



WCC Youth Leadership Initiative

2011 evaluation results

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Program summary

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation's Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) is a multicultural youth leadership program that provides young people the opportunity to build skills and qualities needed to be agents of change in their community. The goal of YLI is to develop a new generation of leaders who reflect the St. Paul community, and are prepared and committed to contributing their talents to building a thriving, inclusive and multicultural community.

The program targets youth of diverse backgrounds, ages 14-18, including both youth that are considered "at-risk" and those that are excelling. Each year, YLI engages 60-70 youth, who engage in 30 hours of programming per month. Youth are racially, ethnically, and geographically diverse from across the St. Paul metropolitan area. Youth make a one year commitment to participate in five core program activities, which are held after school, on weekends, and on school release days:

- **Leadership retreats** are held three times each year. At retreats, youth explore concepts of leadership, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and participate in experiential learning activities that focus on working effectively with others.
- Monthly **cultural sessions** are held for youth in specific cultural groups. Aided by cultural coaches (volunteers from the community), youth explore their culture and heritage, stereotypes and prejudices, share experiences, and learn about their culture's contributions to society.
- In weekly **action team meetings**, youth focus on providing service to the community. Youth choose a community issue to focus on, they explore that issue, and then develop a service project to address the issue.
- Youth are **mentored** by their peers who are former program participants. Mentors receive leadership training on how to effectively facilitate activities and mentor their peers. They also develop, implement, and deliver program curriculum during the retreats, in partnership with program staff.
- **School support services** provide one-on-one structured support to youth around their individual educational needs. In addition, youth discuss the importance of education, set academic goals, and learn about higher education opportunities. This year, YLI also partnered with ScholarShop to provide seven sessions on college preparation; youth were encouraged, but not required, to attend these sessions.¹

¹ A separate evaluation of YLI ScholarShop sessions was also done by Wilder Research in June 2010 and is available at www.wilderresearch.org.

YLI offers a graduated participation track so each student is provided with opportunities to share his or her ideas, skills and talents regardless of his or her ability. First-year participants are asked to actively participate in all program components. Through active participation, youth build their skills and confidence to be a leader. Second- and third-year participants support first-year participants' growth and development, and may facilitate activities. Youth who are ready to take on significant leadership and responsibility become mentors through an in-depth application and interview process. They receive training in facilitation and program design, and deliver program curriculum during the retreats. Youth mentors also actively participate in other program activities and support the personal and leadership development of participants throughout the year. Finally, alumni of the program are provided with opportunities to re-engage in YLI, such as attend or plan leadership workshops or community events (e.g., Marnita's Table).

Based on the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, these combined program experiences are designed to provide youth support and skills that prepares them for immediate and long-term life success. Through these core program components, YLI works toward the following four goal areas:

1. Understanding of oneself and ones culture: Develop youth's understanding of themselves and their cultures.
2. Leadership knowledge, skills, and qualities: Equip youth with the knowledge, skills and qualities needed for leadership.
3. Appreciation of other cultures: Encourage youth's appreciation for the culture of others and promote cross cultural leadership.
4. Community engagement and voice: Build youth leadership through meaningful engagement in real community issues.

This report presents evaluation results from the 2010-11 program year with a summary on the degree YLI is meeting its goals based on the evaluation data.

Results

Methods

Wilder Research conducted an outcome evaluation with program participations in 2010-11. End-of-year surveys were conducted with youth participants and mentors. The survey was developed by Wilder Research with consultation from YLI staff, and includes a retrospective pre- and post-program assessment. A retrospective pre-post method asks youth at the end of the program how they feel and think now, and to think back to how they felt and thought before the program. This method is used instead of a pre-post method, in which participants complete a survey at the beginning of the program and again at the end, because participants tend to overestimate their levels of knowledge and abilities beforehand, scoring themselves lower retrospectively *after* gaining knowledge and abilities during the program.

This evaluation describes the extent YLI participants self-reported increased knowledge, awareness and attitudes of themselves and their culture, leadership, other cultures, and community engagement. This evaluation also provides information on YLI participants' satisfaction with the program.

