

From Participation to Engagement: *How Youth Get Turned On In OST Programs*

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Motivation is Important

1. It affects **retention**
2. Engagement in activities is **prerequisite** to youth gaining their developmental benefits
3. Positive motivation is an important **outcome variable**

Our Objective

- To **Develop Grounded Theory** about the **Change Process** whereby youth become more motivated by program activities.



Preliminary Research: A Three Stage Process

- 1. Amotivation:** Youth enter for extrinsic reasons
- 2. Personal Connection:** Youth find a link between the program's mission and what matters to them
- 3. Intrinsic Motivation:** Youth develop interest in and enjoyment of the work

The Youth Development Experience

Understanding the “development” in youth development

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The Data Set

- 12 programs for high-school aged youth studied over 2-10 months
- 125 interviews with 25 program leaders
- 788 interviews with 113 youth
- 167 site observations

1. Program Entry

- **Arts & Technology Programs.** Most youth entered with high interest and prior motivation
 - **Leadership Service Program.** Most joined for reasons extrinsic to the program activities (families, fulfilling a service requirement, friends in program).
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2. Becoming Motivated

- 106 of 113 Youth reported experiencing high levels of motivation
- How?
Stay tuned.

3. Transfer of Motivation

a. Self Efficacy

I've done a lot better in school since I've joined the drama program. It makes me want to feel like, if I can succeed at this, why can't I succeed at grades and everything else.



Transfer Continued

b. Skills for Self-Regulation of Motivation

It helped my work ethic definitely... I would work really hard and get that gratification... that work ethic is still very ingrained.

c. Interest & Enjoyment of a Particular Activity

It motivated me to actually get excited about teaching



The Role of Programs?

- Do no harm!
- Leaders' role in “**balancing**” the warrants of practice
- A **program culture** in which modes of action, personal connection to the work, and enjoyment of work is passed on.



Thank You!

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<http://web.aces.uiuc.edu/youthdev/>