students surveyed volunteered for an organization with youth, community and religious identified organizations being the likely sites.
- twenty-four percent of 15 to 25 years olds had raised money for a charity and nineteen percent had worked with others to solve a community problem.
- youth, 15 to 25 years old, engaged in some form of political voice such as boycotting (30%), signing an email petition (16%), protesting (11%),
- contacting an elected official (11%), or contacting the media – broadcast (9%) or print (7%).
- twenty-three percent of immigrant youth (15 to 25 years old) had protested within the last twelve months, which was more than double that of students born in the U.S. to native-born parents.

6

Still, there exist disparities in these levels of engagement linked to a range of factors such as parental socioeconomic status, personal educational attainment, ethnic or racial identification, and newcomer status (Lopez et al, 2006; Flanagan et al., 2010). This would suggest that environments for political learning and socialization are not equal. Seventeen percent of the youth population surveyed is highly disengaged:

> ". . . much less confident in their own ability to make a difference, less likely to have college-educated parents or parents who volunteer, less likely to have any college experience, less aligned with either party, and more likely to be Latinos or immigrants." (Lopez et al., 2006: 9).

Students who have access to opportunities to learn about politics and participate in civic activities while still teenagers are more likely to be engaged as adults (Flanagan et al., 2010; Kahn et al., 2006). While high-school civic education classes are one mechanism to address the engagement disparities, community-based organizations and OST learning environments can also play a role.

Boston's current landscape supports many public and civically oriented institutions, strongly identified neighborhoods, an engaged business sector, and a variety of nonprofit and community groups work to better the civic and cultural life of the city. The city boasts many collaborative initiatives and efforts designed to address the challenges of a large, multi-ethnic urban hub. Civic challenges remain. Inequalities in income and education, high cost of living, stagnating voter participation, linguistic barriers faced by newcomers, low youth volunteerism, and lack of diverse leadership reflective of the city's many communities create conditions where many voices and concerns may not be integrated into the fabric of Boston's civic life (Boston Indictors

7

Project, 2010). Understanding the opportunities and possibilities presented to Boston

youth to overcome these engagement barriers and to what extent successful strategies

exist is the focus of this research.

Young Bostonians

<u>Composition of Boston Youth</u>

Boston youth reside in a city where minorities comprise over 50 percent of the

population. African American (23.1%), Latino (17.4%), and Asian (9.0%) populations

are similar to other top twenty U.S. cities with slightly more Asians and Whites and

slightly fewer African Americans and Latinos (ACS 2012; Menino, 2003) According to

the U.S. Census Bureau, fifteen to nineteen year olds comprise 8.0% of Boston's

population (ACS, 2012) and in 2006 the teen population was the highest it had been in a

decade (Boston Indicator Project, 2010). This teenage population is slightly higher than

the 6.9% average of the top twenty U.S. cities. Teenagers (age 15 to19) in Boston are as

racially mixed as other Bostonians with African Americans (27%) and Latinos (21%)

comprising the largest minority groups (Census, 2010). A study by the Center for Labor

Market Studies at Northeastern University in 2004 indicated that youth age 16 to 24 are

a growing segment with Latinos and Asians leading the way (Center for Labor Market

Studies, 2004). This same trend for the Boston Metro area and its northern suburbs was

confirmed by a 2012 report (Center for Labor Market Studies, 2012).

Boston youth are fortunate to live in a city with high indicators of education,

health, and income. The city currently ranks fourth in the nation on the American Human

Development Index (American Human Development Project, 2010). Almost a quarter of

families in Boston with children under 18 years of age live below the federal poverty line (ACS, 2012) and there are significant gaps between non-Hispanic white and African American and Latino youth (ACS, 2012) This is mirrored in other major cities in the U.S. where the average poverty for urban African American and Latino youth is double that of non-Hispanic white youth (ACS, 2012). The highest concentrations of those living in poverty are found in the neighborhoods of Roxbury, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Dorchester, and South Boston (Boston Indictors Project, 2010). Two of these neighborhoods, Roxbury and Mission Hill, are home to the largest number of disconnected youth in the city (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2012). In terms of family structure, most teenagers (48.8%) are living in single parent, female-headed households (ACS, 2011a) and these families are almost six times more likely to live in poverty than two-parent households (ACS, 2011a). African American and Latino teens are almost three times more likely to be living in such single-parent poverty households than their white counterparts (ACS, 2011).

Boston youth are more likely to have a foreign-born parent than others in the state. Nearly 40 percent of those under 18 in Boston live with at least one parent who is foreign-born which is about ten percentages points higher than the average for the top 20 U.S. cities (ACS, 2012). This rate is double the average for Massachusetts. Yet, most of these youth are themselves native born. A large percentage (44%) of these young Bostonians also live in households where a language other than English is spoken at rates almost nine percentage points higher than the other top 20 U.S. cities (ACS, 2012).

<u>Challenges Facing Boston Youth</u>

Despite the multi-racial composition of the city, Boston youth face a range of challenges that are linked to poverty with a distinctly racial and ethnic dimension. Simply by looking at school enrollments, one sees clear-cut differences between non-Hispanic white and minority students. Eighty percent of white students attend private schools compared to less than 17 percent of African American and 23 percent of Latino youth (ACS, 2011a). This is true of other urban areas where the demographics of the youth population are not mirrored in the public school system (NCES, 2012). The resulting public school student body has minority students more likely to attend schools where poverty is concentrated (McArdle et al., 2010). For example, of the students who qualified for free- or reduced-price lunches in the Boston Public Schools, 48 percent were African American and 32 percent were Latino (Boston Indicators Project, 2010).

TABLE 1: Boston Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2012-13)

Race	% of District	% of State
African American	35.6	8.6
Asian	8.6	5.9
Hispanic / Latino	39.9	16.4
White	13.2	66.0
Other	2.7	3.0

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2014.

These Boston Public School students are graduating at rates almost 20 percent lower than the rest of the state (MA Department of ESE, 2014). However, compared to other major urban hubs, graduation is above the average (NCES, 2012). Boston Public Schools also serve more students with linguistic challenges[1] (MA Department of ESE, 2014). In 2012, 17 percent of those with limited English proficiency dropped out of public school and 21 percent of Latino youth[2] (MA Department of ESE, 2014). Looking at Grade 10 MCAS scores for Math, English Language Arts, and Science/Technology, students with disabilities or who were linguistically challenged (first language not English or identified as English language learner) performed at rates much lower than the overall student population. African-American students were also lower performing in Math (MA Department of ESE, 2014). The future plans of 24 percent of students enrolled in Boston Public Schools were unknown compared to 6 percent statewide, which may indicate some level of disconnection between students and the school system.

---

[1] Defined as either non-native English speakers or those identified as English language learners.
[2] Language barriers may be a factor here. As referenced, 46% of youth in Boston speak Spanish.

TABLE 2: Boston Public School Selected Populations (2012-13)

Population	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	45.4	17.3
English Language Learner	30.7	7.7
Low-income	71.7	37.0
Students with Disabilities	19.2	17.0
Free Lunch	66.3	32.1
Reduced Price Lunch	5.4	4.9
High Needs	82.3	47.9

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2014.

While poverty and learning barriers (e.g., language) exist in schools, a majority of youth in the 2006 Boston Youth Survey[3] reported feeling safe in school and in their neighbourhoods. Nearly 80 percent trusted adults in their lives and indicated that their experiences of violence, both as witnesses and victims, were on the decline. Still many youth reported feeling racially discriminated against, and gang violence was perceived as a continuing problem. Crime statistics from this same year, confirmed that juvenile crime had declined by 14 percent since 1993 despite a larger teen population (Boston Indicators Project, 2010). However, these overall declines in crime were accompanied by an increase in violent crimes among youth and in particular gun violence (Boston Indicators Project, 2010c). These increases in violent crime have occurred in tandem with fewer

---

[3] This survey was conducted with a representative sample of youth in the Boston Public Schools. The report represents self-reported data and does not reflect the attitudes of youth not in public school.

funds for community policing, reduced youth jobs, and increased gun availability (Boston Indicators Project, 2010c).

In terms of other traditional youth risk areas such as substance abuse, young parenthood, depression, and suicide, Boston youth appear to fare better or no worse than their peers across the nation. For example, Boston youth experience lower levels of alcohol and tobacco use than the national average (Boston Data Project, 2006). Youth in Boston also have lower rates of disconnection than other large metro areas in the United States (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2012). What does emerge is that as young Bostonians reach early adulthood some segments are struggling economically especially as labor markets have become increasingly competitive. This is particularly true of young men of color who have higher levels of unemployment, incarceration, and disconnection often linked to low levels of educational attainment (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2012; Center for Labor Market Studies, 2012b; Boston Youth Council, 2004).

Working to Meet Youth Needs

Youth in Boston are fortunate to have multiple sectors working to address many of the needs identified above. Government departments at all levels, community-based groups, faith-based organizations, social service agencies, and local businesses form a loose youth service constellation. These entities provide jobs and job training, academic enrichment, recreational activities, creative outlets, housing, physical and mental health support, legal help, peer connections, and a range of other opportunities and services (Boston Indicators Project, 2010; Boston Navigator, 2010; Boston Data Project, 2006). According to the 2006 Boston Youth Survey, 72 percent of teens reported that they had

13

access to a community center that served teens and 62 percent were involved in some form or organized activity each week (Boston Data Project, 2006).

One can see evidence of efforts toward improving outcomes for youth in city government, private and public schools, family support systems, community revitalization efforts, out-of-school engagement, juvenile justice reform, and other policy-level initiatives. Organizations like Boston and Beyond, the Boston Promise Initiative, and the Boston Plan for Excellence seek to improve educational and youth development opportunities through coordination of private and public learning resources. Other organizations like the Boston Private Industry Council and Roxbury Youthworks, seek to ensure that youth have adequate skills to form self-sufficient and sustainable work lives. Still others, such as Project RIGHT, the Dorchester Youth Voice Collaborative, the Ten Point Coalition, and the Mayor's Youth Council, provide leadership opportunities or mobilize youth to address pressing issues that affect them and their communities. A participatory youth budgeting process was approved for implementation in 2014 (City of Boston, 2014). These are just a small subset of a much larger nonprofit sector working to achieve positive outcomes for youth in Boston.

Boston's Nonprofit Sector

Boston's nonprofit sector is actively involved in initiatives like those detailed above. These organizations serve as important intermediaries connecting individuals and their families to the larger community as well as to commercial and government resources. The city is home to over five thousand public charitable nonprofit

organizations[4] — the largest concentration of nonprofits in the state (NCCS, 2007;

Keating et al., 2008). The sector is diverse with public and societal benefit organizations

comprising the largest segment (29%) followed closely by human service organizations

(20%). Health (12%), higher education (12%), and arts, culture, and humanities

nonprofits are other important service areas comprising the Boston nonprofit sector.

FIGURE 1: Boston Nonprofit Organizations by Industry Sector
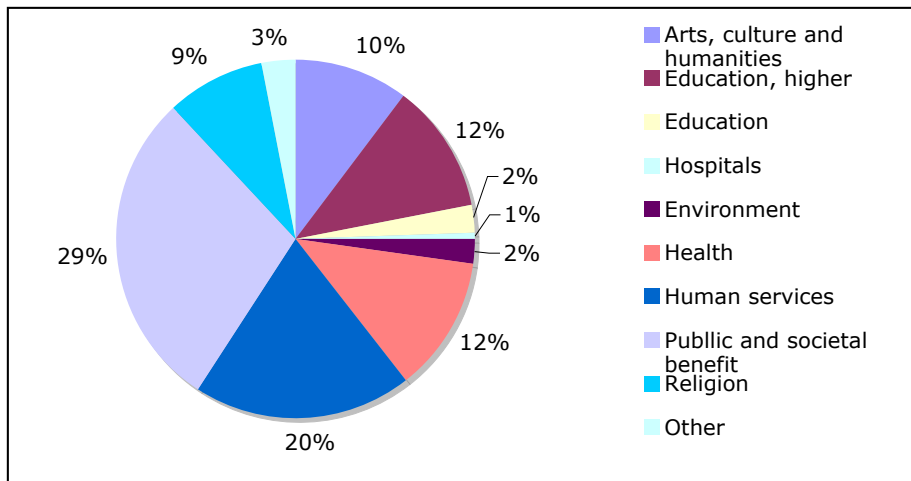
Source: NCCS Core Data, 2007

Boston's charitable nonprofits range in size from small grassroots organizations to

large economic engines like nationally recognized hospitals and universities (Keating et

al., 2008). Approximately 5 percent of these organizations indicate that they are oriented

toward youth development, sports, and recreation (Massachusetts Nonprofit Database,

2010). Yet one can find youth-serving programs in a wide range of nonprofit

organizations. For instance, community action agencies like the Action for Boston

---

[4] These organizations have formal classification as 501(c)3 organizations via the U.S. Tax Code and are
  tax-exempt. This number represents those organizations with operating budgets of $25,000 or more who
  file tax returns with the IRS.

Community Development and community development corporations like the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation offer programs targeted toward youth residents within their service areas as part of their overall community revitalization efforts. Arts organizations like the writer's group Grub Street and the crafts and fine arts Elliot School serve a general population with youth as one constituency. Still other nonprofits such as Project Hope, Episcopal City Mission, Codman Square Health Center, and Emmanuel College meet a range of social, health, and educational needs of youth either directly or indirectly as part of comprehensive family support.

In addition to providing direct services, nonprofit organizations also have a hand in creating opportunities for youth to explore new learning and individual development that support school-based curricula such as Harvard Medical School's AP Biology program or, like the Boys and Girls Clubs, they may provide alternative programming separate from schools. Some organizations may even combine these strategies such as the media arts organization Amplifyme. Nonprofit organizations also act as advocates and sites of civic and political engagement for youth. Some of these may promote specific issues geared toward improving the lives of youth, like the Boston Plan for Excellence, while others, such as the Hyde Square Task Force, may be sites of direct youth activism and mobilization.

Out-of-School Time (OST) in Boston

This research is particularly interested in the role that out-of-school time (OST) programs offered by nonprofit organizations may play in developing positive political engagement attitudes among youth age 14 to 18. Using a definition from the 2006 report

by the American Youth Policy Forum,

> "[O]ut-of-school time (OST) programs and activities occur afterschool, on evenings and weekends, and during the summer. These activities are housed in various locations, both in schools and in the community. They provide youth with an opportunity to develop academic and other skills in a wide range of domains by offering high interest activities." (p.2)

Like other urban centers such as Chicago, Charlotte, Denver, Seattle, and New York, Boston provides a number of out-of-school time (OST) programs that would be defined as opportunity-rich community (Hayes et al., 2009; Saito, 2006). The city has also received OST infrastructure supports (e.g., funding for coordination, professional development, outreach, and promotion) from outside funders, similar to other urban areas like Chicago, New York, and Providence (Afterschool Alliance, 2010). Part of this infrastructure, the Boston Navigator, an online directory of OST programs, contains over 1500 programs offered by nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and informal associations. Figure 2 details the range of goals and activities offered by the various programs housed in charitable nonprofit organizations. Many of these programs are free and offered before school, after-school, on weekends, and during the summer and are funded through private foundations and the government. These programs seek to address a variety of needs including improvements in education, juvenile justice, and poverty alleviation (Collaborative Communications Group & C.S. Mott Foundation, 2006; Halpern 2002). These programs also provide a variety of activities from sports and recreation (e.g., little league baseball, hockey, sailing) to academic achievement (e.g., homework help, test prep, supplemental classes) to creative performance (e.g., dance, theater, music) to community service (e.g., park clean ups, volunteering with elderly) to

17

leadership training. Boston is recognized as a city with an advanced network of OST programs (Mahoney and Parente, 2009). Greater detail is provided in the research design section of this proposal.

FIGURE 2: OST Program Goals and / or Activities
(N=897)[5]
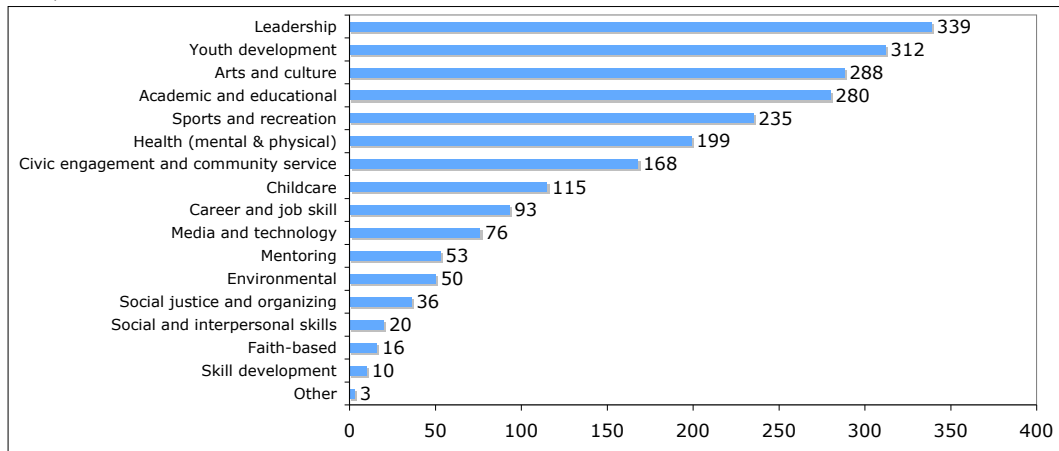
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010; NCCS Core Data 2007

A number of umbrella organizations and efforts support this work. For instance, BOSTNet is a twenty-three year old organization that seeks to address quality and capacity of OST programs as a field. Boston and Beyond, mentioned above, is a public-private partnership with the City of Boston that promotes, coordinates, and expands OST opportunities throughout the city. The Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership advocates statewide for the OST field. Boston's programs also benefit from close proximity to the National Institute on Out-of-School Time located in Wellesley, MA, which links research with practice. Youth workers in Boston also convene annually as part of the Youth Work Intensive. Sponsored by the BEST Initiative, this gathering offers a range of skill

---

[5] Programs may have indicated multiple goals.

development workshops and networking opportunities for professional youth

development workers in the City of Boston.

The Evolution of OST

OST efforts in Boston are part of a much larger trend of developments in serving

youth in non-school hours. Starting in the late 1800s and early 1900s, mandates for

compulsory education, child work laws, urbanization and industrialization of the

workforce drew more women into factories and worked to separate children and youth

from adult spheres (Mahoney and Parente, 2009; Halpern 2002; Seppanan and deVries,

1993). Early concerns over unstructured time and increased youth activity on the streets,

especially of low-income youth, were met by provision of playgrounds, indoor sports

facilities, and informal drop-in centers (Mahoney and Parente, 2009). Increased need for

youth activities during non-school hours amplified from the 1970s as more and more

women entered the workforce, family structures shifted (e.g., single-parent households,

declines in extended families), and concerns over youth safety, health, and development

grew (Halpern, 2002; Seppanan and deVries, 1993).

The evolution of OST programs in the City of Boston mirror these larger national

trends. In the 1980s and 1990s, civic and nonprofit leaders coordinated efforts through

the MOST Initiative with funding from entities such as the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest

Fund and the Boston Foundation (Rublin et al., 2004). The Medical Foundation, now

Health Resources in Action, also worked to bring together teen program providers and

stakeholders to improve training for youth constituencies. From 1998 to 2000, a City of

Boston initiative worked to create a citywide youth development strategy focusing on the

strengths of youth and providing opportunities to build on these strengths (Rublin et al., 2004). This initiative formed the now the public-private Boston and Beyond Partnership.

Considerations for OST Program Design

As OST programs have become an increasing component of youth development and learning processes, research and evaluation of existing programs has also increased (Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2005). Establishing concrete guidelines and recommendations for OST programs is made difficult by the variety of outcomes (e.g., risk prevention, opportunity provision, youth development, community change), constituents (e.g., middle-school kids, teens, girls, racial and ethnic identity groups), activities (e.g., homework help, creative expression, community service), structures (e.g., formal curriculum, drop-in, student-led), and settings (e.g., school-based, community-based, urban, rural) of individual programs. However, there does seem to be some consensus that effective OST programs address the following areas:

TABLE 3: Out-of-School Time Program Features from OST Literature

OST Design Area	Key Program Indicators
Program features	Type (school-based, community-based, youth development, childcare), outcomes (critical thinking, improve executive function, skill-building), program mechanics (program curriculum, preparation, clear goals, consistent program, consciously structured or unstructured, well-organized, scheduled well, evaluation continuous, perceived as run well), learning strategies (responsive, flexible, developmentally / age-appropriate, facilitative questioning, opportunities for voice, project-based, group reflection, time for socialization, opportunity for collaboration, participants feel like they have program ownership), enhance engagement (cool things to do, interesting, exciting, variety of activities, new experiences, practical, life-connected)
Staffing	Autonomy from sponsor, qualified, low child: adult ratio, educated, professional development opportunities, compensated adequately, low turnover
Leadership	Experienced, perceived as effective, has community connections, has background in youth development
Infrastructure supports	Psychological and physical safety, adequate administrative support, adequate funding / financing, adequate facilities, easy access to and from site, affordable for participants
Interpersonal interactions	Adult support (connections with staff, emotional support from adults, caring relationships, practical support from adults), welcoming (staff engaged w/ youth and make them feel welcomed, other participants make youth feel welcomed, youth feel comfortable voicing concerns), youth-oriented strategies (adult don't dominate, team-building, constructive criticism, conflict resolution, positive youth image, intentional relationship building), recruitment (youth-oriented, targeted)
Participant self-system	Respect / trust / ownership (can affect change, leadership opportunities, opinions matter, decision-making), self-actualization (internal motivation, responsibility, youth makes own choices, seeks personal fulfillment), connecting / bonding (knowledge about program, amount of time connected to org), demographics (gender, ethnic / race, educational attainment, student demographics, age, grade level), autonomy (control over own time)
Family and friend micro-systems	Demographics (country of origin, SES,, education attainment, primary language, parent marital status), interactions (communication with parents, parent support of OST, parent monitoring), proportion of friends involved in OST, program uses peer networks to engage friends
External relationships	Links with community, families involved in planning, communication with others, external motivation for programs to exist, support of sponsor, pride in organization or group, coordination with schools, staff interact with parents, partnerships (community, schools, police, justice agencies, other nonprofits)

Source: Royce, 2009; Arbreton et al., 2008; Hammond, & Reimer, 2006; Saito, 2006; Arbreton et al., 2005; Birmingham et al, 2005; Huebner and Mancini, 2003

What is particularly clear from the literature on out-of-school time programs is that relationships and social environment are crucial to effective youth development environments (Hammond and Reimer, 2006; Aberton et al., 2005; Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2005; Riggs and Greenberg, 2004; Ecceles and Gootman, 2002). At the same time, activities that are challenging and geared toward the needs of the particular constituency are critical to keeping youth engaged (Hammond and Reimer, 2006; Birmingham et al., 2005; Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2005). Still, without the necessary organizational supports, such as trained staff, adequate facilities, and accessible location, programs are unlikely to maximize the potential for the youth involved (Hammond and Reimer, 2006; Saito, 2006; Birmingham et al., 2005).

Engaging Teens and Older Youth

The 2005 National Household Education Survey's report on after-school programs and activities of youth in grades K-8 found that 40 percent of respondents were engaged in OST programs at least once a week and that mothers working 35 hours or more were more likely to have their children enrolled in such programs. Those families below the poverty line were engaged in more OST hours (10.7) than those above (8.5) as were minority children (Carver and Iruka, 2006). The City of Boston has been a leader in engaging these younger cohorts in a variety of OST programs that work from asset and strength-based youth development models in which the positive skills and attributes of young people are at the center of program efforts (Rublin et al., 2004).

Yet, despite addressing the many emotional, developmental, relational, and structural needs of younger individuals, participation in OST programs by older youth is on the decline. In fact, ten percent of high income and 30 percent of low-income teens do not participate any sort of out-of-school time activity (Terzian et al, 2009). In Boston, only 22 percent of teenagers are involved in effective and engaging OST programs (Rublin et al, 2004). This indicates that programs may not be meeting the particular needs and challenges faced by teens and older youth (Aberton et al., 2008).

New research is emerging that seeks to understand what OST program elements might best meet the needs and interests of youth age 14 to 18, both in and out of high school (CBASS, 2010; Terzian et al., 2009; Aberton et al., 2008; Rublin et al., 2004). While it appears that standard elements such as connections to adult staff, easy access and safe space, both psychological and physical, are just as necessary in teen-oriented OST programs, there are additional considerations. More opportunities for leadership and choice, unstructured time for socializing, respect and trust from adults, and skill-mastering activities with real-world application are identified as specific musts for teen-serving OST programs (CBASS, 2010; Terzian et al., 2009; Aberton et al., 2008).

In 2003, the Boston's After-School for All Partnership, a precursor to Boston and Beyond, formed the Teen Study Committee to look specifically at the issue of teen access and involvement with OST programs in Boston (Rublin et al., 2004). The 2004 report that resulted from the Teen Study Committee's work, "Coming of Age in Boston: Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Teens," posited that effective teen programs should:

- Provide decision-making opportunities for participants
- Have trained youth workers and experienced leaders

- Link fun, engaging activities with skills for academic and life success
- Designate "teen only" spaces

<u>Developing Political Engagement Attitudes</u>

In addition to meeting the needs of older youth, a number of Boston OST

programs appear to seek outcomes that are compatible with the development of political

engagement attitudes (see Figure 2). Specifically, the Boston Navigator online directory

of out-of-school time programs details 855 programs oriented toward leadership, youth

development, civic engagement, community service, social justice or organizing.

Emerging research in youth development as well as community psychology is attempting

to identify components of youth-oriented programs that seek "sociopolitical" or

"psychopolitical" development compatible with the development of political engagement

attitudes (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Tarifa et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2008; Yohalem and

Martin, 2007; Williams, 2007; Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007;

Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright and James, 2002). These theories will be

explored more fully in the theoretical literature section.

Such programs link individual skill and competency development to community

and social issues (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Yohalem and Martin, 2007; Watts and

Flanagan, 2007; Ginwright. and Cammarota, 2002). Critical consciousness, power

analysis, and youth identity work through expression and reflection are also often key

features of such programs (Tarifa et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2008; Watts and Flanagan,

2007; Ginwright and Cammorata, 2002). This research explores OST programs that

articulate goals and objectives compatible with youth development models that seek

sociopolitical or psychopolitical outcomes and contrasts them with programs that do not articulate such outcomes.

Policy Significance and Contribution to Research

Large policy domains affect young people. Juvenile justice, workforce development, education, public health, and a range of family-oriented policies all have youth as a major constituent or beneficiary. Over the last three decades youth and their families have received an increasing number of public goods and services from entities outside of government including nonprofit organizations. These organizations are entrusted with both private and public dollars to use for public benefit. This devolution has meant that an increasing number of young people are learning about public decisions and resource provision not from their interactions with government agencies and programs, but rather through their interactions with nonprofits. Through a close examination of OST programs, this research explores the relationship between program design and implementation, organizational structures and norms and the effects that both of these have on how young people think about themselves as political actors.

By examining OST programs for youth age 14 to 18, this research also contributes to the growing body of literature and policy efforts are concerned with civic and political engagement outcomes for citizens and youth (Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Ginwright and Cammorata, 2002; Putnam, 2000). It intends to inform resource allocation decisions for private and public entities that direct funding to OST programs (Mahoney and Parente, 2009; Collaborative Communications Group and C.S. Mott Foundation, 2006; Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-

School Time, 2005; Seppanan and deVries, 1993). It seeks to contribute new metrics to measure the quality of OST programs seeking political engagement to meet growing performance measurement demands from funders and civic leaders (Mahoney and Parente, 2009; McAdam and Brandt, 2009). The research adds new understanding to the growing body of research on youth development and out-of-school time needs of older youth (CBASS, 2010; Terzian et al., 2009; Aberton et al., 2008; Rublin et al., 2004). Finally, the research is intended to help program staff, community organizers, and civic leaders support youth engage in policy initiatives that affect their day-to-day lives and future prospects (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Tarifa et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2008; Yohalem and Martin, 2007; Williams, 2007; Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright and James, 2002).

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

The research arises out of interest in three main areas: 1) political learning and participation; 2) the role of non-profit organizations as sites for the provision of public and civic goods and 3) the use of community-based out-of-school time (OST) programs as sites for socio-political development. These content areas form the contours of the research and create a foundation for ensuing theoretical discussions and concepts.

Every year, youth in communities across the United States are engaged in a range of out-of-school time activities. From academic enrichment to arts-based programming to sports and recreation to health promotion and behavioral intervention. Young people participating in OST program activities build social skills, find support, express themselves creatively, explore important issues in their communities, and seek to affect change. These programs encompass a range of designs informed by a number of youth development perspectives and create important institutional learning environments that affect youth. It is within these environments that young people begin to assimilate their roles as political actors and citizens. These roles may be constructed in multiple ways from active and engaged to disengaged to socially controlled supporting the *status quo.*

27

Political Learning and Political Participation

Theories of political learning (including political socialization) and political participation are linked to systems and processes of decision-making, authority and control within political contexts where power and resource allocation are of primary concern. Yet who gets to participate and what that participation looks like can differ greatly based on one's theory of political participation. Should all be involved in decision making or is the delegation to a select few preferred? At what level should decisions be made and what accommodations should and could be made to encourage participation?

There are those political theorists who contend that full participation in a complex democracy like the United States is not possible, desirable or even necessary (Pateman, 1970). Based in the theoretical traditions of Locke and Hobbes, one set of theories sees political participation as the protection of self-interest. Participation within this context conceives of individual motivation toward collective action as a result of incentives or benefits (Leighley, 1996; Walker,1991; King and Walker, 1991). It is a rational choice. Self-interested motivation may take many forms. The acquisition of material goods such as land and wealth may motivate action. One may also be motivated to participate by the bonds of friendship, family, or fraternity. More ideologically driven passion or purposive interests are other driving forces that may motivate individuals act collectively with others. In each case, the motivation is to rationally maximize the value of concern supporting one's own self-interest (Walker, 1991).

28

Yet, pluralist thinkers (e.g., Schumpeter and Dahl) contend that the masses cannot be trusted to be rational decision makers even within the context of aggregated self-interest. Rather than a mass of self-interested demands, political participation is the act of choosing from among a number of competing elites. This theoretical formulation asserts that voters delegate their decision-making power to those with political expertise to engage in public decision-making processes (Pateman, 1970). This is the core of the representative democratic form. Within this brokered form of participation, policy designers and elected officials may go as far as to specifically assign "benefits" and "burdens" to certain groups based on perceived power of those groups. Rather than acting in the interest of constituents, representatives may work in their own self-interest in an effort to retain their role as public decision-maker. This may result in decisions in favor of those with power, but also with those whom the general voting public may perceive as deserving or whom are positively constructed (Ingram, Schnieder, and DeLeon, 2007; Soss, 2002). In this way, political participation of groups may be hampered through "social control" or enhanced through "social citizenship" (Soss, 2002). Political learning thus could be seen as either positively (e.g., rights, entitled) or negatively (e.g., marginalized, alienated) enforced. Such learning may also appear to be positively enacted, but actually result in negative or ineffective political participation outcomes (e.g. interests or demands are co-opted or dampened).

Another set of political theories see political participation arising out of human nature and a natural inclination towards association. Embodied in the theories of Rousseau and de Tocqueville, participation protects an individual's rights and also seeks

to educate and integrate the individual into a democratic society (Pateman, 1970). Within such contexts individuals are seen as being able to learn the skills and attitudes necessary to the exercise of democracy. Institutional contexts become environments where self-interest is connected and reconciled with the common good. Participation becomes a form of political expression. Again, these environments may also serve to squelch or curtail dissent.

Rather than putting decision-making in the hands of an elite few who may or may not serve the interests of constituents, theories of participatory democracy advocate for expanding decision-making on public issues to more individuals directly by increasing their opportunities to participate in such processes. Participatory theorists also argue for the inclusion of "sectors" outside of the political sphere (e.g., workplace, home, school) and "modes" beyond traditional voting and lobbying (Hildreth, 2012; Hilmer, 2010: Gould, 1989; Barber, 1984; Pateman, 1970). At a mundane level, participatory theories can be seen in a rationale and transactional exchange frame where individuals and groups are able to resolve collective problems through participatory processes that involve all interested parties (Hildreth, 2012; Glassman & Kang, 2011). A more transformational vision argues that increased participation in public decision-making in "all sectors of society" means more individuals will gain the skills and capacities to be actively involved in civic life and as result society itself will be transformed and better equipped to deal with "inequality, injustice, and exclusion" of all types (Hildreth, 2012: 299; Huber et al., 1997; Gould, 1989; Barber, 1984; Pateman, 1970).

In order to enhance participation, one set of participatory theories asserts that decision-making control and education are most effective in small collective groups (Wolfe, 1985). These theories advocate for devolved or decentralized political environments that create more opportunities for more voices to be involved in collective decision-making (Kaase, 1984). As stated above others are more expansive, seeing the need for participatory practices to infiltrate every sector of society so that institutions themselves are changed (Hildreth, 2012: 299; Gould, 1989; Barber, 1984; Pateman, 1970). Thus, citizens may not only increase their feelings of political efficacy by learning new skills and capacities (Hilmer, 2010), but they in turn may in teach institutions, especially political institutions, to be less corrupt and dysfunctional (Dzur, 2012).

OST programs present themselves as spaces for expanded political participation. In these environments they are able to explore political learning and participation. These programs are offered in community-based environments to a population, youth, without formal access to political power and few opportunities to participate in public decision-making. OST programs have the potential to shape the ways in which young people think of themselves moving forward as citizens and agents of change. This research seeks to understand how organizational structures, program features, and interactive processes within programs inform youth political engagement attitudes. It seeks to understand how these elements might best be arranged to support and promote political engagement that would allow young people to achieve their own desired policy outcomes.

Nonprofits as Sites of Civic Goods Production

Seldom are youth involved in the creation or evaluation of programs and policies that affect them. Therefore, it is important to understand how policy design affects young people. The mechanics of what make good policy design are often examined in relation to formal government institutions. This research asserts that the nonprofit sector is an equally valid site for evaluation and critique. Gaining additional insights into how nonprofit OST programs engage or don't engage youth can provide a step toward understanding how larger policies affect youth, especially those related to education, employment, public health, and criminal justice.

One can interpret the nonprofit formation of practices such as OST programs as attempts to address needs not served by either the government or commercial sectors (Gronbjerg, 2001: Young, 2001; Solomon, 1999). It could also be that as a sector, nonprofits possess certain assets that make them more attractive sites for the production of services such as OST programs. For instance, the nonprofit motive may bestow a greater amount of trust (Hansmann, 2003; Ortmann & Schlesinger, 2003; Te'eni & Young, 2003). Or the close contact with constituents may mean organizations in this sector have more intimate and local knowledge about gaps and service needs within a community (Ortmann & Schlesinger, 2003). Nonprofits as a sector produce collective goods that no single individual can produce (Olsen, 1971).

Regardless the rationales for formation, nonprofit organizations are increasingly sites of policy implementation (e.g., delivering goods and services), civic production (e.g., creating social bonds and trust), and political expression (e.g., engaging citizens in

public dialogue and deliberation) (Frumkin, 2002; Siriani and Friedland, 2001; Smith and Ingram, 2002; Lohmann, 2001; Gronbjerg, 2001; Smith, 2000; Smith, 1999). These organizations clearly produce key public goods such a health, education, and housing. Yet they are also sites for the production and delivery of "common" or "civic" goods (Lohmenn, 2001; Frumkin, 2002; Siriani and Friedland, 2001; Smith, 2000). For example, nonprofit organizations can act as community-builders, conveners, and sites for civic and political engagement (Sampson et al., 2005; Smith, 2000; Cohen, 2001). They are also conduits of information, political and organizational skills, communication and deliberation, and sites for the formation of public opinion (Warren, 2003).

As Putnam's *Bowling Alone* asserts, these sorts of civic spaces are disappearing to our great disadvantage. If we wish to create a vibrant public sphere we must do more than encourage and inform those of voting age or simply strengthen citizenship in schools. We also need investment and research into the mechanisms by which nonprofit organizations and other civic organizations build political participation skills and enrich community contexts (Soss and Jacobs, 2009; Chapman, 2008; McFarland and Thomas, 2006; Cohen and Dawson, 1993). For OST programs, the range of "civic goods" produced may range from building trust within small group environments to large scale collective action to address critical youth concerns (e.g. job access, juvenile justice reforms, accessible higher education). As independent entities, nonprofits organizations have the ability to seek out their own preferred outcomes and goals including those related to civic goods production (Gronbjerg, 2001). For the purposes of this research, the key civic good of interest is the extent to which nonprofit organizations are able to development the

political engagement attitudes in youth as a key ingredient in creating political actors and change agents.

Youth Development Toward Political Engagement

This research explores the range of youth programs offered in out-of-school time settings to youth in Boston with an assumption that some program goals (e.g., leadership development, civic engagement) are likely to lead to more concrete political engagement outcomes than others (e.g., childcare provision). Youth development theories are grounded in the larger field of human development and draw heavily from disciplines such as psychology, biology and sociology. Broadly, these theories address the manner in which youth make the transition from adolescence into adulthood. While there are various theories, they generally focus on psycho-social traits that if supported and nurtured will result in positive outcomes for youth (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002; Flanagan, 2003; Michelsen et al., 2002).

The 80s and early 90s saw a growth in new theories rooted in psychological human development (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002). During this time, youth development theories sought to address deficiencies in youth themselves. To ensure that youth become self-sufficient adults, key needs must be met such as access to material resources, provision of a safe and secure physical environment, overall physical and mental health, emotional and social support from caring adults, opportunities to gain knowledge and skills, interactions with peers and grounding in moral and spiritual norms. (Michelsen et al., 2002). The meeting of these needs is necessarily affected by "environmental" and "contextual" conditions such as family socio-economic status, place

34

of residence, and inherited physical and mental capabilities (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Michelsen et al., 2002; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Even youth who appeared to be functioning well were positioned within this context of prevention or problem waiting-to-happen.

By the mid-90s, the youth development field had shifted. The context had become one of assets and strengths not deficiencies. (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002). This new orientation emphasized "empowerment, exploration, and emotional health" rather than prevention of negative outcomes or problematizing youth (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002, p. 82). Yet, this positive development model still rooted itself within the psychological context of the individual. Critics argued that by ignoring the real social, economic and political realities of young people, especially oppressed urban youth, the positive model of youth development lacked the tools or framework to address the external forces at play (Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright and James, 2002).

Building from the individual strengths and assets of positive youth development, a model of community youth development sought to meld positive youth development with theories of community development (Perkins et al., 2001; Hughes and Curnan, 2000). Within this theoretical approach youth were seen as "actively engaged in their own development and the development of the world around them" (Perkins et al., 2009: 105). These dual processes of self and community developments were interactive and mutually reinforcing (Perkins et al., 2009; Lerner et al., 2003).

A social justice youth development model also emerged as a means to connect individual youth and with a larger realm of social and political concerns (Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Yohalem and Martin, 2007; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright and James, 2002). Concepts of "sociopolitical" and "pychopolitical" development informed this model (Morsillo and Prilleltensky, 2007; Watts and Flanagan, 2007; Prilleltensky and Fox, 2007). The social justice youth development model takes into account the often challenging and hostile environments that young people find themselves confronting. In addition to addressing the psychological needs of individual youth or simply urging youth to be engaged in the larger society, the social justice model seeks to create a "critical consciousness" that addresses issues of power within social relations (Parker and Bauknight, 2009; Ginwright and James, 2002). It analyses how power affects youth identity; it orients itself toward system change, and it looks to collective action and uses youth culture as the starting point (Tarifa et al., 2009; Harre, 2007; Ginwright and James, 2002). In addition to the "empowerment, exploration, and emotional health" of the positive youth development model, the social justice youth development model seeks stages of awareness ― "self -awareness," "social awareness," and "global awareness" (Ginwright and James, 2002). Each of these stages seeks to connect the individual youth to the larger context of social, economic and political arrangements within society.

Table 4 summarizes the four dominant theoretical approaches to youth development discussed above. These models provide frameworks for analyzing elements of OST programs and the organizations that offer them. Each model suggests a different

36

orientation towards political engagement and envisions a different role for young people in the policy arena. For example, the social youth development model constructs young people as vulnerable and dependent. Paternalistic policies focused on safety, healthy behaviors and protection would be the focus of program viewed through this theoretical lens. This would include policies concerned with preventing teen pregnancy, drug addition, and crime. Such policies would place authority in and respond to intermediaries acting on behalf of young people (e.g., schools, community leaders, healthcare professionals, law enforcement). In contrast, the social justice youth development model sees young people as able to lead and advocate for their own interests. Policies informed by this sort of orientation would place young people at the decision-making table (e.g., participatory budgeting) and programs would provide them with the skills and knowledge to navigate policy processes (e.g., analyzing power, political communication, organizing).

TABLE 4: Key Youth Development Models

	Youth Development Model	Policy Role	Key Features and Outcomes	Source
Youth Activity	Social Youth Development	Dependent	1. Bonding to prosocial family, school, and peers 2. Clear standards or norms for behavior 3. Opportunities for involvement in productive prosocial roles 4. Skills and competencies to be successfully involved in these roles including intelligence and a resilient temperament 5. Consistent systems of recognition and reinforcement for prosocial involvement 6. Work to prevent conduct problems — school misbehavior, truancy, drug abuse, teen pregnancy	Lerner, 2005; Ginwright and Cam-marota, 2002

Youth Empowerment	Positive Youth Development	Community Asset	1. Promoting positive relationships with peers 2. Emphasizing youths' strengths 3. Providing opportunities to learn healthy behaviors 4. Connecting youth with caring adults 5. Empowering youth to assume leadership roles in programs 6. Challenging youth in ways that build their competence	Lerner, 2005; Ginwright and Cammarota, 2002
Youth Engagement	Community Youth Development	Civic Actor	1. Creating a culture of respect and partnership 2. Creating a just and compassionate society 3. Creating safe space 4. Creating a culture of appreciation 5. Transferring practical, usable skills 6. Being conscious stewards of relationships 7. Finding and living one's true calling.	Hughes & Curnan, 2000
	Social Justice Youth Development	Agent of Change	1. Analyzes power in social relationships 2. Make identity central 3. Promotes systemic social change 4. Encourages collective action 5. Embraces youth culture	Ginwright & James, 2002
Non-Youth	Non-developmental	Consumer	1. Does not see youth developmental 2. Consumer of goods and services	n.s.

This research explores OST programs and organizations as they related the "sociopolitical" or "psychopolitical" development of youth participants. As such it looks to programs and organizations that exhibit elements of the community and social justice youth development models (i.e., youth engagement) and contrasts them with organizations that have OST programs with no stated youth development model.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Conceptual Framework

Conceptually, social norms and structural circumstances or institutions affect the ways in which youth understand, evaluate, and feel about the world around them. These cognitive, evaluative, and affective processes are important elements in the development of political engagement attitudes (Hess and Torney-Purta, 2005). This research assumes that involvement in out-of-school time (OST) programs can influence these processes. OST programs are also housed within organizations and these organizations work to influence the design, implementation and evaluation of such programs. If the parent organization espouses a specific theory about youth involvement or a specific youth development model, these perspectives have the potential to influence how the OST program operates. This is true even if the model is unconsciously articulated. The youth development model may even act as a proxy for organizational norms (e.g., goals, values, missions). This research seeks to understand how OST program design, implementation and accountability structures are influenced by organizational features (e.g., resources, decision systems) and how these organizational and program contexts in turn impact youth political engagement attitudes.

The diagram (Figure 3) below provides a visual representation of this process. This conceptualization takes into account that social norms and structural circumstances and institutions of the society surrounding nonprofits and youth, affect these organizations and the youth populations they serve.

FIGURE 3: Conceptual Framework
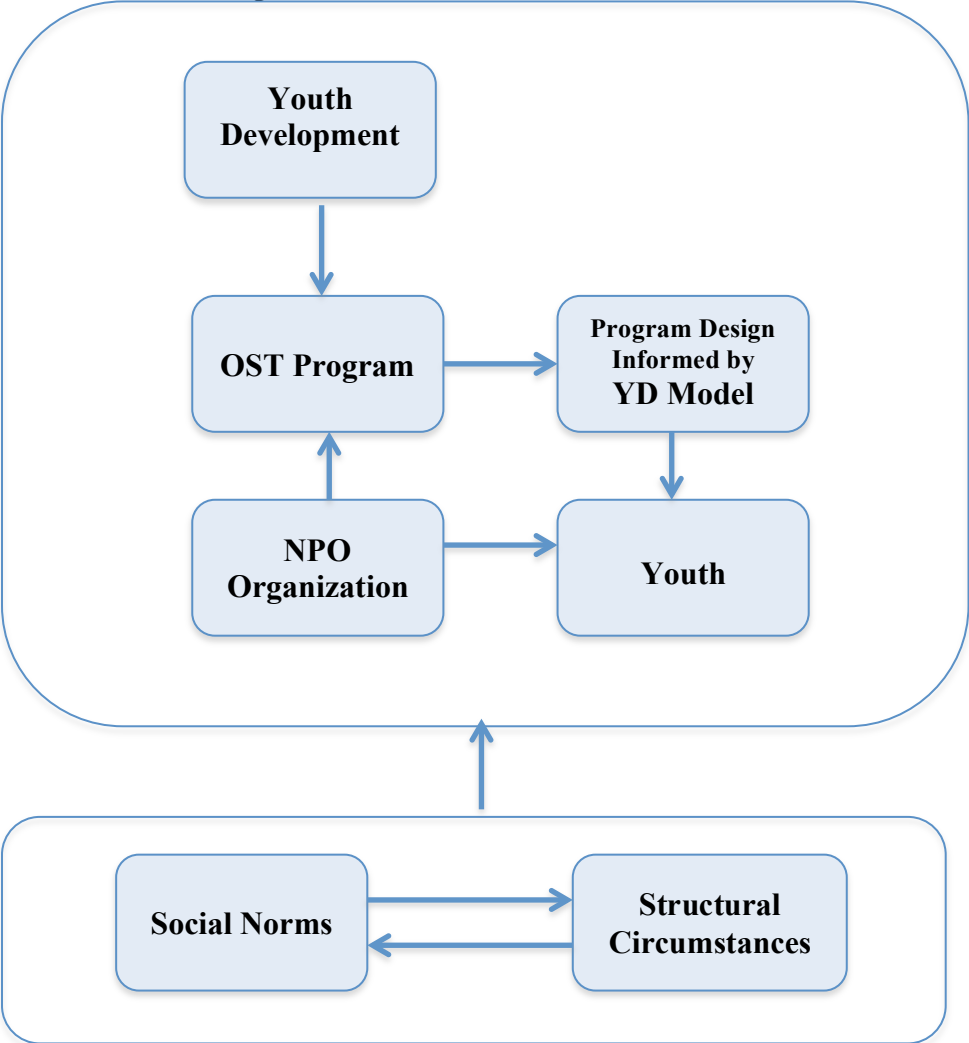
Source: Original image created with Microsoft Word.

Research Questions

With the above conceptual framework in mind, the research addresses the following main research question:

- What OST program features and elements are most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth?

These related questions are also explored:

- How are OST programs with and without a youth engagement orientation designed, implemented, and held accountable?
- How do participants in OST programs with and without a youth engagement orientation perceive the program, their involvement in it, and its affects on their personal development?
- What is the role or impact of organizational norms and structures on youth engagement and non-youth engagement OST program goals, objectives, and outcomes?
- How do larger social norms and structural circumstances influence organizations and the youth engagement and non-youth engagement OST programs offer?

Initial Propositions and Assumptions

The research works from a basic set of assumptions or propositions. OST programs that employ a social justice or community youth development model (i.e., youth engagement) will demonstrate positive political engagement attitudes among youth participants. These youth will display political engagement attitudes that are stronger and more defined than programs that have no clearly articulated youth development model. However, it is possible that forces external to the program (e.g., family, friends, school, media, faith community) will have stronger effects and account for the political engagement attitudes of youth. It is anticipated that the level of involvement in the program of each individual youth participant will also impact the degree to which political engagement attitudes are developed. It is expected that the following features

41

will be present in organizations that work to build positive political engagement attitudes among youth participants:

- Adults committed to political engagement are part of the program's organizational leadership, staff, adult mentoring effort
- Accountability and evaluation mechanisms track political engagement outcomes
- Strong alignment exists between organizational goals and program activities related to political engagement outcomes
- Linkages between the OST program to real world experiences are present
- Programs connect youth participants to community issues and community leaders in an effective manner
- Mechanisms are present to make power visible in a critically reflective manner
- Programs hold youth accountable and create challenging environments
- Programs provide decision-making opportunities and authority for youth participants
- There is ample peer and adult support in a collaborative environment
- Youth identity, voice, and expression are actively supported and developed
- Programs are perceived as effective by youth participants

It is possible, however, that despite the above, the program has limited or no effect and external factors or low youth involvement is responsible for political engagement attitudes. The following aspects of program design and implementation are expected to influence program outcomes:

- Power dynamics between participants and facilitators
- Stated goals, objectives, and outcomes
- Process or product orientation of the program and its activities
- Critical consciousness raising of youth participants
- Internal or external focus orientation of participants
- Role of youth participant in the program

However, the program's articulated youth development model may have little to no effect if there is misalignment between the parent organization and the program itself. Likewise, programs with no stated youth development model may have strong effects on

the political engagement attitudes of youth if particular program or organizational

leadership circumvents stated goals and outcomes. The research assumes that internal

forces (explicit or implicit) and accountability structures determine program goals and

activities. This assumption includes the power that funders have on programs. However,

it is possible that external entities such as local leaders, parents, or community attitudes

may result in program goals and activities that are not controlled by the organization or

its funders. Appendix A provides a detailed matrix matching the main and related

research questions to key propositions, indicators, data collection methods, and data

sources.

Methods and Data

The research questions seek to understand the processes, dynamics, and

mechanics of OST programs geared toward youth ages 14 to 18 and as such, suggest a

qualitative approach (Yin, 2009; Yin, 2008; Maxwell, 2005). In order to understand

different program environments and their impact on youth, the research uses a multi-case

site format with multiple units of analysis. The cases work to match youth characteristics

(e.g., gender, race, economic status) across programs. The maximum variation is along

the youth development model articulated by the organizational mission. Youth

engagement models, both community development and social justice, are on one end of

this spectrum and no youth development model is on the other.[6] In addition to you

development orientation, type of organization, age of organization, and program specifics

(e.g., time offered, costs, length) are other key variables (see Appendix B). There are

---

[6] It should be noted that despite this spectrum of youth engagement, youth development theories are often presented within their own silo of concerns (e.g., prevention, youth empowerment, community development, social justice).

three distinct units of analysis – organizations, OST programs, and youth participants.

An overview of the main research question with propositions, units of analysis, data

collection, and analytical strategies is provided in Table 5 and expanded upon in

Appendix A.

