



MICHIGAN Community Foundations



YOUTH Project

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Track Your YAC!

*A Tool for Assessing
Your YAC's Progress
Toward Best Practices*

Is Your YAC on Track?

Take the quiz inside this brochure and add up your score to see how you stack up to Best Practices!!

42 points or more: One word: AWESOME!

37-42 points: Great job! Your YAC is doing very well in achieving Best Practices. Check any answers for which your YAC reported 2 points or less to see if there are areas in which you can do even better!!

29-36 points: You are doing well, but there is some room for improvement. Check any answers for which your YAC reported 2 points or less to see if there are areas in which you can do even better!!

21-28 points: Your YAC may be struggling with some real issues. Share this assessment with your advisor, staff and your Board of Trustees, and note answers for which your YAC reported 2 points or less to see if there are areas in which you can do even better!!

20 points or less: Contact Breannah Alexander at 616.842.8070 or balexander@michiganfoundations.org. She can help you get on the right track!

Each question number inside corresponds to the similarly numbered Best Practice below. For suggestions on implementing Best Practices, download a copy of "Putting Best Practices into Action: A YAC Best Practices Manual" at www.youthgrantmakers.org.

Youth Advisory Committee Best Practices*

#1: Meets a minimum of seven times a year.

#2: Has a minimum of 12 members ages 12-21 who reflect the many forms of diversity found in the local youth community.

#3: Has two trained YAC advisors provided by the community foundation who are knowledgeable and supportive of youth development and youth leadership.

#4: Holds an annual orientation for all new members and encourages all members to participate in training opportunities that will strengthen their skills in philanthropy.

#5: Assesses critical issues of area youth at least every three years.

#6: Engages in a grantmaking process that is responsive to the critical issues of area youth annually.

#7: Evaluates the effectiveness of each grant annually.

#8: Participates in a community youth project annually.

#9: Engages in fund development activities to assist with the continual growth of the endowed youth fund and the community foundation annually.

#10: Has at least one YAC member serving as a full voting member on the community foundation Board of Trustees.

#11: Interacts with community foundation board, staff and donors regularly on a formal and informal level.

#12: Has activities highlighted in the community foundation's annual report, web site, newsletters, public presentations and other communication tools.

#13: Conducts an annual self-assessment to reflect upon its strengths, challenges, use of Best Practices and opportunities for improvement.

#14: Participates in and attends the Youth Grantmakers Summer Leadership Conference, Fall Regional Trainings and Advisor Roundtables.

* The YAC is a permanent advisory committee of the Community Foundation with the primary responsibility of making funding recommendations for grants made from the Community Foundation's endowed Youth Fund.

Take the quiz below to see how well your YAC is doing in meeting each of the 14 Best Practices!

1. How often does our entire YAC meet?

- 7-11 times per year. (3 pts.)
 - 5-6 times per year. (1 pt.)
 - 4 times per year or less. (0 pts.)
- Extra Credit!!* Our full YAC meets 12 or more times each year. (1 pt.)

2. Which statement most accurately describes the individuals on our YAC?

- YAC members vary in age, race, ethnic background, school, interests, socio-economic level, personal/family history, and academic/physical abilities and reflect the youth in our community. (3 pts.)
- The YAC has some diversity, but could more accurately represent the youth in our community. (1 pt.)
- Our YAC does not reflect the many forms of diversity found in our youth community. (0 pts.)

3. Which statement best describes the relationship between YAC members and our advisors?

- Our YAC has two great advisors who relate well to youth and let YAC members take the lead. (3 pts.)
- Our YAC has one great advisor who lets YAC members take the lead. (2 pts.)
- Our advisor(s) means well, but needs help relating to youth. (1 pt.)
- Our advisor(s) is in charge and makes all the decisions. (0 pts.)

4. When new members join our YAC...

- Experienced YAC members provide an interactive, comprehensive orientation that includes a grant-making simulation. (3 pts.)
- Experienced YAC members do a quick overview of YAC. (2 pts.)
- The advisor conducts new member training with no youth involvement. (1 pt.)
- New members learn strictly "on the job." It's sink or swim!! (0 pts.)

