YOUTH VOICES:
LINKING NEW TECHNOLOGIES WITH PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Year Two Final Report

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Wellesley Central Health Corporation

Year Two Final Report

As described in the original Youth Voices proposal submitted to the Wellesley Central Health Corporation, there has been much attention, in the field of community health, given to the value and importance of youth participation in identifying the needs and determining the solutions of their communities. Ensuring that this is authentic youth participation, however, has not been sufficiently explored. Youth Voices contributes to closing this gap by developing youth-driven processes for social action and community health promotion. In particular, under the current project, Youth Voices has developed and evaluated the EIPARS Model for engaging youth in community issue identification and collective action using media technology and is developing a Youth Voices Guide to sustain, inspire and disseminate the Model. EIPARS is grounded in the literature and practice of Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR is "research that provides practitioners, organizations or communities with the tools to solve their problems" (Boutilier, Mason & Rootman, 1997). It provides stakeholders with immediate feedback and usable findings to make necessary changes in program planning while serving to advocate for social policy change.

While the literature on PAR is extensive and growing, detailed guides grounded in the substantive area of community health are largely missing from the literature, especially concerning youth and technology. The intent is not to promote a rigid model, but to share a successful method that hopefully will be a catalyst to stimulate participatory community development in health, and in particular to encourage agencies to foster more active involvement of youth in agency and community initiatives

Youth Voices represents a collaboration between the TeenNet Research Program at the University of Toronto and youth serving community organizations in downtown Toronto. In 2002-2003, TeenNet partnered with Beat the Street and Regent Park Focus. In 2003-2004,

TeenNet continued to partner with Beat the Street and solidified a new partnership with Supporting Our Youth (SOY). What makes Youth Voices unique is the recognition of the importance of and opportunities gained from using media technologies with youth. The use of media technology with youth recognizes that for an entire generation technology has always been a part of the world in which they live. One only has to observe the use of cell phones and MP3 players to see that for many youth technology is not a tool but a natural and seamless part of how they conduct their lives. The use of media technology is integral to the EIPARS Model.

This report provides an overview of Year II, which attempted to further evaluate the Youth Voices EIPARS Model while capturing learnings to develop a relevant and inspiring Youth Voices Guide. Also contained in this report is a short review of Year I, an overview of Year II including, partner activity reports and summery research results.

Project Goal and Objectives

Project Goal: To investigate how new technologies linked with Participatory Action Research methods can engage and sustain youth in social action and community health promotion.

Project Objectives:
1. To develop and evaluate a model (**EIPARS**) for engaging youth in social action and community health promotion

2. To analyze ways in which low and high-end technologies promote youth engagement and ownership in social action and community health promotion

3. To develop and evaluate processes for youth-driven participatory action within the structure of existing community health organizations.

Year One (2002-2003): Recap

In Year One of the Project, the youth of Regent Park Focus and Beat the Street went through one full cycle using the EIPARS model for issue identification and community action. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation was completed as the youth completed each stage of the Model. Preliminiary analysis of the data collected was completed and used to modify and refine the EIPARS Model. One of the significant learnings from Year I was the recognition of the need to build research as well as reflection into the Model. While these elements have always existed in

some way, the research analysis reinforced the importance of evaluation to create a sense of ownership, connection and effectiveness of action to a group's project. Therefore the Model that was originally called EIPAS was expanded to Six Phases (EIPARS)

Figure 1 privides a visual representation of one full cycle of the six phases of the EIPARS Model: **Engage-Identify-Plan-Act-Reflect/Research-Sustain**.
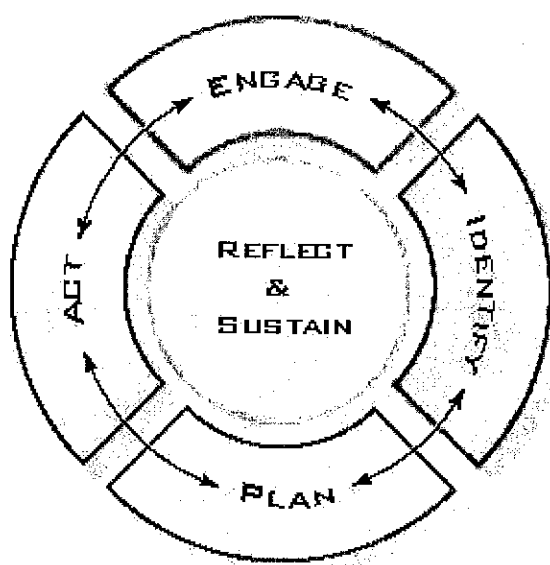
Figure 1 The Youth Voices Process

