



Youth/Young Adult Voice at the Agency Level (Y-VAL)

RESEARCH & TRAINING CENTER FOR PATHWAYS TO POSITIVE FUTURES



Developing and
validating an assessment
of youth and young adult
voice in agency-level
advising and decision
making



*Pathways RTC Webinar
Series*

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Poll

Who is on the call today?

Overview

Topics for today's presentation

- The value of young adult participation in advising and decision making at the organizational level
- The need for a defined set of best practices and an assessment of the extent to which these are in place
- The development and testing of the Youth and Young Adult Voice at the Agency Level (Y-VAL) assessment and TA tools



Understanding Youth Voice

Youth MOVE National's (YMN) Best Practices Committee has been working to support the field with understanding:

- What it means to be youth guided and young adult driven
- What youth and young adult leaders contribute to the field through meaningful engagement and what youth organizations offer for supports and services for the field
- What are indicators of success related to
 - Youth and young adult peer support
 - Meaningful youth and young adult engagement
 - Quality health and wellness for those with MH challenges



Identified as a Priority

YMN Best Practices committee identified a need to understand what supports youth/ young adult “voice” at agency and system levels

- Clarify what sorts of resources and commitments are required
- Prevent people from reinventing the wheel each time and/or causing distress or harm
- Provide a tailored and data-driven approach for developing, implementing and advancing youth-driven activities



Agency Assessment

- Provides a framework of key indicators of meaningful and successful Y/YA voice
- Assessing allows for a collective and reflective process to better understanding where the agency with Y/YA voice
 - Promotes a shared vision for success
 - Identifies strengths and needs
 - Supports with moving towards sustainable engagement
- Helps young people advocate for meaningful participation and support
- Aids in assessing impact of technical assistance



Developing the Assessment

- Literature review
 - Formal research on youth participation
 - Assessment tools from systems of care and related efforts
- Initial item development (PSU/YMN teams)
- Initial stakeholder feedback
- Review by YMN Best Practices Committee
- Formal feedback from stakeholders, N=23, highly experienced, 40% young people





Poll

Regarding efforts at your agency to increase young people's voice in advising and decision making, are you...?

Review Version

- 41 items grouped into 7 “themes”
- Feedback on each item:
 - How essential is it to include this as an expectation?
 - Essential, optional, inadvisable
 - What do you think about the wording?
 - Fine as is, minor revision, major revision
 - Open-ended comments
- Feedback on the theme
 - Do the items “cover” the themes adequately?



Theme 1: Overall Vision and Commitment

(a) Commitment to meaningful participation

- The agency has created a formal statement affirming its commitment to promoting Y/YA leadership and meaningful participation in advising and decision making within the organization.
- The agency and its leaders assertively communicate this vision to stakeholders —including young people, management and staff.
- The agency has engaged in training or other activities designed to help foster meaningful partnerships between young people and adults.

