

Building Power: Young Women's Advisory Council



**A Participatory Governance
Program Model for a National
Young Women's Initiative**

— by Girls for Gender Equity



October 2016

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Executive Summary

Young Women's Initiative

The New York City Council's Young Women's Initiative (YWI) is the nation's first intergenerational, participatory governance planning process.¹ Community advocates, policy experts and the Young Women's Advisory Council were charged with determining the needs for programming, policy change, data collection, and areas for long-term research that would improve the lives of cisgender and transgender (cis and trans) young women of color and gender nonconforming young people in the city of New York. The focus of YWI includes:

- Identifying the needs of young women and girls of color ages 12–24, while being mindful that intervention may reach a wider age range.
- Spotlighting issues experienced by women and girls of color, knowing that when inequity is disaggregated by race and gender, disparities in outcomes in New York City are overwhelmingly concentrated in communities of color; and
- Embracing an inclusive framework around gender, beyond the gender binary, and ensuring that transgender women and gender-non-conforming young people are also centered in this work.

YWI seeks to build a lasting blueprint for moving policies, transforming systems, and investing in the future of young women and girls of color in New York City over the long-term.²

In September 2015, the New York City Council convened stakeholders across the City, including but not limited to community-based

organizations, advocates, policy experts, and cis and trans young women of color themselves. Together they made recommendations to secure the futures of women and girls across the five boroughs.

Aligned with the Council's commitment to participatory governance and knowing that young women and girls of color are experts in their own lives, the City Council partnered with Girls for Gender Equity to create a Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC), which played a key advisory role during the process.

The City Council called upon three leaders for racial and gender justice, Joanne N. Smith, Founder and Executive Director of Girls for Gender Equity; Ana Oliveira, CEO of the New York Women's Foundation; and Dr. Danielle Moss Lee, CEO of the YWCA of New York City to serve as Initiative Co-Chairs. In partnership with City Council staff, the YWI Co-Chairs provided the vision, structure and framework for YWI.

The Initiative staff and Co-Chairs formed a Steering Committee of grassroots advocates, policy experts, City Council members and leaders of YWAC, which established a Working Group process to develop recommendations for improving the lives of young women and girls of color.

Members of the Steering Committee led five Working Groups representing key systems of inequities that we are working to transform: Health, Economic & Workforce Development, Community Support & Opportunity, Education, Anti-Violence, and Criminal Justice.³ (New York City Council, 2016).

The Young Women's Initiative (YWI) is the nation's first intergenerational, participatory governance initiative to be fully dedicated to improving the lives of cisgender, transgender girls and young women of color and gender nonconforming young people. The seven-month initiative (September 2015 to March 2016) was charged to determine what future innovation in programming, data collection, policy, and public/private partnerships was needed to combat gender inequity and racism in New York City. Girls for Gender Equity collaborated with staff from the Community Engagement Division of the New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito's office to organize the Young Women's Advisory Council. Through a public-private partnership with the New York Women's Foundation, all partners developed a program that created conditions

for young women and girls to critically shape and inform the YWI recommendations on Health, Economic & Workforce Development, Community Support & Opportunity, Education, Anti-Violence, and Criminal Justice.

Young Women's Advisory Council

The Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC) was convened as expert participants informing the New York City's Young Women's Initiative. The crux of the Initiative is centered on the lived experiences of young women and girls of color navigating the systemic racist and sexist policies and practices of institutions, and the absence of trauma-informed approaches. In an effort to maintain the integrity of the initiative, Girls for Gender Equity (GGE), collaborated with community leaders, organizers and allies from the five boroughs of NYC to recruit 23 young people as the Young Women's Advisory Council.

The Speaker's staff from the Community Engagement Division worked in partnership with GGE staff, YWAC Co-Chairs Gloria Malone, Miss Cherno Biko, Nala Simone Toussaint and Amanda Matos to create a responsive, powerful and informative youth council model.

Participation and leadership of cis and trans young women and girls of color has been integral to the Young Women's Initiative. The 23 members of the Young Women's Advisory Council participated in the 5 issue-based working groups (Health, Economic & Workforce Development, Community Support & Opportunity, Education, Anti-Violence, and Criminal Justice)³ and were part of the YWI Steering Committee.

As a further commitment to fully include all young women of color within the gender spectrum, space was intentionally created to support and lift the voices of trans and gender nonconforming young people within the initiative. For example, a trans council was led by trans young women. Though initially manifesting as a distinct group, the council co-chairs altered their strategy – convening separately on an as-needed basis as the YWI program progressed. The involvement of young women, from YWAC to issue group work spaces, critically ensured that the voices and experiences of young women were not only lifted in traditionally adult-held spaces, but were also actively informing adults throughout the initiative.

Centering Trans & Undocumented Voices

Recognizing the underrepresentation of trans and undocumented voices informing the YWI process, youth activists worked alongside Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) and adult advocates to push for more inclusive spaces. This manifested in action both within and outside the initiative.

With support from GGE, the young women within the initiative created a two-pronged model to address the underrepresentation of trans and undocumented voices. Internally, YWI organizers actively widened the lens of gender identity in both framework and analysis during policy development. Externally, youth activists created and held a dedicated space for underrepresented voices to assess policy proposals. The strategy to reach out to trans and gender nonconforming young people outside of the initiative allowed for NYC based youth who were not connected to organizations to offer input. These spaces and strategies were led by trans youth activists and critically shaped YWI's final recommendations, which can be found at www.shewillbe.nyc⁴

Program Evaluation

Focus and Goal

Girls for Gender Equity seeks insight on three main areas of program evaluation: codification of the Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC) program model; an assessment of the program from participating young women; and sharing best practices for implementing YWAC nationally.

Methodology

Peer-reviewed articles, government agency reports, and facilitation handbooks were the bulk of literature consulted. Interviews were conducted with YWAC members and their co-chairs, resulting in useful information further supplemented by responses from a diagnostic survey, mid-point survey and a following final survey. Two focus groups were conducted with trans and undocumented young women to help further evaluate policy development. Data collected from both focus groups informed programmatic and evaluative pieces of this report.

Limitations & Assumptions

While undergoing research, some limitations were encountered. The evaluation of the YWAC model is based on three sources of data; further formative assessments were not able to be conducted,

reducing the variety of collected information for analysis. Despite these setbacks, the research design evaluates two areas that are least affected by time constraints and focuses on GGE’s most immediate needs: codification and youth feedback.

6 Step Social Work with Analysis Model⁵

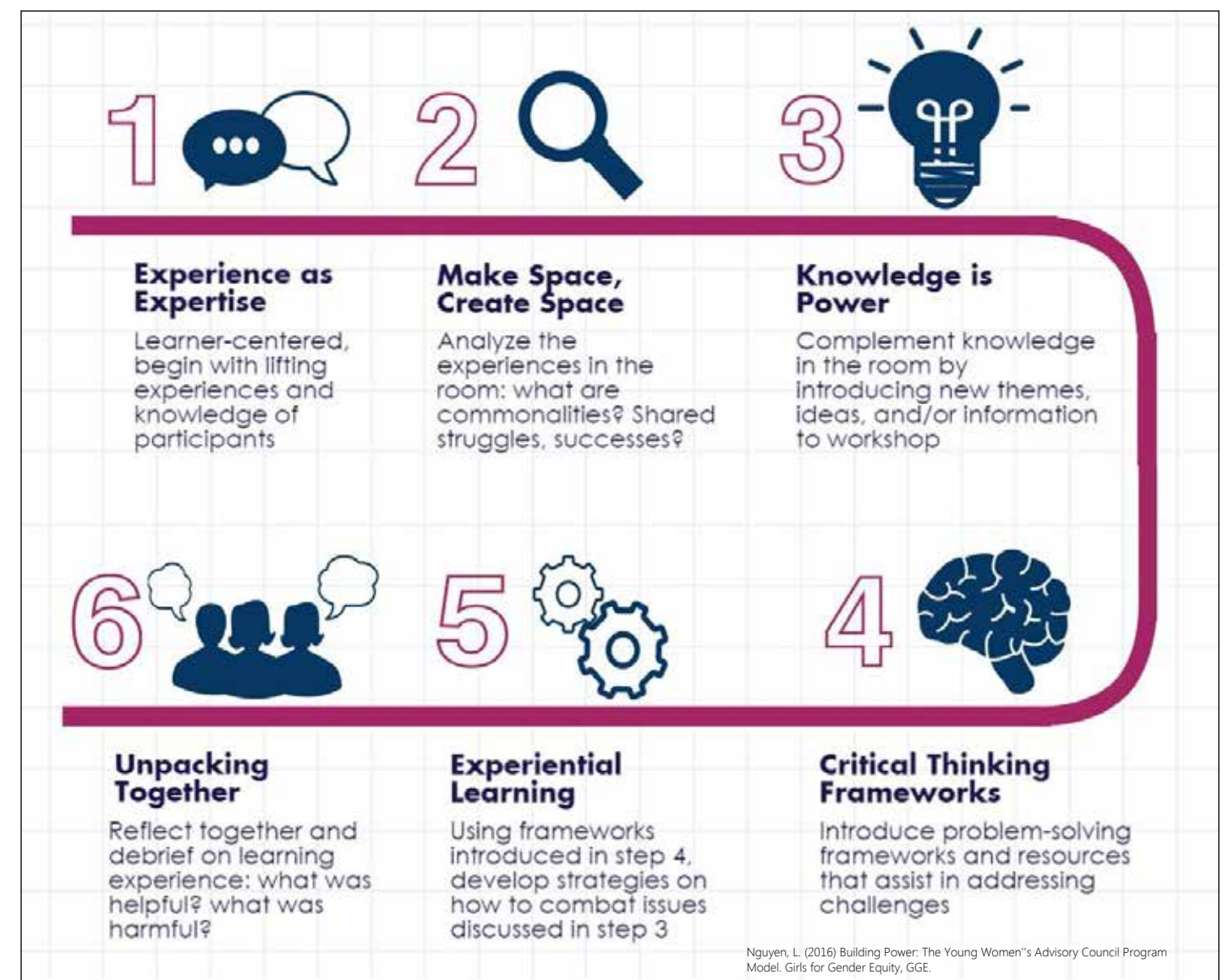
The six step sequential model is broken into three thematic blocks defined by key facilitation methods outlined in GGE’s pedagogic strategy: shared-ownership of knowledge [steps 1 & 2], scaffolding power [steps 3, 4 & 5] and meta-analysis [step 6].

Step 1 Experience as Expertise: As an introduction into the topic of discussion, participants choose how they want to engage with the discussion. Generally open in focus, participants are invited to “show up” in the YWAC space by sharing their own personal experience and knowledge on an identified discussion topic.

Step 2 Make Space, Create Space: Comprised of two actions, this step encourages participants to (a) analyze their shared experiences and (b) highlight important ideas related to the discussion (i.e. allyship and privilege). Participants note the nuances within their shared experiences and are mindful of the voices within the room, to both recognize collective strengths and identify areas that may need more support.

Step 3 Knowledge is Power: This step acts as a point of contextualization. Adding onto established knowledge and experience, participants are introduced to new information to frame – and further unpack the discussion topic at hand. Terms and concepts are defined to anchor discussion. Participants then consider externalities and other notable details.

Step 4 Critical Thinking Framework: Analysis takes hold as participants engage in programming geared – to strengthen and support critical problem – solving, solution-oriented evaluation and conceptual thinking. Typically initiated through a problem statement, participants are prompted to develop strategies and an action plan to address issues raised previously. This outlines key actions that eventually build a critical thinking framework.



Step 5 Experiential Learning: Experiential learning opportunities anchor acquired problem-solving skills. Typically done through small group work, participants actively apply what they have experienced as young women of color by simulating a real-world scenario. Participants are tasked with solving a new issue by using the framework established previously in step 4.

Step 6 Reflect on the Journey: The final step is a point of reflection. Participants gather collectively to debrief on their learning journey. Though check-in moments happen throughout the model, step 6 is more of a structured process that unpacks the learning experience. YWAC members are prompted to build community through lifting challenges, points of contention and offering recommendations.