Multimedia technologies are used to **Engage** youth into the project, and allow them to express themselves through creative approaches such as art, video, music or photography. Through this work, youth **Identify** issues of importance to them. The group then creates a **Plan** for addressing one or more of the issues they have identified, and mobilizes to **Act**. Central to the Youth Voices process is a need to continually **Reflect/Research** on how the project is doing, and find ways to **Sustain** the group's work.

Learnings from Year One were also captured in the development of a draft Youth Voices Guide. This Guide was created to assist community partners to sustain their work into Year II.

Year Two: Overview

A new project coordinator, Andrea Ridgley, took over the Youth Voices project from Charlotte Lombardo, in July 2003.

The second year of the Youth Voices project focused on building the sustainability of the process by running additional EIPARS cycles more closely integrated into the structure of the community partner organizations. This meant TeenNet staff did not co-facilitate groups but rather supported the facilitator and formed primarily a research relationship with youth. The draft Guide to the Youth Voices process provided the key knowledge transfer between Year I and Year II.

The Year II research objectives focussed on continuing to develop, evaluate and finalize the Youth Voices EIPARS Model; assess more closely the role and impact of the multimedia technologies used; and identify how youth engagement and action projects fit into the partner organizations. Feedback on the Youth Voice Guide was also obtained from the group facilitators.

The evaluation of the EIPARS Model for a youth engagement and action continued as it did in year one. We assessed the stages of the model for satisfaction, strengths and challenges, role of facilitator, and lessons learned by the participating group. Further assessment was also done to obtain feedback on how the process impacted the youth participant's sense of personal empowerment (motivation, self-efficacy, critical thinking, beliefs about group action, etc.), sense of community (participation in decision making and action, perceptions of support, perceptions of community connectedness, increased empathy), and their sense of contribution to organizational and community empowerment (belonging to a social network, impact/effectiveness of action, etc).

The importance of documenting and researching youth and technology projects is a growing need supported by the documented growth in multimedia youth projects in our communities. Because of this and the fact that the projects in year II were going to use more diverse and

sophisticated technology than Year I, prompted the recognition that a focus on the nuances of using technology with youth should be explored. We wanted to capture the role of technology in the EIPARS process (how it promotes youth engagement and ownership; contributes to social action and community health promotion). We also wanted to understand the organizational and personnel issues around technology use (time, expertise, organizational structure).

During Year I, it became clear that organizational and human factors impact on the ability to successfully complete and sustain implementation of this kind of youth participation model. For example, it had been identified that we could not necessarily assume that all involved would recognize and support youth participation and leadership as EIPARS demands. Therefore, we focused a part of the evaluation on how the EIPARS model was being used by the partner organizations both practically and philosophically. In particular, we were interested in understanding what did and didn't work regarding the stages of the model and why, as well as what connections were being made between the Model, the group's chosen action and community health promotion. Philosophically, we attempted to capture how the Model's approach fit in with the theoretical and operational approach of the community partners. This also included assessing the impact of organizational and human factors on the ability to complete and sustain both the EIPARS Model and project.

As identified, creating a relevant, usable Guide is important to the sustainability and dissemination of the EIPARS Model. In year II, attention was given to how the draft Guide was being used by the youth group facilitators and its ease of understanding and usability. To start to identify effective Guide dissemination formats and methods, we sought to capture how the partnering community organizations identify and integrate resources into their programs, and the impact of the individual workers and managers on this process.

Partner report

The partnership with Beat the Street continued into Year II of the Youth Voices Project. However, the Regent Park Focus manager decided they would not be able to continue into Year II. Most of the youth who had participated in Year I had moved on to other things and Regent Park Focus did not have the finances or the staff to start a new group. However, the initiatives

undertaken in Year I continue. The Tough Guise project has been developed into a workshop and implemented at conferences, schools and community centers by Regent Park Focus staff. Tough Guise is a multimedia presentation that examines the way masculinity is portrayed in popular culture and its link to the practice of tough posing and violence among boys (see Year 1 report for further detail).