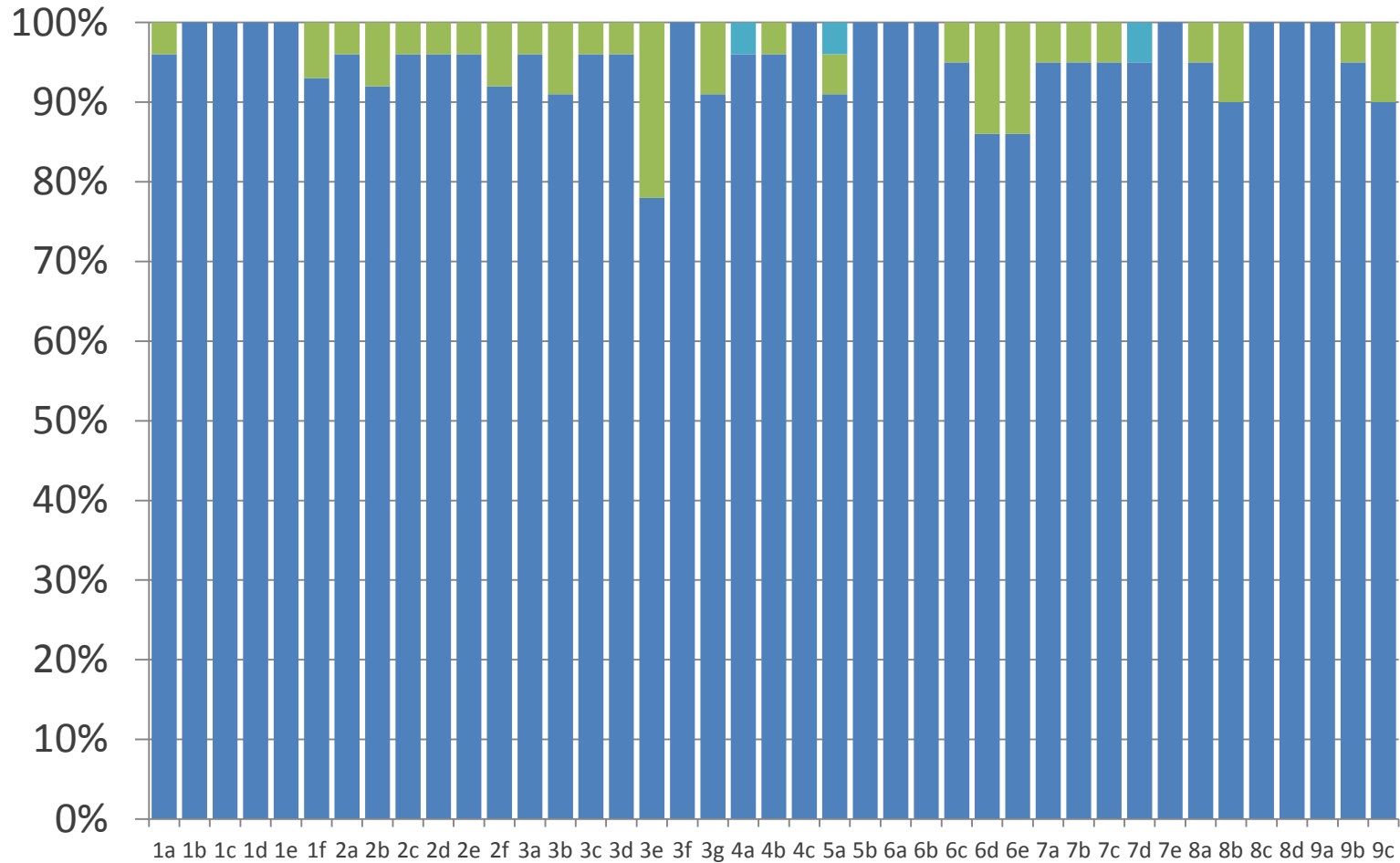


Response...

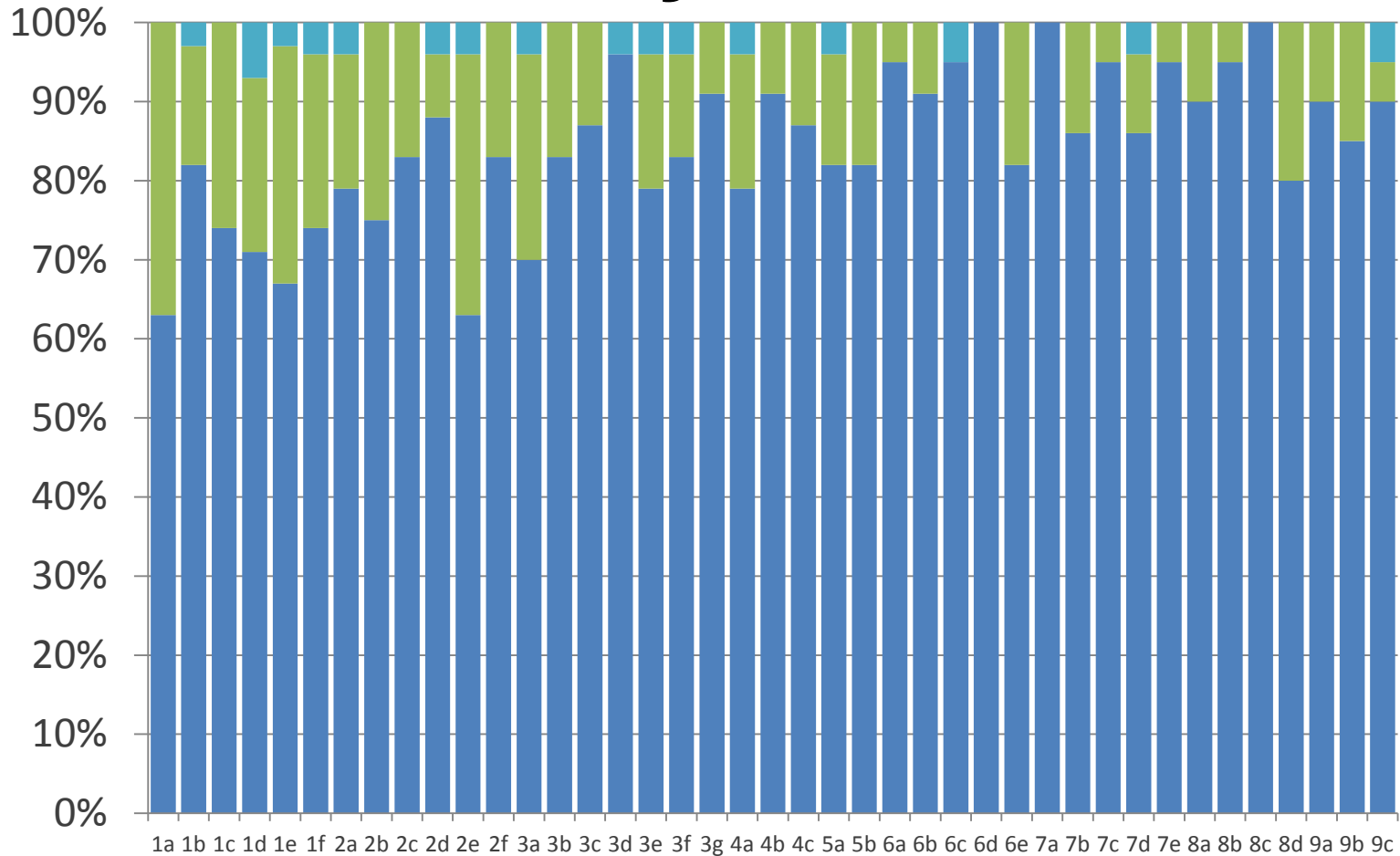
N/A	1	2	3	4	5
<p><i>Does not apply, or I do not know about this</i></p>	<p>LEAST DEVELOPED</p> <p><i>none of the aspects in place/ not true for our organization</i></p>		<p>MIDWAY</p>	<p>FULLY DEVELOPED</p> <p><i>all aspects consistently in place/ completely true for our organization</i></p>	



