

Building Bridges for the Sake of Youth

Community- and Faith-Based Youth Workers Have Much to Learn from Each Other

TWO YOUTH WORKERS live in the same community—and may, in fact, touch the same groups of young people. Both emphasize building positive relationships. Both are positive role models and seek to develop young people as leaders. Both would value opportunities to share ideas, learn from others, and have supportive colleagues.

However, these two youth workers may not even know each other's name, much less have opportunities to learn from and with each other. That's because one works in a community-based organization (such as a YMCA or a Boys and Girls Club) and the other works in a faith-based organization (such as a church, synagogue, mosque, or parachurch group). Although they are both committed to helping young people grow up successfully, they work in parallel worlds with distinct learning opportunities, networks, accountability systems, and priorities.

Many dynamics have contributed to the divide. On a pragmatic level, youth workers can be so busy doing their programmatic work that they rarely find time to link with others. In addition, perceptions of dogmatism, exclusiveness, and judgmentalism can undermine any sense of collegiality and trust. Add to the mix polarizing per-

ceptions that religious institutions have no constructive role in public life (or that they have all the answers), and it's easy to see why bridges are often not built.

And yet . . .

Can we really cultivate communities with a shared vision of and commitment to young people's healthy development without building bridges across these two aspects of community life that are both concerned about and invested in young people? Furthermore, can't each sector learn from and encourage the other—even when they don't see eye to eye on everything? After all, both groups of youth workers struggle with some of the same issues, including retention of young people through middle and high school and reaching marginalized youth. Both groups could benefit from opportunities to enhance their skills as youth workers. And, finally, do these parallel systems serve the best interests of young people, or are there opportunities for and benefits to finding or creating intentional links between these two worlds?

As one youth worker put it, "We should all be asking, 'How can we work together to achieve the common good?'" Or, as another said, "Ultimately, we are all working to better the lives of youth. We have limited resources, so the more we work together, the further we can go."

Search Institute and the National Collaboration for Youth (with support from Lilly Endowment) recently completed an exploratory project that asked whether there might be common ground for training and professional development

Portions of this article are adapted from Garza, P., Artman, S., & Roehlkepartain, E. C. (with Garst, B. A., & Bialeschki, M. D.). (2007). *Is there common ground? An exploratory study of the interests and needs of community-based and faith-based youth workers*. Washington, DC: National Collaboration for Youth, and Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, with contributions from the American Camp Association. The full report is available at www.search-institute.org or www.nydic.org.

DISPLAY 1

About the Project

Beginning in 2006, the National Collaboration for Youth and Search Institute (with support from Lilly Endowment Inc.) began exploring whether there are opportunities for building bridges between community-based and faith-based youth workers around professional development issues. Titled *Is There Common Ground?*, the project involved the following activities:

- **Online survey of youth workers**—The broadest information base for the project was an online survey of 1,322 youth workers in both community- and faith-based settings. Although fairly large and unique, the sample is a convenience sample and should not be interpreted as nationally representative.
- **Focus groups**—Six focus groups were conducted in four cities: New Orleans, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, and Tucson. Most of the groups were a mix of faith-based and community-based workers. Most groups included three to six participants.
- **National consultation of thought leaders**—Finally, a two-day dialogue was convened among two dozen national leaders in April 2007 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Through panelists, small-group dialogues, and other discussions, these national leaders helped frame the issues and recommend possibilities for future action.

between these two groups of youth workers (Display 1). And if there *is* common ground, are youth workers interested in linking with each other?

What emerged from the study was a remarkable degree of consensus (with a few important exceptions) about what it takes to be an effective youth worker. And despite some significant challenges, there is broad interest in learning and mutual support across sectors. Thus, the opportunity lies in developing models and relationships that build bridges, increase mutual trust, and, in the end, strengthen community capacity for supporting young people's healthy development.

However, we begin by naming some of the major challenges.

