

# **Youth Development Executives of King County**

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**Strategic Plan  
2014-2016**



# Identity Statement

Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC) is a coalition of youth-serving organizations working together to advance the youth development field in order to improve outcomes for young people.

Representing the executive leadership of King County based youth serving organizations, YDEKC is uniquely positioned to hone a common voice and **advocate** for our members with the systems (school districts, governments, the public) that they intersect with; to **develop field level knowledge** about best practices in youth development; and to **build leadership strength** in the non-profit youth serving sector.

In only a few years, YDEKC has established itself as a key voice for youth serving providers in the region.

## Mission

Youth Development Executives of King County builds and unifies the youth development field.

## Vision

Every young person has the opportunity and support they need to learn, lead, connect, contribute and thrive.

## Who We Are

YDEKC membership is comprised of Executive Directors, CEOs and other key leaders of non-profit organizations directly serving youth ages 5 through young adulthood within King County.



## 3 Programmatic Goals

### 1. Advocacy

Garner systemic support of the youth development field

### 2. Outcomes

Promote common youth development outcomes

### 3. Capacity Building

Increase YDEKC member capacity through professional development and networking opportunities

## 1 Operational Goal

### 1. Sustainability

Strengthen internal capacity and organizational sustainability



# Programmatic **Advocacy**

## Goal 1 **Garner Systemic Support of the Youth Development Field**

### **Rationale:**

Hundreds of youth serving organizations in King County serve upwards of 100,000 young people from age 5 to young adult in the region.

Without these services, many young people would not have the social, emotional, academic and physical wellbeing supports they need to successfully navigate childhood and adolescence to become healthy, contributing adults in our communities.

With YDEKC, executive leaders of youth serving organizations can harness their collective power to ensure youth development programs are recognized and funded as essential supports alongside K-12 education and other systems that support young people.

### **Advocacy Strategy 1**

***Coordinate and advance advocacy efforts for the field***

### **Objectives**

A) Build relationships with elected officials and key decision makers in government and business to build awareness and commitment to children and youth services and the youth development field.

B) Represent the executive leadership of the youth development field in regional collective impact efforts and local and regional advocacy coalitions.

C) Articulate member perspective through letter writing, testifying and taking positions on relevant and timely matters that impact the Youth Development field.

D) Sign on and support partners' advocacy agendas (local, state, federal) as appropriate.



E) Engage members in networking and education opportunities around advocacy efforts.

### **Advocacy Strategy 2**

#### ***Increase stable funding for high quality direct service programming***

##### **Objectives**

A) Ensure funders recognize the need for concurrent funding of direct service, capacity building and system building.

B) Advocate for adequate funding streams for youth serving organizations with attention to small organizations and organizations that take direction from communities of color.

C) Advocate for concurrent financial support of social, emotional, physical, enrichment and academic needs of youth.

### **Advocacy Strategy 3**

#### ***Increase awareness of and access to youth development programs and services***

##### **Objectives**

A) Partner to develop a comprehensive online program inventory of opportunities for youth in King County.

B) Develop and seek implementation of school community partnership toolkit that supports development of strong partnerships between schools and youth development providers.



# Programmatic Outcomes

## Goal 2 Promote Common Youth Development Outcomes

### Rationale:

We know that youth development and youth serving programs make an essential contribution to successful outcomes for youth.

However, it is extremely difficult to understand our collective impact without common data points that can help us to improve our programs, provide proof of effectiveness, and inform policy decisions.

With YDEKC, youth development organizations can build common language and use common tools to measure our impact as individual organizations and as a field.

### Outcomes Strategy 1

***Solidify and strengthen outcome and measurement framework for youth development organizations***

### Objectives

A) Engage in a shared measurement initiative to solidify our field level theory of change, and define program level and youth level metrics.

B) Support member implementation of theory of change measurement through the development and promotion of a measurement “tool-box” across ages and developmental domains including surveys, observational assessments and staff reports.

