

**Summary:**

Youth work is a complex and dynamic practice that reflects a long tradition of engaging young people of all ages with adults in community-based opportunities to learn, practice and grow. Youth work promotes nonformal learning in parks, recreation centers, schools, and myriad other organizations focused on topics like the arts, sports, culture, faith-based learning, civic engagement, leadership, science, technology and the environment. Successful youth work intentionally builds on interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, personal choice, voluntary participation and quality learning experiences. Historically many youth programs viewed young people as clients or members dependent on and directed by adults in authority. This E-study explores how a commitment to positive youth development succeeds when a human rights based approach to youth shapes youth worker assumptions and actions in daily practice. The three case studies demonstrate how rights-based practice both depends upon and influences youth policy in relationships, organizations and communities.

**Background information**

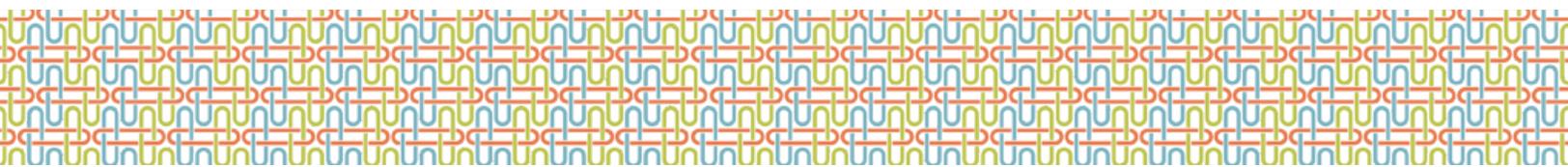
This E-study tells the story of three experienced youth workers who have embraced a rights-based approach to their work with young people. During their year in the NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship, they dug deep into readings and discussions of human rights work. They conducted action research on youth rights and examined their own practices as well as the policies of youth organizations. The white papers which are at the heart of this E-study share their discoveries, obstacles, changes of perspective and recommendations. What emerges is the vital connection between the philosophy and values of practice and the community valuing of young people as visibly articulated in its public policies and organizational policies in regard to youth. This E-study invites people who work with and on behalf of youth to look critically at their own practices as well as the youth policy stances of the organization and community in which they work.

**Learning Outcome(s)**

The overall learning outcomes for this E-Study are that the user will:

- See young people through a lens of positive youth development
- Recognize assets that support learning of young people
- Explore how a rights-based approach to youth work can apply to your own practice
- Explore ways to advance rights based youth policy within organizational systems as well as in local, national and international policy contexts.

Module	Learning Objectives
<b>Intro: Human Rights-Based Approach to Youth Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The opening video establishes the context and topic for the E-Study. The two facilitators of the NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship describe their perspectives on the importance of a rights-based approach to youth work. One of the fellows talks about what drew her to the fellowship.</li> <li>● Youth workers, youth program leaders and professionals working on behalf of young people in the youth policy arena are the primary audience.</li> </ul>



**Module 1  
NorthStar  
Overview**

- E-Study participants will understand the purpose of the NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship to prepare youth workers to explore, lead and advocate for positive youth policy in organizational, systems and community settings.
- Establish the interdependency -- the critical link -- between practice and policy.
- Consider the many ways practitioners confront youth policy issues in their practice.
- Acknowledge the importance of youth policy in national and international settings.

**Module 2  
A New  
Standard  
Operating  
Procedure**

- Practitioners and policy-makers will gain insight into the shared values that contribute to a youth-centered approach.
- Practitioners will gain tools to explore their own value system and reflect on how those values impact their practice.
- Program, organization, and systems leaders will examine the impact of policies and practices in the lives of young people and be challenged to consider the role of power and privilege in their governing practices and adopt youth-centered policies and practices.

**Module 3  
Media  
Consent  
Forms**

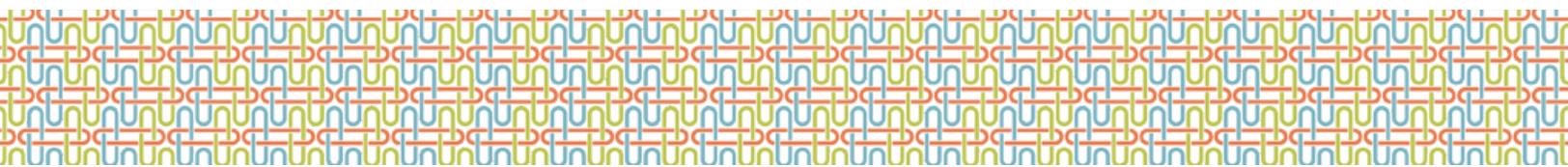
- Practitioners and program leaders will be equipped to help youth and families navigate the media release process and to raise issues of youth rights at the organization level.
- Organization leaders will understand how to create a youth-rights-based media release form and policy and will be equipped to communicate those policies to systems leaders.
- Systems leaders will consider the issues related to using youth images in fundraising and marketing and the policy implications of those issues.

