

EVALUATION QUESTION 1: What is the current state of youth success and Rock County’s effort to support this success through community and individual investment in the form of youth/family services and programming in Rock County?

Context

The following quotes set the stage for this Evaluation Question in the sense that they summarize the Rock County context at the point in time of the Community Asset Survey.

Success looks like:

“Youth need positive role models. Someone to foster positive interaction when youth don’t have that presence nor a place to go to . . . and opportunities to try something that only requires your interest and attendance.”

“Invest in the county with community service, versus outside. Mistakes made as teens stay with you in the eyes of the community.”

“Current mental health struggle. It affects everything else: school, home, community. . . You have to want it, to feel better, to get better, to put the work in.”

“Youth would have consistency in their lives that included discipline and responsibility. Everyone is a leader, can be a leader.”

“Youth need to see opportunities so that we have people invested in their communities and passion to identify with them. . . access to parents who know the opportunities to expose their kids to do and support them through changes.”

“Healthy and safe kids in the community, many to check in and hold them accountable, stick with them, trusted individuals, people who cared when they didn’t care about themselves.”

“Opportunity. Access to services that exist. Youth have interests, but need access and adult support, people who are willing to take the time, follow through inside and outside the home.”

“Take kids out of drug environments/trauma and put them in environments where they thrive.”

“(In Rock County) Beginning to see equity issues more clearly, shine a light and increase awareness. Gives us the opportunity to look at how all youth are receiving support. Not as many youth of color are in AP classes. Achievement gap between white and black students indicates we have a lot of work to do. Opportunities are key. Gap is not about being capable but about less access. Need to increase access by decreasing lack of knowledge and discomfort level.”

available through Youth-Adult Partnership. The rest of this report highlights how the evaluator progressed from collecting the data to its implications and possible next steps.

“More people involved/engaged equals success.”

“Job opportunities. Job skills program. Youth need to earn money and build their resumes. They need opportunities like internships and job training available to them. Emotional and social success and access to healthy food and how to prepare it.”

“Need a minimum of basic needs met on a daily basis. So many don’t. We need to eliminate barriers to prevent that from happening.”

“It comes down to resilience. Many youth lack perseverance. If something happens, they shut down, can’t work through it.”

“Guidance. Direction. Clear goals. Some young people are precise in those things, but most need help. Not to tell them, but to teach them, train them to think for themselves. Ask questions, ask the right questions.”

Barriers are:

“Parents didn’t graduate in this country so they don’t understand or know how the process works, where to direct their children.”

“Language. Driver’s license. Money.”

“Challenging home situations. Literacy skills.”

“Lack of role models and opportunity for positive self-enforcement that isn’t forced.”

“Bullying. Too many expectations and overscheduling affects mental health. It looks like apathy but it isn’t.”

“Economic status—too few dig behind the scenes to see what’s happening in their lives.”

“Pockets of poverty/lack of access in more rural areas. . . Navigating our system is challenging. Lack of time to interact with the system.”

“Income. Transportation. Uneven leadership. Leadership demographic does not match the city demographic.”

“Transportation. . .Commitment. . .lack of awareness.”

“Social media and technology are growing faster than we can keep up with.”

“Lack of staffing. . .local funds. . .space.”

“Voters disconnect from youth so they do not support funds.”

“Assets in one community are not present in all.”

“Living up to expectations.”

“Youth are left alone longer.”

“Adults committing their time. They are generous about donating things but not time. Adults are uncomfortable around kids, feel that they ‘already did their time’.”

“Parental involvement. Parents don’t feel comfortable being involved.”

“Drugs and alcohol. Parental disconnect between community culture/lifestyles and youth deaths.”

“Politics. The political world. Youth are overwhelmed. Don’t know how they play a role.”

“Your family’s income has a lot to do with what happens to you. If you’ve done something wrong, it can determine when advocacy for youth will be easy and when it won’t.”

“Need to let the resources/needs direct program. Also, cooperation between resources. Need consolidation to get at the root of the problem.”

Implications

For the purposes of this discussion, community development will be defined “as a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process through planned intervention to improve their seven capitals situation. The seven community capitals are natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built.”² Based upon the facilitation of the Community Asset Survey on the topic of Positive Youth Development, Rock County has initiated this type of social action process through the many diverse programs, but stakeholders don't believe that the efforts are systematically getting at the root issues.