### Outcomes Strategy 2

***Support common outcome measurement and shared data between youth development organizations and schools, and across organizations.***

### Objectives

A) Continue to support adoption and data use (in partnership



with youth development organizations) of the YDEKC/Road Map Student Engagement and Motivation Survey (SEMS) across Road Map districts and other interested districts in King County.

B) Improve data sharing processes, protocols, and data use capacity for Community Based Organizations with School Districts and between CBOs.

### **Outcomes Strategy 3**

***Partner with funders and government entities for a common regional Theory of Change (TOC)***

#### **Objectives**

A) Solidify Regional Youth Development Theory of Change with government and funder partners based on member informed TOC (Strategy 1)

B) Encourage funders and system level partners to support and encourage measurement of common TOC.



# Programmatic **Capacity Building**

## Goal 3 **Increase YDEKC Member Capacity through Professional Development and Networking Opportunities**

### **Rationale:**

Strong leaders are essential to effective organizations. Through YDEKC, non-profit executive leaders have a network of support and access to resources that can help them to hone their leadership and management skills, build organizational capacity, and ensure the field retains effective, committed executive directors and CEOs.

### **Capacity Building Strategy 1**

*Support organizational capacity building efforts to develop high quality and high impact programming*

### **Objectives**

A) Build capacity among member organizations to use both quality and outcome data to inform practice.

B) Provide education and encourage adoption of the statewide youth program quality standards in partnership with School's Out Washington (SOWA).

C) Develop tools that are needed for member organizations to meet standards, particularly with regard to organizational management and policy development in partnership with SOWA.

### **Capacity Building Strategy 2**

*Engage and connect member organizations*

### **Objectives**

A) Clearly build and articulate value proposition for member organizations.





B) Host events for member organizations including more informal opportunities as well as annual member summit(s).

C) Recruit and engage new member organizations.

D) Increase and improve electronic communications (see Operational Goal, Strategy 2)

**Capacity Building Strategy 3**  
***Support Leadership Development***

**Objectives**

A) Engage with higher education to increase opportunities for professionalizing the youth development field including increasing career opportunities for youth workers and building a strong pipeline for executive leadership.

B) Develop formal and informal professional development supports for executive leaders and work to ensure there is a strong pipeline of next generation non-profit leaders.



# Operational Sustainability

## Goal 1 Strengthen Internal Capacity and Organizational Sustainability

### Rationale:

Dedicated infrastructure and staff are essential to effective collaborations. YDEKC has laid the foundation for that support organization. The priority in the next three years will be to strengthen the funding, systems, and governance structures in pursuit of establishing a healthy and sustainable organization.

### Sustainability Strategy 1

*Fundraise to support an annual budget that is in alignment with strategic priorities*

### Objectives

- A) Maintain current levels of grant funding and develop new relationships with additional foundations staff.
- B) Develop a Major Donor strategy for small group of committed individuals.
- C) Manage and increase membership contributions.
- D) Develop an earned income strategy.

### Sustainability Strategy 2

*Improve communications capacity*

### Objectives

- A) Develop and execute a 3-year communications plan.
- B) Create goals for website content and use, including member only portal.
- C) Develop e-newsletters, social media capacity or other communications tools.



### **Sustainability Strategy 3**

#### ***Continue to clarify and hone governance structure***

##### **Objectives**

- A) Maintain an active advisory board of 16-20 members.
  
- B) Continue to clarify roles and responsibilities of YDEKC, SOAR, and SOWA.
  
- C) Annually revisit and update as necessary Memorandum of Understanding with Fiscal Sponsor (SOWA) and determine when and if separate 501(c)3 status should be further explored.



## Appendix A: **Organizational History** History

In 2009 a small group of local funders gathered informal feedback from youth development leaders on the potential benefits of greater coordination among youth organizations. There was agreement that there was a lack of cohesion around standards of practice or quality and a need for a more unified youth development perspective at key decision-making tables.

