



## Understanding Youth Participatory Action Research

**TOTAL SESSION TIME:** 90 minutes

**SESSION OBJECTIVES:** Participants build team cohesion and learn about YPAR.

**PREPARE:**

- Make copies of the Human Bingo Worksheet
- Set the flip chart paper in a place where everyone can see clearly.

### Opening Block: Human Bingo

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will learn more about each other.

**MATERIALS:**

- Human Bingo Worksheet
- Fun-size candy for prize

**ACTIVITY:**

- Ask participants to walk around and interact with others to find people who match the characteristics in the squares below.
- When they find someone who fits a characteristic, write their name in the corresponding box.
- The first person to complete a row, column, or diagonal by filling in five boxes should shout “Bingo.”
- The winner will be given a small prize.

**DISCUSS:**

- Ask each participant to share something they learned about the other participants.
- What were you surprised by? Did you have anything in common with someone else?

### Core Block 1: Identifying the ‘Big Question’

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** To learn about youth participatory action research.

**MATERIALS:** YouTube links

**LEARN:** Play video: Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR): (Time: 0:10 – 1:40)

**ACTIVITY:** The facilitator will read a series of scenarios representing different types of research. Participants will have to decide if the research is YPAR or not YPAR.

*This project was supported by Award No. 15PNIJ-22-GG-01420-RESS, awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.*

Learn more about Safety 7 at <https://www.childtrends.org/project/centering-youth-experiences-youth-participatory-action>.

## Safety 7

- Ask participants to stand up in a single file line. Tell participants to listen to the scenario and decide if they think the scenario is YPAR. Step to the right if it is YPAR. Step to the left if it is not YPAR.
- The facilitator will read each scenario. If the group seems to understand the concept or gets bored, only complete six of the eight scenarios.
- Explain why or why not the scenario is YPAR.

### Scenarios:

1. High school students in a community partner with local leaders to investigate the causes of youth unemployment in their neighborhood, leading to the creation of a job training program for young residents. (YPAR)
2. A data scientist conducts a study on the relationship between social media and car theft. They create a tool to analyze social media data and combine it with data from the police department. (Not YPAR)
3. A researcher conducts an evaluation of an afterschool program to see if it is useful to teens. She designs and administers a survey to program participants and then analyzes the data and tells the school how the program needs to improve. (Not YPAR)
4. Teenagers passionate about environmental issues conduct a study in their town to measure air pollution levels near schools, prompting local authorities to implement cleaner transportation options for students. (YPAR)
5. A city planner decides that the local youth need a new recreational center. He designs it based on what he thinks they'll like, without consulting any young people in the area. (Not YPAR)
6. Youth in an urban area conduct a project to address the issue of food insecurity among their peers. They gather data through surveys and interviews with fellow students, identify local food resources, and then work with local businesses to establish a community food pantry located at their school, ensuring that no student goes hungry during the school day. (YPAR)
7. The city's health department launched a campaign about healthy eating for teens. They use data from national surveys of teens and create posters, which they distribute in schools, without getting any input from the actual local teens they're trying to reach. (Not YPAR)
8. A group of young adults collaborates with a city council to research the lack of recreational spaces for youth, leading to the development of a community skate park. (YPAR)
9. A local professor wants to develop a program to prevent students from dropping out. She conducts interviews with college students to learn about the obstacles that they experience and then develops a program based on those research findings. (Not YPAR)

**DISCUSS:** Ask participants to share the key components of YPAR

## Core Blocks 2: The YPAR Process

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** For participants to learn more about each other and facilitators.

### MATERIALS:

- YPAR Video

- YPAR Process Cards

**LEARN:** Play video: YPAR Process: (Time: 2:15 – 4:58)

**ACTIVITY:** Participants will be given cards with words or statements that align with YPAR and the YPAR process. They will be asked to match their cards to the appropriate definition and/or YPAR stage.

Step 1: Prepare the Cards

- Write descriptions of key YPAR process steps on large poster paper. These descriptions can include terms like "Identifying the Issue," "Research," "Action Planning," and so on. Be sure to provide a brief explanation for each term. Post steps in order along a spacious wall.
- On a set of cards (Post-its), create corresponding words, phrases, or images that represent each YPAR process step (e.g., "Collect Data" or "Interview Participants").

Step 2: Set Up the Game (5 minutes)

- Give participants cards that represent each step in the YPAR process.

Step 3: Play the Game (10 minutes)

- Ask the participant to read the description and then try to match it with the correct card.
- Give participants about 5 minutes to match their cards with the correct YPAR stage.

**DISCUSS:**

- Gather the participants and discuss each matched pair.
- Ask them to explain what the YPAR process step means and why it's important. Encourage them to think about how these steps are interconnected.
- Conclude the game by discussing how participants can apply the YPAR process in real life.

### **Closing Block: Establishing a Closing Ritual**

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**OBJECTIVES:** Participants will end the meeting with their closing ritual.

**LEARN:** The purpose of closing rituals is to indicate the conclusion of a group session. These rituals, chosen collectively by the group, serve as a consistent way to help group participants collectively conclude the session. Here are several examples of closing rituals suitable for group sessions:

- The closing ritual can be a quote, a motivational statement, encouraging words, etc.
- Examples of closing rituals include:
  - Chant/Response: The facilitator says a specific word, agreed upon by the group, and the group responds with either the same or a different predetermined word, also chosen collectively by the group.
  - Team Huddle: Participants come together and put on arm in the middle of the circle. One participant counts to 3 and the group shouts a motivating phrase or the team's name.

## Safety 7

- Song: The group decides on or creates a line from a song or rap that represents the purpose of the program. The group leader begins by singing that line from the song. Each group member joins in by repeating the song line until all are singing it together.
- Positive Message: The group decides on a positive message that represents the purpose of the program, such as “Ending community violence, our unity is the key.” The group leader begins by saying the message. Each group member joins in by repeating the message until all have said it. The ritual ends with the entire group saying the message together.

### **ACTIVITY:**

- Ask participants to brainstorm a closing ritual.
- Help participants collectively decide on a closing ritual.
- Perform the closing ritual.