Barriers and Challenges

If something isn't happening already, it's helpful first to step back to examine what's getting in the way. Why hasn't there been more cross-sector collaboration? When we asked about challenges and obstacles in both the online survey and focus groups, a number of significant, sometimes heated, issues rose to the top:

Exclusiveness, proselytizing, or dogmatism—This challenge was mentioned most frequently

regarding faith-based youth workers, who are viewed as recognizing only one belief system and expecting to be able to proselytize (though many faith-based youth workers would challenge this characterization). One community-based youth worker asserted, "I'm willing to learn alongside anybody who is interested in the same topic, but I'm not willing to have their religious views or perspectives imposed on me or my work."

Fear of judgment and lack of respect—Youth workers in both sectors point toward fear of judgment due to harassment, political correctness, hostility, and stereotyping as obstacles that keep the sectors apart. They also point to a lack of understanding of each other's values, goals, backgrounds, and other realities as a barrier.

Discomfort with religious or spiritual issues—Community-based youth workers are less comfortable with the language of spirituality and religion (the primary language used by many faith-based youth workers), making dialogue sometimes awkward.

Legal issues—A number of survey respondents noted legal issues or the need to separate church and state as a key obstacle or challenge.

Limited time and resources—Finally, a practical matter surfaced repeatedly: Youth workers have no additional time to focus on building these bridges. One youth worker said, "[It] takes time, costs money, it is only one of a million other things we have to do." So youth workers, whose priority is the young people they serve, focus their attention on their own programs, activities, and networks.

Benefits and Opportunities

Given all the barriers and challenges (real and perceived), why bother to place a priority on the difficult work of building bridges between two groups that don't necessarily trust or respect each other? Interestingly, the participating youth workers and leaders were just as adamant about the opportunities as they were about the challenges. These advantages include:

Enriching the lives of youth—For many youth workers, the bottom line is what's best for young people. And they believe connections are better than isolation. One respondent stated, "Whether it be faith-based or community-based, people who work with kids all have the same passion in

mind. We all need to work together for the betterment of our youth.” Another added, “We are missing significant segments of youths’ lives due to our ‘silo’ mentality and unwillingness to network.”

Deepening mutual understanding—Coming together to learn together can help each sector better understand and respect the other. “I think it would have a somewhat enriching effect [to] build networks of opportunities,” one survey respondent said. “At a minimum, the youth workers would hopefully come to a fuller knowledge and respect of each other and their work and ways of working.”

Tapping each other’s strengths to improve all youth work—Both groups of youth workers suggested that each sector has strengths that could be shared with the other. One survey respondent said, “We all have a lot to learn from people in related but different fields, because our colleagues in different areas approach similar problems to ours in their own unique ways that can, in turn, help us see our problems in a fresh way.”

Some youth workers suggested, for example, that faith-based youth workers may, on average, have a lot to teach about working with volunteers, understanding young people’s spiritual lives, and seeing their work within a broader mission.

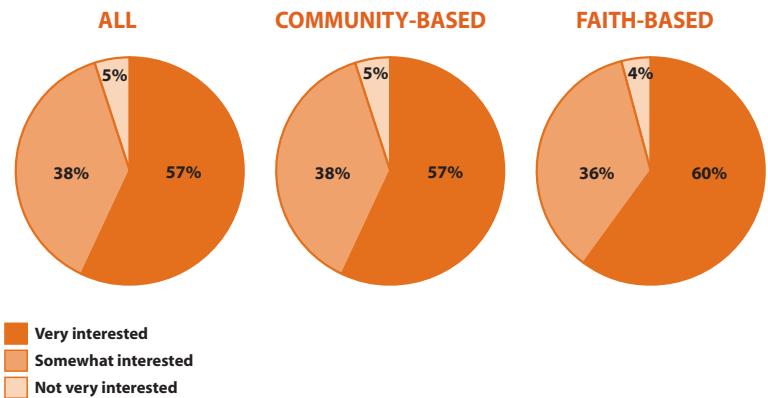
Community-based youth workers may, on average, be able to help faith-based workers understand community resources, reach youth in the broader community, and work with diverse populations of youth; community-based youth workers may also share other knowledge they often gain through their organizations’ ongoing investment in professional development. “There are so many resources in both community- and faith-based groups,” one youth worker noted. “Sharing should mean that all would have access to more opportunity, therefore being more enriched.”