In May of 2011, 59 youth, out of 71 graduates, completed retrospective pre and post surveys, a 83 percent response rate. In addition, a focus group was conducted with all nine mentors on May 25, 2011.

Limitations

Data represent youth perceptions and self-report, which is largely subjective. Youth also tend to give the response they believe is "correct." This may be especially the case in the focus group, when youth may not want to say something that contradicts their friends in a group setting. Long-term data on change in youth behavior as a result of participation in YLI are not available. Finally, youth who have negative experiences in the program are more likely to have dropped out and are not in the program to complete a survey. Despite these limitations, survey results provide a perspective of how youth feel they have grown while in the program, and their satisfaction with program components.

Description of survey respondents

Of the 59 youth completing an end-of-year survey, 50 were participants and 9 were mentors. Two-thirds were in the program for the first time (one did not respond to this question). While a large majority of the participants were first-time participants (78%),

all of the mentors had been in the program at least one previous year and over half (55%) had participated two previous years.

Twice as many young women participated as young men (see Figure 1), though the mentors were evenly split. Most (83%) were 16, 17 or 18 years-old, with the youngest participant being 13 and the oldest 19. Mentors were slightly older than participants. Most (72%) just completed the 11th or 12th grades; more mentors were graduating from high school this year whereas more participants were in the 11th grade. A majority of participants (77%) reported being of Asian descent, compared with half of the mentors, who represented a broader diversity of ethnic backgrounds than the participants.

1. Characteristics of participants

	Participants	Mentors	Total
Gender	N=48	N=9	N=57
Female	69%	56%	67%
Male	31%	44%	33%
Age	N=49	N=9	N=58
13	2%	0%	2%
14	8%	0%	7%
15	4%	0%	3%
16	29%	11%	26%
17	27%	44%	29%
18	27%	44%	29%
19	4%	0%	3%
Average (mean)	16.7	17.3	16.8
Grade (just completed)	N=48	N=9	N=57
8 th	8%	0%	7%
9 th	6%	0%	5%
10 th	17%	11%	16%
11 th	40%	22%	37%
12 th	29%	67%	35%
Average (median)	11	12	11
Ethnic background	N=47	N=8	N=55
Asian/Pacific Islander/Southeast Asian/ Asian American	77%	50%	73%
European American	17%	25%	18%
African/African American	15%	38%	18%
Latino/Hispanic	6%	25%	9%
American Indian	4%	13%	6%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding. Respondents may select more than one ethnic background.

Outcome evaluation

Understanding oneself, and one's culture

One of YLI's program outcomes is that youth develop their understanding of themselves and their culture. Youth rated themselves on various aspects of self-identify. Their ratings on the retrospective pre and post surveys were compared to determine the extent their participation impacted their self-identify and appreciation of others.

The most improvement was seen in respondents' willingness to take risks and stand up for what is right (71% improved; see Figure 2). Over half improved in these four areas, agreeing more strongly at the end of the program than at the beginning: think about what will happen as a result of their decisions, are confident in themselves, are proud of their cultural background, and can handle stressful situations. While fewer experienced change in having goals for the future, 88 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they had goals for the future prior to joining the program.

2. Youth self-ratings on attitudes about future-orientation, cultural pride, resiliency, and self-confidence

	Percent that agree or strongly agree		Improved
	Pre	Post	
I am willing to take risks and stand up for what is right.	51%	97%	71%
I think about what will happen as a result of my decisions.	66%	98%	54%
I feel confident in myself.	66%	95%	54%
I can handle stressful situations.	65%	100%	51%
I am proud of my cultural background.	81%	98%	51%
I have goals for my future	88%	98%	42%

Note: *Improved is the percent of respondents that moved from disagree to agree/strongly agree or agree to strongly agree.*

Youth also reported that the program has helped them be more confident, open-minded, or happy. Some are less fearful, stronger, or more comfortable with themselves.

Academic improvement

The survey tool asked youth to rate themselves on several academic areas.