In December 2003, TeenNet secured a second partner for Year II in Supporting Our Youth (SOY). Supporting Our Youth is a community development project designed to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgendered youth in Toronto. Through the active involvement of youth and adult communities, SOY works to create healthy arts, culture and recreational spaces for young people; to provide supportive housing and employment opportunities; and to increase youth access to adult mentoring and support.

The focus of Year II of the Youth Voices Project was for the EIPARS Model process to be more integrated into the partner community organization with the community partners conducting the day-to-day running of the youth groups. The TeenNet researcher and the two partner community organizations jointly conducted the initial planning and set up of the youth groups. The community partners then facilitated the youth groups using the EIPARS Model and draft Guide. In order to further assess the effectiveness of EIPARS and the sustainability of the process within the community organizations, the TeenNet researcher met with the community partners on a monthly basis and had contact with the youth, facilitators, and managers more regularly through regular meetings and scheduled data collection appointments.

To ensure consistency of the implementation of the Model and clarity in regards to roles, a Terms of Reference document was created and signed by TeenNet staff and each community partner. This was deemed especially important given the more 'hands off' relationship in Year II. The Terms of Reference outlined the project goals, the project tasks and the agreed upon responsibilities of TeenNet and the partnering organization

YV Peace Power, Beat the Street

Beat the Street is a learning center for street-involved youth and adults in downtown Toronto. Beat the Street is a program of Frontier College, providing literacy training, upgrading, computer access and arts programming.

As reported in the Year I Final Report, the goal for Year II was to use the concept of *Perspectives of Street Youth* and find new and creative methods for young people to tell their own stories. However, all of the youth involved in the original project moved onto other activities during the summer, 2003. Given the transitory nature of street-involved youth this was not surprising. However, several of the youth were available for a TeenNet researcher to do 'member checking' of the outcome evaluation she conducted with them in Year I.

For Year II, youth were recruited for the new Youth Voices Project from a group of learners at the center who were interested in learning computer based music production software. Seven youth between the ages of 19-22; five young men and two women participated in the project. (Ten were originally recruited but three left the project for various reasons). The group called themselves Peace Power and used music production software to create songs and music about topics they identified as important to them. The youth met two days a week between May 2003 – April 2004.

Some of the issues identified by the Peace Power participants were: surviving day-to-day as a street-involved youth, barriers to accessing support and services, poverty, homelessness, betrayal, racism, and lack of access to outlets of self-invention. When developing what message the group wanted to communicate to their youth audiences they focused on the positive: Chase your dreams, Develop yourself, and Widen your perspective.

The youth participated in several workshops to assist them in focusing their issues, building skills and expressing themselves in different ways. The ultimate goal was to build a dynamic show. In addition to in-depth learning of Acid Pro music production software, the group learned

about lyric writing and song construction, and participated in a Breakdancing and video production workshop. They also participated in a Forum Theatre Workshop. This assisted them in building the content and approach of their performances. Forum Theatre is a form of interactive theatre designed to teach people how to take an active role in the life of their community, through their local government, community initiatives, and daily forms of direct action. The youth also spent two weeks with Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography learning about photography with a focus on taking pictures that reflected the lyrical and thematic content of their music. Gallery 44 is a non-profit artist-run centre.

The youth participants quickly identified they wanted to do "outreach" to other street involved youth and adults who work with youth, as their main action. "Outreach" consisted of creating a multimedia performance of their ideas, opinions and inspirations. The group viewed their performances as not only having their voices heard but also as a learning exchange for them. For example, they would pose questions to their audiences about their themes of personal choice, community and self respect, while communicating a three-fold message of *Chase your dreams*, *Develop yourself*, and *Widen your perspective*. The YV Peace Power group did fifteen performances in total, presenting to over 700 youth and adults in a variety of settings, including the 6th Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival, April 2004. *See Appendix A for a list of performances*

The TeenNet researcher met monthly with the participating youth and agency Manager, and weekly with the group facilitator to check-in on the process. Evaluation of the process was conducted through monthly focus groups with youth and monthly one-on-one individual interviews with the manager and facilitator. More on the data collection can be found in Data Collection section of the report.