Developing a community-wide approach—“If change is going to happen in our communities, it has to be a joint effort,” one participant said. “If we are all working separately to achieve peace in our communities, then we are not using our resources wisely and, in turn, separating the community even more.” One youth worker spoke from the experience of being involved in a cross-

FIGURE 1

Interest in Cross-Sector Learning Opportunities, by Sector

If training, resources, or other professional development opportunities were offered that intentionally included both community-based and faith-based youth workers, how interested would you be in participating?



sector collaboration: “We already see the advantages. . . . The networking of the two is invaluable for fund-raising, community spirit, and to give the youth an idea how life works.”

Interest in Learning Together

Even when weighing the advantages and disadvantages, most youth workers in both sectors say they are “very interested” in building bridges between the two sectors. As shown in Figure 1, more than half of those participating in the youth worker survey said that they would be “very interested” in cross-sector training, with most of the rest being “somewhat interested.” Only a small percentage of youth workers in either group indicated that they were “not very interested” in such opportunities. This interest is remarkably consistent between community- and faith-based workers. It is also consistent for both female and male youth workers and for youth workers of all ages.

Thus, even with some of the cautions and concerns, both community-based and faith-based youth workers seem interested in linking together to improve their work with youth, challenge mutual misperceptions, learn from each other, and, in the process, work toward greater shared commitment to creating communities where young people are valued, guided, and empowered

TABLE 1

Essential Competencies for Youth Workers, by Sector

Percentage of respondents in the youth worker survey who say each theme is “essential” to their work. (**Boldface** indicates items for which the difference between community-based and faith-based workers is 10 percentage points or greater.)

	ALL	COMMUNITY-BASED	FAITH-BASED
Developing positive relationships and communicating with youth	85	87	86
Demonstrating the attributes and qualities of a positive role model	79	81	79
Involving and empowering youth	73	80	72
Interacting with and relating to youth in ways that support asset building	65	72	57
Working as part of a team and showing professionalism	65	68	57
Respecting and honoring cultural and human diversity	60	66	47
Adapting, facilitating, and/or evaluating age-appropriate activities with and for the group	58	62	54
Identifying potential risk factors in the program environment and taking measures to reduce those	52	56	47
Understanding and applying basic principles of child and adolescent development	52	59	40
Caring for, involving, and working with families and community	46	48	43
Respecting and honoring religious diversity	38	39	38
Helping young people develop spiritually	33	14	77

to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

A Starting Point: Strengthening Youth Worker Competencies

We need to dig deeper, however, to sort out shared interests and priorities—and those areas where youth workers may not see eye to eye. In doing so, we begin either to confirm or to challenge the perceptions that the two groups of youth workers have very different goals, priorities, and approaches. In addition, if the focus is on training and professional development, perhaps a helpful starting point is to examine what youth workers see as critical skills and compe-

tencies for their work—and where they may be most open to strengthening those competencies.

To begin exploring these issues, we built the online survey around the framework of Youth Development Worker Competencies that has been endorsed by the National Collaboration for Youth.¹ This framework identifies 10 areas of skills and attributes that these national organizations believe are critical for effective work with youth. Because of the focus on cross-sector issues, we added two other potential competencies to the survey: respecting and honoring religious diversity and helping young people develop spiritually.

Shared goals and priorities—As shown in Table 1, the vast majority of both faith-based and community-based youth workers share particularly strong commitments to three of the competencies: developing positive relationships and communicating with youth, demonstrating the attributes and qualities of a positive role model, and involving and empowering youth. Indeed, each of these competencies is seen as “essential” by at least 7 out of 10 youth workers surveyed.

Furthermore, two-thirds of youth workers surveyed indicated that 5 of the original 10 core competencies were “essential,” and about half of those surveyed believed the other 5 were “essential.” Almost none of those surveyed indicated that any of the original 10 competencies was “not important.” Furthermore, the community-based and faith-based youth workers were roughly equal in their level of affirming 6 of the 10 original competencies.

