

# Real Food Active Living



*YES! empowers youth, in partnership with adults, to create community change.*



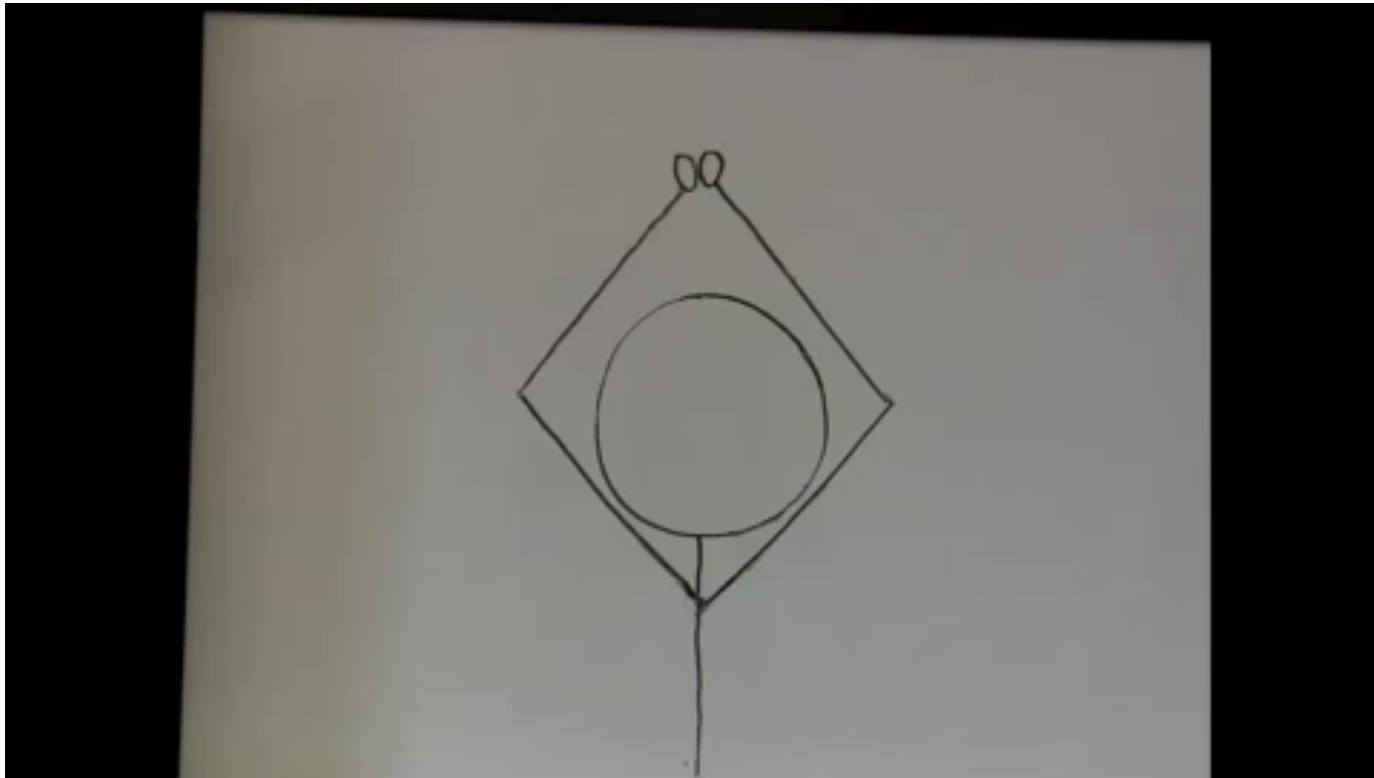
Wednesday March 14, 2012

Bronwyn Lucas, Executive Director

Rich Burris, Youth Staff: Real Food Active Living

Katie Spears, Team Lead: Real Food Active Living

# Who is YES!



<http://youtu.be/oRblmm93CLs>

# Who is YES!

- Statewide non-profit
- Offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh, NC
- More than 50% of staff are high-school aged youth
- Youth-Adult partnerships/ intergenerational effort (mission)
- Youth trainings/adult trainings
- Focus on achieving policy, system and environmental changes that impact adolescent health
- Organizational and adult capacity building



# Who is YES!



- Started in January 2008
- The YES! Youth Empowerment Model used since the early 2000's
- Flagship Program: Question Why, Teen Tobacco Prevention