Impact

YWAC Program Outcomes

During the seven-month duration of YWI, different types of assessments were conducted to evaluate the YWAC progress and identify gaps that may need further development. After administering interviews; check-ins; and qualitative surveys to youth and staff, some key themes emerged in reported responses, highlighting successes of the model, as well as, areas that need more support.

Strengths

I. Community Building

Responses articulated community building as a major strength of the program – noting empowerment and respect as essential ingredients to strong programming. Specifically, the young women felt supported by each other, their co-chairs, and their adult advocates throughout YWAC meetings.

II. Leadership Development

Most of the goals the young women wanted to accomplish through YWI centered on learning, organizing and developing skills connected to leadership, particularly through the lens of policy and organizing.

III. Staff Responsiveness

When asked about other programming strengths, YWAC members stated staff responsiveness, specifically towards raised concerns and requests, was another crucial building block to success. As an intergenerational approach to programming, the YWI co-chair, Joanne Smith, would sit in on some of the YWAC meetings and debrief weekly with the YWAC Co-chairs in order to hear where she can support the process for young people. She would speak with adult working group YWI co-chairs directly and as a group and share some of the concerns and better strategies for working with youth. Youth decided that they wanted to co-create the working group meeting agenda and present the issues as they experience them to the working groups so working group co-chairs agreed and made more time and room for the youth to be seen and heard.

Areas That Need More Support

I. Time Constraints and Management

A number of YWAC members commented on the strict time line of the recommendation development process. Only spanning seven months, many felt a possible extension of the initiative's lifespan and better management of time would have benefited the program.

II. Elevating Youth & Trans Voices

Survey and interview data also showed YWAC members and staff wanted more involvement of trans and undocumented young people. Though changes were made throughout the duration of the process to address this concern, the young women felt more should be done, especially within issue groups and spaces that were predominantly held by adults. As outlined in Discrimination Against Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students in New York State (Frederico, 2015) nationally, a staggering 41 percent of people who are transgender will attempt suicide at least once. The vast majority (almost 75 percent) of transgender students report being verbally harassed at school in the past year, and one-in-three have been physically assaulted. More than half have avoided going to school due to harassment, and one-in-six (15 percent) have left school altogether. One-in-five transgender people experience homelessness during their lives, and in New York City, the average age that a transgender person becomes homeless is only 13-and-a-half.

III. Disability Rights

Although GGE reached out to local disability rights organizations, only two people identified as having disabilities. YWAC was not successful with attracting and learning from the expertise of youth with disabilities. YWI co-chairs and City Council researched and incorporated data and recommendations to address the needs of youth with disabilities especially in school. A number of participants identified as mentally ill. People with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty because poverty operates as a cause and consequence of disability. Children with disabilities enter the juvenile legal system at 5-6 times the rate of youth who do not have disabilities, with 65% of boys and 75% of girls in juvenile detention having at least one mental illness, and up to 85% of children in juvenile detention having at least one disability; and 55% of male state prisoners and 73% of female state prisoners have a mental health condition, with just 1 in 3 state prisoners and

1 in 6 jail inmates receiving treatment for their illness since being admitted.⁶

Additional Program Strengths

Data collected highlighted some key characteristics of YWAC's programmatic strengths:

HR Management

Having a dedicated staff member coordinate and plan policies and procedures before the start of programming enhances stability within the program, while also reducing burdens during moments of crisis or times of increased activity.

Flexibility and Responsiveness

Making the program agenda flexible enough to accommodate changing needs and requests of the space will enhance participation and sense of community of the space. Increased responsiveness of staff creates the conditions for participants to feel supported and heard.

Safe(R) Spaces

Perhaps the most important consideration, the provision of safer and supportive spaces is key to the YWAC model. This was emphasized continuously throughout the review of literature, programming and assessment data. Safe(R) spaces are the foundation to movement building, especially when it engages traditionally marginalized communities. When participants feel safer and supported in these spaces there is a deeper connection and trust developed between youth and the issue, youth and adult advocates, and youth and peers.

Policy Outcomes

YWI connected community-based organizations, grassroots activists and women and girls of color to discuss short, medium and long-term priorities to enhance New York City's policies, structures and services for girls. **This manifested in four key actions:**

I. The New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito announced a \$20 million dollar commitment over the next 2 years to fund important programs recommended by the Young Women's Initiative.

II. New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women's Initiative: Report & Recommendations (2016)⁷

The groundbreaking work and organizing that progressed during YWI produced a list of recommendations on key issue areas for City Council to consider. With YWI work informing the process, City Council released a report that outlined important findings and tangible solutions to address gender inequity in New York City. The report can be found at www.shewillbe.nyc

III. Young Women's Advisory Council 2.0

YWAC was highlighted as one of the most successful components of YWI, City Council pledged to continue including young women and girls in the decision making process. With support from City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and key partners in the Mayor's office, and with support from The NYC Fund for Girls & Young Women of Color and City Council Young Women's Initiative discretionary funds, Girls for Gender Equity is leading a second iteration of the YWAC program to Establish a standing Young Women's Initiative and Young Women's Advisory Council to monitor implementation of recommendations and continue to build new areas of focus. footnote.⁸

IV. Building Power NYC Map⁹

Building Power NYC Map is a pilot tool used to map the services available to cis, trans young women and girls and gender nonconforming young people of color in New York City. Its goal is to support individual, organizational and New York City Council access to knowledge about services that exist and intentionally center the needs of young women and girls and gender nonconforming youth of color. All information shared was self-reported by YWI participant organizations. The map findings only reflect the 80 organizations that completed the mapping survey and the 197 locations although not all participated in YWI. The tool is aimed to be a starting point for the City Council to fully develop the 4th overarching recommendation from YWI report, "Work towards building a cross agency 'one-stop' youth-centered digital platform that can support youth with information relevant to a service they are receiving, function as a searchable tool for accessing services in neighborhoods and serve as a digital case manager."¹⁰

Background

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE)

Mission

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) is a leading grassroots advocacy and service delivery organization working to center the voices and experiences of young women of color within the racial and gender justice movement of the 21st Century. GGE is a Brooklyn-based intergenerational organization working to combat the widespread gender-based violence violations against people of color by uplifting their civil and human rights. GGE supports transformational movement building with cis, trans, and gender nonconforming young people of color by seeing their often-untapped leadership and advocacy potential. GGE encourages communities to remove barriers and create opportunities for girls and women for self-determined lives by promoting the physical, psychological, social and economic well-being of communities of color.

Theory of Change & Outcomes Framework

Reflective of its intersectional¹ mission, GGE's theory of change (TOC) is an amalgamation of values and theories from the fields of education, social work, and community organizing. Echoing underpinnings and theories such as Black Feminist Pedagogy, Difference Theory, Positive Youth Development, Strengths-based and Eco-systemic Social Work approach. GGE's programs are grounded in social justice principles therefore GGE strategically directs its focus on long-term

movement building that addresses the root causes of oppression.² To do this well, it is important for girl-centered organizations to first acknowledge and then address the barriers girls of color encounter based on the structural factors that contribute to and perpetuate the systems of oppression working to maintain inequality: cis sexism, racism, nationalism, heterocentricity, transphobia, ableism, classism or economic discrimination, etc. Incorporating this kind of anti-oppression analysis into how organizations approach, frame, and design programming involves becoming more culturally responsive, ultimately improving outcomes and impacts for historically marginalized communities.

With particular emphasis on intergenerational organizing and youth leadership, GGE employs a dual approach of advocacy and direct service in order to holistically support the development of young women of color, LGBTQ and trans youth. GGE strives to live feminist values that commit to ending gender based violence, state sanctioned violence, and racist policies and practices, while also integrating and uplifting the experiences of cis and trans women and girls as experts of their experiences. Evidence demonstrates that violence, sexual assault, and racism are about power, and people with the least amount of power are the most vulnerable and susceptible to abuse. This abuse is 100% preventable.

Positive Youth Development (PYD), is both a philosophy and an approach to policy and program development that challenges the dominant narrative that youth are problems in need of fixing. The underlying philosophy of youth development is holistic, preventative, and positive. The PYD model focuses on the development of assets and competencies in all young people. As an intergenerational organization, GGE creates a network of peers, students, adult staff, and teachers to offer a stable and consistent environment where youth can feel safe, take risks and feel supported as they question and explore their roles as change agents in a participatory democracy.

GGE's strength based approach views all young people in the space as "at potential" and already empowered as to not reduce them to any trauma they may have lived through and may still be dealing with. If we know that a young person has been violated in any way we see that they bring a first person experience to the conversation but do

not reduce them to the violation that took place against them. The ecosystems perspective is a way of seeing a young person and the environment in their interconnected and multilayered reality to order what support systems or stressors they may be experiencing. Finding out the support and stressors in school, home, guardianship and community allow practitioners to have a fuller picture of the young person that’s attending YWAC and engaging in the civic process.

GGE frames Black feminism as “difference” black feminism, drawing from Audre Lorde’s (1984) *Queer Black Radical Theory*. Difference, in Lorde’s conceptualization, is not a problem, it is a solution. Difference unites, rather than divides, sisters. Within our differences, Lorde insisted, “...We are both most powerful and most vulnerable . . . and [that it is our task to use our differences] as bridges rather than as barriers between us.” In this context, there are no hierarchies of oppression; one oppression (e.g. sexism) is not worse than another (e.g. racism). Our circumstances and the situations we face are far more complex than any one experience of oppression, and thus we must create a more expansive vision of what it means to engage in feminist praxis.

Services Provided by GGE

As part of its commitment to youth leadership development, GGE provides three New York City-based educational, social justice based programs that support and complement classroom-covered content. Its **Urban Leaders Academy**, a holistic after-school program for middle and high school students ages 11 to 19, serves approximately 150 students at one middle and one high school. Structured as a five day a week after school program, GGE hires culturally responsive teachers that teach during the school day as well as teachers from the community. Urban Leaders Academy creates innovative social justice curricula that focuses on education, culture, arts, health and community in order to address the youth development needs of young people served by the program. Participation in Urban Leaders Academy increases student attendance, improves academic performance and classroom behavior, advances critical thinking skills and increases student connection across grade levels.

Sisters in Strength youth organizers are young women of color who apply to GGE to strengthen sisterhood with other young women while receiving direct service social work support, learning and practicing community-organizing skills over the course of two-three years. GGE staff develop and facilitate a yearly curriculum twice a week for six hours, engaging Sisters in Strength in topics including, but not limited to: Building Community and Sisterhood; Identity; Identifying the Issue/Root CausePower, and Privilege; Power Mapping and Analysis; Introduction to Organizing; Movement Building; Sexism and Patriarchy; Gender Based Violence; Participatory Action Research (PAR) and more.

Young Women’s Advisory Council (YWAC) is GGE’s third program. YWAC was designed to create a platform where youth engage in reciprocal learning with adults to name policy reform, programs and resources that will best advance the lives of young women of color. YWAC is an advocacy and civic engagement program for girls residing in the five boroughs of NYC ages 12-24 to engage in participatory governance with community partners, the City Council and Mayors Office of the City of New York. YWAC works with national movement leaders to inspire national young women’s initiative.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a central youth organizing framework utilized by GGE. Smith et al. PAR as a process by which young people investigate important social issues and conduct research to identify the root causes of social problems that directly impact them. Youth take action by disseminating their findings to policymakers and key stakeholders to call for change to unjust conditions. PAR is an instrumental tool in increasing youth participation in social justice organizing and creates innumerable opportunities for young people to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills. PAR is a significant praxis that emphasizes the development of young



people's knowledge and critical thinking skills, centering young people as experts on their own lives and issues they deem as important (INCITE, 2010; Cammarota & Fine, 2008). Sisters in Strength youth organizers participated in the Education work group with the Director of Organizing because of the Participatory Action Research they led to learn the impact of school pushout on girls of color, in particular black girls.