Over 90 percent agree or strongly agree that they do their best in school and attend school regularly (see Figure 3). Though less than a third of respondents improved in these areas, most (85-90%) agreed they did their best and attended school regularly prior to joining the program. Similarly, only 8 percent reported their grades improved since joining the program; however 69 percent reported getting mostly A's or B's prior to joining YLI.

3. Youth self-ratings on academics

	Percent that agree or strongly agree		Improved
	Pre	Post	
I do my best in school.	85%	91%	28%
I attend school regularly.	90%	97%	14%

Note: Improved is the percent of respondents that moved from disagree to agree/strongly agree or agree to strongly agree. All changes were statistically significant with the exception of "attending school regularly."

Community engagement and voice

Another goal of YLI is to build youth leadership through meaningful engagement in real community issues. Again, youth rated themselves on various aspects of community engagement. Individuals' ratings on the retrospective pre and post surveys were compared to determine the extent their participation impacted their knowledge and attitudes.

All participants agree or strongly agree that young people can make a difference in the community and that they will help their communities, with almost three-quarters improving (see Figure 4). In addition, almost all (98%) agree or strongly agree that they feel part of community and will help their community, with 70-75 percent improving. Less than half reported any change in these areas, though respondents had high levels of agreement in all three areas before the program: presence of caring adults in their life who have high expectations, the importance of listening to and valuing the opinions of others, and the presence of people in their life they can depend on.

4. Youth self-ratings on community connectedness, engagement and voice

	Percent that agree or strongly agree		Improved
	Pre	Post	
I believe young people can make a difference in the community.	68%	100%	71%
I will help my community.	51%	98%	70%
I feel like I am part of a community.	46%	98%	75%
There are caring adults in my life who have high expectations for me.	88%	98%	36%
I feel prepared to be a leader.	41%	92%	75%
I know what I can do to help make the community a better place.	51%	95%	70%
I think it is important to listen to and value the opinions of others.	90%	100%	49%
There are people in my life I can depend on when I need help.	85%	100%	46%

Note: Improved is the percent of respondents that moved from disagree to agree/strongly agree or agree to strongly agree.

In their comments, youth reported becoming more aware or more involved in their communities. They also developed their “voice,” and learned how to speak up for what they believe in, as well as listen to others.

Leadership knowledge, skills and qualities

YLI also has the goal of equipping youth with the knowledge, skills and qualities needed for leadership. YLI participants were asked how much their skills in specific areas improved. Overall, youth reported their skills in all areas improved. The most impact was seen in leadership, team work, and project planning skills; two-thirds or more of participants reporting improving their skills “a lot” in these three areas (see Figure 5).

5. YLI’s impact on skills (N=59)

	A lot	Some	A little	None
Leadership skills/styles	70%	25%	5%	0%
Team work skills	66%	31%	3%	0%
Project planning skills	66%	32%	2%	0%
Public speaking	63%	27%	9%	2%
Problems solving skills	56%	37%	7%	0%

Youth were also asked how much they learned about the topic their Action Team worked on (see Figure 6). Overall, 83 percent of respondents increased their knowledge of the topic area they worked on, with almost 90 percent of those in the health and environment teams increasing their knowledge of those topics.

6. Youth knowledge of action team topic area

	Number	Percent that knew some or a lot		Increased knowledge
		Pre	Post	
Health	9	67%	100%	89%
Environment	8	38%	100%	88%
Human rights	7	43%	100%	86%
Poverty	12	58%	100%	83%
Family	18	67%	94%	82%
Total	55	55%	97%	83%

Youth also reported learning communication and public speaking skills. They learned how to be a leader, facilitate, plan, and work with and trust others, as well as when to follow other effective leaders.

Appreciation of other cultures

The program’s final goal is to encourage youth’s appreciation for the culture of others and promote cross cultural leadership. Though no specific parts of the survey address youth’s appreciation of other cultures, youth reported learning about other cultures and becoming more connected with their own.

Participant satisfaction

YLI participants and mentors were satisfied with the program and rated all aspects highly (see Figure 7).