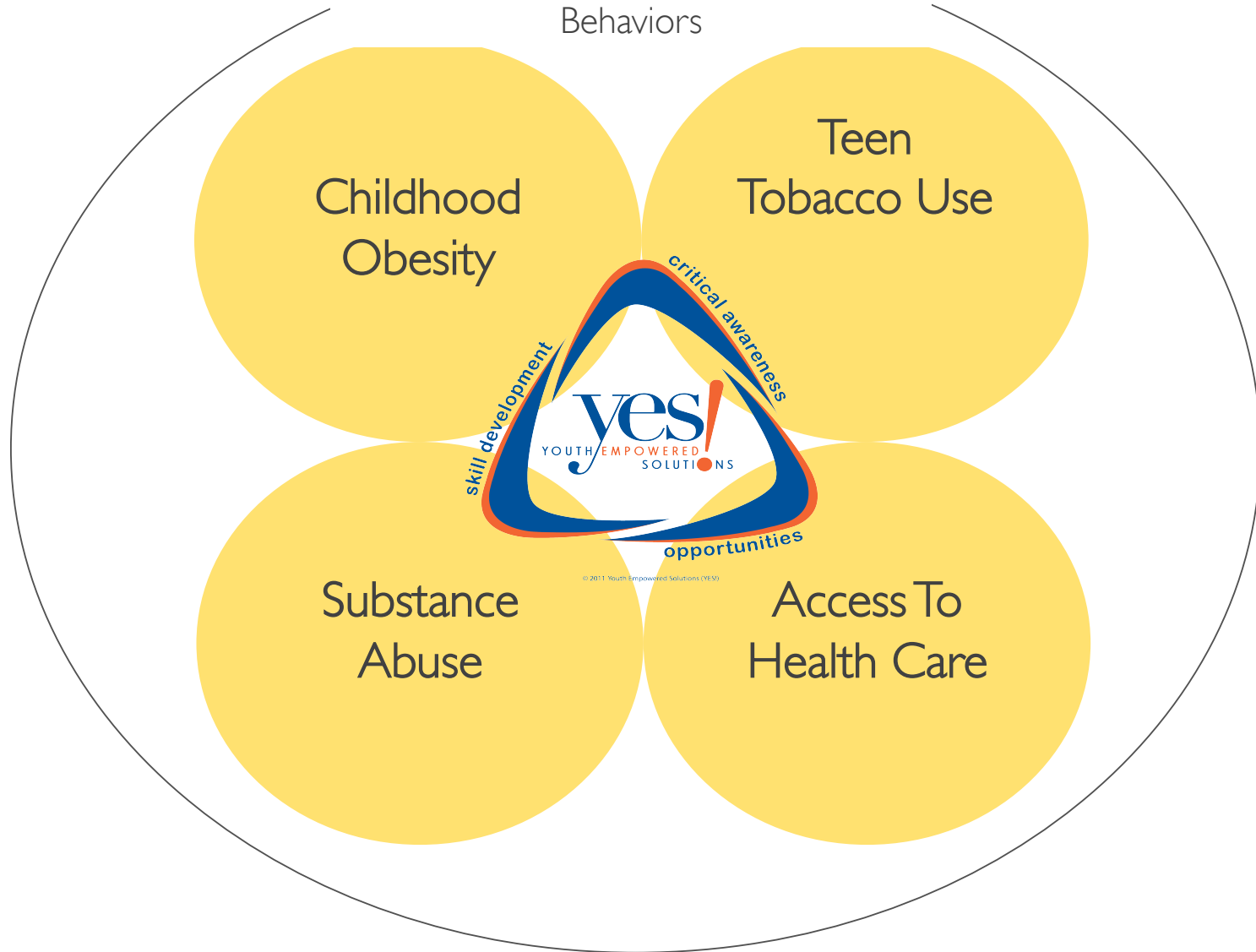


# Who is YES!



Youth Empowered Solutions

CDC Prioritized Adolescent Health Behaviors



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# MYTHS about Youth Participation

- Myth 1 Youth participation is accomplished by placing one youth on a board or committee.
- Myth 2 Youth participation means that adults surrender their roles as guides and educators.
- Myth 3 Adults are ready for youth participation.
- Myth 4 Youth are ready to participate; they just need the opportunity.



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Skill Development Critical Awareness Opportunities

Youth Empowered Solutions



# Youth Empowerment Checklist

Assessment of your work with youth!



# Up the River Activity



# The Social Justice Tree

Leaves



Roots



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Skill Development Critical Awareness Opportunities

Youth Empowered Solutions



# Skill Development

- Learning How to Make Change
  - Practicing how to speak in front of policy makers and the media
  - Learning about effective teaching techniques for peers and youth
  - Studying media for advertising messages
  - Discovering how to run a group and create action plans



# Critical Awareness

## - Asking Why Questions

- Why do some communities have grocery stores and others don't?
- Why are unhealthy food items advertised with youth icons?
- Why are there more sidewalks in certain neighborhoods?



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# Opportunities

- Taking action to create community change
  - Bring youth to the decision making table...and KEEP them there!
  - Put youth in front of the microphone
  - Allow youth to develop and conduct peer programs



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# 2/3 Activity

**Skill Development** – Youth strengthen their skills to effectively make decisions, positively interact with their peers, and act as community advocates.