**Module 4  
Planning &  
Evaluation in  
Youth Work**

- Funders, executive directors and policy-makers will gain an understanding of how a shift in thinking will better support the field of youth work.
- Leadership teams will better their understanding of how to look critically at evaluation tools in order to embed a human rights-based lens
- Program staff will use the practice of reflection as an example to examine how an intentional youth rights-based approach to program-planning creates an equitable community both inside and outside of programming.

**Conceptual Framework**

The E-Study has 4 modules -- an overview of the NorthStar Youth Worker Fellowship and 3 case studies which build upon the white papers written by 3 youth workers in the fellowship. The Introductory Video and Module 1 present views on why a rights-based approach to youth work strengthens positive youth development and positions young people to be full participants in their own learning and leadership. Modules 2-4 begin with advocacy for a youth-centered approach to practice, move to advocacy for organizational policies that respect the rights of youth, and end with philosophical and practical ways to honor the rights of youth in program planning and evaluation. Youth workers, program leaders and youth policy advocates will gain new perspectives and ideas on assessing their own work and appreciating the dilemmas that adults in practice face in their daily work when supportive youth policies are absent. The case studies demonstrate how the presence of well articulated positive youth policies in personal, organizational and society are essential to strong, effective youth work practice.



**Runtime: Approximately 6.5 hours depending on how many recommended resources are added.**

Breakdown of approximate time for each module:

Introduction: 10 minutes

Module 1: 60 minutes (including 10 min. for Introductory Video)

Module 2: 120 minutes

Module 3: 90 minutes

Module 4: 110 minutes

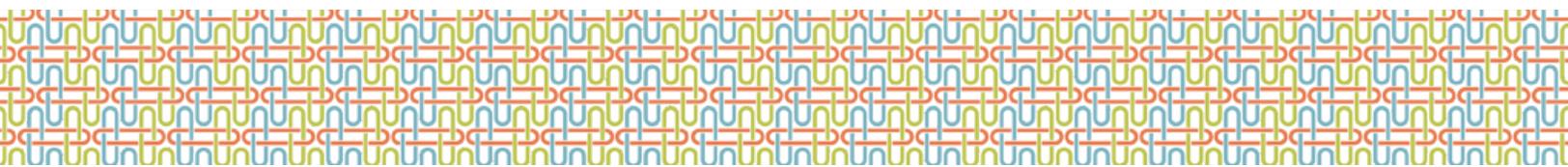
## **Suggested Uses**

### **E-Study Intro - Human Rights-Based Approach to Youth Work**

- **Use #1: Reflecting on Introductory Video**
  - **Estimated time - 10 minutes**
  - **Students prepare by watching introductory video at least once**
  - **Suggested materials to create while watching video:**
    - Jot down 3-5 keywords or phrases used by fellowship leaders to describe the reasons the concept of rights-based approaches is important for youth work.
    - Note anything that's said which made you think, "Yes!"
    - Note anything said that makes you question or uncomfortable
    - Watch the video again to test out your initial reactions
  - **Suggested tasks:** Read the United Nations Charter for the Rights of Children version for Kids linked on page 3 of Module 1

### **Module 1: NorthStar Fellowship**

- **Use #1: Make the Connection Between Youth Work and the Topic of Youth Rights**
  - **Estimated time - 60 minutes**
  - **Students prepare by completing Module 1 with special attention to the links of page 2 which focus on details of the fellowship.**
  - **Suggested Reading:** Konopka, G. (1973) Requirements for the Healthy Development of Adolescents. Link found on page 4 under resources. This thoughtful essay makes the connection between youth work to promote the healthy development of young people and the concept of human rights and youth.
  - **Suggested Alternative Tasks:**
    - Watch Konopka Video linked on page 4 to hear her personal perspectives on adolescents and their basic needs and rights.