In conclusion, GGE advocates locally and nationally with the most impacted young people. GGE centers the lives of girls and young women within the racial and gender justice movement of the 21st Century. GGE engages with community leaders and national organizing campaigns including Move to End Violence, Dignity in Schools Campaign, Black Lives Matter, Movement for Black Lives, Advancing Equity for Women and Girls of Color at the White House Council on Women and Girls, Anna Julia Cooper Center - Advancing justice through intersectional scholarship at Wake Forest University, Black Girl Movement, Communities United for Police Reform, Every Black Girl and Grantmakers for Girls of Color. GGE staff, alumni and youth organizers provide training on issues including implicit bias, school pushout, gender specific burdens, students' rights in school and sexual harassment.³

Gender Equity Landscape

Gender equity is the just allocation of resources, programs and decision making across the gender spectrum with the assurance that all groups have access to a full range of opportunities to achieve self-determined social, psychological, and physical goals.⁴ With the push for more policy and action focused on closing the gender equity gap, there has been some tremendous progress. Women-owned businesses have risen in numbers; more women are holding high-ranking positions in industries

across the country; due to increased access of contraception and sexuality education, teen pregnancy rates have dropped and; both high school and college graduation rates have skyrocketed.⁵

Gender Equity Snapshot

Despite these monumental achievements, social inequity, violence and disparities continue to persist for women and girls of color:

- Black girls (12 percent), American Indian/Alaska Native girls (7 percent) and Hispanic girls (4 percent) are more likely to be suspended from school than their White peers (2 percent).⁶
- Girls of color (Black and Hispanic, 64 percent; Asian American, 53 percent) are less likely to be involved in sports compared to White girls (76 percent).⁷
- Women of color face a greater risk for several serious health conditions, including diabetes, obesity, certain kinds of cancers and HIV/AIDS.⁸
- Trans women workers are more likely to face wage disparities (nearly falling by one-third).⁹
- Trans women of color are more likely to be victims of homicide.¹⁰
- Women of color also experience higher rates of physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.¹¹

The growth of gender equity is a significant testament to sustained political organizing and policy reform, there is still a need to directly address the multiple systemic inequalities that women and girls of color face in all aspects of their lives.

On October 8, 2015, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito unveiled the Young Women's Initiative (YWI); the first government-led campaign to be dedicated to young women and girls of color. The seven-month initiative aimed to determine what future innovation in programming, data collection, and public/private partnerships are needed to address gender inequity.

Prior to the launch of YWI, GGE led mobilization efforts to drive an increased attention toward the experiences of women and girls of color. After the innovative Young Men's Initiative in 2011 and the following national launch of My Brother's Keeper in 2014, GGE rallied to include young women and girls of color in the racial justice call to action. GGE brought together local grassroots organizations, leaders and youth activists to mobilize communities and uplift the needs of young women and girls of color on the ground. Committed to make New York City a place where young women and girls of color can thrive, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito took on this call to action.

In 2014, GGE, along with other community leaders challenged the New



York City Administration to include the racial and gender justice needs of young women of color within the local Young Men's Initiative and national My Brother's Keeper Initiative.

As a public Call to Action, GGE hosted a series of historic town hall hearings on girls of color in NYC in partnership with the African American Policy Forum,

dozens of local organizations, Public Advocate Letitia James and City Council Member Laurie Cumbo. Following the hearings, the NYC Council Speaker staff and GGE began meeting to share our vision of a Young Women's Initiative for girls of color.

In March 2015, Girls for Gender Equity met with the Speaker's office to present a brief and discuss local and national efforts to build an agenda for young women and girls. New York Women's Foundation and NoVo Foundation joined GGE in the meeting to show philanthropic will behind a young women's initiative.

In May 2015, the City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito announced that the City Council would launch a Young Women's Initiative (YWI) focused on changing the lives of young women and girls of color who experience the greatest disparities. Along with Council Members Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Elizabeth Crowley, Laurie Cumbo and Darlene Mealy, Speaker Mark-Viverito presented an empowering vision before an audience of over 2,000 leaders of community-based organizations and philanthropic partners who gathered for the New

York Women's Foundation's annual Celebrating Women Breakfast. From the stage, Smith echoed the need for action and called in community partners to support the development of the Young Women's Initiative.

In September 2015 over 300 stakeholders, City Council and City Hall staff, including the Young Women's Advisory Council meet numerous times over a seven month period to plan policy, programs, data and resource recommendations for cis and trans women and girls of color in New York City.

In May 2016 New York City Council released [New York City Young Women's Initiative Report & Recommendations](#) that included a total of ninety-nine policy, program, data and resource recommendations from all five work groups and Overarching Recommendations.

Current – Girls for Gender Equity launched the second iteration of YWAC so youth experts can continue to serve as strategic partners to local government, city agencies, philanthropy, and community. YWAC members receive training and support in becoming an accountability team advising the implementation of policy and program recommendations in New York City.¹²

Goals

YWI has three main goals:

- I. Develop policy recommendations that promote and support shifts in institutional practice
- II. Identify underfunded programs and services, and provide recommendations on where to focus public and private funding
- III. Identify key issues that should be public priority, but require long – term research.

Structural Overview

YWI planning process was led by an intergenerational Steering Committee¹³ of community leaders committed to addressing the substantial gender inequities and systemic barriers girls of color face. The Steering committee, co-chaired by Joanne N. Smith (GGE Founder and Executive Director), Ana Oliveira (CEO of the New York Women's Foundation) and Dr. Danielle Moss Lee, (CEO of YWCA NYC),

met together along with key YWI program staff to plan and strategize action, discuss the YWI's progress and address emergent concerns.

The Steering Committee worked closely with key City Council staff to coordinate and manage YWI. Playing a critical role during the initial development of YWI and during its administration, City Council staff actively contributed and informed the initiative. City Council staff, including the Office of Communications, the Office of Policy and Innovation, and the Office of Budgeting, served as key liaisons between City Council and YWI's principal organizers, holding various roles from campaign strategists to YWAC workshop facilitators.

YWI was comprised of four main components: a Communications Strategy Team, a Philanthropy Team, a Data Working Group, and the Young Women's Advisory Council. These components enabled the initiative to engage with stakeholders of all ages, at all levels, throughout the entire process. The Communications Strategy Team, led by City Council staff Jazmine Chavez, designed YWI's media campaign and oversaw the initiative's social media strategy throughout the seven month process. The Philanthropy team led by New York Women's Foundation and NoVo Foundation worked to identify funding opportunities for public and private partnerships and provide recommendations on how to better focus and manage funding streams post-YWI. The Data Working Group, chaired by data and research specialists Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw and Stephanie Gendall, synthesized the data needs of each issue working group, designs a research framework based on those needs, and analyzed collected data that informed data recommendations in a final report at the end of the initiative.

Over 300 service providers and city agencies, along with members of the four main committees were divided into five issue-specific working groups : Health, Anti-Violence, Economic & Workforce Development, Education, and Community Supports & Opportunities.¹⁴ Each issue group was tasked to take inventory of the current services provided and examine the efficiency of those services. After this initial evaluation, working group members were then charged to identify key themes within each issue area and brainstorm potential policy recommendations.

The Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC)

The crux of the initiative is centered on highlighting lived experiences

of young women and girls of color. The involvement of young women throughout the initiative, from YWAC to issue group work spaces, critically ensured that "the voices and experiences of young women themselves are driving the focus of the Young Women's Initiative."¹⁵ In an effort to maintain the integrity of the initiative, GGE in collaboration with youth leaders, organizers, and allies formed the Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC). YWAC is a platform for girls of color and gender nonconforming young people to share their lived experiences and expertise with advocates to create both systemic and cultural changes. YWAC is an opportunity to change the white male heteronormative framework of leadership cultivation and organizational and political decision making. This participatory governance process offers a space for young women to strategize on how to approach, analyze, and combat systemic challenges they face every day. Young women are taught to mobilize their power and to make changes and participate in decision making in the reimagining and transformation of systems.



Advisory Council Members

The council seats twenty-three young women and gender nonconforming young people ranging from 12 to 25 years old, all committed to making sustainable and meaningful change in the gender equity landscape. YWAC is mostly comprised of cis young women of color (with higher representation of Black and Latina women). The council members also represent – different gender identities along the gender spectrum including, trans (18.75 percent), gender-fluid (26.6 percent), and gender non-conforming (13.33 percent). Coming from four of the five boroughs of New York City the twenty three council members represent the Bronx (25 percent), Manhattan (25 percent), Brooklyn (37.50 percent) and Queens (12.50 percent). The council members have an exhibited keen interest in understanding gender equity through the lenses of intersectionality and policy reform.

Young Women's Advisory Program

The YWAC agenda is adaptable and changes to reflect our changing landscape and the emergent needs that arise in the group like the need for childcare, homelessness, arrests or fear of state sanctioned violence, gender dysphoria, illness and a lack of healthcare or any number of reasons that young women of color need support throughout the YWI process. YWAC spaces are varied in scope, covering key programming spanning from community building to education. Though diversified in content, YWAC is anchored in its main role – to inform the Young Women's Initiative throughout its planning and implementation process. YWAC has four specified outcomes:

- Ensure young people are seen as experts of their experiences and feel safe enough to share their expertise, strategies and shape priorities in specified issue areas.
- Educate and train youth to address policy recommendations
- Equip youth to identify legislation and policy demands.
- Foster connection between the initiative and youth are enhanced as YWI develops.

Centering Trans & Undocumented Voices

Recognizing the underrepresentation of both trans and undocumented voices in YWAC early on, GGE strategized with trans leadership about how to make the council more inclusive. This manifested in action both within and outside the initiative. Internally, YWAC organizers actively widened the lens of gender identity in both framework and analysis during policy development. Building on the community resources of YWAC, GGE staff supported YWAC youth leaders as they reached out to local organizers within the trans and undocumented community in New York City. As a continued commitment to the inclusive representation of girls of color, YWAC youth leaders formed safe(r) spaces dedicated to voices of trans women within the initiative. These spaces were held to debrief on YWAC and YWI work. Similar to YWAC, the group convened collectively to debrief on YWI progress, address concerns and needs that arose and offer space for reflection. As YWI program progressed, the group met on an as-needed basis to ensure inclusivity and safe(r) spaces for all voices.

In order to have a deeper conversation about how multiple

oppressions like being transgender or undocumented prevent gender nonconforming young people in our communities from thriving, YWAC needed to include the lived experiences of the person or population who has been pushed out of our community the most; the person who has the least access to resources and the least opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential. YWAC discussed openly the many forces and oppressions that lead to being pushed out to the margins.

Externally, youth activists created and held roundtable sessions for trans and undocumented women to review and assess the developed policy recommendations. The second strategy differed greatly from the previous approach. GGE staff and organizers developed a second plan that better addressed the challenges faced previously—shifting its outreach model to be more aligned with the landscape of both communities. YWAC members mobilized within the NYC trans community by proactively creating opportunities for trans youth to shape and inform policy proposals. With GGE's support, YWAC members created a social media platform to uplift issues addressed in recommended proposals.

Youth Women's Advisory Council Co-Chairs

YWAC was chaired by Reproductive Justice Activist Gloria Malone, trans activist Miss Cherno Biko (former co-chair), WomanHOOD co-founder and Executive Director Amanda Matos and PrEP Specialist Callen Lorde Nala Toussaint. YWAC co-chairs work alongside GGE staff to develop YWAC programming and support structures. YWAC co-chairs serve as both youth advocates and youth leaders. Their involvement with the administrative and managerial components of YWAC programming allow them to highlight the inequities that YWAC members faced in traditionally adult-centered settings. They were able to assess concerns raised by YWAC members as co-chairs having built a strong relationship with YWAC members.

Central Mission of Report

Girls for Gender Equity seeks insight on three main areas of program evaluation: codification of the Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC) program model; an assessment of the program from participating young women; and sharing our best practices for implementing YWAC nationally.

Methodology

Girls for Gender Equity's primary goal for this report is to codify the YWAC's program model. As a result, the literature review focused on pedagogy, community building and youth leadership development. The review identified some key themes and concepts that applied contextually to this report. Further, peer-reviewed articles, government agency reports, and facilitation handbooks were the bulk of literature consulted. Three group interviews were conducted with YWAC members and their co-chairs – resulting in useful information further supplemented by responses from a diagnostic survey, mid-point survey and a following final survey. Bi-weekly meetings with principal organizers at GGE were also held to as a point of re-centering progress and debriefing findings.