**Critical Awareness** – Youth gain a deeper understanding of issues that impact their lives and environments, and how to create systemic change within their communities.

**Opportunities** – Youth identify platforms for decision making, public speaking, and utilizing their skills and heightened sense of awareness.



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# Empowering Outcomes

## Individuals

Train youth on media advocacy



Youth write and publish pro health articles/LTEs

Train youth on public speaking



Youth present to School Board

Train youth on peer education



Groups engage in advocacy work after youth conduct peer education

# Empowering Outcomes

## Agency/Org

Shared decision making



Trust grows between youth and adults

Clear roles & responsibilities



Capacity increases

Agency becomes more diverse



Increase access to more parts of the community

Youth are part of planning



Urgency/relevance of solutions is increased

# Empowering Outcomes

## Community

Youth consistently quoted  
in the press



Positive perception of youth  
grows

Youth as decision makers  
(not just window dressing)



Youth participate in campaigns  
and sit on community boards

Engagement of more of the  
community



Programming becomes more  
diverse, democracy is more fully  
achieved

# What does a Youth Look Like?

Characteristics?

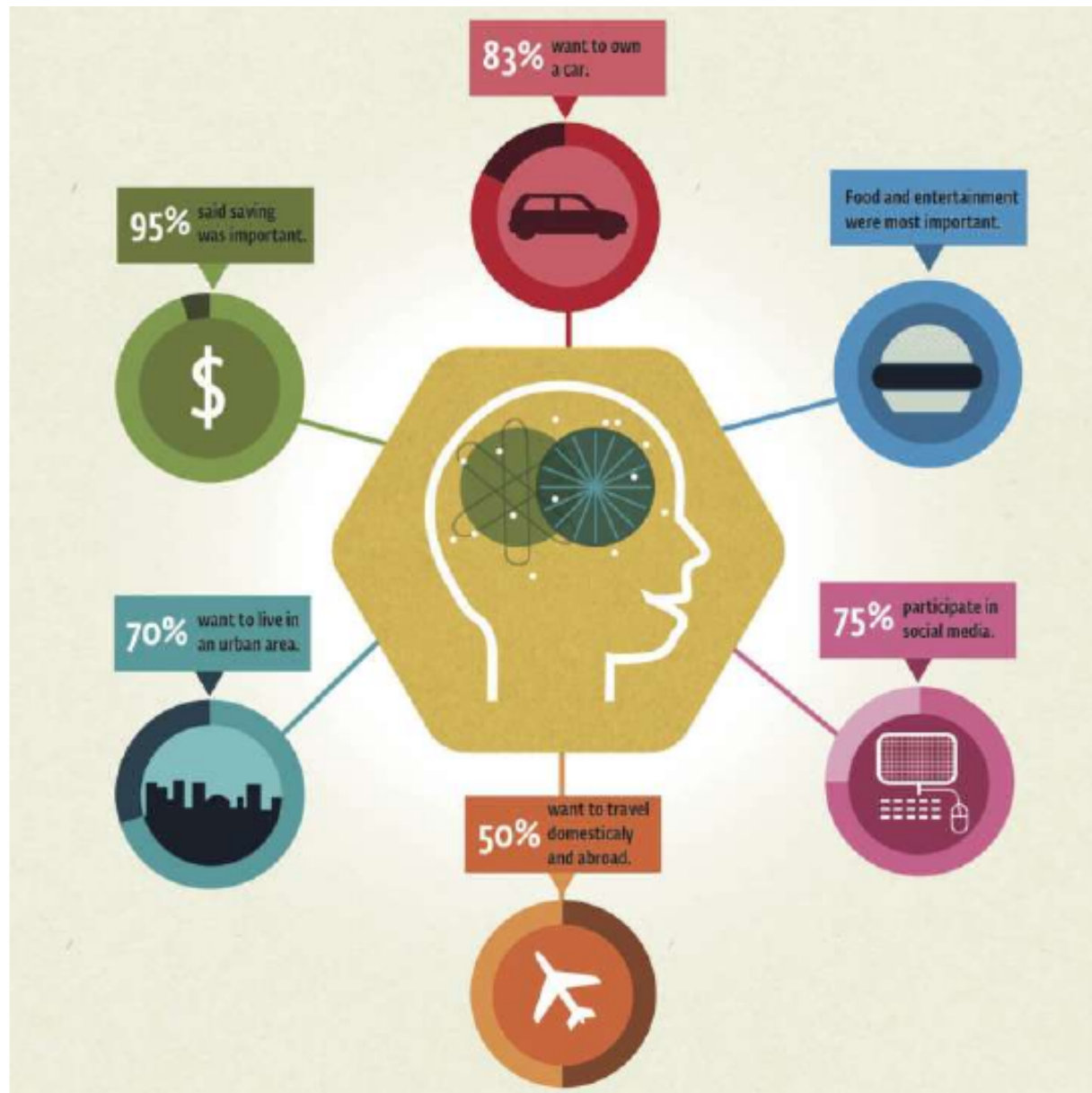
Trends?



