

ST. PAUL YOUTH SERVICES

Creating a Community That Wraps Its Arms Around Our Youth

PUSHING LIMITS IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF HEALTHY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT. How adults respond when youth act out can dramatically alter the course of their lives - for better or much, much worse. St. Paul Youth Services improves our community's collective ability to engage and support all youth by sharing proven and pioneering practices that are Smart, Fair, and Loving - and get results. As adults, we have the power and responsibility to create conditions that give all youth the best chance to thrive, anticipate they'll make mistakes, and hold them accountable in ways that allow them to grow.

Every day 700,000 Twin Cities children interact with adults. By equipping those adults and the organizations they represent with skills to make those interactions loving, positive, and fair, we can transform our community. [LEARN MORE AT SPYS.ORG](http://SPYS.ORG).

SOCIETY'S APPROACH to CONFLICT

CHILDHOOD MISTAKES. LIFELONG CONSEQUENCES. STOLEN DREAMS.

ST. PAUL YOUTH SERVICES' APPROACH

PROVEN STRATEGIES. MEASURABLE IMPACT. HOPE & OPPORTUNITY RESTORED.



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ST. PAUL YOUTH SERVICES YEAR IN REVIEW FALL 2016

BECAUSE YOUTHFUL MISTAKES SHOULD OFFER A CHANCE TO GROW.

We partnered with more than 1,700 YOUTH experiencing challenges at home, at school, with the law, and in the community. Through our one-on-one partnerships and expert services, these beautiful young people were able to:

- resolve crises and de-escalate tense situations
- be accountable and make amends without being criminalized
- develop and practice self-regulation and self-advocacy skills
- access socio-emotional, economic, and health supports
- set and achieve personal goals at home, in school, and beyond
- have a voice on issues and institutions impacting their lives

BECAUSE YOUTH AREN'T JUST TOMORROW'S LEADERS. THEY'RE LEADERS TODAY.

We amplified the voices of nearly 100 YOUTH, providing avenues for them to influence elected officials, nonprofits, and civic leaders and advocate for fair, compassionate policies on issues that affect their lives, including:

- a youth forum on proposed changes to Saint Paul's curfew law, which would have criminalized youth - the sponsoring City Council member retracted the proposed changes as a result of the young people's input!
- a youth-led forum in which Saint Paul Public Schools board candidates were grilled on issues of concern to youth
- a youth forum advising the Saint Paul Mayor and City Council President on the police chief selection and youth-police relations
- speaking opportunities on panels and at public meetings and using their unique talents (e.g., the arts) for advocacy

BECAUSE YOUTH OUTCOMES WON'T CHANGE IF ADULT BEHAVIOR DOESN'T.

We helped transform the cultures and practices of more than 50 ORGANIZATIONS, equipping staff with tools, skills, and perspective to increase racial equity and improve their relationships and outcomes with youth.

We partnered with 5 SCHOOLS through our Behavior Intervention Program. These schools saw:

- reduced suspensions, improved classroom behavior, and improved attendance and academic outcomes
- expanded staff skills in de-escalation, classroom management, and relationship building
- a more positive school culture and a restorative justice approach that keeps kids engaged, learning and in school
- closer school-student-family partnerships

We provided 18 COURTS & LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES with a restorative justice alternative to offer youth facing minor first-time offenses. Through our Pre-Charge Diversion program, youth:

- made restitution to their victims and didn't have further interaction with law enforcement
- avoided incarceration, removal from home, and separation from their family, job, mentors, and school environment and
- avoided a criminal record and its outsized impact on their lives due to reduced job, housing, and student aid prospects
- gained all of the benefits of our youth partnerships above

We trained 150 parents and community members on effective youth engagement strategies.

A ST. PAUL YOUTH SERVICES WORKSHOP SERIES

CREATING TRULY YOUTH-CENTRIC ORGANIZATIONS

Below are 20 qualities of Youth-Centric Organizations. This list is not exhaustive – please add your own!

Instructions for Pair & Share:

- ▶ IDENTIFY 3 AREAS OF STRENGTH for your organization (mark with an "S")
- ▶ IDENTIFY 3 AREAS OF GROWTH (mark with a "G")
- ▶ SHARE THESE WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR
- ▶ BRAINSTORM STEPS TO CREATE CHANGE W/IN YOUR ORGANIZATION (record ideas on back)

- ___ 1. Youth are regularly asked for input on our program - and we act on it
- ___ 2. Youth feel comfortable sharing what's going on in their lives with us
- ___ 3. Our program goals and metrics are based on what young people want to achieve
- ___ 4. Our organization views different opinions and beliefs as a growth opportunity rather than a concern
- ___ 5. Every young person is greeted by staff each day
- ___ 6. Every young person is positively and discreetly redirected when a behavior change is needed
- ___ 7. Every child benefits from "assumption of positive intent," equally high expectations, and room for mistakes
- ___ 8. Our staff have demonstrated cultural competency before working directly with youth
- ___ 9. We take time to ensure our volunteers know how to engage our youth and have had opportunities to discuss their fears, concerns, or assumptions before they interact with our youth
- ___ 10. Our staff are accountable for ensuring every child thrives and are evaluated on youth feedback
- ___ 11. Our staff receive coaching/interventions if they aren't achieving great outcomes for all youth
- ___ 12. Our staff adapt their approach and activities to meet each child's needs and interests
- ___ 13. Our staff follow a swift, established process for addressing concerns raised by youth and families
- ___ 14. Our staff reflects the demographics of the youth we serve
(___ If not, we are addressing the reasons for this disparity & its impact on our youth)
- ___ 15. Our program is accessible to all families based on cost, location, schedule, and rules
- ___ 16. We design events and communications around participating families' preferences and needs
- ___ 17. Our rules are set to ensure a safe environment and provide positive, concrete guidance for behavior.
Our rules focus on what we want youth to do – not what we don't want them to do.
- ___ 18. We intentionally create an environment that communicates we trust and respect young people
- ___ 19. Our rules are clear and consistent, with exceptions made based on circumstance
- ___ 20. Our staff are trained in techniques that promote growth and behavior change vs. behavior control