Of the seven community capitals, Cultural, Human and Social Capital are the categories with the largest number of related codes from the interview data. Human Capital is the category in which the codes of all three intersect to define the common community goal towards which the current social action process is working. The codes in this category are the many ways to define “underserved”. These terms also determine whether the presence of marginalized/underserved are informally and/or formally noticed or not. Within this intersection, Political, Financial and Built Capital illustrate their status generally as codes listed as barriers or gaps. A great emphasis was placed on economy in a variety of ways: transportation, housing, youth availability, adult availability, types of programs/resources for programs, among others. Political Capital codes highlight the demographic “youth” as a marginalized voice collectively but also a part of other groups that may be lacking political capital. They are more readily identified by the

² https://www.rivervalley.k-state.edu/docs/Seven_Community_Capitals.pdf

organizations that serve them: rural, language, socioeconomic, homeless, social emotional status, among others. This is addressed in the possible applications of Youth-Adult Partnership in the table in the previous section.

Codes listed as Cultural Capital and Social Capital demonstrate a perception gap in the systemic community issues that require improved or increased intervention strategies. In terms of Cultural Capital, some codes indicated that stakeholders believe that Rock County is valuing cultural beliefs, values, histories, etc. as assets and others do not believe their assets are valued. Other codes indicate that even where Cultural Capital is recognized, it does not translate to Human Capital. In short some have a currency that while decorative and even appreciated, they cannot spend it. Social Capital contained the largest number distinct and also repeated codes. These codes centered on the interplay between communities and how/why resources are designated, utilized, appreciated. Key codes include: identity, belonging, access, equity, equality, parity. In contrast to Cultural Capital, this category is where systemic racism is either acknowledged or not. This capital is illustrated by the emphasis placed on the role of adults and need of youth to be engaged, participate, and also have advocates/translators into the social world. This category includes the gap between qualifying for a service and actually receiving it. Codes assigned to Financial Capital were rooted in the category of social capital. Codes applicable to Built Capital were also effects of codes assigned to Social Capital primarily in the areas of basic needs and access to knowledge, resources and services. Codes categorized as Natural Capital were not significant, and usually only mentioned as possible service project areas or resources for general wellness.

EVALUATION QUESTION 2: What is the adult/organizational perception of positive youth development, specifically youth-adult partnership?

Context

Interviewees were asked to rank both program content and youth roles as 1) not important, 2) somewhat important and 3) very important. Participants could repeat the same number. This exercise was intended to compare current ongoing work by Extension Educators across Wisconsin and needs in Rock County as well as to compare research articles’ stated beliefs and attitudes related to Youth-Adult Partnership with Rock County stakeholders.

Program Content	Average (1-3)
Equity, Culture and Diversity	2.64
Social and emotional learning	2.98
Community Engagement and leadership	2.47
Healthy living	2.65
Economic pathways	2.097
STEM	2.25

Y-AP role in the community as a whole	Average (1-3)
Training and outreach	2.46
Communication and media	2.62
Research and evaluation	2.068
Organizing and activism	2.64
Service and philanthropy	2.82
Governance and policymaking	2.068

Y-AP role in your organization specifically	Average (1-3)
Training and outreach	2.47
Communication and media	2.95
Research and evaluation	2.245
Organizing and activism	2.66
Service and philanthropy	2.8
Governance and policymaking	2.35

The second piece of data in this section is again coded responses. Similar and repeated codes are represented in each dimension of *Thriving Model Principles of Program Quality* around characteristics of youth, adults and program.³ Codes are repeated more than once where appropriate in terms of the Y-AP Dimension. Codes that are current strengths and weaknesses are included.

YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIP DIMENSIONS ⁴	CODES	QUOTES
Authentic Decision-making—Youth are involved in meaningful decision-making	Short/long term goal setting, Identity, Belonging, Initiative, Community culture, Passive presentation recipients, Stakeholder, Surveys, Opportunity, Relevant content, Coordination, Knowledge, Access, Parity, Navigate systems, Ask questions, Be heard, Overscheduled, Bullying	<p>“Activities are most successful when youth discover their own messages, get beyond being a face in a room. They like to talk, to be asked about themselves, to tell their story.”</p> <p>“Provide general feedback. Participant surveys.”</p> <p>“Nothing currently.”</p> <p>“Nothing formally.”</p> <p>“Youth advocates gather info from other youth.”</p> <p>“Every voice is important. Helps us improve. Their thoughts and ideas help strengthen the organization. Without the youth, we don’t stand.”</p>
Natural Mentors—Adults intentionally support relationships with youth to help them develop	Short/long term goal setting, Critical thinking, Participation, Perseverance, Growth mindset, Community culture, Professional development, Strategic knowledge, Relevant content, Mentorship, Family engagement, Communication,	<p>“Meet youth where they are at. Youth council is not just about youth showing up to adult spaces. Youth feel comfortable.”</p> <p>“The relationships with staff liaisons are key to attracting and retaining youth participants.”</p>