TABLE 5: Overview of Main Research Question

What out-of-school time program features and elements are most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth? **Independent Variable:** Youth development model of OST program expressed via program features and elements **Dependent Variable**: Political engagement attitudes of youth					
		Links between Data and Propositions			
Propositions	**Unit of Analysis**	**What Data?**	**How to Collect?**	**From Where/Whom?**	**Data Analysis Tools & Methods**
Those out-of-school time programs that most closely adhere to community and social justice youth development models will exhibit the greatest number of youth who perceive an increase in their ability to be politically engaged.	OST programs Youth participants	Political efficacy indicators Civic engagement and social action indicators Program features and elements	Interviews / focus groups Observations Document analysis	Youth participants OST program staff NPO leadership Web and external sources Literature	Pattern-Matching, Explanation-Building, and Cross-Case Synthesis (Yin, 2003) Tools: NVIVO8; manual analysis processes

Ethical Considerations

Because the research involved human subjects, IRB approval was granted in

March of 2011 from the UMass Boston Institutional Review Board and specifically

approved collection of data from minor children. Written parental consent as well as

written and verbal assent from the youth participants was secured using standard

informed consent documents. Anonymity of participants and sites has been protected

through standard protocols and pseudonyms for individuals and organizations are used

throughout. In most cases, participants chose pseudonyms. None of the organizations involved in the study had their own IRB boards.

<u>Definitions and Design Choice Rationale</u>

Location of research. Social norms and structures external to organizations and programs can have the potential to exert strong influences on the design and implementation of community-based programs (Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld, 1998; Weisbord, 1997; Wolpert, 1988). These external environments also impact the attitudes and values of individuals within a given context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). To control for these external factors, especially the influence of the public school system, cases reside within a single municipality – Boston, MA.[7]

As mentioned earlier, Boston, like some other mid-sized urban hubs (e.g. Charlotte, Denver, Seattle), provides a number of OST programs (Afterschool, 2010) and is home to over five thousand 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations with robust representation in the higher education and health sectors (NCCS, 2007). Boston is recognized as a city with an advanced network of OST programs (Mahoney and Parente, 2009). It is also a beneficiary of funding and infrastructure supports for OST programming, which is an additional strength evident in some, but not all, cities (e.g. Chicago, Providence and New York) (Hayes, 2009). One of these infrastructure resources is a pre-existing database of OST programs, the Boston Navigator (http://www.bostonnavigator.org), which provides free information on over fifteen hundred OST programs.

---

[7] The City of Boston comprises a number of incorporated neighborhoods which can be found here:
http://www.cityofboston.gov/neighborhoods/

OST programs defined. The research project focuses on out-of-school time

(OST) programs. According to a 2006 report by the American Youth Policy Forum,

> "[O]ut-of-school time (OST) programs and activities occur afterschool, on evenings and weekends, and during the summer. These activities are housed in various locations, both in schools and in the community. They provide youth with an opportunity to develop academic and other skills in a wide range of domains by offering high interest activities." (p. 2)

This research focuses exclusively on OST programs offered by 501(c)3 nonprofit

organizations as defined by the U.S. tax code. Programs run by schools, municipal

departments, and informal volunteer entities (e.g., parent groups and neighborhood

associations) each have their own unique operating environments and are influenced by

different social norms and structures (e.g., elected political bodies, federal and state

educational guidelines). Any program that specifically states that it serves youth in an

out-of-school type setting in Boston and is housed in a Boston-based 501(c)3 nonprofit

organization was considered part of the population of programs considered for the study.

Nonprofit organizations. Case selections came from nonprofit organizations with

formal 501(c)3 status as defined by the U.S. tax code (IRS, 2010). This ensured that

organizations shared a set of minimal characteristics (e.g., status authorized by IRS,

formal reporting at state and federal level, required organizational documents). Previous

research has shown that sector and organizational size both contribute to variations in

financial health, operational capacity, and funding mix (MacIndoe and Barman, 2009;

Keating et al, 2008; Guo and Acer, 2005; Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld,1998). This

research chose programs housed within organizations that belong to the human service

sector to control for these sector effects. Fifty-eight percent of OST programs offered by

nonprofit organizations in Boston are in the human services sector (Sullivan 2010; Boston Navigator, 2010; Massachusetts Nonprofit Database, 2010). Small to mid-sized organizations, those with revenues between $100K and under $1M, were also selected to control for size (Sullivan 2010; Boston Navigator, 2010; Massachusetts Nonprofit Database, 2010). Small to mid-sized organizations are large enough to hire at least some full-time staff, but are small enough that the organizational culture is not too diffuse.

  Youth. Youth, young people, teens, and adolescents are used interchangeably throughout the research to refer to individuals who are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. The physical age range for such populations tend to run from 12 to 25 years of age within the U.S. context. This research specifically looks at high-school aged individuals between the ages of 14 and 18. At times, the literature and supporting demographics include individuals slightly older or younger. The rationale for this choice of age group is two fold: 1) adolescence and the transition to adulthood are an important times when key values, including political attitudes, and identity formation solidify (Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Flanagan, 2004; Youniss & Yates, 1997) and 2) funding for this age group is distinctly different than the early education funding available for younger populations (Datta, 2010).

  Youth development. The term is used specifically to refer to human development processes from a wide range of perspectives (e.g., behaviour, cognitive, social, moral) that occur in the transition between childhood to adulthood. The term is bound by social and cultural contexts and for the purposes of this research should be understood in the context of an advanced, industrial, welfare state generally and the United States

47

specifically. Even more specifically, the research focuses on youth development process

within an urban setting – Boston, MA. Four specific models of youth development –

social, positive, community, and social justice – were used to categorize OST programs

and the organizations within which they are housed. The community youth development

and social justice youth development models are collectively referred to as "youth

engagement." Characteristics of these models can be found in Table 4 in Chapter 2. A

fifth option – no youth development model – was also considered.

  Political engagement. Political engagement and participation can be understood

from a variety of perspectives from voting to community organizing for social change.

This research uses the concept of *political efficacy* generally (Campbell, Gurin, and

Miller, 1954) and *internal political efficacy* specifically (Lane, 1959; Craig, Niemi, and

Silver 1990, p. 290) as measures of political engagement outcomes for youth populations.

According to Dyck and Lascher (2009) internal political efficacy,

> ". . . refers to a person's view of his or her own capabilities in democratic politics
> – whether or not the individual is sufficiently informed to participate, can make
> good decisions, etc." (p. 404)

  Internal political efficacy focuses an individual's attitudes and perceptions.

Additionally, measures of internal political efficacy have been confirmed through a

number of quantitative studies (Morrell, 2005; Craig, Niemi, and Silver, 1990; Lane,

1959; Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, 1954). The measure is composed of four separate

elements (Morrell, 2003; Morrell, 2005):

1. Ability to understand or have knowledge of political or community issues
2. Feeling able to participate in political or community issues
3. Feeling well informed about issues being discussed
4. Feeling as equipped as others to make decisions

A number of studies concerned with youth civic and political engagement outcomes have identified and operationalized internal political efficacy as a measure that allows findings from these studies to be used for this research (Watts et al., 2003; Kahne and Sporte, 2008; Torney-Purta. et al., 2007; McFarland and Thomas, 2006; Kahne and Westheimer, 2006; Youniss and Yates 1997). The internal political efficacy measure is supplemented by measures of expanded political activity and perceptions that range from external political efficacy to collective efficacy.

The research is concerned with youth attitudes about their own political engagement. As a perceptual measure, internal political efficacy is a suitable measure. A standard internal political efficacy survey was not used. Rather youth participants were asked reflective questions that prompted them to compare and contrast attitudes and perceptions related to their program participation and their own sense of internal political efficacy or their own ability to affect change. Responses were coded to formal measure of internal political efficacy.

Case Selection Process

The population of youth programs included in the research was drawn from a larger set of out-of-school time (OST) youth programs in Boston. These OST programs were drawn from two main data sources— the Boston Navigator, an online database of youth *programs* (N=1539), and 2007 Core data for Boston nonprofit *organizations* from the National Center on Charitable Statistics (NCCS) at the Urban Institute (N=5071). The Boston Navigator's unit of analysis is OST programs and data include program name, organizational affiliation, program activities and goals, program location, as well as ages

and genders served by the program. The NCCS Core file's unit of analysis is organizations and contains key organizational information (e.g., address, EIN) and IRS reported data (e.g., organizational revenue, classification, ruling date).

From the population of possible sites, a sample of 897 OST youth programs were identified that were run by 501(c)3 nonprofits in Boston. Given that the research was interested in the role of nonprofit organizations, all programs in the Boston Navigator database not run or sponsored by a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization were omitted as possible sites. Nonprofits needed to be incorporated in the City of Boston and only programs offered within the city's borders were included. To ensure inclusion of programs beyond the Boston Navigator dataset, organizational records from the NCCS were selected that had a good possibility of housing a youth-serving program. Variables in the NCCS dataset related to program activity (e.g., youth development), organizational type (e.g., human service), and IRS classification were used to include or exclude an organization. These were then cross-checked with the Boston Navigator dataset for matches. Those without matches were checked both via Internet web search and Guidestar[8] to confirm whether or not the organization served youth in an OST. Of the resulting 897 programs, 804 were in the Boston Navigator dataset and an additional 93 were supplemented from the NCCS search. It is important to note that the additional 93 programs added from the NCCS search display similar organizational characteristics

---

[8] Guidestar is an online data search service that provides easy assess to primarily IRS nonprofit data. It can be found at http://www.guidestar.org

(e.g., distribution of organizational size, age, and type) as the bulk of programs detailed in the Boston Navigator dataset.

The 897 programs were then geocoded using ArcGIS 9.0 from ESRI. This allowed for programs to be linked to Boston neighborhood boundaries downloaded from Zillow (2010) and census tracts downloaded from MassGIS (2010). Ninety programs were not able to be geocoded due to lack of a valid physical address. This mapping allows for a sense of geographic distribution of youth OST programs in Boston and for analysis of program offerings within each neighborhood. Census tract identification allowed linking of OST programs to key census demographics such as population, number of youth, poverty levels, race, and gender. It also allowed geographic analysis of programs for public transportation sites, school locations, public housing locations and other neighborhood and community resources with a spatial dimension.

FIGURE 4: Map of Youth OST Programs in Boston
(N=807)
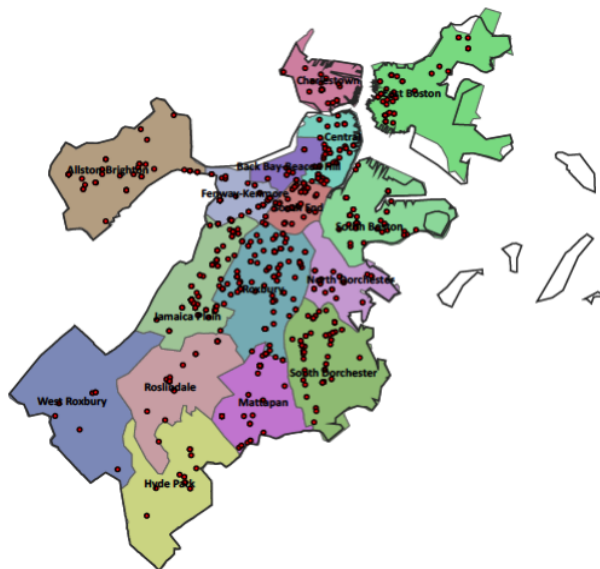
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010; NCCS Core Data 2007; Zillow, 2010; TIGER, 2000; and U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

51

FIGURE 5: Distribution of Youth Programs by Boston Neighborhood (N=807)
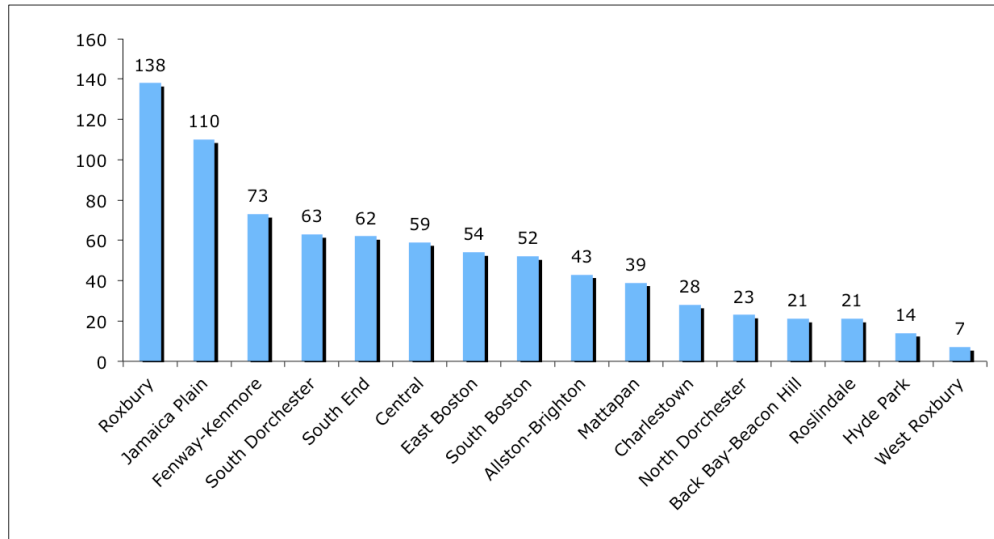
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010; NCCS Core Data 2007; Zillow, 2010; TIGER, 2000; and U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

The 897 programs were then further sorted and analyzed by organizational size, age, and sector. These characteristics have been shown by previous research to affect a variety of organizational factors such as decision-making, financial stability, funding mix, and organizational capacity (MacIndoe and Barman, 2009; Keating et al, 2008; Guo and Acer, 2005; Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld,1998). The breakdowns present the overall distribution of organizational characteristics linked to programs. Details are presented in Figures 6, 7, and 8.

FIGURE 6: Organizational Size using IRS Revenue in Dollars (N=897)
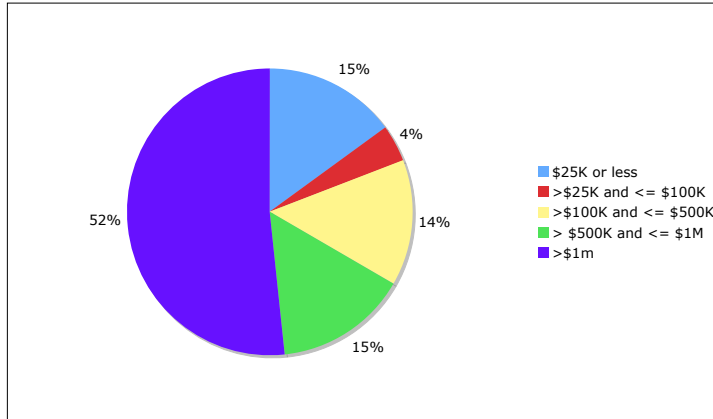
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010 and NCCS Core Data, 2007

FIGURE 7: Organizational Age using IRS Ruling Date (N=897)
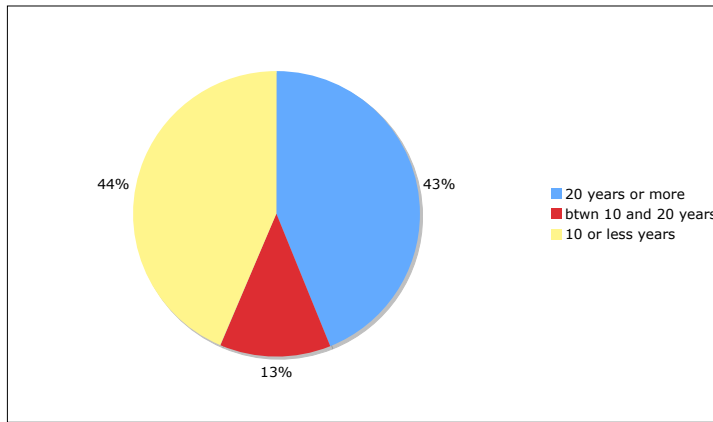
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010 and NCCS Core Data, 2007

FIGURE 8: Organizational Type using NTEE Major Group 12 (N=897)
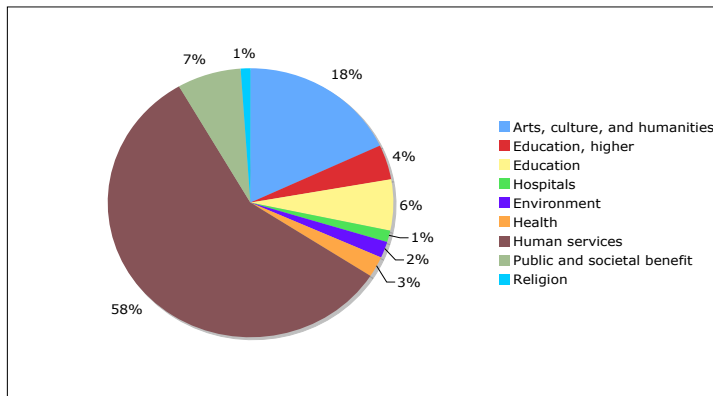
Source: Boston Navigator, 2010 and NCCS Core Data, 2007

From the 897 program, 262 programs were chosen because they were within organizations that could be defined as small to mid-sized with organizational revenues of between $100K and under $1M.[9] These 262 programs were also either part of an organization belonging to the human service or arts sectors. These two sectors were the predominant sectors in the larger sample representing 58 percent and 18 percent of programs, respectively. The 262 programs were then examined to determine whether or not they served youth ages 14 to 18. This information was gained through examination of program listings on the Boston Navigator. This further narrowed the sample down to 127 programs offered by 49 distinct organizations.

A web search obtained the mission statements for these 49 organizations. Using these mission statements, a conceptual sorting of organizations was created clustering like-organizations. A second sorting process used mission statements combined with key characteristics of the four youth development models (see Table 4 in Chapter 2) to score mission statements against youth development models. These scores were normalized to each other using a common denominator. From this scoring, organizations were grouped according to the dominant model at play within the organization. In addition to the four formal models, a non-youth development model was also included. These were then used to sort within each model from highest to lowest. Organizations with scores that were ranked above 2.00 for each organization were included in each of these groupings. A fifth

_____

[9] Organizational revenues are one method by which organizational size is determined (Eikenberry, 2008). Organizational assets and expenses are other methods commonly used (Yetman and Yetman, 2009; Carroll and Stater, 2008; Fsicher et al., 2007).

group was included where organizations that scored zero across three or more of the models was created as a non-youth development group. Organizations that were in both groups (dominant for organization and dominant among organizations) were then chosen for an even smaller sample. The two sorts (conceptual and youth development scoring) were combined to see which organizations hung together across both methods. Criteria from the larger population of youth programs that sorted by sector, age, and positive youth development identification were then added to aid in the analysis. With a greater number of possibilities, organizations in the human service sector were chosen.

From these combined sorts, 21 organizations formed four groups roughly corresponding to the youth development models detailed in Table 4 (Chapter 2): non-youth, youth activity (e.g., social youth development), youth empowerment (e.g., positive youth development), youth engagement (e.g., community youth development and social justice youth development). These 21 organizations were home to 59 separate OST youth programs in the human service sector. These programs are 62 percent of the sample, which closely mirrors the original 897 sample of programs. From these 21 organizations, eleven offered multiple youth programs. Most had programs that ran after school, evenings or weekends (A) and many had a summer programs (S). Three offered programs on a paid or fee basis ($) and five had a defined identity focus based on race, ethnicity or gender. In terms of age, 41 programs were in older organizations (10 years or more) and 18 programs were in younger organizations (less than 10 years) representing 69 percent and 31 percent respectively. These too were representative of the larger sample. All

details of potential case sites can be found in Table 7. For a listing of specific programs

offered at each organization see Appendix C.

TABLE 6: Potential Case Sites

Organization	Org Age	Sector	# Programs	Identity Focus	Activity	Program Time
Non-Youth						
Castle Square Tenants Organization*	Young	HU	2		ComDev	A, S
Friends of Beardsley Park*	Old	HU	4		Environ	A, S
Vietnamese American Civic Association	Old	HU	2	Asian	ComDev	A, S
Commonwealth Tenants Association	Old	HU	4		ComDev	A, S
Youth Activity						
South End Athletics & Activities	Young	HU	1		Sports	A, S
East Boston Youth Hockey Association	Young	HU	1		Sports	A
Greater Boston Hockey League	Young	HU	1		Sports	?
Salesian Boys & Girls Club	Old	HU	2		General	A
Youth Empowerment						
MissionSAFE	Young	HU	2		Enrich	A, S
LEAP Self-Defense	Young	HU	3	Girls	Sports	?
Boston Urban Youth Foundation	Young	HU	1		Academic	A
Montserrat Aspirers	Young	HU	1	Immigrant	Academic	A, S
Dorchester Youth Hockey ($)	Young	HU	1		Sports	A, S
Greenwood-Shalom Outreach ($)	Young	HU	1		Enrich	A, S
Boston Police Athletic League	Old	HU	1		Sports	?
Parkway Youth Hockey	Old	HU	1		Sports	A

Sportsman Tennis Club ($)	Old	HU	11		Sports	A, S
Partnership for Youth with Disabilities	Old	HU	5		Academic	S, ?
Youth Engagement						
Reflect & Strengthen	Young	HU	3	Girls	Support	A, S
Sesame Street Institute*	Young	HU	1		ComDev	S
Centro Cultural Latino*	Old	HU	11	Latino	Enrich	A, S

* Case sites included in the research and represented by pseudonyms chosen by participants.

Several case selection designs were possible. This research is concerned with how organizational structures and norms as well as program design, implementation, and evaluation impact the political engagement attitudes of young people. This project chose to contrast organizations with a youth engagement focus (e.g., community youth development and social justice youth development) against those with no articulated youth development focus as a means to provide the greatest contrast in program offerings. Four cases, two youth engagement and two non-youth oriented were chosen.

All selected case organizations offer summer programs, which controlled for activities conducted roughly at the same time. All four also had school-year or year-long programming as well. There existed a good amount of initial variation including age, number of programs offered, and identity orientation. In terms of geographic location, two of the organizations were located in Dorchester, one in Roxbury, and one in the South End. The youth served range from neighborhood youth to students from specific high schools to citywide youth. One program even engaged youth from suburban communities in the Greater Boston area.

57

TABLE 7: Selected Case Sites[10]

	Organization	Mission	Key Characteristics	Youth Served
Non-Youth	**Castle Square Tenants Organization** South Boston	Castle Square works to maintain affordable housing in their community and is a strong advocate of programs and services needed to build vibrant and safe communities.	Founded: 1994 Incorporated: 1994 Revenue 2007: $253,093 Revenue Mix: Diversified Board type: Constituent # of Programs: 2	Youth from the Castle Square Housing complex and other neighborhood youth. Also youth from other areas of Boston, especially those who attend the high school across the street.
	Friends of Beardsley Park Dorchester / Jamaica Plain	The Friends of Beardsley Park's mission is simple: to restore and preserve Beardsley Park, a historic urban greenspace located in the geographic heart of Boston.	Founded: 1974 Incorporated: 1980 Revenue 2007: $397,533 Revenue Mix: Single (private grants / donations) Board Type: Constituent # of Programs: 4	Citywide with many from surrounding neighborhoods
Youth Engagement	**Centro Cultural Latino** Roxbury / Mission Hill	Centro Cultural Latino has works in partnership with Latino youth and families to end destructive cycles of poverty, health disparities, and lack of opportunity in their community.	Founded: 1968 Incorporated: 1982 Revenue 2007: $992,702 Revenue Mix: Diversified Board Type: Institutional / Expert # of Programs: 11	Citywide with strong neighborhood commitment and emphasis on Latino youth and English Language Learners.
	Sesame Street Institute Dorchester	The Sesame Street Institute develops and strengthens the power of youth to work toward building a just society.	Founded: 1987 Incorporated: 2002 Revenue 2007: $882,825 Revenue Mix: Single (private grants /donations) Board Type: Hybrid (Constituent & Institutional / Expert) # of Programs: 1	Citywide with some from outside city including suburban areas.

---

[10] Additional details for organizations and programs are provided in Appendices H and I.

Data collection strategies were logically linked to the main research question and

related questions in order to maintain a clear chain of evidence. Each of these questions

in turn were linked to one or more of the three main units of analysis (see Table 8 and

Appendix A).

TABLE 8: Research Questions and Units of Analysis

Research Question	Unit(s) of Analysis
What out-of-school time program features and elements are most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth?	OST Program Youth
How are out-of-school time programs with and without a youth engagement orientation designed, implemented and held accountable?	OST Program
How do participants in out-of-school time programs with and without a youth engagement orientation perceive the program, their involvement in it and its effects on their personal development?	Youth
What is the role or impact of organizational norms and structures on youth engagement and non-youth engagement out-of-school-time program goals, objectives and outcomes?	OST Program Organization
How do larger social norms and structural circumstances influence organizations and the youth engagement and non-youth engagement out-of-school-time programs they offer?	OST Program Organization Youth

As suggested in Yin (2009), data collection was designed to provide multiple

sources of evidence or triangulation. Multiple sources and triangulation help improve the

validity by allowing different sources to check one another and allows for a more

complex examination of the research phenomena. This was accomplished by

interviewing individuals occupying different roles within each out-of-school time

program (e.g., youth participant, program staffer, organizational leader), interviewing

multiple youth within each program,[11] reviewing organizational and program documents,

reviewing theoretical and practitioner literature, interviewing key informants familiar

with the youth development and out-of-school time fields, examination of administrative

data on neighborhoods and schools and a scan of the main media environment. Table 9

provides an overview of data sources linked to the units of analysis.

TABLE 9: Data Sources for Units of Analysis

Organization	OST Program	Youth Participants
Norms Interviews with youth, staff and leadership Mission, vision, and value statements Strategic plan Promotional materials Informal observations Structure Organizational chart Board List Annual reports Articles of Organization Strategic plan Filed IRS 990s (3 years) Website	Design Interviews with youth, staff and leadership Program materials Website Implementation Interviews with youth, staff and leadership Program materials Informal observations Evaluation Interviews with staff and leadership Assessment tools	Pre-Program Skills & Attitudes Interviews with youth and staff Application forms Assessment tools Acquired Skills & Affected Attitudes Interviews with youth Informal observations Program artifacts Assessment tools

---

[11] It should be noted that due to constraints at one site, the Sesame Street Institute, multiple youth interviews were not possible. An additional interview with program leadership and observation of several program elements in action were added to this site to help provide additional perspectives and aid with triangulation.

External Context
Important to understand effects of family, community, school, work, faith-based, and government institutions on youth participants as well as organizational and program actors.
<u>Social Norms & Structural Circumstances</u> Key informant interviews with community leaders, funders, engaged youth workers Interviews with organizational leadership, program staff and youth participants at case sites Scan of public policy statements and reports related to youth, community development, schools and families in Boston Administrative data (e.g., MA DESE, U.S. Census) Media scan (*Boston Globe*)

Overall data management techniques. Data was managed using Dropbox, a cloud-based file system, which allowed for easy access to research materials across multiple sites and multiple platforms. Data was organized by type (e.g., interview, document, observation) and each file contained the date and case site identifier as part of the naming convention. A physical binder organized by site containing items that were too cumbersome to scan into an electronic format supplemented the Dropbox filing system. Collection techniques were standardized across all sites in order to create a uniform case protocol and to facilitate cross case analysis.

Interviews. A total of 28 interviews were conducted. Twenty-two of these were at case sites including youth (13), staff (4), and leadership (5). In addition to site-specific interviews, six key informants were also interviewed. Two of these individuals were long-time youth workers familiar with the Boston OST environment, one was a program officer at a local foundation whose portfolio contained a number of youth programs in the civic engagement, one was a professor of youth studies at a local university, one was a program manager at an organization that provided capacity building services for the OST

field in Boston, and one was an organizational leader at a youth organizations in the

Greater Boston area. Table 10 provides detail regarding the number and role type of

interviews conducted at each case site including the cross case key informant interviews.

TABLE 10: Interview Distribution by Case Site

Interview Type	Total 28	Centro Cultural Latino	Castle Square Tenants Org.	Friends of Beardsley Park	Sesame Street Institute
Youth Participants	13	4	4	4	1
Program Staff	4	1	1	1	1
Organizational Leadership	5	1	1	1	2
Total Organizational	**22**	**6**	**6**	**6**	**4**
Key Informants	6				

Interviews were conducted from June 2011 to February 2012. Most interviews

were conducted one-on-one with the researcher. The single exception was that youth at

one site, Centro Cultural Latino (CCL), requested that they be interviewed together. Four

semi-structured interview protocols, one for each role type (youth, staff, leadership, key

informant), were used for each interview to maintain consistency. These protocols

(Appendix D) were developed using a research design matrix and guiding questions

(Appendix A) that linked them back to the main and related research questions.

Youth interviewees were chosen from a list of OST program participants and

mirrored as much as possible each program's overall youth participant population. This

process was used mostly to prevent program staff and leadership from choosing their

stars and top achievers. Youth interviews at one site, the Sesame Street Institute, were

constrained and did not conform to this selection process. At this site, the researcher was

granted access to one youth participant. The researcher requested that an interview be

granted with a black female who had been with the program for two or more years and was part of the teen leadership crew. These criteria were set to get as much program information from the teen while choosing an individual sharing gender and race characteristics of the majority of the participants. Program staff at this site then coordinated the interview.

Interview transcription was via the Amazon Mechanical Turk service using a process similar to one described by Andy Baio (2008). Each interview was broken down into six-minute chunks (to speed transcription and protect anonymity of interviewee). The researcher then reassembled these. This process also had added benefit of second party validation. The researcher checked the accuracy of each transcription against the original audio file.

Documents. A range of documents was collected from each site (see Table 11). Websites from each case site were captured using a software program called Site Sucker. State filed annual reports and Articles of Organization (founding documents) were downloaded from the corporate database of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[12] Annual nonprofit financial reports (the IRS Form 990) were downloaded from Guidestar.[13] Additional materials were either obtained directly from staff at each case site or downloaded from organizational or program websites. Not all document types were available at each site. Documents were either saved in electronic or

---

[12] The Secretary of State is responsible for maintaining registration and incorporation documents for businesses in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts including those with nonprofit status - http://corp.sec.state.ma.us/corp/corpsearch/corpsearchinput.asp

[13] Guidestar is a well established entity that provides key data related to nonprofit entities including documentation submitted to the Internal Revenue Service - http://www.guidestar.org

physical format. Both types were managed according to the conventions described earlier.

TABLE 11: Document Detail by Case Site

Document Type	CCL	DERC	FBP	SSI
Website	x	x	x	x
Annual Report (state)	x	x	x	x
Articles of Organization	n/a	x	x	x
IRS Form 990 (3 years)	x	x	x	x
Board List	x	x	x	x
Strategic Plan	x	n/a	x	x
Assessment Tools	x	n/a	x	x
Program Artifacts	x	x	x	n/a
Application Forms	x	n/a	x	x
Program Materials	n/a	n/a	x	x
Promotional Materials	x	n/a	x	x

Informal observations. Informal observations of program and organizational space along with neighborhood contexts and social interactions were made during each visit to case sites. All sites were visited at least twice and occurred at both morning and afternoon times frames. These observations were approximately 15 to 20 minutes in length. Observation of program delivery was made at two sites – Castle Square Tenants Organizations and Sesame Street Institute. At Castle Square, the observation of a skill-building workshop, Nail Design, was observed as well as regular drop-in interactions. Each of these observations occurred in afternoon time frames and lasted for about 20 to 30 minutes. Two key program elements were observed for the Sesame Street Institute – morning assembly and a late morning seminar. Each of these observations lasted approximately 30 minutes. Observations were captured in a hand written notebook and supplemented by voice memos using a smartphone. These observations were then

synthesized and typed into an electronic document. Sketches of main program space were

also created and saved in the physical binder. Observations conducted are detailed in

Table 12.

TABLE 12: Informal Observation Detail by Case Site

Informal Observation Type	CCL	DERC	FBP	SSI
Program Space	x	x	n/a	x
Organizational Space	x	x	x	x
Neighborhood	x	x	x	x
Program Operation	n/a	x	n/a	x

Other sources. Boston census track data was downloaded from the U.S. Census

Bureau.[14] This data was used to gain context for organizational sites and was aggregated

to the zip code level using ArcGIS mapping software for insights into youth participant

neighborhoods and general resident socioeconomic status in that neighborhood. School

level data was obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education[15] with emphasis on school type, graduation rate, racial and ethnic

demographics, and standardized test scores. As the main paper of record for Boston,

headlines from the front page and metro sections of the *Boston Globe* were captured from

January 2011 through September 2011 in an excel spreadsheet for later coding by tone

and depiction of youth subjects. The researcher also attended the March 2012 Youth

Work Intensive (BEST Initiative, 2012), a gathering of program staff and youth engaged

in a variety of out-of-school time programs in the Boston area. Workshops on youth

organizing were the primary area of interest and notes from presentations and

---

[14] http://factfinder2.census.gov/
[15] http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/

conversations with youth workers were captured electronically via a tablet device and later saved to the electronic management system.

Data Analysis, Strategies, Techniques, and Processes

The main analytical strategies used by this research are grounded in the theoretical propositions suggested by the literature and possible alternative or rival explanations (Yin, 2009 ― see Appendix A). The case study design sought to compare and contrast program designs and implementation as well as organizational structures and norm across sites. The research looked to build theories about what might affect political engagement attitudes among youth in OST programs and as such inform future research. Analysis looked at each individual case site and also looked across cases by unit of analysis. Four main analytical techniques were used consistently throughout: 1) pattern matching, 2) clustering, 3) explanation building, and 4) cross case synthesis (Yin, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Lists, sketches and diagrams were tools used throughout to capture connections, patterns and thoughts between programs and analytical units as well as within case sites. These sketches or diagrams translated into formal analytical memos often after several versions of working to visualize themes, connections or concepts seemed more solidified (Yin, 2010; Saldana, 2009). Analytical memos were also used to capture initial thoughts from informal observations, reactions to interviews, insights from additional theoretical readings, and emerging thoughts. These in turn informed the data collection process throughout. Metaphors (Saldana, 2009: Corben and Strauss, 2008) for each case site were used as conceptual shorthand. These metaphors were created early on, reworked and

modified during the entire process as new information tested the strength of each metaphor.

In terms of process, IRS filings and select organizational documents (e.g., articles of organization, annual reports, website) were analyzed prior to interviews using a matrix to aid in cross case comparisons. The comparisons provided an initial understanding of the organizational context prior to interviews. Matrices were also used during the initial transcription check for interviews to capture key elements for each role type (e.g., youth, staff, leader). This allowed for emerging cross case summaries according to role that were then transformed into analytical memos.

All materials (audio files, transcripts, organizational documents, matrices, sketches, reflective memos — written and voice) were brought into NVivo, qualitative research software. The data structure of the electronic file management system was replicated in NVivo. Provisional analytical codes were created based on the research question and assumptions (Appendix E). The first pass at coding was for structural and descriptive purposes (Saldana, 2009) to assign site and role designations. The second pass coding used the provisional list adding additional codes as key concepts were needed. This second pass of coding randomly selected interviews within role type. As coding was conducted, analytical memos were created within NVivo as themes and concepts were pulled from the interviews and documents. Excerpts and examples were drawn directly from the source materials into these memos. Emerging insights, syntheses and potential findings were kept in separate analytical memos for future reference.

The analytical memos and coded material were then analyzed for patterns and potential connections often seeking to cluster and refine theoretical concepts. This process of pattern seeking, clustering and refining happened multiple times throughout the analytical process. Matrices, diagrams, and exploratory writing further aided this analysis. For example, matrices were critical in displaying key elements in each unit of analysis (e.g. youth, OST programs, organizations) in a manner that highlighted commonalities and differences. This in turned help in organizing and synthesizing new themes and concepts. These high order concepts and themes were used in shaping key findings for the research.

Validity, Limitations, and Challenges

Regarding validity, the research works from standard methods for case study design (Yin, 2003: 34; Miles and Huberman, 1994). For example, research questions were used to guide the design and creation of interview questions and themes. Common protocols for interviews were created for each role and used across sites to enable consistent comparisons of data. Checklists managed collection of documents across sites and were organized through both an electronic and digital file system. Additionally the researcher worked to address bias in description and interpretation of data (Maxwell, 2005; Maxwell 1992). In part this was done through securing multiple sources of data that worked to confirm details of programs and organizations. Organizational leaders and program staff were also asked to provide feedback on case description to check interpretation of findings. Thorough documentation, detailed protocols, and confirmation of analyses by participants, field experts, and outside readers were key. Seeking

alternative explanations, looking for negative explanations, and exploring outliers was also used to question finding validity. For example, information on home and school environments was obtained from teens since they have been shown to influence political efficacy, and these environments were considered during analysis. Consulting new literature to understand and confirm findings was also used as new understanding emerged.

As detailed earlier, case site selection was based on detailed and theoretically driven criteria that were applied to a large potential pool of sites. OST programs with contrasting youth development models were selected to provide opportunities for comparison that could provide insights into alternative explanations and considerations based on difference.

Interviewees were selected according to role type within the organization and were designed to provide multiple perspectives on the design and implementation of OST programs offered. Further, a youth interviewees were drawn from a pool of program participants at each site and attempted to mirror participants in each program and were chosen by the researcher to prevent cherry-picking by staff of high achievers or positively oriented youth participants. The exception to this was noted in the interview section above. Audio recoding of interviews, third party transcription and researcher transcript checks along with use of actual documentation from case sites sought to limit researcher bias in describing data collected (Thomson, 2011; Maxwell, 1992).

While the number of interviewees was small, the aim for this study was to build new theory. Thus, this research didn't strive for generalizability or representativeness,

rather it worked to unearth the dynamics and processes at play in OST programs in order to understand how they might be linked to improved political engagement attitudes for youth. Richness and depth of data were preferred over breadth. Within such a context, small interview sample size is not problematic as long as the findings are interpreted with these constraints in mind (Small, 2009).

As stated earlier, multiple sources of evidence (e.g., triangulation of data) (Yin, 2009), including additional theoretical literature and key informant interviews, were used. A strong evidence chain links the main and related research questions to data collection and analytical strategies. A case study protocol consisting of data collection instruments and processes was replicated across all sites to allow for comparability across sites. A case study database using both Dropbox and NVivo maintained a solid audit trail. These efforts along with the research design were implemented to provide credibility and transparency to the research (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Replication is not the main indication of external validity for this particular research. However, the research is guided by theory with new and emerging concepts supported through additional literature. For instance, new literature in about youth sociopolitical development was used to supporting research findings and a reconceptualization of the theoretical framework (McIntosh & Youniss, 2010; Sherrod et al., 2010).

In terms of internal validity, varying understandings and definitions of political engagement had the potential to confound the results. Standard and empirically tested measurements of internal political efficacy (Morrell, 2003: Clarke et al., 2006) were used as guides in coding youth responses. However, by coding youth responses rather than

70

measuring through a standard survey, interpretive bias has the potential to affect attempts to seek external validity or generalizability. Additional measures of external political, civic, and community efficacy were also used to provide greater context (Kahn and Westheimer, 2006; Curran, 2007; Bobek et al., 2009, Terkla et al., 2007; Nishishiba, et al., 2005). Codes for program elements and organizational features were developed using concepts within the youth development literature.

Given the generational gap between the researcher and the participants, shades of meaning and concepts from youth participants were checked throughout the interview process. For example, the researcher often synthesized the response from youth and asked for confirmation of such understanding within the context of the interview itself. Insights from youth workers and those who have long standing experience working with youth populations were also sought. This was done through interviewing two key informants who were working with youth similar to those in the study, as well as two other key informants who had interactions with many youth serving organizations in the Boston metro area. Participation in several sessions of an annual conference of Boston area youth workers was another strategy used to address this potential generational bias.

Insights about political efficacy are confounded by the self-selection bias of participants in the out-of-school time programs. While a comparison of youth in non-youth and youth engagement programs provides insights about different program environments, ascertains about youth not engaged in OST programs should not be made. Other factors also influence political efficacy (e.g., previous community service, politically engaged home environment) (Levy, 2013; Beaumont, 2011; McFarland and

Thomas, 2006) and interviews with youth participants worked to unearth the influence

that school, home, prior experience, and other such external factors played in their

internal political efficacy attitudes. External data on these contexts were also brought into

the analysis especially as potential alternative explanations. These elements combined

worked to understand possible alternative or rival explanations to findings (Maxwell,

2005) and address potential validity threats.

CHAPTER 4

LOOKING DEEPER: ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS IN THE

SOCIOPOLTICAL DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

An Overview of Organizations and Programs

The programs serving teens as well as the organizations that house them were

chosen to highlight contrasting examples of youth development strategies. Two

organizations, Centro Latino Cultural[16] located in Roxbury and the Sesame Street

Institute in Dorchester have clearly articulated youth development models that seek youth

engagement or empowerment. These organizations identify themselves as youth

development organizations and primarily serve young people. The other two

organizations, Castle Square Tenants Organization in the South End and the Friends of

Beardsley Park, whose office is in Dorchester with the park straddling Dorchester and

Jamaica Plain, serve a general constituency of which teens are one subgroup. From their

missions, neither of these two organizations articulated a youth development model.

---

[16] All organizational names as well as the names of individuals interviewed are pseudonyms. In most cases
these pseudonyms were chosen by the interviewees in the study.   All interviewees provided informed
consent to participation with the understanding that their identities and the identities of their
organizations were not disclosed. Individuals under 18 years of age gave formal assent along with
informed consent by legal guardians. The Institutional Review Board at the University of Massachusetts
Boston approved all procedures and protocols.

However, it became clear during the interviews that although neither Castle Square Tenants Organization nor the Friends of Beardsley Park viewed their organizations as being focused on youth development, the youth-serving programs at each site had developmental goals for their young people. The staff at the Friends of Beardsley Park spoke consciously of positive youth development. The coordinator of the organization's Youth Park Stewards program, Tony White, was a member of the Boston Youth Environmental Network that provided professional development, youth development resources, and information on environmental education to OST programs (Boston Youth Environmental Network, 2013). Acting director, Cynthia Gardner (2011), also stressed that professional development for Tony in the area of working with youth was important:

> There were a few obstacles just getting the content to do the after school work because we wanted it to be a little more than just working in the park, and he has really developed. He has done some amazing stuff around energy and he had the young people do research on different fuels for cars and some of the new technology that is coming out.

Staff at Castle Square didn't articulate a conscious youth development model but there was definitely a sense of young people being viewed as having strengths and being in development. When asked why youth activities at the Castle Square Community Center were important, Emilio Flores (2011), Center manager, explained:

> I feel like a lot of that has to do with, you know, the teens having, uh, something to do and being engaged, and even if they're, you know, they come here reluctantly or they're not that interested in the program, at least they're not out getting into trouble somewhere. . . . [W]e always talk about the sort of tangible things, like they'll be able to go to college and get a job and support their family. . . . But I guess there's more to it than that, um, just, you know, having a good attitude about things, and you know, maybe growing up a little bit, being more mature and sort of I think that there's a lot of development stuff.

74

During her interview, executive director Deborah (2011) detailed her hopes for

the young people at Castle Square:

> I also think its important for the youth know that you can live beyond Section 8,
> and it tends that when you grow up in the neighborhood where it is Section 8, and
> you don't know anything else, and you think that this is what you are supposed to
> do. . . . You know, when I was a little girl, it's like what do you want to have or be
> when You grow up. And I said: "Well, gee, I want to have a husband, I want to
> have kids, I want to own my own house and I would like to have my own
> business." . . . So I just felt that the kids here needed to have these opportunities
> also.

Each case site organization and the specific program analyzed (see Table 13) for

this study are explored in the sections that follow. Organizational features such as

location, mission, leadership, resources (human, material and financial), constituents

served, and external relationships are detailed along with an assessment of perceived

values and norms. For each OST program, the case site descriptions include details about

program resources (including its physical space and staffing), guiding pedagogical

strategy or theory of change, goals and objectives for youth participants, program design

(including recruitment, activities, skills developed and evaluation mechanisms in place)

and roles of both youth and adults within the program. Dynamics related to interpersonal

interactions (peer-to-peer and youth-to-adult), motivation for participation, and external

influencers on youth such as family and friends will also be explored.

The programs and organizations at the core of this research can be framed as

metaphors representing specific responses to the political learning and socialization needs

of the young people they serve. While each programmatic metaphor may incorporate

elements from the others, driving characteristics of the program are used to form the

archetype. These metaphors were created during data collection as a mechanism to understand the dynamics and processes happening at each case site. Metaphors are a recognized analytical device used within qualitative research contexts (Saldana, 2009: Corben and Strauss, 2008). The metaphor for each site was defined and refined in an iterative process that occurred throughout the data collection and analytical phases of the research.

For instance, Castle Square Tenants Organization was housed within an apartment complex; it seemed to be an extension of the home, almost like a communal living room. The teens and staff seemed to talk and speak of each other as "family." The organization as a pseudo family was not a hard metaphor to attach to the organization. Initially, Castle Square was conceptualized as the "supportive" family. However, given that the young people were able to develop such a strong sense of self and voice within the context of the organization, the idea of *The Empowering Family* seemed to be a better fit.

Youth hired as part of the Youth Park Stewards program at the Friends of Beardsley Park clearly saw themselves as being engaged in a summer job and the organization was their workplace. Given that the organization ended up having a model of work informed by positive youth development concepts and that teens worked in teams, it was not hard to think of this program as *The Team-oriented Workplace*.

The Sesame Street Institute was working from a school or learning model. But the question was what kind of school? The first descriptive that came to mind was "progressive." The organization worked from a social justice stance in its educational work. Upon further thought and reflection the organization was actually concerned with

76

re-booting and liberating young people from the normative structures they typically find themselves in. The Sesame Street Institute became *The Liberation School* linking it the critical pedagogies informing the organization's mission and values.

The most difficult metaphor to create was for the Centro Cultural Latino. Initially, the organization's focus on professionalism and moving young people into responsible adult roles suggested a business or a factory. But those images seemed too cold for the type of relationships that the organization sought. The center was teaching youth, but also forming and shaping them at both the personal and professional levels. The concept of a workers' union came to mind. However, that term was a bit too political for the nature of the organization. Eventually, the idea of a guild seemed to resonate with what was unfolding in the context of this organization. The teens were definitely in a work-oriented space, but a space that was interested in them being mentored and trained to have a solid and engaged role in the public realm. Centro Cultural Latino became *The Citizenship Guild*. Table 13 brings the organizations, programs and metaphors together.

TABLE 13: Case Sites, Programs, and Metaphors

Non-Youth (Multi-Constituent Organization)	Youth Engagement (Youth Constituent Primarily)
Case 1 Castle Square Tenants Organization: Teen Center ***The Empowering Family***	**Case 2** Centro Cultural Latino: Community Organizers ***The Citizenship Guild***
Case 3 Friends of Beardsley Park: Youth Park Stewards ***The Team-oriented Workplace***	**Case 4** Sesame Street Institute: Youth Lead ***The Liberation School***

Castle Square Tenants Organization: The Empowering Family

As the *Empowering Family,* Castle Squares Tenants Organization's Teen Center worked primarily in developing the individual or self-domain while helping youth transition into the interpersonal and group domain. Teens were encouraged to develop their interests and skills while at the same time exploring new ones. Creating a welcoming and inclusive culture within the organization and building strong relationships amongst all members were important features of this organization and its programs. A sense of "family" and "care" were articulated throughout the interviews. Teens indicated that they found their "voice," were responded to, and became "responsible." In part these were developed through a highly responsive and adaptive stance towards the needs of youth participants. Youth were challenged and provided multiple levels at which to contribute to the organization as well as the larger community.

The Organization

Location. The Castle Square Organization has offices and programming space in storefront locations that are part of the Castle Square affordable housing complex. Castle Square Tenants Organization represents the residents of Castle Square and collectively these residents are the majority owners in the property. Castle Square is on an active part of Tremont Street in the South End bordering Boston's Chinatown. The organization's immediate neighborhood is in the process of gentrification where low-income (over a third living below the poverty line) and working class residents share streets with trendy

new eateries and high-priced condo developments. The census tract[17] where Castle

Square is located has a population profile where over seventy percent of nearby residents

are Asian and over 62% are foreign born from Asia (U.S. Census, 2012). Less than eight

percent have completed college and a little over twenty percent are under18 years of age

(U.S. Census, 2012). A thriving community garden is a block away and the site has

ample public transportation options served by both bus and subway lines. However, the

closest T-stop, Back Bay, is about half a mile from the Castle Square's main office. The

organization is not far from key city resources such as the main branch of the Boston

Public Library, Boston Common, the Public Gardens, South Station and a number of

nonprofits serving a variety of constituents including youth. A public middle and high

school are literally across the street from Castle Square as well as a two-year trade

college.

     Mission and history. Castle Square Tenants Organization was founded in 1987

(Castle Square Tenants Organization, 2011) and gained nonprofit status in 1994

(Guidestar, 2011) with a mission to preserve the organization's housing units:

> . . . as affordable housing for low and moderate income residents into perpetuity
> and provide comprehensive community and social supports for residents of [the
> Castle Square housing complex] and the surrounding community. (Castle Square
> Tenants Organizations, 2011).

    From an interview with executive director, Deborah Backus (2011), the Castle

Square complex was originally developed in the 1960s as affordable housing in part with

funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In 1992, as the

---

[17] Neighborhood demographics for organizations can be found in Appendix I.

complex's affordable housing designation was set to expire, residents, through the Tenants Organization, worked to ensured that its affordability was sustained by becoming resident owners of the property in partnership with a private developer and with the help of *pro bono* legal help from a prestigious local law firm. In 2010, Castle Square became majority owner in the property and has continued to keep the Castle Square apartments affordable while providing a wide range of services for its residents and others in the surrounding neighborhood.

Human resources. Castle Square has a relatively small staff with positions covering administrative, resident service and programmatic areas. Many of the program staff work part-time and during the summer there are paid positions for youth with the organization. Funding for these positions is primarily through the Boston Youth Fund (Flores, 2011). There is racial and ethnic diversity amongst the staff with half being Asian and the rest mixed between those who identify as Latino, White and African American. The majority of staff, six, are women. The staff comes from a mixture of backgrounds with expertise in affordable housing, technology, media, nonprofit management, and education. A number of the individuals are current or former residents of Castle Square (Backus, 2011).

According to Emilio Flores, (2011), the organization was in the process of formalizing and stabilizing its human resources with particular attention to programmatic positions in the Community Center. Deborah (2011) also noted that she especially was looking for a stage in the organization's development that she didn't "have to

micromanage" and could basically get "along with everybody" and "be true to [the organization's] mission."

Leadership. Castle Square's executive director, Deborah (2011), is an African American woman in her 50s who had once been a resident of Castle Square Housing Complex as well as one of the founding members of the organization. She had been involved in the organization becoming resident owners in the complex. She later moved out of the complex and started her own consulting business advising other affordable housing organizations on a range of issues. She was working for another housing related organization when the board of Castle Square asked her to return as a consultant and later asked her to take over the executive director position in 2003 (Backus, 2011).

As a former resident, Deborah knows many of the young people's parents and expresses a desire to help them, like they were her own children. However, her key commitment is to the development of community-based board leadership and affordable housing development. She is committed to getting the board to see that they "own" the property and are responsible for the decisions of the complex (Backus, 2011).

Tenants Organization's board members are all residents of the Castle Square Housing Complex and are elected by other residents to "make decisions about the direction of the organization" (Castle Square Tenants Organization, 2011). Deborah noted in her interview that she the predominantly female group (six of the seven members) is multi-racial with half of the group being Asian. According to both Deborah (2011) and Emilio (2011), one of their newest members is Hun Kiang who had been an

active member of the Teen Center and worked on a WiFi project while he was a student at Bunker Hill. In her interview Deborah (2011) shared:

> . . . he started out being in the after school program. [H]e went from, you know, being in high school, middle school, being over there, and helping us build the WiFi network with Emilio and last year he said he was interested in becoming a board member. And we've always wanted a young person, because, basically, everyone's up in age. We need to get younger folks in, get the younger perspective of what the needs are here.