In an effort to ensure sustainability of project and capacity building, Robert Davis, Beat the Street Manager joined TeenNet staff at two Wellesley Central CBR Workshops: "Community-Based Research II" and "Writing Effective Proposals for Community-Based Research".

TeenNet supported Beat the Street in winning the 2003 Youth Advocate Award for Innovation (in which the Youth Voices youth group was recognized) and in securing a Crime Prevention Grant.

Outputs

- Please see attached Peace Power DVD

- Please refer to http://www.beat-the-street.org/learn/peace.html and http://www.beat-the-street.org/learn/resources.html to see some of the work of the project. This will also be linked to TeenNet's youth action website (www.globalyouthvoices.org) in the coming months.

Please see Appendix B for:

Outreach 2004 at Gallery 44, July 13 - Aug 5 2004

- "Peace Power: Six youth who are making a difference", Catch the Flava Newspaper, Fall 2004

- VOX (TVO) television story on "Peace Power". VOX is a youth magazine series that provides a new voice for young people, and encourages them to explore their ideas, their issues, and the world around them.

YV Rock the Boat, Supporting Our Youth

The participants for the Youth Voice Project were recruited from the existing programs of Supporting Our Youth (SOY), particularly from a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) newcomer and/or immigrant social youth group called EXPRESS. Seven youth (five young men and two young women) between the ages of 18-24yrs became Rock the Boat. (Eight youth were originally recruited but one left the project for personal reasons). All of the youth immigrated within last five years from Indonesia, the Caribbean, Ethiopia, Egypt and Pakistan.

The Rock the Boat group operated between January – June 2004. This late date was due to the negotiation with Regent Park Focus and the time it took to identify a new, appropriate Youth Voices community partner.

This group mainly identified issues that related to their migration experience: being gay, lesbian or bisexual, being young, challenges of culture and homosexuality, experiences of racism in gay mainstream and society at large, isolation, awareness and acceptance of own communities and the need to bring communities together.

From these issues, the group determined their project objective: to create a website that would educate LGBTQ youth about the social, fun and entertaining side to living in Toronto, Canada, as well as give support and provide resources to legal and social services. The site is now available at www.rocktheboat.ca. The youth identified that resources were important so that LGBTQ newcomer youth and youth who live outside Canada have a place to connect online, share multimedia arts, accurate immigration information, services and social places in Toronto. They also stated strongly that the use of their website could be an activist tool to support and mobilize young people.

The name Rock the Boat came from a play on the term Fresh Off The Boat, which is a slang insult applied to newcomers to English speaking countries. The comment implies that these newcomers are ignorant about the complexities of life in a modern city. Therefore, Rock the Boat implies an active, engaged newcomer who is not going to conform to this stereotype and will rebel strongly against it. The group also decided they wanted their own URL so they could distinguish themselves from the existing agency website (www.soytoronto.org). The Rock the Boat website consists of sections entitled: Who We Are; Where to find us; In the Arts (images & words); Survival kit (resources); Our Community; and FAQs.

To create their website, the youth had two kinds of meeting which ran concurrently through the year. Learning the technology occurred at bi-weekly meetings and the content creation happened at weekly meetings. The tight timeframe for the project also required the youth to do content work between meetings. Some of the technology that was learned and used by the group was: Internet 101, web authoring and design software and how to use scanners. The youth contributed their own photography, art and writing to the create the content of the website. An

art therapist did an Improvisation Workshop with them to challenge and stimulate their ideas of artistic expression.

Although funding has ended for this initiative the youth have decided to incorporate the maintenance of the website into the EXPRESS drop-in social group. Other members of EXPRESS have indicated an interest and thus there is the potential of having larger group contribute materials and the Rock the Boat youth will experience some peer leadership in knowledge exchange.

The TeenNet research wrote a support letter for SCPI Capital Fund grant secured by Supporting Our Youth. This grant will ensure technical equipment and office furniture to enable SOY to continue to deliver a broad range of community-based programs and services for marginalized LGBTTQ youth, with the goal of empowering them, assisting them to increase their knowledge and develop skills, and to help them integrate into the community. TeenNet also facilitated a connection between Beat the Street and Rock the Boat. The facilitator of Rock the Boat needed a place to conduct hands on website development training. SOY did not have this capacity so the training was conducted in Beat the Street's computer lab.