³ *Thriving Model Principles of Program Quality*: 1) Physical and psychological safety, 2) Appropriate structure, 3) Supportive relationships, 4) Opportunities to belong, 5) Positive social norms, 6) Support for efficacy and mattering, 7) Opportunities for skill building, 8) Integration of family, school and community. Read more at <https://oregonstate.app.box.com/s/oqxjml3tn9tucttc08oja0gvnnq4vhh8>

⁴ Youth-Adult Partnership Dimensions cited from the Youth-Adult Partnership Rubric published by Michigan State University. For further informational/training materials visit <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/youthadultpartnership/> or <https://extension.umn.edu/working-youth/what-youth-development>

	Connection, Capacity building, Access, Parity, Role models, Growth, Navigate systems, Common language, Ask questions, Be heard, Mental health, Bullying	
Reciprocity—Youth and adults work together as partners	Teamwork, Participation, Community culture, Active program development/facilitation, Informal interaction, Observation, Recreation, Relationship building, Shared projects/responsibilities, Little, None, Attempted, No differentiation, Commitment, Disconnect, Turnover, Flexibility, Lack of time, Communication, Family engagement, Coordination, Language, Regulations, Parallel development, Parity, Role models, Common language, Ask questions, Be heard	<p>“Minimal youth voice.”</p> <p>“We have tried youth boards to discuss policy, but have yet to have any youth who understand/want the stuff they need. . . Youth are asked for their opinions informally. . . We observe youth and their actions.”</p> <p>“Youth are on our programming board, youth reps in the church, intergenerational activities, neighborhood visits/involvement and visibility. These strategies are a work in progress. Need to be flexible around your goal/purpose. Even if you fail, fall forward.”</p> <p>“Youth develop presentations, marketing. Constantly working/reevaluating. Adults support the relationship. No youth leadership ‘roles’ because youth say they don’t want to have hierarchy.”</p>
Community Connectedness—Youth are engaged in communities	Participation, Purpose, Community culture, Leadership roles, Local/state government, Peer leadership, Unique space, Opportunity, Relevant content, Engaging content, Connection, Community, Commitment, Capacity building, Communication, Family engagement, Coordination, Knowledge, Access, Parallel development, Parity, Navigate systems, Ask questions, Be heard, Mental health, Equity	<p>“Benefits are youth building relationships with adults with trust, other community members involvement and opportunities for youth to be community voices. . . Students have also facilitated professional development for adults on diversity issues. We plan to repeat this training.”</p> <p>“The committee includes a youth member.”</p>

Implications

Overall, Evaluation Question 2 illustrates a gap in stakeholders’ identifications of long term outcomes and current formal practice. Data shows some disconnect and/or lack of agreement on

what the Rock County context is and the most efficient means to initiate/evaluate social change around youth and families. The majority of codes illustrate understanding and support of Y-AP, especially related to the importance of supportive adults. However, the quotes in “Authentic Decision-making” reflect a lack of youth initiate/driven questions, instructions, content, etc. This could imply a general passivity in the implementation of the content despite intentions to the contrary. The ranking of youth involvement framework aligns closely with the codes in its support of Youth-Adult Partnership. While, certain roles are more important, no role is unimportant overall. Nor do the stakeholder’s illustrate other types of resistance. For example, citing a youth role as important in the community as a whole but unimportant within their organization specifically. High rankings in “Training and outreach” also imply that youth knowledge is valued beyond being a token mouthpiece (i.e. Communications and media). However, lower numbers in “Research and evaluation” and “Governance and policymaking” might imply a bias towards youth organizational capacity and follow through.