Financial resources. In terms of Castle Square's financial position, the organization's revenues in 2007 were a little over $250K and they were able to steadily grow these by about $200K to $454,839 in 2009 with a three-year average of $341,040. While their assets were modest in 2007 ($52,037), they more than quadrupled them to $212,933 in 2009 ending up with a three-year asset average of $116,312 (U.S. Treasury, 2011; U.S. Treasury, 2011b; U.S. Treasury, 2011c). In 2009, the organization's revenue was pretty evenly split between contracts and private grants and donations with a decent amount originating from program fees ("2009 return of,"2011c). The diversified revenue mix and increasing assets would suggest that the organization is entering period of growth (Froelich 1999; Stone, Hager & Griffin, 2001).

External relationships. As the entity charged with representing the residents' ownership interest in the Castle Square Housing Complex, the organization works closely with the minority owner Weber Management. Deborah (2011) also indicated the organizations was also in the process of building collaborations with other organizations like Blackstones' Community Center, YouthWorkers Alliance, and Costco International. Programs at the Community Center also worked with the public high school and tech college across the street from the complex (Flores, 2011). Formal relationships with

parents were in the developing phase and a parent advisory group had been set up (Flores, 2011). Other than that, Emilio (2011), did note that some parents had a negative impression of the Center and in particular its Teen Center program. He admitted it was sometimes "a challenge just to . . . convince the residents that we are legit" in terms of offering substantial programming to teens (Flores, 2011).

Constituents and programs. In terms of constituents, Castle Square primarily serves the residents of its housing complex and secondarily those living in the surrounding neighborhood. Their programs target the predominantly Asian tenants at Castle Square with separate offerings for seniors, adults and youth (Backus, 2011; Flores, 2011; Castle Square Tenants Organization, 2011). A number of the organization's programs had started in the mid to late 1990s as part of community center offerings and its main program space is called the "The Center." Programs offering adult computer literacy, free wireless Internet, and basic computer repair are legacies of this early work.

While Castle Square does not indicate from its mission or other NTEE classifications that program activity involves youth development work, its most extensive programs serve exactly these young constituents. Afterschool and summer programs for elementary and middle school-aged children provide both academic support and enrichment. These out-of-school programs for younger kids had moved from an informal drop-in program to a formal, licensed program over the course of four to five years starting in about 2006 (Flores, 2011).

The organization's Teen Center provides leadership workshops, academic support, tutoring, employment, internship opportunities, skills for independent living,

drop-in opportunities for socializing and enrichment activities such as multimedia

production in video and music (Castle Square Tenants Organization, 2011). However,

from the interview with Community Center manager, Emilio Flores (2011), the

programming with teens is rather "organic." When asked if they had a specific teen

program Emilio shared:

> No I guess not. And that's one of the things that Debbie was mentioning early is
> about how we're trying to develop a much more comprehensive plan that
> addresses some . . . [of] the teens needs and how to meet those needs. Yes some
> of the stuff I've been reading up on about other programs they start out with their
> program philosophy and earlier about leadership and empowerment and how
> technology or whatever it is and I feel like we never had that for the teen program
> here. It was always drop in. (Flores, 2011)

> ***Norms and values.*** This organic approach to teen programming may in part be

linked to a set of organizational norms and values related to adaptability, responsiveness

and support of individual imitative. When asked to talk a bit more about these ideas,

Emilio Flores (2011) shared that in terms of programming it's:

> . . . [y]our program, you work on it, you bring in the kids, you bring them snacks,
> find the funding whatever it is, you know if you need our support, we'll support
> you, but we're not going to do anything for you, just don't have the time. And so
> the board and Debbie have you know that's sort of their philosophy, very hands
> on as far as getting things done, very flexible, very much taking initiative . . . and
> if you don't, you don't last very long because the program just won't survive,
> because it's your program.

> Deborah (2011) confirmed this in her interview as well:

> And I'm all about, you know, open to my staff. If you have an idea about
> something, you think it's good, come to me and I'm very open. If I think it's
> something, if I think it's doable and feasible, then I'll say, "let's try it."

> This sense of openness also seemed to translate to the relationship sphere. Emilio

(2011) noted that staff was "very open about [their] interests" and that regular

84

communications with teens and other youth ensured staff also knew about what the teens were thinking and experiencing. Emilio felt these features created a "family environment."

This family feeling was shared by the teens interviewed. Stephanie (2011) spoke of a "connection" and everyone being like "a little family." Malinda (2011) talked of "getting to know" everyone and Ben (2011) said, "if something was wrong with [his] mind" he had someone to talk to. BD (2011) expresses this family and connection feel well:

> I would describe it how it really felt like a family, it really does. After a while I've gotten so close with everybody here what everybody does, and it reminds me of home. Like being at home with my actual family and just hanging out just experiencing family life.

These relationships between teens and with adult staff will be explored in greater detail as they relate to the teen umbrella concept at Castle Square – Teen Center.

The Teen Center

Program space. The organization's youth programming takes place in a small storefront location called "The Community Center." The space houses two classrooms, a computer lab, multimedia production room, kitchen, and shared office space (see Figure 9). The space is multi-purpose serving younger kids in afterschool programs, teens, adults and senior citizens. Teen activities spanned the use of all of these spaces, including the shared office. The space seemed cramped for the amount of activity it supported and plans for a new more spacious center were part of the housing complex's energy retrofit project that was in progress during the research (Flores, 2011). Despite the cramped quarters, the space had lots of life to it with inspirational quotes on the wall,

85

displays of artwork, press clippings, photos, and educational materials in the classrooms (Observation, June 15, 2011).

Program staff. Emilio Flores is responsible for managing the Community Center and was the primary program person interviewed for this study. However, other staff working in the Center had daily interactions with the teens in the Teen Center. This included Mark, the coordinator of the programs for elementary and middle-schoolers; Vera, coordinator for the tech programs, Molly, the new teen coordinator, and Max a part-time instructor for the multimedia program.

FIGURE 9: Castle Square Tenants Organization Community Center Sketch
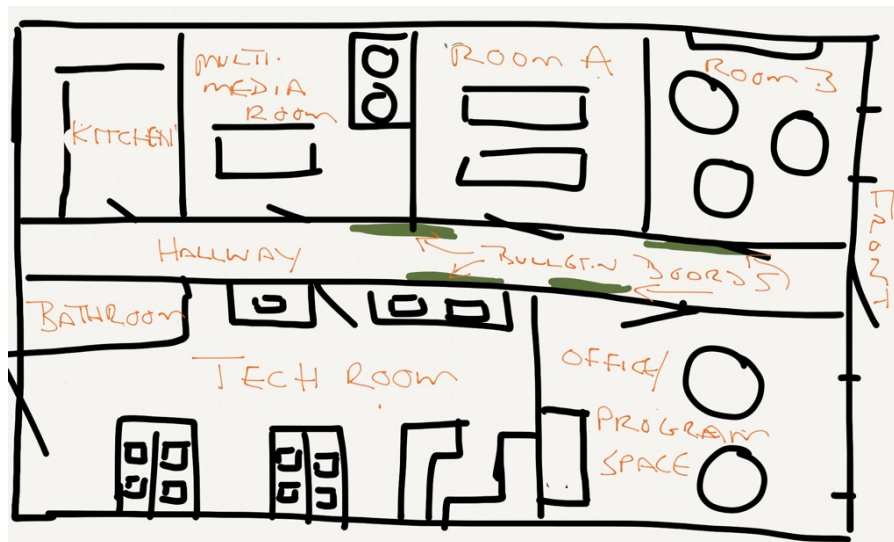
Source: Original drawing using Paper based on site observation (Observation, June 15, 2011).

Emilio (2011) always had a desire to work for social good and knew he wasn't interested in the for-profit business world. After graduating from Tufts University, he worked for large educational research nonprofit and spent a year as an Americorps VISTA working with Castle Square around technology issues – computer repair, wireless network. After his VISTA year was up, Castle Square asked him to come on as the

manager of the Community Center. At the time of the interview, he had been with organization for 5 years (including his year as an Americorps VISTA). He felt this long-term tenure had allowed him to grow in his position while improving systems and programs and the organization's culture of personal initiative has benefited him.

However, Emilio (2011) admitted that it has been a struggle to ensure that personnel are compensated properly and has been pushing the board to consider making more people full-time and offering benefits. While the job has afforded a lot of personal growth through doing, formal professional development opportunities have been limited and essentially staff-initiated. Also, many of the staff interacting with teens had been working at the Center for a while, but the key position responsible for the Teen Center, the teen coordinator, had a very high turnover rate. Molly, the new teen coordinator, had only been working there for a couple of months when Emilio was interviewed. His opinion was that this turnover was in part due to the low pay and half time nature of the job.

Recruitment and participants. Most of the teens involved in the Teen Center had come to the program through friendship networks or word of mouth. The storefront positioning also was a draw for casual walk-ins especially from the public high school across the street as well as youth in neighboring housing developments. Emilio (2011) noted that "teen employment has been one of [their] big draws." It seemed from interviews that staff did not connect teen jobs, mostly with the computer repair clinic, and the other teen-oriented programming as a comprehensive set of activities serving teens.

At the time of the study, there were seventeen youth involved in the Teen Center world (see Table 14).

TABLE 14: Basic Demographics of Teens Served by the Teen Center

| | Castle Square Tenants Organization | |
	Population	Sample
# Youth	17	4
Gender		
Female	9	2
Male	8	2
Ethnicity / Race		
Hispanic	3	1
Black	5	1
Asian	7	2
White	1	0
Other	1	0
Age		
14	4	1
15	5	1
16	4	2
17	3	0
18	1	0
Length with Program		
< =1 yr	5	1
2 yrs	2	1
3 - 4 yrs	4	1
>= 5 yrs	4	1
Unknown	2	0

Source: Information provided by Castle Square Tenants Organization staff

While many of the teens resided in the Castle Square Housing Complex, a number of them attended the public high school across the street, lived in the neighborhood or were friends of teens who were at the center (Flores, 2011; Stephanie, 2011). Some of the teens both lived in Castle Square Complex and went to school together (BD, 2011). When asked how she first came to the center, Stephanie (2011) said the following:

> I thought it was a really good environment for teenagers because it's somewhere where everybody pretty much goes at my school. After school a lot of the wrestlers go there. A lot of other teenagers just come in because it's right there and it's convenient. People go there to hang. They'll spend either five minutes or a couple hours. It just gets people more involved in the community.

Others like Ben and Malinda had been participating in Center activities since they were very young. Malinda's mom had signed her up for the after-school program when she was in Kindergarten (Malinda, 2011) and Ben (2011) indicated he had first come to Castle Square when he was in elementary school and needed help with academics. He stayed on for the summer programs and found that there were "tons of events around Castle Square and it was really fun." The place has now become a "second home" to him.

Others too talked about staying engaged because the Teen Center was a place to "chill" (BD, 2011) or do "something interesting or fun" (Malinda, 2011). BD, a friend of Ben's, first started coming to the center when he was in middle school (BD, 2011). He was drawn in by his interest in "video production and music production," and the classes the Teen Center had to offer.

Guiding philosophy. In terms of a theory of change or guiding pedagogical strategy, Community Center manager, Emilio Flores (2011) admitted:

> [O]ther programs they start out with their program philosophy and earlier about leadership and empowerment and how technology or whatever it is and I feel like we never had that for the teen program here.

Yet, at the time of the research, Castle Square's teen programming was evolving. Programming had already moved from a strictly drop-in program to more fluid time blocks focused on homework help and enrichment offerings (e.g. cooking classes, media production, nail design, computer repair) (Flores, 2011). For the most part the strategy was to find interesting activities to keep the teens engaged. Emilio (2011) noted:

89

[I]t took a while, but now we are seeing some really great results where teens are coming regularly to do homework, and then afterwards they are participating in activities. . . . It was hard to pull all that together at once. Kind of start homework help . . . and we cut down the activities, and now we're trying to put more and more activities out there.

Goals and objectives. Despite the lack of a formal theory of change, both Emilo (2011) and Deborah (2011) spoke of concrete outcomes for the youth who engaged in Center activities including those who were part of the Teen Center. Essentially, both wanted young people to have fulfilling, self-sufficient and sustainable lives. Emilio (2011) wanted the teens "to go to college and get a job and support their family" as well as have a "good attitude about things," and perhaps "growing up a little bit, being more mature." Deborah (2011) related her aspirations for the teens to her own aspirations as a young person:

> You know, when I was a little girl, it's like what do you want to have or be when you grow up. And I said: "Well, gee, I want to have a husband, I want to have kids, I want to own my own house and I would like to have my own business. . . . So I just felt that the kids here needed to have these opportunities also.

These were also aspiration echoed by the teens themselves. Ben (2011) talked said "I imagine myself being in college where I can learn videography." BD (2011) indicated "I would be happy just seeing myself, my friends, and family just doing what we do whether it's working, making decent money, and just living. " Malinda (2011) hoped she would be "traveling, meeting new people" and "obviously mak[ing] money." Stephanie (2011) was right in tune with these aspirations when she said:

> I don't wish to be rich or famous I don't wish . . . none of that. I just want to be comfortable, I want to graduate college. I want to make something of myself so I can be the first one in the family that can say I graduated college and I have this.

Both Emilio and Deborah hoped that the teens would gain the kind of skills, attitudes and behaviors that would allow them to make this journey forward in life.

Program background. In many ways the every-changing programming at the Teen Center seemed to work towards these goals while at the same time keeping youth engaged through responsive activities. Initial teen programming started with the setup of the computer lab or tech room in the early 1990s with HUD funding. Prior to that there were no services (Backus, 2011). Since then, teen programming has gone from a complete drop-in to a fluid set of activities related to homework help and academic support, multimedia production, enrichment classes (e.g. nail design, cooking, dance) and formal employment opportunities (BD, 2011; Ben, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Stephanie, 2011; Flores, 2011). Socializing or "chill" time are still a component of Teen Center activities (Malinda, 2011).

Program design. In many respects, programming for teens appeared to be highly responsive to teen interests. Stephanie (2011) explained:

> It first started off with the nail design class. Because a lot of people were coming to the nail design, we decided to expand it more and find out what people would like. . . . We just started coming up with ideas like: You should teach a cooking class, because Vera teaches the nail design class. She's really good at cooking and we wanted to learn how to do fondant. That's how it happened. We did a fondant class. And then people came and they were like why are you guys into fondant? And then it turned into a baking class. . . . We recently had a teen bake off.

In addition to classes, teens came to the Teen Center to work on homework knowing that they could often find some adult help and support in figuring things out (BD, 2011; Ben, 2011; Malinda, 2011). Other times the staff would simply connect teens

up with additional resources or opportunities such as taking teens to local colleges or inviting individuals in to talk about their jobs (Stephanie, 2011).

Yet the Teen Center was not perfect. In addition to the high turnover rate for the teen coordinator (Flores, 2011), there were times when teens were unsure whether or not the Center was open. Ben (2011) indicated:

> sometimes, when teens think the venue is open, but when they get there, it's closed, because of some miscommunication. Or sometimes the staff that was in charge of the teen night is not there, everyone gets frustrated. It happens quite a lot.

The fact that the South End neighborhood the Teen Center is situated in has a number of other youth-serving venues means teens are able to go elsewhere. Ben (2011) mentioned organizations like the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, the YMCS and Boston Asian YES (a youth development program) as places he goes to when he is bored at the Teen Center.

Evaluation and outcomes. There were no formal evaluation mechanisms in place for the Teen Center activities. The only metric was whether teens were or were not showing up and if they interested (BD, 2011). Despite this lack of formal evaluation, it was evident through the interviews that teens had gained concrete skills and knowledge, developed new attitudes and behaviors, and grown emotionally both at the personal and interpersonal levels. Both BD (2011) and Ben (2011) talked about learning video production from "how to use a camera" to "how to edit using software on the Macs" (Ben, 2011). Malinda had gained photography skills (2011). Both she and Stephanie (2011) picked up nail design tips (2011). All the teens mentioned learning to cook everything from smoothies to fondant (BD, 2011; Ben, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Stephanie,

2011). BD (2011) had perfected his dance moves mostly learning from his good friend

Ben and seeing his creative process. Yet, the teens had also learned to "take the lead with

planning and pulling . . . things together" (Backus, 2011).

Yet there were changes and attitude and behavior through engagement with the

Teen Center. Emilio (2011) indicated that as they started to change the culture of the

Teen Center, individuals who had been "big time trouble makers" were not "coming in

and . . . telling other kids, 'hey quiet down'." BD (2011), Ben (2011), and Stephanie

(2011) talked about gaining "self-discipline", "maturing" and taking school "more

seriously." The teens also talk about things like overcoming "shyness," "finding voice,"

"not to judge others by how they look," pride through contribution, and being confident

in public. (BD, 2011; Ben, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Stephanie, 2011). Ben sums up range of

things he gained by being part of the Teen Center and the larger Castle Square

community:

> All the years I`ve came here I guess what I wanted is was to learn how to be more
> outgoing, being social with other people even though they're not the same race as
> me. Making a lot new friends. Learning how to take care, right. . . . [I learned] in
> the repair clinic learned to fix my own computer.

The teens also spoke of strong emotional changes too. They found "friendship,"

"support," connection or "coming together", comfort, care, and "worth" (BD, 2011; Ben,

2011; Malinda, 2011; Stephanie, 2011).

> Just how the people treat each other, how we talk to each other, how we interact,
> all the different things that we do, all the different things that we are into. . . .
> When I started coming here I think that's when we started all of us started coming
> together and becoming more closer as friends. And that's why it feels so much at
> home when I'm here (BD, 2011).

Interpersonal interactions. It would seem that the ways in which teens and adults interacted within the context of the Teen Center was a strong element of why these young people had learned the things they did. Part of the connective tissue between the teens themselves was the shared living and schooling environments that many of them had in common (BD, 2011; Flores, 2011). Many teens found their way to the Teen Center through their friends, which meant pre-existing relationships, were there. Both Emilio (2011) and Ben (2011) admitted that there were a few tussles and Stephanie (2011) noted that discussions could get heated, but in general staff would calm them down.

Malinda (2011) also spoke of a gender imbalance that at times made the space feel unwelcoming to young women. Emilio (2011) admitted that this had been problem in the past, but that he saw more and more "young ladies" coming into the Teen Center. In part, he felt that the active involvement of the tech coordinator, Vera, was responsible for this shift. Also the move towards a bit more structure had helped as well. Finally, Malinda (2011) admitted that having classes like nail design was a way to smooth the transition into the center and feel comfortable:

> Well, I like the classes here so I would come. And then, I sort of knew them, but I didn't know them that well. Our relationship just got better because we would sometimes just chill in here and watch movies.

The classes like baking also seemed to be opportunities for both the young women and men to interact within a structured context (Stephanie, 2011).

"Chill" time coupled with programming that was driven by teen interests also seemed to create a relaxed and comfortable place for teens to interact with one another in a "less tense environment" than school (Stephanie, 2011). At the same time, there were

94

opportunities for these young people to take on new roles and responsibilities. Most of

the teens at one time or another had taken on formal jobs within the Center. Some had

worked for the computer repair clinic and others for the elementary and middle school

program (Ben, 2011; Stephanie, 2011). Others had done informal, volunteer jobs that

contributed to the Center as a whole such as Malinda and her friend paining one of the

offices (Malinda, 2011). Still others were given responsibility over projects like Castle

Square's contribution to Boston's Night Out or hooking up a community partner with use

of the Center's space (BD, 2011; Backus, 2011; Stephanie, 2011).

Teens expressed multiple ways in which adults at Castle Square had responded to

them. For instance, Stephanie (2011) noted:

> Vera is really good at taking in suggestions, like what we believed would be good
> for teens. And so is Molly, our new teen coordinator. They're really good at
> putting in what we like and they make it happen or they try to make it happen as
> much as they can. And then it ends up happening. . . . Yeah. It's really cool
> because we have we have a teenager's perspective of those things, so like with
> their help, you could be like, it's really a good idea.

All of the teens had stories of their ideas or interests being pushed forward or

supported by the adults at the Center. They spoke of adults being "open to new ideas", or

"they don't force" or are "willing to grab you at your chance." (Malinda, 2011; Ben,

2011; Stephanie, 2011). Some of the teens like BD (2011) and Stephanie (2011) also had

these same responsive experiences reinforced within the context of their small, public

high school across the street.

Also the adults in and around the Teen Center seemed adept at creating an open,

"comfortable," and welcoming environment that focused on liking or engaging teens in

activities and opportunities (Stephanie, 2011). Teens spoke of the staff as being

"amazing people" who were always around to "help" and who also had "eyes everywhere" (Stephanie, 2011; Ben, 2011; BD, 2011). Staff would ask teens about their day and in turn would share what they were doing in their lives (Flores, 2011; BD, 2011; Stephanie, 2011). These "little things make a big difference" according to Stephanie (2011). The Teen Center's "culture it is sort of lose friendly and informal" and goes back to the idea of the Teen Center being a "family" (Flores, 2011). Emilio (2011) shared:

> It's definitely like a family. We are all kind of like an uncle or big brothers of the center. So there is a lot of one-on-one chats or an adult with two teens. I always people chatting in the kitchen. Maybe Max will be in there with a couple youth. There is a lot of discussion and a lot of more personal interaction.

Being the Empowering Family

In the absence of formal, structured programming guided by a stated theory of change or youth development philosophy, Castle Square appears to have created a culture conducive to an individual's growth and sense of agency while at the same time supporting an environment of trust. Their organizational practices and norms resulted in a space where teens experienced warmth, welcoming, comfort, care, and support. Pre-existing relationships brought into the Center coupled with long-term engagement with the Center and plenty of "chill" time seemed to contribute to the building of these strong social bonds. Combining home, school and out-school interactions within a small geographic area may also have helped in creating this social ecosystem.

Adults at Castle Square also made themselves available and open to teens. By positioning themselves in roles as guides and mentors, they were willing to share their own life challenges while simultaneously pushing and challenging teens to think about their lives seriously. Teens were provided with new experiences and opportunities for

96

responsibility through enrichment classes, field trips, leadership tasks and paid employment. Youth has multiple ways to engage and participate in programming at the Teen Center.

Finally, programming that was highly responsive, flexible and adaptive to teen interests and input seems to have built up confidence and agency. Individual initiative was valued and rewarded and teens could point to multiple instances where their voices and concerns were listened to and acted upon.

Friends of Beardsley Park: The Team-oriented Workplace

Rather than a primary focus on the bolstering and building the individual, Friends of Beardsley Park: ***The Team-oriented Workplace***, brings youth assets to the context of a group environment with steps towards connecting them to a set of larger community concerns. The structure of the youth program is less fluid than the Empowering Family archetype and motivation may initially be externally driven (e.g., desire to earn money). Friends of Beardsley Park expects youth will conduct themselves well and aspires for individuals to be productive team members. Relationships with adults, while supportive and approachable, are more like a "good boss" than a "good parent." The organization consciously builds interpersonal skills while at the same time connecting work to larger social purposes. The Friends strives to make contributions to community benefit visible as well as expand opportunities for youth to engage in new experiences that are consistent with the organization's mission to use the park as a means to engage community members (e.g., outdoor experiences, staging community events in the park).

The Organization

Location. The Friends of Beardsley Park office space is a third-floor walk up in a building on Columbus Avenue in one of Dorchester's neighborhood squares. The area is primarily residential and the 500+ acre Beardsley Park is only a few blocks away. A local branch of the Boston Public Library is about a block from the Friends' office as is a small community garden. Multiple bus lines traverse Columbus Avenue, but the nearest T-stop, Stony Brook, is more than a half-mile away. The census tract[18] to which the organization belongs is similar to Castle Square's relative to income, poverty and educational levels. However, most of the residents in the vicinity are predominantly Hispanic and Black (nearly equal). Over a third of the population is foreign-born, the majority coming from Latin America (U.S. Census, 2012).

Mission and history. Friends of Beardsley Park seeks to "restore and preserve" a valuable community resource, in this case the historic green space that is Beardsley Park (Friends of Beardsley Park, 2011). Founded in 1974 and gaining nonprofit status in 1980 (Guidestar, 2011b), the organization's mission is to be a:

> . . . voice for [Beardsley Park]: working to engage all park users and community members to improve the park through advocacy, programs, and restoration. (Friends of Beardsley Park, 2010).

The Friends' members are park users, neighboring residents, outdoor enthusiasts and other community members that "help care for the park's special places" and ensure that they "have a voice in decisions that impact the park" (Friends of Beardsley Park, 2011). Beardsley Park is managed by the City of Boston and the Friends' see part of

---

[18] Neighborhood demographics for organizations can be found in Appendix I.

their mission as making sure the city responsibly manages this public greens space (Gardner, 2011). For instance, the organization has pushed back against the city using Beardsley Park as a snow dumping site or a staging area for infected trees from other city green spaces (Gardner, 2011).

Human resources. The four member staff of the organization consists of the executive director, deputy director, who oversees restorations projects, the youth and volunteer coordinator and an administrative co-op intern from Northeastern University. During the summer the organization hires four additional adults as crew leaders for the Youth Park Stewards program as well as teen workers (Gardner, 2011; White, 2011). Like Castle Square, funds for the summer teen crew come from the Boston Youth Fund (White, 2011). Two other summer staff are hired to coordinate and run the youth community night (Gardner, 2011). Staff backgrounds are in environmental planning, community organizing, media production and construction (Gardner, 2011; White, 2011; The Friends of Beardsley Park, 2011). The staff is racially diverse and the youth and volunteer coordinator, Tony White, is the only male.

With such a small staff there is a lot of pitching in and helping out. According to deputy director, Cynthia Gardner, when hiring for staff they look for folks "who can work pretty independently, and who can be very flexible" (Gardner, 2011). The small office space has only one small private meeting room which means that all work is out in the open (Gardner, 2011; Observation, June 27, 2011).

Leadership. The executive director was on sabbatical when this research was conducted and the deputy director, as acting director, was interviewed for a leadership

perspective. The deputy director, Cynthia Gardner, is a woman of color in her late 40s.

She holds a master's from MIT and sees herself primarily as an "environmental planner"

(Gardner, 2011). Growing up in a middle-class suburb of Connecticut, Cynthia was

surrounded by lots of green space as well as a constellation of community-oriented

organizations (e.g. Girl Scouts). With a biology and chemistry background, she first work

in the pharmaceutical industry and then became concerned with the more systemic causes

of diseases like cancer and their links to the environment.

Prior to joining the Friends of Beardsley Park in 2005, she gained experience with

open space preservation and support of community gardens at a land trust. She also

worked at a state level agency and was the "director of an organization" and consulted

with other nonprofits. Cynthia first came to Friends to direct their campaign to restore the

wild woodlands area of the park. She also brought skills in resource development,

volunteer management, board relations and project management to the organization

(Gardner, 2011).

According to Cynthia (2011), the organization's board of directors is a

"community-based board" without "representation from other organizations or

corporations or any institutions" (Gardner, 2011). While board members don't all come

from the organization's membership, most are either long-time residents of

neighborhoods abutting the park or have a personal connection to the park (Friends of

Beardsley Park, 2011). At the time of the research, the board was female weighted, but

the nominating committee tries to ensure "representation from different community,

gender and racial and ethnic groups" (Gardner, 2011). The body also has some diversity

of skills with a member working in the "youth field," a "graphic designer with ideas about marketing," and a "retired teacher who does mediation" (Gardner, 2011).

   Financial resources. Friends' financial position was fairly solid. The organization's revenues in 2007 were $397,533 and remained stable over the three-year time period (2007-2009) averaging $409,167. They did see growth in their assets going from $399,606 in 2007 to $512,180 in 2009 (U.S. Treasury, 2011d; U.S. Treasury, 2011e; U.S. Treasury, 2011f). The organization's revenue comes primarily from private grants and donations with a very small amount originating from program fees (2009 return of, 2011e). While the organization is stable financially, relying only on private donations makes it a little vulnerable (Froelich 1999; Stone, Hager & Griffin, 2001). However, the organization draws from a number of private sources, which helps mitigate some of this risk (Gardener, 2011). One of their long time private funders that provided operational funds specifically for the Youth Park Stewards was in the process of winding down its funding (White, 2011) However, Cynthia (2011) noted that increasing corporate sponsorships was one strategy the organization was considering.

   External relationships. The Friends of Beardsley Park also works in collaboration with a number of other environmentally oriented groups in advocating for and preserving green and open space in the City of Boston. Groups like the Olmsted Collaborative, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and Boston Park Advocates are frequent partnering groups (Gardner, 2011). In fact, the organization allows the Boston Park Advocates to use its office space as a mailing address and occasional meeting location both Cynthia and the executive director sit on committees of the Emerald

Necklace Conservancy (Gardner, 2011). The organization also works with a neighboring

zoological association and a local church for Youth Park Steward meetings on rainy days

(White, 2011). As mentioned previously, the organization has a love-and-hate

relationship with the City of Boston who formally oversees Beardsley Park (Gardener,

2011).

Additionally, Tony White, the youth and volunteer coordinator, is involved with

other youth-oriented collaborative groups. Tony is actively involved with the Boston

Youth Environmental and the BEST Initiative for support, networking, information

resource, and training (White, 2011; Gardener, 2011). He has worked with other youth

serving organizations like the Dorchester Youth Collaborative and Project Right as well

as agencies and organizations that refer youth to programs such as Action for Boston

Community Development and Department of Youth Corrections (White, 2011). Tony

also indicated he has some minimal engagement with parents and other families of the

youth served by the organization. In general these interactions are often related to

questions about paycheck or disciplinary actions taken during the program.

Constituents and programs. Core constituents served by Friends are users of

Beardsley Park generally and committed individuals and groups with whom they work

specifically. By extension, they also serve those neighborhoods and communities

surrounding the park in the neighborhoods of Dorchester and Jamaica Plain. Park

stewardship (cleanup and containment of invasive species) and woodlands restoration of

220 acres of forest are in alignment with their mission and NTEE classifications (Friends

of Beardsley Park, 2011; Guidestar, 2011b). Additionally they are committed to

advocating for the park's maintenance, restoration and use. As Cynthia noted "we want the park filled with people and activity aligned with Olmsted's vision for public parks as democratization of space" (Gardener, 2014). The organization oversees a long-running outdoor performance space for music events and theatric performances. The organization's mission and activity classifications do not capture these cultural activities at the performance space (Friends of Beardsley Park, 2011). Friends' work with youth, the Youth Park Stewards program, is focused on employment and youth development. This constituent focus is also not detailed in their mission or NTEE classifications (Friends of Beardsley Park, 2011; Friends of Beardsley Park, 2010).

Cynthia admitted that the performance space activities were not in alignment exactly with their mission and that in many ways this programming was a resource drain (Gardner, 2011). The organization continued to support the programming because "people love it" and there was "a lot of tradition tied to it" (Gardner, 2011). Youth programming appeared to have more organizational alignment. In her role as resource developer, Cynthia was developing ideas and writing grants for youth programs partly at the insistence of the executive director (Gardner, 2011). However, youth were also park users or potential parker users and developing future environmental advocates and park stewards was a goal (Gardner, 2011).

Norms and values. The culture of Friends was harder to grasp and not as evident as the culture of Castle Square. In part, this may be a result of the short tenure that most of the youth have with the organization. It was the first summer of engaging with the organization for three of the four teens interviewed. However, Cynthia (2011) noted that

she felt the place was "pretty egalitarian" and "not that hierarchical." This seems

consistent with a very small staff that requires flexibility and pitching in.

Youth Park Stewards

Program background. The Youth Park Stewards program developed over a

number of years. Originally, another organization was running it and had access to a lot

more money that would be used for field trips throughout the summer (White, 2011).

Initially, the program was a lot of "clearing basins" and "clearing out gutters" and

Friends transformed it into a program with more "education" focusing on cleanouts in

areas that had a lot of "historical significance to the park" (White, 2011). The program

also has evolved to increase teen awareness about invasive plant species, plant

identification as well as general issues related to park stewardship (Gardner, 2011; White,

2011). The program also works to create positive impressions of teens "by community

members who visit the park while teens are working in the woods or at events and

thanking them for their efforts" (Gardner, 2014). The program works hard "weave the

community connection into everything" (Gardner, 2014).

Program space. The Friends of Beardsley Park Youth Park Stewards program

occurs almost entirely in the Woodland restoration area of Beardsley Park. Frederick

Olmsted designed the park and the Woodlands comprise 220 acres of the overall space.

In addition to the Woodlands, teens also oversee community nights in the summer at the

stadium that is part of the park's resources. Their tools and indoor programmatic space

are part of the zoological society's holdings and rainy day programs are held both there

and at a local church (White, 2011).

104

FIGURE 10: Beardsley Park Sketch
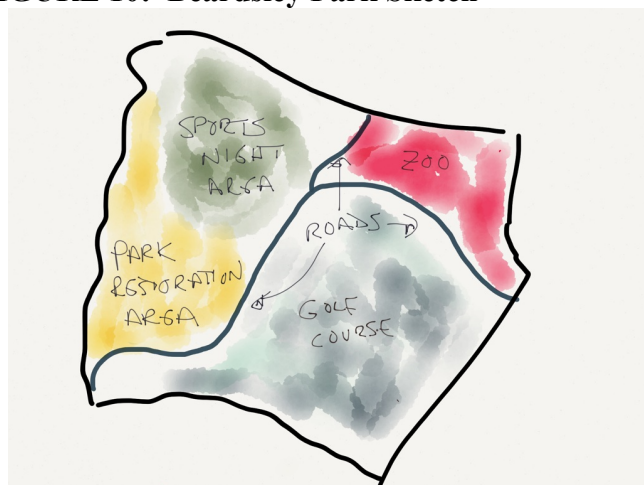
Source: Original drawing using paper based on park map

Program staff. The Youth Park Steward program is the main responsibly of Tony White, youth and volunteer coordinator,[19] who had been with the organization for almost four years (White, 2011). The program has summer, fall, spring and school year programs. The summer program, running from after the Fourth of July weekend through mid-August was the focus of this research. In the summer, the Youth Park Stewards expands its staffing to included four additional adults who act as crew leaders as well as the teen participants themselves who are hired as summer staff workers. Crew leaders are adults whom are either college students doing summer work or school teachers picking up summer work (White, 2011).

Born and raised in the Mattapan[20] neighborhood of Boston, Tony had previously worked for a television station in Florida and by his own admission didn't really have any experience with environmental issues or youth (White, 2011). Tony did have experience

---

[19] The position is full-time with commensurate benefits.
[20] Mattapan is an area not too far from Beardsley Park.

managing adult trade crews when he worked for his father's general contracting business.

Tony felt these were transferable skills and that as a young African American male who

grew up in the area he could relate. Tony (2011) noted:

> It was kind of different for me because I didn't, I never worked with young people in my life. . . . You know I guess when you do it with older people they're like well you're young they're young you can all get along so that's how it worked out.

Still, during the interviews with both Tony and Cynthia, it was clear that the

organization was very good at pushing, supporting, and responding to Tony's own

professional development needs. He benefited from training in areas like park

restoration, outdoor experiences with youth, youth programming and youth development

(White, 2011; Gardener, 2011). In fact, Cynthia noted that Tony had grown quite a lot in

his role with the Youth Park Stewards:

> When he first began things were going pretty well, there were a few obstacles just getting the content to do the after school work because we wanted it to be a little more than just working in the park, and he has really developed. He has done some amazing stuff around energy and he had the young people do research on different fuels for cars and some of the new technology that is coming out. Then they went to . , . electric battery plants for cars.

This emphasis on development also trickled down to the crew leaders as well as

the teen crew themselves. Crew leaders participate in a three day training program to

prepare them for working with their young crew members and the Youth Park Steward

summer program also has "a lot of youth development pieces . . . as well as conservations

pieces" (White, 2011). In addition to a weekly private meeting with crew leaders, Tony

(2011) shared that he and the crew leaders meet once a week to talk about the overall

dynamics of the groups:

106

We'll work through who's working, who's not working, what we can do to make this person work. Does this person need to be split up from someone? Are they not working just because their friend is talking to them all the time. Should we separate these two? Does this person not like this other person? Should we move them to a different group? So I had the staff meeting to kind of put into perspective what we should do, what we shouldn't do and should we, you know, just go into the logistics of working through group dynamics.

It was also clear that crew leaders needed be able to work well with teenagers in way that both maintained discipline, but also could motivate and support these young workers. Tony stressed the point by sharing a negative example of what happens when a crew leader isn't well equipped to work with teens:

[This past crew leader] just wasn't cutting it at his position, and one of the students, he had a big issue with boundaries. So the student punched him in the face, and then threatened him, and threatened to everybody to come back with a bulletproof vest, so, he was terminated, the student, and then eventually the crew leader was terminated. . . . He shouldn't have worked with teenagers at all. Some people just don't do it.

Recruitment and participants. Teens in the summer Youth Park Stewards program came to Friends through the Boston Youth Fund summer jobs application program (White, 2011). Almost ninety percent of the teens were new to the program. Three of the four teens interviewed for this research came to the Youth Park Stewards program as employment seekers (Eva, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). The teens expressed the desire for "having money in my pocket" (Jae, 2011) or "really need[ing] that money" (Eva, 2011). Applying for "outdoor jobs" landed one of the interviewed teens in the Youth Park Stewards (Taylor, 2011) and another had a long time connection with the organization (JD, 2011). JD's uncle brought him to volunteer with the organization at the age of 13 or 14. He was in his third year of working in the summer

program (JD, 2011). At the time of the study, there were eighteen youth involved in the

Youth Park Stewards summer program (see Table 15).

TABLE 15: Basic Demographics of Teens Served by Youth Park Stewards

	Friends of Beardsley Park	
	Population	**Sample**
# Youth	18	4
Gender		
Female	9	2
Male	9	2
Ethnicity / Race		
Hispanic	8	2
Black	3	1
Asian	1	0
White	3	1
Other	2	0
Age		
14	1	0
15	4	1
16	6	1
17	5	1
18	2	1
Length with Program		
< =1 yr	16	3
2 yrs	0	0
3 - 4 yrs	2	1
>= 5 yrs	0	0
Unknown	0	0

Source: Information provided by Friends of Beardsley Park staff

In his interview, Tony (2011) indicated that most of the teens in the summer

Youth Park Steward program came from Beardsley Park's surrounding and nearby

neighborhoods of Dorchester, Jamaica Plain and Mattapan. One teen lived in East

Boston, but previously resided in the area, volunteered for Friends, and worked

previously for the Youth Park Stewards program as did his brothers (White, 2011; JD,

2011). For the most part teens got to their Youth Park Steward job via bus, bike or foot

(White, 2011; Eva, 2011: Jae, 2011).

The program is weighted heavily towards African American and Latino youth and Tony (2011) thought many of the teens came from low- to moderate-income households. He knew that a number them had Section 8 housing. Of the teens interviewed, parents, guardians and extended family held civic oriented jobs in law enforcement, law, nursing, the military, or firefighting. One interviewee had a father and other family members in one of the local trade unions. There was a good deal of diversity among the group in terms of skills and educational aptitude (White, 2011; Gardener, 2011) as Cynthia (2011) notes:

> We have people who are in METCO[21] and people who are in some of the worst public schools and people who are in private schools and people who are in parochial schools.

Goals and objectives. The Youth Park Steward program, like theTeen Center at Castle Square, did not have a formal theory of change guiding its work. However, unlike Castle Square it did have formal curriculum and youth development goals. The goals for the program were also linked to the Friends' overall mission. Cynthia (2011) shared:

> Well, people on the board, people in the community definitely wanted young people to be playing a role in that whole stewardship piece of the park and also there was a lot of youth violence in the neighborhood surrounding the park. And so, youth jobs as an opportunity to get some track record or give them something to do. And we wanted it to be meaningful. It's not weed whacking a vacant lot. We wanted them to do something that really is needed. We wanted them to learn something, because whacking weeds in a vacant lot is needed, but they don't really learn a lot. We felt that this was an opportunity to learn. They could I.D. basic species and learn what the beneficial species were and learn to I.D. trees and do even some high level landscaping work.

---

[21] METCO is a private nonprofit assignment program that works to support racially integrated learning opportunities of Metro Boston area students and their families (http://www.metcoinc.org/)

While Tony (2011) wanted the teens to develop that "second level of stewardship for the park," he also wanted the teens in the Youth Park Steward program to have a really positive work experience. He wanted them to "walk away with a sense of pride" and "really enjoy this job" (White, 2011).

Cynthia (2011) did express a desire to have the Youth Park Steward program to connect the work experience and increased knowledge about the park to more concrete advocacy work. A natural fit for this seem to be the lack of recycling bins in the park and the large amount of waste that were "plastic bags, water bottles, or other kinds of cans or plastic containers that can be recycled" (Gardner, 2011). She envisioned a project that hat young people "testifying [to] the city council and getting a petition signed for those bins in the park" (Gardener, 2011). She admitted that this next step of youth engagement with park issues had not been integrated into the program. They had done some advocacy trainings for youth with outside help and worked on the citywide youth jobs campaign, but it was hard to do this in the context of the jam-packed summer program (Gardner, 2011). Tony (2011) did indicate that teens in the past had worked on the "bottle bill" that would require deposits on water and juice containers.

Program design. In terms of how the program was designed, the day-to-day activities of the program were pretty set. The teens were separated into two crews. One of the teens, Jae (2011), indicated that one crew was bigger than the other, but he wasn't quite sure why they were structured that way. Each crew had a crew leader and an assistant crew leader. The two crews meet at the same place each morning at 9:00, starting with a group circle. The circle was an opportunity to map out the week, give

110

"kudos" to folks and share information between the two crews spent most of their days apart from one another (White, 2011). During this morning teens asked questions and got clarification on things (Eva, 2011). After these morning announcements, one group went to the toolshed[22] to get what they need for the day and the other group did a team-building activity. The other group came back, do their team-building while the other team went and got their tools. Both groups then headed out to their work sites for the day (White, 2011).

Once the crews were at their work sites, the crew leaders explained the day's project and demonstrated how to use the tools. Tony (2011) indicated sometimes teens that are in the school-year program or were part of the program in previous years would lead the demonstration and use of the tools. In fact, this was "one of the new things [they were] doing . . . having them [the seasoned teens] kind of lead the circle" (White, 2011). The crews worked on a range of projects from "chopping down knotweed, pulling up buckthorn, or just sweeping and just making the area look nice . . . or getting rid of invasives" (Taylor, 2011). They might "pull trees" (Jae, 2011), cut down trees (White, 2011), build raised beds for a community garden (Taylor, 2011), or any range of other park tasks that have been identified by, park patrons, Boston Parks & Recreation or the Friends of Beardsley Park staff (White, 2011). The crews worked at their sites until lunchtime and then broke for an hour to each. Both crews:

> meet up underneath the tree at the basketball court . . . play basketball, flag football, whatever they're used to before that day. Or some of the kids just hang

---

[22] The program only uses non-powered tools, which makes for physically demanding and exhausting work.

111

out,--listen to their iPod, or whatever, and just kind of relax for the hour, 'cause you know the work's really--.and it's hot (White, 2011).

After lunch it was back to the project sites and at some point there was an "intentional break" to "go over the project, talk to teens, reinforce some of those environmental reasons why [they're] out there doing the work" (White, 2011). These breaks were also opportunities for the teens to take "time to reflect" on the work. Occasionally, one crew helped out another crew if their work was complete (Jae, 2011). Teens noted that the work was physically demanding and not for the lazy (Eva, 2011; Jae, 2011; JD, 2011; Taylor, 2011). Tools were sometimes hard to master (Eva, 2011). Very hot days were especially grueling requiring extra breaks and the occasional "water balloon fights" (Taylor, 2011; White, 2011). At 2:30 the crews started to wrap and head back to the main meeting place where there was a whole group reflection on the work. Tools went back to the sheds and teens headed home.

On rainy days, the crews met at a local church and focused on team-building activities (White, 2011). The Youth Park Stewards also helped in the execution of Community Night where the community is invited into the park to enjoy a cookout and play things like flag football, basketball, and soccer (White, 2011). On Community Night, the teens broke into groups of five and worked on different aspects of making the Community Night a success. Some handed out flyers at park entrances letting community folks know about the evening (Eva, 2011; Taylor, 2011; White, 2011). Another team got the heavy grill and set up at the site. Some facilitated the games (White, 2011).

112

In addition to the day-to-day work and Community Night event, the program also scheduled in a number of outdoor related fields trips over the course of the six-week program. Sailing on the pond in Jamaica Plain, nature walks, a ropes course, and camping were the highlights shared by the teens during their interviews (Eva, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). The camping trip, which happened in the middle of the program, resonated with the teens that were interviewed (Eva, 2011: Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). Each crew went on a camping experience that combined increased connection with the outdoors as well as team-building elements. Jae (2011) in particular found the camping experience engaging, describing it this way:

> There was one trip where we went camping over night. This is when we went out to Blue Hills. They provide everything for us, so everything's for free. All we have to do is bring the food. They taught us how to set up the tents. We went canoeing and after we went canoeing we went swimming in the fresh water. I was the only one who caught a fish in the water. . . We were swimming and we had goggles on, but it was only two of us with goggles. . . . We went in the water and we see way down to the sand little fishes. I come back up and say, "Oh, god. I see fishes." They thought I was tripping. So, we went back down, everybody else had seen them, and there was a little net we took underneath there and I caught one.

When asked what improvements he would like to see in the program, Tony (2011) indicated a desire to expand the program to cover more of the woodland area of the park. However, that would require another toolshed and would lessen the time for both crews to do team-building together (White, 2011). Overall, the program appeared to do well at building concrete work skills, team-building, raising awareness about issues affecting the park while providing space for reflection and individual development. Cynthia (2011) expressed a desire to integrate more "environmental advocacy work" into the program.

113

Evaluation and outcomes. In terms of evaluation, each participant in the summer

Youth Park Stewards programs are asked questions like (Gardner, 2011):

> What did they learn?
> What did they like?
> What did they dislike?

Their answers to these were used to evaluate the program. Tony (2011) admitted

that he'd "been itching to do it [evaluations] for the past couple of years, but . . . just

never got around to it. [He] didn't have enough time." For the most part he asked

"veteran" members to let him know how things were going since they were

"comfortable" with Tony and knew he wouldn't take it "personally" (White, 2011). This

feedback seemed to be primarily about things that were working well with the program

and things that needed to be improved (White, 2011). Additionally, participants were

asked "to make a speech of how [the] summer was like" for each of them (Eva, 2011).

This speech was given at closing night celebration for program participants and their

families (Gardner, 2011).

During her interview, Cynthia (2011) was also trying to get a handle on the long-

term impacts of the program, which was a challenge. For instance, Cynthia (2011) was

interested in surveying alumni to find out the answers to these questions:

> What are they doing now?
> Did they graduate from high school?
> Did they graduate from college?
> Are they working?
> What are they doing?
> What elements of the program had the most influence on them?
> Are they still connected to the park in some way?
> What impact did this program have on them being a good environmental citizen?

114

This desire to assess long-term impact was not unique to Friends. Many youth-serving programs, including the ones in this study, wish they had the capacity for this longitudinal data as well as continued contact with alumni of the program.

Luckily for this study, interviews with the teens unearthed some of the ways in which they experienced the program. The teens admitted that the job required "a lotta work" (Eva, 2011) and was "hard at first" (Taylor, 2011). "Working in the really hot sun" and using new tools like "weed whackers" was a challenge (Eva, 2011). Taylor (2011) noted:

> I just wasn't used to it, but it's like you have to getting rid of the plants. It's actually a lot of labor. I'd go through full water bottles, five water bottles, for the first few weeks every single day.

JD (2011) thought he would be just "cutting trees and picking up trash." But the teens also noted that as they got accustomed to the work their attitudes shifted. This mostly seemed related to seeing the concrete results of their effort. As she talked about the work more, Taylor (2011) noted "I guess I just got used to it [the hard work].. . . I enjoyed doing it too, cleaning up the community and stuff." JD (2011) talked about what he thought the job with the Youth Park Stewards was going to be about. At first the tree cutting was "just a thing to do. But I went, and then it seemed something different. So, I kind of liked it" (JD, 2011). Both Taylor and JD seemed to have taken the difficulty of the physical work as a challenge to overcome. JD (2011) said:

> . . . It [the work] pushes you, it sets you to challenges. You say "I can't do this'" like our last project was a weed field like three football fields. And everybody was like "we can't do this." And I'm just like "we can finish this." And in three days we finished it. And everybody's like "we can't do this." And I say "we can do this. We should start." And then we started and then three days it was done. And it usually take people a week. You know it sets the challenges and oh you

know you ain't always gotta like when I first came here, I didn't like it. It's good. In life not everything is going to be handed to you. So I stayed in and now I don't want to leave.

Yet for Eva (2011) the physical labor was difficult and she found it hard to successfully accomplish tasks. She went from thinking of herself as a "hard worker" to thinking she was a "lazy person" (Eva, 2011). Yet when talking about cleaning out gutters, Eva (2011) said it was "easy, so, it's, like, okay" and that she "was really good at that." She also enjoyed recruiting people for Community Night. In fact, she seemed proud that she "got a lot of people" to come to the event (Eva, 2011). Here some variety of work assignments seemed essential in keeping a teen like Eva engaged.

In addition to dealing with the challenges of demanding physical labor, the teens expressed growth or new understanding about themselves as people as a result of participation in the program. Taylor (2011) "had to open up to people " and that without this experience she would never have "hung out with these type of people." While a supervisor told Eva (2011) she was a "keep to herself person, " Eva (2011) indicated that her reserve was linked to "trying to keep everybody in a good mood." JD who had been with the organization for about four years shared in detail how the organization and the Youth Park Stewards factored into his own personal growth and development. He said prior to becoming involved with Friends (2011):

> I used to not talk to nobody. The two years I volunteered and my first year I didn't talk to nobody. And then, I started talking to people more. You know before I used to be like, 'I'm going to let my mom do this because if I do this I'm by myself I'm going to mess up'. And this job lets you do things on your own. This job lets me trust myself to do everything that I needed to. So now I just do it. And it helps you to depend on yourself. Even though you know you're with the team, you know everybody's working there on their own thing. So you gotta depend on yourself to know what you're doing.

In addition to new attitudes, the teens also gained concrete skills and new knowledge. Most notably participants talked about a greater awareness of plant species and how to identify them. Eva (2011) said she "didn't know anything about them, but they tell us what harm it does the trees and everything." In particular, invasive plants like Cat Briar, Buck Throne and Knotweed were cut back or pulled (Eva, 2011; Taylor, 2011; JD, 2011; Jae, 2011). Jae (2011) explained:

> You'll have a tree then there will be other leaves that are wrapped around the tree from giving it oxygen and water, so they're basically just starving the plant. We'll come in and cut down all of that so the tree can live. . . .I didn't even know that plants could do that.

Taylor (2011) was happy to know how to identify harmful plants like "poison ivy" and JD (2011) noted that in addition to learning trees, he learned "ways around the park, and how to find yourself if you're lost. How to follow trails." Learning about a range of hand tools and how to use them safely was also part of the program (Eva, 2011; Taylor, 2011). However, Jae (2011), who had much more experience with landscaping and had learned safe use of power tools at another job site, wished they could make use of power tools in the Youth Park Steward program.