Divergent goals and priorities—Just as important as the commonalities are some of the differences in perspectives between faith-based and community-based youth workers. The greatest is on “helping young people develop spiritually,” a competency that was added to the original framework. Faith-based youth workers are more than five times as likely as community-based workers to say that cultivating spiritual development is essential to their work with youth.

Community-based workers, on the other hand, are more likely than faith-based workers to view four of the competencies as “essential”:

- Understanding and applying basic principles of child and adolescent development (19-point gap)
- Respecting and honoring cultural and human diversity (19-point gap)
- Interacting with and relating to youth in ways that support asset building (15-point gap)
- Working as part of a team and showing professionalism (11-point gap)

Each of these areas of difference points to potential opportunities for both conflict and dialogue. Community-based workers who place greater emphasis on diversity, for example, can be resources to faith-based workers who may be struggling to engage young people from many backgrounds in their work. On the other hand,

“There are so many resources in both community- and faith-based groups. Sharing should mean that all would have access to more opportunity, therefore being more enriched.” –Youth worker

some faith-based youth workers may characterize diversity as code for “anything goes,” thus setting up a potential conflict in values, priorities, and approaches.

The case of spiritual development opens another conversation and source of potential tension. Spiritual development came out as the lowest priority for community-based youth workers and among the highest priorities for faith-based youth workers. Because we did not define what is meant by spiritual development, it’s likely that many youth workers (in both sectors) equated it with religious formation or, perhaps, religious indoctrination—both of which are off limits to (or viewed negatively by) youth workers in community-based settings.

However, if spiritual development is viewed as a core part of human development that is distinct from, but linked to, religious development or formation, it opens new possibilities for conversations that may stretch youth workers in both sectors. In fact, there are models in which dimensions of spiritual development have been successfully addressed in cross-sector contexts and spiritual development has long been a part of the definition of youth development.

For example, the New England Network for Child, Youth & Family Services has done extensive work in listening to the spiritual perspectives and needs of vulnerable youth, then encouraging secular youth-serving agencies to address these questions more intentionally.² Extensive work is also under way by Search Institute through its Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence to deepen a shared understanding of spiritual development that resonates across communities and cultures, which will likely establish a platform for deeper analysis and dialogue.³ A shared understanding of spiritual development may emerge from these efforts that would increase the interest in and comfort with the issue among

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community-based youth workers and also help faith-based workers see the issue in a broader context.

Readiness to Participate in Competency-Focused Learning Opportunities

Knowing priorities is an important starting point for finding common ground as well as distinctions. However, if the focus is on training and professional development, it's also important to understand areas where youth workers might have the most interest, need, and readiness for learning. If there is high readiness in both sectors for particular competencies, then perhaps learning opportunities in these areas would be relevant and meaningful to youth workers in both settings.

The online survey asked about the core youth worker competencies in three ways:

- How important each competency was to their work with youth (already shown in Table 1);
- How interested they would be in learning opportunities in this area; and
- Whether they already felt adequately prepared to address each competency.

Although many other factors play into whether youth workers will actually seek and participate in learning opportunities (such as the cost and quality of available learning opportunities or the levels of institutional support for training participation), we used this information to estimate “readiness for learning”⁴ (Table 2). This calculation suggests professional development priorities among both groups of youth workers.

As one might expect, some of the competencies that are viewed as most “essential” (including the top three) have a high readiness for learning score. But some competency areas become more or less important when these multiple perspectives are combined. For example, four out of five youth workers said being a positive role model is “essential,” making it the second most important competency. However, it's

also the area in which youth workers are most likely to be “already prepared,” so their interest in more professional development is lower. Thus, this competency falls to eighth place in terms of overall readiness for learning.

For our purposes, however, the key finding is that three of the five top areas of readiness for learning are shared by both groups of workers:

- Involving and empowering youth;
- Developing positive relationships and communicating with youth; and
- Interacting with and relating to youth in ways that support asset building.