Defining Moments!

Music, Arts,  
Culture?





# The Evolution of Food and Exercise

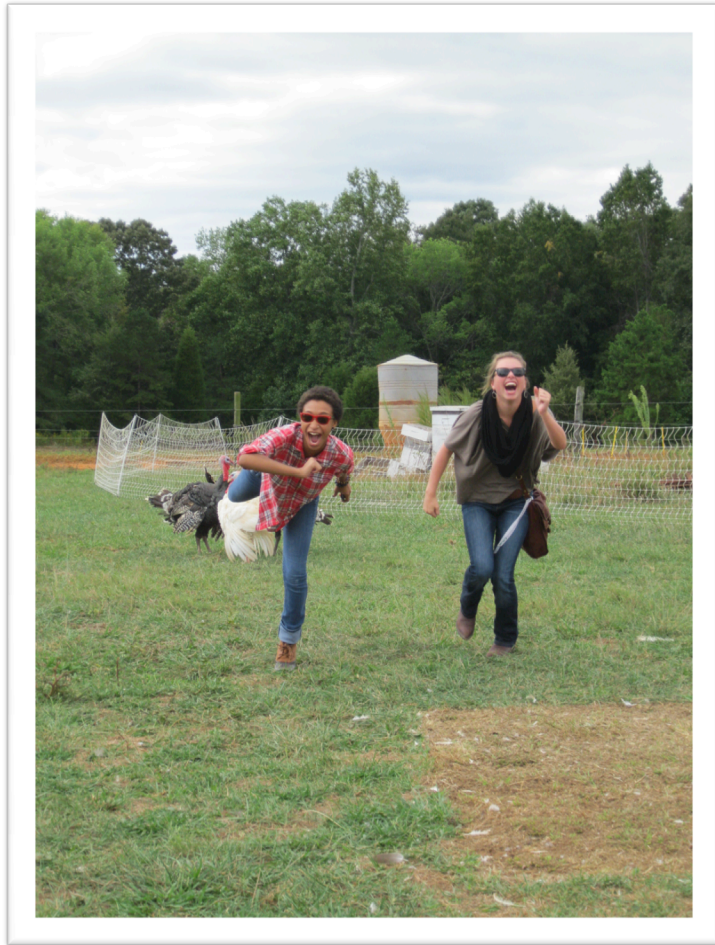
THE EVOLUTION OF  
FOOD AND EXERCISE

# Real Food and Active Living

- Originally funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2008-2010)
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC Foundation invested in 2010 to continue the RWJF investment
- 2011 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina made a significant investment in YES! to expand the reach of our work to build capacity of organizations to address childhood obesity
- 3 Full Time Adults, 9-10 youth staff
- Currently located in Asheville and Charlotte, NC



# Real Food and Active Living



- YES! does not set local or statewide policy priorities but we promote best practices set forth by ESMMNC and the CDC.
- Provide training and technical assistance to build capacity, mobilize youth, impact change.
- YES! focuses on sustainable system, environmental and policy changes.

# Real Food and Active Living

- Adult Leader Trainings:
  - Youth Empowerment 101
  - Understanding the Generation
  - Youth Recruitment and Retention
  - Advocacy and Action Planning
  - Health Issue 102



## Youth Leader Trainings:

- Real Food 101
- Active Living 101
- Media Literacy/Advocacy 101
- Youth Advocacy 101



# Real Food and Active Living

- Asheville Team: advocating/planning with Asheville High School to implement a second-chance breakfast and revenues will help to support a healthy salad bar.
- Charlotte Team: advocating with the CMS SHAC and The CORE to pass a stronger healthy vending wellness policy.
- Laurinburg, NC youth team: advocating/action planning to gain community support to renovate a building for a youth-friendly wellness/fitness center.
- Hamlet, NC youth team: advocating to secure town land for a large-scale community garden in an identified food desert.
- Collaborating with the Southern Obesity Summit to bring their event to Charlotte, NC, engage 100+ youth from across the south and to create strong outcomes.



# YES! Custom Services

- [Youth Trainings](#)
- [Adult Leader Trainings](#)
- Learning Collaborative
- YES! Appraisal
- Technical Assistance
- Resource Creation





Empowering youth,  
in partnership with adults,  
**to create community change**

<http://youtu.be/oCXppM9MM70>



Empowering youth,  
in partnership with adults,  
**to create community change**

<http://youtu.be/wyolppuWSi4>

# Questions?

For more information visit  
[www.youthempowerededsolutions.org](http://www.youthempowerededsolutions.org)

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