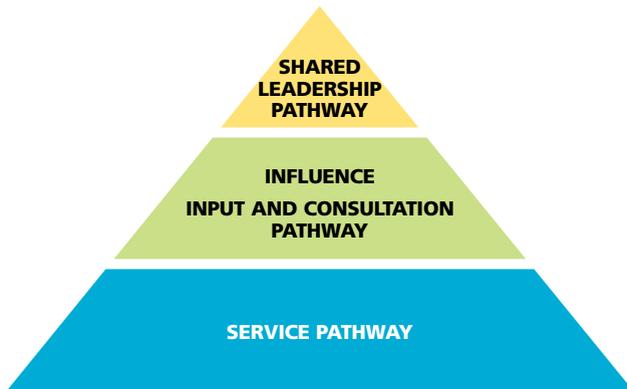


Hampton's Model of Youth Civic Engagement



Three key pathways create a system that increases a community's social capital. This approach — investing in youth — offers countless benefits. It taps their energy and ideas, creates a youth focus in public decision-making, ensures more inclusive results, trains them for increasingly responsible and meaningful positions, creates productive citizens and cultivates pro-social attitudes in the next generation of taxpayers and policy-makers. Most important, it builds a better community.

For more information, contact:

Hampton Coalition for Youth
City Hall • 22 Lincoln St • Hampton, VA 23669
757-728-3280 • www.hampton.gov/foryouth

To obtain additional pamphlets in this series covering more specific topics of Youth Civic Engagement and Creating a Youth-Friendly City, email foryouth@hampton.gov.



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Youth as Change Agents in Neighborhoods



Photography by Lisa M. Zunzanyika
Additional photos courtesy of Alternatives, Inc. and City of Hampton

YOUNG VOICES, NEW VISIONS:
The Power of Youth to Improve Communities

A series based on Hampton, Virginia's model of Youth Civic Engagement

Youth as Change Agents in Neighborhoods

Youth Civic Engagement energizes neighborhoods by treating youth as stakeholders with a vested interest in the place they live. In Hampton, neighborhood youth participate as change agents on many levels through service, advisory and leadership roles.

Service

Young people volunteer at festivals, cleanups, organize neighborhood events and help elderly residents. They are active in Neighborhood Month celebrations.

Influence

As advisors on committees, teens work on issues like traffic, recreation facilities, crime, and improving perceptions of the community. Many participate in the creation of neighborhood plans.

Shared Leadership

As neighborhood leaders, youth create safety, mentoring, and athletic programs; and apply for grants for new initiatives. Some neighborhood associations have youth as voting members.

There are countless ways to engage young people in neighborhood improvement efforts. For ideas, just ask them!



HOW IT WORKS IN HAMPTON

The success of neighborhood youth engagement depends on the cooperation of the city's Neighborhood Office and the skilled facilitation of Alternatives, Inc., the local nonprofit youth development agency.

- 1 Representative youth participate on Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board (NYAB), a group of passionate and trained teens who speak to neighborhood associations about improving neighborhoods through engaging youth.
- 2 A neighborhood is identified by demonstrating that youth are a priority, and that residents support youth involvement and are willing to listen to their ideas.
- 3 NYAB and Alternatives staff identify and mobilize neighborhood youth, host neighborhood speak-outs where youth can voice their concerns to adult leaders, and lead their peers in developing and implementing service projects to address their concerns.
- 4 Once teens complete their project, they can continue to tackle new opportunities in their neighborhood, or join NYAB and begin to work in other neighborhoods across the city.