The TeenNet researcher checked-in with youth and manager on a monthly basis; conducted focus groups with youth monthly and individual interviews with manager and facilitator monthly. More on the data collection can be found in Data Collection section of the report.

Outputs:
Please see http://www.rocktheboat.ca for project website. This will also be linked to www.globalyouthvoices.org in the coming months.

Please see Appendix C for:
- "Seeking a home in the gay village" Toronto Star, June 23, 2004-07-12

Beat the Street/Supporting Our Youth

TeenNet was also able to facilitate a connection between Beat the Street and Rock the Boat. The facilitator of Rock the Boat needed a place where all the youth would have a computer station so he could conduct the website building instruction (SOY did not have this capacity). Beat the Street does, so workshops were held at Beat the Street.

Results

Data Collection Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to evaluate the Youth Voices EIPARS Model, Guide and processes for youth-driven participatory action within the structure of partner organizations.

The TeenNet researcher conducted monthly focus groups with youth participants and individual interviews with facilitators. The manager of Beat the Street was also interviewed monthly because of his close involvement in the project. Each interview was 1hour to 1.5hours and the focus groups were 1.5hours. The TeenNet project manager conducted all interviews and focus groups, she took notes during data collection and both the focus groups and interviews were tape-recorded. The project manager also did the coding of the data. Coding was created based on the framework of Year I, the expert knowledge of the TeenNet research team, and the recent literature in the field of youth participation, youth and technology, organizational capacity and knowledge exchange.

At the beginning of each project, the youth were given a short, close-ended questionnaire regarding their technology use and demographic information. The partner facilitators and the TeenNet researcher each kept process notes to record experiences and observations of the group, the EIPARS Model process and the Guide.

Finally, the Global Youth Voices Website Server Log Files (www.globalyouthvoices.org) were also tracked for a measure of the exposure and impact of projects.

Highlights of Analysis

The analysis of the data was divided into three main themes:

- The ability of the EIPARS Model to engage youth in community action
- The role of technology in youth engagement
- How Models and resources of youth engagement and action fit into community organization structures

The analysis of the data was used to refine the EIPARS Model and Guide, and to identify structures and frameworks for facilitating the implementation of the Model and Guide in community agencies. Highlights of the data analysis are provided below.

I. EIPARS Model

Both community partner projects completed a full EIPARS cycle. Analysis of the results confirmed Year One findings on the ability of the EIPARS Model process to authentically engage youth to take action in their community.

The EIPARS Model process of providing youth with an opportunity to voice their thoughts and feelings about their communities and plan and take action on the issues of importance continues to be a very powerful tool in engaging and working with youth. In particular, on an individual and group level the EIPARS Model process supported participants in exploring who they are and who they want to be, and in believing that their thoughts and opinions matter.

The analysis indicates that the EIPARS Model process facilitates feelings of authentic participation in the youth group and a sense of ownership of their projects. The youth developed new understandings about their place and potential power within their communities. Overall, the participating youth felt their work would be able to make a difference on some level. A common theme was the sense they were contributing to a greater good. They had the desire to educate and assist others in their communities to understand their issues, not just for their personal gain or the strength of the group but also for the gain of their communities.

In the evaluations, the youth indicated the importance of food, honorariums and travel tokens to enable them to participate in projects. In addition, the facilitators indicated that honorariums

helped with youth's commitment to the process. However, it was noted by most of the youth, that while the honorarium may have contributed to their initial interest in the project, what they got out of it far outweighed the money they received. The skills that the youth stated they learned during the project include media literacy, new technologies, public speaking, political efficacy, critical thinking, writing, personal expression, individual development (deadlines, attendance, commitment, sharing), group process skills, presentation skills, marketing, and what is entailed in organizing performances. The facilitator and manager at one of the community partner locations highlighted the skills the youth developed by using music software, including math (beats), timeline (music is fractions), understanding metaphors and analogies for lyrics, new vocabulary, and using a thesaurus. The facilitator also outlined how the youth learned to produce and record a CD and distribute music on the Internet.