Thus, if this “readiness for learning” calculation approximates opportunities for strengthening the capacity of youth workers, there are clear areas of potential cross-sector training, including, as low-hanging fruit, these three areas.

Another possibility is to encourage dialogue across sectors in those areas where one group or the other, on average, has more experience or sees as a higher priority than the other. For example, what would happen if community-based youth workers described for faith-based youth workers why and how they address human diversity, then the faith-based workers shared their knowledge and experience related to spiritual development? Such an approach would require strong relationships and trust. One can imagine, however, that the creative interplay of these two issues would stimulate powerful growth and learning.

Unanswered Questions

This project was, by definition, exploratory and preliminary. Because this was a convenience sample (as opposed to a random or representative sample), we cannot assume that these results are necessarily representative of all youth workers in either sector. Furthermore, we only had the opportunity to bring the issues to the surface, not examine them in depth. Hence, the project is helpful in starting a conversation, but a

TABLE 2

Priorities for Learning Opportunities, by Sector (in %)

	"Very Interested" in Training, Resources, and/or Educational Opportunities			Already Feel Adequately Prepared			Calculated Readiness for Learning ^a		
	ALL	COMMUNITY-BASED	FAITH-BASED	ALL	COMMUNITY-BASED	FAITH-BASED	ALL	COMMUNITY-BASED	FAITH-BASED
Involving and empowering youth	65	67	63	23	24	22	58	62	57
Developing positive relationships and communicating with youth	56	62	50	28	24	32	57	63	52
Interacting with and relating to youth in ways that support asset building	60	63	53	21	22	20	52	57	45
Adapting, facilitating, and evaluating age-appropriate activities with and for the group	54	57	50	20	19	22	46	50	41
Respecting and honoring cultural and human diversity	49	55	42	22	21	20	44	50	35
Caring for, involving, and working with families and community	56	56	57	18	19	14	42	43	43
Identifying potential risk factors in the program environment and taking measures to reduce those risks	52	55	51	20	22	17	42	45	41
Demonstrating the attributes and qualities of a positive role model	39	43	35	40	39	41	39	43	37
Understanding and applying basic principles of child and adolescent development	46	48	47	25	24	22	37	42	33
Working as part of a team and showing professionalism	39	42	32	36	36	38	34	37	26
Helping young people develop spiritually	37	31	56	14	8	27	28	19	53
Respecting and honoring religious diversity	35	38	39	21	17	23	26	30	27

^aTo reach the readiness score, we first subtracted those who said they "already feel adequately prepared" from those who said the competency is "essential" (which was shown in Table 1). Then we averaged this number with the percentage who said they were "very interested" in training, etc., to reach a "readiness for learning" score. Although the specific number is not meaningful, the overall ranking suggests priorities for learning opportunities.

number of important questions remain to be explored. For example:

- How might these findings be confirmed or challenged through a more in-depth profile of youth workers with representative samples from multiple sectors and settings (either nationally or within a state or region)? How might specific groups of youth workers view these issues differently? For example, is there more or less openness to cross-sector collaboration among youth workers in urban versus rural versus suburban contexts? How might specific program goals and contexts affect the priorities on various competencies as well as the interest in cross-sector collaboration? (A follow-up study of camp directors by the American Camp Association mirrored many of the findings reported here, but also highlighted unique accents within that population of youth workers.)⁵
- How do youth workers actually understand, cultivate, and practice each of the competencies identified in the National Collaboration for Youth's framework? Many elements clearly have face validity for youth workers in both sectors. But more exploration, dialogue, and research are needed to confirm that the framework does, in fact, capture the most essential competencies (for both community- and faith-based youth workers) and then explore how they are lived out in practice.
- What existing systems, resources, frameworks, and tools are relevant and already in use across sectors, including both pre-service and in-service training and development opportunities? What networks are already in place from which we can learn more about effective practices? It is noteworthy that when we asked people to identify existing resources that cross sectors, they generally named organizations

and networks that, upon further examination, serve only one sector or the other. Furthermore, when we tried to identify essential reading lists that cross sectors, we found that few people contacted had adequate knowledge of both sectors to make informed recommendations.