Essential, Optional, Inadvisable



Wording: OK as is, Minor/Major Revision



New version

1. Overall vision and commitment (8 items)
2. Collaborative approach (5 items)
3. Empowered representatives (5 items)
4. Commitment to facilitation and support of Y/YA participation (3 items)
5. Workforce development (4 items)
6. Participation in developing programming/program policies (5 items)
7. Participation in evaluation (4 items)
8. Leading initiatives and projects (3 items)





Poll

**In my agency/organization we integrate
Y/YA voice in advising and decision
making.....?**

Validation study

- Online survey including the Y-VAL and parts of two other assessments with published information on reliability/validity
- Recruitment using two strategies
 - Organizations recruited/registered—data collection began early February, ongoing
 - “Open call”—data gathering starting March 1
- Incentive: 1 in 50 chance at \$100 gift certificate

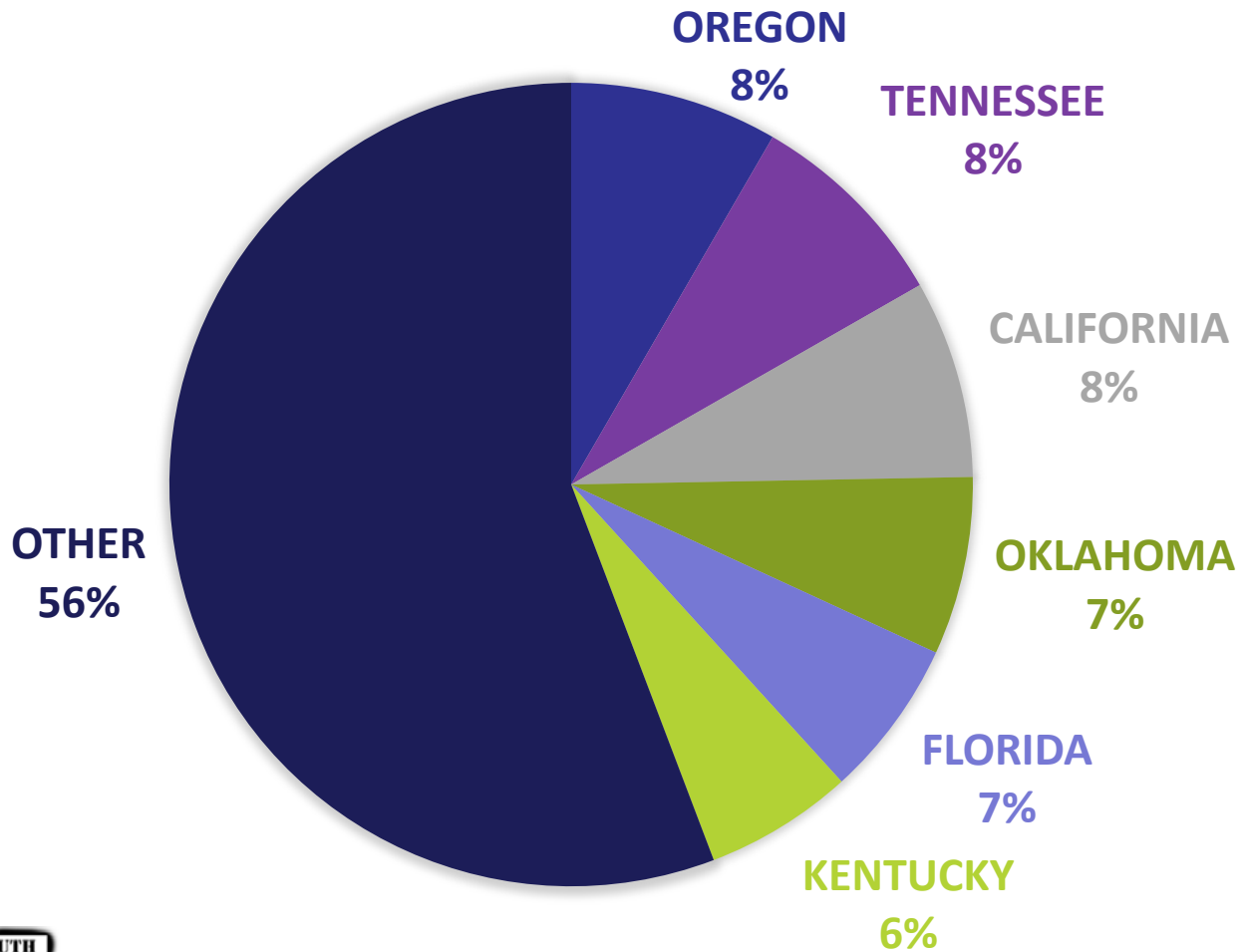


Responses

- 385 total received, but 134 partial
- 84% of these stopped when they could view theme 1
- Non-completers were significantly more likely to
 - Not be directly involved in efforts to increase voice at the agency level
 - Older
- Non-completers removed.
- Remaining data only 1.3% missing