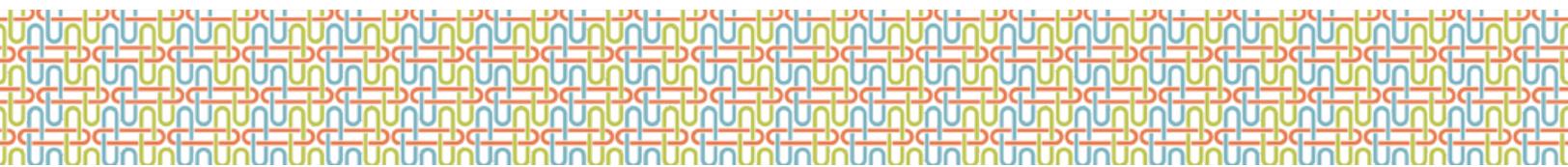
## A Human Rights-Based Approach to Youth Work

- Have a discussion (or write a short paper) about the implications of rights-based approaches to youth work given that the United States is not a signatory to the CRC? What does that mean for youth policy in the United States?

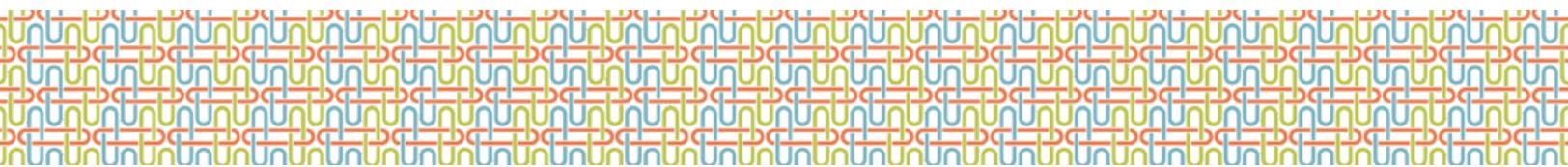
### Module 2: A New Standard Operating Procedure

- **Use #1: For the Practitioner**
  - **Estimated time: 120 min.**
  - **Suggested materials to be used:**
    - Pages/slides 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
  - **Suggested tasks:**
    - *Listen or read the paper* linked on page 1 of the module, giving focus to the following sections: Professional Identity, Research Assertions, Learning Across Disciplines, Values, Youth-Centered Approach: Core Values Worth Sharing, Youth-Centered Work in Action
    - *Review the Growing My Approach Video:* Then explore the personal and professional values that influence your work.
    - *Review Reflections on our World case studies*
    - *Review Youth-Centered in Action module:* How do these values show up in your practice? Is a youth-centered approach valued in your organization? Why? Why not?
- **Use #2: For the Policy-Maker**
  - **Estimated time: 90 min.**
  - **Suggested materials to be used:**
    - Pages 1, 3, 4, 6
  - **Suggested tasks:**
    - Listen or read the paper linked on page 1 of the module, giving focus to the following sections: Looking Back to Move Forward, Research Assertions, Making Connections in a Broader Context, Learning Across Disciplines, Youth-Centered Approach: Core Values Worth Sharing, Youth-Centered Work in Action, From Individual Values to Cultural Norms, A (New) Standard Operating Procedure
    - *Review Reflections on our World case studies and reflect on the following questions:* How can policy decisions impact the outcome of these cases? How can a Youth-Centered Approach be supported
    - *Review Youth-Centered in Action module and reflect on the following questions:* How do these values show up in your organization's policies and procedures? What presents the most challenges to adopting youth-centered approaches? Who are the champions for these values in your system or organization?

### Module 3: Media Consent Forms



- **Use #1: For Direct Service Staff and Program Leaders**
  - **Estimated time**
    - 90 minutes
  - **How should students prepare?**
    - Read the paper “Media Consent Forms: Towards a Rights-Based Approach” by Ellie Kunkel (Asset 5A).
    - Obtain and read a copy of their organization/program media consent form.
  - **Suggested materials to be used:**
    - E-Study Intro
    - Slides 1-4, 7 (slides 5 & 6 depending on interest and role within organization)
  - **Suggested tasks:**
    - Create a “Layers of Impact” image, similar to the one on slide 2, mapping the media consent process in their organization/program. Discuss what role they play in the process.
    - After watching the video interview, discuss instances they’ve experienced similar or in contrast to those mentioned. What could have been in place to better protect the rights of youth and families?
    - Role-play with the “Program Leader Resource: Talking Points & Questions to Raise with Organization Staff” document. Practice conversations in which program leaders advocate for youth and families’ rights.
  - **Alternative tasks/assignments:**
    - Interview young people in their program/organization. What do youth want to know before their image or story is used? How do youth want to be depicted?
    - Use the “Program Leader Resource: Questions to Consider & Discuss With Families” document to start a conversation with youth and/or families in their program/organization. Do these questions seem useful and relevant? Offer edits or additional items to consider.
- **Use #2: For Organization and Systems Leaders**
  - **Estimated time**
    - 90 minutes
  - **How should students prepare?**
    - Read the paper “Media Consent Forms: Towards a Rights-Based Approach” by Ellie Kunkel (Asset 5A).
    - Read organization (or partner organizations, as relevant) media consent form/s.
    - Read organization (or system/network, as relevant) policies related to obtaining, storing, and sharing client images, stories, etc..