5. Which statement best describes how our YAC determines the critical issues that young people in our community face?

- Our YAC assesses critical issues of area youth formally at least every three years. (3 pts.)
 - Our YAC assesses critical issues of area youth only informally. (1 pt.)
 - Our YAC never assesses critical issues. (0 pts.)
- Extra Credit!!* Our YAC assesses critical issues at least every two years. (1 pt.)

6. Which statement best describes how our YAC responds to the issues that youth in our community face?

- Our YAC makes grants designed by youth serving organizations that addresses issues identified in our needs assessment. (3 pts.)
- Our YAC makes grants at least once per year, but the decisions are not based on our needs assessment. (1 pt.)
- Our YAC doesn't make grants. (0 pts and call Breannah Alexander at 616.842.7080)

7. Which statement best describes what our YAC does to evaluate its grantmaking?

- Within a year after making grants, our YAC learns about each grantee's progress through written reports, oral presentations, or site visits, and uses the lessons learned for future grant rounds. (3 pts.)
- Our YAC looks at written reports submitted by grantees whenever they come in. (1 pt.)
- What's evaluation? (0 pts.)

8. Which statement best describes our YAC's participation in community projects?

- At least two-thirds of our YAC participate in more than one community service project annually. (3 pts.)
- At least two-thirds of our YAC participate in one community service project annually. (2 pts.)
- Fewer than two-thirds of our YAC participate in one community service project annually. (1 pt.)
- Our YAC does not coordinate any type of service opportunities for our members. (0 pts.)

9. Which statement best describes our YAC's fund development efforts?

- Each year, our YAC successfully raises money for the endowment from both individuals and businesses in our community. (3 pts.)
 - Within the past year, our YAC has successfully raised money from either businesses or individuals. (2 pts.)
 - Each year, our YAC asks for money from individuals and/or businesses, but has not yet raised any money. (1 pt.)
 - Our YAC does not attempt to raise money. (0 pts.)
- Extra Credit!!* At least 50% of YAC members give money to the endowment fund. (2 pts.)

10. Does our YAC have a representative on the community foundation Board of Trustees (BOT)?

- Yes. One YAC member serves as a full voting member on the BOT. (3 pts.)
 - Getting there. YAC members participate in BOT meetings, but are not permitted to vote (1 pt.)
 - No. YAC members have no involvement with BOT meetings. (0 pts.)
- Extra Credit!!* Two or more YAC members serve as voting members on the BOT. (2 pts.)

11. How close is the relationship between our YAC members and board, staff, and donors of the community foundation?

- YAC members are regularly invited to attend CF events and to visit the CF offices, and at least 25% of YAC members have attended. (3 pts.)
- YAC members are regularly invited to attend CF events and to visit the CF offices, but fewer than 25% of YAC members have attended. (2 pts.)
- YAC members have little interaction with CF Board, Staff, or Donors. (0 pts.)

12. How well is our YAC featured in community foundation publications and/or communications?

- Featured in every publication and is involved in one or more presentations to the community, such as annual reports, web site, newsletters public presentations, etc. (3 pts.)
- Featured in some key publications and communications. (1 pt.)
- Publications and communications don't feature the YAC at all. (0 pts.)

Extra Credit!! Our YAC has its own web site. (1 pt.)

13. Once a year, our YAC...

- Reflects on how well it functions and meets Best Practices, and uses that information to improve. (3 pts.)
- Reflects on how well it functions, but does nothing with that information. (1 pt.)
- Doesn't reflect on how well it functions or how to improve, and continues to operate the same way year after year. (0 pts.)

14. How high is our YAC's participation in networking and education events?

- Multiple YAC representatives attend the Youth Grantmakers Summer Leadership Conference, Regional Trainings and Advisor Roundtables each year. (3 pts.)
- Our YAC has been represented at only one or two of the three events listed above in the last year. (1 pt.)
- None of our YAC representatives have attended any of the three meetings listed above. (0 pts.)
- Our YAC has not sent a representative to the Youth Grantmakers Summer Leadership Conference in the last two years. (-1 pts.)

TOTAL POINTS SCORED: _____

See the other side to score your YAC and learn more about Best Practices!