Supplementing the content knowledge and manual skills needed for the job, teens also learned from the team building games, ropes course, and field trips like camping. Taylor (2011) noted that the team building helped with "working with a group and learning .. . . not to get so frustrated with each other easily." Eva (2011) saw how the Community Night "shows how much we can interact with people outside of the community and in our community actually." This community connection also seemed

117

important to Taylor (2011) when she talked about building the "community garden . . .

flowerbeds." Taylor (2011) talked in detail about the steps in making these flowerbeds,

but that idea that the community members would have "fresh vegetables" was what

seemed to energize her.

Probably because he had been connected to the organization the longest, JD

(2011) had the most expansive understanding and knowledge of Beardsley Park. For a

kid who once didn't want to talk to anybody, he was extremely persuasive in saying that

"Beardsley Park is the safest park there is." He went on to say:

> [The park] has everything that you need. You can live in Beardsley Park and want
> for nothing. . . . I mean there's water running through Beardsley Park. It has
> shelter. Like, yeah, you could live in Beardsley Park, as long as you've got
> drinking water, you'd be all right.

Also because he had been with the organization and program longer, JD was able

to step into some leadership roles as well. While he didn't meet the age requirement to

be a crew leader, JD (2011) talked about helping out with interviews, going to some

organizational meetings, sending letters to groups, and speaking about the program at

career fairs. He also helped with getting others oriented to the various places in the park

and helped others learn to use some of the tools (JD, 2011).

When asked what their future held, most of the teens interviewed had strong

visions. Taylor (2011) indicated that in five years she would be in college studying to be

a crime scene investigator or studying criminal justice. JD (2011) thought he would "go

into the military" and that eventually he wanted to join a SWAT team. Jae (2011) was

hoping that he would be able to enter into construction like his father and get his union

membership. Of the four, Eva was the youngest and had little to say about her future

plans, but despite her mixed feelings about the work in the program she admitted she liked being outside in the summer and would consider returning the following year.

Three of the four teens were new to the Youth Stewards Program and didn't know others who they were working with prior to joining the program (Eva, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Jae, 2011). JD (2011) knew a few folks in the program who went to school with him. Taylor (2011) in particular said this was the best thing about the job "meeting new people." Taylor and Eva were on the same crew and had gotten close after weeks of hard work (Eva, 2011). While teens mostly kept to their crews, they did get mixed up together to promote Community Night (Eva, 2011).

Interpersonal interactions. In general, it seems that the teens got along well with one another. Eva (2011) noted:

> We get along most of the time. . . . I mean, some people have, like, attitudes and stuff. So they get mad over stuff fast. So then they start arguing . . .but someone will break it with a joke.

Taylor (2011) confirmed that her crew got along well despite sometimes "get[ing] on each others' nerves" and Jae (2011) noted "we make jokes here and there, but we're still active and ready to work. . . . I like that about everybody." JD (2011) went a bit further to say:

> This job is just all about teamwork. You can't do this job on your own, and we do so many activities, you build that bond so quick that it's just . . . you trust in one another.

The camping trip in particular seemed to extend the bonding for the teens. "It was after the camping trip, that's when everyone really became close," Taylor (2011) shared.

119

JD (2011) felt the camping trip worked to bring people together because it required

teamwork:

> So, like, the tents. To stand up the tents, you need at least four people. So in the group, there's like eleven people. So four building one tent, four people will build another, that's . . . that group right there, we eat dinner together, the night we camp.

> He also felt that the Sports Nights were good for bonding since "they mix up the

groups, and everybody's helping, talking and stuff" (JD, 2011). Despite the great

bonding and coming together, JD (2011) did share that there was always a bit of

"competing with each other" between the two crews JD (2011) was quick to add

however that it was all "out of kindness and stuff."

> In terms of adults in the program, most interactions were primarily with the crew

leaders or Tony. There were occasional interactions with Cynthia as well as the park

patrons. As was detailed earlier, crew leaders were either school teachers or college

students (White, 2011; Taylor, 2011). Some of them had worked for the program

previously and some were new (Eva, 2011; Taylor, 2011). While the leaders oversaw

crews and keep on top of assignments, they also were working right alongside of the

teens (Jae, 2011).

> It seemed from the interviews with Taylor (2011) and Eva (2011) that their crew

leaders were "fine" or "regular" but that there seemed to be an undercurrent of

dissatisfaction in both of their interviews. When asked how she interacted with her crew

leaders Taylor (2011) shared:

> I mean, sometimes they aggravate us because they're always like, "Go do this and go do that", and we're just like . . . you know . . . there's nothing to really fix because they're our authority.

120

Eva (2011) also said:

> One of my supervisors told me that I'm a keep to myself person. I don't talk a lot, but once you get to know me, I do talk a lot.

When asked if she thought she was a "keep to myself person" or a quiet person, Eva (2011) said "No." So in digging deeper, Eva (2011) seemed to think that part of the problem was that "I talk to her, but not as much as the other supervisor." When further asked if she where this person's supervisor what would she tell them to do? Eva (2011) responded:

> I would try to, like, be their friend or something, so, like, so then it'll be easier for me to get them to work instead of somebody I couldn't . . . I don't know at all telling me to work.

Later in the interview Eva did share an experience with an adult counselor at her school whom she could connect with and had good interactions with. Eva (2011) said:

> You can go talk to him if you want and he was like, a really comfortable person, so, like, everyone would go to him and he knows how to deal with things real good.

So it would seem this level of comfort and approachability as well as ease with teens was lacking a bit in one of the adult crew leaders on this team. What is clear is that a casual remark by this supervisor had a strong impact on one of the team's youngest members.

As for Tony, teens stated that their interactions with him were positive (Eva, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). As the "jump and fix it guy" (White, 2011), the teens could see that Tony was a "hard worker" (Eva, 2011) and that he "stays on everybody" (Jae, 2011). Tony clearly kept in communication with the crews and was always going

121

"back and forth" and talking to the crew leaders (Jae, 2011). Yet Tony was "friendly" (Eva, 2011) and tried "to make it fun" for everyone (Taylor, 2011). He was also open to feedback about the program (Jae, 2011) and willing to share some responsibility (JD, 2011). JD (2011) indicated, "Tony helped me a lot, and told me 'yeah, you can do this, don't second guess yourself.'"

Tony for his part worked hard at maintaining authority with the teens but in a way that doesn't "rub them the wrong way" (White, 2011). At the same time Tony spoke of mentoring teens in school as well as providing them with learning and growth opportunities within the context of the work. Tony (2011) shared:

> I enjoy it, it's having the relationship with some of the young people, seeing them grow as young men and women, doing different things or even succeeding in what they went out to do is always great to see.

Tony seemed comfortable relating own struggles and issues the teens in particular with "getting out of high school" (White, 2011) as means to connect with teens in the program. Tony (2011) also shared that it was "the relationship with young people" that was the most important thing for him. He expressed his care and concern for these young people:

> You hear a lot of negative things about it, but I think even the bad kids, they're even really cool too. They're a little too cool sometimes, but it's good to see them. Because it's not that they're not able to work, they won't work. It's just they're not getting the right opportunity. They are also getting past some of the things that they are struggling with. Like coming on time or even peer pressure, or their parents taking their checks and depositing them for them. It's some of those things and there are a lot of hurdles, but then there are other times they're like . . . my success.

As for other adults Youth Park Stewards encountered, those who interacted with Cynthia found her relaxed (JD, 2011). Community members who came to Community

Night seemed excited and happy to be there (Eva, 2011). The recipients of the new

flowerbeds were happy (Taylor, 2011). Park patrons in general thanked the teens for

being in the park (White, 2011).

Being The Team-oriented Workplace

Unlike Castle Square, the Friends of Beardsley Park had a structured and clearly

defined program designed to engage youth in a work-defined program. While the

organization did not have a stated theory of change, the Youth Park Steward program was

clearly informed by theories of positive youth development and concepts of youth as

community assets.   Dedicated time for team building as well as group and individual

reflection are indicators of this developmental approach.

Motivated by desires for employment, teens saw themselves as workers but they

experience the overall program as something more than simply work. Challenged by

demanding physical labor, teens also found opportunities for gaining new knowledge and

skills within an atmosphere of fun and social bonding. The work was contextualized and

connected to the organization's core mission. New experiences such as camping, trail

walks, and sailing worked toward an enhanced appreciation for the outdoors while plant

identification and knowledge about the parks history were integrated into day-to-day

work.

Program participants learned to work with new people from different backgrounds

then themselves. They also saw the visible result of their work –- improved park spaces,

new community resources (e.g., a community garden), and happy park patrons (e.g.,

community night). Teens engaged in this work supported by adults who strove to be the

123

"good boss" and worked to model and demand positive behavior. The organization expressed care and concern for the well-being and development of its young crew members.

Sesame Street Institute: The Liberation School

Like the Empowering Family, The Sesame Street Institute's expression as *The Liberation School* emphasized individual development and growth, but it focused on pushing the individual to see the forces at play in our world. While social bonding and trust were important components in the Institute's programs, the acquisition of new knowledge and practical skill development in leadership were the core. Individuals continued to be supported in their personal and interpersonal domains as they built the skills necessary to be civic actors and social change agents. The Institute's flagship Youth Lead program was at once concerned with addressing toxic and oppressive cultural norms while creating opportunities for its participants to gain a sense of their own agency and ability to have power. Like the Liberation School, the Sesame Street Institute trusted young people with power and continued to build bonds through confronting difference and oppression. The Institute's programs focused a good deal on building critical thinking and awareness while providing concrete experiential opportunities in leading and directing program activities. Adults within the organization held roles as facilitators, guides and resources. Adults also helped their young leaders build bridges and connections to others in a citywide and even region wide community who could aid them in their efforts.

124

The Organization

Location. Sesame Street Institute is located in one of Dorchester's historic "corners." This community corner is a commercial hub populated by a number of small local businesses as well as some recognizable chains and is ringed by a residential area. The organization owns a street-level space at the back of an apartment building that appears to serve mostly low- and moderate- income families. According to the U.S. Census (2012), the Institute's census tract[23] is racially and ethnically similar to that of the Friends of Beardsley Park with Blacks and Hispanics (slightly more Blacks than Hispanics) making up the majority of residents. Thirty percent are foreign-born, most of whom come from Africa rather than the Latin American origins of the Friends neighborhood. Education levels are similar to those living in Beardsley Park area, but incomes and home ownership rates are substantially higher. The area is served by a number of bus lines, and the nearest T-Stop, JFK / UMass is almost a mile away.

Mission and history. The Institute was formed with a specific emphasis on youth. Incorporated in 1995 and gaining nonprofit status in 2002, the organization's flagship program, Youth Lead, originated as a program of an affluent prep school in one of Boston's more well heeled suburbs in 1987. The Institute's original intent was to raise the awareness of the schools' privileged youth to the systemic inequities that exist within our society. The programming then expanded to collaborate with other local schools and eventually the organization incorporated in 1995 and moved to its current location.

---

[23] Neighborhood demographics for organizations can be found in Appendix I.

125

The organizational re-location was part of a cultural shift and reinterpretation within the organization that resulted from tensions between a mission of "talking" about social justice and a desire to "do" social justice. Ernestina "Ernie" Horton (2011), one of the organization's co-directors talked about it his way:

> I think the staff, many years ago was going to revolt. They were like, "we're not just teaching these suburban kids how to, you know like, interact with poor kids of color, from the urban environment, but where like we are creating action and movement together." Like why do we exist? If we are doing social justice and we are learning social justice, like the only way, like our whole concept, our whole model, is you learn by doing. And we are not learning by doing, We're not modeling what we're supposed to be modeling. We're not living our values in a way that's healthy. I think there was a huge move to do that in the program by the staff to say, "OK. We're learning. At what point are we taking action?"

This tension resulted in a "huge rift" on the board of directors between those who just wanted "education" and those who were advocating for "empowerment" (Horton, 2011). This rift resulted in half of the board leaving and the remaining board working to reconcile or come to a "great compromise" in the balancing these two competing tensions (Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011). The organization's other co-director Berton "Bert" Myles (2011) elaborated that at that time the organization moved from "being all about learning, often learning about other people's struggles, to learning about our own struggles." Bert (2011) went on further to talk about how this organizational shift moved into looking at root and systemic causes of issues that meant that youth were "talking about action that was beyond service." Bert (2011) admitted that these leadership and mission shifts were also supported by shifts in funding that were also much more open and agreeable to "organizing" work.

At the time of this research, the organization had settled into its new orientation and there was "no internal resistance" left (Myles, 2011). In fact, Ernie (2011) indicated that she had been spending a lot of time making the organization "more friendly for white suburban folks" in an effort to get back some of the balance of "race, class and gender."

Human resources. The Institute had a small staff. In addition to the two co-directors sharing executive leadership there was a director of community education (an African American male in his 30s), director of youth organization (a Latino in his 20s who came up through the program) and a part-time bookkeeper and operations coordinator (an Asian woman). Members of the youth leadership team were paid staffers and participants in Youth Lead summer program all received stipends for their participation. Like the other organizations, a chunk of this funding for teens in the summer came from the Boston Youth Fund (Horton, 2011).

Leadership. Prior to taking on the two co-director roles, Ernie Horton (a Latina in her late 20s) was the development and fundraising expert and Bert Myles (a white male in his mid 30s) was overseeing the summer Youth Leads program. Ernie was born in Texas to a family of Mexican descent. She shared that her father's critical thinking and "level of political thought process was something that he ingrained" in his children (Horton, 2011). Self-reliance as well as helping others were other values Ernie (2011) attributed to her upbringing. Ernie came to Boston to attend Emerson University and first started volunteering with the Institute helping out with the annual appeal. She eventually got hooked by the kind of "creative education" she saw going on at the Institute (Horton, 2011). Ernie (2011) explained:

127

I saw young people learning in a way that they should be learning. They were asking critical questions. They were thinking about things in the world that was a really different way. It was not just regurgitation of facts, it wasn't just "I am here to get a grade," but it was critical thinking at it's best. And then I just fell in love. I fell in love with organization.

Ernie kept volunteering for the Institute as she worked as a college counselor for a Gear-Up program at a local high school. She was applying for graduate teacher training programs when the previous executive director at the Institute offered her a job as a "part-time grant writer" (Horton, 2011).

Bert (2011) was completing his master's degree in a self-created education program at Harvard when he got connected to the Institute through a friend of his who was directing the summer Youth Lead program. Bert (2011) was "interested in youth work" and creating environments where "the people affected by decisions" make the decisions. Bert (2011) got involved with the organization and found he "really loved it." Initially, Bert (2011) handled operations and bookkeeping and then later took on a "youth worker position" and eventually became the "summer program director." During his employment with the Institute, Bert was also working with former Institute program participants in forming a new youth-led organization in Roxbury as well as engaging in programming at an art center.

Bert (2011) noted that he left the Institute:

. . . because it was headed in a crumbling direction, in my opinion. People were burning out, and the former director was burnt out. I left it with very little hope. And it really did fall apart within the next two years.

Ernie echoed similar sentiments in saying that the organization was in a bit of "disarray" at that same time and she was "ready to leave, because she was unhappy with

leadership." That is when Bert came to her with the proposal that they share the

directorship and combine their skills. Ernie (2011) admitted the proposal made her

anxious:

> I was like I don't know how to do that, I can't. It would be detrimental for this
> organization if I were to step in. And he [Bert] said, "Ok, let's do it together. I
> know how to do all that stuff, and you know how to do the writing." Between the
> two of us we have all the capabilities of being an executive director.

Despite the potential stresses and strains of leading an organization like the

Institute, embarking on the challenge with her colleague, Bert, bolstered Ernie. She

noted that encouragement from an executive director at one the Institute's partner

organizations also helped her see that her "love" for the organization was more important

than any concrete skills she needed to learn or the challenges that needed to be faced

(Horton, 2011).

At the time of the research, the Sesame Street Institute's board had moved beyond

the tensions of the organization's mission reorientation (Myles, 2011). According to

Ernie (2011), the majority of the board's members were individuals under 30 years of age

and eight of the fourteen were alums from the organization's programs. The organization

consciously included youth constituents in "authentic" leadership roles and "adults that

are on the board are never like, Oh, you're just a kid" (Horton, 2011). In fact, board

leadership was shared between an adult and a youth co-chairs. In talking about the board,

Ernie (2011) said:

> In many ways -- like, they're working hard to run this place. And I can
> legitimately say that with all security. I won't say that they are not getting
> anything from us, but they have the same type of relationship with this
> organization that a lot of us do. We're in love with it. And they, that's why they
> serve on the board.

Financial resources. In terms of financial status, the Institute had revenues approaching $1M in 2007 with inflows of $882,825. However, their three-year average was $575,781 and their trend was one of decreasing revenues over this time period. The organization also had over $1.1M in assets in 2007, primarily related to the ownership of their space, with a three-year average of just under $1M. Like their revenues, assets were also in decline over the three-year time period, most likely as a result of declining property values (U.S. Treasury, 2011g; U.S. Treasury, 2011h; U.S. Treasury; 2011i). Bert (2011) indicated that their space was currently for sale, but that they were "leaning against selling." This lack of revenue diversification coupled with the declining revenue and assets suggest that the organization was in a period of financial stress (Froelich 1999; Stone, Hager & Griffin, 2001).

The organization's revenue came primarily from private grants and donations with a very small amount originating from program fees (Horton, 2011; 2009 return of, 2011i). While the Institute is primarily interested in action-oriented social justice education, Ernie (2011) shared that she could easily talk to a funder who was mostly interested in "new jobs" or "employable skills." She noted:

> Our young people are learning to do research, they're learning to facilitate a meeting, they're learning to have difficult discussions, they're creating agendas, they're cleaning the kitchen, I mean the range is huge of employable skills. If that's what they're looking for, that's what they get. All day long, employable skills.

Ernie (2011) also could sell the program as "academic engagement," "positive youth development," as well as its core mission of "social justice education." Both Ernie

(2011) and Bert (2011) talked about the difficulty convincing those in the philanthropic world of their value. Ernie shared:

> We do incredible work, but we're the only ones that know we do incredible work. Nobody else knows that we do incredible work. What we do is so legitimate, and we do it so effectively, and we do it on the cheap.

Ernie (2011) was also frustrated that funders "expect us to measure impact on five dollars." Bert (2011) further indicated that their "biggest funder pulled out because we weren't partnered with a failing high school or failing school" and that "funding shifts every few years." One of the challenges the Institute was facing was that "almost all the money in Boston, or big money, has turned to college, attendance, and graduation" and that to reorient in this direction would change fundamentally what the Institute did (Myles, 2011). The Institute would always have "a group of young people who are dropped out, who are not going to college, or where college isn't the right fit" (Myles, 2011) and that this worked well when there was funding for "court involved" programs. Yet much of that funding has shifted to focus on "academic" outcomes (Myles, 2011).

Bert (2011) indicated that the changing funding environment had forced the Institute to be "as collaborative as possible and to have as many partners as possible." Organizational relationships were feeding participants into the Institute's Youth Lead program. These collaborations were helping the organization move "beyond just the individual transformation" into the formation of a network of aligned groups (Myles, 2011).

The community education director, Frank Widit, indicated that the Institute was working with schools in West Roxbury as well as the Milton Academy (Widit, 2011).

131

The Institute also had reciprocal relationships with other organizations aligned with their mission (Widit, 2011) including an organization founded by a former Institute participant who also had been a Youth Lead program co-director (Widit, 2011). The Institute was actively working with community-based organizations and leaders liked the Black Ministerial Alliance to expand learning opportunities for Institute youth through internships and other experiential activities (Horton, 2011).

Ernie (2011) indicated that she also indicated that she had a "community of people" who supported her organizational struggles. Bert (2011) indicated it is "really hard in nonprofits to balance family life and work life" and "it's a high burnout with not a lot of training, not a lot of support." So supports networks like the kind Ernie speaks of seem particularly important especially in a competitive youth program space (Myles, 2011).

Constituents and programs. In terms of those that the Institute serves, its constituents are young people, in keeping with their NTEE focus on youth development (Guidestar, 2011c). Programs served teens and young adults with a geographic outreach that spanned outside of the City of Boston into surrounding suburbs. According to the Sesame Street Institute website (2011):

> Eight hundred young people come from the city and outlying communities for leadership development and social justice education in our summer, weekend and afterschool programs.

The Institute seeks to provide its young people with skills, training and opportunities to issues related to social justice and social change. These are in alignment with the "citizenship programs" NTEE classification (Guidestar, 2011c). The Institute's

132

flagship Youth Lead program provides leadership skills, internship opportunities,

education on important social issues, and opportunities to connect with other youth

during an intensive summer long program (Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011; Widit, 2011;

Sesame Street Institute, 2011). The organization provides outreach weekends for other

youth interested in learning about systemic causes to homelessness and poverty as well as

programs for court-involved youth and others, including adults, who seek to understand

the system of crime and punishment in the United States (Sesame Street Institute, 2011).

They work to keep engaged alumni of their programs through a graduate program that

operates throughout the year and supports the social justice education needs of

"educators, youth workers, administrators and others" who work with young people

(Sesame Street Institute, 2011). The Sesame Street Institute has a formal theory of

change (see Figure 13) which envisions "pathways to change":

> [Pathways] transform lives and communities by helping young people embrace
> difference, tackle issues head-on, reflect, act and give back. [Our] model of youth
> work demonstrates how we educate ourselves and others to make meaningful
> change in the world around us (Sesame Street Institute, 2010).

Norms and values. The overall culture of the Institute casually observed and

gleaned from interviews appeared to be one of energy, passion and engagement. Ernie

(2011) spoke of "love" and "care" and both she and Bert indicated they wanted to

"reboot" or change what the youth thought of as "normal" social interactions (Horton,

2011; Myles, 2011). Bert (2011) shared the following:

> There's a lot of focus on building different community and there's a lot of counter-
> culture community, which to me is loving support of community. There's a lot of
> focus on supporting people holistically, not just academically so that's like dealing
> with trauma, that's dealing with emotional, social problems. That's encouraging
> people to manage their anger, deal with problems in the home.

Simone (2011), a youth participant in the summer program, noted that the

Institute felt like "family." Given the limited access to youth opinions, it is hard to

understand how widely felt these sentiments were among the Institute's youth

participants. Youth were definitely observed at both the high school and at the Institute

headquarters leading and directing numerous activities with adults being almost invisible

or to the side of the core action (Observation, July 20, 2011; Observation, July 12, 2011;

Observation, November 11, 2011). Teens appeared to feel comfortable in the space as

well as with others in the space (Observation, July 20, 2011; Observation, July 12, 2011;

Observation, November 11, 2011). This was consistent with the organization's mission

and vision for its young participants.

The love and care for youth participants extended beyond individual participants

to the organization as a whole. Ernie (2011) spoke of how people simple "fall in love

with [the] place" and Frank (2011) felt it was important for young staffers to really care

about the organization as well as be open to challenge and a passion for social justice. It

is a culture that seeks to "live out [these] values" while truly believing in young people

(Myles, 2011; Horton, 2011). Simone (2011) affirms this sort of culture:

> So you can tell just based off of the wall colors here that it's a very welcoming
> environment. It's a very understanding, a very caring environment. And it's very
> open. So on any given day you can have any given conversation with any given
> person. It's just that open and welcoming. I think based on what [the Institute]
> tries to offer us, as young people -- a space where the outside world isn't really
> generating for us -- they're really trying to create that space for us here so that we
> are comfortable and are able to share our ideas and thoughts, and are able to have
> different conversations. Because it's not available anywhere else.

FIGURE 11: Sesame Street Institute Theory of Change Model
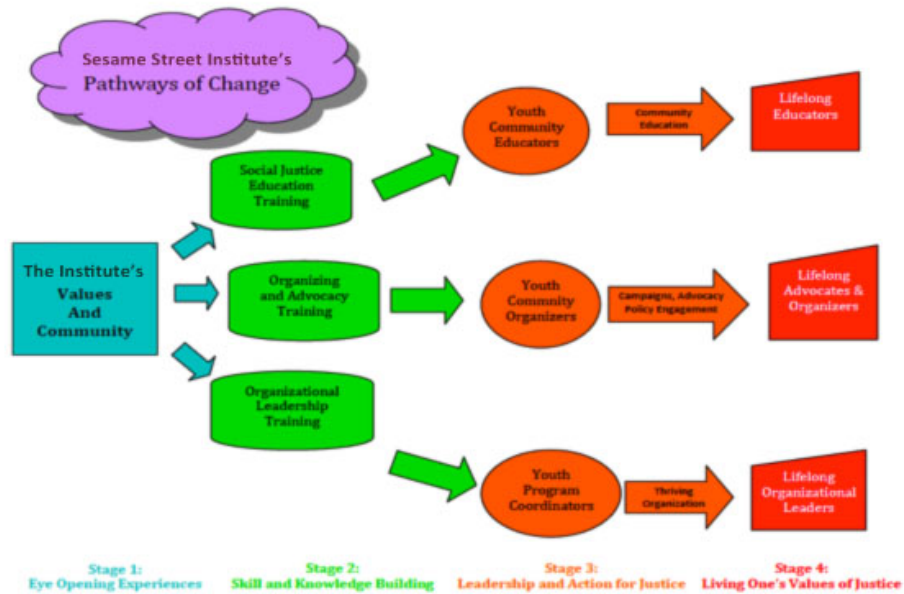
Source: Sesame Street Institute Strategic Plan, 2010-2015

<u>Youth Lead</u>

Program background. As indicated above, the Sesame Street Institute's flagship

program Youth Lead began as a program of outreach weekends at a private, college

preparatory in 1987. Its primary objective was to sensitize students to class and racial

privilege (Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011; Sesame Street Institute, 2011). The program

expanded to a summer long leadership development offering and included other schools

with high levels of academic achievement (Myles, 2011; Sesame Street Institute, 2011).

As detailed above, efforts to reconcile the educational and empowerment missions of the

organization were clearly present within the push for the Youth Lead program to balance

out these tensions and bring more diverse youth in contact with one another over issues

of systemic change (Myles, 2011).

135

Programmatically, the Youth Lead program sees itself as meeting learning needs

not addressed in school (Horton, 2011). Ernie (2011) shared how history is taught as an

example:

> You're not teaching history from the current events perspective. Because that's
> not how you teach history in the Boston public schools, or even in other schools.
> You teach it from the past, never do you teach it from the present. That's kind of
> how we work, that has kind of been the evolution of it. It's evolved into more
> action-based work, where it's not just like "let's learn together, Kumbaya." But,
> like, okay next steps, what are we going to do? How are we going to carry this
> forward?

Program space. In 2011, the Sesame Street Institute's Summer Youth Lead

program took place primarily at a Boston Public School High School on the border of the

Dorchester and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods. From casual observation (Observation,

July 20, 2012), the group was using the high school auditorium, lobby area, classroom

spaces, main office, faculty break room and other spaces in this large urban high school.

The school also hosts one of the City of Boston's Centers for Youth and Families.[24]

Teens and program staff moved freely through the school and there appeared to be no

school authorities present.

The Institute had program space at their main offices in Dorchester where the

teens on the leadership team met and school year programming occurred (see figure 12).

This main headquarter space is brightly colored with an open concept that appeared to be

reconfigurable with mobile walls. There was a kitchen, open work cubicles, and private

meeting space as well. Quotes and posters that spoke to systemic or radical social change

---

[24] Boston Centers for Youth and Families is the city's human service agency with a wide range of programs responsive to community needs offered public schools and other community sites. These centers are critical resources for youth in Boston's neighborhoods. (BCYF, 2013).

(e.g., Malcolm X poster, "Youth Jobs Now" protest sign, "No One is Free When Others are Oppressed" bumper sticker) were displayed throughout the space. The environment had signs of lots of activity and felt used. Teens appeared to move freely throughout the space and appear comfortable with setting things up and beginning activities or work (Observation, July 12, 2011; Observation, November 11, 2011). According to Ernie (2011) the space had been designed by the teens themselves and took their needs into account.

FIGURE 12: Sesame Street Institute Sketch
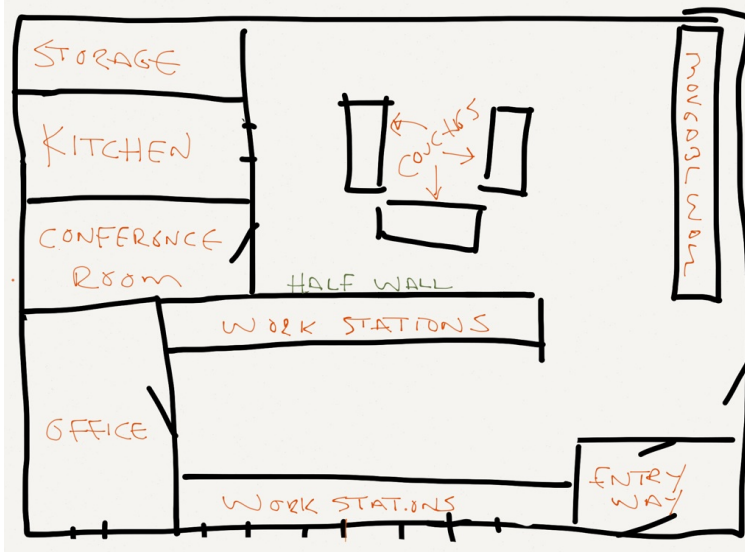
Source: Original drawing using paper based on site observation (Observation, July 12, 2011)

Program staff. Staffing for the Youth Lead program consists of the Institute's core staff and a teen leadership group of about a dozen teens (Horton, 2011). Ten additional adult staff members were added for the summer to provide structured learning content and support. Most of these individuals "want to be teachers or are thinking of becoming educators or are already educators" (Myles, 2011). Boston youth participants also received stipends for their participation as part of a Boston summer job initiative.

137

Both co-directors provided programming support for the Youth Leads program with Bert taking a bit more of an oversight role than Ernie (Myles, 2011; Observation, July 20, 2011).

Frank Widit, the director of community education, was also interviewed as part of this research to provide a staff perspective of the Youth Lead program. While he didn't specifically "direct" the Youth Lead program, he was actively involved in its implementation (Widit, 2011). While Frank had gone to college for graphic arts, he had worked in a number of youth-oriented environments prior to coming to the Institute. These prior experiences he described is being primarily in areas of "youth empowerment" around issues like housing, HIV / AIDS, and the school to prison pipeline (Widit, 2011). Frank came to the Institute working with the prison empowerment project and then with incarcerated young women. This work eventually transformed into the Career Pathways program as well as Community Education (Widit, 2011).

Frank (2011) had been able to participate in professional training workshops on teenage and adolescent development as well as access to workshops in more core social justice areas like addressing "adultism" in youth programming. At the same time, Frank (2011) admitted that is own personal experiences as a young person and involvements with similar youth environments made him feel "very comfortable" in spaces like the Institute and programs like Youth Lead. More than age, Frank felt the most important quality that a youth worker needed was a personality that could connect to and relate to young people in an authentic way through real listening and "real conversation" (Widit, 2011). Frank (2011) also related that when he was a young person it was really important

138

that his mentors pushed and challenged him to move forward not just with a vision to college, but beyond college. He has tried to carry this insight into his own work with youth (Widit, 2011).

Recruitment and participants. Teens in the Youth Lead program come from a wide range of Boston neighborhoods as well as surrounding suburbs like Milton and Lexington (Widit, 2011). About 60% to 70% of these teens in the programs are in Boston Public Schools (Widit, 2011). Teens travel to the site of the Youth Lead program as well as the Institute's main offices via bus or subway or both (Simone, 2011; Widith, 2011). While some of the program participants are recruited through the Institute's partner organizations, most of the teens apply directly to the program (Myles, 2011) and almost all of these teens come through word of mouth (Widit, 2011; Simone, 2011). For example, teen leader Simone (2011), started the Summer Youth Lead program in 2009 and "was introduced by [her] good friend Barbara."

TABLE 16: Basic Demographics of Teens Served by Youth Lead

	Sesame Street Institute	
	Population	**Sample**
# Youth	72	1
Gender		
Female	48	1
Male	24	0
Ethnicity / Race		
Hispanic	10	0
Black	40	1
Asian	6	0
White	11	0
Other	6	0
Age		
14	n/a	0
15	n/a	0
16	n/a	0
17	n/a	1
18	n/a	0

Length with Program		
< =1 yr	56	0
2 yrs	13	0
3 - 4 yrs	3	1
>= 5 yrs	0	0
Unknown	0	0

Source: Information provided by Sesame Street Institute staff.

Teens definitely view themselves as applying for an employment opportunity

(Horton, 2011) and the hiring process seemed rather rigorous. In addition to an

application, teens needed to write an essay, provide two letters of recommendation and

participate in five group interviews (Myles, 2011). Bert (2011) indicated that in order to

be accepted into the program, teens needed to demonstrate a commitment in one of two

areas:

> One [area] is around preexisting commitment or interest or desire for social
> justice and the second criteria is pre-existing spark for leadership of peers. We
> have like a low, medium, high ranking. They have to have a medium on at least
> one of those to be considered for the program.

Bert (2011) went on say that when they had too many teens who were low in both

categories or didn't have this medium level of efficacy, that those teens who were:

> on the path towards being positive role models and / or community leaders is less
> than 50% or about 50%. And when they have at least a medium or above it's like
> above 80%.

The most effective participants were able to make a connection between "what

they're learning about and their lives" and that they needed some sort of "internal drive"

or the "transformation" doesn't happen in moving them up to a high level of leadership or

social justice knowledge (Myles, 2011). Ernie (2011) also confirmed that the program

indeed was looking for that "spark of engagement." However, she (Horton, 2011) also

140

talked about bringing in teens with "high need" and Bert (2011) indicated that a teen

who was "a gang leader or a former gang leader" was currently part of their program.

Ernie (2011) didn't skirt around the truth when she said:

> [T]here are some young people in our program because if they weren't in our
> summer program they would be murdered.

At the same time some very smart and well-performing students don't get into the

program because their interest or desire for learning more about social justice just isn't

there (Myles, 2011). In part, the Institute is interested in "individual transformation," but

they are also striving for "community change" (Myles, 2011). This is echoed in

organization's theory of change (Figure 11) that strives for change by working to change

the way in which individual youth view, understand and can act upon the world.

But even when a "high need" participant gets involved in the program there are

still possibilities for growth, transformation and leadership. Bert (2011) talks about

Marvin, who was a brother of one of the teen leaders who was in his second summer

Youth Lead experience:

> [During his time with the Institute, Marvin had] gotten involved with two
> community groups in Brookline.[25] He's just really excelling and influencing. He
> leads a group. His group is about having people discover who they really are,
> which is like taking people to a deeper place, which is what his path was here. He
> had really discovered who he really was. And that's what happened (Myles,
> 2011).

Simone (2011) on the other hand was someone who was already sensitized by her

home life to think about issues in a particular way and was clearly a student who at least

had this medium level of social justice interest. She shared:

---

[25] One of Boston's more well heeled neighborhoods.

My parents were both immigrants to America, so I think just on that front we have a different view on some of the things that happen day-to-day here that some other people might not dwell on. And so we start to see those things already, and so some of those conversations do happen, but it's not like an intense three-day retreat talking abut these things.

Goals and objectives. Both Ernie (2011) and Bert (2011) articulated positive outcomes for the youth in the Institute's programs. Ernie (2011) hoped that these young people could become "educators," "organizers," "advocates," and "organizational leaders" that had a social justice lens and that they formed a strong "community" with themselves and others to "create equity in Boston." Frank (2011) also expressed his desire that over the next decade the Institute would become the "training ground for young people who want to be involved in social justice so that they get their feet wet." In a broader sense, Bert (2011) hoped that young people from their programs could "take control of their lives" and "have a voice" in the system and decisions that affect their lives so that they are agents in their own lives. He wanted them to find their own "internal drive," "name their dreams," and "start pursuing them" (Myles, 2011). As for values and social justice, he admitted he wanted that, but at the same time it would be enough if the young people in their program could take away "care" for themselves and for others (Myles, 2011).

Guiding philosophy. These dual missions of building up the individual capacity of young people to be agents of change and creating a new generation of social justice leaders is articulated in the organization's theory of change (Figure 14) and its pedagogical strategies. In part the organization works to develop the individual agency of the youth engaged in its programs while at the same time building a strong community

142

among young people coming from different backgrounds. It seeks to unite their individual struggles or as Ernie (2011) put it "like we are creating action and movement together." In order to do that, participants in Youth Lead and the Institute's other programs needed to "learn by doing" (Horton, 2011). Bert (2011) indicated that they did this through "role modeling and examples." For example, a year before this research the Youth Lead program had been co-directed with a 21-year-old former program participant who also had started her own youth-led organization (Myles, 2011). Bert (2011) shared:

> When you see Cori and Theo who are like 16 and 17, both in high school, leading every morning, some people don't think about it but others are like "I want to do that. I could do that." And then, hey, I can do this.

Providing "opportunities for young people to lead" is one of the core pedagogical strategies used by the Youth Lead program (Myles, 2011). In fact "every teen has to lead a component" of the program (Myles, 2011). The focus on "process" rather than "content and outcome" is part of what keeps the organization focused on the development of youth agency and leadership capacity (Myles, 2011). At the same time the organization works from a "questioning pedagogy, problem solving pedagogy" so that youth "can think and form their own opinions, form their own ideas or ideology" (Myles, 2011). Ideally, the organization wants youth to question what is "normal" and gain the skills that allows those "who are affected by things [to] have a say over them" (Myles, 2011).

Program design. The Youth Lead program is six and half weeks long and starts with a three-day, two-night retreat (Horton, 2011; Simone, 2011; Sesame Street Institute, 2011). The retreat creates intense bonding and community building through the sharing of individual struggles, or "moments of freedom" to begin building a powerful sense of

trust and community (Horton, 2011; Simone, 2011; Sesame Street Institute, 2011). In

talking about the power of the retreat, Simone (2011) expressed that the:

> structure of the retreat really gives us the chance to really get to know one another on different levels. And we were able to speak on different topics that I wouldn't regularly speak about with my friends, so topics like racism, sexism and classism and things like that. The staff were able to break those topics down and give us a place to discuss, and talk about our past experience with the different topics, and how we felt about the topics. So I really thought that was amazing, it was a lot of conversation that was happening, there was a lot of learning that was happening, but there was a lot of conversation that was happening. And I thought that was great it was with students of my own age. Those are heavy topics, to be discussing, and the fact that I were able to talk with other students around my age, I thought that was great, I don't know, I just thought that it was amazing that we could talk about such deep things with one another.

This intense retreat experience was followed up by structured learning, hands-on

work in the community, and action projects (Myles, 2011; Horton, 2011, Sesame Street

Institute, 2011). Student created and led large group "assemblies" were offered three days

a week followed by smaller seminar groups comprised of about a dozen students each

(Myles, 2011; Observation, July 20, 2011).

Seminar groups meet for ninety minutes, break for lunch, and then regroup for

another hour in the afternoon (Myles, 2011). Seminars were a chance for deeper

exploration into topics that interested participants. During the summer of 2011, some of

the seminar topics were political arts and cultural arts, education justice, health and

identity, environmental justice, and violence and liberation movements (Myles, 2011;

Simone, 2011). Structured after more formal learning environments, seminars worked to

engage participant interest with "activities" and rich content including "media" (Sesame

Street Institute, 2011; Simone, 2011; Observation, July 10,2011). Simone (2011) was a

member of the violence and liberation seminar, which she felt:

gave us a chance to be in a smaller setting and really get some deeper information on different subjects, and it was like a classroom setting, where the teacher really presented these topics. But there were also times for conversations to talk about what we were learning and stuff like that, to make sure that that information was registering and that we understood everything that was happening.

The seminars also worked to engage participants with learning that was "relevant to everyone's lives" and linked to "current events" and an "action-based" perspective (Horton, 2011). For example, Simone (2011) spoke of an exercise where the teens were split into three groups (Vanilla, Chocolate, and Strawberry) with each group getting different amounts of physical space -- the Vanilla group had the most space to spread out while the Chocolates were congested in a small space. Simone (2011) started to make connections:

> [It's like the] neighborhoods here [in Boston]. They are neighborhoods like Mattapan and Dorchester where there are a lot of people in the smaller area but if you step out into the suburbs, the houses are more spread apart as less people as more wealthy can see. You can see the different areas clearly. After doing that activity, it made a lot of those connections for me.

While students stayed with a seminar group throughout the six-weeks, they also had opportunities to teach back what they learned in student led "final presentations" (Sesame Street Institute, 2011; Simone, 2011; Widit, 2011). During her interview, Simone (2011) could see how these teach back sessions were linked to the overall development of leadership skills:

> You also learn leadership skills throughout the summer, and those leadership skills help you facilitate different workshops. . . . And so, after that learning period, we become the teachers. . . we develop a whole day for everyone else to teach back some of the information that we were taught. So that was a great way to connect what we're learning, and also the leadership skills that we're building.

As a staff member, Frank (2011) saw the seminars being the primary place where participants were challenged, pushed to "analyze" what they knew, and to understand their "own privilege." He shared:

> I mean in conversations with people that have been in my seminars, that I interact with . . . you read their essays . . . if it's not one thing, its something that challenges them on some level. It might not be everything that hits them, but at least one thing is hitting them.

The structured learning seminars and community building assemblies were complimented with community-based internships on the other two days of the week as well as community action projects worked on over the course of the six weeks (Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011; Sesame Street Institute, 2011). Internships were linked to one of three "career pathways" : "education, organizing, or organizational leadership" (Myles, 2011) and extended into the school year programming where participants continued to learn concrete skills relevant to their paths (Widit, 2011).

Evaluation and outcomes. While access to Youth Lead participants was limited, Simone's over two years of experience with the organization provided a great deal of insight. Simone (2011) definitely experienced a strong shift in her attitudes or believes related to youth agency. She shared:

> I would definitely say that the youth are a powerful people. I think that's definitely something that [the Institute] has shown we are capable of doing so much. And over the course of the time I've been here, I've seen how great young people can be.

An example of this youth power was the Jobs for Youth campaign. Simone (2011) felt like she could organize people, gain control and actually bring issues to decision makers and regain funding for youth summer jobs in Boston. In 2010, Simone took a trip

146

to Haiti with her sister where she delivered leadership curriculum she developed to a group of 8-12 year olds (Simone, 2011). Without her experience in Youth Lead and the Institute, Simone felt she might have viewed herself more in a support role for an English class rather than an agent bringing educational content (Simone, 2011).

Frank (2011) admitted that not every student ends up with positive developmental outcomes like Simone. Sometimes the problem is as simple as not providing teens with as much support and practice in new skills before sending them out in the community. Frank saw this as fairly easy to correct, what was harder were the effects of outside forces that impeded progress. For instance, Frank (2011) spoke of one young person who was consistently homeless, despite staff efforts to keep the teen housed. At other times, violence and shootings in the neighborhoods challenged the Institute staff to figure out how to best support the needs and learning of the teens in their programs (Widit, 2011).

Part of the solution for the Youth Lead program, seems to have been to bolster not only concrete skills teens (e.g. organizational ability, knowledge, communication, and collaboration) but emotional capacity as well. For instance, Simone (2011) spoke of deep emotional learning:

> I developed these friendships and bonds with people that I've never met before in my life. And I was comfortable with sharing things with them and they were comfortable with sharing things with me. . . and it was amazing to see all the different stories that were shared within the circle and how comfortable people were with sharing some deep things within themselves. Like just a circle of different people you don't know, you don't know how they're going to take in this information, you don't know what they're going to do with it after the circle but everyone was comfortable enough to share what they wanted to share.

This experience echoes the kind of "rebooting" and changing what is "normal" that Ernie (2011) and Bert (2011) spoke of in their interviews. The combination of student led

activities, deep discussion and learning on important topics, intense and emotional bonding with concrete skill develop definitely had an impact on Simone and from the interviews with staff similar experiences are shared by other teens (Simone, 2011; Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011; Widit, 2011). For Simone, (2011) she felt she could leave the program and be "able to take whatever I learn and bring it back to people and help the standard of living improve for different people, and just bring something back to different communities."

In terms of evaluation of program outcomes, both Frank (2011) and Ernie (2011) talked of constant and embedded processing with "check ins" at the beginning, throughout, and end of day. Frank (2011) also indicated there was lots of communication between all programs and levels of the organization to keep everyone informed. Ideally, a student will come to the Institute, go through the Youth Lead program, work with the organization over the next school year, come back the following summer, and then in the following school year work with a community based partner organization (Horton, 2011). Ernie (2011) admitted that at the time of the research they were going through a process with a community partner:

> [We had a process] to talk about evaluation, to talk about performance measurement, and to really document if the young person comes out of our summer program, this is what we expect them to have.

Part of this effort in the preceding year had been to document the organization's processes. What Ernie really hoped was to demonstrate the impact of these processes, yet the resources and capacity to do this were limited despite pushes from funders to get at the impact (Horton, 2011).

Bert (2011) was frustrated with the varied evaluation systems and program

structures in place across youth organizations just within the Greater Boston funding

environment. For instance, comparing the leadership program at the Institute with that of

another respected organization, it was clear that both programs had very different

outcomes. For this peer organization Bert's (2011) assessment was that "their youth

leaders, they can't lead on their own" or "articulate an ideology." This was a very

different sort of leadership development than what the Youth Lead and the Institute had

in place, where he felt youth transformed themselves completely. So his question was

how do you compare these two programs that are both doing "leadership development"

(Myles, 2011).

Ideally Bert wanted to see his organization and others use something like Boston

After School and Beyond ACT framework. Basically, he wanted funders to "develop a

tool for everyone across the board and use the same tool so apples were compared to

apples" (Myles, 2011). He felt this would allow him and others to see what programs

were really good at what types of activities so they could figure out what would be the

best program for any particular young person. At the same time, he wished funders would

just come in on "two or three random days for the program" to observe what really goes

on and experience the program environment (Myles, 2011).

Interpersonal interactions. These sorts of random visits might start to get a

handle on things like the culture of an organization or tone of interaction between youth

as well as between youth and the adults in the program. From Simone's (2011) interview

it was clear that she found a great deal of connection, challenge, and thoughtful

engagement with her peers at the Youth Lead retreat:

> [The retreat brought] students, from all across Boston, and even surroundings, suburbs. It was just a mix of students that I wouldn't normally have the chance to always be around. So that was amazing. And the structure of the retreat really [gave] us the chance to really get to know one another.

Simone (2011) found the Institute "a great place to just think and think about

anything that you wanted to think about." For Simone (2011), the Institute was a

"wonderful community" and a "great place to be in." She could see "how people can help

other people." Frank (2011) indicated that every group is different in terms of interactions

between youth, but that they really worked hard at creating a team environment and a

team feel.

Ernie (2011) felt that these connections were built through participants "sharing

their stories with other young people, creating that layer of humility and the community

piece is the driving force of next steps. They also worked to deal with conflict when it

arises either in a group setting or between the individual's involved (Widit, 2011).

Additionally, staff spent a lot of time modeling behavior and modeling ways to check

each other until it becomes a norm of the group and the youth themselves have adopted

the practice (Widit, 2011).

Youth clearly have the opportunity to take on new responsibilities within the

context of the Youth Lead program and could build upon these if they moved into the

school year program. Some participants moved into more formal staff positions and

worked with adult staff in equal staffing relationships (Widit, 2011). There are even

opportunities to move onto the board of directors of the organization (Horton, 2011). For

Ernie (2011), this was all part of a conscious process of incorporating youth into the

organization as decision makers. This process was done in a manner that allowed youth

"to have a voice," "tools," and "support" to participate realizing their goals (Widit, 2011).

Ernie (2011) admitted that putting the power in the hands of teens meant constant

attention to their values, because it "becomes very easy to not live those values"

especially when you have programmatic and organizational things you want to

accomplish that may have to take a back seat.

This care for youth decision-making and power was also taken into consideration

when the Institute sought community partners for the Youth Lead internships and the

school year career pathways. Ernie (2011) in particular was concerned that internship

settings also lived the values present at the Institute. She shared:

> I look at it like there are children that I'm not going to place them just anywhere.
> I'm not going to place them with an adult that I don't trust or someone that I don't
> know . . . [t]he level of trust I need to have in this person in order to place my
> young people there needs to be very high (Horton, 2011).

Part of the Institute's valued and trusted community were social justice, youth

organizations participated in their collaborative organizing strategies. Additionally, a

number of community-based sites, businesses and individuals worked with the Institute in

fulfillment of its mission. Parents and families of youth participants did not seem a large

part of the organization's external network. This in part may be due to its large

geographic reach for participants. Yet, given the success of word-of-mouth recruiting, it

seemed that friend networks of participants were activated to some degree.

151

<u>Being the Liberation School</u>

The Sesame Street Institute is at once concerned with the individual development and growth of individuals as agents, while at the same time working towards community change through the establishment of new norms and understanding. These aspirations are articulated in a theory of change that is informed by the values of social justice, critical consciousness and empowerment. Fundamentally, the organization works to build a culture of trust and respect for the voices and contributions of its young participants.

Teens accepted into the Youth Lead program, while motivated by the desire for employment, also possessed either some interest in social justice or some desire to lead others. Like Castle Square, social bonding and trust were important components of the Institute's programs. However, the design of the Youth Lead program also emphasized equitable group processes, opportunities to decide and lead, support of individual knowledge acquisition about systemic issues and problems, and concrete hands-on experience through internships and community action projects. These team-building and work experiences intersect with the Youth Park Stewards program at the Friends of Beardsley Park despite the different ideological lens of the work.

Participants in the Youth Lead program were challenged to engage with others from diverse backgrounds and experience while also coming to understand the power and privilege that they and others possessed. Adults within the organization hold roles as facilitators, guides and resources in their quest to support youth in their journey to be independent agents of change. Adults also helped their young leaders build bridges and

connections to others in a citywide and even region wide community who could aid them in their efforts.

Centro Cultural Latino: The Citizenship Guild

In may ways, Centro Cultural Latino, the *Citizenship Guild,* worked to integrate development of the individual, group and community domains through a commitment to long-term engagement with individual youth. With programs designed to reach middle-schoolers as well as teens and young adults, the organization worked to create a caring environment were young people felt welcomed and challenged in a manner that was developmentally appropriate. El Centro wanted its program participants to be aware of their own personal development and growth. The organization aspired for its youth to be successful and productive members of society. Programs at El Centro worked consciously to develop connections to others both within the organization as well as to the world outside. Teens involved in the Community Organizing program work to consciously build concrete skills and positive attitudes to aid their future academic and work lives. At the same time, teens in the program engaged in campaigns to improve the larger community as well as build competence in collaboration with others towards collective goals. As the Citizenship Guild, Centro Cultural Latino had adults who were there to mentor, support, and challenge its young workers while providing ladders for increase responsibility and leadership.

<u>The Organization</u>

Location. Centro Cultural Latino is located in an active neighborhood, which is part of the Mission Hill area of Roxbury. The three-story walk-up leased out by the organization is less than half a mile from three main T-stops (Roxbury Crossing, Longwood Medical Area, and Brigham Circle). Multiple bus lines stop nearby. The organization is in close proximity to Roxbury Community College as well as the Longwood Medical Center and a cluster of hospitals and healthcare related organizations. The census tract (U.S. Census, 2012)[26] that el Centro is in has a very young population with the median age being about 23, but only 5 percent of residents are under the age of 18. Over two thirds of residents are individuals identified as White with Asian identified residents being the second largest racial group at almost 17 percent. Thirty-percent of residents are foreign-born most from Asia and Europe. Incomes and educational levels are also high with low levels of unemployment and poverty. However, 90 percent of residents in El Centro's immediate surroundings rent rather than own which might be related to age.