## A Human Rights-Based Approach to Youth Work

- Consider expectations of common funders or communication partners regarding photos and stories.
- **Suggested materials to be used:**
  - E-Study Intro
  - Slides 1-3, 5-7
  - “Program Leader Resource: Questions to Consider & Discuss With Families” document from Slide 4.
- **Suggested tasks:**
  - Compare organization/network media consent form and policies with the sample form provided on Slide 5. What is missing from the existing form, and why was the decision made to leave it out? What would it take to make the existing form and processes rights-based?
  - Role-play with the “Organization Leader Resource: Messaging Around Youth and Families’ Rights” document. Practice conversations in which organization leaders explain youth media policies and the youth rights approach behind them to funders and others outside the organization.
  - Read the articles “Pictures of me: user views on their representation in homelessness fundraising appeals” and “Charitable organizations’ storytelling influence on donors’ emotions and intentions.” Discuss how images and stories used in fundraising and marketing either perpetuate or break down stereotypes about people.
- **Alternative tasks/assignments:**
  - Form a working group within their organization to revise the media consent form and policies in use. Include people (and youth, if possible) the organization serves in these conversations.
  - Develop an organization position statement on youth rights and media use.

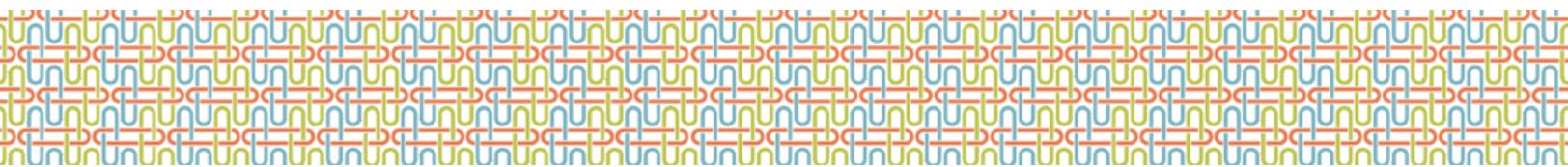
### **Module 4: Planning and Evaluation in Youth Work**

This e-study can be used to initiate conversations around best practices in youth work and the various lenses and perspectives (such as social justice) used when developing youth programming.

#### **Four tasks to prepare students for this e-study:**

- Define social justice and youth work
- Visit Weikart Center website and read about the YPQA tool and improvement cycle
- Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Rights of the Child
- Check out this Glogster and the resources found on the page

**Use #1:** Design a Glog using Glogster



- Using Glogster, create an interactive media poster that highlights your definition of youth work and its importance. Include videos, music and links to other resources that help support your definition. [Here](#) is a sample.

**Use #2: Making the Link**

- Using domain and scale from the YPQA tool and the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values from Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education, create a new scale specific to a youth program of your choice that supports the idea of embedding a socially just lens into evaluation. Use the example found in the conclusion of the paper as an example.

**Additional Resources**

**Module 1: NorthStar**

**Module 2: Lindsay**

Influential Books

On Caring by Milton Mayeroff

Experience and Education by John Dewey

The Courage to Teach by Parker Palmer

The Little Book of Circle Processes

Peacemaking Circles and Urban Youth: Bringing Justice Home by: Carolyn Boyes-Watson

Online Resources

[The Circle Process: A Path for Restorative Dialogue](#)

[SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](#)

