



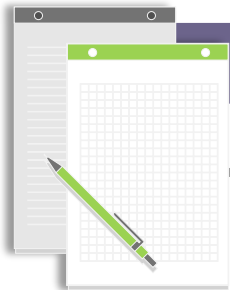
YPAR in School

Identifying Community Issues and Assets

Lesson adapted from:

YPAR Hub. (n.d.). *Identifying Community Issues and Assets*.

<http://yparhub.berkeley.edu/define-issue/identifying-community-issues-and-assets/>



Objective

To identify key issues and assets in the community

Activity: Identifying Issues & Assets

Materials

- Butcher paper or flip chart paper
- Paper
- Tape
- Pens or pencils
- Markers
- Clipboards
- Why Train Handout

Prepare Before

Prepare butcher paper by creating two columns labeled with the name of your school/organization and your neighborhood/ city/town on top.

Pre-Activity

Have students name a community of which they are a part (school, family, religion, neighborhood, rec center, sports team, musical group, etc).

(Continued next page)



YPAR in School

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Activity: Identifying Issues & Assets

Part 1: Identifying Issues

STEP 1: Divide participants into small groups and give each group a piece of paper and pens. Have them create two columns on the paper and label the columns with the name of your school/organization and the neighborhood/city/town. YPAR facilitators should do the activity as well.

STEP 2: Brainstorm as many problems they can that exist in these places. Encourage students to think about what really bugs them, or if they could change something, what would they change?

STEP 3: After brainstorming, come back to the full group and record all of the issues on chart paper. Compare participants' responses and recall the importance of different perspectives in understanding their community.

Part 2: Identifying Assets

****Remind the group about the concept of assets: positive things or strengths. An asset can be a skill, a quality, or a resource (e.g., money, a building, a program). Try to generate a few examples from students.**

STEP 1: In the same small groups, have participants turn their paper over and label the same columns: school/organization and neighborhood/city/town. Under each heading, have participants write assets (e.g., people, places, programs) that are supportive and important for them and for youth in general and that make their community a better place to live.



YPAR in School

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Activity: Identifying Issues & Assets

Part 2: Identifying Assets *(Continued)*

STEP 2: Share back as a full group. Invite the participants to share their lists of assets and to write them all up on a chart paper above or next to the chart of problems or issues.

Part 3: Why Train

Give each group a copy of the handout “Why Train”.

When identifying a problem to address, there are many underlying issues. You should not just say something is a problem. You want to get at the heart of the issue. Asking “why?” continually will help you get to the bottom of the issue and help you develop a potential solution. Go through this thought exercise in your group about the potential problem you want to address in your research project.

Developing solutions to a problem is equally as challenging. You can’t just say “we will fix the problem.” Real life is more complex than that. When you come up with your solution, you have to think through all of the details. Asking continually “how?” will help you develop the details of your plan.

Lesson adapted from YPAR Hub:

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Reflection

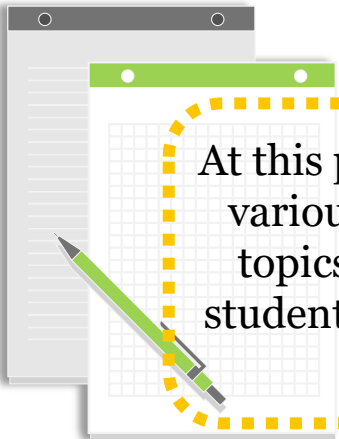
- Give each youth a piece of paper and ask them to take a few minutes to:
 - Choose one issue from the list and write down why this particular issue bothers them.
 - Choose one asset from the list and write down why they think this asset is particularly important.
- Ask them to recall experiences that may cause them to feel this way.
- Have participants share their thinking with a partner. Have participants then share some of the things they said or heard in their pair. Allow time for sharing and questioning from others. Is there agreement on the issue that is most important?

Summarize

Discuss how identifying problems and strengths can help us find our research question and project.

Demonstrate

Have each participant name something about their school/organization that they particularly like or appreciate.



At this point, your class should be gathering a larger list of various community issues that might be possible YPAR topics. Try to document all of the ideas in one place so students will be able to look over the larger list as they get closer to identifying a specific issue.



YPAR in School

Why Train

Directions: When identifying a problem to address, there are many underlying issues. You should not just say something is a problem. You want to get at the heart of the issue. Asking “why?” continually will help you get to the bottom of the issue and help you develop a potential solution. Go through this thought exercise in your group about the potential problem you want to address in your research project.

State the problem:	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	
Why is that a problem?	

State a solution:	
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YPAR in School

How Train

Directions: Developing solutions to a problem is equally as challenging. You can't just say "we will fix the problem." Real life is more complex than that. When you come up with your solution, you have to think through all of the details. Asking continually "how?" will help you develop the details of your plan

State the solution:	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
But how?	
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But how?	