- How do young people themselves view these issues and these sectors? What do they see as core competencies of youth workers? How would they frame the agenda across sectors within communities? How do they perceive the gap (or lack of gap) between sectors and its effect on their lives? Although this project began with a specific focus on youth workers and their competencies, it is vital that young people's perspectives on these issues enter the conversation.
- Who else needs to be included in the conversation moving forward? For example, much of the conversation has focused on those who work with young people who are part of community organizations or congregations. But what about people who work with youth in institutional settings, such as foster care or juvenile justice? Do they share an interest and see value in building these bridges? What other issues does this change in setting raise? Similarly, how would it affect the conversation if educators in schools were included in this conversation? Do they see value in building these bridges? What other issues or opportunities would it raise for them?

Opportunities and Implications

Even though this project is preliminary and there remain important questions, participants expressed widespread interest in moving forward with developing relationships, trust, mutual understanding, and shared language and approaches that create more interaction and common ground between community- and faith-based youth workers. Here are some of the opportunities and implications that emerged from their conversations:

Focus on what's best for young people—As we concentrate on developing strong systems to

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Abstract definitions and position papers may do less to stimulate shared commitments than would shared experiences, stories, and actions that transcend sector, organization, and worldview.

support youth workers, it can be easy to get caught up in systems and politics, forgetting the ultimate goal: positive outcomes for our children and youth. By focusing first on young people and their capacities, hopes, realities, challenges, and dreams, it's likely that a sense of common purpose and shared commitment can emerge across differences.

Learn from existing innovations—Although cross-sector professional development is not the norm, it does exist and it has been effective. There may be many organizations, particularly at the local level, doing innovative work that touches on the possibilities for cross-sector professional development. Some of those models are intentionally cross-sector; others are cross-sector simply because of who is involved and the nature of the community. Finding and learning from these examples provide an experiential foundation for future collaboration.

At the national consultation as part of this project, Elaine Johnson of the Academy for Educational Development described her organization's youth development training curriculum, which is delivered in a neighborhood or community context.⁶ The training focuses on community-level workers and includes a mixture of organizations—including both faith-based and community-based organizations—in most events. In Johnson's experience, the training effectively works across sectors and, in fact, stimulates important connections among youth workers at the community or neighborhood level.

Expand the vision of a youth worker's role—When youth workers understand the power of community and the potential for change, they are more likely to align themselves with other youth workers who share that commitment in the community. At the national consultation, Tom East of the Center for Ministry Development suggested that an important framing issue for this dialogue is “to broaden the imagination of youth workers” (in both sectors) to include the web of relationships that are integral to their work and to the

lives of young people. This includes colleagues, community partners, educators, families, business leaders, and the broader community. As long as youth workers view their role as only involving themselves and the youth in their program, it is difficult for them to see the value of (or the essential need for) professional development and sharing with others.

Work locally—The real challenges and potential of cross-sector learning will only become evident when activity happens on the ground among youth workers from different backgrounds and sectors. “I do think we need more research,” one youth worker said, “but I think we can learn and act at the same time. By acting and learning together, we can learn a lot.”

Abstract definitions and position papers may do less to stimulate shared commitments than would shared experiences, stories, and actions that transcend sector, organization, and worldview. Through stories and narratives, the work will come alive and have meaning for youth workers. Through action, it will become part of who they are. Here are some of what would advance cross-sector understanding and cooperation:

- Find or create opportunities to get to know each other, build trust, and develop partnerships. Keep an open mind, being nonjudgmental and discussing commonalities while not ignoring the differences. Integrate each other's strengths into work with youth, thus enhancing mutual understanding and support.
- Develop the places and spaces where youth workers across systems and sectors can come together to share, define, reflect, and develop practice strategies for promoting holistic development and deliberately promote the spiritual and moral development of children and youth.
- Provide opportunities for workers to share what they are doing. Conduct joint trainings, workshops, and events. Share

resources, best practices, program ideas, activities, and curricula.