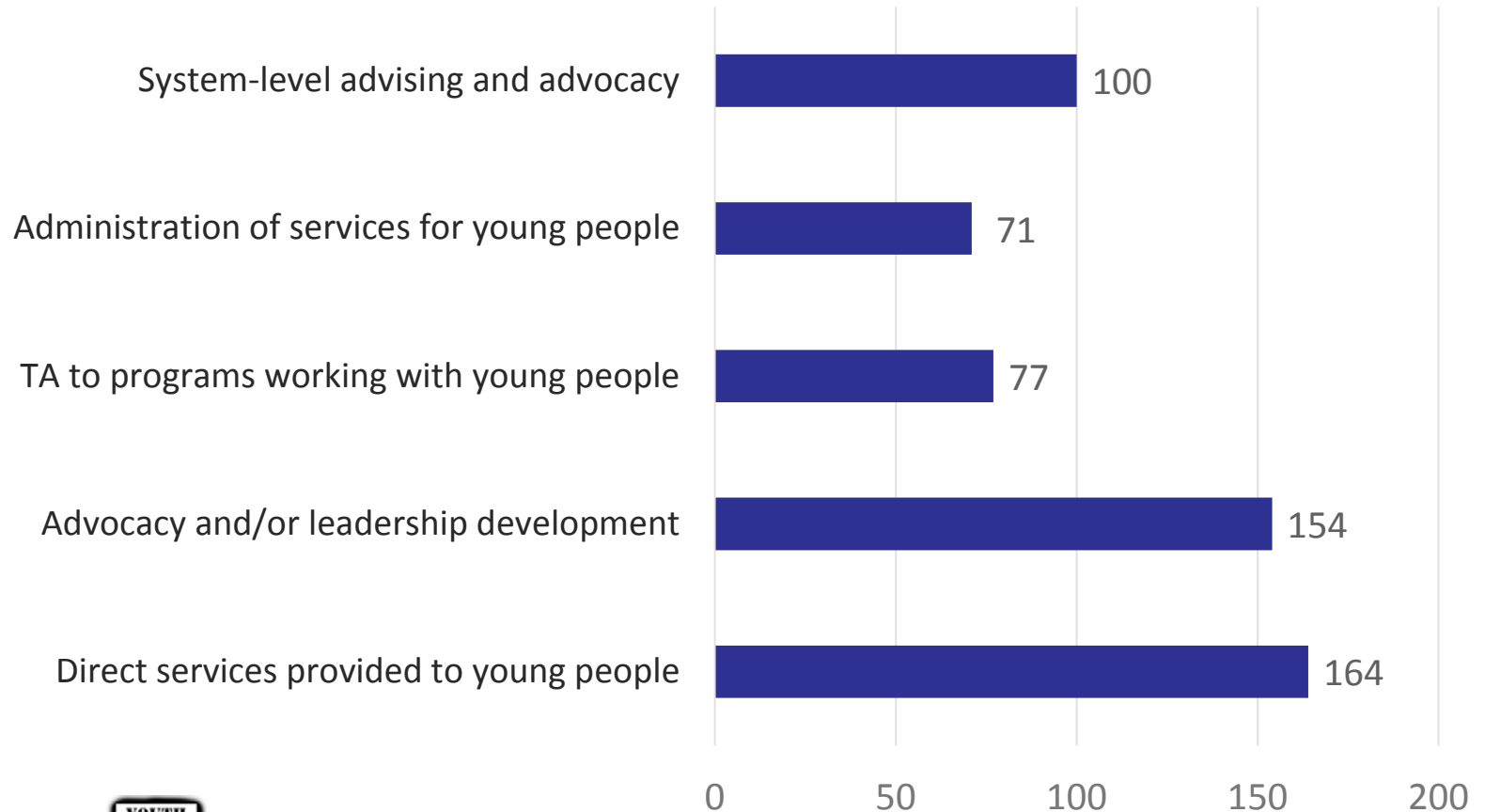


Location of organization/agency



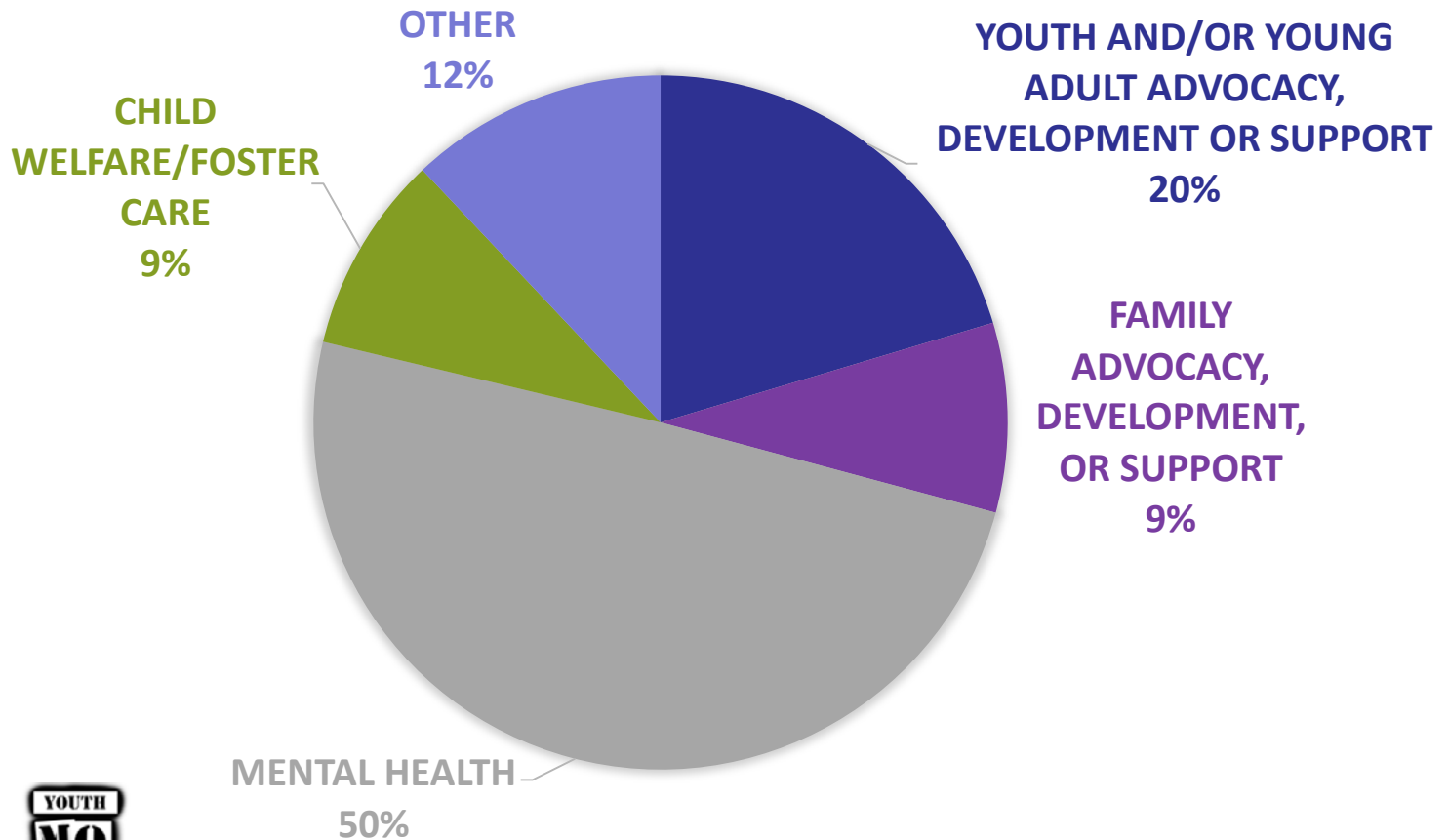
Organizations' activities

Select all that apply



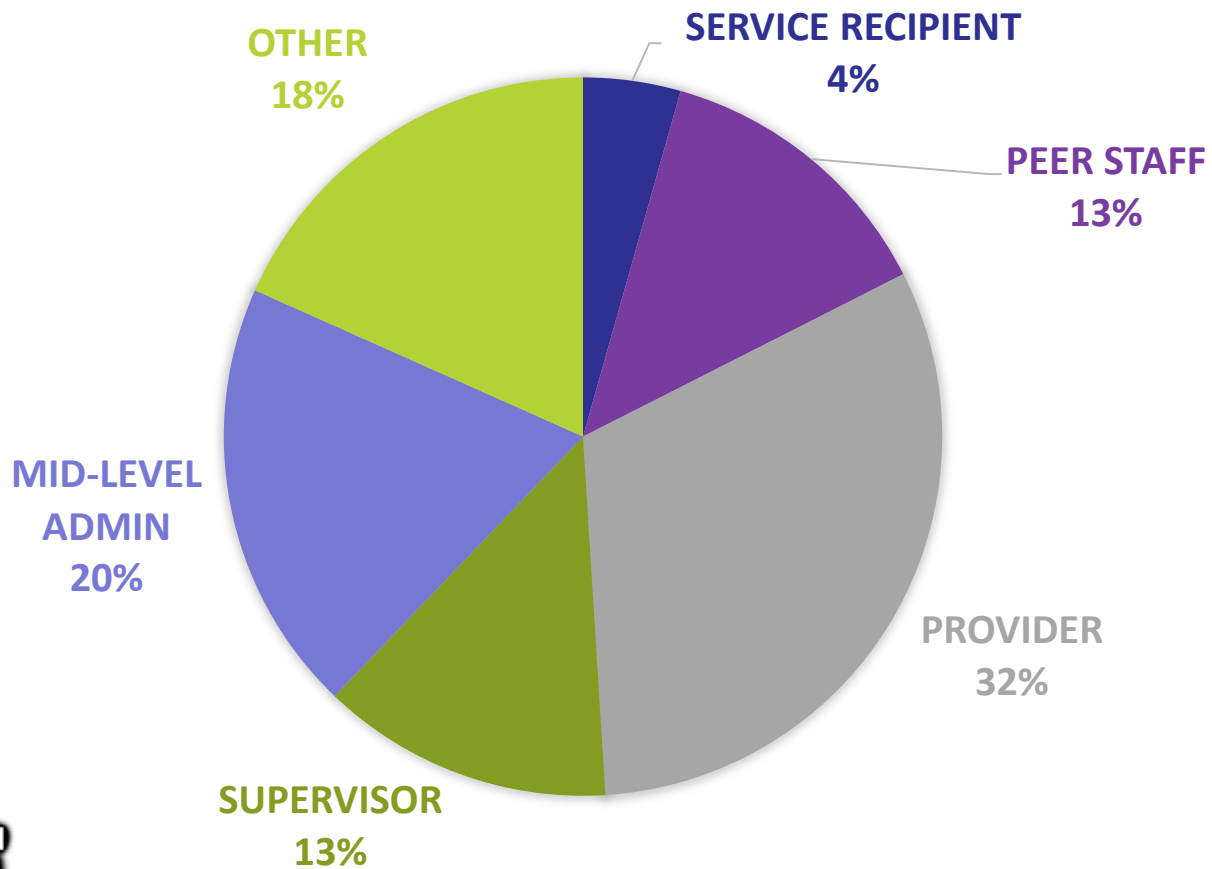
Organizational focus

Select one