Mission and history. El Centro was founded in 1968 and became a nonprofit specifically to meet the needs of Latino youth and their families. The organization sees youth as the key "resource" to develop and preserve. The organization addresses issues related to "poverty, health inequities, and lack of educational and professional opportunities" for these communities (Centro Cultural Latino, 2011). The organization seeks "long-term engagement and positive relationships" between "youth at-risk" and a

---

[26] Neighborhood demographics for organizations can be found in Appendix I.

community of supportive adults and organizations towards the growing of "confident, competent, successful and self-sustaining adults" (Centro Cultural Latino, 2011).

Human resources. El Centro had ten filled job positions at the time of this research. The organizational structure consisted of an executive leadership team with directors, managers and coordinators handling a range of programmatic and administrative areas (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Centro Cultural Latino, 2011). Most staffers were full-time with a few part-time positions. The organization also paid all teens involved in its programs on a part time basis. The organization had about 100 volunteers engaged at the time of the research (Vargas-Franco, 2012). A volunteer coordinator insured that these individuals were trained, observed and supported in their efforts (Sola, 2012).

About 60 percent of the staff at the time had Latino heritage and 70 percent are bilingual (Vargas-Franco, 2012). The gender balance leaned female with seven of the positions filled by women. The organization also had a fairly young profile with many of its staff only a few years out of college along with a few more "seasoned" folks in leadership (Vargas-Franco, 2012).

From bios on the organizational website most staff had bachelor degrees with a number holding master's and most had experience working with youth and education-oriented environments (Sola, 2012; Centro Cultural Latino, 2011). Those staff without this expertise had some sort of expertise in a key programmatic area such as health or music (Sola, 2012). The executive director of the organization, Raquel Vargas-Franco (2012), admitted that it was often hard to recruit Latino staff often "more attracted to

155

working in the corporate sector." Raquel wished she was able to raise the resources that

would support professional development for staff or help pay college expenses for young

adults interested in youth work who might be from their own community or at least

reflective of it (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Given these constraints, there was "a really strong

desire amongst the leadership team and especially our director to develop leadership

skills among staff" (Sola, 2012).

     Leadership. El Centro's executive director, Raquel Vargas-Franco is a Latina in

her early 40s with over 25 years of experience working with youth and Latinos in Boston

(Vargas-Franco, 2012). Raquel (2012) originally thought she would "be involved in

politics." She worked at both the Massachusetts State House and in Boston's City Hall

and found she really "hated" these environments (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Growing up in

the Brookline neighborhood of Boston to a Nicaraguan father and Argentinian mother,

the lack of diversity meant Raquel faced a number of "racial incidences" that were very

"traumatic" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Her parents were also very "active around social

justice issues, particularly around Latin America" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Raquel (2012)

shared how these formative experiences influenced her:

> I wanted to work in the Latino community and I wanted to work in some type of
> setting that could contribute to young people building self-esteem around who
> they were, particularly around their culture and their language because of what I
> had faced. You know, it took me a really long time to be okay with who I was and
> accept myself and be proud of who I was just because it was a constant barrage of
> negativity throughout school, in and out of school and in the neighborhood that I
> lived in, it was always a deficit-based approach. That's what led me here.

     Prior to joining el Centro, Raquel had worked for other public service and

community-based organizations including a public health commission, a neighborhood

organizing nonprofit, and an anti-poverty group. At the time of the interview she had

been at Centro Cultural Latino for thirteen years (Vargas-Franco, 2012). It was clear that

her true calling was to serve the mission, youth, and community served by el Centro:

> [It] really fills my soul. It's my passion. I love seeing our young people be really
> proud of who they are and be fearless in their identity, in their culture, in their
> language. It just makes me really proud. It's something that I didn't get to
> experience. My mission in life is just that I want young people to feel okay with
> who they are, to feel proud of who they are, and never for a second let anybody
> tell them that they are less than what they are (Vargas-Franco, 2012).

Raquel hoped that she was leading the organization in an "inclusive" way that

built the leadership skills of others and where she and her leadership staff could "make

decisions together" and where staff "feel empowered" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Raquel

(2012) admitted she hadn't "figured out yet" how to have this same sort of involvement

with the direct service staff. Raquel hoped that there was room for "people to use their

creativity" in accomplishing their work with the understanding that certain guidelines and

deliverables had to be met. Program director, Christine Sola (2012), confirmed that this

constant communication around goals and deliverables created transparency and helped

staff "understand how decision making is made and how we make decisions as a whole."

In leading the organization, Raquel (2012) was supported by an "awesome"

seven-member board. The predominantly Latino members of the board had slightly more

men than women. From the interview with Raquel (2012), the board members were

individuals committed to the supporting her, the staff and the organization. They went to

events, mentored youth, secured funding, and went to bat for the organization when

needed (Vargas-Franco, 2012). The board member bios on the organizational website

(Centro Cultural Latino, 2011) also highlight the institutional connections and expertise

of these individuals. Working for local entities like The Boston Foundation, Mayor

Menino's Office, and the Jewish Family and Children's Service, these individuals

brought skills in program design, project and nonprofit management, community

organizing, communications, and youth development with "at-risk" populations.

Financial resources. In terms of financial resources, Centro Cultural Latino had

inflows of $992,702 in 2007. The three-year revenue average (2007 to 2009) for Centro

Cultural was almost $1.3M pushing the organization above the $1M initial selection

criteria for case sites which was based on 2007 financial data. This also meant it was the

largest organization in the study. During this time period, the organization demonstrated

steady growth in revenues, despite the effects of the recent recession. This growth was

also seen in their assets over the same time period (U.S. Treasury, 2011j; U.S. Treasury,

2011k; U.S. Treasury; 2011l). Additionally, the organization had diverse revenue

sources. While over half of its revenue came from private grants and donations, about a

third was in the form of government contracts and federated campaigns and a very small

amount originating from program fees (U.S. Treasury, 2011j, Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola,

2012). Centro Cultural was in a growing state with diversified revenue indicating that

was in a strong financial position (Froelich 1999; Stone, Hager & Griffin, 2001).

Raquel (2012) admitted that this growth towards a stable and diversified revenue

base came after a very low point where two of their three key funding sources were lost.

This financial shake up made the organization "really look at diversifying . . . funding."

Yet, the great recession and cuts in government funding were still things to keep in mind.

Still, Raquel (2012) wished more funders weren't so "terrified of community organizing"

and funding that work. Christina (2012) also wished more funders understood the having

lots of numbers or serving a bunch of youth in drop-in programming wasn't always

productive. She felt that sometimes a "more intensive approach" was needed and that

takes more resources. Still framing the youth organizing as health education, academic

achievement, youth employment, violence prevention or straight up youth development

was often needed to attract a wider range of funders (Sola, 2012).

External relationships. In addition to diversifying its funding base, the

organization, under Raquel's leadership, worked to increase its connections with its

community and other organizations and to be come less "insular" (Vargas-Franco, 2012).

Early on Raquel and her staff worked on voter registration and parent organizing, which

helped the organization, become more involved concretely in their local community in

the Mission Hill area (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Programmatically, they worked with other

organizations similar to themselves like the Hyde Square Task Force or the Dudley

Square Neighborhood Initiative in Dorchester (Sola, 2012). They had formal

"memorandums of agreements with all of the Longwood Medical area institutions, all of

the colleges of the Fenway, and all of them provide some tech and monetary support"

(Vargas-Franco, 2012). These same organizations provided internship opportunities for

the young people el Centro serves (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012). The organization

also partnered with area schools for its afterschool programs (Vargas-Franco, 2012) and

its middle school program was housed at a church across the street from their offices

(Natalie, 2011).

159

As an organization working to meet the needs of a particular community while also organizing that community, el Centro was often asked to participate in important decision making bodies across the city and "people asked for [their] insights on different things" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). This meant at times the organization walked a "tightrope" with its partners who at times they needed to challenge (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Raquel (2012) noted:

> We partner with the Children's School, the Mission Hill, the Newton Health School, but at the same time we are organizing against the Boston Public Schools, so it can be tense at times, because if a group of parents come to us and say "Hey, this stuff that's happening at this school is not right," we're going to back them up. And we've got to help them navigate what they need to do and who they need to talk to. And so again sometimes, it can be tense.

Constituents and programs. Centro Cultural Latino primarily served youth 10 to 21 years of age and by extension their families. The organization was dedicated to serving Latino youth from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, but also served youth who lived in the surrounding community as well as youth from the City of Boston. According to their website (Centro Cultural Latino, 2011):

> Each year [we] intensively serve 1,000 Leadership Pipeline participants and reach 3,000 youth and adults through community events and outreach efforts. All youth served live at or below the poverty level and are City of Boston residents.

Centro Cultural Latino programs encompassed education, employment, arts, and culture activities offered during the school year as well as the summer. Their education program met the academic support and enrichment needs of middle school students (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011). Older youth were given support as they transitioned into high school through preparation for college. The organization provided English language support to teens as well. Teens gained job skills and

160

experience through the organization's employment programs which focused on health careers as well as community action and organizing. Music and support for girls were part of the arts and culture programs. The organization ran "workshops and events that involve families" and there were community celebrations like "the three kings event and families are always welcome" (Natalie, 2011).

   Norms and values. As a youth development organization, Centro Cultural Latino positioned its programs within a theory of change framework that combined all of these elements as comprehensive and holistic "pathways to success" (see Figure 13). Ideally the organization envisioned its young constituents feeling "like they are part of the community" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Raquel (2012) wanted these young people to be "engaged in making a difference" and to eventually see "youth of color represented" in the institutions of power (e.g., CEOs, board of directors, school committee). Ultimately, Raquel (2012) wanted the young members of el Centro to be:

> a progress factor in that community, communicating respectfully with other people . . . of all sectors, ethnicity, races, being able to love other people . . . those are the things that are really important as a human that are going to get you very far versus if you, you know, pass the algebra MCAS.

   Director of community organizing, Christina Sola (2011), indicated that the organization tried to accomplish this implementing in an age appropriate manner programming in four key areas: 1) education, 2) workforce readiness; 3) civic engagement and 4) arts and culture. Christina (2011) shared that it wasn't really a success to the organization if young person went to college and got a good job, but then didn't give back to their community and had no understanding of their own culture. Their young people need all of these components to be successful citizens.

FIGURE 13: Centro Cultural Latino Theory of Change Model
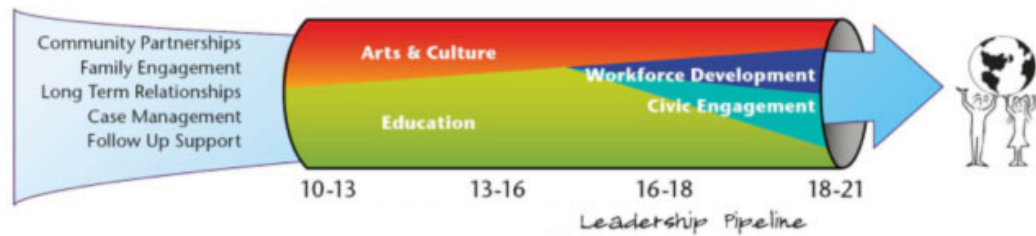
SOURCE: Centro Cultural Latino, 2011

Community Organizers

Program space Centro Cultural Latino was located in a three-story walkup with the first and third floors dedicated to programming. The first floor was the main entrance and also housed the music program. The Community Organizers' programming took place primarily on the third floor, which was comprised of fairly open spaces and rooms for "classes" and meetings. There were couches in a couple of the rooms and a larger kitchen connected to an open space room with lots of college materials and pennants on the wall. Wood floors and lively paint colors gave the space a warm and inviting vibe that still seemed like a place of work. The youth programming space, this program space was neat and orderly.

Program background. The Community Organizing program emerged out of other community outreach activities the organizations was involved in like voter registrations and parent organizing efforts (Vargas-Franco, 2012). As the organization got involved in more and more in the community "youth talked about how they wanted to have a voice, they wanted to be part of the community decision making" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). El

162

Centro responded by creating the Community Organizing program around 2003 and hired

Christina Sola as the coordinator of that program (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012).

FIGURE 14: Centro Cultural Latino Third Floor Sketch
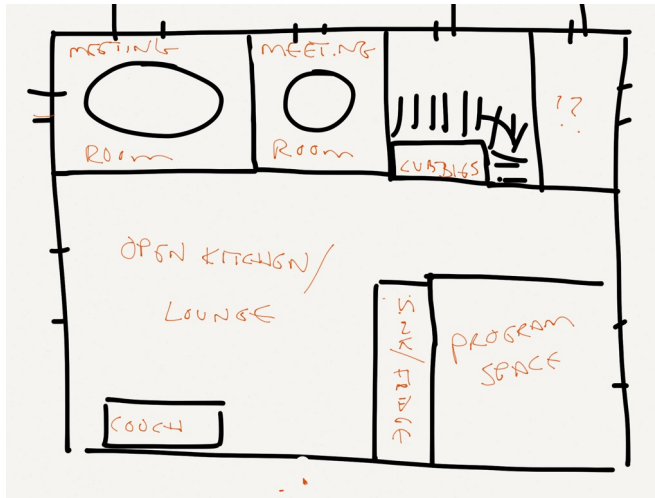
Source: Original drawing using Paper based on site observation (Observation, September 9, 2011)

It also helped that the organization was able to combine its solid experience in doing

health education, strong collaborative partnerships with other youth organizations with a

new focus on organizing around health issues to gain three year funding from the Robert

Wood Johnson foundations to launch this new program (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola,

2012). The program "gradually ventured into different areas of community development,

violence prevention and different health issues, as well as . . . more extensive work in

education" (Sola, 2011).

 Program staff. As mentioned Christina Sola had come to Centro Cultural Latino

to work on the Community Organizing program (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012).

Christina's background was in youth work and she envisioned being at el Centro for a

couple of years before seeking a graduate degree (Sola, 2011). At the time of the

research, Christina (2012) was about ready to celebrate her eighth year with the organization. The organization's mission and "integrity" were part of what kept her engaged (Sola, 2012). Additionally, the organization accommodated Christina's desire to constantly challenge herself and learn (Sola, 2012). In Christina's own words the organization "opened up a lot of opportunities for me" (Sola, 2012). In addition to Christina, the Community Organizing program had two program coordinators in their early twenties and recent college graduates (Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011). Two senior youth leader positions had recently been added to the program (Sola, 2012; Karen, 2011) and twenty-six teens were also paid workers in the program (Sola, 2012).

   Recruitment and participants. There were twenty-six youth in the Community Organizers program at the time of the research.[27] With slightly more females than males, program participants were predominantly of Hispanic origin in keeping with the organization's overall mission to serve members of the Latino community (see Table 17). However, Christina noted that the demographics of youth served had started to shift over the last few years as Mission Hill's demographics shifted. The program, however, works to maintain a good balance between neighborhood youth, Latinos, racial and gender mix, as well as incorporating English language learners (Sola, 2012). Most of the Community Organizers had been in the program for a year or less, but some of these teens had been affiliated with Centro Cultural Latino for much longer. In fact, two of the teens

---

[27] Centro Cultural Latino was a replacement for another organization and as result, interviews for the research happened in the fall of 2011 rather than the summer. While elements of the summer program are included in the case description for this site, much of the detail relates to the school year program. During the summer, the number of youth involved in the program swells to about 60 to 70 with additional youth coming through the Boston Youth Fund summer jobs initiative.

interviewed, Hector and Natalie, had participated in the middle school program when
they were quite young (Hector, 2011; Natalie, 2011).

Teens appeared to have come to the Community Organizers and el Centro in a
number of ways. Seventeen year old Karen (2011) saw the organization's store front,
walked in and found out what the organizations was all about. As mentioned above,

TABLE 17: Basic Demographics of Teens Served by Community Organizers

| | Centro Cultural Latino | |
	Population	Sample
# Youth	26	4
Gender		
Female	16	2
Male	10	2
Ethnicity / Race		
Hispanic	21	3
Black	2	1
Asian	0	0
White	0	0
Other	3	0
Age		
14	1	0
15	10	1
16	7	2
17	8	1
18	0	0
Length with Program		
< =1 yr	17	2
2 yrs	2	1
3 - 4 yrs	2	0
>= 5 yrs	5	1
Unknown	0	0

Source: Information provided by Centro Cultural Latino staff.

Hector and Natalie were involved as young children in the organization. Hector
had heard about el Centro when he was in third grade and joined when he was "seven or
eight" (Hector, 2011). Javier (2011) had friends at school who knew about el Centro and
recommended that the newcomer to Boston check it out because it would "help him in

165

school and . . . real life." Door knocking and community events were also other ways in which teens became aware of the Community Organizers (Sola, 2012). During the summer component of the program, an additional 30 to 40 percent of the youth came from the Boston Youth Fund summer job applications (Sola, 2012).

Given that a good percentage of teens in the program either lived or went to school in the Mission Hill area, transportation to the Community Organizers program is not a barrier. Teens indicated that public transportation (both buses and subway) was easy and accessible (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Natalie, 2011). Paid employment in the Community Organizers program also motivated teens to get to the program (Natalie, 2011). Involvement in program decisions such as "potential incentives" or "different internships" also supported motivation (Christina, 2012).

Goals and objectives. The Community Organizers focused strongly on three of the four content areas within the organization's theory of change – workforce readiness, education, and civic engagement. Arts and culture were also woven in occasionally through the organizing of community events. Desiring to maintain engagement with youth beyond their middle school program, the Community Organizers, and other teen-oriented programs, were seen as continued "investment" that would ensure "long term outcomes" are reached (Sola, 2012). Natalie (2011) confirmed this in saying "[t]hat's what they like to do because they want to see that the kid that they worked with -- in that they see growth, and still be part of the organization."

The push toward individual success for youth definitely shaped desires to build solid workforce skills and work ethic. Christina (2012) shared:

166

One of the things I like about working here is that the idea that it's a work experience too. That it's not just come after school or when you can, it's not just youth development, it's also youth employment.

And while the teens viewed their involvement with the program primarily as employment, education was still communicated as the "number one thing" (Natalie, 2011). Natalie (2011) shared:

Juniors and seniors stay every Monday and Wednesday so after work from 6:30 to 8 we stay after to do homework, college, they give us like college workshops so we can, you know, know more about college and then the freshmen and sophomores stay every Tuesdays and Thursdays and if they see that you're working here but your grades aren't so well they give you like a break and you basically come here but instead of working you're in the academy so they help with your homework and schoolwork to bring up your grades.

Still, for Raquel (2012) the "ideal outcome" for youth was:

wherever they end up, that they are still involved in their community. . . able to identify issues that are of inequality, that are unjust and that they feel that they actually can make a difference.

This goal that individual young people could "make a difference" was also envisioned within a context where these teens would build a "network" of Latinos who would make decisions and connect to "decision makers" (Vargas-Franco, 2012). The vision was one of individual transformation leading to collective and institutional power. For Christina (2012), the times when members of the Community Organizers are able to take responsibility for a project, work independently on it, and even come up with new directions and pathways was evidence of their movement towards this eventual outcome.

Program design. Teens in the Community Organizers participate both in summer and school year programming. Members of this program start their day with an opening circle and a temperature check of their current status (Natalie, 2011). The circle is

167

followed by announcements and then the large group splits into smaller campaign groups

of five or six to go work with supervisors (Natalie, 2011). Hector (2011) indicated that

these team leaders are "there to help us and like make sure that we're on time and work."

However, he (Hector, 2011) followed with a sentiment about the role teens played in

directing their own work with the support of the adult staff:

> Even though the staff is there we're basically like in charge if you want to say it
> like that because they're the ones like if you have a question or anything you can
> always ask them.

At the time of the research teens were involved in campaigns focused on sugar

sweetened beverages, health education, tobacco, and cultural proficiency in the schools

(Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011). Each campaign group would work on

planning for events and other campaign activities (Karen, 2011). To determine what

issues to focus on, community and schools surveys and assessments were used by the

Community Organizers to surface what was important (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011).

Karen (2011) shared how the cultural proficiency campaign came about:

> I know cultural literacy youth from 2009. Cultural literacy came from, we did
> surveys about my high school youth about school bullying, and the cultural
> literacy and representatives at school, and that's when we got cultural.

> These assessments fed into the overall planning for the organization and were also

examined for alignment with the overall organizational goals, mission and funding

resources available (Sola, 2012).

> For the cultural proficiency campaign, Community Organizers would plan for

events, but they would also go to school committee meetings, speak at individual schools,

show films, and make recommendations for things like the hiring of "more bi-cultural

teachers in the Boston school" (Karen, 2011). The sugar sweetened beverage campaign also involved getting the word out about the health effects of these drinks through door knocking and flyering for community events (Natalie, 2011). Throughout teens are supported and prepped in the execution of these tasks through role-playing and simulations (Karen, 2011). For the sugar sweetened beverage campaign, staff had "youth do a SWOT analysis . . . so they identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, both in the community but as well as within campaigns" (Sola, 2012).

Because the summer program has a "mix of youth" some who have been with the program for long time and another "big chunk" that are new to the program, more contained or isolated projects relevant to a campaign might be taken up (Sola, 2012). Within this context teens may not be aware of the whole strategy of any given campaign, but they will often go out into the community to do the needs assessment surveys and other community research (Sola, 2012). Planning and implementing large scale community events like "Arts Nights" are also part of the summer work regime (Sola, 2012). The amount of training and skills required for these sorts of activities are on the lower end, but they still feed into the larger campaigns that the Community Organizers are involved with.

Evaluation and outcomes. As an organization, Centro Cultural Latino, was heavily invested in outcomes measurement and had been working on the design and implementation of an organization-wide database system (Sola, 2012; Vargas-Franco, 2012). Organizational goals and objectives were discussed at every level and program activities were tied to these (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012). Christina (2012) talks

about their evaluation in the context of organizational growth and development. She (Sola, 2012) shared:

> how strategic of an organization we've become. Whether it's the evaluation piece, the database piece, our theory of change but I think one of the things it's really done for us is gave the staff a common language give us all a common understanding of where were trying to go but still give us opens up for a lot of creativity along the way.

Program goals, job performance, whether to take on new contracts or programs were all tied to overall organizational visions and goals and evaluation points at mid and end of year were routine (Sola, 2012). One area that both Raquel (2012) and Christina (2012) noted they'd like to improve was the long-term impacts of the program on their alumni. They had started to build some of the communication and outreach needed to track this, but the resources, both human and financial, were not available and could take priority over the day-to-day programming (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012).

In talking to the teens in the Community Organizers program it was clear that they all made shifts in their attitudes. Most notably all of the teens noted that they felt more comfortable with individuals outside their own friendship group and felt more confident in speaking up (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011; Natalie, 2011). Karen (2011) that that the program staff had "helped . . . progress . . . attitude-wise" smoothing out some of her "feisty" nature. Hector (2011) could see that the program helped him and others with "leadership" and "stepping up" and that they all worked to keep each other from being "sidetracked" in their tasks.

170

Natalie (2011) shared how they also learned to "work with people you might not get along with." Karen (2011) too talked about the ability to mange being in diverse groups:

> Like I'm more the type of person that I stay within my own group. I mean it's good at times but how you going to learn if you just stick with you friend and don't branch out and talk to other people and get to know other people. So when I came here I got to know the people, got to know other things.

Hector (2011) too could see how the program helped him be:

> more and more open minded to like any new things and how to be more friendly to other people because by being friendly and having, you know, friends in other organizations you can learn on how much there is to learn in one organization.

Hector (2011) also could see how his involvement had made him more interested in what was going on around his community. Prior to being in the program he wouldn't "pay that much attention" to things that weren't happening to him directly and would just "put it to the side" (Hector, 2011). He (Hector, 2011) noted he had become much more interested in the news and his community as a result of being in the program and being at the el Centro in general.

For Javier (2011), the program's push for him to be come a "better person" improved his own sense of individual responsibility. Javier (2011) noted:

> They like make you see like a program or simply activity that you take can like help you be a better person like you're not just wasting your time on something that is not going to be valuable but you're like totally like investing your time for something better in the future. . . . I learned how to like take more challenges and join more clubs or activities that can help me in my future and to be a better person.

Being in the program helped Natalie (2011) see that "your voice counts" and even more importantly that "when you have a lot of people and a full group majority of voices

that's also a big step." Natalie saw that she wasn't alone in her desire to improve the community and that "youth and grown-ups were on [her] side" (Natalie, 2011). Javier (2011) too could see "if we want to do something we tell others about it, and we make them want to join us, so they can help us shape a vote." Hector (2011) contrasted this with a friend of his at school who told Hector :

> he feels like he has no say in what happens in his school. He goes to my school. And I think it's because how some of the plans, it's school and we're supposed to be there six hours a day, and he feels like there is nothing going on that he might be involved in and he's scared of speaking out.

Hector (2011) definitely didn't feel this way and he could see that being involved with the Community Organizers was part of the reason his attitude in this area was so very different.

Many of the teens interviewed also gained a good amount of positivity from helping out the community and doing lots of concrete activities (Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011). Planning and organizing community events were particular highlights. Hector (2011) like the socializing and the feeling of creating "little gathering place for people to come." Karen (2011) got satisfaction out of providing life music for the older folks to enjoy. Natalie (2011) loved the feeling of an event that turned out really great for the youth and families in her community. Natalie described one of these events:

> We recently had one where it was like, we were gonna have a dinner with families, but it was more like healthy eating so families had to bring in salads and everything, food, a lot of food and dessert. And when we have events like that we always have people from the music clubhouse play music. So, it's always like a little mini-party with family and everyone you work with. So we always have a great time. So I think those are like the best parties.

172

At the same time, some of the teens did feel like stress and strains from other parts of their life were hard to manage in the context of the program (Hector, 2011; Karen, 2011). Hector (2011) noted that when he was stressed it was really hard to participate and collaborate in program activities and Karen (2011) admitted that it was hard to put a smile on your face when you've had a bad day. For Javier (2011), overcoming his fear of being with a lot of people he didn't know and expressing him self was the emotional barrier he had to overcome.

Yet the teens appreciated the push they received in improving their own attitudes and ways of dealing with a work environment (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011). They all felt like their ability to speak publically and communicate professionally had been greatly improved during their time with the Community Organizers (Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011; Karen, 2011; Javier, 2011). Karen (2011) appreciated the help she got on her "personal problems" and honest feedback on her "attitude." This was particularly important since Karen (2011) and her family had just come out of "time of grieving" over her brother's death. The Community Organizer's program really supported her (Karen, 2011) emotionally:

> Since I came working here I just lost my brother so I put my whole life on hold because of that one thing that happened. . . . I haven't touched a piano in like a year after that happened. And when I did finally touch a piano and I started playing I started crying and [one of the staff members] told me you can't like keep your life on hold just because that one person isn't there anymore even though they're there spiritually. And that's what like broke me out of my shell . . . and started, like I guess enjoy more things and getting back to what I used to play like with the dance.

In addition to new attitudes and emotional growth, may of the teens gained new knowledge and skills. The organizing campaigns created a context to learn about

important community issues and raised awareness about how members of the community

were affected. As part of the cultural proficiency campaign in the schools, Karen (2011)

learned from students:

> [The] majority of them said that they didn't like that the curriculum was so simple.
> Like in Black History Month, all they learn about is M.L.K., as if, he did have a
> significant impact but he wasn't the only person and that's all they learn about.
> Even people that were Hispanic were saying that. They didn't want to take
> Spanish. They were saying that they automatically put them in Spanish I and
> Spanish II because they assume that because they're Hispanic it's easier for them,
> but the majority of them said they didn't want to take that. They'd rather take
> something different, like French.

This meshed with what Hector (2011) learned as part of the cultural proficiency

campaign as well. In working to address the needs of English language learners (ELL) in

the schools, Hector (2011) noted:

> It was really like eye-opening for me, because I learned all these new things that I
> didn't know about them. Like how . . . they might be like . . . regular classes may
> be like more advanced than the ELL classes.

Natalie (2011) had gained knowledge and appeared to be developing a critical

consciousness as a result of her involvement with the Community Organizers. When

talking about the campaigns she was involved with, Natalie (2011) said:

> We live in a low-income community and a lot of colored people, like, a lot of
> things in our community are targeting us, specifically teens, like, well, like, stores.
> One of our, in our tobacco campaign we do a lot of storefront surveys, so, it's like
> going around the community and making sure that these stores don't have more
> than 60 percent of their windows covered with tobacco advertising and junk food,
> which is an ordinance also. So it's just little things like that. Because the fact that
> we live in a low-income community, all these kids are, you know, being face-to-
> face with all these, like, local stores it's just not healthy. So that's one of the big
> issues and another one is, like, discrimination against race and that's like another
> big issue that I don't really like. I don't think anyone should be discriminated
> against because of, like, their skin color or because they're like a female.

Throughout the entire interview process it became clear that the Community Organizer program and other programs at Centro Cultural Latino were incredibility future oriented. Teens talked a lot about the job preparing them for college or future jobs (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Javier, 2011). Becoming a "better person" (Javier, 2011), "progressing" your personality (Karen, 2011), and working towards a better community (Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011; Karen, 2011) were all messages the teens got from the program. At the time of the interview, Karen (2011) was applying to colleges and the rest spoke of productive and successful futures (Javier, 2011; Hector, 2011; Natalie).

Interpersonal interactions. The overall interaction between the youth was friendly and supportive. The group used words like "welcoming, " "family," and "comfortable" to describe the environment of the program (Karen, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011). The bi-lingual and Spanish-friendly nature of the organization seemed to contribute to this overall cultural comfort (Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011). Although Karen (2011) was not a native Spanish speaker, she did not feel alienated by the Spanish-supportive nature of the space. Hector (2011) and Natalie (2011) had been part of the organization since middle school and this clearly contributed to some of their level of connection with the organization. Yet despite his short tenure with the organization Javier (2011) also noted a high degree of comfort with the program and the organization as a whole. Hector (2011) noted that is part this comfortable environment might have to do with the organization being "filled with other teens . . . so you're not gonna feel like you're left out. You're gonna feel right at home."

175

The family-feel and comfort did not mean that there weren't tensions, but these were seen as part of normal activity. As Natalie (2011) noted:

> We'll have our days where we're having discussions or that we're just not all agreeing and it just turns into like a big commotion and everyone talking at once and they want they just frustrate each other and it frustrates like our supervisors but it happens.

These sorts of tensions and altercations tended to brushed-off or talked through (Karen, 2011; Sola, 2012). Staff tried to remain vigilant about the youth interactions and worked hard to break up cliques and other potential relation trouble areas (Sola, 2012).

As noted earlier, teens had some amount of ownership and responsibility for program activities. A more formal teen leadership role had been reinstituted as a means to provide opportunities for continued improvement, growth and responsibility beyond regular Community Organizer roles (Sola, 2012). In fact, Karen (2011) had just been selected as one of these new senior youth community-organizing leaders. This position was for:

> somebody who . . . is a supervisor to their peers, who designs the program, who works a bit more hours so they can have input on what's happening on the day to day (Sola, 2012).

Choosing one of these leaders was a serious endeavor and involved a real contribution and responsibility to the program (Sola, 2012). Advancement in the program was not just a logical step related to the amount of time put in. Rather, those who were willing to put in the work and could do it well garnered increased responsibility, pay, and recognition (Sola, 2012). Christina (2012) noted that they worked to make decision-making and the application process for these youth leaders as transparent and

understandable as possible. Ultimately, teens were pushed to make their own choices and take responsibility for those choices (Sola, 2012).

Adults worked to mentor, guide, and push teens to be better versions of themselves. As noted above, words noting improvement, progress, and attention to success were spoken by the teens and reinforced by the staff (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Sola, 2012; Vargas-Franco, 2012). Keeping expectations high for the teens was sometimes a challenge especially in pushing the non-Latino staff to expect more from their young members (Vargas-Franco, 2012). Yet, adult staff demonstrated care for their young charges. Natalie (2011) noted that:

> If any of the supervisors see that you're having a bad day, they automatically will pull you aside, what's going on?

Hector (2011) felt that the young age profile of the staff helped. He felt more "comfortable sharing with someone closer to [his] age" (Hector, 2011). At the same time Natalie (2011) expressed that some of the staff had built relationships with the teens over a number of years and kept in mind that they, the teens, were still young and maturing. Again, the "small family" feel of the organization seem to contribute to the relationships adults had with youth (Hector, 2011). Karen (2011) noted that adults "responded respectfully" to her and that their "doors are always open, you can always come in and talk to somebody and we have our supervisors' numbers and we can text them."

Raquel (2012) felt that part of the cohesive vibe of the organization's programs was an effort to for "everybody to work together across programs and do events all together." All adults had interactions with youth, and the responsibility for maintaining the organizations norms fell on everybody:

If you're staff or you're the supervisor, you are, as staff, responsible also for when you see somebody breaking the rules, not waiting for Christina to come as the director, not waiting for their direct supervisor, but you are responsible to address it too (Sola, 2012).

The program benefited from the organization's work to keep communication open about decisions, plans, and potential conflicts (e.g., institutionalized racism) (Vargas-Franco, 2012; Sola, 2012).

The Community Organizers entwined with the surrounding community through outreach efforts and community events (Karen, 2011; Hector, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Javier, 2011; Sola, 2012). Parents and families were clearly welcome at the center. They were included in events and could seek help at from program and organizational staff. There were "workshops and events that involve families" (Natalie, 2011). In talking about her teammates, Karen (2011) noted "her mom and his parents, whenever they need help it's also a good place to be helpful."

Teens also shared that they worked on campaigns with other organizations like Hyde Square Task Force, Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project, teens at the Boston Chinatown Community Center, a local Somali youth group, and others (Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011; Sola, 2012). Natalie (2011) noted there was a lot of overlap and that when they went to "community meetings" it was good to see others that they were familiar with. The program also partnered with local schools, other human service providers, local hospitals, faith groups like the Boston Ministerial Alliance and even the Boston Police Department at times (Sola, 2012).

<u>Being The Citizenship Guild</u>

Centro Cultural Latino, the ***Citizenship Guild,*** works to integrate development of the individual, group and community domains through a commitment to long-term engagement with individual youth. With programs designed to reach middle-schoolers as well as teens and young adults, the organization works to create a caring environment were young people feel welcomed and challenged in a manner that is developmentally appropriate. El Centro wants its program participants to be aware of their own personal development and growth. The organization aspires for its youth to be successful and productive members of society. It is not enough for el Centro youth to have successful academic and work futures, they also need to have an appreciation of their cultural heritage while also striving to give back to the larger community.

Programs at Centro Cultural Latino worked consciously to develop connections to others both within the organization as well as to the world outside. Teens involved in the Community Organizing program built concrete skills and positive attitudes that aid their future academic and work lives. Community Organizers' campaigns emerged out of community needs and provided teens with opportunities to plan and own their work within a context of meaning and value. The Community Organizers' campaigns worked to improve the larger community as well as build team members' competence in collaboration with others. Creating connections and comfort with decision makers and institutional power are also part of the Community Organizers' learning outcomes.

As the Citizenship Guild, Centro Cultural Latino had adults who mentored, supported and challenged its young workers while providing ladders for increased

responsibility and leadership. Families and community were an integral part of the activities created and implemented by the Community Organizers program. A network of organizations and institutional partners as well as institutionally connected board members ensured that the youth served by the organization and its programs had a strong base of support.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMER IN THE CITY: YOUTH AND NEW INSIGHTS INTO YOUTH

SOCIOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

It's summer 2011. Across Boston's neighborhoods thousands of teens are

involved in a range of summer programs from academic enrichment to sports camps to

summer jobs. At a community park in Dorchester, Taylor, a 16 –year-old young white

woman, is finishing up the construction of a raised garden bed that community members

will use to grow vegetables. Her new friend, Eva, a 15-year-old Latina, is at the edge of

the park handing out flyers to residents inviting them to an evening of fun activities in the

park. Meanwhile Jae and JD, two young black men in their late teens, are cutting back a

patch of invasive Japanese knotweed as part of a park conservation effort. They will meet

up with the others later to help get everything ready for the community night in the park.

In South Boston, a few neighborhoods away, Melinda, a 14-year-old young Asian

woman, is starting to paint an office in the community center of a housing complex. She

really likes the bright, warm color. The office is now going to double as program space

for the early childhood program the center runs. In another room at the center, Stephanie,

a 15-year-old Latina, is helping a group of smaller kids on an art project. Down the hall,

BD, a 16-year old Black male, is helping his friend Ben, a 16-year-year old Asian male, with dance moves. Both will be performing at a community night event in the neighborhood the following week.

In Roxbury, Hector and Natalie, two Latinos who are both 16-years-old, are going door-to-door in the Mission Hill area asking residents to fill out a community needs survey and letting them know about an upcoming community festival. Their community organizing teammates, Karen, a 17-year-old young bi-racial woman, and Javier, a 15-year-old Latino, are back at the cultural center. Karen is working with program staff to plan the next youth organizing meeting as part of her teen leadership position, and Javier is chilling a bit in the music center before getting started on his own door-to-door knocking tasks.

At a high school sitting on the boundary between Dorchester and Jamaica Plain, Simone, a 17-year-old young black woman, is checking in with other members on her leadership team to see how the day's educational seminars are going. She is a returning member of the summer leadership program. Later she will be prepping materials for a community education workshop on the school to prison pipeline, which she and another teen will conduct for a community group in Roxbury.

These thirteen teens[28] and the four nonprofit-based programs they belong to are at the core of this exploration into youth-serving programs and the impacts such programs have on the development of political engagement attitudes among teens. All of the teens in this study attend Boston Public Schools -- from competitive exam schools like Boston

[28] For detailed demographics on youth in the study, please see Appendix F.

Latin Academy to pilot schools like the Boston Community Leadership Academy to regular schools like Excel High School to vocational schools like Madison Park High School. The teens live in varied neighborhoods – Dorchester, Roxbury's Mission Hill, South End, West End, East Boston, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, and Downtown. Most come from families with low to moderate incomes, and a handful sits more solidly in the middle class. Some are in single parent or guardian households. Most are in households with at least one foreign-born guardian and over half have some language other than English spoken in the home. These young people mirror the gender, race, ethnic, and age make up of the larger teen constituencies served by the organizations in this study. They are also fairly similar to their peers attending Boston's public schools (see Tables 1 and 2 in Chapter 1).

Political Efficacy, Sociopolitical Development, and Revisiting the Conceptual Framework

As detailed in the previous chapter, this study started out with a conceptual vision that social norms and structural circumstances affect the ways youth understand, evaluate, and feel about the world around them. It asserted that these cognitive, evaluative, and affective processes are important elements in the development of political engagement attitudes among youth (Hess and Torney-Purta, 2006). This research was conducted under the assumption that involvement in out-of-school time (OST) programs can influence these processes. Further, the research sought to understand how OST program design, implementation and accountability structures are influenced by organizational features and how these organizational and program contexts in turn might impact youth political engagement attitudes.

The key indicator used to measure political engagement in this study is internal

political efficacy or the extent to which teens feel that they can affect or work toward

change for issues they care about. This measure is traditionally comprised of four

separate elements (Morrell, 2003; Morrell, 2005):

1. Ability to understand or have knowledge of political or community issues
   (Political Knowledge)
2. Feeling able to participate in political or community issues (Youth Voice)
3. Feeling well informed about issues being discussed (Political Interest)
4. Feeling as equipped as others to make decisions (Change Attitude)

To get at how teens thought about their ability and confidence in affecting change

and making decisions, they were asked these two questions during semi-structured

interviews:

- What do you think is the most important issue facing you as a young person?
- What would you do to start working toward addressing this issue?

Their answers to these questions were then coded in Nvivo. Table 18 details the four

internal political efficacy codes found in the source interviews.

TABLE 18: Evidence of Youth Internal Political Efficacy

Label		Sources	References	Description
IntPolEff		1	1	Internal Political Efficacy
	Political Knowledge	16	32	Demonstrated knowledge of public or community issues
	Youth Voice Expression	28	109	Demonstrated a strong point of view about self and / or world around them
	Political Interest	12	18	Demonstrated interest in public or community issues

Change Attitude	20	71	Articulated a belief in own ability to affect change

As it turned out, all youth interviewed could identify at least one issue that was important to them (Political Knowledge) often relating to issues in their day-to-day lives or personal experiences (e.g. violence, health behaviors, interpersonal relationships). Almost all felt they could act to make change (Change Attitude) and many could talk about the issue with authority or confidence (Political Interest). Many were also able to propose specific actions they would take to start addressing important issues (Youth Voice). For example, when asked what he would change, JD at Friends of Beardsley Park shared:

> Yeah, I mean there's a lot of things that could be changed but I just want to... change more people using their resources, and using other things that are not necessary, like building new buildings and stuff. . . Like, instead of building a track field, and a football field, you could just go to Beardsley Park, and there's like... a ton of grass, and you could run everywhere. Like they do track races and stuff. . . Yeah, they just waste money, and it sucks. Like, if you saved all that money from however many football fields, and baseball fields and track fields they did... and just came to the park and ran . . . through the golf clubhouse, and Jamaica Pond and through the Beardsley Park, we'd have a lot of money left over.

Yet not all teens were able to articulate a plan or conceive of how they might begin to act. For instance, Taylor, also at the Friends of Beardsley Park, when asked how she would begin to make change on her issue said, "I don't even know, to be honest with you."

Given that this initial measure of internal political efficacy was pretty consistent across teens in all programs, it could be argued that this is a result of a natural developmental stage in adolescence. Teens interviewed were in a very close age cohort

ranging from 14 to 18 years with the average being 16. Research has shown that political knowledge increases from age 14 to later teen years (Torney-Purta, 2004). However, it is likely that this is the result of increased exposure to information as a result of education. It has been shown that political knowledge can be impacted by exposure to political information delivered in appropriate formats (Lynda et al., 2007). Additionally, research on internal political efficacy with youth and young adults finds that the measure is dependent on an individual's background and context and that variety exists across the age spectrum (Levy, 2013; Beaumont, 2011; Torney-Purta et al., 2008; McFarland and Thomas, 2006). For example, in a study involving 116 interviews and over 600 pre/post surveys with youth and young adults, Kahne and Westheimer (2006) found that youth action and youth public service projects did not always improve in their political efficacy and that resistance to youth efforts could lead to frustration, hopelessness, and decline in the intent to politically engage in things like voting. In contrast, a later study by Kahn and Sport (2008) of over four thousand high school students in Chicago found that students who engaged civic learning opportunities that involved things like current events, discussions, or service learning experienced increases in their commitment to civic participation including solving problems in their community. Thus internal political efficacy is not necessarily a function of age or developmental stage, but rather the result of experiences that support or dampen certain developmental outcomes.

While large variation in the internal political efficacy measure did not exist across programs, the interviews with teens unearthed a great deal of variation in the depth or complexity of how each teen understood social change and political engagement

186

processes. In addition to internal political efficacy, some of the teens expressed elements related to external political efficacy (Wilkenfeld et al., 2010; Morrell, 2003; Bandura, 1997) or the belief that their opinions or concerns could be expressed, heard, and responded to by those who cared about what they thought or by those in power.

Some of the teens had already moved from attitude to action and were addressing community issues by contributing to and participating in activities they cared about. A small few also demonstrated a complex understanding of root causes of problems that were linked to larger systems. These teens also indicated that change was complex, hard, and took time. There were teens who understood change or action was a collective endeavor achieved by working with others and required building connections. A couple of teens were even clear that this was going to be part of their own lives moving forward.

In addition to experiences in these OST programs, experiences with family, school, and other community-based environments also seemed to play a role in the development of political engagement attitudes among these teens. For example, Stephanie (2011), Malinda (2011) and BD (2011), all at Castle Square Tenants Organization, spoke of school-based experiences with volunteering and working toward resolving large issues like reduction in CO_2 admissions to more school-based concerns such a "mean girl" behavior or incompetent teachers. JD (2011) at the Friends of Beardsley Park talked about how his uncle connected him to the park organization as a volunteer when he was a pre-teen and how all of his siblings had been part of the park stewards program. Karen (2011) at Centro Cultural Latino had done lots of community work and loved being involved in the community. Simone (2011) at Sesame Street talked

about her family's immigrant background influencing her more critical view of how social and political systems work in the U.S.

A handful of the teens also engaged in watching or reading news related to some current event. Most however, were drawn to human interest or crime story narratives (e.g., Casey Anthony, Gaddafi family abuse of their nanny) rather than political, policy or social issue content. Others read the news for sports, weather or entertainment information. Teens engaged in programs at the Sesame Street Institute and Centro Cultural Latino were exposed to a good deal of information relevant to social issues and public policy at the core of these programs (e.g., health effects of sweetened beverages, lack of cultural competence in the public schools, discrimination, oppression).

The teen interviews suggest that sociopolitical development is multi-faceted. The original conceptual framework sought to explore how out-of-school time programs influenced this development. However, this original framework lacked nuance and complexity related to existing youth development models. The framework assumed that OST programs employed youth development models in a static manner and did not stray from those concepts in efforts remain "true" to the model. In the original model, the youth development theory was used to mold youth participants into perfected outputs. Elements of this original framework still hold. Youth are still conceived as being influenced by the experiences they obtain within these OST programs. However, how youth development models are employed within program contexts is re-conceptualized.

In order to understand the influence of OST programming on the political engagement attitudes of youth, integrating the youth development models is needed.

188

Rather than operating in isolation, one can reimagine these models as collectively

forming a sociopolitical development continuum.[29] Through integration, three distinct

developmental domains emerge: individual, group, and community (see Table 19).

Presenting the models in this manner also brings more clearly into focus the domain

strengths of each model. For example, the social youth development model concentrates

on developing individual capacities with some attention to the individual within the group

context. In contrast, the social justice youth development model preferences connections

and capacities in the community domain. Both the positive and community youth

development models are dispersed across all three domains.

---

[29] It should be noted that there is no agreed upon political socialization or sociopolitical development model
in the field of youth civic and political engagement. There is an emerging body of theoretical thinking
that is working toward such a model.

TABLE 19: Youth Development Models Toward a Sociopolitical Development Continuum

YD Model	Social YD *Youth Activity*	Positive YD *Youth Empowerment*	Community YD *Youth Engagement*	Social Justice YD *Youth Engagement*
Policy Role	Dependent	Community Asset	Civic Actor	Agent of Change
Individual	Opportunities for involvement in productive prosocial roles		Creating safe space	
	Clear standards or norms for behavior	Providing opportunities to learn healthy behaviors		
	Work to prevent conduct problems - school misbehavior, truancy, drug abuse, teen pregnancy		Finding and living one's true calling.	Make identity central
	Skills and competencies to be successfully involved in these roles including intelligence and a resilient temperament	Emphasizing youths' strengths / Challenging youth in ways that build their competence	Transferring practical, usable skills	
Group	Bonding to prosocial family, school and peers	Promoting positive relationships with peers	Being conscious stewards of relationships	
	Consistent systems of recognition and reinforcement for prosocial involvement		Creating a culture of appreciation	Embraces youth culture
		Connecting youth with caring adults	Creating a culture of respect and partnership	
Community		Empowering youth to assume leadership roles in programs		
			Creating a just and compassionate society	Analyzes power in social relationships
				Promotes systemic social change
				Encourages collective action

This reworking incorporates both evidence and analysis of the research fieldwork as well as new thinking evident in the scholarly literature related to youth sociopolitical development (McIntosh & Youniss, 2010; Sherrod et al., 2010). Additionally, integration of the models allows one to see how youth could move from the inward development of self toward involvement with others and the larger community or society, suggesting that political engagement entails competence in all three domains. As McIntosh & Youniss (2010: 29-30) wrote:

> . . . the nature of political engagement calls for a socialization process that involves developing reasons to become involved, joining with like-minded others to work towards collective goals, and learning to interact with competing interest groups to mutually achievable solutions to political problems.

This reworking of youth development models is further informed by theoretical developments within the youth civic engagement literature that link political socialization to development along the life course (Sherrod et al., 2010). It also reflects Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) earlier conceptualizations of a "good citizen" – the personally responsible citizen (individual), the participatory citizen (group), the justice-oriented citizen (community). This is also compatible with the processes articulated in the social justice youth development model as stages of awareness -- "self awareness," "social awareness," and "global awareness" (Ginwright and James, 2002).

An Expanded Conceptual Framework

Initially, this research envisioned some ideal program intervention that would maximize the political engagement outcomes for teens. It worked from an assumption that programs with a social justice or community youth development lens would be better

191

positioned to deliver political engagement outcomes than other types of programs. As will be explored further, some aspects of this assumption are correct. The teens from Centro Cultural Latino and the one teen from the Sesame Street Institute had more knowledge about larger social issues such as cultural competency, public health, and racial discrimination -- all issues tackled within the context of the organizations' programs. They also had more concrete experience in civic and political action within their community (e.g., door-to-door canvassing, community education, speaking to those in power about community issues).

Yet, there were teens at both the Friends of Beardsley Park and the Castle Square Tenants Organization who also had insights into larger social issues and systems. Stephanie at Castle Square spoke in depth about ethnic and gender stereotypes:

> I think a lot lately, you have to have your own thoughts, you cannot follow everybody else's chain of thoughts. Have your own chain of thinking, have your own perspective of things, have self-respect for you. . . . You don't always have to be a stereotype. For me, I felt like I'm always trying to avoid my stereotype. . . . For me it's like I hate stereotypes about my race.

JD at the Friends had a vision of natural resources and consumption of material goods that was very complex (see previous quote). Teens at both Castle Square and Friends spoke of connections to the larger community through participation in community events and projects; even if these experiences were not framed within a context of political action. The teens in these two programs also demonstrated other elements of learning that related to political engagement skills and attitudes. For example, youth hanging out at Castle Square Tenants Organization's Teen Center expressed incredibly strong youth voice, individual agency, and social bonding. This was despite

the lack of a formal training program or a conscious youth development model that sought such outcomes for Castle Square teens. For example, BD explains how learning from his Teen Center peer Ben and then performing in the community built up his confidence:

> I don't know I always found it embarrassing out in public just doing whatever. I mean I was always very self-conscious about my movements and what I could do. And then I saw Ben do it, and it's like, "Yeah, I'll try it ". . . less self-conscious about being in front of a whole lot of people, yeah . . . I would l have definitely said, "no" right off the bat. I was a very shy person when I was a kid. I was very shy. I never liked speaking. I never liked participating in class when it came to speaking. . . . You're in front of people. I never liked doing any of that. But I think, through dance, I was able to shake off the nervousness in front of people. I can even speak in front of a bunch of people now.

Taylor at Friends talks about how she and other teens collectively built raised community garden beds:

> We actually did a community garden too. . . .We helped build six flowerbeds. We actually drilled the cardboard boxes together, like you know, the wood . . . to make the flowerbeds and then we laid down the plastic underneath it and soil, so that the people in the apartment building, they'd have fresh vegetables and stuff. We build it as a garden.

These capacities and experiences associated with self-efficacy -- "the confidence in one's ability to control and execute the actions required to deal with current and future situations" -- (Wilkenfeld et al., 2010, p.195) and collective efficacy – "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 477) – have been linked to civic and political participation in future life (Wilkenfeld, 2010, Hart et al., 2007; Youniss &Yate, 1997). So clearly, these two organizations were involved in developing political

193

engagement outcomes that may not have been consciously articulated in program objectives.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Sesame Street Institute's program of critical consciousness raising and efforts to train young people to see the systemic roots of social problems wasn't particularly successful with the most struggling teens. As Institute co-director Bert Myles stated:

> So the two areas, one is around preexisting commitment or interest or desire for social justice and the second criteria is pre-existing spark for leadership of peers. We have like a low, medium, high ranking. They have to have a medium on at least one of those to be considered for the program. We found that our success rate when it's been real low . . . is like 50 percent or like people who we feel like at the end of the program that we would really want to keep working with so it's not really success.