In their comments, respondents said they had a lot of fun at retreats, they connected with others (“bonded”), and were inspired. Most felt motivated by their action team, and enjoyed getting to meet people and help their communities. In their comments, many noted they enjoyed the cultural sessions, especially the food, but also the insights they learned about their own and others’ cultures. Those that attended ScholarShop found it helpful and productive and some especially enjoyed the college tours.

A few youth felt like they spent too much time sitting and talking at retreats. Some felt the action teams started too late and they did not have enough time to plan. As a group, they were least satisfied with the cultural sessions and school workshops (Scholar Shop). Some youth felt there were not enough cultural sessions, the sessions were not focused enough, the sessions leaders did not show up or were late, and that information about the session was shared too late in the week.

7. Satisfaction with YLI

	N	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
The staff	56	91%	9%	0%	0%
The program overall	55	87%	11%	2%	0%
The usefulness of the information presented	56	70%	29%	2%	0%
The field trips & special events	57	81%	18%	2%	0%
The opportunity to provide feedback	57	83%	14%	4%	0%
The program's mission and goals	57	81%	16%	4%	0%
The retreats	57	79%	16%	5%	0%
Thursday action team meetings	57	67%	28%	5%	0%
The youth mentors	55	76%	18%	6%	0%
Saturday cultural sessions	55	62%	31%	6%	2%
Tuesday school support workshops (Scholar Shop)	42	48%	41%	10%	2%

For the most part, participants were very happy with the program and had few suggestions for improvement. Those that did offered the following suggestions to improve the program:

- More activities: new games, more simulations, longer or more frequent retreats, and more physical activities (not just conversations)
- Incorporate ways for graduates to be involved
- Increase the diversity of participants and address cultural issues

Experiences and feedback from mentors

Reasons for becoming a mentor

Many of the mentors noted that they decided to become mentors because of the experience they had with program mentors when they were participants. They wanted to help and inspire others like their peer mentors helped and inspired them. Some desired to be role models or play a bigger role in the community. However, a few mentors noted that they hadn't really thought about being mentors until a staff member encouraged them. They were somewhat afraid, but decided to challenge themselves. Here are some of their comments:

The mentors the first year when I was a participant really influenced me to be a mentor myself.

After the third retreat, my first year, I knew I wanted to be a mentor because I wanted to help someone, like how the staff and mentors helped me.

I didn't imagine that I would be a mentor until they sent me the paper. At first I was really afraid to do it. I didn't believe that I could do it. . . . [Then I thought] let's give it a shot. There is nothing to lose.

Mentor trainings

The mentors felt the the Boundary Waters trip and Boot Camp helped them prepare for being a mentor in multiple ways. Many people compared many of the Boundary Waters trip experience with their experiences as mentors. For example, they said that they worked as a team to reach their goals in the Boundary Waters, similar to how they work as a team during the program. They weren't alone and could help each other. The accountability and responsibilities were similar, too. In the Boundary Waters, they each had to follow through on their assigned responsibility, like cooking dinner or carrying the canoe, which noted was like having responsibilities as a mentor for facilitating an activity. Finally, they took turns doing different tasks in the Boundary Waters, just like they co-facilitated program activities as mentors. They reported the Boot Camp helped them learn how to deal with specific situations and made their role as mentors seem more "real." Both the trip and Boot Camp provided them opportunities to self-reflect, build relationships with each other, learn communication skills, work together as a team, and learn from adults who have more experience in leadership. Several mentors also said both activities "set the tone for the year." Their comments included:

Being a youth mentor, we have a lot of responsibilities. It's kind of like that canoe on your shoulder, if you drop it, the canoe is going to be all broken and you also let yourself down.

As far as mentor boot camp, that was more real . . . and we were practicing for what we were going to be doing throughout the year.

I felt like it was all about getting us to work together and getting use to each and knowing how it works. We learned to communicate with each other, that was the big one. It really prepared us for it.

I feel like when we were over at the Boundary Water, there was a lot of time for reflecting every single day. That really helped me to understand myself. . . . At mentor boot camp, we kept doing reflecting, looking into yourself and who you are. I feel like that has really helped me in every aspect of life as a leader and as a friend. . . . It has really helped me to grow and to help myself help other people.