As a result, a vision for the collaboration of non-profit youth development organizations to speak with a unified voice was introduced at a one-day summit for executives in November 2010. Attended by 70 executive leaders, the summit built consensus for the development of an independently staffed organization to better organize the youth development field.

After the summit, the planning team morphed into a steering committee to lay the groundwork for the organizational model and seek funding. Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC) received its first grants from the Gates Foundation and Raikes Foundation to launch as an organization in the fall of 2011.

The steering committee, with additional membership recruited, then became the official Advisory Board for the organization, and Jessica Werner began as the first paid staff in October 2011. As of March 2014, the organization now supports 2.5 FTEs, and counts 89 organizations as members.

YDEKC's first two years were focused on developing a common voice for executive leaders, identifying common outcomes for the youth development field and in partnership with the Road Map Project, and on elevating high quality practice. Much of the work that has been accomplished to date will carry forward into our first official strategic plan for 2014-2016. A summary of work to date can be found in YDEKC's 2011 – 2013 (bi)Annual Report, published in April 2014.

School's Out Washington played a convening role for the initial summit, and now serves as YDEKC's fiscal agent, providing space, equipment and overhead administrative support (payroll, IT support, etc.) in exchange for approximately 20% of YDEKC's budget. YDEKC is responsible for raising its own funds.



## Appendix B: **Planning Process**

# Strategic Planning Process

In October 2013, a process was initiated to develop a strategic plan for Youth Development Executives of King County. An outside consultant, Kim Rakow Bernier, was hired to lead the process. The 2014 – 2016 strategic plan merges established organizational and operational goals as well as the field level priorities that were agreed upon at the 2013 YDEKC Member Summit.

While much of the groundwork for the strategic plan had been established over the last 2-3 years of strategic decision-making, additional input from YDEKC staff, board and a sample of its members was elicited to ensure documentation of a plan that reflects members' current goals and priorities. The Executive Team and full YDEKC Advisory Board were engaged throughout the fall and winter in feedback processes towards the strategic plan.

YDEKC's board of director's engaged a sample of the YDEKC membership in the development of their 2014-2016 strategic plan through one-on-one conversations guided by an interview protocol. Board members were also asked to submit their own responses to the interview questions. 22 individuals representing the same number of YDEKC member organizations provided feedback, representing 26% of total YDEKC membership. Of the respondents, six are YDEKC board members.

All data was compiled by consultant Kim Rakow Bernier into a final feedback report that was then incorporated into the draft strategic plan. YDEKC Committees including some non-board members (Advocacy Committee, Fund Development and Member Engagement and Communications) also weighed in on the final plan.

The YDEKC Advisory Board officially voted to approve the 2014-2016 Strategic Plan on March 11, 2014.



# Appendix B: Strategic Planning Process

Executive leaders from the following organizations participated either through the Advisory Board and/or Member Interviews:

## YDEKC Advisory Board Member Organizations (as of March 2014)

- Bike Works
- Boys & Girls Clubs of King County
- City Year
- Communities in Schools of Seattle
- Community Day School Association
- Community for Youth
- Girl Scouts of Western Washington
- Neighborhood House
- Renton Area Youth & Family Services
- School's Out Washington
- SOAR
- Southwest Youth and Family Services
- Summer Search Seattle
- The Service Board
- Washington Asian Pacific Islander Community Services
- WSU Extension King County 4H

## Member Interviews conducted by board members (December 2013 & January 2014)

- Atlantic Street Center
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound
- Bike Works
- Camp Fire USA - Central Puget Sound Council
- Chinese Information and Service Center
- Communities in Schools of Renton
- Communities in Schools of Seattle
- Community Day School Association
- Community Schools Collaboration
- Coyote Central
- Horn of Africa Services
- Imagine Housing
- Invest In Youth
- Mockingbird Society
- Neighborhood House
- Southwest Youth and Family Services
- Danna K. Johnston Foundation
- Summer Search Seattle
- Team Read
- Year Up - Puget Sound
- YouthCare
- Vietnamese Friendship Association