As a result, those teens with some level of interest in social justice or leadership were the primary targets for recruitment into the Institute's summer Youth Lead program.

As the research unfolded, it became clear that each organization's program had strengths or competencies in the realm of sociopolitical development. They also had weaknesses. It was also clear that these organizations intersected with political socialization and learning processes that happened elsewhere such as in families and schools. In considering what was learned from each case site, it seemed that no one organization served the entire sociopolitical development needs of any given young person, much less a diverse community of young people like those in Boston's public schools.

Additional theoretical literature suggests that individuals start the process of political engagement at different places and thus need different strategies and learning

environments based on their interests, skills, and capacities (Wilkenfeld et al., 2010; McIntosh & Youniss, 2010). Schools interested in civic and political engagement are encouraged to offer a range of co-curricular activities to meet the diverse civic and political engagement needs of students (Jonathan et al., 2011; Finlay et al., 2010). It follows that community organizations would also need to provide diverse opportunities out of school for young people to become politically socialized (CIRCLE, 2013; Finley et al., 2010; Westheimer & Kahn, 2004). Given that youth are at different points in their sociopolitical development, diverse opportunities would also need to provide multiple entry points and pathways allowing youth flexibility to move along the sociopolitical development continuum. Youth would benefit, it seems, from engaging in different activities and interventions perhaps even at different organizations or in different types of programs within the same organization (McIntosh & Youniss, 2010).

Rather than seeking an ideal programmatic design informed by a singular youth development model, a new conceptual framework reworks this assumption of how teen political engagement attitudes might best be supported and developed in out-of-school time. The framework still conceptualizes youth-serving programs as influenced by the organizational context in which they sit. It stills envisions young people learning from these program contexts. It positions both the organizations and youth within a larger realm of social norms and structures.

An expanded conceptual framework no longer holds that youth development models are separate from one another and that youth in any given program or community are monolithic in their sociopolitical development needs. Instead, the expanded

195

framework places young people along a pathway toward political socialization. The framework acknowledges that the foundations for political engagement begin with bolstering the individual and building on this foundation to include skills within interpersonal or group contexts and then transitioning youth into the wider spheres of community and the larger society over the course of one's life (Sherrod et al., 2010). At each stage, youth continue to build and strengthen their capacities in existing domains. The framework envisions OST programs as working to move young people along this pathway toward increasing political engagement.

Programs engage youth with varied skills, capacities, and needs. These youth in turn are situated on a sociopolitical developmental pathway with a mix of competencies in their self, group, and community domains. Programs that seek effective development of political engagement attitudes assess their young constituents to determine which interventions are most needed. With an integrated set of youth development models disaggregated along developmental domains -- individual, group, and community --- programs select a range of strategies to meet the specific needs of the youth population they serve. Rather than employ one youth development model, programs mix and match from multiple models. Programs then seek to recruit and engage youth most suited to their program intervention.

In the new conceptual framework, interactions between youth and program are more visible. Likewise, programs are more dynamically and creatively engaged in employing youth development models. Ultimately, a more diverse set of program designs are realized as elements from models are mixed and matched. The results are programs

that are responsive to multiple youth populations and able to meet the sociopolitical

needs of teens in Dorchester as well as those in Brookline.

FIGURE 15: Conceptual Framework Redux
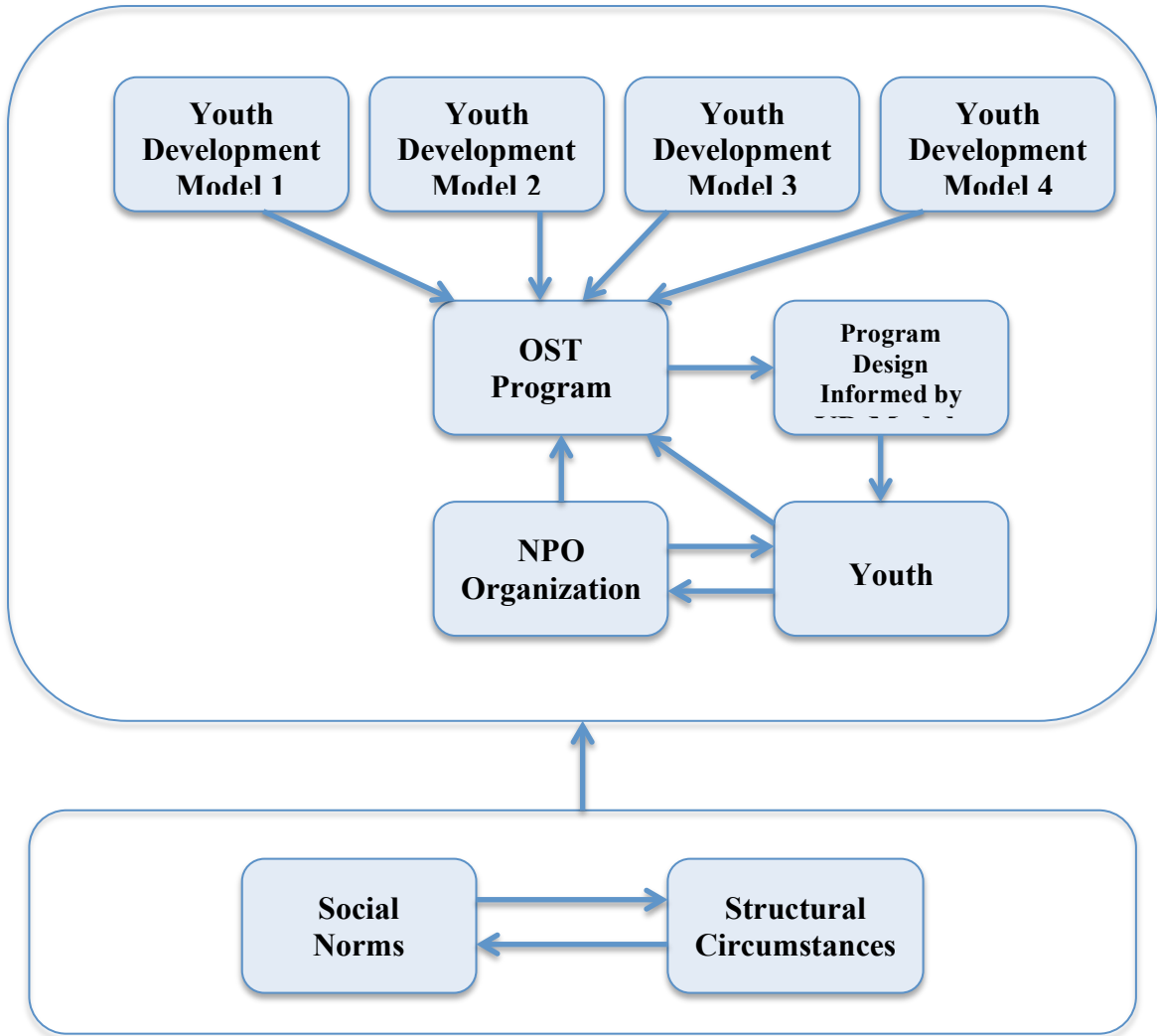
In this expanded model, sociopolitical development begins with the building of an

individual's skills and capacities related to political knowledge, confidence, voice, and

agency. As these skills are built, one moves into ever increasing wider scope of

engagement. Individuals move from small intimate groups such as family and friends to

more public groups such as work and school. In doing so, they add to their individual

repertoires new skills and abilities that allow them to engage with others. Listening, collaborating, coordinating, cooperating, deliberating, entering into and resolving conflict, compromising, and acting collectively are practiced and developed. As these small group skills are built, attention to an individual's development in terms of affective, cognitive and attitudinal abilities continues. Moving into the larger spheres of community and society, youth develop the ability to work for the benefit of the community, to see and empathize with positions that are not their own, to understand large systems, to critically assess and evaluate social, cultural, political, and economic systems as well as power.

FIGURE 16: Sociopolitical Development Domains
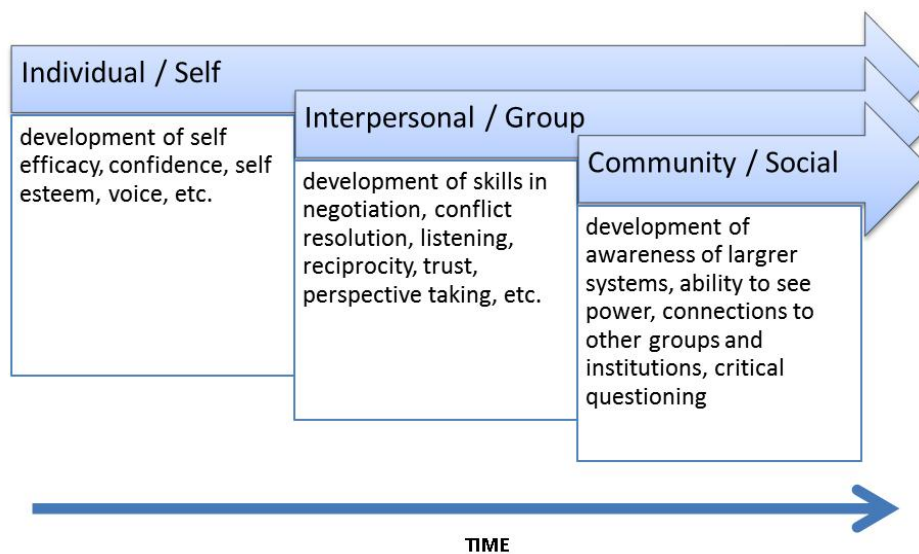
At each stage attention to the developmental needs of the person as an individual, a member of a group, a member of the community, and a member of society are folded into a push for growth along the sociopolitical development spectrum. As each person transitions into a more expansive realm, programs and organizations serving youth work

to smooth these transitions and ease the passage from self to small group; from small group to community; from community to the larger society. Thus a young person who already has a strong sense of self and works well in small groups might benefit from connecting their lived experiences to community endeavors where they might envision a role for themselves and work with others to affect larger social change. Likewise, a young person who is still trying to navigate what they care about and build confidence in who they are as a person, might not take full advantage of a program that concerns itself with understanding the root causes of homelessness or domestic violence if that program does not simultaneously work to build up the confidence and self-efficacy of the young person.

A Constellation of OST Program Offerings Supporting Sociopolitical Development

Rather than one ideal model for youth political engagement, this research suggests a constellation of out-of-school time youth opportunities is needed. These varied OST program interventions provide opportunities to engage a diversity of young people. Such opportunity responds to a young person's diverse sociopolitical development needs and circumstances. In a setting of diverse offerings, programs may focus primarily on building individual, group, or community skills with the understanding that each of these developmental domains is needed in the development of political engagement attitudes. Programs may primarily focus on one developmental domain, but may have program elements that work in other developmental domains. It is also possible that a program may work to bring skills development in all three developmental domains. It is also possible that youth might build skills and capacities in one environment and build others

in a different location, including non OST settings (e.g., families, schools). Figure 16 visualizes how each of the case site OST programs relates to the individual, group, and community developmental domains.

FIGURE 17: Situating Case Site Program within Developmental Domains
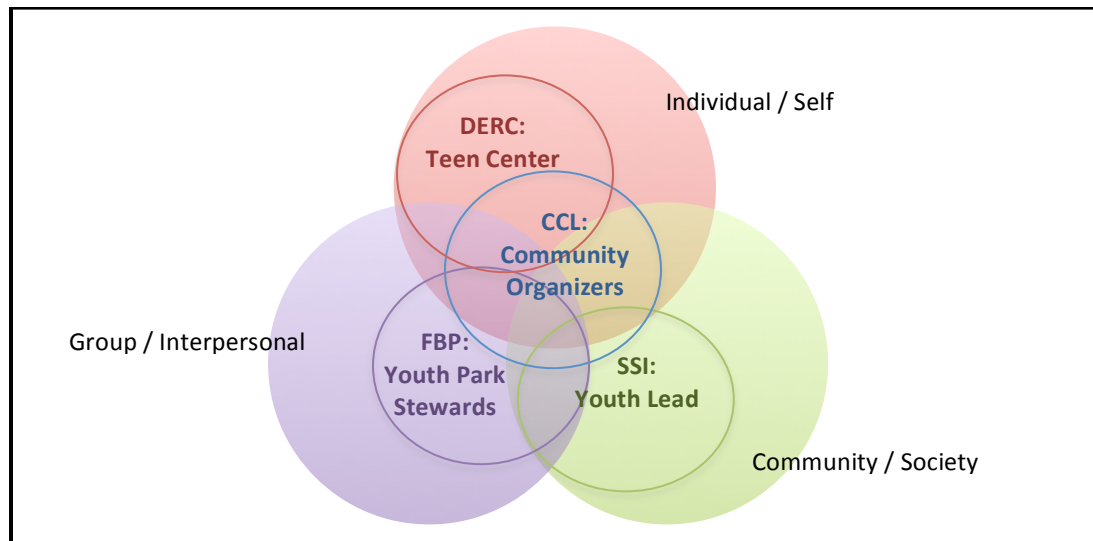
In a constellation of out-of-school time programs, each case site OST program worked to build a specific set of skills and capacities in different developmental domains for the young people they served. In some instances, the OST program combined elements from two or all three developmental domains. Combined, these four sites worked to address the building of political engagement attitudes from a continuum of strategies. As detailed in Chapter 4, each of these programmatic strategies can be expressed through an organizing narrative or metaphor. As a reminder, these metaphors developed over the course of the research as an analytical exercise meant to distill program features and organizational contexts into accessible imagery.

The Empowering Family. Castle Square's Teen Center works to bolster youth

and build them up as assets. It works primarily in the domain of the individual or self,

helping to bridge the interpersonal and group domains. The Empowering Family focuses

on creating a normative culture of care, comfort, welcoming, and openness. Relationships

between youth as well as between youth and adults are important in creating social bonds

and trust. Adults may position themselves as mentors, guides, older siblings, or the

quintessential "good parent." There is a focus on individual development informed by

theories of social youth development and positive youth development. However, it pays

particular attention to supporting youth voice, individual choice, and agency maintained

through a highly responsive and adaptive stance towards the needs of youth participants.

In this way features from the social justice youth development model are called upon.

Youth are challenged and provided multiple levels at which to contribute to the

organization as well as the larger community, which finds inspiration from the

community youth development model.

The Team-oriented Workplace. Friends of Beardsley Park's Youth Park Stewards

works at building youth assets within the context of a group environment with steps

toward connecting to a set of larger community concerns. These concerns pull from the

social, positive, and community youth development models. The structure of the program

is less fluid than that of the Empowering Family and motivation may initially be

externally driven. This metaphor has expectations for how youth will conduct themselves

and aspires for individuals to be productive team members. Adults in this model, while

supportive and approachable, are more like a "good bosses" than "good parents." The

Team-oriented Workplace consciously builds interpersonal skills while at the same time connecting work to large social purposes, the primary focus of community youth development models. Contributions to community benefit are made visible.

The Liberation School. Youth Lead at the Sesame Street Institute has a focus on pushing the individual to see the forces shaping our world. The Liberation School pays attention to acquisition of new knowledge as well as practical skill development in leadership. This emphases come from its grounding in social justice youth development. While this metaphor continues to support the individual and group domains, it primarily works at building the skills necessary for individuals to be civic actors and social change agents. In these cases it finds affinity with positive and community youth development as well. The Liberation School allows program participants to learn and grow as people toward leadership. This metaphor trusts young people with power and continues to build bonds through confronting difference and oppression. Skills in critical awareness and thinking are also built. Adults position themselves as facilitators, guides, and resources. Again, all of these are clearly informed by the social justice youth development model.

The Citizenship Guild. Centro Cultural Latino's Community Organizers works to integrate development of all three domains (individual, group, and community) through a commitment to long-term engagement with the individual. It works to create a caring environment where young people feel welcomed as a hallmark of social and positive youth development strategies. The Citizenship Guild wants program participants to be aware of their own personal development and growth, which comes from theories of positive youth development. It wants youth to achieve and be productive. It wants youth

202

to develop connections to others both within the organization as well as the community linking it to community youth development. It works to consciously build skills and competence in all domains and provides support across the organization. It works consciously to link youth to other actors in the community as well as those in power, which draws some lessons from social justice youth development theories.

Thus, these organizing metaphors detail how different youth development models express themselves to varying degrees within program contexts and, as a result, work to build the capacities of different development domains – self, group, community. The development of all three domains is necessary for sociopolitical growth. However, it would seem that each of these programmatic expressions can move young people toward greater political engagement by building and supporting their internal political efficacy.

CHAPTER 6

MAKING IT WORK: DESIGNING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

FOR YOUTH POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

In the book *Teenage Citizens,* Constance Flanagan explores the development of

young people's political theories. Flanagan frames community-based organizations like

the ones in this study as "mediating institutions" where young people come to understand

their "rights and responsibilities" to the communities formed within these meso-level

spaces or "mini-polities" (Flanagan, 2013, p. 2; Cohen, 2001). One's ability to be an

agent, or engage politically, is one aspect of this political learning or socialization

process. In exploring the question of which out-of-school time program features and

elements are most conducive to the development of political engagement attitudes in

youth, this research suggests that a constellation of political learning opportunities can

work to meet the varied sociopolitical development needs and trajectories of a diverse

youth population.

As discussed in chapter 5, all youth interviewed for this research had some level

of internal political efficacy. Chapter 4 provided details on program variation in terms of

program resources (including physical space and staffing), guiding pedagogical strategy

or theory of change, goals and objectives for youth participants, program design

(including recruitment, activities, skills developed, and evaluation mechanisms in place),

and roles of both youth and adults within the program. Organizations housing these programs were also detailed in terms of features such as location, mission, leadership, resources (human, material and financial), constituents served, external relationships, values, and norms. Conceptualized as idealized metaphors, each of the programs in this study, and by extension their organizations, worked to address the individual, group, and community development domains of youth to varying degrees (see Figure 16 in Chapter 5).

An alternative visualization (Figure 17) shows how the developmental domains of individual, group, and community are blended within each program. It should be noted that this visualization is not based on concrete measurement, but rather is an approximation based on detailed analysis. So, for example, Sesame Street Institute's Youth Lead program had a theory of change that sought larger community change and admittedly worked best with youth who already had some level of individual capacity. This contrasts with Castle Square's Teen Center, which created a highly responsive environment that supported the interests of individual youth and provided some connection to community events and activities. Friends of Beardsley Park's Youth Stewards program devoted a great deal of time to team building and group work. The Community Organizers at Centro Cultural Latino's theory of change saw successful youth as having individual and community capacities built through collective work and planning.

FIGURE 18: Program Developmental Domain Blend
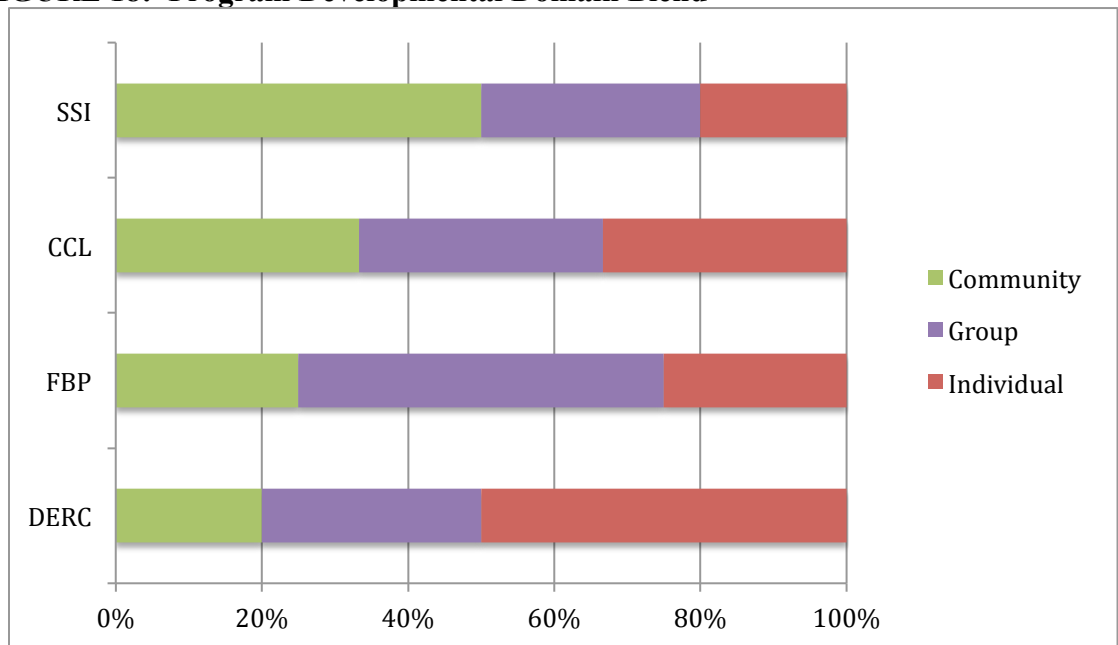
In looking at program features and elements that contribute to relatively strong levels of internal political efficacy in the youth in this study, there appear to be specific elements that contribute to these three developmental domains. Looking at these features by domain should provide insight for others looking to build politically engaging out-of-school time environments.

Growing the Person: Building Competence in the Individual Development Domain

As discussed in Chapter 5, having confidence and comfort in one's own abilities has been shown to be a precursor to political efficacy (Wilkenfeld, 2010, Hart et al., 2007; Youniss &Yate, 1997). Chapter 4 also detailed the ways in which existing youth development models work to support development in the individual domain (see Table 20).

TABLE 20: Youth Development in the Individual Domain

Social Ecological	Positive	Community	Social Justice
Opportunities for involvement in productive prosocial roles		Creating safe space	
Clear standards or norms for behavior	Providing opportunities to learn healthy behaviors		
Work to prevent conduct problems: school misbehavior, truancy, drug abuse, teen pregnancy		Finding and living one's true calling.	Make identity central
Skills and competencies to be successfully involved in these roles including intelligence and a resilient temperament	Emphasizing youths' strengths / Challenging youth in ways that build their competence	Transferring practical, usable skills	

The programs in this study exhibited many of the characteristics in this domain.
Youth at all of the sites expressed a feeling of belonging and comfort with others in the
context of their respective programs and there was no indication that any of them felt
unsafe. In fact, teens at Castle Square, Centro Cultural Latino, and the Sesame Street
Institute spoke specifically of feeling that those in the program were "family." Eva at the
Friends of Beardsley Park seemed to be the only teen interviewed who had some
ambivalent feelings that would hint at some tension.

Staff at all sites spoke of working to encourage positive behaviors. This could be
as simple as asking teens at the Castle Square Teen Center to work on their homework
before engaging in other activities or Community Organizer staff ensuring that teens keep

their academic performance up by putting work responsibilities second. For the Sesame Street Institute's Youth Lead, it might be the push to reboot toxic social relationships evident in the larger culture, while the Youth Park Stewards at the Friends of Beardsley Park looked to install productive work habits.

None of the programs seemed to see youth as having problematic behaviors nor did they articulate any positions that saw youth as being in deficit. Staff at Centro Cultural Latino talked of wanting youth to be successful individuals and those at the Sesame Street Institute hoped teens could have the agency to drive their own lives. The Teen Center at Castle Square Tenants Organization seemed to have a high level of program responsiveness to the interests and desires of its young program participants.

All of the organizations provided opportunities for teens to be involved in concrete skill development that might be transferred beyond the context of the program. Public speaking, issue research, life skills (e.g., cooking), use of tools and technology, and event planning were just a few of the examples shared by teens during their interviews. Additionally, teens spoke of being challenged by their experiences in the programs. Whether it was to engage in the hard physical labor of the Youth Park Stewards or to engage with others around difficult conversations at Youth Lead or to work on discomfort with speaking in front of groups at the Community Organizers or to take on responsibility helping younger kids at the Teen Center, teens seemed to experience these challenges in ways that were positive.

Programs in this study worked to build these individual domain capacities in the following ways:

- Creating environments of care and concern
- Meeting youth where they are; listening and responding to their needs
- Providing opportunities and growth

Creating Environments of Care and Concern

Authentic relationships. During the 2012 Boston Youth Work Intensive,[30] a number of seasoned youth workers expressed need for staff in youth serving programs to be transparent and honest in their interactions with youth. As articulated in Chapter 5, there were many instances of staff and teens speaking of their experiences as being family-like within the context of programs. Tim (2011) at Castle Square felt this was in part a result of staff sharing their personal interests with teens as well as promoting personal conversations and interactions at all levels. In fact, Emilio (2011) talked often of the "culture" in the center. Deborah (2011) also talked about caring for the youth at Castle Square as though they were her own children and wanting things for them as for her own kids. Stephanie (2011) indicated that simple things like being asked how her day was showed that the staff cared and contributed to the family feel. Ben (2011) felt he could go to staff with personal and school problems and Melinda (2011) mentioned that even seeing a staffer's goofy side contributed to the welcoming feel of the space. As BD (2011) noted:

> Staff have eyes everywhere – all staff are amazing people who care, listen to you, help out, down to earth, love to laugh.

---

[30] The Boston Youth Work Intensive is an annual gathering of New England youth workers hosted by Health Resources in Action. Experienced and novice youth workers gather to support and share work within youth serving programs.

Castle Square was characterized by many opportunities to build these casual connections which participants found to be meaningful and enriching.

These sorts of relational interactions were echoed at other sites. Tony (2011) at Friends of Beardsley Park mentioned how he valued the relationships he had with youth and personally seemed to get a lot out of them. JD (2011) in particular noted that Tony was always willing to share his knowledge and experience with the teens in the program and that he personally got lots of support and encouragement. Both Raquel (2011) at Centro Cultural Latino and Ernie (2011) at the Sesame Street Institute spoke of "love" and building better human connections. In fact, Ernie (2011) often sounded like a protective mother as evidenced by a phrase like "my young people." For Centro Cultural Latino these strong relationships extended to families as well (Karen, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011).

Teen perspective. Beyond authentic relationships teens, particularly at Castle Square and Centro Latino, felt the organizations they were part of really had a "teen perspective" (Stephanie, 2011; BD, 2011; Victor, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011; Javier, 2011). BD (2011) noted that staff at Castle Square had a "high tolerance for teen behavior" and Stephanie (2011) thought they were "really responsive" to teens. Victor (2011) at Centro Cultural Latino saw the benefit of hiring staff close in age to the teens. It was an important factor in feeling connected and comfortable talking to them. While teens in the Youth Park Stewards program did not articulate the benefits of a teen perspective, JD (2011) did note that crew leaders have experience with teens if not necessarily with the specifics of the job task. For his part, Bert (2011), at Sesame Street

210

Institute shared that the overall system doesn't demonstrate a belief in young people and that he and others at the organization come from a perspective that very much does. Other youth workers at the 2012 Boston Youth Work Intensive articulated a similar sentiment that adults working with youth need to work against "adultism" and have a strong belief in the positive power of young people.

Sympatico staff. Many of the adults (program staff and organizational leaders) interviewed for this research shared lived experiences similar to the youth they served. Alternatively, those who did not share personal backgrounds expressed long-term commitments to youth organizing or youth work. These past experiences seemed to support their ability have or be sympathetic to a "teen perspective." For example, Castle Square's executive director Deborah (2011) had raised her kids partially at Castle Square and saw her kids reflected in the youth at the Teen Center. Centro Cultural Latino's executive director (Franco-Vargas, 2012) could still feel her personal history of dealing with racial bias as a teen in a community where hers was the only Latino family. She expressed the desire to create better experiences for the youth her organization served. Ernie (2011), co-director at Sesame Street Institute, drew from her childhood of family support, service, and critical questioning in her orientations toward teens in her program, while program director Frank (2011) tried to mirror the kind of great mentor relationships he had as a young person.

Growing up in an immigrant family, Christina's (2012) background helped her connect with teens in her program, but she also had experience in educational environments and worked for other youth-oriented programs. Bert (2011), Sesame

Street's other co-director, also had training as an educator, worked in alternative learning environments, and had positive experiences being mentored. While new to working with youth, both Emilio (2011) at Castle Square and Tony (2011) at Friends of Beardsley Park, looked to the sorts of experiences they had with their parents and their first work experiences to guide and inform their interactions with teens in their programs. For example, Tony (2011) admitted he struggled with learning how to be a mentor and how to establish good boundaries and tried to translate his management lessons in working with his father's subcontracting business to this new environment. Emilio (2011) spoke of the influence his mother had on him in modeling work that had both an educational and public service component. In fact, the only adult interviewed who didn't speak of a personal connection to the teens was Friends of Beardsley Park's deputy director Cynthia (2011). However, she linked her passion for the organization's mission back to her own growing up in a suburban area with lots of green space and a desire to see youth be valued members of the park community.

Meeting Youth Where they Are; Listening and Responding to Their Needs

Program adaptability. With a fluid and changing program and no articulated youth development model, teens at Castle Square ended up displaying stronger internal political efficacy than would have been expected. It seemed that the Teen Center's empathic and caring environment was made more powerful by its ability to respond and adapt to the teens and meet their intrinsic motivational needs. The large amount of time devoted to socialization and responsive and fluid program offerings, created space for

youth to get involved, to act on ideas, to realize things important for them and to have peers, adults, and others who helped realize these aspirations.

Ben (2011) and Stephanie (2011) indicated that staff listening to teens created program opportunities at the Teen Center. BD (2011) also confirmed this with the caveat that there were sometimes resource limits. When teens didn't have any ideas, staff would jumpstart the process by suggesting things that might tap into teen interests (Ben, 2011). Stephanie (2011) felt she had a say in how things were done at the center. She also felt that staff backed up her and her peers and supported their individual interests. For example, Ben (2011) told of a community event where he asked if he could do a dance performance and staff positively responded. BD (2011) talked about a teen coordinator who was not working out well. Teens complained and the coordinator left. Emilio (2011) thought that the flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to teen programming needs in part had to do with open communications throughout the organizations and systems and structures that provided a framework for individual agency for all -- staff as well as teens.

Engaging in multiple ways and at multiple levels. While other sites in the study were not as highly adaptable in their programming, all were able to engage youth at more than one level. Some sites like Castle Square and Centro Latino Cultural had youth who entered the organization as young children through formal middle school programs (Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Ben, 2011). For Centro Latino, this long-term engagement was part of their overall theory of change (Figure 15). The Youth Park Stewards program at Friends of Beardsley Park had a less formal mechanism for long-

213

term engagement. A teen like JD (2011) had come to the organization as a volunteer when he was of middle school age and remained connected to the organization. Sometimes funding allowed for teens to expand their summer work into other areas and former alumni have returned to the park as volunteers, patrons, and board members (Gardner, 2014). Youth Lead participants initially signed on to an intensive summer program, but had opportunities to grow with the program over two to three years (Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011).

Opportunities for paid employment were evident at all four sites. Only Castle Square did not have it as the main factor motivating engagement. For the Centro Cultural Latino, employment was a mechanism to maintain connection to youth as they transitioned into their teen years (Sola, 2011). The Youth Lead program saw employment as an economic need and mechanism for leveling the playing field to ensure engagement of a wide range of teens in their program (Horton, 2011). Despite the "job" framing for the other three programs, additional activities such as field trips, internships, and community events provided teens with different ways to enhance engagement.

Providing Opportunities and Growth

Learning organizations. All of the organizations in this study were committed to developing the young people in their programs. Emilio (2011) at Castle Square talked about how he and his colleagues were constantly learning, improving, and building capacity and that there was support and openness to do this. Deborah (2011) confirmed that her experiences at Castle Square over the years had allowed her to learn skills and capacities to lead the organization. She also worked to translate this same sort of

214

empowerment through learning to others in the organization. Christina (2012) and Raquel (2012) at Centro Cultural Latino also stressed how the organization had created space for each of them to grow and learn as leaders. Centro Cultural Latino also spent a good deal of time training and acculturating staff to the organization (Sola, 2012). Both Christina (2012) and Emilio (2011) could link the continued improvement of the programs they ran to their long tenure with their respective organizations. Cynthia (2011) at Friends noted how improving Tony's youth development abilities were important, and Tony (2011) confirmed that he had gained from these learning opportunities. Mentoring and building the capacity for critical thinking were learning themes present at the Sesame Street Institute (Myles, 2011; Widit, 2011; Horton, 2011).

Field experts working on social change programs with youth who presented at the 2012 Boston Youth Work Intensive confirmed that creating learning and development cultures was an important part of this work. During a key informant interview, long-time youth development leader Cara Lisa Berg Powers (2011) indicated that regardless of program content, seeking information and critical questioning were perhaps even more critical components needed in youth programs.

New experiences. Teens interviewed at all sites detailed many instances where they were given opportunities to experience new things that energized their engagement with programs and appeared to boost their self-confidence. Malinda (2011) at Castle Square indicated that she had the opportunity to try lots of new things from photography to nail design. Ben (2011), also at Castle Square, felt he could learn things at the Teen Center that school didn't provide such as new dance moves and video editing. Teens at

215

the Youth Park Stewards all mentioned the camping trip and for many it was the first

time they had experienced the outdoors in this way (Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Eva, 2011;

JD, 2011). For Simone (2011), getting the chance to think about the world in a new way,

encounter new content, and see a bigger picture of how systems work was what impacted

her most. She indicated that the kinds of conversations she engaged in at the Institute

were not the kinds she encountered in school or even with her closest friends (Simone,

2011).

Engaging with Others: Building Competence in the Group Development Domain

In chapter 4 the concepts participatory citizens (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) and

collective efficacy (Bandura, 1997) were discussed as elements linked to civic and

political participation in future life (Wilkenfeld, 2010, Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee,

2000; Hart, Donnelly, Younniss and Atkins, 2007; Youniss &Yate, 1999). This chapter

also detailed the ways in which existing youth development models work to support

development in the group domain (see Table 21).

TABLE 21: Youth Development in the Group Domain

Social Ecological	Positive	Community	Social Justice
Bonding to prosocial family, school and peers	Promoting positive relationships with peers	Being conscious stewards of relationships	
Consistent systems of recognition and reinforcement for prosocial involvement		Creating a culture of appreciation	Embraces youth culture
	Connecting youth with caring adults	Creating a culture of respect and partnership	

Some of the indicators in this group domain are also linked to the individual domain described above (e.g., bonding to prosocial family, school and peers; connecting youth with caring adults). All of the organizations detailed ways in which they reinforced and recognized positive involvement. As discussed earlier, interviews at both Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino indicated that homework and academics were important. Both programs promoted behaviors geared toward these activities over other behaviors (Flores, 2011; Ben, 2011; Sola, 2012; Natalie, 2011). One example of a reward at Castle Square was participation in a citywide ice cream event for teens at the center that had "stepped up" or demonstrated leadership and responsibility (Flores, 2011). The ability to apply and be chosen as a teen leader at Centro Cultural Latino was also a reward for certain positive attitudes and behaviors. This is not unlike the youth leadership team at Sesame Street Institute (Horton, 2011). The organizing framework of "work" at the Youth Park Stewards program emphasized positive work habits such as arriving on time and completing assigned tasks (White, 2011; JD, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Eva, 2011).

Peer interactions, social relationships, working together, respect, and appreciation were evident at all of the sites. The Youth Park Stewards consciously implemented team-building exercises as part of their program design (White, 2011; JD, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Jae, 2011; Eva, 2011). This program as well as the Community Organizers focused on small group work tasks. Sesame Street Institute worked to "reboot" the human relationships teens had with others. The perspectives of teens were clearly valued

(Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011). The fluid and responsive program design at Castle Square created time for socialization and relationship building.

As for embracing youth culture, this was most evident at the Sesame Street Institute and Castle Square. With many youth-led activities, attention to "adultism" and a clearly youth designed and run space, Sesame Street Institute appeared to create plenty of room for youth actions and concerns to bubble to the top. Alternatively, Castle Square created a teen-oriented space by tapping into and responding to youth interests while creating ample amounts of time for socializing and bonding. Although, Centro Cultural Latino and Friends of Beardsley Park were dedicated to young people, the priorities of the organizations and the program structures seemed to have less space for youth expression and directives.

In exploring the program elements that worked to build these group capacities, these elements were found to be at play:

- Supporting processes of group formation and inclusion
- Promoting opportunities to encounter difference
- Setting up expectations and responsibilities

Supporting Processes of Group Formation and Inclusion

Long-term engagement. Groups do not form out of thin air. Attention to building trust and providing opportunities to build strong bonds are important to group formation (Kreijns et al., 2013; Newton, 2001). Additionally, supporting processes by which individuals feel they belong and are connected to the group improve social cohesion (Lenzi et al., 2013: Vasta, 2013; Bloustien, 2007). Each program in the study employed different strategies to support group formation. For some teens at Castle Square and

218

Centro Cultural Latino connecting to the organization at a young age and being involved for several years was an important element in feeling part of the organization (Ben, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011). Both of these organizations, Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino, amplified long-term engagement by being located in the communities where the teens they served either lived or went to school. Despite not having a stated commitment to long-term engagement, Friends of Beardsley Park did have at least one teen, JD (2011), who had found a long-term pathway by beginning as a volunteer when he was thirteen. Staff confirmed that other teens had found long-term engagement pathways within the organization (Gardner, 2014).

Short, intense experiences. In addition to long-term engagement, short and intense experiences also seemed to aid in building and connecting youth in programs. Simone (2011) at the Sesame Street Institute talked about a series of workshop activities that started off the Youth Lead program, then quickly laid bare individual struggles and pain. Ernie (2011) had talked about this sort of activity showed the common struggle and pain. For the teens in the Youth Park Stewards program, there were team-building experiences such as a ropes course, but the camping trip was the intense bonding experience noted by all teens (Jae, 2011; JD, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Eva, 2011).

Communication. The attention and time given to communication and processing experiences were also noted. For Castle Square the fluid and responsive program format provided ample time to "chill" and socialize (Malinda, 2011). Teens in the Youth Park Stewards mentioned that their physically demanding jobs also afforded moments of fun and socializing (JD, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). Emilio (2011) at Castle Square

219

spoke of communication linked to the enforcement of the organization's culture. This idea of culture communicated through common language and values was also emphasized at Sesame Street Institute (Widit, 2011) and Centro Cultural Latino (Sola, 2012).

Promoting Opportunities to Encounter Difference

Many teens mentioned that one of the positive aspects of being involved in their program was the opportunity of getting to know or becoming friends with teens that were very different from themselves. The Sesame Street Institute and the Friends of Beardsley Park were ideally situated to pull teens from very different communities and backgrounds. Even for teens at Castle Square who had lots of neighborhood connections, the intimacy of the setting created strong bonds between those who might otherwise not have become friends. The Centro Cultural Latino was the only organization where difference was not noted by the teens. In part, this may have to do with the cultural identity and neighborhood focus of the organization. With difference as a noted factor within programs, it is not surprising that that interviewees noted many instances of talking through or working out conflict and disagreement (Backus, 2011; Sola, 2012; Stephanie, 2011).

Setting Up Expectations and Responsibilities

In addition to connecting youth to each other and creating atmospheres conducive to reducing difference, teens were also provided roles within the organization that expected them to contribute and be responsible. Experienced youth workers at the 2012 Boston Youth Work Intensive stressed how important it was for young people to see into

220

the world of decision-making as well as see others, like themselves, leading. Therefore ladders that allowed youth to step up and step back from leadership are important.

Responsibility. Despite the fluidity of Castle Square's programs, Emilio (2011) did talk about a culture where the use of the Community Center should be seen as a privilege and members of the Teen Center had certain responsibilities if they wanted to use this space. So things like emphasizing homework and productive uses of the center's computer lab came into play in setting up responsibilities. At Centro Cultural Latino, Christina (2012) spoke of individual teens being "accountable" and "responsible" for the choices they make within the context of the Community Organizing program and elsewhere at the organization. For the Youth Park Stewards, responsibility came in the form of work tasks and expectations (White, 2011). There were teens who were very clear that they had grown in their sense of responsibility as a result of being engaged with their programs (Javiar, 2011; Ben, 2011; JD, 2011).

Challenge with support. With responsibility, programs also were committed to pushing teens and challenging them to move beyond their own personal boundaries toward a wider collective context (Widit, 2011; Sola, 2012). This challenge looked different at each organization. JD (2011) in the Youth Park Stewards program spoke of how he would challenge the teens in his crew to get tough tasks done just as he had been challenged in the program. Yet this challenging was within a culture of encouragement and support. For Castle Square, teens were asked to get involved in things that maybe they initially didn't think they could do, but staff and others would be there to support their efforts (Stephanie, 2011). Or maybe, Castle Square staff would simply be open to

221

teen efforts to move into new realms (Ben, 2011; BD, 2011). Raquel (2012) at Centro

Cultural Latino spoke of how all of the adults at her organization needed to challenge

youth and have high expectations of them if they were going to be successful community

members. Natalie (2011) confirmed that this was indeed one of the main things the

organization had taught her. She was confident that with hard work she could accomplish

things, and that there would be support and help available.

Connecting to Community: Building Competence in the Community Development Domain

Connecting to community may be difficult for youth who don't have competency

in the individual domain and at least some experience in the group domain. All of the

organizations and the programs in this study had some ability to connect their teen

participants to the larger community. However, this domain was not as strongly

expressed as the other two. Chapter 4 showed ways in which the youth development

models worked to support development in the community domain (see Table 22).

TABLE 22: Youth Development in the Community Domain

Social Ecological	Positive	Community	Social Justice
	Empowering youth to assume leadership roles in programs		
		Creating a just and compassionate society	Analyzes power in social relationships
			Promotes systemic social change
			Encourages collective action

Youth leadership roles were clearly evident at the Sesame Street Institute where many of the Youth Lead program activities are orchestrated by a youth leadership team (Simone, 2011; Myles, 2011) and individual youth take on various program roles (e.g., teach backs). The Community Organizers program at Centro Cultural Latino also had formal teen leader positions as well as opportunities for small groups or teams to lead and plan tasks (Karen, 2011; Sola, 2012). Even though Castle Square's Teen Center was fairly fluid, teens did have opportunities in other parts of the organization to have responsible roles in the after school and tech center programs (Stephanie, 2011; Flores, 2011). The Youth Park Stewards program at Friends of Beardsley Park also had opportunities for youth to lead within the context of the Community Night events.

Creating a just and compassionate society seemed to be a goal most clearly articulated by the Sesame Street Institute and its call to "reboot" human relationships and shift social norms. However, Centro Cultural Latino also had teens involved in looking at ways to address social inequalities, especially for young Latino community members. While both Castle Square and Friends had issues (e.g., affordable housing and green space conservation) that informed their work, there wasn't a strong sense of larger social justice or equity issues at play within these organizations.

All of the organizations, except Castle Square, modeled and promoted collective action for solving problems. For the Youth Park Stewards, the day-to-day team tasks and Community Nights were manifestations of collectivity. For Centro Cultural Latino and the Sesame Street Institute, work on larger community campaigns with their associated tasks were strong examples of collective action. Teens in the Community Organizers

program could specifically talk about these collective efforts and some could see how working with teens from other organizations made this work even more powerful (Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011).

To varying degrees, Centro Cultural Latino and Sesame Street Institute were also involved in analyzing power in social relationships and systemic ways to affect social change. There were no activities in this vein evident at either Castle Square or Friends of Beardsley Park. The Community Organizers at Centro Cultural Latino worked toward these goals through concrete skills and actions related to articulated campaigns (e.g., gaining cultural competency, reducing the intake of sugar sweetened beverages). While teens in Sesame Street Institute's Youth Lead program were also building concrete skills, much of their understanding of power relations and systemic change were built through research, learning opportunities, discussions and then practical opportunities at internship sites.

According to the current youth development models, Castle Square appears not to be heavily engaged in the community domain. However, it seems some rudimentary community capacities might be missing from the current schema – most notably, creating awareness of the community sphere and providing opportunities to contribute to community activities. Things like attending or speaking at public meetings or gatherings, volunteering and contributing to community causes, and simply engaging with others in the community are not part of these models. However, the emerging "contributions" aspect of the positive youth development model along with the existing "connections" (Washington State University Extension, 2008; Lerner et al., ND) would seem to capture

such activities. With these additional community capacities added to the current schema,

programs in this study worked to build community capacities in these ways:

- Creating awareness and opportunities to "see" the community
- Supporting mechanisms for contribution and leadership
- Building skills that move toward social action

Creating Awareness and Opportunities to "See" the Community

Castle Square provided opportunities for its young people to be aware of a larger

community of activity, primarily within the Castle Square housing complex and the

surrounding neighborhood. Castle Square teens were also afforded opportunities to move

beyond the confines of their neighborhood by participating in large citywide events like a

Scooper Bowl,[31] a lakeside BBQ, and recreational outings like skiing (BD, 2011;

Stephanie, 2011; Malinda, 2011; Flores, 2011; Backus, 2011). Teens at Centro Cultural

Latino were out in the community door-knocking and attending public meetings (Natalie,

2011; Hector, 2011; Karen, 2011; Sola, 2012) and the Youth Park Stewards were

working in a public community space every day (White, 2011; Gardner, 2011).   While

mostly focused on learning and workshops, the Youth Lead participants also had concrete

opportunities to work in public and community-based settings (Simone, 2011; Myles,

2011).

Supporting Mechanisms for Contribution and Leadership

Contributing. More than simply seeing the community, teens at all of the sites

were able to provide concrete contributions to the community. At Castle Square, teens

spoke of participating in community night events like "Take Back the Night" either in

---

[31] The Scooper Bowl was a citywide all-you-can-eat fundraiser for the Jimmy Fund.

225

assisting with planning, performing, or helping out (BD, 2011; Ben, 2011; Flores, 2011).

Helping with the organization and execution of Community Night activities at Beardsley

Park were key activities that participants in the Youth Park Stewards program undertook

along with making concrete improvements to the park itself (e.g., picking up trash,

restoring the woods, building community gardens (Jae, 2011; JD, 2011; Taylor, 2011;

Eva, 2011; White, 2011; Gardner, 2011). Teens at Centro Cultural Latino were also

involved in making community events happen like the annual Three Kings Festival and

summer music gatherings (Natalie, 2011; Hector, 2011; Karen, 2011; Javier, 2011; Sola,

2012). At the Sesame Street Institute community contributions were realized in the form

of internships where teens worked and supported a range of community services. Some

teens in Youth Lead also went out into the community and conducted educational

workshops about important issues (e.g., school to prison pipeline, health disparities)

(Simone, 2011; Widit, 2011; Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011).

   Leading. In addition to contributing, teens had opportunities to take on defined

leadership roles. At both Castle Square and Sesame Street Institute, opportunities to lead

and take on increased responsibility seemed designed to meet the needs of youth who felt

ready to expand or grow into those roles (Flores, 2011; Horton, 2011; Myles, 2011).

Some of these opportunities were through paid jobs (e.g., working at Castle Square's tech

center or after-school program), others were self-initiated (e.g., hosting a community

event), and some where presented within the context of program activities (e.g., teaching

back content of Youth Lead seminars) (Stephanie, 2011; Ben, 2011; BD, 2011; Flores,

2011; Simone, 2011; Myles, 2011; Widit, 2011). The Community Organizers at Centro

226

Cultural Latino had recently created a couple of paid leadership opportunities for teens (Karen, 2011; Sola, 2011) and teen groups often conduct work independently with stepped back supervision (Sola, 2011). Teens had responsibility in realizing the Community Nights at the Youth Park Stewards. There were other informal opportunities for youth to engage in multiple ways. Because of his long tenure with the organization, JD (2011) indicated he would often demonstrate how to do certain task, would help his crew leader understand tasks, and would work to motivate his teammates. As one of the oldest teens in the Youth Park Stewards and with formal landscaping work experience, Jae (2011) also seemed to view himself as having an informal role in leading his team, which he appeared to take pride in.

Building Skills that Move Toward Community and Social Action

More so than teens at Castle Square and Friends of Beardsley Park, teens at Centro Cultural Latino and the Sesame Street Institute built concrete social action skills. Speaking at public meetings, talking to decision makers, canvassing the community, surveying residents, learning the particulars of issue campaigns, and working with other organizations, Community Organizer participants were able to see and speak to a range of community issues affecting their communities (e.g., lack of cultural competency in the schools, health effects of high sugar beverages and tobacco) (Hector, 2011; Natalie, 2011; Karen, 2011; Sola, 2012). Within the context of the Youth Lead program, teens were researching and communicating the detrimental effects of systemic issues such as classism and racism (Simone, 2011; Myles, 2011; Horton, 2011). To a lesser extent, participants in the Youth Park Stewards were sensitized to the importance of the work

227

they were engaged in and its links to larger park restoration and conservation efforts and the need to maintain public green spaces. Most teens could speak to the threats invasive plants posed to the park and many said that their work was important in stewarding the park as a resource for the community to use and enjoy (JD, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Eva, 2011; White, 2011). While the organization hoped to link its work to even larger environmental advocacy issues, the time, resources, and mechanism for implementation were still illusive (Gardener, 2011). Still, a teen like JD (2011), who had been with the organization for many years, was very adept at articulating a systemic view of resource distribution and the need to support natural resources. Members of Castle Square's Teen Center were the least engaged in building concrete social action skills but most of the teens had gained a strong sense of voice and comfort speaking or performing in public (Stephanie, 2011; BD, 2011; Ben, 2011).

Other Considerations in Developing a Politically Engaged Youth

In addition to programmatic elements and feature and organizational structures and norms, this research also seemed to hint at other factors that also might be contributing to or supporting the political engagement attitudes of the young people interviewed. These would include:

- The influence of place
- Family background and school experiences
- Exposure to civic issues and activities

The Influence of Place

Being in the neighborhood. Both Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino are community-based organizations with programming that serves youth within a specific

228

geographic areas. Many of the teens interviewed at both organizations either lived or went to school in the same area. For Castle Square, the placement of a school across the street from the Teen Center, where many of the teens went to school, also seemed to matter (Stephanie, 2011; Ben, 2011; BD, 2011; Flores, 2011) as did easy access to a number of youth serving programs (Ben, 2011). The fact that the South End School was small and appeared to have a responsive culture created positive experiences for at least two of the teens a Castle Square (Stephanie, 2011; BD, 2011). For the Community Organizers, their organizing issues and efforts revolved around their Mission Hill location amplifying the impact on their own backyard. One can also see a place-based focus in the Youth Park Stewards program and some of the teens came from neighborhoods surrounding the park and could see how the park served the communities. Only Sesame Street Institute with its issue focus and dispersed teen recruitment did not have a strong commitment to its surrounding neighborhood.

The space is ours. In addition to the neighborhood as a place, the physical space of programs also seemed to have some importance in terms of ownership and belonging. Teens at Castle Square talked about the Community Center as a space where they could "hang,","chill," "distress," and socialize with others (BD, 2011; Stephanie, 2011; Ben, 2011; Simone, 2011). In fact, teens at both Castle Square and the Sesame Street Institute were observed independently setting up and orchestrating activities in their respective spaces. These spaces also had a "lived in" feel with examples of youth work and activity throughout (Observation, June 15, 2011; Observation, July 12, 2011). And while the Youth Park Stewards operated in a public, outdoor space most of the time, JD (2011) felt

229

like the park was home even after he moved to a completely new neighborhood (JD, 2011). Teens at Centro Cultural Latino didn't speak of any particular attachment to the space apart from the overall culture of the organization feeling welcoming and "like family" (Hector, 2011; Javier, 2011; Natalie, 2011).