Evaluator’s Observations/Potential Applications

Observation	Potential Application
<p>1) Community Asset Survey responses once coded are divided in three key themes: system as a whole, youth and adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to prioritize an asset based and culturally relevant approach, a holistic analysis for this report and moving forward would be the seven community capitals, a current interpretation classification used by interviewed stakeholders. These are 1) community development, 2) natural capital, 3) human capital, 4) social capital, 5) political capital, 6) financial capital, 7) built capital. • The significant emphasis placed on the role supportive relationships serve in all aspects of youth success requires an interpretation around youth-adult partnership dimensions. These are: 1) authentic decision-making—youth are involved in meaningful-decision making, 2) natural mentors—adults intentionally support relationships with youth to help them develop, 3) reciprocity—youth and adults work together as partners, 4) community connectedness—youth are engaged in communities⁵. • The “youth” theme should be addressed in their own words though a representative series of focus groups.

⁵ Dimensions cited from the Youth-Adult Partnership Rubric published by Michigan State University. This information will be developed through The Thriving Model Principles of Program Quality published by Oregon State University.

<p>2) Rock County has a diverse range of programming content that coincides with the current initiatives of Extension Educators working in communities throughout Wisconsin. As referenced during the Community Asset Mapping, these are: 1) equity, culture and diversity, 2) social and emotional learning, 3) community engagement and leadership, 4) healthy living, 5) economic pathways, 6) STEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next steps would be more beneficial if they connected current stakeholder expertise across demographics, programs across communities, content across programs versus creating something new. • A dynamic means, either virtual or in person, to maintain an informational connection regarding programming.
<p>3) Community stakeholders that included specific providers or programmers and larger community development roles/engagement believe that youth success includes positive adult relationships and engagement through well-defined, authentic roles. As referenced during the Community Asset Mapping, these are: 1) training and outreach, 2) communication and media, 3) research and evaluation, 4) organizing and activism, 5) service and philanthropy, governance and policymaking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no resistance to the foundational tenants of youth-adult partnership as a possibility research articles posed. • Minimal common language to speak about the formal/informal strategies in which stakeholders understand the youth population. A common language would both aid in sharing effective strategies and noticing gaps/opportunities within a youth initiative/interaction based off of another stakeholder's experience. • A need for common vocabulary and training through Y-AP for community members/organizations in order to increase number/level of partnership opportunities for youth serving agencies.
<p>4) Concern was noted regarding the amount of youth voice that informed current programming and the formalization of youth roles to gather youth voice so that youth programming would be more easily adapted to the quick changes in youth needs/wants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth-Adult Partnership infusion in community stakeholders' organizations and programming would formalize youth voice and create a more constant feedback loop into the framework for ongoing program development, specifically conceptualizing the change and designing educational and organizational approaches.
<p>5) Disconnect between attitudes and practice in Y-AP. Current curriculums/practices are not intentional enough in bridging youth opportunities for empowerment in the greater community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address these gaps through youth input, using the stakeholder data in the focus groups. • Youth-Adult Partnership infusion in community stakeholders' organizations and programming would define roles and short, medium and long term outcomes.
<p>6) Current goals for youth success are difficult to measure (i.e. 'safe space').</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Capitals Ripple Mapping or Youth-Adult Partnership vocabulary could support measurement and evaluation to make programs more attractive to funders and more competitive for grants.

Methods

From May to September 2019, face to face interviews were conducted with 45 organizations, some represented by individuals and others teams of two or three, in order to assess the current state of youth success and individual and collective investment of time/resources that both contribute to and/or are missing from youth success in Rock County. This includes the level to which youth themselves are included in the individual and collective investment of time/resources.

Current UW-Madison, Division of Extension partnerships, within the last year, as well as a preliminary report conducted with identified key informants in 2018, were the basis of the initial selections. The list expanded based on recommendations from interviewees. Attention was paid to represent each major town/city in Rock County, but greater time was focused on the urban areas of Janesville and Beloit due to a prior directive from the Agriculture and Education Extension Committee.

A diverse set of stakeholders were interviewed based upon their work/initiatives as specific providers or programmers and larger community development roles/engagement. These included business owners, teachers, public and private elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools, coaches, parents, healthcare providers including mental health, equity and diversity advocates, city government, faith based organizations, service organizations, and local police departments. Participants were told that their responses were confidential and that while the report lists who was interviewed as a means to expand connection between the youth-adult partnership/service provider community, each may elect to be removed from the list. Each listed participant provided their own one sentence summary of their work and its importance. Further information is footnoted and linked for reference. Interviews averaged one hour.

The italicized questions below are the evaluation questions that guided this process. Actual interview questions asked of stakeholders are listed under each.