We also had the opportunity to interact with adults. We are the people we are mentoring. Different ages, different whatever, we are all different. We have the chance to interact with adults who have years and years to learn the stuff that we are learning at the moment.

Mentors also appreciated the mentor trainings/discussion and one-on-one check-in meetings held throughout the year. While a few noted they like going out to eat and saw it as a sort of reward, largely, mentors felt as though they received constructive criticism and feedback on how to build their leadership and communication skills. They felt like they were building professional relationships, rather than just making friends. They also noted that staff helped them problem-solve, advise, and held them accountable for goals they set. In terms of how staff could support them more, mentors did not agree. A few felt that they would like to talk about the personal life more, not just school and YLI, but others felt it was up to each individual mentor to discuss what they wanted with staff. Similarly, some felt the staff was overly focused on what they needed to do to improve, whereas others felt the staff also offered praise. Overall, mentors felt that a lot of time was spent debriefing and more time could be allotted for celebrating successes and checking in. Here are some of their comments:

Every time we get with them, they always take us out to go eat. It's sort of a reward, it's not just the food, but when you go to a spot and have a one-on-one, it's very beneficial to your behalf because they will give us constructive criticism and they will tell you how you can do better. They help you improve your leadership skills.

It's nice to have someone to hold you accountable to reaching your goals. It's nice to talk to someone who will tell you what you need to work on or what is going on. When they see that you are improving, it's nice hear someone say that. I really like the one on ones.

I really like one on ones. It gives me time to reflect on myself. . . . It really tells me how I am doing and setting up goals for the next retreat. Having the staff give me feedback and they ask if want advice from them.

Positive experiences and difficulties being mentor

Mentors enjoyed being role models for participants and helping to have impact and influence their peers. They also enjoyed being part of the mentor team and working with the co-mentors. Several also mentioned that their experience as a mentor helped them grow and mature. Here are their comments:

I really like having people looking up to me. I like to be that role model person. I like to inspire people and make an impact on them. I like being that person that everyone looks to for guidance.

I like to see [the participants] grow, you can see them visual change, everything about them is kind of different and I like that. Maybe they aren't as shy or they speak up or they are doing things that they never thought they would do, stuff like that. They open up.

One of the things I like is having co-mentors and being part of the team. They are the ones that know how you are feeling when you are trying to facilitate and people aren't listening or participants are being annoying or something. They understand how you feel. Having a team a mentors is such a strong thing, you grow with them throughout the year. They are a backup and are like family to you.

Though the mentors mostly had positive experiences as mentors, they noted some challenges. Some found that part of being a role model involved not behaving in ways they might normally, because it would not reflect well on participants. Similarly, one mentor noted the need to balance being serious and being fun. Many noted having to learn new skills that did not come naturally, such as being direct and assertive, speaking up, and talking to people you don't know. Working with a team and managing time was a challenge for some, as well. The mentors noted that sometimes co-facilitators didn't agree and they had to learn to resolve those differences. Finally, one mentor noted that it was easy to become over confident when something went well and not be prepared enough for subsequent activities. Their comments included:

I feel like I have [to be] this statue to look up to. Since I am a mentor, it's a sense that I can't do certain things.

I was really trying to find a happy medium of not being too serious, but I still want to be taken seriously as a mentor. It was really hard trying to find that balance.

From the first time I started as being a mentor, I wasn't really good at public speaking. I didn't really project my voice, so that was a challenge for me. Throughout, I have grown. I still kind of talk low, but still I kind of learned from it.

Another challenge is when you have a partner that doesn't agree on something, then you guys get stuck at that one point. It also ties in with time management because you run out of time trying to debate over it, but when you get stuck on that one thing, then it's hard to get passed it until you come up with a resolution.

I just feel like it would get done more successfully if I could just do it by myself, so working with other people, especially when they are just like me, then it's really hard because we both want to get it done our way. It's really hard to find a happy medium. It's a big challenge for me working with a lot of people.