<u>Family Background and School Experiences</u>

Family. For some teens family background and experiences in school also seemed to impact the way in which they thought about making change in their community. Many of the teens at the Friends of Beardsley Park had families who held civil service or public serving jobs (e.g. police, lawyers, military, nurses, unions) (JD, 2011; Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011). As immigrants, Simone's (2011) parents had a particular perspective on how society did or did not support the aspirations of her family. In general, the teens at Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino had families who were struggling or themselves were not solidly connected to formal civic institutions.

School. Teens also had varying experiences in their school environments. Stephanie (2011), Malinda (2011), BD (2011), and Eva (2011) all recounted positive experiences that supported their desires for engagement or change. For Malinda it was engaging in a number of volunteer and service activities, while Stephanie and BD had school administrators respond to their concerns about school operations. Eva recounted a guidance counselor at her school that provided support and connection to her concerns. The teens at Centro Cultural Latino mostly became sensitized to the inequalities in student experiences through their work as Community Organizers and their school cultural competency campaign.

<u>Exposure to civic issues and activities</u>

Engaging in the community. Many of the teens did not have much prior volunteer or community engagement experience. Only Karen (2011) talked of community work being her passion and wanting to be involved in the community as her main thing. Ben (2011) at Castle Square indicated he had volunteered at organizations in the neighborhood and BD (2011) indicated all of his volunteering had been for Castle Square. This was similar to Natalie (2011) who only volunteered at Centro Cultural Latino. A few of the teens (e.g., Jae and Taylor) had done service-oriented activities through their church. Malinda (2011) was heavily engaged in volunteer and fundraising activities at her school and Hector's (2011) basketball team had done some fundraising in the community as well. In general though, these community engagement activities for teens were relatively thin.

Being civically informed. Teens also had relatively low experience with political or policy-oriented content in the news. To varying degrees the teens did watch or read the news but often it was for entertainment, sports or human interest related content (Jae, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Malinda, 2011). A few of the teens said that they watched the news with their family members, but few noted engaging in conversations with them about news stories. Natalie (2011) noted that her mom was concerned about local violence in the news and talked to her about it, and Hector (2011) indicated there were sometimes heated discussions at his aunt's house. For her part, Karen (2011) said she watched the news with her mom but that she felt it didn't really cover "important stuff." Stephanie

(2011) recounted several human-interest stories that really fuelled her passion about how some people are treated and the inequalities that seem to exist in society.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Revisiting Research Questions

<u>Main Research Question</u>

This research sought to understand what out-of-school time program features and

elements were most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth. It

proposed that those out-of-school-time programs that most closely adhere to community

and social justice youth development models (See Table 4 in Chapter 2) would exhibit

the greatest number of youth who perceive an increase in their ability to be politically

engaged. Politically engaged for the purposes of this study was defined as internal

political efficacy. Alternatively, if the youth development model did not matter,

individuals in the program, particularly program staff, might influence political

engagement attitudes as a result of personal influence more than programmatic intent. It

also suggested that external influences, such as family, friends, and external institutions

(e.g., media and school) could influence political engagement attitudes in a negative

manner.

As explained in Chapter 5, youth across all programs exhibited internal political

efficacy through their perceived confidence in their ability to work toward an issue they

233

cared about. It is also true that beyond internal political efficacy there was a great deal of variation in the depth or complexity of how each teen understood social change and political engagement processes. In addition to internal political efficacy, some of the teens expressed elements related to external political efficacy (Wilkenfeld et al., 2010; Morrell, 2003; Bandura, 1997) or the belief that their opinions or concerns could be expressed, heard, and responded to by those who cared about what they thought or by those in power. For instance, Ben (2011) at Castle Square shared:

> We asked one of the organizers, of the Castle Square, and the person said it's fine, we can go over and put that dancing routine into the schedule, and all the performances in the schedule, so it worked really fine. We performed pretty well.

Or Natalie (2011) at Centro Cultural Latino who said:

> Your voice counts, but when you have a lot of people and a full group majority of voices that's also a big step. The fact that you work here you already have youth and grown-ups on your side, the fact that you work for a community that can also help. So I think anything that you really want to do, can, working here.

Some of the teens had already moved from attitude to action and were addressing community issues by contributing and participating in activities they cared about. A small few also demonstrated a complex understanding of root causes to problems that were linked to larger systems. These teens also indicated that change was complex, hard, and took time. For instance, in talking about youth, Karen (2011) said:

> I know my issues, violence, street violence, you can't make a change, . . . you can't just wipe it off the face of the earth unfortunately, but you can make an impact and get more people aware of it and try to make it a big impact if I were to change it. Like I was saying, the peace walks, I did a couple of those and that really does make an impact on everybody.

There were teens also that understood change or action was a collective endeavor achieved by working with others and required building connections. A couple of teens were even clear that this was going to be part of their own lives moving forward.

In general, youth at the two organizations identified as having a community or social justice youth development orientation were more likely to demonstrate these political engagement indicators beyond internal political efficacy. However, there were youth in the other two programs who also exhibited traits beyond internal political efficacy. In particular, Stephanie at Castle Square appeared to have a critical consciousness related to race and gender and JD at Friends of Beardsley Park could articulate a systemic understanding of resource allocation and use. Rather than seeing this variation as a failure or weakness of consistent implementation of the community and social justice youth development models, Chapter 5 explored the limits of seeing the dominant youth development models as existing in separate silos. Rather, findings from this research now suggest that the models be reconceived as existing along a continuum that support three separate domains of sociopolitical development – individual, group and community. Each of the programs in this study combined elements from multiple youth development theories and worked across development domains.

Related Research Question 1: Youth Participants

The main research question also had four related or sub-questions. The first related research question asked how participants in out-of-school-time programs with a youth engagement orientation perceive the program, their involvement in it, and its effects on their personal development? It proposed that youth in those out-of-school time

programs that most closely adhere to community and social justice youth development models would perceive the program positively, view themselves as having a great deal of leadership and responsibility in the program, build practical skills, gain a critical awareness of themselves and the world around them, understand mechanisms for systemic change more fully, and think of themselves more fully as change agents. Potential forces that could work against this outcome were seen as low program engagement (physically or mentally), poor program implementation, lack of adequate program resources or the influence of external forces (i.e., family, friends, school, media) that counter the program.

Almost all youth in the various programs viewed their participation as positive. Eva at the Friends of Beardsley Park was the only participant who expressed any negativity. It could be that her young age or need for more individual support and care may have influenced her response. Other teens in the Youth Park Stewards program did note the difficulty of the physical labor of this particular program, but overall they mostly talked about it as a challenge they were proud to have overcome.

In terms of leadership and responsibility, there was a great deal of variance from program to program. The Youth Park Stewards program had the fewest such opportunities with no formal leadership positions for youth participants. Informal leadership did appear to operate within the program for JD, who had been part of the program the longest, and for Jae, who had prior experience in the job area. At the Teen Center, teens had ample opportunities to suggest and make programming happen, and formal job and volunteer positions were available for teens that expressed interest.

236

Community Organizers took responsibility for campaign planning on a regular basis as part of the program structure and a small number of formal leadership positions were made available for youth who demonstrated the ability to take on such a responsibility. In the context of the Youth Lead program, every teen was given an opportunity to lead some aspect of the program.

All of the teens expressed that they gained practical skills within the context of their respective program. Public speaking, media-making, performance, life skills (e.g., cooking), collaboration and team work, construction, plant identification, research, writing, use of tools and technologies, and soft skills (e.g., punctuality, time management) were some of the many areas mentioned by teens.

It could be said that teens in all programs gained new insights about themselves as a result of their participation. However, a "critical awareness" of the world was most clearly articulated by youth at the Sesame Street Institute and Centro Cultural Latino. Participants in programs at both organizations expressed knowledge of root causes of social problems. Here, both programs were committed more fully to a focus on the community domain in a way that looked at the contribution, engagement and leadership aspects of being involved in the community. While teens at the Friends of Beardsley Park and Castle Square had contact with the community and in some instances were participating or contributing to community endeavors, they were not as aware of systemic change. Whereas, teens at the other two organizations were actively engaged in research, campaigns, and activities designed to unearth and explore such systems.

At the same time, there were teens at all organizations that seemed to see themselves as change agents. Simone at Sesame Street Institute talked about seeing herself as leading and taking charge rather than just supporting. Stephanie at Castle Square expressed a desire to move beyond being a stereotype. JD at Friends of Beardsley Park saw himself as a team motivator and staunch park advocate. Both Natalie and Hector at Centro Latino could see how they needed to address the systems that kept their community down, and Natalie could see how this needed to be done with others.

Related Research Question 2: Program Features and Elements

The second related research question asked how were out-of-school time programs with a youth engagement orientation designed, implemented, and held accountable? The proposition was that out-of-school time programs with a youth engagement orientation would exhibit variation in design, implementation, and accountability frameworks depending on the particular organizational and social norms and characteristics in which they are situated. It further stated that successful youth engagement out-of-school time programs would exhibit the elements of community and social justice youth development models as well as incorporate key elements from positive and societal development models (See Table 4 in chapter 2). It alternatively posited that while youth engagement out-of-school time programs might exhibit the range of youth development features, they may not be successful as a result of poor program design or implementation, lack of adequate infrastructure supports, staff and leadership gaps, inability to keep youth engaged, or influence of external forces (i.e., community leaders, elected officials, foundation leaders) that counter the program.

238

As was detailed, there was a great deal of variation in design, implementation, and accountability frameworks of the programs that were part of this study. At one end of the spectrum, Teen Center at Castle Square was a fluid and ever changing set of program offerings designed to meet the interests and motivations of its teen members. The other three programs all had formal curriculum and learning goals with formal evaluation metrics in place. Centro Cultural Latino was the most sophisticated in linking organizational goals and plans with program goals and outcomes. Program participants at the sites were engaged for the long term and others for much shorter periods.

It is also true that the two organizations with community and social justice youth development models did incorporate elements from the positive and societal development models. With its attention on youth who already had a certain amount of individual confidence and self-efficacy, the Youth Leads program incorporates fewer elements of these other models. What was not initially envisioned was that the other two programs, the Teen Center and Youth Park Stewards, would incorporate elements of the community and social justice youth development models. The Teen Center had strong elements of supporting youth voice, identity, and culture in its highly responsive programming approach. Both the Teen Center and the Youth Park Stewards also created opportunities for their teen participants to engage in community activities and focus on positive group interactions.

Related Research Question 3: Organizational Norms and Structures

Related research question number three focused on the role or impact of organizational norms and structures on youth engagement out-of-school time program

239

goals, objectives, and outcomes? Internal forces driving programs (explicit or implicit) and holding them accountable (i.e. organization, leader, programs staff, youth themselves) were proposed at the determining factors. Alternatively, organizational factors might not influence program goals or activities; rather factors external to the organization might be the key driving forces.

All programs seemed to be well aligned with organizational norms and structures. The empowering and flexible attitude of Castle Square's leadership was articulated by program leadership and expressed in the responsive programming of the Teen Center. The family feel, love, and care of Castle Square, Centro Latino, and the Sesame Street Institute were also evident at all levels. The concern with individual agency and community change at the Sesame Street Institute was reflected throughout that organization. The need to create responsible and successful citizens committed to themselves and their community was a strong theme through the interviews at Centro Cultural Latino. The Friends of Beardsley Park definitely had a concern for Beardsley Park, its maintenance, conservation, and enhanced use by community members as a shared concern. This organization's larger advocacy values and environmental concerns were perhaps not as solidly present at all levels of the organization. This may have to do with the short-term nature of the summer program and the non-environmental backgrounds of the youth director and crew leaders coupled with a tight resource environment.

<u>Related Research Question 4: External Factors</u>

The final related research question asked how larger social norms and structural circumstances influenced organizations and the youth engagement out-of-school time programs they offer. It proposed that external forces (explicit or implicit) and accountability structures (i.e., funders, community leaders, government regulations) determine program goals. Otherwise, external factors might have no influence on program goals or activities as they are influenced by factors internal to the organization

Each of the organizations had a good deal of internal control over its program objectives and goals. However, there were external forces at play that challenged or enhanced the program experience. Key among these was the constant demand of funding. The Boston Youth Fund provided key resources for all of the summer programs and the requirements for receipt of the funds meant the acceptance of randomly assigned teens. For Friends of Beardsley Park the Boston Youth Fund was a key mechanism for getting applicants for its summer program, whereas Centro Cultural Latino worked to adapt some of their organizing program activities to accommodate short-term participants. The advocacy and social change work of the Sesame Street Institute and Centro Cultural Latino was not always a popular focus amongst funders, and both organizations spoke of framing the work alternatively (e.g., as workforce development or academic achievement) to secure funds. For the Sesame Street Institute, the effort required to constantly reframe created a degree of organizational stress and frustration.

All of the organizations mentioned partnerships and collaborations, but for both Centro Cultural Latino and the Sesame Street Institute these relationships were embedded

241

within the program offerings to a greater degree. Both organizations worked with other organizations on issue campaigns and sought to bring either their youth or their program elements to other organizations. Both Centro Cultural Latino and Friends of Beardsley Park staff mentioned that they at times needed to hold or challenge partners and collaborators (e.g., City of Boston, Boston Public Schools) which created some tension.

Families were only evident at Centro Cultural Latino, but they did not seem to have a heavy influence on program goals or activities. Friend and peer groups, however, were much more visible. Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino both had strong friendship networks that brought teens to their programs, and Sesame Street also used word-of-mouth. Only Friends of Beardsley Park didn't seem to have peer networks at play.

For both Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino, the context of their neighborhoods played an important role. Teens at both organizations had strong connections to these neighborhoods. The organizations themselves were also embedded in the neighborhood. Beardsley Park was also a neighborhood resource. But perhaps due to its large size and the multi-neighborhood service area, the neighbor influence seems dwarfed by the park itself.

As for the larger attitudes about young people in Boston, media coverage in the *Boston Globe* from January to mid-September of 2011 portrayed a multi-faceted representation of young. Less than 10 percent of the coverage portrayed young people in the extreme negative frame of criminals or disruptive forces. Almost 25 percent actually framed young peoples as heroes, change agents or positive actors in their communities.

242

The bulk of the remaining coverage primarily saw youth in a neutral, vulnerable or victim frame. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 1, as a metro area with dense out-of-school time opportunities for young people and many private and public sector agencies focused on youth, the overall climate of the city would suggest that it is concerned with and committed to young people.

Youth Political Engagement: Implications for Policy & Programs

Out-of-school time programs in Boston engage a diverse cross-section of youth in a range of programming efforts. These varied offerings provide multiple modes of participation (e.g., participation in community events, organizing community events, assessing community needs, educating community members) and multiple points of entry (e.g., casual drop-in, paid employment, leadership skill building). This research suggests that no one program design holds the key to improved youth political engagement. Rather, a set of strategies tailored to the needs of specific youth populations can all move youth along their sociopolitical development pathways. Communities should strive to support a diversity of OST programs that are able to meet the individual, group, and community domains for youth at varied stages of need and individual development.

Boston is fortunate to have meta-level infrastructure supports for its OST programs (e.g., Boston Navigator, Boston and Beyond, BEST Initiative). Policy makers and community leaders should use this infrastructure to bring young residents in the policy process and youth, and the organizations that support them should use it to create a more visible platform for youth voice and advocacy. For programs, coordinating and communications systems implemented at the community level such as asset maps, peer

coalitions, or searchable resource databases coupled with a shared rating or assessment regime could help individual programs see where they sit in the eco-system of programs supporting sociopolitical development. Such a system could also help OST program staff identify new opportunities for youth who may have moved beyond or are not well supported in their sociopolitical development by their own programs.

Communities are made stronger when diverse perspectives are brought to the table and individuals and groups are able to work effectively across differences. Neighborhood contexts in Boston are still relatively segregated, which impede this sort of heterogeneity. Many of the youth interviewed for this research highly valued meeting and engaging with peers who were not part of their normal networks. In part, the design of a funding vehicle like the Boston Youth Fund seemed instrumental in making these connections happen. Other innovations such as this should be promoted and supported.

Additionally, the "job" focus of funding like this didn't disadvantage low-income youth who may often be prevented from participating in youth development oriented opportunities like these. Complimentary to funding for teens, policy makers and community leaders should work to support youth worker career pathways. Specifically, youth from disengaged communities need programs to build the skills, capacities, and certifications to become youth workers in their own communities.

Place-based OST programs embedded in neighborhood environments were important to teens at Castle Square and Centro Cultural Latino. Both of these organizations also provide long-term engagement opportunities by connecting early childhood programs with teen friendly activities, including space to drop-in and socialize.

Both entities engaged youth in community level events and activities. By supporting such place-based programs, it is likely that young people who might not otherwise opt-in to an OST program will find themselves more easily engaged with the opportunity is little in their building, across the street or down the block.

For funders and others interested in accountability metrics, in addition to measuring individual youth outcomes and traditional organizational capacity (e.g., funding stability, leadership, program expertise), evaluation of decision-making and communication processes within organizations, organizational values and norms, and the personal beliefs and lived experience of program staff and organizational leadership can provide insights into the types of programs that are realized within the small organizational context. These elements of organizational culture seemed critical in creating climates of understanding, authenticity, transparency, care, responsiveness, and challenge for young people and for the transmission of valuable message about how young people can be involved.

Limitations

This exploratory research worked to build new theory about program and policy interventions seeking to improve political engagement attitudes for youth 14 to 18. Situated in out-of-school time programs offered by nonprofit organizations, the insights provided may not hold for other program environments with different organizational features and constraints (e.g., schools, government agencies, for-profit entities). Using findings with populations exhibiting different demographic features should also be done with care. This is especially true when dealing with younger populations or youth

245

inhabiting very different socioeconomic situations. What works for youth in a diverse, urban hub may not work for youth in a homogeneous suburb or population sparse rural area. While it is likely that findings can inform similar urban contexts, local geo-political realities and population demographics may create unique influences that would need further exploration.

Generalizing findings of internal political efficacy outcomes of youth in the study to other youth, either at the case sites or included in other studies of internal political efficacy for similar populations is not recommended. While youth interviewees provided a great deal of depth and insight into program operation, organizational culture, and interpersonal interactions, their small number prevents representative, statistical strength. Rather, the insights gained from this research suggest opportunities for further exploration and research.

Insights about internal political efficacy should also be understood as biased toward participants who have self-selected into out-of-school time programs. While a comparison of youth in non-youth and youth engagement programs provides insights about different program environments, it is impossible to determine how these compare to youth not engaged in OST programs. Other factors also influence political efficacy (e.g., previous community service, politically engaged home environment) (Levy, 2013; Beaumont, 2011; McFarland and Thomas, 2006) and without non-OST program youth there are limits in understanding how these influences might be operating.

Future Research and Next Steps

As an exploratory and theory building effort, this study suggests a number of future research endeavors that would extend what is revealed here. To improve the findings of this study, a survey of ALL current participants in the case sites using standard measures of internal political efficacy would help understand how typical the interview responses of teens were and would aid in linking these findings to other studies that use similar measures.

Operationalizing key program and organizational design features into a format that would support a large-scale study across a number of out-of-school time programs, might further explore the relationship between political engagement outcomes and development in the individual, group, and community domains. Ideally, such measures should work toward being designed in such a manner that they could be implemented in low-capacity, nonprofit settings. Appendix J provides a suggested start for such a study. A more complex set of political engagement measures would also create a more nuanced understanding of out-of-school time programming interventions for long-term sociopolitical development is another area where research could provide valuable insights to programs and those who evaluate them. Combining a larger-N survey with the in-depth case based ethnographic study would provide a template to replicate in other out-of-school time programming dense environments. This would work to better understand the effects of the local geo-political environment and would further inform which program and organizational features hold.

Beyond program design features and organizational structures, there is an interesting line of inquiry related to the organizational culture, values and norms. Further unpacking of the relationships between the personal backgrounds of organizational leadership and staff, articulated values, and daily operations and processes within the organization might yield interesting insights. Using methods from social anthropology and ethnographic field study, could further refine the types of interpersonal interactions and social dynamics that are occurring within programs and their larger organizational and community contexts.

Finally, this research suggests that place-based out of school time offerings with connections to teens' home or school neighborhoods might be mechanisms to serve youth populations at high risk for being civically and politically disconnected. A more rigorous study that explores the relationship between political engagement outcomes and location of the out-of-school time program would better be able to answer this particular line of inquiry. Other research suggests that these micro-geographies may well be important factors in creating strong or weak environments for communities and their residents (Grannis, 2009; Sampson, 2012).

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH DESIGN MATRIX AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="5"><u>MAIN:</u> What out-of-school time program features and elements are most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth?
Independent Variable: Youth development model of OST program expressed as program features and elements
Dependent Variable: Political engagement attitudes of youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td colspan="3">Links between Data and Propositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propositions</td>
<td>Unit of Analysis</td>
<td>What Data?</td>
<td>How to Collect?</td>
<td>From Where/Whom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those out-of-school time programs that most closely adhere to community and social justice youth development models (See Table 4) will exhibit the greatest number of youth who perceive an increase in their ability to be politically engaged.

ALTERNATIVE:

Individuals in the program, particularly program staff, influence political engagement attitudes as a result of personal influence more than programmatic intent.

External influences, particularly family and friends, influence political engagement attitudes.

Political engagement attitudes are countered by negative influences in external institutions, especially the media and school.</td>
<td>OST program

Youth participants</td>
<td>Political efficacy indicators – trust, interest in politics, knowledge about politics, belief in own ability to make change

Civic engagement and social action indicators – volunteering, advocacy work (i.e. protesting, contact w/ politicians)

Program features and elements (See Related 2)</td>
<td>Interviews / focus groups – youth OR Survey instrument

Interviews – staff, leadership

Observations – program activities, informal interactions

Document analysis – program literature, website, annual reports, evaluation reports, grant submissions, curriculum guides, strategic planning docs, other organizational documents</td>
<td>Youth participants

OST program staff

NPO leadership

Web and external sources

Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="5"><u>RELATED 1:</u> How do participants in out-of-school time programs with a youth engagement orientation perceive the program, their involvement in it and its affects on their personal development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth participants will voice a</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Factors</td>
<td>Interviews /</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
</table>

variety of perceptions related to the program, their involvement in it, and their own personal development. Youth in those out-of-school time programs that most closely adhere to community and social justice youth development models will: perceive the program positively view themselves as having a great deal of leadership and responsibility in the program build practical skills gain a critical awareness of themselves and the world around them understand mechanisms for systemic change more fully think of themselves more fully as change agents ALTERNATIVE: Even out-of-school-time programs that most closely adhere to community and social justice youth development models youth may not perceive the program positively or acquire new skills or attitudes. This may be the result of the following: low program engagement (physically or mentally) poor program implementation lack of adequate program resources influence of external forces (i.e. family, friends, school, media) that counter the program	participants	related to participant involvement: Recruitment Motivation Access & Engagement Climate / Interactions Program Mechanics Leadership Opportunities Family & Friend Support Personal Development	focus groups – youth OR Survey instrument Observations — program activities, informal interactions Document analysis — program evaluations, journals,	participants OST program staff
RELATED 2: How are out-of-school-time programs with a youth engagement orientation designed, implemented and held accountable?				
Out-of-school-time programs with a youth engagement orientation will exhibit variation in design, implementation, and accountability frameworks depending on the particular organizational and social norms and characteristics in which it is situated.	OST program	Factor related to program design, implementatio n, and accountability : Program initiation	Interviews – staff, leadership Observations – program activities, informal interactions	OST program staff NPO Leadership

250

		Program mechanics Learning strategies Infrastructure supports Staffing Participants & recruitment Interactions / climate Evaluation & assessment External connections	Document analysis – program literature, website, annual reports, evaluation reports, grant submissions, curriculum guides, strategic planning docs, other organizational documents	
Successful youth engagement out-of-school time programs will exhibit the elements of community and social justice youth development models as well as incorporate key elements from positive and societal development models (See Table 4). ALTERNATIVE: While youth engagement out-of-school time programs may exhibit the range of youth development features, they may not be successful as a result of: Poor program design or implementation lack of adequate infrastructure supports staff and leadership gaps inability to keep youth engaged influence of external forces (i.e. community leaders, elected officials, foundation leaders) that counter the program				
RELATED 3: What is the role or impact of organizational norms and structures on youth engagement out-of-school-time program goals, objectives and outcomes?				
Program goals and activities are determined by the internal forces driving them (explicit or implicit) and holding them accountable (i.e. organization, leader, programs staff, youth themselves) ALTERNATIVE: Organizational factors do not influence program goals or activities, they are influenced by factors external to the organization	OST program Nonprofit Org	Factors related to organizational norms and structures: Organizational mission Organizational values Structure of organization Interpersonal interactions Accountability structure Funding resources / mechanism	Interviews – staff, leadership (including board) Document analysis – incorporation documents, bylaws, IRS reports, website, annual reports, board minutes, strategic planning docs, other organizational	OST program staff NPO Leadership (staff and board) Funder of OST progrrams

251

		documents	

RELATED 4: How do larger social norms and structural circumstances influence organizations and the youth engagement out-of-school-time programs they offer?				
Program goals and activities are determined by the external forces driving them (explicit or implicit) and holding them accountable (i.e. funders, community leaders, government regulations) ALTERNATIVE: External factors do not influence program goals or activities, they are influenced by factors internal to the organization	Youth participants Nonprofit org	Factors related to external influences: Funder interactions Political culture / government interactions Social values and orientations towards youth Interactions with other social institutions (family, schools, business sector)	Interviews – funders, community leaders, experts in the field Document analysis – funder reports, grant evaluations, media products, public statements of community leaders	NPO Leadership (staff and board) Funders of OST programs Community leaders Key informants
Data Analysis Tools & Methods Pattern-Matching, Explanation-Building, and Cross-Case Synthesis (Yin, 2003) and other qualitative research methods from the case study and AR traditions. Tools: NVIVO8 or Atlas.ti, manual analysis processes				

What out-of-school time program features and elements are most likely to improve the political engagement attitudes of youth?	Org	Prog	Youth	Ext
Political efficacy				
What do youth participants think about their own ability to make change?			I	
Do youth participants have an interest in politics or how social systems work?			I	
Do youth participants exhibit knowledge about politics or how social systems work?			I, D, O	
Do youth participants have a general sense of trust?			I, O	
Do youth participants trust institutions such as school, government, law enforcement, and the media?			I	
Civic and Social Action Involvement				
Are youth participants involved in community work or volunteerism?			I	

	Org	Prog	Youth	Ext
Are youth participants engaged in advocacy work?			I	
Are youth engaged in mobilization efforts?			I	
Program Features & Elements				
What are the essential features of a well-running OST program?		I, D		
Are there clear goals, objectives and outcomes?		D		
[See next question for more detail]				
How are out-of-school-time programs with a youth engagement orientation designed, implemented and held accountable?	**Org**	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Initiation				
Who initiated the program?		I, D		
How long has it existed?		I, D		
What are the goals and outcomes and how are they determined?		I, D		
Who are all the people involved in the program and what are their roles?		I, D		
Who designs the curriculum and core activities of the program?		I, D		
Program Mechanics				
How structured or unstructured is the program?		D, O		
What is the pacing of the program?		D, O		
How long does it take place? — duration		I, D		
What days does it meet? – frequency		I, D		
How many hours are each session? Intensity		I, D		
Learning Strategies				
What sorts of pedagogical strategies are used?		I, D, O		
To what extent are the elements of community and social justice youth development incorporated into program activities?		I, D, O		
Is there space for flexibility and adaptation?		D, O		
Infrastructure				
How much space is required? Is the space adequate?		O		
What materials are required? Are they adequate?		D, O		
What additional administrate or infrastructure supports are needed?		I, D, O		
How is the program financially sustained?		I, D		
	Org	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Staffing				
Who conducts the program?		I, D		
What are their qualifications, experience and educational background?		I, D		
How much are they compensated?	I, D	I, D		
Do they have access to professional development?	I, D	I		
What role does leadership play?				
What are their qualifications, experiences and educational background?	I, D	I,D		
Does the leader bring social capital to the program?	I, D	I,D		
Participants & Recruitment				
How are participants recruited?		I, D		
Is there an intake, assessment or base skill level required of participants?		I, D		
What are the demographics of participants?		I, D		

253

	Org	Prog	Youth	Ext
Interactions / Climate				
To what extent are participants involved in program decisions?		I	I, O	
What are the interactions between youth and adults like?		I	I, O	
What are the interactions between youth in the program like?			I, O	
Does the program environment feel welcoming?			I, O	
What sorts of relationship building strategies are used?		I	O	
Are there tensions and / or conflicts? If so, how are they resolved?		I	I, O	
Evaluation and Assessment				
How is the program assessed or evaluated and is it tied to program goals?		I, D		
Who is involved in providing feedback?		I, D		
How is feedback incorporated into the program?		I, D		
External Connections				
How are parents or participant's families involved in the program?	I	I		
What is the nature of communications and interactions with parents and families?	I	I		
Do participants engage their friends or peers in the program? If so, who		I	I	
Are other community / neighborhood groups, organizations or members involved?	I, D	I, D		
What interactions exist between the formal institutions (i.e. school, police, city)?	I, D	I, D		
General Overview				
Overall what are the programs strengths? How about weaknesses?		I	I	I
What current opportunities available to the program? How about challenges?		I	I	
How do participants in out-of-school-time programs with a youth engagement orientation perceive the program, their involvement in it and its affects on their personal development?	**Org**	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Recruitment				
How did participants hear about the program?				I
How did they feel when they first connected with the program?				I
Motivation				
Why did participants want to get involved with the program?				I
What keeps them involved?				I
	Org	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Access & Engagement				
How long have they been involved in the program?			I, D	
How often do they attend the program?			I, D	
How do they get to the program? Is it easy to get to?				I
Climate / Interactions				
What do they think about the space in which the program occurs?				I
Do participants feel physically safe? Psychologically safe?			I, O	
Do participants feel comfortable and at ease?			I, O	
How do they feel about programs staff? What about non-program staff?			I, O	
Do they trust adults in the program? What about other youth?			I, O	
To what extent do participants feel respected?				I

254

	Org	Prog	Youth	Ext
Program Mechanics				
Does the program give them adequate opportunities for voice and expression?			I, D	
Are program activities interesting and challenging?			I, D	
Does the program give them opportunities to connect to new people and opportunities?			I, D	
Does the program allow them to be involved in meaningful activities?			I, D	
Do what extent does the program connect them to community resources, leaders and institutions?			I, D	
Leadership Opportunities				
To what extent do they feel they have control within the program?			I	
Do participants feel they are the key decision-makers in the program?			I	
Do they feel that they are given responsibility?			I	
Do they feel like the program is able to change and adapt to meet their needs?			I	
Family & Friend Support				
What do parents and family think about youth involvement?				I
What are overall interactions between youth and their parents / family?			I	
What do friends think about youth involvement?				I
Personal Development				
What skills have participants learned during the program?		I, D	I, D	
Have they developed new awareness about themselves? Others? The community? The world in general?			I, D	
How have they grown as a person?			I, D	
Do they feel better able to affect change? If so, what type of change?			I, D	
What are the lessons learned?			I, D	
General				
Overall what are the program's strengths? How about weaknesses?	I	I	I	
How do they see their future development possibilities?			I	
What is the role or impact of organizational norms and structures on youth engagement out-of-school-time program goals, objectives and outcomes?	**Org**	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Organizational mission				
What is the organization's mission?	D			
How does the organization's mission reveal itself within OST program goals, objectives and outcomes?		D		
Is the mission articulated and understood by staff, board, program participants and key stakeholder?		I		
Organizational values				
What are the key values articulated within formal documents?	D			
What do staff, board, program participants and key stakeholders say are the organization's values?	D			
Are the organization's values evident within OST program materials, activities, etc?		D		
Structure of organization				

	Org	Prog	Youth	Ext
What does the organizational chart look like?	D			
Where is the OST program situated within the organization?	D			
What do decision and governance structures look like?	I, D			
Interpersonal interactions				
How does staff treat one another? Is there tension or teamwork?	O			
What sort of language does staff use to talk about their work?	O	I		
What sorts of power dynamics exist?	O			
What are the relationships between board and staff?	O			
Accountability structure				
Who is responsible for what?	I, D			
Who is accountable to whom?	I, D			
Are there formal written evaluations of staff and programs?	D			
Is there a strategic plan in place? If so, how is its success measured?	D			
What is the board's role in oversight and accountability?	D			
Funding resources / mechanism				
What is the revenue mix or concentration of the organization?	D			
Who are the funders?	D			
What type of funding (i.e. grants, fee-for-service, contracts) does the organization have?	D			
What percentage of the operational budget is dedicated to programs?	D			
What percentage of the operational budget is dedicated to the OST program?	D			
What are the sizes of current grants?	D			
How long has the organization had funding for each of its current funders?	D			
How would they rate the relationships with individuals linked to their funding sources?	I			
How do larger social norms and structural circumstances influence organizations and the youth engagement out-of-school-time programs they offer?	**Org**	**Prog**	**Youth**	**Ext**
Funder interactions				
How do the key funders interact with the organization?	I			
What formal reporting and oversight mechanisms do they have for programs they fund?	D			
Does staff (leadership and program) have regular communications and interactions with funders?	I, D			
How do funders see their role vis-à-vis the organization and its program?	I			I
How does staff view their relationship to funders?		I		
Political culture & government interactions				
What is the organization's relationship with the municipality and key departments?	I			
Does the organization have formal or informal mechanisms for meeting and / or reporting to key political institutions including the Mayor's office, public schools, police department, other key city departments, state departments / agencies (i.e. DCF, DESE), federal agencies and quasi public entities?	I,D			

What initiatives or policies exist or in the works that may affect the organization or its OST programs?				D
Does the organization engage in advocacy work?	I, D			

Social values and orientations towards youth

How are youth viewed in the mainstream culture?				D
How do key institutions (i.e. schools, law enforcement) talk about and report out on youth?				D
What are the views that key community leaders have about youth?				I,D
What sort of research and reports are being distributed in which youth are prominently feature?				D

Institutional Interactions

How other key institutions affect the organization and its programs such as workforce development, nonprofit professional groups, industry groups?	I			D
Does the organization or the OST program partner with other organizations or groups?	I,D			
Does the organization partner with parent organizations, church groups, volunteer groups or informal organizations?	I,D			

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH VARIABLES

DEPENDENT			
Individual	Political Efficacy	categorical 0 = neutral 1 = positive political efficacy 2 = negative political efficacy	Using basic political efficacy scales found in: Dyck, 2009 Morrell, 2005
INDEPENDENT			
Program	Features and Elements	Starting from OST literature will expand using grounded theory approaches – main areas: Program initiation Program mechanics Learning strategies Infrastructure supports Staffing Participants & recruitment Interactions / climate Evaluation & assessment External connections	Concepts found in: Royce, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 Hammond, & Reimer, 2006 Saito, 2006 Arbreton et al., 2005 Birmingham et al., 2005 Huebner and Mancini, 2003
Individual	Youth Involvement	Starting from OST literature will expand using grounded theory approaches – main areas: Recruitment Motivation Access & engagement Climate / interactions Program mechanics Leadership opportunities Family & friend support Personal development	Concepts found in: Royce, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 Hammond, & Reimer, 2006 Saito, 2006 Arbreton et al., 2005 Birmingham et al., 2005 Huebner and Mancini, 2003
Organization	Norms and Structures	Starting from OST and NPO literature will expand using grounded theory approaches – main areas: Program initiation Program mechanics Learning strategies Infrastructure supports Staffing Participants & recruitment	Concepts found in: Royce, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 Hammond, & Reimer, 2006 Saito, 2006 Arbreton et al., 2005

		Interactions / climate Evaluation & assessment External connections	Birmingham et al., 2005 Huebner and Mancini, 2003
CONTROL			
Program	Youth Development Model	categorical 0 = social 0 = no model 1 = social 2 = positive 3 = community 4= social justice	Scales found in: Michelsen et al, 2002 Gainwright & James, 2002 Gainwright & Cammorata, 2002 Kahne et al, 2006
Program	Program Type	categorical 0 = child care 1 = youth development	Based on concepts found in: Riggs & Greenberg, 2004
Program	Program Location	Categorical 0 = school-based 1 = community based	Based on concepts found in: Riggs & Greenberg, 2004
Individual	Age	continuous years	Parker & Bauknight, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 CIRCLE, 2008b Riggs & Greenberg, 2004
Individual	Gender	categorical 0 = male 1 = female 2 = other	Parker & Bauknight, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 CIRCLE, 2008 Riggs & Greenberg, 2004 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Race / Ethnicity	categorical 0 = White non-Hispanic 1= Black non Hispanic 2 = Hispanic / Latino 3 = Asian 4 = Native American / Pacific Islander 5 = more than one race 6 = other	Parker & Bauknight, 2009 Arbreton et al., 2008 Watts & Flanagan, 2007 CIRCLE, 2008 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	First Language	categorical 0 = English	MA Department of ESE, 2010

259

		1 = Spanish 2 = other language	Pancer et al., 2007
Individual	English Proficiency	categorical 0 = proficient in English 1 = LEP	MA Department of ESE, 2010 Rublin et al., 2004
Individual	Educational Level	categorical 0 = high school graduate 1 = grade 7 2 = grade 8 3 = grade 9 3 = grade 10 4 = grade 11 5 = grade 12 6 = no-grade / in school7 = not in school	Arbreton et al, 2008 Watts & Flanagan, 2007 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Educational Achievement	Categorical 0 = Mostly below Ds 1= Mostly Ds 2 = Half Ds and half Cs 3 = Mostly Cs 4 = Half Cs and Half Bs 5 = Mostly Bs 6 = Half Bs and Half As 7 = Mostly As 8 = Other	Arbreton et al, 2008 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Employment Status	categorical 0 = part time 1 = full time 2 = no employment	CIRCLE, 2008 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Community Involvement	categorical 0 = not involved 1 = political activities 2 = community activities 3 = passive involvement 4 = helping activities	Concepts found in: Pancer et al, 2007 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Household Income	continuous dollars	Arbreton et al, 2008 Watts & Flanagan, 2007 CIRCLE, 2008 Riggs & Greenberg, 2004
Individual	Family Education	categorical 0 = some high school 1 = high school graduate 2 = some college 3 = Associate or Trade degree 4 = Bachelor degree 5 = Graduate or Professional degree 6 = other	Pancer et al, 2007 Watts & Flanagan, 2007 Riggs & Greenberg, 2004 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Family Structure	categorical 0 = 2-parent	Arbreton et al, 2008

		1 = single –parent 2 = extended 3 = other	Watts & Flanagan, 2007 Huebner & Mancini, 2003
Individual	Language Spoken in Home	categorical 0 = English mainly 1 = Spanish mainly 3 = another language 4 = English & another language	MA Department of ESE, 2010
Individual	Family Foreign-born	categorical 0 = both parents / guardians native born 1 = one parent / guardian native born 2 = both parents / guardians native born	MA Department of ESE, 2010 Pancer et al, 2007
Individual	Family Ideology	categorical 0 = democrat / liberal 1= republican / conservative 2 = libertarian 3 = independent 4 = other 5 = no affiliation	Dyck, 2009 CIRCLE, 2008
Individual	Religion	categorical 0 = Protestant 1 = Catholic 2 = Jewish 3 = Islamic 4 = Buddhist 5 = Hindu 6 = Agnostic 7 = Atheist / none 8 = Other	CIRCLE, 2008 Pedersen, 2005
Organization	Size	categorical 0 = $25K or less 1 = >$25K to <= $100K 2 = > $100K to <= $500K 3 = >$500K to <=$1M 4 = >$1M	Macindoe & Barman, 2009 Keating et al, 2008 Guo and Acer, 2005 Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld,1998
Organization	Age	categorical 0 = under 10 years 1= 10 to 20 years 2 = over 20 years	Macindoe & Barman, 2009 Keating et al, 2008 Guo and Acer, 2005 Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld,1998
Organization	Sector	categorical 0 = arts, culture & humanities 1 = education, higher 2 = education 3 = hospitals 4 = environment 5 = health 6 = human service 7 = public & societal benefit	Macindoe & Barman, 2009 Keating et al, 2008 Guo and Acer, 2005 Galaskiewicz and Bielefeld,1998

		8 = religion 9 = other	
Organization	Type	<u>categorical</u> 0 = not a nonprofit 1 = nonprofit	Riggs & Greenberg, 2004
Community	Social Construction of Youth Population	<u>Categorical</u> 0 = negative / weak 1= negative / strong 2 = positive / weak 3 = positive / strong	Examples found in: Ingram, Schneider & DeLeon, 2007 Additional concepts in: Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007
Community	Geographic Type	<u>categorical</u> 0 = rural 1 = suburban 3 = urban	Based on concepts found in: Gainwright & James, 2002 Gainwright & Cammorata, 2002 US census designation based on population size

APPENDIX C

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS OFFERED AT SELECT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Program
Non-Youth Oriented	
Castle Square Tenants Organization*	Gearing up for Independence – SAT Prep Music and Video Production for Teens Teen Center**
Friends of Beardsley Park*	Drop-In Youth Sports Nights Volunteer in the Park Youth Park Stewards** Theater in the Park
Vietnamese American Civic Association	Summer Worksmart Program VACA 'S Youth Development Program
Commonwealth Tenants Association	Mentoring Program Teen Program CTA After-School Program Summer Program
Youth Activity	
South End Athletics & Activities	Youth Baseball and Softball
East Boston Youth Hockey Association	East Boston Youth Hockey Association
Greater Boston Hockey League	Greater Boston Youth Hockey League, Inc
Salesian Boys & Girls Club	Orient Heights Unit Park Street Unit
Youth Empowerment	
MissionSAFE	MissionSAFE Boston Rocks with MissionSAFE
LEAP Self-Defense	Girls' LEAP Self-Defense Girls' LEAP Self-Defense Girls' LEAP Self-Defense
Boston Urban Youth Foundation	Boston Urban Youth Foundation
Montserrat Aspirers	Montserrat Aspirers
Dorchester Youth Hockey	Dorchester Youth Hockey
Greenwood-Shalom Outreach	Greenwood Shalom After-School and Summer Enrichment Programs
Boston Police Athletic League	Boston Police Athletic League
Parkway Youth Hockey	Parkway Youth Hockey, Inc.
Sportsman Tennis Club	Challenger Tennis Tournament Training Camp USA Half Day Summer Camp

263

	USA Tennis-Saturday
	Math*Stars
	USA Tennis
	Optimum Training Academy
	Holiday and Vacation Camp
	Team Excellence
	USA Full Day Summer Camp
	Challenger Prep
Partnership for Youth with Disabilities	Making Healthy Connections
	Mentor Match
	Access to Theater
	Young Entrepreneurs Project
	Peer Leadership
Youth Engagement	
Centro Cultural Latino*	Enrichment After-School Program
	Community Organizers**
	Make It Possible
	Culture Alive
	Summer Program
	Health Educators
	Music Jam
	Career Pathways – Health
Reflect & Strengthen	Whtat's the 411? Political Education
	Street Theater
	Girls Rap
Sesame Street Institute*	Youth Lead**

NOTE: Programs with two asterisks (**) are the proposed individual programs to included in case analysis. Organizations in the study and their programs have had their names modified to pseudonyms.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Based on the questions in Appendix A, these four interview protocols were used to guide the semi-structured interviews with all participants in the study. Formal consent and assent for minors was obtained as approved the UMass Boston's IRB. Consent for audio recording was also obtained.

Organizational Leader

You *(10 minutes)*
When did you first get involved in ORG?
What did you do before then?
Get to the "life story" here.

Program and Participants *(15 minutes)*
What is the story of the PROGRAM?
How did it start?
Who was involved (now and then)?
What are the goals and outcomes you are seeking?
How would you describe the variety of ways in which the participants interact and learn from the program?
What have been high and low moments?
What does the future look like?

Staff *(10 minutes)*
I'd like to know about staffing for PROGRAM. What are the various roles and responsibilities? What do you look for in terms of skills and background? How would you describe the interactions amongst staff (within and between programs)? How do you see yourself vis-à-vis the program?

Resources / Funding / Sustainability *(10 minutes)*
In addition to staffing, what are the other resources needed for the program? What are your strategies for sustaining the program?

External Relationships *(10 minutes)*
I'm also interested in the various stakeholders, such as funders, parents, city officials, institutions, and other community groups and how they involved with the ORG and PROGRAM. Can you tell me a bit about these? What are the challenges and opportunities?

Other *(5 minutes)*

Do you have anything else you'd like to offer?

Program Staff

You (*10 minutes*)
When did you first get involved in ORG?
What did you do before then?
Get to the "life story" here.

Program (*15 minutes*)
What is the story of the PROGRAM?
How did it start?
Who was involved (now and then)?
How is the program structured?
What are the goals and outcomes you are seeking?
Are there specific learning strategies you use?
How do you handle evaluation and assessment?
What have been high and low moments?
What does the future look like?

Participants (*10 minutes*)
Can you describe the general demographics of the participants?
How do participants find out about the program and get involved?
If I were to be a fly on the wall during a type day in the program, what would I observe?
How would you describe the roles that teens play in the program?

Staff (*10 minutes*)
What is your role in the program and in the larger organization? What are the things going well in your job and what are some of the challenges? How would you describe the interactions amongst staff in general? How about between staff and participants?

External Relationships (*5 minutes*)
I'm also interested in the various stakeholders, such as funders, parents, city officials, institutions, and other community groups and how they involved with the ORG and PROGRAM. Can you tell me a bit about these? What are the challenges and opportunities?

Other (*5 minutes)*
Do you have anything else you'd like to offer?

Youth Participant

Engagement with the Organization

How did you first get involved with PROG? How long have you been here? How do you get here? What made you want to become involved? What were your first impressions of the organization? How have these initial impressions change? Have you been involved with a nonprofit before or done any community work before or have you volunteered for things?

Program Mechanics
Can you tell me a bit about what you do as part of the PROG? OR How would you describe the program to other people? What do you think is the best thing about the program? How does the work get done?

Interactions with Others
Can you describe what it is like working with the other team members (good, bad, indifferent)? How about working with your direct supervisor? How about the other staff in the organization? Can you give an example of an ideal interaction? How about a not so ideal one?

Lessons Learned
What are some of the things you've learned from this experience? In thinking about your time at ORG, what do you think are the big lessons that will stay with you for a long time? Where the any "ah hah" moments that come to mind? Can you take a moment and think about yourself prior to this program – how are you different or how have you changed?

Civic and Political Engagement
Shifting away from the program for a moment, what do you think is the most important issue facing you as a young person? What would you do to start working towards addressing this issue? Do you think this program has helped you gain any skills or insights in being effective in addressing such an issue? If so, what?

Future Vision
Where do you see yourself in five years? 10 years? 25 years? So if you were writing a memoir of your life, what would you say about your time at ORG?

Key Informant Questions

Can you tell me a bit how you came to be involved in XYZ? What is your current role in your organization and how is your research factoring in?

What do you see as the challenges facing organizations like XYZ?

Can you tell me a bit about XYZ?

What are the most common challenges facing organizations you've been working with? What are some of the really positive and successful strategies being used?

How are organizations funding their OST activities? What about the human resources and skills needed to run such programs — where are they at?

What sorts of trends do you see in terms of program design around social justice, community organizing and change? Training methods? Youth development models? Evaluation and assessment?

If you were evaluating whether or not an organization was doing youth work that promoted political engagement, community organizing and social change, how would you know if they were doing this work?

Are there important insights you'd like to share that aren't covered by the questions above.

Name	Sources	Ref.
External	12	16
Faith Community	3	3
Family	21	43
Friends	15	24
Funder	8	16
Local government	6	11
Neighborhood	21	49
Other Community Orgs	21	51
Schools	22	62
Interactions	2	5
Org-Prog and External	7	16
Program and Org	18	25
Program and Youth	35	209
Youth and External	23	64
Youth and Org	25	44
Organization	55	435
Financial Resources	9	14
Norms-Culture	34	153
Collaborative	15	26
Mission	9	9
Power dynamics	31	74
Values	27	76
Site Name	0	0
CCL	35	239
DERC	45	234
FBP	47	187
SSI	53	211
Structure	13	37
Program	74	234
Design feature	17	32
Adult support	35	162
Connects to community	28	100
Critical reflection	21	49
Decision-making - leadership opportunities	23	95
Focus - Intenral or External	26	66
Learning Strategy	34	120
Opportunity Provision - 2	20	54
Peer support	23	88
Power made visible	17	48
Real world experience	32	101
Responsive and open - 2	26	58
Youth challenged	31	110
Youth held accountable	27	65
Youth identity supported	31	110

	Youth ownership	23	86
Evaluation		8	19
Goals-Objectives		16	40
Implementation		4	6
	Climate	35	243
	Infrastructure	10	11
	Initiation	5	8
	Recruitment	23	51
	Staffing	36	187
Outcomes		30	69
YouthDevModel		5	6
Youth Participant		38	203
Internal Processes		26	85
Invovlement-Engagment		16	47
	Access	17	33
	Motivation	28	136
Perception Program		2	2
	Effective	15	36
Personal Dev		4	6
	Aspirational - 2	8	13
	Behavior	24	70
	Cognitive	27	82
	Emotion-Affective	33	198
	Evlauative-Judgement	25	86
	Increased agency - 2	20	77
	Skills	34	150
PolEngageAttitude		2	2
	Civic Involvement	3	3
	Advocacy	17	25
	Mobilization	19	39
	Volunteer	16	37
	IntPolEff	1	1
	Change Attitude	20	71
	Political Interest	12	18
	Political Knowledge	16	32
	Youth Voice Expression	28	109
	Generalized Trust	16	34
	Institutional Trust	19	43
	News - 2	13	25
Role		10	20

Note: Those codes with a "-2" emerged during the coding process and were added.

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

Centro Cultural Latino				
Name	**Karen**	**Hector**	**Javier**	**Natalie**
Interview Type	Group	Group	Group	Group
Org				
Name	CCL	CCL	CCL	CCL
Length at Org	2 yrs	1 yr	<1yr	6 yrs
Demographics				
Gender	F	M	M	F
Age (in yrs)	17	16	15	16
Race / Ethnicity	Bi-Racial	Latino	Latino	Latina
Schools				
Name	Urban Science Academy	Boston Comm. Leadership	Boston Comm. Leadership	Excel High School
School Type	Regular	Pilot	Pilot	Regular
School Quality*	medium	medium high	medium high	medium
Grade	12	10	10	11
Neighborhood				
Name	Dorchester	Mission Park	Mission Park	Mission Hill
Neighborhood SES**	Low	Moderate / High	Moderate / High	Moderate
Family				
NonEngHome	Y	Y	Y	Y
Foreign Born Parent	Y	Y - Dominican	Y - Dominican	Y - Dominican
Family SES	Low / Moderate	Low / Moderate	Low / Moderate	Low / Moderate
Castle Square Tenants Organization				
Name	**Ben**	**Melinda**	**Stephanie**	**BD**
Interview Type	Indiv.	Indiv.	Indiv.	Indiv.
Org				
Name	DERC	DERC	DERC	DERC
Length at Org	8 yrs	2 yrs	< 1 yr	3 yrs
Demographics				
Gender	M	F	F	M
Age (in yrs)	16	14	15	16
Race / Ethnicity	Asian	Asian	Latina	Afr. American
Schools				
Name	Josia Quincy	Boston Latin	Josia Quincy	Josia Quincy
School Type	Pilot	Exam	Pilot	Pilot
School Quality*	medium	high	medium	medium
Grade	11	10	10	12
Neighborhood				
Name	South End	South End	West End	Copley
Neighborhood SES**	Low / Moderate	Low / Moderate	High	High
Family				
NonEngHome	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Foreign Born Parent	Y – Chinese	Y	Y	N

Friends of Beardsley Park

Name	Eva	Taylor	JD	Jae
Interview Type	Indiv.	Indiv.	Indiv.	Indiv.
Org				
Name	FBP	FBP	FBP	FBP
Length at Org	< 1yr	< 1yr	3 yrs	1 yr
Demographics				
Gender	F	F	M	M
Age (in yrs)	15	16	16	18
Race / Ethnicity	Latina	White	Latino	Afr. American
Schools				
Name	Frederick Middle	Boston Latin Academy	Madison Park	Dorchester High
School Type	Pilot	Exam	Voc	Regular
School Quality*	N/A	high	low	medium
Grade	9	11	11	Graduated
Neighborhood				
Name	JP	Dorchester /JP	East Boston	Fields Corner
Neighborhood SES**	Mod. / high	Low / Moderate	Moderate	Low
Family				
NonEngHome	Spanish?	N/A unlikely	Spanish	N/A unlikely
Foreign Born Parent	n/a		Carribbean?	
Family SES	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
Family SES	Low / Moderate?	Low / Moderate	Moderate	Low / Mod.

