
SNIPPET

Mapping and Marketing Resources for the Entire Community

Youth Council: Ventura County Youth Council

Element: Comprehensive Approach

Function: Coordinating Youth Services

Subject: Resource Mapping

The Challenge: The mission of the Ventura County Youth Council is “To form collaborative alliances with other dedicated youth-service agencies and youth advocates to more effectively disseminate and share information, as well as provide for and assist with opportunities that benefit our youth – our future.” Toward that end, they and their Workforce Investment Network had formed the Workforce Investment Network for Youth Program (WINetwork). They recognized a need to inform the community and potential collaborators of the program, to gather information about local youth serving agencies, and to recruit members to the network.

Practice and Evidence: The Council developed community outreach and marketing strategies for their WINetwork. The WINetwork began by sending letters and surveys to community youth advocates. They also conducted a series of town hall meetings and arranged for one of them to be televised on a local cable network. These efforts had three goals:

1. To introduce the community to the unified effort forming the Network.
2. To administer the Youth Services Survey to gather provider information.
3. To invite all youth advocates and survey respondents to participate as members of the Network.

After the initial outreach efforts, the WINetwork developed ways to create community awareness and market their Network. They developed a strong tag line for all their materials: “Advocates for an enlightened and mighty generation.” They established a color code so that the community would begin to identify the “look” as that of the Network. The Network promoted the concept that healthy and effective youth programs will eventually contribute to the success of adult programs. This message educated the community that good youth programs were the best investments that can be made for the entire county.

Through the Network, all youth services were marketed as a whole, thus creating a clear, unified message for youth seeking assistance.

The WINetwork was able to complete several projects as a result of its outreach and marketing practices. It published the Ventura County Youth Services Resource Directory, and held a Youth Summit during which the resource directory and its purpose were introduced. It also established monthly meetings for members, with benefits such as professional development workshops,

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monthly calendar discussions, technical assistance, and program education. (See the YCidea “Forming a Network for Youth Service Providers” beginning on page 43.) The Network also produced a full-color publication that outlines the youth services in the county, explains the scope of the Network, and invites participation. In addition, it published the second edition of the resource directory, “Jobs for Youth and More,” and held a countywide job fair where the directory was released.

After the initial collection of data through the survey, the WINetwork continued to solicit responses. They knew that more time was needed to gather all the information about youth services in the area and that the work would always be evolving. The members continued to develop new ways to engage additional stakeholders, including reaching more youth.

Where to Go for More Information

Ventura County Youth Council

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Tools

Tools are available from the Ventura County Youth Council
Youth Services Resource Directory I
Youth Services Resource Directory II
Youth Services Directory Survey
Youth Summit Flyer and Agenda