Keeping in practice with qualitative research methods, YWAC sessions, working group meetings and roundtable discussions were observed throughout the administration of the initiative, which provided a deeper understanding of program mechanics, culture and idiosyncratic practices. YWAC sessions were weekly, spanning from 2-4 hours in programming. Working group meetings were held bi-weekly and spanned approximately two hours in length. Two roundtable focus groups were conducted with trans and undocumented women and girls in mid-February. Data collected from both focus groups informed the evaluation piece of this report—highlighting key programmatic strengths and identifying areas may need more development.



The YWAC program provides youth-led pathways to take back ownership of these spaces – these are women-owned spaces, trans-owned spaces and youth owned spaces. Every YWAC meeting is facilitated by co-chairs, both of whom are young women of color. Every YWAC meeting is facilitated by youth. Youth are at the center of the YWAC organizing framework, from managing space to cultivating the culture of the space. Youth have the agency and support of YWAC to adopt and grow the structure to reflect their needs and requests. Youth are treated as powerful agents for change and experts of their own experiences YWAC spaces are also informed by a genderfluid lens. With members identifying as cisgender, trans, genderfluid and gender non-conforming, gender is full in YWAC spaces.

YWAC Program Model

Pedagogic Strategy Oriented towards intergenerational community organizing, GGE's strategic plan is informed by several distinct theories including the education for liberation, black feminist pedagogy and critical race theory. YWAC programming consists of a Social Work with Analysis model that draws from an array of progressive facilitation methods including shared-ownership of knowledge, scaffolding power and meta-analysis. With influences from different fields and levels of organizing, the strategy is able to provide a net of support catered to diverse experiences. The strategy also provides space to engage with key concepts, including intersectionality, intergenerational organizing and allyship, to anchor discussion and provide council members a

structural understanding of their work and how it will inform the final policy recommendations.

The strategy provides opportunities to further nourish and enrich educational moments. It raises questions and encourages participants to be active when describing, analyzing, and planning. This is crucial in YWAC spaces. As many of the young women come to YWAC with different levels of trauma and experiences related to government and/or participating service providers, it is essential that YWAC spaces are sensitive to these dynamics. The strategy supports the vulnerability of showing up in new spaces by building community, cultivating leadership through knowledge seeking, and critically analyzing by employing critical analysis.

Limitations and Assumptions

Further formative assessments were not able to be conducted, reducing the variety of collected information for analysis. Despite these setbacks, the research design evaluates two areas that are least affected by time constraints and focus on GGE's most immediate needs: codification and youth feedback.

Social Work with Analysis Model

The six step sequential model is broken into three thematic blocks defined by the key facilitation methods mentioned previously: shared – ownership of knowledge, scaffolding power and meta-analysis.

Build Community

Shared-ownership of knowledge is based on the concept of a collaboratively constructed space built by a mediational framework of shared language, definitions, analysis and experiences.¹ Echoing the principle of shared – ownership, step 1 and 2 take inventory of the human capital and resources represented in the space while simultaneously building community. These initial steps are critical as they lay a foundation for productive and meaningful problem – solving later on. During these first two steps, participants are collectively defining terms, identifying connecting themes and highlighting nuances in their experiences. By lifting these voices as experts and making/creating spaces for them in the room, YWAC members are collaboratively reinforcing and validating each other's self-esteem and confidence, building trust and community within the group.

Step 1 Experience as Expertise: As an introduction into the topic, participants choose how they want to engage. Generally open in focus, participants are invited to show up in YWAC space by sharing their own personal experience and knowledge on an identified topic.

Step 2 Make Space, Create Space: Comprised of two actions, this step encourages participants to (a) analyze their shared experiences and

(b) highlight important ideas related to the discussion (i.e. allyship and privilege). Participants note the nuances within their shared experiences and take inventory of the voices within the room, recognizing collective strengths and areas that may need more support.

Scaffold Power

Steps 3, 4 and 5 employ scaffolding to help participants practice critical thinking and problem-solving skills in a safer and supportive learning environment. Scaffolding is an education technique in which learners receive support when performing a task “beyond their reach if pursued independently when unassisted.”² Participants gradually learn how to approach and execute a task with the guidance of a master-learner.³ In steps 3 and 4, co-chairs introduce problem-solving techniques to help YWAC members build a framework. This method complements shared knowledge established in steps 1 and 2 by introducing new themes and concepts to further understanding of the discussion.

Step 3 Knowledge is Power: This step acts as a point of contextualization. Adding onto established knowledge and experience, participants are introduced to new information to frame and further unpack the discussion topic at hand. Terms and concepts are defined to anchor discussion. Participants then consider externalities and other notable details.

Step 4 Critical Thinking Framework: Analysis takes hold as participants engage programming geared to strengthen and support critical problem – solving, solution-oriented evaluation and conceptual thinking. Typically initiated through a problem statement, participants are prompted to develop strategies and an action plan to address issues raised previously. This outlines key actions that builds a critical thinking framework.

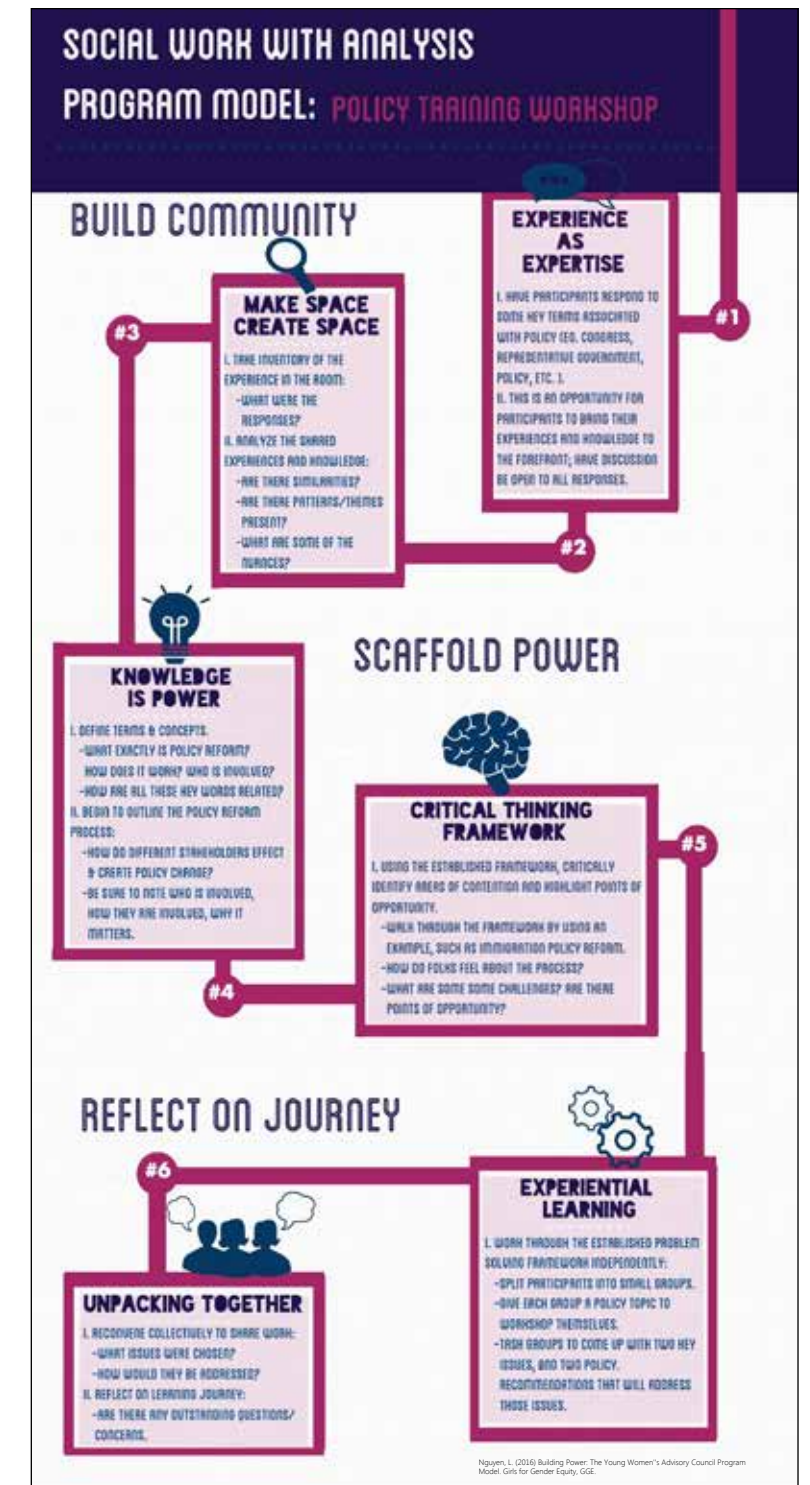
Step 5 Experiential Learning: Experiential learning opportunities anchor acquired problem-solving skills. Typically done through small group work, participants actively apply what they have learned by simulating a real-world scenario. Participants are tasked with solving a new issue by using the framework established previously in step 4. This experiential learning method makes the problem-solving process more iterative and personable. Participants are actively building efficacy in their work, while developing valuable skills for the future.

Reflect on Journey

The final step is a point of reflection, in which participants gather collectively to debrief on their learning journey. Though check-in moments happen throughout the model, step 6 is more of a structured process that unpacks the learning experience. This final step returns participants back to the original shared – ownership context, in which YWAC members are again prompted to build community by sharing challenges, points of contention and offer recommendations. The inclusion of this meta-analysis ensures YWAC members are given opportunities to voice concerns, praise, or other points of consideration, while developing new skills and knowledge.⁴

Safe(r) YWAC Spaces

The first approach created safe(r) spaces for trans women and girls internal to YWI. Recognizing the need to center their voices within the initiative early on, trans activists and YWAC members Nala Toussaint and Miss Cherno Biko worked alongside GGE and adult advocates to reach out to the local community; this resulted in the creation of safe(r) YWI spaces that centered the expertise of trans women. This early inception allowed for a rich and inclusive dialogue that greatly enhanced YWI. The group members convened collectively in-person and online to debrief on YWI progress, address needs that arose and offer space for reflection. As YWI the program progressed, the group met for concentrated action and debrief as-needed to ensure inclusivity and safe(r) spaces for all voices.



Roundtable Discussions

The second approach reached underrepresented communities and voices external to YWI. Near the end of the YWI process, YWAC Co-Chairs collaborated with local organizers to hold roundtable discussions centered on the experiences of trans and undocumented women and girls. Two consecutive roundtable discussion sessions were conducted in February to unpack and discuss how the initiative could better align itself with the needs of trans and undocumented women and support young women from these communities in leadership opportunities. The sessions aimed to accomplish three main objectives: 1) identify inequities and dis-service in current city services for trans and undocumented women, 2) lift and map key community supports and service providers in New York City, and 3) discuss specific policy recommendations developed by YWI organizers.



YWAC Learning Policy from Sasha Ahuja, Deputy Director, Policy & Innovation Division Office of Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

also provided to help alleviate burden. Participants were offered food, gift cards, and MTA transportation cards for each roundtable session they attended.

The roundtable discussions spanned four hours in length, with each discussion taking approximately two hours to complete. The program flow mirrored YWAC's facilitation approach: grounding, identifying issues and gaps, lifting supports and resources, and visioning. Additionally, to ensure the validity and safety of the space, the roundtables were held at a Streetwise and Safe (SAS), a local non-profit unaffiliated with city government. Incentives were

Impact

YWAC Program Outcomes

During the seven month duration of YWI, different types of assessments were conducted to evaluate the initiative's progress and identify gaps that need further development. After administering interviews; check-ins; and qualitative surveys, youth and staff responses were collected, synthesized and analyzed. Some key themes emerged in these responses, highlighting successes of the model, as well as areas that needed more support.

The formation of trans and undocumented-centered spaces came at pivotal moments during the YWI process. Considering the policy impacts of the initiative, there was a conscious effort to continuously try to create meaningful safe(r) spaces for all women and girls. Further, with YWI organizers already steadfast in their policy work, it became increasingly more pertinent to create an advisory body that could effectively shape any developed recommendations. It was important that the expertise of young women were not just incorporated, but also as central to the design and implementation of the initiative GGE staff, YWAC Co-chairs and participating young women responded to the demand for such an advisory body. YWI youth organizers and their adult advocates answered this push for space critically and seriously.