Sesame Street Institute

Name	Simone
Interview Type	Indiv.
Org	
Name	SSI
Length at Org	3 yrs
Demographics	
Gender	F
Age (in yrs)	17
Race / Ethnicity	African American
Schools	
Name	Boston Latin
School Type	Exam
School Quality*	high
Grade	12
Neighborhood	
Name	Mattapan
Neighborhood SES**	Moderate
Family	
NonEngHome	Y
Foreign Born Guardian	Y - Parents Haitian
Family SES	n/a

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CENSUS TRACTS

		Castle Square Tenants Org.	Friends of Beardsley Park	Sesame Street Institute	Centro Cultural Latino
Census Tract		704.02	813	913	809
Total Pop*		1723	4760	2499	4008
Race / Ethnicity					
	White*	8.9	19.7	12.6	68.6
	Black*	13.9	49.4	37.1	9
	Asian*	70.9	0.9	3.3	16.5
	Hispanic*	9.2	47.5	21.3	7.8
Median Age*		46.4	34.7	29.3	23.3
% less than 18 years*		21.2	26.3	28.4	5.1
	Males*	24.4	28.1	31.6	4.6
	Females*	18.6	24.7	25.4	5.8
% Foreign Born		62.9	34.5	31.1	30.2
	Asia	80.6	14.4	10.9	62
	Africa		14.4	69.3	
	Latin America	12.3	69.5	19.8	8.5
	Europe				29.5
% Non-English in Home		78.8	60	68.7	30.4
Education					
	% HS or less	43.8	56.7	60.8	91.3
	% BA or less	7.9	9.5	10.3	57.9
% Unemployed		23.8	17.8	17.7	6.5
% Families below Poverty		39.1	38.1	29.7	4.9
Median Household Income		$16,638	$16,835	$30,467	$67,768
Median Gross Rent		$557	$409	$1,215	$1,523
Ave Value Owner Occupied House		N/A	$413,800	$444,400	$595,900
% Rent*		99.5	90	27.3	91.5
% Own*		0.5	10	72.7	8.5
Ave Household Size*		2.44	2.31	3.16	2.37
Ave Family Size*		3.19	3.22	3.67	2.77

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Those with an asterisk (*) are from the 2010 U.S. Census. All others are from the 2006-2010 ACS 5-year estimates.

APPENDIX H

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL MATRIX

	Centro Cultural Latino	Castle Square Tenants Organization	Friends of Beardsley Park	Sesame Street Institute
Neighborhood				
Type	Young Prof.	Gentrifying	Low Income	Working Families
Race/Ethnicity	White	Asian	Latino	African American
Org Structure	Formal – Est.	Formal – Dev.	Team	Team
Leader Experience	Established	Established	Established	Developing
Leader Expertise	Youth	Housing	Environment	Comm. & Youth
Board Type	Institutional	Constituent	Constituent	Hybrid
Staff Experience	Education	Community	Community	Hybrid
Programs				
Education	yes	yes	no	Yes
Employment	yes	yes	yes	Yes
Enrichment	yes	yes	no	No
Constituents	Youth (10 to 21)	Housing Residents & Neighbors	Park Users & Neighbors	Youth (13 and up)
Revenue Mix	Diversified	Diversified	Single	Single
Financial Status	Growing	Growing	Steady	Declining

APPENDIX I

CROSS-PROGRAM MATRIX

	Centro Cultural Latino: Community Organizers	Castle Square Tenants Organization: Teen Center	Friends of Beardsley Park: Youth Park Stewards	Sesame Street Institute: Youth Lead
Program Type	Youth Development	Drop-in / Enrichment	Workforce	Youth Development
Program Space				
Private	yes	yes	no	mixed
Youth only	yes	no	no	yes
Program only	no	no	no	no
Adequate	no	no	mostly	yes
Theory of Change	formal model - individual success	no	no	formal model - community change
Staffing				
Number	3 FT / 2 PT (includes teen leaders)	2 FT / 3 PT	3FT / 2PT	4FT / 14PT (includes teen leaders)
Autonomy	yes	yes	yes	yes
Qualified	yes	mixed	mixed	yes
Low youth:adult	mixed	yes	yes	no
Prof. Development	yes	limited; self directed	yes	yes
Compensated well	no	no	yes	no
Low Turnover	yes	mixed	yes	yes
Participants				
Number	26	17	18	72
Recruitment	word-of-mouth; walk-in; friends; door knocking, community events	word-of-mouth; walk-in; friends; BYF applicants	BYF applicants; membership	word-of-mouth; partner organizations
Motivation	paid job / individual and community improvement	primarily self-motivated	paid job	paid job / social justice or leadership interest
Role(s)	multiple	multiple	worker; park advocate	learner & leader
Outcomes				
improve exec. func	yes	yes	yes	perquisite for program
skill-building	yes	yes	yes	yes
critical-thinking	yes	no	no	yes

275

Program Mechanics

Type	structured	fluidly-structured	structured	structured
Formal curriculum	no	no	yes	yes
Clear goals	yes	developing	yes	yes
Schedule	yes	yes	yes	yes
Organized	yes	yes	yes	yes
Continuous eval	yes	no	no	yes
Perceived well run	yes	not by all parents	yes by most participants	yes

Learning Strategies

Responsive	no	yes	no	yes
Flexible	mixed	yes	no	mixed
Developmentally appropriate	yes	yes	yes	yes
Facilitative questioning	unknown	no	no	yes
Youth Voice	yes	yes	yes	yes
Group reflection	unknown	no	yes	yes
Time for socialization	yes, want more	yes	yes	yes
Opp. for collab.	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ownership	yes	yes	some	yes

Engaging

Variety of activities	yes	yes	somewhat	yes
New experiences	yes	yes	yes	yes
Real world app.	yes	yes	yes	yes

Interactions

Peers	family feel; friendly	family feel; friendly	team mates; friendly	peers; friendly
Adults	supervisors; family feel; Mentor / Guide	family feel; Mentor/ Guide	supervisors; some tension with crew leaders	facilitators, supporters, guides
Families	families included in some activities - viewed as part of constituents served	minimal contact	minimal contact	minimal contact
Others	working with many other youth orgs and private employers for internships	collaborative w/ high school & tech college	interaction with park users and surrounding community	working with youth organizing groups & community orgs as sites for internships

SECOND PHASE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

A second phase of research is proposed that would build on the general insights from this research in a manner that would improve their generalizability across multiple OST program environments.

Research Question:
Do certain OST program features yield stronger political engagement attitudes among youth aged 14 to 18 than others?

Population:
Youth aged 14-18 attending Boston Public Schools (or a similarly situated urban school district)

Sample:
Randomized selection of 1000 teens – 500 participating in OST programs and 500 not engaged in any OST programming (including sports, extracurricular clubs, etc.)

Sample Survey Questions

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

Program Involvement

1. In the last 12 months have you been involved in any type of program that could be considered out-of-school time? This would include extracurricular clubs, sports or athletics, programming at a community organization, summer programs, and other similar endeavors.

    ___ Yes   ____ No [IF No, SKIP to #23]

2. When did you participate in out-of-school time programming? (check all that apply)

    _____ During School Year
    _____ Summer
    _____ Before School
    _____Afterschool
    _____ Weekends

3. In the last 12 months how many types of out-of-school time activities were you involved in?

___1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5 _____ More than 5

4. How many weeks in the last 52 weeks were you involved in out-of-school time programs?

    ___ 1-4 ___5-8 ___ 9-12 ____13-26 ___ 27-38 __39-52

5. During a typical week, how many hours would you spend in out-of-school time programming?

    ___ 1-2 ____ 3-5 ___ 6-10 __10-20 ____ over 20 hours

6. Where did you participate in out-of-school time programming? (check all that apply)

    ____ school property
    ____ community-based organization (e.g. nonprofit, house of worship)
    ____ government office or agency (local, state or federal)
    ____ for-profit business
    ____ other _____

7. What type of out-of-school type activities were you involved in? (check all that apply)

    ____ Leadership
    ____ Arts and culture
    ____ Academic / educational
    ____ Sports and recreation
    ____ Civic engagement / community service
    ____ Career / job skills
    ____ Media and technology
    ____ Mentoring
    ____ Environmental
    ____ Social justice / organizing
    ____ Faith-based
    ____ Social / drop-in
    ____ Other _____

OST Program Features

Thinking about the out-of-school time activity you felt the most involved in, indicate how strongly you agree or disagree. (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

278

8. The program really felt like it understood teens and what they wanted.
9. I feel like program staff and other adults in the program cared about me and what I thought in a manner that seemed true.
10. It seemed like the staff and other adults in the program understood my life because they had similar experiences.
11. The program was very good at listening to what teens wanted and made changes to meet our needs
12. I felt like there was always a way for me to be involved and there were different types of activities
13. The program emphasized learning.
14. The program offered new experiences that were fun and challenging.
15. The program offered some amazing, life changing experiences.
16. Communication and discussion were important aspects of the program.
17. The program constantly challenged me and gave me the necessary supports to succeed.
18. I was able to take on responsible roles within the program.
19. I was able to contribute my skills and knowledge to make the community better.
20. I had opportunities to lead others.
21. The program was very close to where I lived or went to school.
22. I felt like the program's space belonged to me and I felt comfortable there.

INFLUENCES IN MY LIFE

23. I enjoy school.
24. I believe myself to be a good student.
25. I have trusting and supportive adults in my life.
26. I discuss issues in my community and the larger world that are important to me with my family and / or friends.
27. I have experience with volunteering and community service.
28. I am regularly involved in faith-based activities (e.g. church services, praying).

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

For each of the statements below, indicate how strongly you agree or disagree. (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

Internal Political Efficacy

29. I consider myself well-qualified to participate in community issues
30. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important community issues facing our city
31. I feel that I could do as good a job in making community decisions as most other people
32. I think that I am as well-informed about community issues as most people

External Political Efficacy

33.   People like me don't have any say about what the leaders in the community do.

34.   I don't think community leaders care much what people like me think

DEMOGRAPHICS

35.   What is your gender?

__ Female
__ Male
__ Other
__ I'd prefer not to say

36.   What is your ethnicity?

__Hispanic
__Non-Hispanic
__ I'd prefer not to say

37.   What is your race?

__American Indian / Alaskan Native
__Asian or Asian American
__Pacific Islander / Native Hawaiin
__Black or African American
__White or Caucasian
__Latino
__ I'd prefer not to say

38.   Are you eligible for the free or reduced-priced lunch program?

__ Yes
__ No
__ I'd prefer not to say

39.   What is the highest level of education your parents or guardian have completed? (refer to the person with the most education).

__ Did not complete high school
__ High school graduate
__ Some college but no degree
__Associate's degree or trade school certificate

__Bachelor's degree
__Graduate degree (e.g. Masters, Doctorate, Law School)
__ I'd prefer not to say

40.   Is a language other than English spoken in your home?

__ Yes
__ No
__ I'd prefer not to say

41.   What zipcode is your school in?_____

42.   What zipcode for the place you live in most? _____

BIBLIOGRAPHY[32]

Arbreton, A., Bradshaw, M. Metz, R., & Sheldon J. (2008). More time for teens: Understanding teen participation—frequency, intensity and duration—in Boys & Girls Clubs**.** Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. Accessed on December 21, 2010 at: www.ppv.org/ppv/publication.asp?section_id=23&search_id=0&publication_id= 231

_____, Sheldon, J., and Herrera, C. (2005). Beyond safe havens: A synthesis of research on the Boys & Girls Clubs. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures. Accessed on December 21, 2010 at: www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/187_publication.pdf

ACS (2012). "2008-2012 ACS 5-Year Estimates." *United States Census Bureau*. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t

ACS (2011). "2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates." *United States Census Bureau*. Accessed on November 30, 2013 at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid =ACS_11_5YR_DP03&prodType=table

_____ (2011a). "Characteristics of teenagers 15 to 19 years old: 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates." *United States Census Bureau*. Accessed on November 30, 2013 at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid =ACS_11_5YR_S0902&prodType=table

Afterschool Alliance (2010). *America after 3pm: From big cities to small towns*. Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. Accessed on February 15, 2014 at: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM_Cities_Towns_10122010 .pdf.

American Human Development Project (2010). *Mapping the measure of America*. Accessed on December 2, 2010 at: http://www.measureofamerica.org/maps/.

---

[32] Resources marked with and asterisk (*) are not fully accessible since they have been given pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of research participants.

American Youth Policy Forum. (2006). *Helping youth succeed through out-of-school time programs*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.

Astin, A. W., Vogelgesang, L. J., Ikeda, E. K., & Yee, J. A. (2000). *How service learning affects students*. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute, University of California.

Auberbach, C. F, & Silverstein, L. B. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis*. New York: New York University Press.

Backus, D. (2011, June 22). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Baio, A. (2008). "Cheap, easy audio transcription with mechanical turk." (September 22). Accessed on October 27, 2012 at: http://waxy.org/2008/09/audio_transcription_with_mechanical_turk/.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* New York: Macmillan.

Barber, B. (1984). *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a NewAge*. Berkeley,CA: University of California Press.

BCYF (2013). "Boston centers for youth and families," City of Boston. Accessed on September 29, 2013 at: http://www.cityofboston.gov/images_documents/folder_FINAL_tcm3-35317.pdf.

Beaumont, E. (2011). "Promoting political agency, addressing political inequality: A multilevel model of internal political efficacy." *The Journal of Politics, 73*(1), 216-231.

BD. (2011, 9 30). Interview by FM Sullivan.

Ben. (2011, 8 17). Interview by FM Sullivan.

Berg Powers, C. L. (2011 12 29). Interview by FM Sullivan.

BEST Initiative (2012). *Youth Work Intensive Conference*. Accessed on October 27, 2012 at: http://www.youthworkcentral.org/best-initiative/youth-work-intensive.html

Birmingham, J., Pechman, E. M., Russell, C. A., & Mielke, M. (2005). *Shared features of high-performing after-school programs: A follow-up to the TASC evaluation.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates. Accessed on December 21, 2010 at: www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam107.html.

Bloustien, G. (2007). " 'Wigging people out': Youth music practice and mediated communities." *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *17*(6), 446-462. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://doi:10.1002/casp.938.

Bobek, D., Zaff, J., Li, Y. and Lerner, R. (2009). "Cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components of civic action: Towards an integrated measure of civic engagement." *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *30*(5): 615-627.

Boston Data Project (2006). *Boston Youth Survey 2006*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center. Accessed on December 12, 2010 at: http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hyvpc/files/Final_2006_BYS_Highlights_and_table s.pdf.

Boston Indicators Project (2010). *Education*. Boston, MA: The Boston Foundation. Accessed on December 18, 2010 at: http://www.bostonindicators.org/Indicators2008/Education/Default.aspx .

_____ (2010b). *Civic Vitality*. Boston, MA: The Boston Foundation. Accessed on December 18, 2010 at: http://www.bostonindicators.org/Indicators2008/CivicVitality/Default.aspx.

_____ (2010c). *Public Safety*. Boston, MA: The Boston Foundation. Accessed on December 18, 2010 at: http://www.bostonindicators.org/Indicators2008/PublicSafety/Default.aspx.

Boston Navigator (2010). *The Boston Navigator*. Accessed on January 10, 2010 at: http://www.bostonnavigator.org

Boston Youth Council (2004). *A Profile of Boston's Struggling Students and Disconnected Youth*. Boston, MA: Boston Private Industry Council. Accessed on December 12, 2010 at: http://www.bostonpic.com/files/resources/dropout_youth_profile.pdf

Boston Youth Environmental Network, (2013). *Organizational Website*. Accessed on July 28, 2013 at: http://environetwork.org/.

Boston Youth Fund, (2013). BYF website. Accessed on July 28, 2013 at: http://www.bostonyouthfund.org/faqs.asp#selection.

Boston Youth Survey (2006). *2006 Boston Youth Survey*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hyvpc/files/2012/10/Final_2006_BYS_Highlights_ and_tables.pdf.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). "Forms of capital" in J. C. Richards (Ed.) *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Burd-Sharps, S. and Lewis, K. (2012). *One in seven: Ranking youth disconnection in the 25 largest metro areas.* Brooklyn, NY: Measure of America. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.measureofamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/MOA-One_in_Seven09-14.pdf .

Campbell, A., Gurin, G. and Miller, W.E. (1954). "The voter decides," *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *296*(1): 171-172.

Carroll, D.A. and Stater, K.A. (2008). "Revenue Diversification in Nonprofit Organizations: Does it Lead to Financial Stability?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 9*:947–966.

Carver, P.R., and Iruka, I.U. (2006). *After-school programs and activities: 2005* (NCES 2006-076). Accessed December 21, 2010 from: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006076.pdf.

Castle Square Tenants Organization. (2011, 03 26). *About*. Retrieved from organizational website. Accessed on December 12, 2011 at: http://www.csto.org.

CBASS (2010). "After-school is part of the solution: Expand high-quality after-school and summer opportunities for high school students." Accessed on January 2, 2011 at: www.afterschoolsystems.org/files/2885_file_High_school_fact_sheet.pdf

Center for Labor Market Studies (2012). *Labor market trends in the Boston Metro/ North Region*. Boston, MA: Commonwealth Corporation.

Center for Labor Market Studies (2012b). *Employment rates of teens (16-19) in Massachusetts by race-ethnic group, 2012 (in %)*. Boston, MA: Commonwealth Corporation. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.northeastern.edu/clms/wp-content/uploads/Teen_E_P_Charts_ACS_2011_2012.docx

_____ (2004). *Demographic indicators for teens and young adults in Massachusetts*. Boston, MA: Commonwealth Corporation.

Centro Cultural Latino (2011). Organization Website. (*)

Chapman, T.L. (2008). "Unraveling the ties between civic institutions and attitudes toward political violence," *International Studies Quarterly*, *52*: 515–532.

CIRCLE (2013). *All together now: Collaboration and innovation for youth engagement* Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge. Medford, MA: Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement Accessed on November 30, 2013 from: www.civicyouth.org/about-circle/commission-on-youth-voting-civic-knowledge/

_____ (2012a). "Youth vote 2012," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/.

_____ (2012b). "#Youth truth: Young voters are diverse in many ways," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/youthtruth-young-voters-are-diverse-in-many-ways/

_____ (2012c) "State by state youth voter turnout in 2012," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on March 3, 2014 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/state-by-state-youth-voter-turnout-in-2012/

_____ (2010). "Young voters in the 2010 elections," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on December 30, 2010 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2010-Exit-Poll-Fact-Sheet.-corrected-Nov-10.pdf .

_____ (2008). "Trends by race, ethnicity, and gender," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on October 12, 2009 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/?page_id=235.

City of Boston (2014). "Youth participatory budgeting." Accessed on March 2, 2014 at: http://www.cityofboston.gov/youthzone/pb.asp.

Clarke, H., Sanders, D., Stewart, M. and Whitely, P. (2006). "Taking the bloom off new labour's rose: Party choice and voter turnout in Britain, 2005," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 16(1): 3–36.

Cohen, C. (2001). "Social capital, intervening institutions and political power." In S. Saegert, J. P. Thompson, & M.R. Warren (Eds.), *Social capital and poor communities,* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation: 267–289.

Cohen, C.J. and Dawson, M.C. (1993). "Neighborhood poverty and African American politics," *The American Political Science Review, 87*(2): 286-302.

Coleman, J.C. (1988). "Social capital in the creation of human capital." *American Journal of Sociology* *94*: S95-S120.

Collaborative Communications Group & C.S. Mott Foundation. (2006). *Statewide afterschool networks: Policies & practices*. Retrieved November 10, 2010 from:http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/about_national_network/dat/policies_and_practices_2005.pdf

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research, 3rd edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Craig, S.C., Niemi, R.G. and Silver, G.E. (1990). "Political efficacy and trust: A report on the NES pilot study items," *Political Behavior*, *12(*3): 289-314.

Curran, M. , (2007). "Internal and external efficacy during the 2000 and 2004 presidential debates: Tracking efficacy over time." *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the NCA 93rd Annual Convention, November 15, 2007 Chicago, IL* Retrieved November 10, 2010 from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p192119_index.html

Datta, M. (2010, 2 3). Interview by F,M. Sullivan.

Davidson, A., Schwarts, S.E.O., and Noam, G.G. (2008). "Creating youth leaders: community supports," *New Directions for Youth Development*, *120*: 127-136.

Delli Carpini, M.X. and Keeter, S.K. (1996). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dyck, J.J. and Lascher Jr., E.L. (2009). "Direct democracy and political efficacy reconsidered," *Political Behavior*, *31*:401-427.

Dzur, A. W. (2012). "Participatory democracy and criminal justice." *Criminal Law and Philosophy*, *6*(2), 115-129.

Eccles, J. S., and Gootman, J. A. (Eds.). (2002). Community programs to promote youth development: Committee on community-level programs for youth. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Edwards, K. (2009). "Disenfranchised not 'deficient': How the (neoliberal) state disenfranchises young people." *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 44*(1), 23-37.

Eikenberry, A.M. (2008). "Fundraising in the new philanthropy environment: The benefits and challenges of working with giving circles," *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, *19*(2): 141-152.

Eva. (2011, August 10). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Fahmy, E. (2006). *Young citizens: Young people's involvement with politics and decision making.* Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing.

Farrell, H. and Knight, J. (2003). "Trust, Institutions, and Institutional Change: Industrial Districts and the Social Capital Hypothesis," *Politics & Society*, 31(4): 537-566.

Fernandes, A.L. and Gabe, T. (2009). "Disconnected Youth: A Look at 16- to 24-Year Olds Who Are Not Working or In School," *Congressional Research Service*. Accessed on January 2, 2011 at: www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40535.pdf .

Finley, A, Wray-Lake, L. and Flanagan, C. (2010). "Civic engagement during the transition to adulthood: Developmental opportunities and social politics at a critical juncture," in *Handbook on research of civic engagement in youth,* L.R. Sherrod, J. Torney-Purta, and C. Flanagan (Eds.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.: 277-305

Fischer, R.L., Wilsker, A.L. and Young, D.R. (2007). "Exploring the revenue mix of nonprofit organizations - does it relate to publicness?" *Research Paper Series* Working Paper 07-32, Atlanta, GA: Andrew Young School of Policy Studies.

Flanagan, C. (2013). *Teenage citizens: The political theories of the young*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

_____, Levine, P. and Settersten, R. (2010). "Civic engagement and the changing transition to adulthood," Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on December 30, 2010 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/ChangingTransition.pdf.

_____ (2004). "Volunteerism, leadership, political socialization, and civic engagement," in *Handbook of adolescent psychology*, R.M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), Hoboken, NJ: Wiley: 721-746.

_____ (2003). "Developmental roots of political engagement." *PS: Political Science and Politics, 36* (2), 257-261. Reprinted as a Working Paper for the Network on Transitions to Adulthood Research Network in October 2006.

Flores, E. (2011, June 15). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Fox, J., Tarifa, T., & Machtmes, K. (2008). A qualitative examination of youth voice in the decision-making process within the 4-H youth development program: Promoting promising practices in overcoming barriers. *Journal of Youth Development, 3*(3).

Friends of Beardsley Park (2010). Strategic plan. (*)

Friends of Beardsley Park. (2011, 03 26). *About*. Retrieved from organizational website. (*)

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M.B. Ramos, trans.). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Froelich, K. A. (1999). Diversification of revenue strategies: Evolving resource dependence in nonprofit organizations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *28*(3): 246-268.

Frumkin, P. (2002). *On being nonprofit: A conceptual and policy primer*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fung, A. & Wright, E.O. (2001). "Deepening democracy: Innovations in empowered participatory governance," *Politics & Society*, I(1)1: 5-41.

Galaskiewicz, J. and Bielefeld, W. (1998). *Nonprofit organizations in an age of uncertainty*. New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Galston, W. (2001). "Political knowledge, political engagement and civic education," *Annual Review of Political Science, 4*:217-234.

Gardner, C. (personal communication, February 21, 2014).

Gardener, C. (2011, July 13). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Ginwright, S. and Cammarota, J. (2002). "New terrain in youth development:The promise of a social justice approach," *Social Justice 29*(4): 82-95.

_____ and James, T. (2002). "From assets to agents of change: Social justice, organizing, and youth development." *New Directions for Youth Development*, No. 96, Winter 2002: 27-46.

Giroux, H.A. (2010). "Bare pedagogy and the scourge of neoliberalism: Rethinking higher education as a democratic public sphere." *The Educational Forum*, *74*: 184-96.

Giroux, H.A. (2003). "Critical theory and educational practice*." The critical pedagogy reader*, A. Darder, M.Baltodano, and R.D. Torres (Eds.). New York and London: RoutledgeFalmer: 27-56.

Glassman, M. & Kang, M.J. (2011). "Five Classrooms: Different forms of 'democracies' and their relationship to cultural pluralism(s)," *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43(4): 365-386.

Godsay, S., Kawashima-Ginsberg, K., Kiesa, A., & Levine, P. (2012). *That's Not Democracy": How Out of School Youth Engage in Civic Life and What Stands in their Way.* Medford, MA: Tufts University. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/CIRCLE_ThatsNotDemocracy_WebFinal.pdf.

Gould, C. (1989). *Rethinking Democracy: Freedom and Social Cooperation in Politics, Economy, and Society.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith, trans.) London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Grannis,R. (2009). *From the ground up: Translating geography into community through neighborhood networks*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gronbjerg, K. (2001). "Markets, politics, and charity: Nonprofits in the political economy," in *The nature of the nonprofit sector*. Ott, J.S. (Ed). Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 217-231.

GuideStar USA, Inc. (2011). *Castle Square Tenants Organizations basic organization information.* Retrieved February 16, 2011, from GuideStar Premium database. https://www.guidestar.org/rxg/products/nonprofit-data-solutions/guidestar-premium.aspx

_____. (2011b). *[Friends of Beardsley Park's] basic organization information.* Retrieved February 16, 2011, from GuideStar Premium database. (*)

_____. (2011c). *[Sesame Street Institute's] basic organization information.* Retrieved February 16, 2011, from GuideStar Premium database. (*)

_____. (2011d). *[Centro Cultural Latino's] basic organization information.* Retrieved February 16, 2011, from GuideStar Premium database. (*)

Guo, C. and Acar, M. (2005). "Understanding collaboration among NPOs: Combining resource dependency, institutional, and network perspectives." *Nonprofit and Volunteer Sector Quarterly, 34*: 340-361.

Halpern, R. (2002). "A different kind of child development institution: The history of after-school programs for the low-income children." T*eachers College Record, 104*(2): 178-211.

Halpin, J. and Agne, K. (2009). *The political ideology of the millennial generation: A national study of political values and beliefs among 18- to 29-year-old adults.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

Hammond, C., and Reimer, M. (2006). *Essential elements of quality after-school programs study.* Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. Accessed on December 12, 2010 at: www.dropoutprevention.org/sites/default/files/Essential_Elements_of_Quality_AfterSchool_Programs.pdf

Hansmann, H. (2003). "The role of trust in nonprofit enterprise," In Anheier, H. and Ben-Ner, A. (Eds.), *The study of the nonprofit enterprise: Theories and approaches.* New York, NY: Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers: 115-122.

Harre, N. (2007). "Community service or activism as an identity project for youth," *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6): 711-724.

Hart, D., Donnelly, T.M., Youniss, J., and Atkins, R. (2007). "High school community service as a predictor of adult voting and volunteering," *American Educational Research Journal*, *44*(1): 197-219. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/30069475.

Haste, H. (2010). "Citizenship education: A critical look at a contested field." In ," in *Handbook on research of civic engagement in youth,* L.R. Sherrod, J. Torney-Purta, and C. Flanagan (Eds.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., p. 161-188.

Hayes, C. et al., (2009). *Investments in building citywide out-of-school-time systems: A six-city study*. New York, NY: Public Private Ventures. Accessed on February 15, 2014 at: http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/documents/investments-in-building-citywide-out-of-school-time-six-city-study.pdf.

Hector. (2012, January 23). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Hein, A. (2010). "Compared to two years ago, youth vote down -- but not out," *Fox News*, November 2, 2010. Accessed on December 30, 2010 at: http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/11/02/polls-say-youth-votes-reps-say-true/

Hess, R.D. and Torney-Purta, J.V. (2005). *The development of political attitudes in children*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Hildreth, R.W. (2012). "Word and Deed: A Deweyan Integration of Deliberative and Participatory Democracy," *New Political Science*, 34(3): 295-320.

Hilmer, J.D. (2010). "The State of Participatory Democratic Theory," *New Political Science*, 32(1): 43-63.

Horton, E. (2011, 7 12). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Huber, E; Rueschemeyer, D.; Stephens, J.D. (1997). "The paradoxes of contemporary democracy: Formal, participatory, and social dimensions," *Comparative Politics*. *29*(3): 323-342.

Huebner, A. J., and Mancini, J. A. (2003). "Shaping structured out-of-school time use among youth: The effects of self, family and friend systems." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *32*(6): 453-463.

Hughes, D.M. and Curnan, S.P. (2000). "Community youth development: A framework for action," *Community Youth Development Journal,* 1(1). Accessed on April 4, 2014 at: http://www.youthpolicy.org/research/journals/community-youth-development-journal/ .

Ingram, H, Schnieder, A, and DeLeon, P. (2007). "Social construction and policy design," in *Theories of the policy process*, Paul A. Sabatier (Ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press: 93-126.

IRS (2010). *Exemption Requirements - Section 501(c)(3) Organization*s. Washington, DC: Internal Revenue Services. Accessed on September 26, 2010 at: http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=96099,00.html.

Intercultural Center for Research in Education and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. (2005). *Pathways to success for youth: What counts in after-school*. Massachusetts After-School Research Study (MARS) report. Boston: United Way of Massachusetts Bay. Accessed on December 20, 2010 at: www.wcwonline.org/mars/MARSfull.pdf.

Jae. (2011, August 10). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Javier. (2012, January 23). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

JD. (2011, August 10). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Johnson, L. and Morris, P. (2010). "Towards a framework for critical citizenship education." *The Curriculum Journal. 21*(1): 77-96.

Jonathan, K. H., Levine, P., McConnell, T., and Smith, D.B., Eds. (2011). *Guardian of democracy: The civic mission of schools*. Rep. Philadelphia, PA: Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

Kaase, M. (1984). "The challenge of the 'participatory revolution' in pluralist democracies." *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*. *5*(3): 299-318.

Kahne, J., Chi, B., and Middaugh, E. (2006). "Building social capital for civic and political engagement: The potential of high-school civic courses." *Canadian Journal of Education. 29*(2): 387-409.

_____, and Sporte, S. E. (2008). "Developing citizens: The impact of civic learning opportunities on students' commitment to civic participation." *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(3): 738-766.

_____, and Westheimer, J. (2006). "The limits of political efficacy: Educating citizens for a democratic society." *PS: Political Science & Politics, 39*(2): 289-296.

Karen. (2012, 1 23). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Keating, E., Pradhan, G., Wasall, G.H., and DeNatale, D. (2008). *Passion and Purpose: Raising the Fiscal Fitness Bar for Massachusetts Nonprofits*. Boston, MA: The Boston Foundation. Accessed on October 3, 2010 at: http://www.tbf.org/uploadedFiles/tbforg/Utility_Navigation/Multimedia_Library/Reports/Passion&Purpose%20Report_low.pdf

King, D.C. and Walker, Jr., J.L. (1991). "The origins and maintenance of groups," *Mobilizing interest groups in America: Patrons, professions, and social movements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan University Press : 75-102.

Kreijns, K., Kirschner, P. A., & Vermeulen, M. (2013). Social aspects of CSCL environments: A research framework. *Educational Psychologist, 48*(4), 229-242.
Kriby, E.H. and Kawashima-Ginsberg, K. (2009). "The Youth Vote in 2008.*" CIRCLE Fact Sheet* (Updated August 19, 2009). Medford, MA: Tufts University, Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagment.

Lane, R.E. (1959). *Political life: Why people get involved in politics*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Leighley, J. (1996). "Group membership and the mobilization of political participation," *The Journal of Politics*, 58(2): 447-463.

Lenzi, M., Vieno, A., Santinello, M., & Perkins, D. (2013). "How neighborhood structural and institutional features can shape neighborhood social connectedness: A multilevel study of adolescent perceptions," *American Journal Of Community*

Psychology, *51*(3/4), 451-467. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://doi:10.1007/s10464-012-9563-1.

Lerner, L.M., Dowling, E.M., & Anderson, P.M. (2003). "Positive youth development: Thriving as the basis of personhood and civil society," *Applied Developmental Science. 7*(3): 172-180.

Lerner, R. (2005). "Promoting positive youth development: Theoretical and empirical bases," paper prepared for Workshop on the Science of Adolescent Health and Development, National Research Council / Institute of Medicine, Washington, DC. September 9, 2005. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences. Accessed March 15, 2014 from http://ase.tufts.edu/iaryd/documents/pubPromotingPositive.pdf .

Lerner, R.A. (1982). "Children and adolescents as producers of their own development," *Developmental Review*, *2*(4): 342-370.

Lerner, R.A. et al., (ND). "Mentoring: A key resource in positive youth development," *Research in Action*. Accessed on November 30, 2013 at: http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_382.pdf

Levy, B. M. (2013). "An empirical exploration of factors related to adolescents' political efficacy." *Educational Psychology*, *33*(3), 350-383. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://doi:10.1080/01443410.2013.772774.

Lohmann, R.A. (2001). "And lettuce is a nonanimal: Toward a positive economics of voluntary action," in *The nature of the nonprofit sector*. Ott, J.S. (Ed). Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 197-204.

Lopez, M.H., Levine, P., Both, D., Kiesa, Kirby, E. and Marcelo, K. (2006). *The 2006 civic and political health of the nation: A detailed look at how youth participate in politics and communities*, in CIRCLE, Medford, MA: Tufts University, Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed on December 30, 2010 at: http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/2006_CPHS_Report_update.pdf

Lowdnes, V. and Wilson, D. (2001). "Social capital and local governance: Exploring the institutional design variable," *Political Studies*, *49*: 629-647.

Lynda, L. K., McKinney, M. S., & Tedesco, J. C. (2007). "Introduction: Political information efficacy and young voters." *The American Behavioral Scientist, 50*(9): 1093-1111. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.tufts.edu/docview/214754748?accountid=14434 .

294

MA Department of ESE (2014). *Boston student data*. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=00350000&orgtypeco de=5&

Macedo, Alex-Assenoh, Y., Berry, J.M., Brintnall, M., Campbell, D.E., Fraga, L.R., et al., (2005). *Democracy at risk: How political choices undermine citizen participation, and what we can do about it.* Washingon, DC: Brookings Institution.

MacIndoe, H. and Barman, E. (2009). *Partnerships and performance: A review of the Boston nonprofit sector*. Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Boston.

Mahoney, J.S. and Parente, M.E. (2009). "Afterschool programs in America: Origins, growth, popularity, and politics." *Journal of Youth Development, 4*(3). http://data.memberclicks.com/site/nae4a/JYD_090403final.pdf .

Malinda. (2011, August 17). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

MassGIS (2010). *2000 Census Town Boundaries*. Accessed on March 12, 2010 at: ftp://data.massgis.state.ma.us/pub/shape/cen2000/towns/census2000towns_poly.e xe

MassGIS (2010). *2000 TIGER Line / Streets*. Accessed on March 12, 2010 at: ftp://data.massgis.state.ma.us/pub/shape/cen2000/tiger/census2000tiger_arc.exe

Massachusetts Nonprofit Database (2010). *Nonprofit organizations by industry sector*. Accessed on December 16, 2010 at: http://massnonprofits.clinc.us/public/profile.aspx?tn=Boston%2c+MA%3b+&st= &zp=&cn=&geodesc=BOSTON%2c++MA+

Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach, second edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

_____ (1992). "Understanding and validity in qualitative research." In A. M. Huberman & M. B. Miles (Eds.), *The qualitative researcher's companion* Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage Publications: 37-64 (Reprinted from *Harvard Educational Review*. 1992, 62, 3; 279-300).

McAdam, D. and Brandt, C. (2009). "Assessing the effects of voluntary youth service: The case of teach for America" *Social Forces*, *8*(2): 945-970.

McArdle, N., Osypuk, D. and Acevedo-García, D. (2010). *Prospects for Equity in Boston Public Schools' School Assignment Plans*. Cambridge, MA: Diversity Data and the Harvard School of Public Health. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at:

http://diversitydata.sph.harvard.edu/Publications/Prospects_for_Equity_in%20_Boston_Schools.pdf.

McFarland, D.A., and Thomas, R.J. (2006). "Bowling young: How youth voluntary associations influence adult political participation." *American Sociological Review*, *71*(3):401-425.

McIntosh, H., & Youniss, J. (2010). "Toward a political theory of political socialization of youth." *Handbook of research on civic engagement in youth*, 23-41.

Menino, T.M. (2004). *Report of the 2004 Boston youth survey*. Boston, MA: City of Boston. Accessed on December 12, 2010 at: http://www.cityofboston.gov/.../youthsurvey2004%5B1%5D_tcm3-8632.pdf .

_____ (2003). *The Boston 2003 trend report: Snapshot of Boston's children and youth*. Boston, MA: City of Boston. Accessed on December 12, 2010 at http://www.cityofboston.gov/bcyf/pdfs/trend_report.pdf .

Michelsen, E., Zaff, J. F., & Hair, E. (2002). *Civic engagement programs and youth development: A synthesis*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative dataaAnalysis: An expanded sourcebook, second edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Morrell, M.M. (2005). "Deliberation, democratic decision-making and internal political efficacy," *Political Behavior 27*(1): 49-69.

_____ (2003). "Survey and experimental evidence for a reliable and valid measure of internal political efficacy," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *67*:589–602.

Morsillo, J. and Prilleltensky, I. (2007). "Social action with youth: Interventions, evaluation, and psychopolitical validity," *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6), 725–740.

Myles, B. (2011, July 20). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Natalie. (2012, January 23). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

NCCS (2007). Core 2007 PC Data. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. Info available at http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/PubApps/dd2.php?form=Core+2007+PC

NCES (2012). *Elementary / Secondary Information System*. Accessed on April 4, 2014 at: http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/.

Newton, K. (2001). "Trust, social capital, civil society, and democracy," *International political science review / Revue internationale de science politique*, *22*(2):201-214. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at http://www.jstor.org/stable/1601186

Nie, N.H., Junn, J., and Stehlik-Barry, K. (1996). *Education and democratic citizenship in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Niemi, R.G., and Junn J. (1998). *Civic education: What makes students learn*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Nishishiba, M., Nelson, H.T. and Shinn, C.W. (2005). "Explicating factors that foster civic engagement among students," *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, *11*(4): 269-285. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at http://www.jstor.org/stable/40215713.

Olson, M. (1971). "A theory of groups and organizations," *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 5-52.

Ortmann, A. & Schlesinger, M. (2003). "Trust, repute, and the role of nonprofit enterprise," In Anheier, H. and Ben-Ner, A. (Eds.), *The study of the nonprofit enterprise: Theories and approaches*. New York, NY: Kluwer Academic / Plenum:77-114.

Parker, J. S., & Bauknight, L. (2009). Positive youth development through civic engagement. *Journal of Youth Development*, *4*(3). Boca Raton, FL: National Association of Extension 4-H Agents.

Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and democratic theory*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Perkins, D. F., Borden, L. M., Keith, J. G., Hoppe-Rooney, T. L., & Villarruel, F. A. (2009). "Community youth development" in *Work with Young People: Theory and Policy for Practice*, New York: Sage,104-113.

Perkins, D. F., Borden, L. M., & Villarruel, F. A. (2001). "Community youth development: A partnership for action." *School Community Journal*, *11*(2), 39-56.

Prilleltensky, I. and Fox, D.R. (2007). "Pyschopolitical literacy for wellness and justice." *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6), 793-805.

Putnam, R. (1995). "Tuning in, tuning out: The strange disappearance of social capital in America," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, *28*(4): 664-683.

_____ (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Riggs, N.R., and Greenberg, M.T. (2004). "After-school youth development programs: A developmental-ecological model of current research." *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *7*: 177-190.

Royce, S. W. (2009). "Youth perspectives on meaningful participation in community based programs: A qualitative assessment*." Journal of Youth Development, 4*(4). Accessed on December 21, 2010 at: data.memberclicks.com/site/nae4a/JYD_090404final.pdf

Rublin, H., Douglas, K. and Halverson, L. (2004). "Coming of age in Boston: Out-of-school time opportunities for teens, current realities and future prospects," *A report to the teen study committee of the Boston afterschool partnership*. Boston, MA: Technical Development Corporation Accessed on January 2, 2011 at https://folio.iupui.edu/bitstream/.../Coming%20of%20Age%20report.pdf

Saito, R. N. (2006). "Beyond access and supply: Youth-led strategies to captivate young people's interest in and demand for youth programs and opportunities." *New Directions for Youth Development*, *112*: 57–74.

Saldana, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Sampson, R.J. (2012). *The great American city: Chicago and the enduring neighborhood effect.* Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Sampson, R.J., MacIndoe , H., McAdam, D. and Weffer-Elizondo, S. (2005). "Civil society reconsidered: The durable nature and community structure of collective civic action," *American Journal of Sociology*, *111*(3): 673–714.

Seppanan, P. and deVries, D.K. (1993). *National study of before- and after-school programs: Executive summary*. Wellesley, MA: National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellesley College.

Sesame Street Institute (2011). Website. (*)

Sesame Street Institute (2010). Youth leadership for social justice: [Sesame Street Institute's] Next Five Years.

Sherrod, L., Torney-Purta, J. & Flanagan, C. (2010). Introduction to "Research on the development of citizenship: A field comes of age," in *Handbook on research of civic engagement in youth,* L.R. Sherrod, J. Torney-Purta, and C. Flanagan (Eds.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., p. 1-22.

Shihadeh, E. S. and Thomas, S. A. (2007). "Institutional attachment and violence: The concentration of youth disengagement and serious crime" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology. On November 14, 2007 at Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Atlanta, Georgia.

Simone. (2011, November 30). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Siriani, C. and Friedland, L. (2001). *Civic innovation in America: Community empowerment, public policy, and the movement for civic renewal*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press, p. 1-34.

Skocpol, T. (2003). *Diminished democracy: From membership to management in American civic life*, Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Small, M.L (2009). "'How many cases do I need?' On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research," *Ethnography*, 10(1): 5-38.

Smith, S.R. (2000). "Nonprofit organizations in urban politics and policy," in *Nonprofits in urban america*, R. C. Hula and C. Jackson-Elomoore (Eds.). Westport, CT: Quorum Books, p. 7-24.

_____ (1999). "Civic infrastructure in America: The interrelationship between government and voluntary sector" in *Civil society, democracy, and civic renewal*, Robert K. Fullinwider (Eds.). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers: p. 127-150.

_____ and Ingram, H. (2002). "Policy tools and democracy," in *The tools of government: A guide to the new governance*. Lester Salamon (Ed). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press: p. 565-584.

Sola, C. (2012, January 27). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

_____ (2011, September). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Solomon, L.M. (1999). "What is the nonprofit sector and why do we have it?" In Lester M. Solomon (Ed.) *America's nonprofit sector: A primer,* 2nd Edition. New York, NY: Foundation Center p. 7-19.

Soss, J. (2002). *Unwanted claims: The politics of participation in the U.S. welfare system*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

_____and Jacobs, L.R. (2009). "The place of inequality: Non-participation in the american polity," *Political Science Quarterly*, *124*(1): 95-125.

Stephanie. (2011,August 31). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Stone, M. M., Hager, M. A., & Griffin, J. J. (2001). Organizational characteristics and funding environments: A study of a population of United Way–affiliated nonprofits. *Public Administration Review*, *61*(3), 276-289.

Sullivan, F. (2010). *Valuing youth:Nonprofit organizations and the potential for political engagement*. 2010 Annual Meeting of the New England Political Science Association, April 23-24, Newport, RI: NEPSA.

Tarifa, T. Machtmes, K., Fox, J. E., and Johnson, E. (2009). Factors affecting youth voice in decision-making processes within youth development programs. *Journal of Youth Development, 4*(4).

Taylor. (2011, August 10). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Te'eni, D., & Young, D. R. (2003). "The changing role of nonprofits in the network economy." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *32*(3), 397-414.

Terkla, D.G., O'Leary, L.S., Wilson, N.E. and Diaz, A.(2007), "Civic engagement assessment: Linking activities to attitudes," *Assessment Update: Progress, Trends and Practices in Higher Education*, *19*(3): 1-2 and 14-16.

Terzian, M., Giesen, L., and Mbwana, K. (2009). "Why teens are not involved in out-of-school time programs:The youth perspective," *Child trends: Research to results brief*, Publication #2009-38. Accessed on January 2, 2011 at: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_07_22_RB_YouthRoundtable.pdf

TIGER (2000). *TIGER/Line® Shapefile Release*. U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed on March 19, 2010 at: http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/

Thomson, S. B. (2011). "Qualitative research: Validity." *JOAAG. 6*(1). Accessed on February 10, 2013 at: http://joaag.com/uploads/6_1_-7_Research_Method_Thomson.pdf .

Torney-Purta, J., Wilkenfeld, B. and Barber, C. (2008), "How adolescents in 27 countries understand, support, and practice human rights." *Journal of Social Issues, 64*: 857–880.

Torney-Purta, J., Barber, C. and Wilkenfeld, B. (2007). "Latino adolescents' civic development in the United States: Research results from the IEA civic education study." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 36*: 111-125.

Torney-Purta, J. (2004). "Adolescents' political socialization in changing contexts: An international study in the spirit of nevitt sanford," *Political Psychology* , *25*:3, Special Issue (Part Two): Prospect Theory (Jun., 2004): 465-478.

U.S. Census Bureau (2000). *2000 Census Data Release*. Accessed on March 13, 2010 at: http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html.

U.S. Census Bureau (2010). *2010 Census Data Release*. Accessed on January 3, 2012 at: http://www.census.gov/2010census/.

U.S. Census Bureau (2012). *American Fact Finder.* Accessed on September 12, 2012 at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

U.S. Treasury, Internal Revenue Service. (2011). *2007 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): Castle Square Tenants Organization*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011.

_____. (2011b). *2008 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): Castle Square Tenants Organization*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011.

_____. (2011c). *2009 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): Castle Square Tenants Organization*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011.

_____. (2011d). *2007 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Friends of Beardsley Park]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011e). *2008 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Friends of Beardsley Park]* .Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011f). *2009 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Friends of Beardsley Park]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011g). *2007 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Sesame Street Institute]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011h). *2008 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Sesame Street Institute]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011.

_____. (2011i). *2009 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Sesame Street Institute]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011j). *2007 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Centro Cultural Latino]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011k). *2008 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Centro Cultural Latino]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

_____. (2011l). *2009 return of organization exempt from income tax (form 990): [Centro Cultural Latino]*. Retrieved from Guidestar website: http://www.guidestar.org on February 16, 2011. (*)

Vargas-Franco, R. (2012, February 13). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Vasta, E. (2013). "Do we need social cohesion in the 21st century? Multiple languages of belonging in the metropolis." *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *34*(2), 196-213. Accessed on January 12, 2014 at: http:// doi:10.1080/07256868.2013.781983.

Walker, Jr., J.L. (1991). "Explaining the mobilization of interests," *Mobilizing interest groups in America: Patrons, professions, and social movements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan University Press: 41-55.

Warren, M.E. (2003). "The political role of nonprofits in a democracy," *Society*, May/June 2003: 46-51.

Washington State University Extension (2008). *Staff guide for training volunteers – Unit II: Positive youth development.* Accessed on November 30, 2013 at: http://4h.wsu.edu/staff/vm/mod02/Module2.pdf.

Watts, R., Williams, N., and Jagers, R. (2003). "Sociopolitical development," *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *31*:185–194.

Watts, R.J. and Flanagan, C. (2007). "Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective," *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6): 779-792.

Weisbrod, B.A. (1997). "The future of the nonprofit sector: Its entwining with private enterprise and government." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 16*(4), 541-555.

Westheimer, J. and Kahne, J. (2004). "What kind of citizen: The politics of educating for democracy," *American Educational Research Journal*. *41*(2): 237-269.

White, T. (2011, June 27). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Widit, F. (2011,September 20). Interview by F.M. Sullivan.

Wilkenfeld, B., Lauckhardt, J. and Torney-Purta, J. (2010). "The relation between developmental theory and measures of civic engagement in research on adolescents," in *Handbook on research of civic engagement in youth,* L.R. Sherrod, J. Torney-Purta, and C. Flanagan (Eds.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.: 193-219.

Williams, A. (2007). "Support, expectations, awareness and influence: Reflections on youth and democracy articles," *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6), 811-814.

Wolfe, J.D. (1985). "A defense of participatory democracy," *The Review of Politics*. *47*(3): 370-389.

Wolpert, J. (1988). "The geography of generosity: Metropolitan disparities in donations and support for amenities." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 78*(4), 665-679.

Yetman, M. H. and Yetman, M. J. (2009). "Determinants of nonprofits' taxable activities," *Journal of Accounting Public Policy*, *28* (2009): 495–509.

Yin, R.K. (2010). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Yin, R.K. (2009). Case study research: Design and methods. *Applied Social Science Research Methods Series, Vol. 5*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

_____ (2003). Applications of case study research, *Applied Social Science Research Methods Series, Vol. 34,* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yohalem, N. and Martin, S. (2007). "Building the evidence base for youth engagement: Reflections on youth and democracy." *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(6):, 807–810.

Youniss, J. and Yates, M. (1997). *Community service and social responsibility in youth*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Young, D.R. (2001). "Government failure theory," In J. Steven Ott (Ed.) *The nature of the nonprofit sector*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, p.190-196.

YSRB (2009). "Trends in the prevalence of selected risk behaviors and obesity for all students national YRBS:1991—2009," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed on January 2, 2011 at: http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/pdf/us_summary_all_trend_yrbs.pdf.

Zillow (2010). *Neighborhoods for Massachusetts*. Accessed on March 12, 2010 at :http://www.zillow.com/static/shp/ZillowNeighborhoods-MA.zip