Evaluation questions and corresponding interview questions:

1) What is the current state of youth success and Rock County's effort to support this success through community and individual investment in the form of youth/family services and programming in Rock County?

- What does success in Rock County look like for youth? (Success was undefined, but participants could illustrate with a specific example of a 'successful youth'.)
- What are the community assets for youth/youth development programming?
- What are the greatest challenges/barriers youth face in Rock County?
- What are forces or factors resisting innovation?

2) What is the adult/organizational perception of positive youth development, specifically youth-adult partnership?

- Where are the gaps in youth development programming?
- Do youth have a voice in your organization?

- What strategies do you use to understand the youth population of Rock County?
- This section also includes the ranking of content and youth leadership roles in both organizations and the community as a whole.

Other questions were asked as needed, such as: If you have no formal youth voice, what are informal strategies in which youth describe their needs or share their opinions? Does your answer include marginalized or underprivileged youth and families? Can you identify specific characteristics youth or adults exhibited to contribute to youth success? What is a current power/privilege dynamic in Rock County that creates resource inequity or lack of access to programming for young people?

With the exception of a) the summary text written by the evaluator under Evaluation Questions 2-3 and b) the section on evaluator's observations and recommendations on pages, all content are direct quotes from team members or paraphrases of their responses. These were not italicized for readability purposes given the high volume of content.

Participating Individuals/Organizations

<u>Organization/Contact</u>	<u>Office Location</u>
16:49 (Tammy DeGarmo)	Janesville/Beloit
All Saints Anglican Catholic Church (Father Earl)	Janesville
Area Health Education Center (Traci Lindsey)	Beloit
AWARE Evansville-Community Action (Julie Hermanson)	Evansville
Beloit Parks and Recreation (Mark Edwards)	Beloit
Beloit Public Library (Katharine Clark)	Beloit
Beloit School District-Bilingual Family Support (Tulio Duran)	Beloit
Blackhawk Technical College (Megan Miller)	Central Campus
Clinton Public Library (Mary Bieber)	Clinton
Community Health Systems, Inc. (Ana Montoya)	Beloit
Diversity Action Team (Santo Carfora)	Janesville
Eager Free Public Library (Alison O'Brien)	Evansville
Edgerton Outreach (Emily Pope)	Edgerton
Edgerton Rotary (Jim Salimes)	Edgerton
Edgerton Public Library (Kirsten Almo)	Edgerton
Edgerton Teen Center (Dave and Toni Flood)	Edgerton
Evansville Police Dpt./ BASE (Lt. Patrick Reese)	Evansville
Evansville Youth Center (Becky Bartlett)	Evansville
Family Services (Kelsey M. Hood-Christenson)	Beloit
First Congregational UCC (Tanya Sadagopan)	Janesville
Hedberg Public Library (Gabrielle Draxler)	Janesville
Janesville Mobilizing 4 Change (Erin Davis)	Janesville
Janesville Police Dpt. Youth Townhall Meeting Notes	Janesville
Janesville School District-Equity (Angela Lynch)	Janesville
Janesville School District-Student Services (Sonja Robinson)	Janesville
Janesville School District-Parker H.S. Athletics (Richard Schuh)	Janesville
Latino Service Providers Coalition (Cecelia Ramirez)	Beloit
Larson Acres (Sandy Larson)	Evansville

Milton Area Youth Center (Venesa Draves)	Milton
Milton Middle School (Matt Biederwolf)	Milton
Milton Public Library (Jayme Anderson and Ashlee Kunkel)	Milton
NAACP-Beloit Chapter (Dorothy Harrell and Tasha Bell)	Beloit
NAMI (Lindsay Stevens)	Janesville
Orfordville Public Library (Sara Strunz)	Orfordville
Parkview Youth Center (Teena Garber)	Orfordville
Rock River Charter School (Lisa Peterson)	Janesville
Rock University Charter School (Kolleen Onsrud)	Janesville
Saint Thomas the Apostle (Araceli Montoya)	Beloit
Stateline Boys and Girls Club (Caris Haley)	Beloit
TAGOS Charter School (Stephanie Davis)	Janesville
Thompson, Jane (DAT and Rock University Board Member)	Janesville
United Way-Blackhawk Region (Denise Peters-Kauihou)	Janesville
Yellow Brick Rd (Jennifer Schuler)	Beloit
Youth2Youth4Change (Debbie Fischer and Megge Casique)	Beloit
YWCA (Angela Moore and Ginna Isunza)	Janesville

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