Policy Outcomes

The nation's first Young Women's Initiative YWI connected community-based organizations, grassroots activists and women and girls to discuss short, medium and long-term priorities to enhance New York

City policies, structures and services for cis and trans young women and girls of color and gender nonconforming young people. This manifested in four key actions:

I. The New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito announced that the Council will allocate \$10 million over the next 2 years to fund important programs recommended by the Young Women's Initiative. The New York City Council Speaker and Finance Committee released a request for proposal process for the first 5M of Young Women's Initiative discretionary funding for 2017. The awardees can be found in New York City Council Transparency Resolution, Young Women's Initiative.¹ Partners in the philanthropic community held The NYC Fund for Girls & Young Women of Color by New York Women's Foundation and NoVo Foundation will match the funding making YWI a \$20 million initiative for young women and girls throughout New York City.

II. New York City Young Women's Initiative Report & Recommendations:² The groundbreaking work and organizing that progressed during YWI produced over 100 recommendations under the five key issue areas and overall recommendations for City Council, Foundations and community partners to work together to implement. With YWI work informing the process, City Council released a report that outlined important findings and tangible solutions to address gender inequity in New York City.

III. Young Women's Advisory Council 2.0: Listed as Overarching recommendation #1, *Establish a standing Young Women's Initiative and Young Women's Advisory Council to monitor implementation of recommendations and continue to build new areas of focus.*³ YWAC was recognized throughout the city as one of the most successful and essential components of YWI. City Council pledged to continue including young women and girls in the decision making process throughout the two years of the YWI commitment. With support from City Council, The Fund by New York Women's Foundation and NoVo Foundation and key community partners, GGE is leading a second iteration of the YWAC program that is called YWAC 2.0. Four YWAC co-chairs were hired, Sarika Kumar, Gloria Malone, Nala Toussaint and Amanda Matos to lead twenty five young women from throughout the five boroughs of NYC through YWAC 2.0 civic engagement.

The Young Women's Initiative Speakers staff have recruited an Advisory Committee that will be chaired by Dr. Danielle Moss-Lee and Carol Robles-Román. YWI co-chairs Ana Oliveira will report on the Philanthropic advancements and Joanne N. Smith will report on the Young Women's Advisory Council.

III. As a response to the work and findings of YWI, GGE developed a mapping tool that links a diverse range of direct resources and services to local communities. The tool is aimed to provide girls and their communities the supports they need at the quality they deserve. The map is a first step in the overarching YWI recommendation #3 to: *Establish a web-based platform for the Young Women's Initiative that reflects the work of YWI and communicates the City's efforts to improve the lives of young women and girls.*⁴

Building Power NYC Map is a pilot tool used to map the services available to cis, trans young women and girls and gender nonconforming young people in New York City. All information shared was self-reported by agencies. These findings only reflect the 80 organizations that completed the mapping survey and the 197 locations that participated in YWI. GGE is currently hosting and has absorbed the cost for the site development but is poised to transfer platforms to the City Council so they can build out overarching recommendations #3 and #4.

Strengths

I. Community Building

Responses articulated community building as a major strength of the program. Specifically, the young women felt supported by each other; their co-chairs; and the adults in the room throughout YWAC meetings, noting empowerment and respect as essential ingredients to strong programming.

Survey Item: "Please share at least two things that are going well in the YWAC."

*"community building, sharing ideas with one another, learning to listen to each other and **respect** each other's differences"*

*"one big family – **community**"*

*"definitely **community building, empowering youth at meetings**"*

Both interviews and survey data show support was a key component to YWAC spaces. 93.5 percent of YWAC members stated they felt they gained community and personal supports through their participation in the program.

Young women felt community was strengthened within YWAC spaces when staff were flexible with deadlines and time commitments, and provided assistance with travel costs. Allyship was another important concept echoed in the data. Not only did YWAC members feel supported by each other, they also felt the responsibility to step up and bring pertinent issues discussed within YWAC meetings to other spaces.

Survey Item: "Please give one example of a time that you feel like you positively shifted the conversation happening in your working group."

*"As a cisgender woman, I have had to **redirect** conversation to include transgender women"*

*"I **reminded** folks that we have to focus on young women of color, and not all women"*

*"They **build community** there, every time when new folks come in, it is manifesting in that space, for them **as culture**"*

II. Leadership Development

Most of the goals the young women wanted to accomplish through YWI centered around learning, organizing and developing skills connected to leadership, particularly through the lens of policy and organizing.

Survey Item: "What are some of your (personal/aspirational) goals you want to accomplish by being involved in the YWI?"

*"**learn**/be a part of **policy** making— be better evolved/be an **activist** for girls of color"*

*"Beginning a **political career** in **policy** advancement for trans young women of color"*

*"To **learn** and be able to **help** establish further protections and rights for transgender, gender non-conforming youth whom are at most risk in mental health well-being, both physically and financially"*

GGE's practice of positive youth development provides pathways for

the young women to seek and amplify different voices on their own terms, while still building and maintaining a safer climate.

Interview Item: "What are some of your assessed key strengths of the YWAC program?"

*"They also have a deep understanding of **intersectionalities**, in their small group discussion seeing how they **hold their own spaces**"*

III. Staff Responsiveness

When asked about other programming strengths, YWAC members stated staff responsiveness through practices such as deep reflective listening and regarding raised concerns and requests, was another crucial building block to success.

Survey Item: "Please share at least two things that are going well in the YWAC."

*"Staff **responses** to brought up issues/problems with YWAC and/or the working groups" "Having adults to be in the shift of conversation – ageism – being **open minded** and **accountable**"*

Interviews repeatedly stated flexibility in both how we worked together and on the approach as a key strength of the YWAC model. Throughout the YWI planning and implementation process, GGE staff were adaptable and constantly incorporated recommendations and other suggestions raised by youth. Influenced by GGE's core value of intergenerational movement building, this flexibility allowed YWAC to evolve — refocusing and centering the agenda from adult advocates, to youth leaders.

Areas That Need More Support

I. Time Constraints and Management

A number of YWAC members reported that the limited timeline of the initiative—only spanning seven months was a barrier. Many felt an extension of the initiatives' lifespan and better management of time would have benefitted the program and could have had more impact

Survey Item: "Please share at least two things that could be improved in the Young Women's Advisory Council."

*"**limited time** of action"*

*"I wish it **extended** past January. I wish for **further info sharing and collaboration** across working groups"*

The young women also noted that the time commitments of the program were constricting, this was particularly resonant for the trans council members. Due to economic instability, life challenges, or other previously established commitments, many young women were either unable to commit to all of the meetings, or had inconsistent involvement in the initiative.

II. Elevating Youth & Trans Voices

Survey and interview data also showed YWAC members and staff wanted more involvement of young people. Though changes were made throughout the duration of the process to address this concern, the young women felt more should be done, especially within issue groups and spaces that were predominantly held by adults.

Survey Item: "Please share at least two things that could be improved in the Young Women's Advisory Council."

*"**elevating** youth's voice in working groups"*

*"**accommodating** trans women"*

Additional Program Strengths

After analyzing data collected, a few additional considerations were highlighted as key characteristics of YWAC's programmatic success:

HR Management

Having a dedicated staff person with Girls for Gender Equity coordinate and plan policies and procedures before and throughout the launch of programming is crucial and creates stability within the program, while reducing the disruption to the progress of the initiative during moments of crisis or times of increased activity.

Flexibility and Responsiveness

Making the program agenda flexible enough to accommodate changing needs and requests of the young women of color will enhance participation and a sense of community of the space. Increased responsiveness of staff is critical to this process. When participants feel that staff are genuinely invested in their needs and in turn act on their requests, the young women of color feel supported and heard.

Safe(R) Spaces

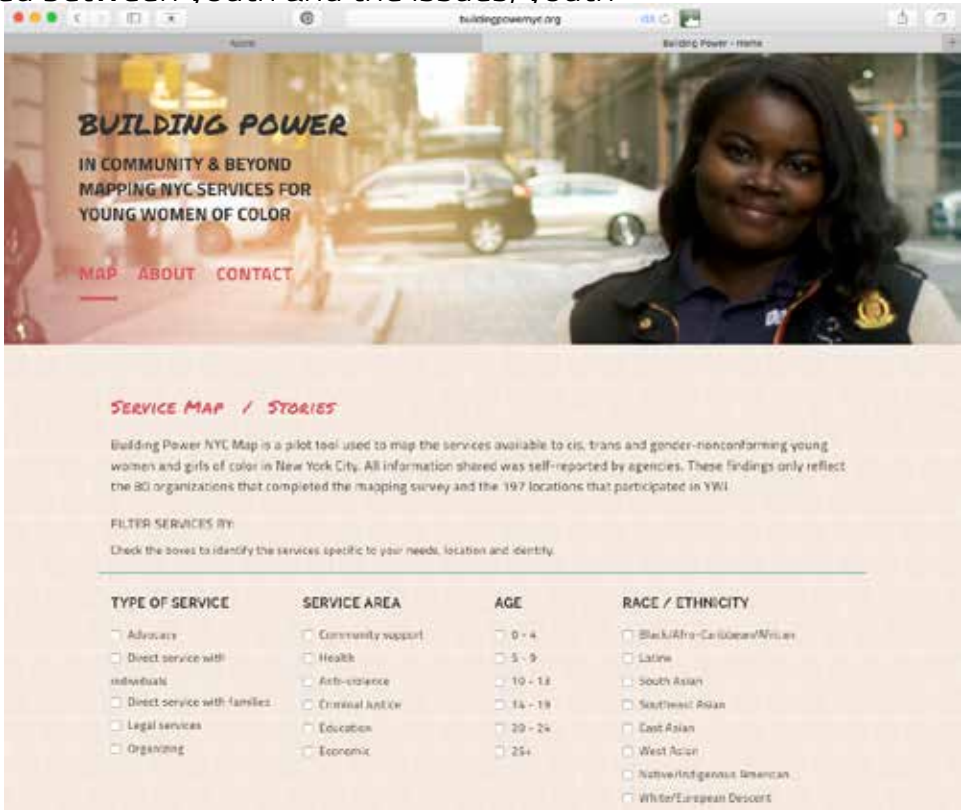
The most important aspect of the YWAC model has been the creation of safer and supportive spaces. This was emphasized continuously through the review of literature, programming and assessment data. Safer spaces are the foundation to movement building, especially when it involves traditionally marginalized communities. When participants feel safer and more supported in these spaces, there is a deeper connection and trust developed between youth and the issues, youth and staff, and youth to peers.

Conclusion and Next Steps

– GGE's social justice activism challenges the structural, legal and social conditions that limit equity. The issues facing young women of color, especially cis and trans young women and gender nonconforming young person surviving in low-income communities, is

deeply tied to other issues such as access to reproductive health and quality health care, domestic and sexual violence, education and economic opportunities, disability, Trans and LGBTQ rights, and so much more. Often times these connections are under-explored because the lives of young women of color are seen as undervalued in the dominant mainstream discourse. Therefore, perpetuating a divisive and polarizing culture among social justice advocates and public policymakers who are unable (or unwilling) to see the existence of young people of color as a vibrant and important political project.

– NOW is the time for us to move and disrupt the status quo, NOW is the time to be courageous and set an inclusive agenda led for and by the people most impacted. Join the Young Women's



Advisory Council in creating intergenerational leadership through participatory governance and young women and girl of color leadership.

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Many youth will benefit from the courage of the New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for launching the Nation’s first Young Women’s Initiative along with City Council Members Laurie Cumbo, Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Elizabeth Crowley, Laurie Cumbo and Darlene Mealy; the finance team within City Council and the many staff members that supported the entire YWI process. The Mayor’s Administration staff that will work closely with Young Women’s Advisory Council to implement many of these recommendations.