Impacts of YLI on mentors

Mentors discussed how YLI has inspired them to do better, mature, and get involved in their communities. Some noted they have a passion for helping others that they did not realize before YLI, and have gotten involved in other community and leadership activities, such as Promise Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Leadership Program, National Honor Society, and Post Secondary Enrollment at local colleges. Many noted they plan to continue these activities, or be involved in new activities that will allow them to continue to help others. One mentor noted that these community activities probably helped him/her get into college. Others noted that as a result of being in YLI, they are more confident and independent, have public speaking skills, more defined future goals, and are more motivated. Some spoke to how their relationships with staff and others impacted them – how having someone support them changed their lives. YLI mentors felt that youth who participate in YLI are more open-minded, accepting, supportive, motivated, attentive, caring, and willing to be involvement than those who do not. Finally, they noted they learned that everyone can be a leader regardless of age, everyone has value, and leadership does not mean taking control but talking and giving. In their own words, they said:

YLI has connected me with many different people and programs.

It gave me a lot of opportunity to join other programs. It was a really good opportunity. I knew that I wanted to do something with the community, but I didn't know how.

I feel really confident. If I want to make a change I feel like I can. I have met a lot of people and a lot of networking in YLI. I feel like I can make a difference. I feel very confident about it. I am not afraid to step up and do it.

I am a really shy and nervous person. I was always unwilling to get involved in anything, especially things that involved a lot of speaking. After YLI, I talk more and am getting involved more into things.

You never know what you can do. It's made me more independent. I used to follow people around. I now make my own actions and decide for myself.

YLI's progress toward their outcomes

YLI has four main outcome goals. That youth in the program: develop understanding of themselves and their cultures; gain knowledge, skills and qualities needed for leadership; appreciate other cultures; and have increased engagement in the community.

The evaluation of the 2010-11 cohort indicates YLI is making an impact on youth's knowledge and attitudes about themselves and leadership. Youth rate themselves higher in all of the areas related to developing understanding of themselves and their cultures, community engagement, and leadership skills. They are more likely to have goals for the future, be proud of their cultural background, and be confident at the end of the program than they were at the beginning. They are also more likely to believe young people can make a difference, feel like they are part of a community, feel prepared to be a leader, and have adults and others in their life. Finally, they report learning leadership, project planning, team work, problem solving, and public speaking skills. While they show less improvement in academic areas, many attend school regularly and do well in school prior to joining the program.

Appendix

End of program youth survey

Focus group protocol

End of program youth survey

Youth Leadership Initiative End of Program Youth Survey 2010-2011

Please complete this survey about the Youth Leadership Initiative. The information you provide is very useful and will help us in future programming. Your answers are anonymous and confidential.

Thinking about how you feel NOW , do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I feel confident in myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
2. I can handle stressful situations.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
3. I think about what will happen as a result of my decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
4. I am willing to take risks and stand up for what is right.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
5. I am proud of my cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
6. I think it is important to listen to and value the opinions of others.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
7. I believe young people can make a difference in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
8. There are caring adults in my life who have high expectations for me.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
9. I feel like I am part of a community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
10. I know what I can do to help make the community a better place.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
11. There are people in my life I can depend on when I need help.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
12. I feel prepared to be a leader.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
13. I will help my community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
14. I have goals for my future	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
15. I do my best in school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
16. I attend school regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

17. What are your grades NOW?

¹ Mostly A's ² Mostly B's ³ Mostly C's ⁴ Mostly D's or below

Now think about how you felt BEFORE you joined the YLI program.	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18. I felt confident in myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
19. I could handle stressful situations.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
20. I thought about what will happen as a result of my decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
21. I was willing to take risks and stand up for what is right.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
22. I was proud of my cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
23. I thought it is important to listen to and value the opinions of others.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
24. I believed young people could make a difference in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
25. There were caring adults in my life who have high expectations for me.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
26. I felt like I am part of a community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
27. I knew what I could do to help make the community a better place.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
28. There were people in my life I could depend on when I need help.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
29. I felt prepared to be a leader.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
30. I planned to help my community.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
31. I have goals for my future	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
32. I did my best in school.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
33. I attended school regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

34. What were your grades BEFORE you started YLI?

¹ Mostly A's ² Mostly B's ³ Mostly C's ⁴ Mostly D's or below

35. What topic did you action team work on? _____

36. How much did you know about that topic BEFORE you started YLI?

¹ Nothing ² A little ³ Some ⁴ A lot

37. How much do you know about that topic NOW?

¹ Nothing ² A little ³ Some ⁴ A lot

How much did your skills in the following areas improve since participating in YLI?

