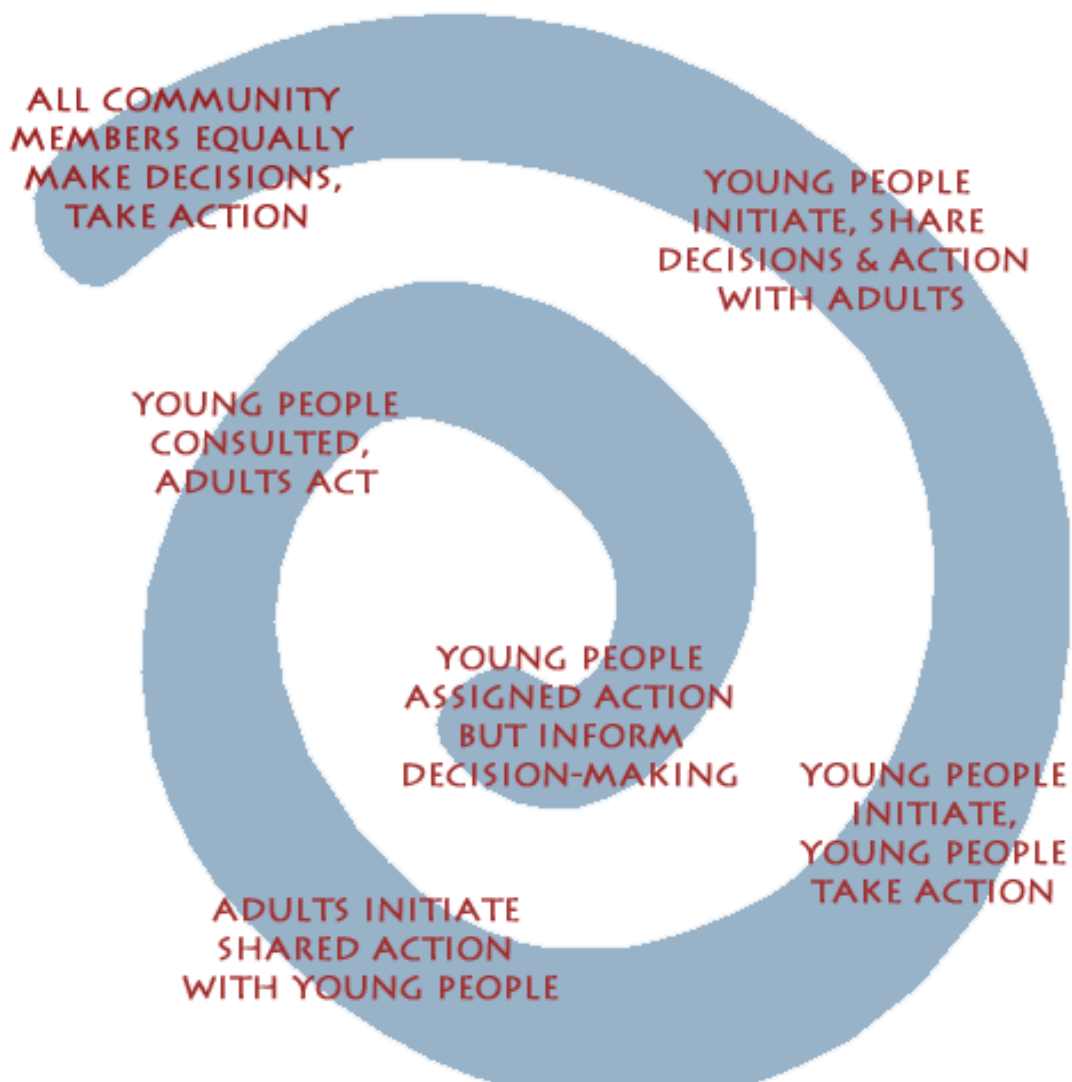


THE FREECHILD PROJECT MEASURE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE BY AND WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



Loosely adapted from Roger Hart's *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*
UNICEF Innocenti Essays, No. 4, UNICEF/International Child Development Centre, Florence, Italy, 1992.
This model © 2003 The Freechild Project. All rights reserved.

Individuals and organizations can use this model to start thinking about how young people can be integrated throughout society. The spiral represents the non-linear motion of social change. You don't simply start in one place and end in another; instead, it is a process that continually evolves while hopefully growing larger. It has been going on a lot longer than the present, and this model is meant to acknowledge the past. The spiral also shows the motion of opportunities becoming narrower as fewer people are engaged.

All community members equally make decisions and take action.

This is the most optimal position for social change by and with young people because it engages every person within a community in decision-making and action through democracy. Instead of simply seeing community as geography, this approach embraces the roots of the word [com = with] as a group of people working *with unity*. Age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, language, ethnicity, and other qualities are embraced as strengthening identity that contributes to a larger good, not as segregating differences. All members experience inclusive, meaningful, empowering participation that is the pinnacle and goal of action and education for social justice. We believe that this is the heart of democratic society.

Young people initiate change while sharing decisions and action with adults.

This approach leverages the skills and leadership of young people with the power of adults in order to benefit the whole community. While young people are recognized as the motivators of social change, adults are engaged for their unique experience, talents, and abilities.

Young people initiate change and take action.

By focusing on the skills and leadership of young people, this approach leverages the power of young people with the ability of young people to affect change in the whole community. Young people are the impetus and generators of social justice action that reaches to other young people and throughout their communities.

Adults initiate change and share decisions with young people.

The leadership of adults is predominant, engaging young people as input-sharers instead of movement-makers. Adults infuse the knowledge and ability of young people through action in particular ways in order to inform community social justice action.

Young people are consulted and adults take action.

In this approach adults may listen to young people during planning, decision-making, or evaluation. This one-way flow of information does not nurture cross-accountability between young people and adults.

Young people are assigned action but inform adult decision-making.

Adults use power over young people through class credit, money, or mandates in order to engage young people in community change. Young people influence adults through direct and indirect communication.