EIPARS Model Refinement

Based on the analysis of the data collected, it is worth underscoring that the process of using the EIPARS Model is as important as any resulting action. There is also a need to reframe this process as fluid rather than step-by-step. For example, depending on feedback, reflection and analysis, a youth group may progress forward through the EIPARS Model or cycle back to an earlier stage. Often there can be a lot of movement back and forth between stages as the group matures, becomes comfortable with each other, and gains experience in identifying and discussing issues and potential actions.   It was also identified that the EIPARS Model needs to recognize that the stages happen on both an individual and a group level.

Implementation of the Model process also requires a flexible approach to timelines. In order to support youth in their sense of project ownership, time is needed to reflect and process issues or learnings. Often the focus of the EIPARS Model process can feel in conflict with the need by the group, the youth and/or the facilitator to reflect on or process issues or learnings. Both community partners identified a need for time to attend to the youths' needs. Time is also need to build trust with the youth, between the youth and for the process of youth action. Many of the youth did not have a lot of experience or trust in being invited to participate in a process of engagement where power was shared between the adults and the youth

While reflection and sustainability is built into each stage, the importance of Engage at each stage was identified. Each stage has its own focus, objectives and activities, which can demand different skills and participation levels from the youth. Therefore, there is a need to ensure engagement is continuous throughout project. This can be done through regular check-ins and reflection.

The results of this formative Process evaluation were used to guide further development of the EIPARS Model and Guide for community organizations.

II. Media Technology

A key component of the EIPARS Model is the use of media technology to promote youth engagement and ownership in social action and community health promotion. Analysis of the data indicates that the Model's use of media technology stimulates and motivates youth to take part in a process that enables them to better understand their community and take action on issues of concern to them.

Engagement

The youth identified the type of technology being used was a primary draw for them joining the projects. The use of technology also facilitated the sense of ownership of projects. Once the youth learned the technology, they had a sense of control over how the technology would be used in the projects. For example, the YV Rock the Boat group directed what their website would look like and what content it would contain; the YV Peace Power group controlled how their music would be produced (created, mixed, and recorded).

Self-Expression and Skills Building

The participating youth identified the media technology they used was an effective means for self-expression and communication with their identified audiences. For one group, using the medium of music was very important to them since music is often the way that they learn about themselves and the world. Using this method also meant that they could communicate their thoughts and feelings to their peers in a way that they felt would be heard. They also stated that

using media technology in the EIPARS Model process greatly assisted them in building their skills using computers and computer software.

Equity

A common theme with the community partner facilitators and managers was the emphasis on the equity that comes with using media technology with youth. At a fundamental level, learning how to use media technology helps level out skill differences that can occur due to different access rates often associated with SES. In addition there is an equity that occurs when youth use technology to control how their thoughts and feelings are transmitted to their communities. And through the Internet, these creations can compete in the broader realm of ideas accessible to the world in a way not normally available to youth through traditional dissemination vehicles.

At Risk Youth

The community partner facilitators indicated how the selected media technology used was ideal for their particular youth population. For one group, the internet-based project allowed the youth a safe space and medium to explore and express themselves. For many, it would not be possible to be vocal about issues in their communities due to safety concerns. For another group, the use of media technology for self-expression enabled wider dissemination of street-involved youth voices often in spaces where they are not heard.

Challenges of using Media Technology

Both projects in Year II used media technology that was computer based. The community partner facilitators identified a number of challenges related to doing a group project that replied on access to computers. At one partner agency some of the youth only had access to computer at the agency location. This limited the youth to working on the project only at the agency, and during the meeting times. The challenge of access can also extend to the community agency itself. For example, one of the YV groups had to go to another facility because they did not have enough computers for all the youth. Some of the challenges with agency access included lack of funds to buy additional technology, too much agency demand for limited computers to allow for non-staff access, and outdated computers that cannot handle media software (web development, etc). One partner identified that for the project to remain current; they would need to replace

technological equipment and programs every 3 years ($65,000). There is inherent in media technology project a tension between what is affordable and what is available. Critical to being able to create a balance is the facilitator's own knowledge of the technology and ability to select the best options and develop creative approaches with limited budgets. For example, the above-mentioned partner also stated that their project could run on cheap laptops using basic Internet access and speakers.