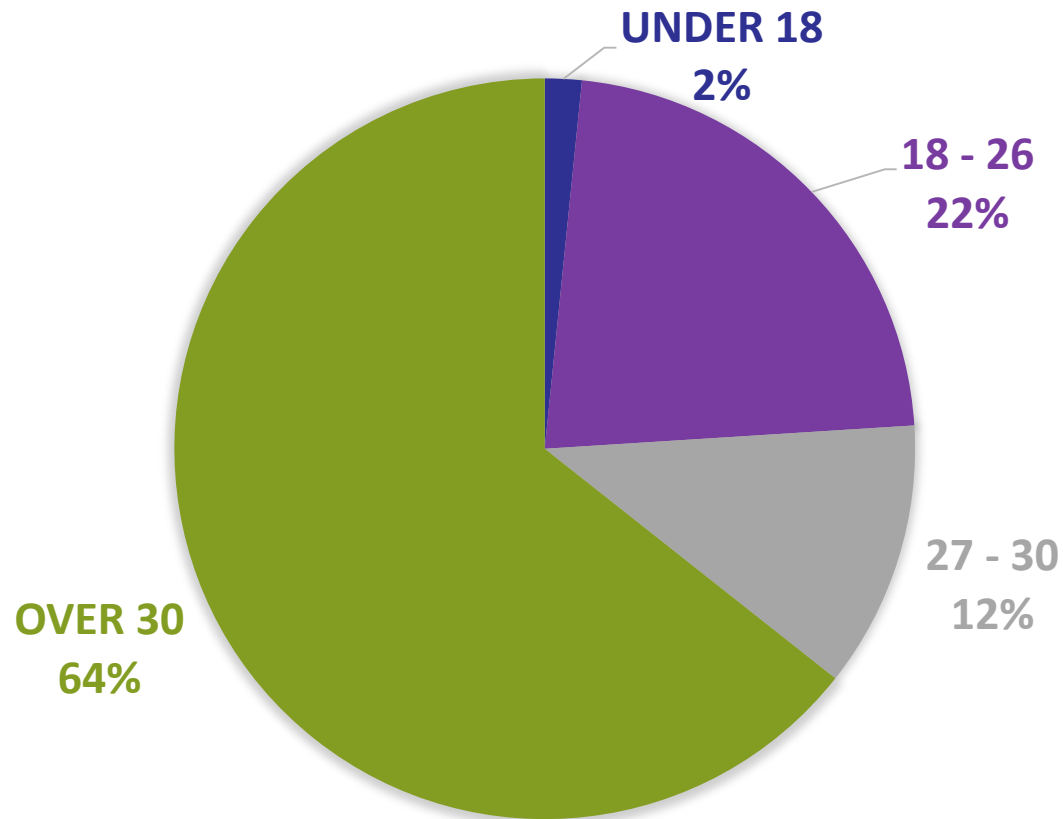
Respondents

“Other” includes consultants, higher-level managers



Respondents' ages

Recruiting 16 and over, per IRB



Internal reliability

Theme	Items	Cronbach's α
1 Overall vision and commitment	8	0.93
2 Collaborative approach	5	0.91
3 Empowered representatives	5	0.93
4 Facilitation/support for participation	3	0.78
5 Workforce development and readiness	4	0.76
6 Impact on programs and policies	5	0.91
7 Role in program evaluation	4	0.87
8 Leading initiatives and projects	3	0.84
All themes	37	0.97