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Project Manager

Sasha Ahuja, Mary Tek, Traci Sanders, Danielle Porcaro, Laura Popa

Health

Staff team leaders: Crystal Pond and David Seitzer, Crilhien Francisco
Team: Aminta Kilawan, Kimberly Williams, Michael Benjamin, Jennie Berger

Education

Staff team leaders: Joan Povolny, Aysha Schomburg, Norah Yahya
Team: Elizabeth Hoffman, Jessica Dodson, Jan Atwell, Chloe Rivera, Mili Bonilla

Anti-Violence and Criminal Justice

Staff team leaders: Laurie Wen, Deepa Ambekar, Ellen Eng
Team: Beth Golub, Catalina Cruz, Muzna Ansari, Will Hongach, Eisha Wright, Faiza Ali

Economic and Workforce Development

Staff team leaders: Ede Fox, Rachel Harris and Matt Carlin, Aliya Ali
Team: Alex Paulenoff, James Subudhi, Theo Moore, Emre Edev

Community Support & Opportunity

Staff team leaders: Tonya Cyrus and Andrea Vazquez, Dohini Sompura
Team: Malaika Jabali, Faizah Malik, Jennifer Wilcox, Casie Addison

Data Team

Phil Martin, Traci Sanders, Pat McClellan

Young Women’s Advisory Council

Danielle Porcaro, Marissa Yanni

Comms/Digital

Eric Koch, Erica Gonzalez
Team: Jazmin Chavez, Juana Ponce de Leon, Amy Varghese, Robin Levine

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Reproductive Health, NEW (Non-traditional Employment for Women), New Economy Project, NYC Anti-Violence Project, NYC Coalition for Reproductive Justice, New York Civil Liberties Union, New York University, New York Urban League, NYC Employment & Training Coalition, NYS Afterschool Network, Nurse-Family Partnership, Partnership for NYC, Per Scholas, Planned Parenthood of NYC, PowerPlay NYC, Race Forward, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, Safety Net Project, Seedco, Silberman School of Social Work, Single Stop, Soros Justice Fellow, Soul Sisters, SAYA! (South Asian Youth Action), TeenMomNYC, The Black Institute, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol, The Door, The New York Academy of Medicine, The Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition, United Neighborhood Houses, Urban Arts Partnership, Urban Assembly School for Criminal Justice, Urban Justice Center, Vera Institute & Clinical Psychologist, Violence Intervention Program, VOCAL-NY, Voices Unbroken, Welfare Right Initiative, WHEDCo, WomanHOOD Project, Women's Prison Association, Women's Sports Foundation, Women's City Club of New York, Women's Venture Fund, Year Up, Young Women's Leadership Network, Youth Represent, YWCA Brooklyn, YWCA of the City of New York.

For a list of individual participant names visit the Shewillbe.nyc report

Most importantly, thank you to the courageous youth who made up Young Women's Advisory Council Members.

Young Women's Advisory Council Members

Angelique Beluso, Tiffany Berruti, Ariadne Billy, Celeste Bond, Brittany Brathwaite, Shatia Burks, Sen Lin Cai, Rachel Candelaria, Percy Carter, Alexandra Crawford, Lea Jean, Francois, Desiree Fuller, Kristen Gonzalez, Heleya Gray, Ariana Hammonds, Sharone Holloman, Prabjoot Lally, Kashmira McCallister, Elanie Paredes, Samantha Ramirez, Hyunhee Shin, Jadayah Spencer

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Appendix A

Steering Committee Members



New York City Council Speaker
Melissa Mark-Viverito, Young Women's Initiative



Ana Oliveira
YWI Co-Chair,
President & CEO New York Women's Fdn



Joanne N. Smith
YWI Co-Chair,
Founder & ED Girls for Gender Equity



Dr. Danielle Moss Lee
YWI Co-Chair President & CEO YWCA NYC



Maya Wiley Counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio



Lilliam Barrios-Paoli,
Chair of Board NYC Health & Hospitals



NYC Council Member
Julissa Ferreras-Copeland,
Chair-Comm. on Finance
YWI Steering Comm



NYC Council Member
Laurie Cumbo, Chair
Comm. on Women's
Issues YWI Steering Comm



NYC Council Member
Darlene Mealy, Chair
Comm. on Civil Rights
YWI Steering Comm



NYC Council Member
Elizabeth Crowley,
Chair - Committee on
Fire & Criminal Justice
YWI Steering Comm.



Monique Morris
YWI Steering Committee
Co-founder National
Black Women's Justice
Institute, Inc.



Amanda Matos
Co-Founder & ED The
WomanHOOD Project
Young Women's Advisory
Council Co-chair



Gloria Malone
Young Women's Advisory
Council Co-chair
Reproductive Justice
Organizer Teen Mom NYC



Carol Robles-Roman
YWI Steering Committee
ED Legal Momentum,
The Women's Legal
Defense Fund



Nala Toussaint YWAC
Trans Young Women of
Color Advisory Council
PrEP Specialist Callen-
Lorde Community
Health Center



Andrea Ritchie
Anti-Violence Co-Chair
Soros Justice Fellow



Rukia Lumumba
Anti-Violence
Co-Chair Director of
Youth Programs CASES



Cidra Sebastien
Education Co-chair
Associate ED The
Brotherhood/Sister Sol



Nadia Lopez
Education Co-chair
Principal Mott
Hall Bridges Academy



Octavia Lewis
Health Co-chair
Transgender Services
Specialist HMI

Appendix A

Steering Committee Members



Dr. Angela Diaz
Health Co-chair
Professor Icahn
School of



Dillonna Lewis
Community Supports
Co-chair ED Welfare
Rights Initiative



Lindsay Rosenthal
Community Supports
Co-chair Fellow
Vera Institute



Alicia Guevara
Econ & Workforce Dev.
Co-chair tED Year Up



Angie Kamath
Econ & Workforce Dev.
Co-chair ED Per
Scholas



Jennifer Jones Austin
YWI Steering
Committee ED
Federation Protestant
Welfare Agencies



Heather McGee
YWI Steering
Committee ED Demos



Stephanie Gendell
Data Co-chair
Associate ED for
Policy & Gov. Relations
Citizen's Committee
for Children of NY



Kimberlé Crenshaw
Data Co-chair
ED African American
Policy Forum



Opal Tometi
YWI Steering
Committee ED Black
Alliance for Just
Immigration /#BLM



Jessica Gonzales-Rojas
YWI Steering
Committee
ED National Latina
Institute for
Reproductive Health



Miriam Yeung
YWI Steering
Committee
ED National Asian
Pacific American
Women's Forum



Jamilah Lemieux
Communications
Co-chair Senior Editor
Ebony



Haydee Morales
Health Co-Chair
Executive Director
Casita Maria
Center for Arts and
Education



Farah Tanis
Anti-Violence Co-Chair
Co-Founder
Black Women's
Blueprint



Melanie Hartzog
YWI Steering
Committee Executive
Director Children's
Defense Fund



Hannah Giorgis
Communications
Co-chair
Journalist BuzzFeed

Appendix A

Principal Organizers



New York City Council Speaker
Melissa Mark-Viverito, Young Women's Initiative



Laura Popa
Project Manager YWI
Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislation and Policy at New York City Council



Sasha Ahuja
Principal Project Manager YWI Deputy Director Policy and Innovation



Latonia McKinney
Finance Director at New York City Council & Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito



Joanne N. Smith
YWI Co-Chair, Founder & ED Girls for Gender Equity



Ana Oliveira
YWI Co-Chair, President & CEO New York Women's Fdn



Dr. Danielle Moss Lee
YWI Co-Chair President & CEO YWCA NYC



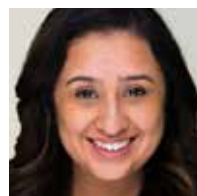
Mary Tek
Policy Innovation Projects Coordinator at New York City Council



Danielle Porcaro
Project Manager Young Women's Advisory Council Community Liaison New York City Council



Amy Varghese
Press Strategy Deputy Press Secretary New York City Council



Jazmin Chavez
Social Media and Community Manager at New York City Council & Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito



Milo Inglehart
Project Management Junior Policy Analyst at New York City Council



Kylynn Grier
Organizer Young Women's Advisory Council Policy Coordinator Girls for Gender Equity



Amanda Matos
Co-Founder & ED The WomanHOOD Project Young Women's Advisory Council Co-chair



Nala Toussaint YWAC Trans Young Women of Color Advisory Council PrEP Specialist Callen-Lorde Community Health Center



Gloria Malone
Young Women's Advisory Council Co-chair Reproductive Justice Organizer Teen Mom NYC

Appendix A

Principal Organizers



YWI Steering Committee First Meeting



YWAC Members Celebrating the End of the YWI Planning Process

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

Intentional collaboration between New York City Council (NYCC) and Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) assisted in developing a shared understanding around the mission and vision of the Young Women’s Initiative. Ongoing conversations and coordination between NYCC and GGE assisted in fostering a shared language and foundation with which to support major stakeholders involved in the seven month planning process.

Below you will find core values emphasized during the planning process of the Young Women’s Initiative:

NYC Council Young Women’s Initiative Adapted from Girls for Gender Equity’s TOC

The NYC Council Young Women’s Initiative (YWI) operates using the following set of values and theories.

1. Intersectional and Black Feminism (or Post-Colonial Feminism): We bring an analysis of power and an awareness of race, class, gender, and heterosexist privilege to all that we do.
2. Inclusivity: YWI actively embraces a definition of ‘women and girls’ that includes the voices and experiences of transwomen and gender-nonconforming people.
3. Collaboration: This initiative will work to establish the conditions necessary for authentic collaboration including community-building, transparent decision-making processes, and power-sharing
4. Transformative youth participation and advocacy: YWI commits to supporting youth engagement in all aspects of the Initiative. We believe that making room for young people to become their own advocates is incredibly powerful and that institutions impacting the lives of young people will only be improved with their participation and expert perspective.
5. Systems Thinking: YWI centers a commitment to removing systemic obstacles for girls and women of color within city agencies and throughout New York City at large and ensuring a mechanism for interagency collaboration and communication for pointed implementation and impact.

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

6. Visibility: YWI is committed to shining a light on the experiences of the most marginalized communities through collecting disaggregated data and conducting research rooted in community partnership to better understand the needs of all young women in New York City.
7. Proactive Strengths-based Approach: YWI recognizes the abundance of strength that young women of color hold and will draw on their expertise to address systemic disparities that members of their communities face.
8. Communication: YWI ensures a mechanism for interagency and inter-committee collaboration and communication for pointed implementation and impact.
9. Accountability: YWI commits to creating mechanisms of accountability to key stakeholders, community members, and the most marginalized communities to ensure that YWI is connected to and supporting the intended impacted communities.

Working on an Intergenerational Team

Adapted from Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition, Routledge, 2007

Values of Intergenerational Work

- Older people and younger people are fully human and deserve to be treated with full dignity and respect.
- Young people and older people are entitled to the same access to resources as other humans.
- Older people and younger people are entitled to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.
- Each person is a work in progress; as we learn together; we make deeper, more significant change at individual, institutional, and societal levels.
- The individual experiences of each of us provide the best data sources for the change that needs to happen.

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

Support Shared learning:

- Develop a shared understanding around terms and the vision of the Young Women's Initiative.
 - What is intersectional feminism?
 - What is institutionalized racism?
 - Why think about equity as opposed to equality?
 - How can intergenerational spaces be supported?
 - » Impacts of Adultism:
 - Ask younger folks what they have experienced as a result of being younger?
 - Ask what support from younger people in the room looks like?
 - » Impacts of Ageism:
 - Ask older folks what experiences they have had getting older?
 - Ask what support from younger people in the room looks like?

Resources and Strengths in the Room:

- What is each person's job or role?
- What can each person do to support overall policy/program creation, implementation, and evaluation? There may be a significant knowledge gap on which individual associated with a given entity (e.g. City Agencies may be in the space because they will implement any laws created and/or implement any programming; City Council staff will draft and create the language that may become legislation proposed to City Council)
- What are some opportunities and constraints that every person faces in their job or in accessing services?

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

Best Practices for a Participatory Process from YWAC Co-Chairs

Relationship-building

Start with relationship building in working groups and in YWAC Spaces – there must be intentional acknowledgment of and dismantling of the power dynamics that show up in the space. This is a priority, not an afterthought for this shared work.