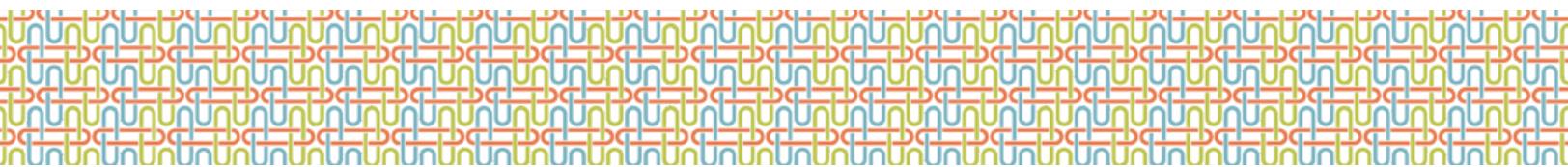
[Ways of Being: A Model for Social and Emotional Learning](#)

**Module 3: Ellie**

Breeze, B., Dean, J. (2012). Pictures of me: user views on their representation in homelessness fundraising appeals. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 17, 132-143.

Burman, E. (1994). Poor children: charity appeals and ideologies of childhood. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 12, 29-36.

Merchant, A., Ford, J. B., Sargeant, A. (2010). Charitable organizations' storytelling influence on donors' emotions and intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 63, 754-762.



## **Module 4: Julie**

### Influences

Ta-Nehisi Coates, National Correspondent at [The Atlantic](#)

Howard Zinn, author and professor <http://zinnedproject.org/>

Melissa Harris-Perry, professor, author and speaker <http://melissaharriserry.com/>

Ricardo Levins Morales, artist and activist <http://www.rlmartstudio.com/>

Warsan Shire, [poet](#)

Sprockets Neighborhood network [meetings](#)

The Absorbent Mind by [Maria Montessori](#)

## **References**

### **Module 1: Leadership Team**

### **Module 2: Lindsay**

American Youth Policy Forum. (2006). Helping Youth Succeed Through Out-of-School Time Programs. American Youth Policy Forum, Washington, D.C.

Andrews, J. (2000). Champion of Social Justice: Contributions of Gisela Konopka, Paper given at the 22nd Annual International Symposium, Association for the Advancement of Social Worker with Groups, Inc. Toronto, Ontario, Canada - October 19-22, 2000 and republished as Gisela Konopka and group work. Retrieved September 16, 2012 from the encyclopedia for informal education: [www.infed.org/thinkers/konopka.htm](http://www.infed.org/thinkers/konopka.htm)

Health Workforce Information Center. (2012, March 20). Interprofessional Training: Introduction. Retrieved Aug. 14, 2012 from Health Workforce Information Center: [www.hwic.org/topics/introductions.php?id=23](http://www.hwic.org/topics/introductions.php?id=23)

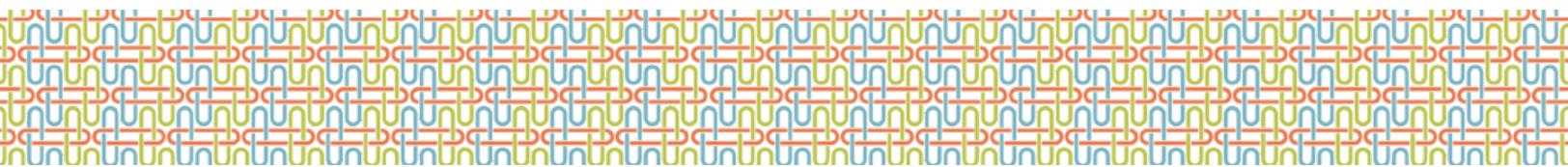
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Pecukonis, E., Doyle, O., & Bliss, D. L. (2008). Reducing barriers to interprofessional training: Promoting interprofessional cultural competence. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 22(4), 417-428.

Smith, M. (1999, 2002). Youth Work: An Introduction. From the encyclopedia of informal education: <http://www.infed.org/youthwork/b-yw.htm>



The Finance Project and Public Education Network. (2004). *Teacher Professional Development: A Primer for Parents & Community members*. Washington, D.C.

Walker, K. C., & Larson, R. W. (2012). Youth Worker Reasoning about Dilemmas Encountered in Practice: Expert-Novice Differences. *Journal of Youth Development - Bridging Research and Practice* , 7 (1), 5-23.

Young, K. (2006). *The Art of Youth Work* (2nd Edition ed.). Dorset, United Kingdom: Russell House Publishing.

**Module 3: Ellie**

United Nations General Assembly. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved July 2015, from United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:  
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>.

**Module 4: Julie**

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/compass>

<http://www.cypq.org/>

Brown, A. and Walidah, I. (Ed.). (2015) [Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements](#)  
[AK Press](#)