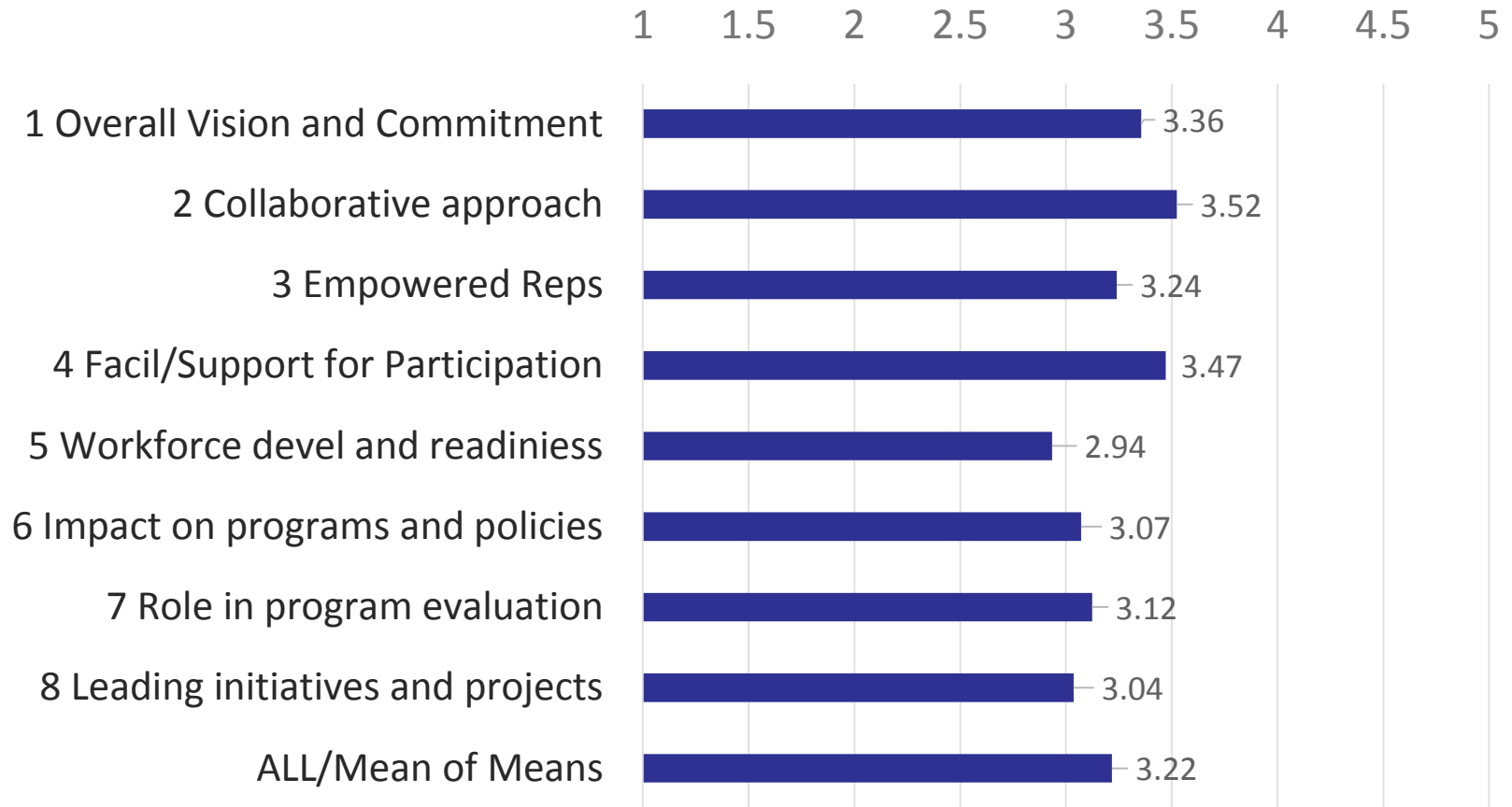


CFA

	X2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
YVAL model	1020.24	581	0.934	0.942	0.054	0.065
Single-factor model	2124.34	629	0.8	0.788	0.098	0.102

- Missing data handled using multiple imputation built into AMOS. Ten imputed datasets averaged for CFA
- Very good fit:
 - CFI and TLI > .95
 - RMSEA < .06
 - SRMR < .08
- Change in X2 = 1104, df = 48, p < .001

Theme means



Items with highest means

2(b) Respectful partnering	3.92
1(c) Culture of partnerships	3.88
1(a) Commitment to meaningful participation	3.66
4(b) Addressing barriers to participation	3.64
2(c) Youth/Young adult-friendly meetings	3.63
7(a) Feedback on services	3.48
2(a) Collaborative partnering	3.45

