Are we really listening to our youth?

The ‘voice’ from a Columbine youth following their tragedy:

We have...
More degrees, but less sense;
More experts, but more problems;
More medicine, but less wellness;
Multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values.
We spend more, but have less.

Through the Best Schools/Best Community movement, school-aged children and youth were invited to participate in the launch of the Hamilton Proud Campaign on May 3, 2010 at Hamilton Place, and they did with much enthusiasm and pride.

Skits and songs were written and rehearsed, dance routines created and video clips edited and all of this was done in individual groups located throughout various parts of the city. It wasn’t until the day of the launch that all of these young people joined together as a whole to merge their projects into one.

As a community, we should be extremely proud of the Youth of this city.
... is continuing to involve multiple agencies and partners in identifying the gaps and types of need for funding. Children (5 to 14 years) and youth (15 to 24 years) in Wards 2 and 3 (2006) - nearly 4000 children - were estimated to have problems (20%).

The goal is to foster neighbourhoods and schools as places for children, youth and their families to thrive; to enlist youth as activators and use their collective assets emphasizing pillars of well-being. Planning activities using a community development model include school boards, principals and community opportunity agencies.

At present we are mapping out existing community agencies and programs providing opportunities (ie. YM/WCA, Kiwanis, Jamesville Neighbourhood Hub, Street Youth Collaborative, Artsaround, Project Video Production, Child Care programs, Early Years Centres); identifying other agencies/opportunities (ie. faith based, cultural); mapping out the coordinated process of reaching out and engagement strategies; and mapping out space and places for children and youth congregation.

Catchment areas identifying “mapped boundaries” of elementary and high schools by neighborhood and/or postal code continue to be a challenge.

Hamilton’s youth displayed a considerable amount of respect for their peers, for themselves, and for their leaders, and it was obvious to anyone fortunate enough to be “backstage” as the event came together that these young people WANTED to be a part of this event. These individuals are definitely proud of their community and have set a good example for us to follow.

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**Six Critical Life Messages**

1. I believe in you
2. I trust you
3. I know you can handle this
4. You are listened to
5. You are cared for
6. You are very important to me

*From the book ‘kids are worth it! Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline’ by Barbara Coloroso*
We are part of the New Initiative funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care entitled Applied Health Research Network Initiative (AHRNI). Researchers across the province are looking at ways to ease the burden on the health care system and make it work more efficiently. The System Integration and Innovation Research Network (SIIReN) hub based at the University of Western Ontario is led by Dr. Moira Stewart and is responsible for three program areas of research:

- Transitions of Prevention and Care, led by Dr. Jonathan Sussman;
- Systems of Prevention and Care, led by Dr. Gina Browne;
- Primary Health Care System, led by Dr. Moira Stewart.

The Innovative Integrated Systems of Prevention and Care program or theme will develop and implement research initiatives on integrated and innovative care for problems affecting children, youth, their families, schools and local neighbourhoods.

Our Vision and Belief:

“It takes the children to raise the village”

Goal: Foster neighbourhoods and schools as places for children, youth and their families to thrive:
- Reach their full potential
- Support the continuation of the Youth Engagement & Action in Hamilton (YEAH) collaborative
- Feel a sense of belonging and have voice in helping each other as an early intervention in:
  - Schools to be a cascade of youth helping children and youth
  - Neighbourhoods
  - Local businesses
Proud Hamilton Campaign, May 3, 2010 at Hamilton Place

The Hamilton Positive Youth Development and Healthy Communities Movement welcomed the opportunity to enlist the help of Hamilton Youth in the Hamilton Proud Campaign hosted by the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative on May 3, 2010 at Hamilton Place Theatre.

The approach taken was to enlist the ideas and energy of street and school aged, multicultural youth to participate and design the venue for the launch and shape its movement. Community agencies and schools came together to improve the image of Hamilton. This was the beginning of a 15-week initiative where several events have been and continue to be planned to promote and raise awareness in the community.

“Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, let me do and I understand”
(Chinese proverb)

Special thanks to the Sponsors:

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More from a Columbine youth...

We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often
We’ve learned how to make a living, but not a life
These are times of steep profits, and shallow relationships
These are days of fancier houses, but broken homes