While the EIPARS Model process would seem to require facilitators that can both work with youth and the chosen media technology, there was a tension in the data. Most of youth stated that having supportive facilitator was most important, as long they are open to learning from the youth and/or getting outside assistance regarding technology. One of the partner managers stated that technical skill comes first when he hires. He also identified the challenge of hiring a facilitator for this kind of project. Not only do they have to know the technology but also they should have experience in working with 'at-risk' populations, have counselling and group work experience, and get a low wage.

III. Knowledge Uptake

As stated, a key focus of Year II of the Youth Voices Project was to evaluate how the EIPARS Model process was adapted into the structure of our community partners. Analysis of the data highlighted a number of key considerations for successful implementation of the EIPARS Model process.

The data highlighted the need to consider further how the EIPARS Model process operates within a context of organizational norms and values. And how the skills, abilities and personalities of the participating youth and facilitators and agency managers can impact the process.

Some of the organizational factors that were identified as impacting on if and how an organization will use the EIPARS Model process include:

• Agency finances

- Available staff time
- Funder requirements and mandates for project/agency
- Organization policies and values
- Support by key staff and/or agency manager
- Staff training
- Staff skills

It has been concluded that critical to the implementation of the EIPARS Model process is that for each of the above dimensions there is a transparent dialogue between the youth and the organization and/or facilitator about expectations and limitations.

Group Foundations

The EIPARS Model process begins long before the youth engage in issue identification. A strong foundation and environment of a successful group must be built, starting with the process of recruitment. The youth may be initially intrigued and engaged by the media technology but honest reflection and discussion of relevant issues cannot happen unless there is a culture of group respect and support. This also plays a part in the youths' ability to reflect on the group process because reflection demands self-exposure.

Staff and Organizational Support

The facilitators and manger identified the difficulty with uptake of any new model or guide. Since community groups often get bombarded with potential resources the manager and/or staff need to champion an idea or resource. It needs to be made clear how it is going to benefit the their program and individual work. There also needs to be organizational openness and support for new programming and approaches to working with youth.

All of these learnings will be used in Year III to develop list of key considerations for any organization seeking to implement the EIPARS Model process.

Youth Voices Guide

Based on interviews and observation, it was identified that there is a need for a resource for youth facilitators who are interested in guiding a youth-led project using multimedia technologies.

Both facilitators used the EIPARS draft Guide. One used it quite prescriptively and the other used it as more of a "touch stone". Initially, one facilitator was resistant to using the Guide because he felt that he already had an approach to working with youth that captured a lot of the EIPARS Model. However, in the end, he found the structure the guide provided helpful in grounding his work and because of the short timeline to complete the projects.

In particular, both facilitators found the draft Guide useful at the beginning of the projects around the process of engagement – getting youth involved. It helped the facilitators establish goals and timelines for the projects. It also contributed to making the project process deeper and more thoughtful with the focus on reflection. They also liked that it was short, flexible and easy to follow.

Both organisations identified an interest in developing the Youth Voices Guide. The focus of Year III is to develop a Guide that will provide the sustainability of the EIPARS process within the partnering organizations but also for other organizations interested in using such a method.

Dissemination of Youth Voices Project

The Rock the Boat website is up and running (www.rocktheboat.ca). However, due to the time constraints of Year II, it has yet to be officially launched. Supporting Our Youth (parent organization) is committed to doing this and has requested that the funds unspent in year II be carried over into Year III of project. This would include a public announcement/event and the creation of dissemination materials.

The Peace Power group dissemination has already been noted in the project report section of this report.

Dr Skinner, TeenNet's Principal Investigator, has disseminated the Youth Voices EIPARS Model and projects both nationally and internationally, including invited presentations in Jordan, Brazil and Greece.

TeenNet continues to research, evaluate and refine the Youth Voices EIPARS Model in a variety of settings. Most recently, TeenNet has been developing international partnerships to explore the use of the Youth Voices EIPARS model in a global context. One project: Youth Voices-Engaging Bedouin Youth in Community Health Promotion was conducted in Israel. TeenNet is also currently developing partnerships with academic and/or health organizations in Brazil, China and Jordan.