Other relationship building practices include:

- Get to know individuals in the space:
- Who is in the room?
- What are their gender pronouns?
- What part of their identity brought them to their work?
- Establish group values around gender, race, class, religion, cultural differences, educational attainment
- Exercises that explored various identities that people can have and live with. Awareness, respecting, acceptance, advocating
- Group agreements which were agreed upon by the group, hung up every meeting, and would be added to if and when needed.

Communication

Establishing a culture of open communication early on is essential to creating an environment where all participants feel included, heard, listened, and respected. Communication affects how and when people show up and how engaged they feel they can be throughout the process. We acknowledge that communication looks different for each person and group. Due to this reality we established a group culture of communication and one on one communication with participants when necessary.

Other communication practices include

Agree on a shared method of communication between individuals in the room – ensure that young people are included on this communication from the very first e-mail or conference call. Ask each

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

person what the best way to communicate with them is and use it. Constant communication on decisions being made, changes needed, and check ins. Ensuring older co-chairs update the young people as often as they do older individuals in the space. This includes emails, meetings, and including young people on the decision making. Include the young people in the changes happening with partners in the work, i.e. – government, organizations

Engaging Young People

Having young people in the room is not enough. Ensuring that young people are equitably engaged throughout the process is vital to maximize their input. While we stress that each group will have ideas on what engagement looks like for them, we would like to offer baseline practices for engaging young people –

A seat at the table.

- Having the young people have designated space at the table where the meeting is taking place.
- Establishing a practice that if someone under the age of 25 has something to contribute to the conversation that they get priority to speak, even if they raised their hand after an older person in the room.

Allow/Ask/Propose that young people address the group through a presentation and or giving them standing time in each meeting for them to address the large group. Ensure time for young people to get snacks at the beginning of meeting times.

- Trust young people to take ownership over their projects, report back, or share their ideas with the team. Be sure to be available for questions and guidance if needed.
- Be clear about the goals of each meeting.
- Pair young people in groups of two if the larger team breaks off into smaller working groups.
- If a young person hasn't spoken in a while, ask for their opinion and allow them time to state their ideas.

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Core Values and Best Practices

Avoid using acronyms or jargon

Create a system where young people don't feel embarrassed to ask people in the room to define the acronym or jargon. YWAC used "Jargon Giraffe" and would raise their hand, press their middle and ring finger to their thumb while their pinky and index fingers stick straight up. That motion singled to the speaker that they didn't understand and the speakers responsibility is to clarify the jargon or acronym. It's fun and effective.

Dots

List different options on a piece of chart paper, open up voting to the room using a sticker or by placing a dot next to team member's preferred options. Provide the young people with extra dots so that their votes are counted more

Availability

Make meetings and opportunities conducive to young people's schedules. It is important to be mindful of the workload they balance between school, homework, and jobs. Making yourself accessible to provide additional support to young people is equally essential so they feel equipped and ready to participate in meetings with stakeholders.

Convene the youth together before going into their working group meeting and after they finish their working group meeting. This will provide space for:

- Collaboration and strategizing for the meeting
- Information sharing
- Debriefing from intergenerational meetings with youth

Provide a calendar of dates for meetings at the beginning of process. This is done to ensure that young people are made aware of their commitment to the process as well as for us to maintain respect of the young person's time and schedule.

Making exciting opportunities available for youth to attend – ensure permission slips and excused absence letters are provided with time to lead.

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

Make sure you are available for the young people when they need, even if it is not on scheduled meeting dates.

Arrive early to the meeting space and be prepared to stay late to provide additional debrief time to participants as needed

Hard Skills Learning

Engage young people in learning transferable hard skills that they can use in other areas of their lives is another practice used during the YWAC process. Skills ranged from educational to speaking to writing.

Training on opinion and editorial writing

- Media interviewing skills were necessary since there was a possibility of the young people being interviewed at a press conference
- Public speaking skills - needed for testifying at hearings
- Basic understanding of how a bill becomes a law on the local and federal level

Space

Locate a community room in a building where staff and security can be prepped on how to greet young people. Many government and corporate buildings are intimidating and hard to navigate for people, regardless of their age. It is essential to always give young people clear directions on how to get to the meeting location and how to sign in through security. Central location that is available through multiple modes of transportation

A low security space will ensure:

- People who are trans and gender nonconforming do not need to feel intimidated to “prove” their gender or conform with binary gender identities People of different immigration status feel welcomed
- Those who need assistance as per the American Disability Association requirements are able to attend

Appendix B

Core Values and Best Practices

Financial Compensation

Because the young people are participatory researchers and are providing their time financial compensation is highly encouraged. Many of the young people said that they were able to prioritize YWAC meetings because of compensation. Inform them of the hourly rate and provide a clear outline of what opportunities are paid and which are not. Timely payment in accordance with the payment dates outlined on the schedule of meetings outline provided in the beginning

Appendix C

Trans and Undocumented Women’s Roundtable Program

Centering Trans & Undocumented Voices

ACTION:

Girls for Gender Equity and youth activists of the Young Trans Women of Color Advisory Council developed a roundtable program that was dedicated to trans and undocumented women and girls of color to inform the final policy recommendations of The Young Women's Initiative.

A Program Model

GROUNDING

Anchor the discussion by bringing participants together as members of a shared community space

ex: ice breakers, community agreements

ANALYSIS

Evaluate local policies that successfully support trans and undocumented women and girls

ex: "who is helping the girls, the people, *the girls like us*, in New York City?"

VISIONING

Identify opportunity windows and inform the city's policy agenda by proposing recommendations

ex: "what is one thing you would love to see in New York City?"

Three Essential Program Objectives

Objective I



Identify gaps in current services for trans and undocumented women of color in New York City

Objective II



Map key community supports and service providers that are successfully serving the two communities

Objective III



Discuss and assess developed policy recommendations to present to City Council

KEY PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS:

The program was located outside of city government. The discussion was also held and led by a young trans women of color. Participants received food, gift cards and mta fare cards for each session attended.

SOURCES:
Nguyen, L. (2016). Centering Trans and Undocumented Voices. Girls for Gender Equity, GGE.

Lynda Nguyen
Girls for Gender Equity, GGE

Appendix D

Social Work Analysis



Appendix E

Community Building Exercise: Identity Walk –
Incorporates Steps 1& 2 of Social Work with Analysis

Identity Walk (Part 1)

Leader:

Supplies: 9 signs, post-its, markers

Time: 40

Our next activity is called “Identity Walk.” Some of you folks might have done this activity before; some of you might not have had the chance. For those of you who have not participated in this activity, the Identity Walk is an exercise in which we ask all individuals involved to share a bit about themselves. You are all encouraged to step outside of your comfort zone. Remember the Community Agreement of “Challenge By Choice,” so we will never force you to share something or define yourself .

This is a completely silent activity. I ask that y’all be respectful and refrain from making comments, nonverbal, or side conversation. Everything shared in this conversation must and will remain confidential. Again I reference the Community Agreements of “Confidentiality” and “WSS, WLL.” As you might have noticed there are signs around the room labeled: gender, sexual orientation, ability/ disability, race, ethnicity, religion/ spirituality, age, citizenship, and additional identities. With the post it’s given to you please write, in silence, the way you identify under each category. When you are done please put them face down in front of each sign and I will put them up when everyone is done.

Appendix E

Community Building Exercise: Identity Walk –
Incorporates Steps 1& 2 of Social Work with Analysis

Wait for everyone to finish and then put the post its up underneath each respective identity.

Now that the post its are up under each identity, walk around the room and see other people’s responses. Notice if there are any similarities and differences, and the ways in which people self-identity. Again, I remind you that this is a silent activity. When you are done please return to your seat.

Debrief of Identity Walk (Part 1)

Time: 7 minutes

1. Any initial reactions?
2. Did anything surprise you? Why or why not? Did anything resonate with you?
3. How did it feel walking around the room in silence?
4. How did it feel reading other mentors’ responses?
5. Is there anything that you would like to share that has not been discussed?

Appendix E

Community Building Exercise: Identity Walk –
Incorporates Steps 1& 2 of Social Work with Analysis

The second half of this activity is going to be more interactive. Now that we've been able to gain a sense of who is in this space with us, this next part will help us learn a little more about each other and our multiple and intersectional identities. As statements are read, please silently move to the sign that you feel best represents your experiences. If you don't feel that any of these areas fits best for you, you can choose to move to the second or third most fitting, or stand in the center of the room. I ask that once you have taken your place in the room that you will quietly observe who is around you and where others are in the room. Take it in and think about what that means for you.

Please move to the identity...

1. This is the identity that is most salient to me at all times of the day.
2. This is the identity that I think about the least.
3. I have experienced the most pain around this aspect of my identity.
4. I have experienced the most joy around this aspect of my identity.
5. This is the aspect of my identity that I have in common with most of my friends.
6. This is the aspect of my identity that I have to defend the most.
7. This is the identity that is most important to me when I am in the Young Women's Advisory Council.

Appendix E

Community Building Exercise: Identity Walk –
Incorporates Steps 1& 2 of Social Work with Analysis

1. Any initial reactions? Surprises? Did anything resonate with you?
2. What did it feel like in this room?
3. Why do you think I decided to include this activity?
4. Is there anything you would like to share that you have been able to do?

Appendix F

Informational Handout: Defined Terms –
Incorporates Step 3 of Social Work with Analysis

Useful Definitions adapted from Gender Spectrum

Cisgender person: someone who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth. For example: your birth certificate says female, and you identify as a woman.

Transgender Person: someone who identifies with a different gender from the gender they were assigned at birth. For example: your birth certificate says male, however you identify as a female.

Preferred Gender Pronouns: is the pronoun or set of pronouns that an individual uses. Implementing the practice of saying everyone's PGP creates space for individuals who do not identify with he/she gender pronouns, and ensures that no one's gender is assumed. It acknowledges that many individuals identify across the gender spectrum as transgender, gender nonconforming, or gender fluid.

Gender: Socially constructed attributes and opportunities typically associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men, as well as the relationships between women and those between men and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender is not a binary, but instead is on a spectrum with an infinite variety of expressions, representing a more nuanced, and ultimately truly authentic model of gender that is self-identified.

Gender Equity: means fairness and justice in distribution of benefits, rights, resources, opportunities and protections regardless of gender identity or presentation. Gender equity does not require that all genders be the same or be treated exactly alike. Gender equity takes measures to correct past inequities and root out structural privilege. Gender equity leads to a truer and more impactful equality. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same places and needs the same things.

Gender Inequality: Unequal access to power and/or limited access to

Appendix F

Informational Handout: Defined Terms –
Incorporates Step 3 of Social Work with Analysis

power by girls women, transgender and people who are gender non conforming in all aspects of life, including but not limited to health care, education, legal protection, the ability to earn a living, and the ability to make decisions in their households and communities.

Gender Role: The set of roles, activities, expectations and behaviors assigned to females and males by society. Our culture recognizes two basic gender roles: Masculine (having the qualities attributed to males) and feminine (having the qualities attributed to females). People who step out of their socially assigned gender roles are sometimes referred to as transgender. Some cultures have three or more gender roles.

Gender Stereotypes: Generalized and/or assembled conceptualizations about people based on gender. Stereotypes depict simplified and rigid view of others and are centered on a limited number of characteristics. Stereotypes create an impression that everyone in the group has the same characteristics. Stereotypes create expectations of how males and females should look, think, feel, and act.

Gender-Based Violence or Gender Violence: Gender violence occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with the gender binary (the incorrect idea there are two genders male/masculine and female/feminine) and unequal access to power associated with each gender, within the context of a specific society. Gender violence is expressed through physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and economic abuse that results in harm, injury, and even death. Legal definitions of sexual assault, domestic violence, and sex trafficking are included in the term gender violence as an inclusive way to encompass all of these forms of violence. Gender violence perpetuates a climate of fear for girls and women, transgender, people who are gender non-conforming, and all people who challenge the norm of heterosexual male dominance through their actions or because of who they are. Gender violence is part of the continuum of gender oppression and is the extreme expression of oppressive practices. The roots of gender violence and gender oppression are in patriarchy, a system of male, heterosexual dominance, supported by and interconnected

Appendix F

Informational Handout: Defined Terms –
Incorporates Step 3 of Social Work with Analysis

to other social structures of domination, including racism, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, ableism, adultism, and/or anti-immigrant policies and beliefs to maintain gender, heterosexual, racial and class and other forms of privilege and power.