- Tended to reflect relatively more abstract expectations



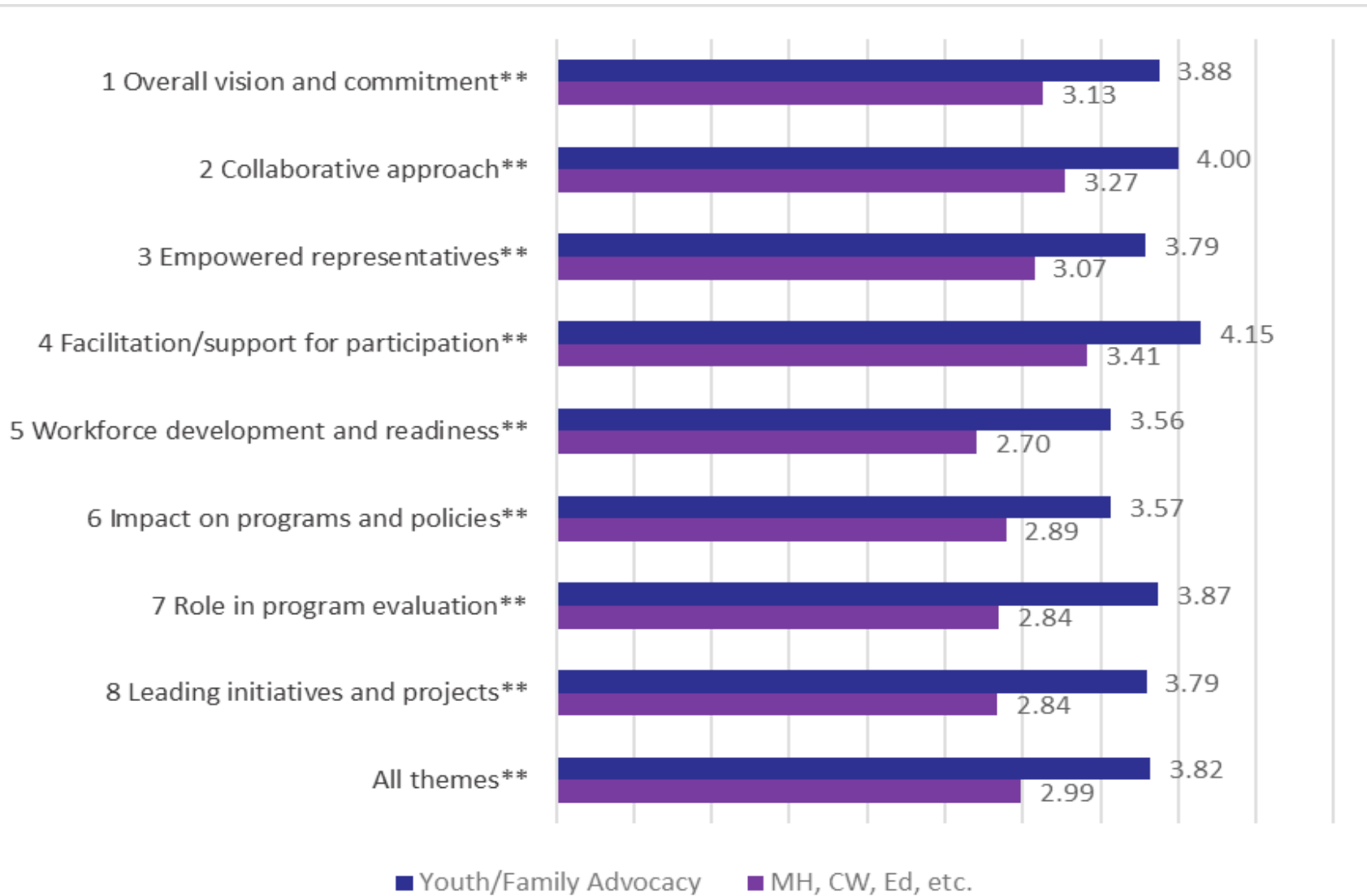
Items with lowest means

1(h) Assessment of participation efforts	2.98
3(a) Decision-making processes are transparent	2.98
6(b) Improving services	2.97
7(b) Participation in evaluation activities	2.84
6(a) Programs and practice models	2.81
5(c) Responsive staff evaluation	2.74
5(a) Participation in hiring	2.56
8(c) Control of funds	2.45

- Reflected concrete expectations



Validation: Overall and theme mean organization type



What about possible impact of role?

- Univariate ANOVA
 - DV=Y-VAL grand mean score
 - Fixed Factors
 - Youth or Peer (versus other role) yes/no
 - Youth/Family Advocacy Organization (versus service organization) yes/no
 - Model: Main effects plus interaction



Validation: ANOVA

- Type of organization significant $p < .01$
- Youth/YA/Peer vs other, significant $p < .05$
- Interaction n.s.
- Same pattern for themes



Validation: Other assessments

- Youth-Adult Partnerships in Community Programs (Zeldin et al., 2014) demonstrated strong factorial, discriminant, and concurrent validity for two subscales:
 - Supportive Adult relationships, 4 items, $\alpha=.84$ in their study, $\alpha=.77$ in our study
 - Youth Voice in Decision Making, 5 items, $\alpha=.85$ in their study, $\alpha=.81$ in our study
- Youth Program Quality Assessment (Hohmann & Smith, 2005), strong psychometrics for two constructs from the Youth-Centered Policies and Practices subscale
 - Influence on Settings and Activities (3 items), $\alpha= .77$ in our study
 - Youth-Centered Policies and Practices (5 items), $\alpha=.84$ in our study



Inter-scale correlations

	Y-VAL	SAR	YVDM	Settings	Policy
Y-VAL	1	.593**	.656**	.660**	.703**
SAR	.593**	1	.843**	.468**	.490**
YVDM	.656**	.843**	1	.497**	.516**
Settings	.660**	.468**	.497**	1	.718**
Policy	.703**	.490**	.516**	.718**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



Correlations with themes

Pattern of correlations was as predicted:

- The two subscales of the Y-AP were most highly correlated with theme 2 of the YVAL (.49 and .66, respectively)
 - both focus on collaborative approach
- The two subscales of the YPQA were most highly correlated with theme 6 (.64 and .65, respectively).
 - both focus on policies and practices



What now?

- YMN testing a process for technical assistance:
 - Identify TA needs using the Y-VAL
 - Review results and identify priorities
 - Provide TA and resources from a toolkit linked to Y-VAL themes
 - Reassess
- YMN and Pathways are about to launch a test of the Y-VOC: Youth/YA Voice on Councils (system-level)



To learn more

- About accessing the Y-VAL tool or to receive any data-informed TA: contact Youth MOVE National at info@youthmovenational.org
- About the research, including Y-VOC study: visit Pathwaysrtc on the web; sign up for rtcUpdates; contact janetw@pdx.edu





<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu>

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PATHWAYS PUBLICATIONS
Tip Sheet: What Is Peer Support and What Is Not Peer Support? (PDF)
Journal Article: Increasing Youths' Participation in Team-Based Treatment

New Tip Sheet: What Is Peer Support?
Posted 06-29-17
This tip sheet from the **AMP+** project provides some clarity around the primary functions of the young adult peer support role, and addresses the common misconceptions of

Participate in a Survey of Service Providers' Training Needs
Posted 06-22-17
Pathways researchers in collaboration with **Youth MOVE National** invite you to participate

Research & Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures,
Portland State University