Engage in respectful, but substantive, conversation about religion and religious institutions in public life—Regardless of where one stands on the issue, it is impossible to ignore the polarizing role that religion has played in public life in recent decades. In Search Institute’s work in communities, for example, the single Developmental Asset that is most often questioned is the asset called “religious community.”⁷

This polarization has been further fueled by best-selling books that marginalize religious identity and religious institutions as irrelevant at best and harmful at worst.⁸ Without analyzing or debating these perspectives, we would suggest that young people and communities will be better served through thoughtful, respectful, and substantive dialogue about where and how religious communities contribute to or undermine healthy development—and whether and how they are seen as resources or partners in community life.

Additional insight and guidelines need to be articulated and shared that clarify appropriate boundaries related to the First Amendment, including church-state separation and religious freedom. Moving to the practical questions of how to engage constructively across ideological

differences is crucial for a healthy civic life in an increasingly pluralistic society.

Begin the Conversations . . . and the Experiments

This exploratory project begins to lay out an agenda for dialogue and action aimed at strengthening youth work practice in both community-based and faith-based settings. Yet, in many ways, it is only a start. It appears that we have something to talk about together, and people who have been engaged in this process have appreciated the invitation and the “space” to have these conversations.

These conversations deserve to continue, be deepened, and spread. There is also a sense, though, that such discussions will only get us so far. They need to come to life through experiences based in relationships in which trust, mutual respect, and shared commitments can grow. In the process, they can contribute to creating healthy, connected, and opportunity-rich communities where young people are guided, nurtured, and supported, whether they are part of a YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, 4-H Club, church, mosque, synagogue, temple—or any combination of the above.

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SEARCH INSTITUTE INSIGHTS & EVIDENCE is a Web-based publication that presents the latest research from Search Institute on healthy children, youth, and communities in a format that is useful to community leaders and policy makers.

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Recommended citation: Roehlkepartain, E. C. (2007). Building bridges for the sake of youth: Community- and faith-based youth workers have much to learn from each other. *Search Institute Insights & Evidence*, 4(2), 1–11.

Editor: Kathryn L. Hong
Graphic Designer: Nancy Johansen-Wester

Search Institute is a national nonprofit organization with a mission to provide leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth, and communities.



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This publication is made possible through the generous support of Lilly Endowment Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.

Notes

¹ The framework of Youth Development Worker Competencies identifies 10 skills that leaders in national youth-serving systems see as essential for effective youth work. The framework has been endorsed by the National Collaboration for Youth and can be accessed at www.nydic.org/nydic/documents/Competencies.pdf

² For information on this work, visit www.nenetwork.org/initiatives/youth-spirit.html

³ See www.spiritualdevelopmentcenter.org for the emerging work under way in this area.

⁴ First we subtracted those who say they “already feel adequately prepared” from those who said the competency is “essential” (which was shown in Table 1). Then we averaged this number with the percentage who said they were “very interested” to reach a score for “readiness for learning.” Although the specific number is not meaningful, the overall ranking suggests priorities.

⁵ These findings are included in the full report, *Is There Common Ground?*, which includes a summary report on the camp data as an appendix.

⁶ AED/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research and the National Network for Youth (1995). *Advancing Youth Development: A Curriculum for Training Youth Workers*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development. For information, visit nti.aed.org/curriculum.html

⁷ For a discussion of the rationale and research behind this asset, see Benson, P. L. (2006). *All kids are our kids: What communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents* (rev. ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 45–47.

⁸ See, for example, Dawkins, R. (2006). *The god delusion*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin; Harris, S. (2005). *The end of faith: Religion, terror, and the future of reason*. New York: Norton; and Hitchens, C. (2007). *God is not great: How religion poisons everything*. New York: Warner. More sympathetic and less strident perspectives are offered by Patel, E. (2007). *Acts of faith: The story of an American Muslim and the struggle for the soul of a generation*. Boston: Beacon; and Tippett, K. (2007). *Speaking of faith*. New York: Viking.