Presentations/Conferences
Ridgley, A., Skinner, H., Poland, B., Lombardo, C. (2004) **Youth PAR: Adding Multimedia Technology To The Mix** abstract for the The Network TUFH/CCPH Atlanta Conference, 2004 has been accepted for presentation in a Thematic Poster Session

Ridgley, A. (2004, April). **Youth Voices: a Model for Youth Engagement and Action** George Brown College, Assaulted Women and Children Counseling Advocacy Program, Toronto, ON

Skinner, H, Lombardo, C., Poland, B., Chalin, C. (2003, October) **Youth Voices: Urban Health Promotion on Using Interactive Technologies (Poster Presentation).** The Second International Conference on Urban Health, N.Y, NY.

Ridgley, A. (2003, December). **Youth Engagement and Community Action.** Youth for Health Phase II project (collaboration between Canada and Ukraine). Centre for Health Promotion and the Canadian Society for International Health, Toronto, ON.

Ridgley, A., Skinner, H., Poland, B., Lombardo, C. (2004, February) **Youth Voices: Health Promotion Using Interactive Technologies.** Public Health Sciences Poster presentation, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Publications
Maley, O., Ridgley, A., Skinner, (In Press) **Youth in Action: Smoke Free World Fights Global Tobacco"** The Globalization Gender & Health. Canadian Institutes of Health Research--Institute of Gender and Health for The Centre for Research in Women's Health (CRWH), Canadian Institutes of Health Research--Institute of Gender and Health, Fogarty International Centre and the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health.

Maley, O., Ridgley, A., Biscope, S., Flicker, S., Skinner, H. (Under Review) **e-PAR: Using Technology and Participatory Action Research to Engage Youth in Health Promotion**

Web Server
Global Youth Voices (5 April 2003 to 3 April 2004) had 4,828 visitors. The most popular viewed page being the home page followed by the youth action page

Budget

Please see attached financial statement from the University of Toronto's Research Services for the fiscal year May 1, 2003 – April 30, 2004.

Carry Over from Year One

As reported in the *Year One Final Report*, the Wellesley Central Health Corporation gave permission for funds from Year One (May 1, 2002-April 30, 2003) to be carried over until June 30, 2004. $7,139.93 was carried over. On the financial statement (May 1, 2003- April 30, 2004) the following amounts are expenditures related to Year One and were incurred prior to June 30, 2004:

Salaries and fringe benefits: $4,285.61

This means that $2,854.32 of Year One funds is still unspent. A portion of these funds was to be used for transcription. However, in the final plan for the data analysis for Year One it was decided that it would be better for the Project Co-ordinator to work directly with the tapes to code the major themes and findings.

Notes for Year Two

TeenNet received approval from the Wellesley Central Health Corporation to extend expenditures for Year Two to June 30th, 2004. Year Two expenditures for the period May 1, 2004-June 30, 2004 will be reported as part of the Year Three.

To facilitate payment of honorarium, travel expenditures, action cost etc, associated with the Supporting Our Youth (SOY) Project, SOY was given a Sub-Grant for the amount of $5,215.00. The Wellesley Central Health Corporation approved this Sub-Grant. As part of the Sub-Grant terms, SOY will provide UofT with a financial statement.

Supplies and Materials and Travel are under budget because the expenditure related to the project with Support Our Youth (SOY) has not yet been incurred. Supplies and Materials are also under because UofT codes the costs associated with the action budget as Services. In the

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budget submitted to the Wellesley Central Health Corporation these costs are listed under Materials and Equipment. This coding also means the category of Other is over the budgeted amount submitted to the Wellesley Central Health Corporation. Travel is also under budget because the youth at the Beat the Street project did not require travel reimbursement.

Request for Extension and Reallocation of Funds

Subtracting the Year One related expenditures from the Year Two report means $2,532.92 from Year Two's budget will be unspent by the end of June 2004.

TeenNet would like to request the unspent funds from Year One ($2,854.32) and Year Two ($2532.92) be expended in Year Three and reallocated to the areas of compensation and travel. TeenNet staff are members of the Steelworkers Union. The collective agreement provides for salary increases that were not reflected in the budget submitted to the Wellesley. In addition, TeenNet would like to identify, with our community partners, potential dissemination strategies such as conferences. We would also like the ability to involve youth participants in these initiatives.

Please also see the attached Financial Statement of Supporting Our Youth (as required by Sub grant) and requisition for unspent funds to be expended into Year Three.