	A lot	Some	A little	None
38. Leadership skills/styles	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
39. Team work skills	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
40. Problems solving skills	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
41. Project planning skills	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
42. Public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹

43. What is one other skill you learned a lot about?

44. How have you changed as a result of YLI or how has YLI impacted your life?

Please rate the following components of YLI:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
45. The youth mentors	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
46. The staff	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
47. The field trips & special events	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
48. The usefulness of the information presented	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
49. The program's mission and goals	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
50. The opportunity to provide feedback	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
51. The retreats	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
Comments:				
52. Saturday cultural sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
Comments:				
53. Thursday action team meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
Comments:				
54. Tuesday school support workshops	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
Comments:				
55. The program overall	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹
Comments:				

56. What is one thing you would change about YLI?

57. What is your gender? ¹ Female ² Male
58. What is your age? _____
59. What grade in school are you in (or did you just complete)? _____
60. What was your role in the program? ¹ Participant ² Mentor
61. How many years have you participated in the program?
¹ 1st year ² 2nd year ³ 3rd year
62. What is your ethnic background? [Check **ALL** that apply.]
- ¹ Asian/Pacific Islander/Southeast Asian/Asian American: _____
- ² American Indian: _____
- ³ African/African American: _____
- ⁴ Latino/Hispanic: _____
- ⁵ European American: _____
- ⁶ Other: _____

Focus group protocol

Introduction: 5 min

Hello. My name is _____ from Wilder Research. I am here to talk to you about your experience being a mentor for Wilder's YLI program. _____ is here to take notes. Please make sure you speak clearly so she can accurately capture what you are saying.

Before we get started, I'd like to propose a few guidelines to follow for this discussion. First, there are no right or wrong answers, so please feel free to share your opinions and please be respectful of other people. The purpose of this discussion is to get different perspectives and points of view. Second, please take turns so everyone gets a chance to talk. Third, I'd like everyone to agree that you will not repeat specifically who said what to anyone outside of this group. Also to maintain your confidentiality, when Wilder reports what was learned in this group, we will do so by summarizing what was shared. We will not report any names or other information that will identify you or share what you say with staff, so please be honest. With that said, we would like to record today's discussion in case we miss anything in the notes. Is that okay with everyone? The recording will be deleted after our notes are completed.

Warm-up: 10 min

To start, I'd like you to tell me a little about yourself.

1. Let's go around the room. Please introduce yourself and tell us how long you have been part of the YLI program and what year in school you are in.
2. What was the main reason you decided to become a youth mentor and what did you hope to accomplish by being a youth mentor?

Questions about YLI: 30 min

Now I have some questions about the preparation and training you have had to be a mentor.

3. How did your trip the Boundary Water Canoe Area (BWCA) and the Boot Camp help prepare you to be a mentor?

4. How have the mentor trainings/discussions and one-on-one check-in meetings with YLI staff helped you be a better mentor?

Next, we are going to talk about your experience being part of YLI, as both a mentor and participant.

5. What has been the best thing about being a youth mentor?
6. What has been difficult about being a mentor?
7. What else could the YLI staff do to help you be a better mentor?
8. Since being involved with YLI, what have you learned about leadership?

Questions about impact: 10 min

Our last set of questions is about your role in the community and future goals.

9. How has being in YLI helped shape who you are today and your future goals?
10. Did YLI play a role in motivating you to get involved in the community?

Closing: 5 min

I am done going through my questions.

11. Does anyone have anything else they want to say about being at mentor for YLI?

I want to remind everyone to respect each other's confidentiality. Please do not discuss what others have shared in this room with people outside this room.

Thank you so much for your time!