Intergenerational:

Intersectionality: Is a theory that seeks to examine the ways in which various socially and culturally constructed categories interact on multiple levels to manifest themselves as inequality in society. Intersectionality was coined by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw and addresses the overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination.

Participatory Action Research (PAR): provides a critical framework for making science – systematic inquiry and analysis – a public enterprise. Allied with feminist, critical race, and indigenous theory, PAR is an approach to research that values the significant knowledge people hold about their lives and experiences.

Participatory Governance: A participatory governance process is a governance theory which puts emphasis on true democratic engagement through deliberative practices. Participatory governance seeks to deepen citizen participation, in this instance cis and trans girls and young women of color, in the governmental process by inclusions of individuals impacted by governance and the examination of assumptions and practices of the traditional view that generally hinders the realization of a genuine participatory democracy.

Appendix G

Informational Handout: Root Cause Tree –
Incorporates Step 4 & 5 of Social Work with Analysis

Root Cause Tree*

A Root Cause Tree helps us visually analyze the symptoms (fruit), institutional causes (trunk), and underlying causes (roots) of a problem.

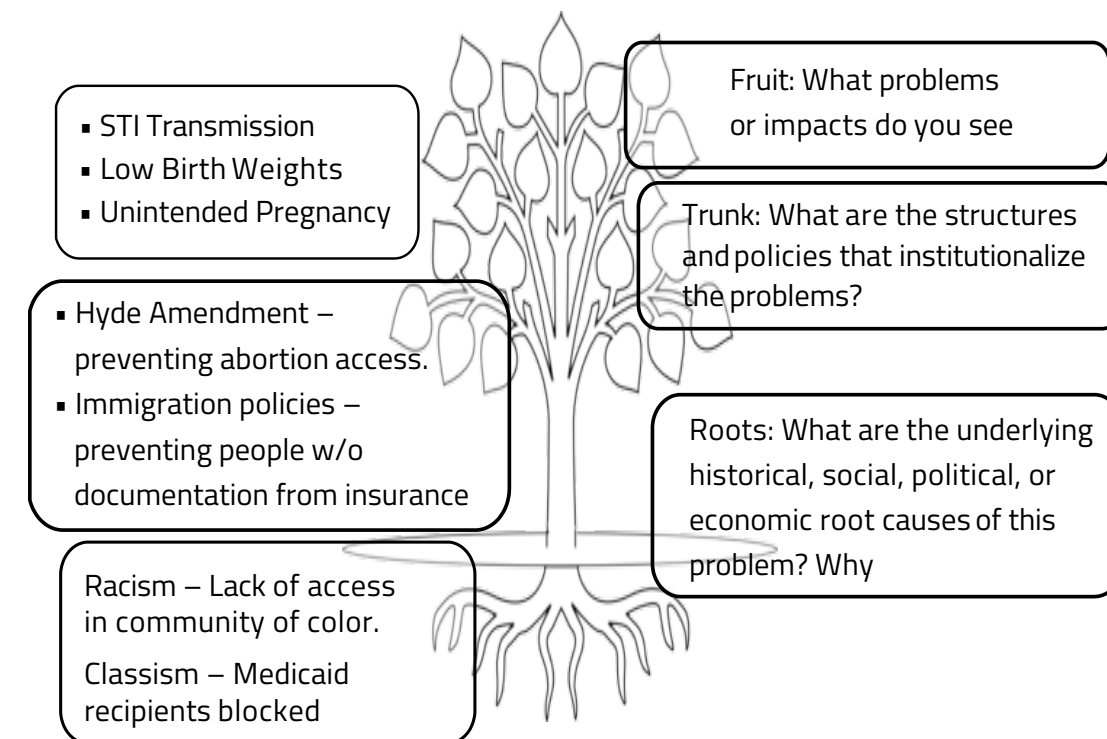
Exercise

Step 1: Choose the issue you plan to analyze (your YWI workgroup).

Step 2: In groups, use the blank tree provided. Start by filling out the top level of the tree with the impacts of symptoms of the issue. These are problems people face in their communities.

Step 3: “What are the structures and policies that institutionalize the problems we see?” or “Why do these problems exist?” Fill in the trunk section with structures or policies that institutionalize the issue you have chosen.

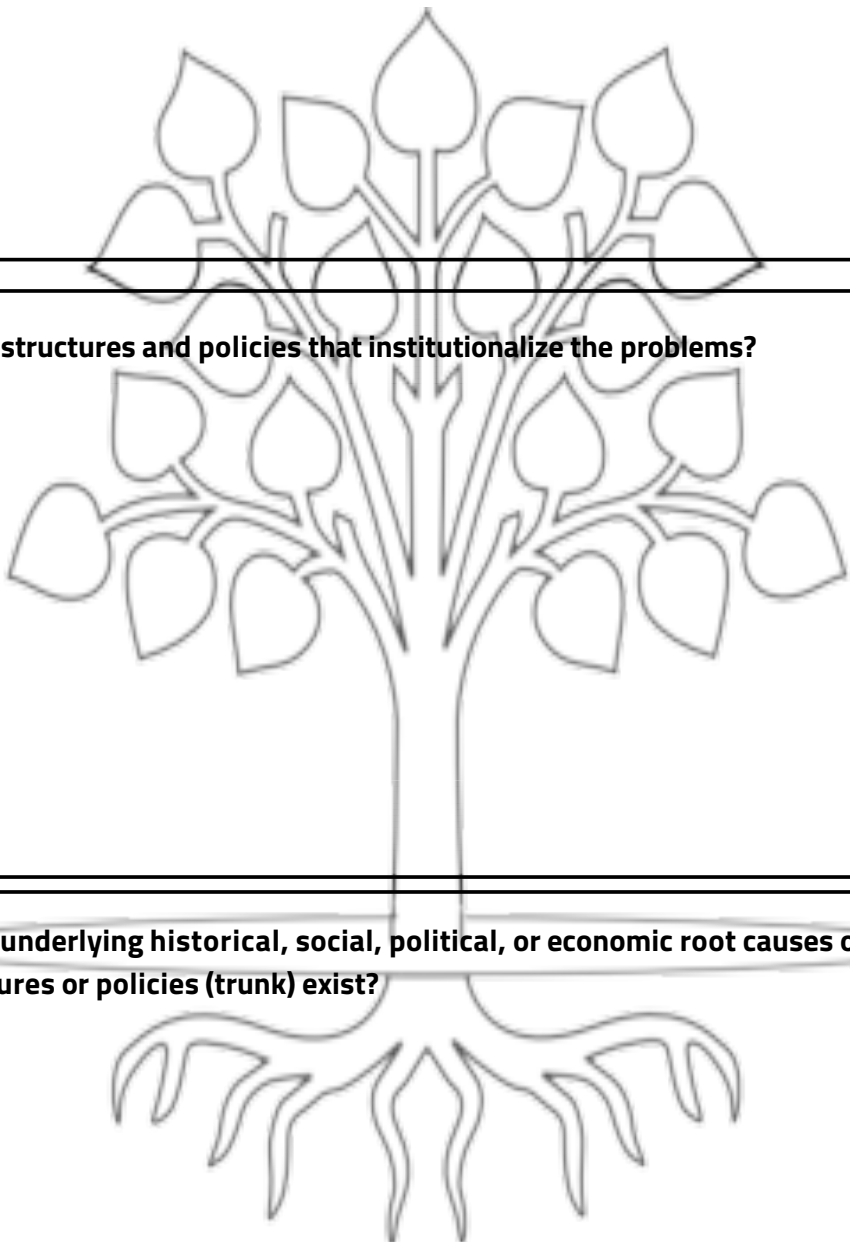
Step 4: “What are the underlying historical, social, political, or economic root causes of this problem?” or “Why do these structures or policies (trunk) exist?” Keep asking yourselves “why?” to get to the root causes.



Appendix G

Informational Handout: Root Cause Tree –
Incorporates Step 4 & 5 of Social Work with Analysis

Fruit: What problems or impacts do you see in NYC?



Trunk: What are the structures and policies that institutionalize the problems?

**Roots: What are the underlying historical, social, political, or economic root causes of this problem?
Why do these structures or policies (trunk) exist?**

**Thanks to Young People For (YP4), a program of People for the American Way, for this exercise.*

Endnotes

Executive Summary

1 A participatory governance process is a governance theory which puts emphasis on true democratic engagement through deliberative practices. Participatory governance seeks to deepen citizen participation in the governmental process by inclusions of individuals impacted by governance and the examination of assumptions and practices of the traditional view that generally hinders the realization of a genuine participatory democracy.

2 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations. Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf>

3 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations. Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf> p.7-8

The Steering Committee led five Working Groups in total:

■ Health
Grounded in a “social determinants of health” framework, the Health Working Group examined available data on disparities in health outcomes, focused on gaps in coverage for basic healthcare and highlighted programs that are reaching the highest need groups of young women and girls.

■ Economic & Workforce Development
Focused on how economic mobility and preparation for entering the workforce need to be fully integrated in the school setting, while expanding options for young women and girls who have left the school system.

■ Community Support & Opportunity Embracing a “whole girl” approach, the Community Support & Opportunity Working Group examined the issues of young women and girls in deep poverty – overwhelmingly those of color - and specifically focused on how policy change translates into implementation.

■ Education
Focusing on the education of young women and girls in the most inclusive sense, the Education Working Group examined how shifts in school climate and curricula, as well as the expansion of after school and out-of-school services, could enhance educational outcomes for young women and girls.

■ Anti-Violence & Criminal Justice
The Anti-Violence & Criminal Justice Working Group focused on reducing young women and girls’ interactions with the criminal justice system, increasing safety and respect for their rights and dignity during police interactions and while in custody, and reshaping responses to violence so they uphold young women’s survivorship, agency and resilience.

4 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations. Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf>

5 Refer to page 30 for a detailed description.

6 For Harriet (9/29/2016). The Vision for Black Lives Is Incomplete Without Disability Solidarity. Retrieved from [Http://www.forharriet.com/2016_09_01_archive.html#ixzz4ObsC4swT](http://www.forharriet.com/2016_09_01_archive.html#ixzz4ObsC4swT) (10/04/2016)

7 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations. Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf>

8 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf> p. 8

9 Building Power NYC Mapping Site <http://buildingpowernyc.org/about.html>

10 New York City Council (2016). New York City Young Women’s Initiative: Report & Recommendations Retrieved from <http://www.shewillbe.nyc/YWI-Report-and-Recommendations.pdf> p. 8

Background

1 Intersectionality was coined by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw and addresses the overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination.

2 Girls for Gender Equity (GGE), “GGE Core Values”

3 Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) “Our Programs” <http://www.ggenyc.org/programs/>

4 Girls for Gender Equity (GGE), (2015) “Mission & Vision” <http://www.ggenyc.org/about/mission-vision/>

5 The White House Council on Women and Girls. (2014). “Women and Girls of Color: Addressing Challenges and Expanding Opportunities.” retrieved from: https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/cwg_women_and_girls_of_color_report_112014.pdf

6 ibid 7.

7 ibid 7.

8 ibid 7.

Endnotes

9 Center for American Progress. (2016). The Gay and Transgender Wage Gap Many Workers Receive Less Pay Due to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Discrimination. Retrieved from: <http://ampr.gs/18R9BSf>

10 The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP). (2014) "2014 Report on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV Affected Hate Violence." http://www.avp.org/storage/documents/Reports/2014_HV_Report-Final.pdf

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12 Building Power NYC Mapping site <http://buildingpowernyc.org/about.html>

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30 3rd Avenue, Suite 103, Brooklyn, NY 11217 | 718.857.1393 or 718.857.1568
@GGENYC | buildingpowernyc@ggenyc.org | www.ggenyc.org

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