

## SESSION 4a: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

### SchYPAR PowerPoint:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1tm07up9YhLcMtxVlmd5\\_FX9L0GJ9cb-mSgvvjqL2l2Q/edit#slide=id.g1c6f3f848b9\\_0\\_69](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1tm07up9YhLcMtxVlmd5_FX9L0GJ9cb-mSgvvjqL2l2Q/edit#slide=id.g1c6f3f848b9_0_69)

### Lesson adapted from:

Yparinschool.com:

<https://yparinschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Community-Issues-and-Assets.pdf>

YPAR hub:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nW-7BLsjubHRZExHleUXJO-aL9\\_9W8iW/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nW-7BLsjubHRZExHleUXJO-aL9_9W8iW/view)

### References:

Cammarota, J., & Fine, M. (2008). *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion*. Routledge.

## LEARNING STANDARDS

**Session Description:** The session introduces the concept of issues, which are the focal point of YPAR projects. Students will brainstorm issues in their schools and communities that are important to them, and the YPAR group will reach consensus on an issue that they would like to address.

### YPAR Learning Standard:

- Identify a school issue that can be systematically investigated

## MATERIALS

- ☐ Process journal
- ☐ Pencils/Pens
- ☐ Display screen
- ☐ Large butcher paper
- ☐ Paper for students to draw a matrix table (or you can print it for them). Each student should have a matrix table.

## LESSON (25 minutes)

*Note on the structure of the lessons: The lessons situate the teacher as the leader or facilitator, but feel free to engage students as leaders/facilitators in preparing the lesson or the lesson itself. You can rotate students to be co-leaders/facilitators throughout the various sessions. They can co-lead with you by preparing beforehand a “mini-lesson” on one of the topics or guiding the conversations during group discussions. We are working on structuring these lesson plans, which engage all research collaborators in the teaching/learning process.*

### Introduction (5 minutes)

1. *[If students completed the preceding sessions]* Reflection question (individually in their process journal, 5 minutes). Have students reference the meaning of action they came up with in previous sessions. Have them answer the following questions in their process journal: How can research be used to take action in your school or community?

### Activity (20 minutes)

2. Begin with a whole class discussion of what an issue is. We know in our gut when there is an issue, whether or not we can easily put it into words. Maybe you feel uncomfortable in a given place, but you're not sure why. An issue might be just the feeling that something is wrong and should be corrected. You might feel some sense of distress, or of injustice. Most simply, an issue is the difference between what *is*, and what *might or should be*. Ask for examples of issues that students are familiar with. Come prepared with some examples if students struggle to generate them.
  - a. *What are the issues within your school that you would change if you could?*
  - b. *What issues do you hear other students in your school discuss that could be improved to make your school better?*
  - c. *What would make your school better?*

3. Ask students to individually reflect and write down on a post-it note 4-5 different issues or problems that are important to them and that impact other students at their school. (You can have them write one issue/problem per post-it).
  - a. The goal here is for students to write down the issues or problems.
4. Using the Issue Identification Matrix, ask students, individually at first, to think through the issues (in the school, the community, or both depending on where you would like to focus) that they wrote down to answer the questions in the Matrix (i.e., issues, personal connection, assets, allies). \*if you want to cut anything due to time, cut assets and allies.

#### Issue Identification Matrix

	School/Organization	Neighborhood/ City/Town
<b>Issues:</b> An issue that you would like to address or find a solution to (ex: discrimination, segregation, power dynamics)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is a major issue(s) in your school?</li> <li>2. How does the issue affect other students?</li> <li>3. Could we reasonably do something about this issue?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is a major issue in your community?</li> <li>2. How does the issue affect other people in the community?</li> <li>3. Could we reasonably do something about this issue?</li> </ol>
<b>Personal Connection:</b> Why the issue matters to you personally	Why does this issue matter to you?	Why does this issue matter to you?
<b>Assets:</b> Positive things or strengths in the community (ex:	What are the strengths of your school? What about your school helps with the issue?	What are the strengths of your community? What about your community helps with the issue?

money, a building, a program)		
<b>Allies:</b> People who can support you or provide resources in addressing the issue	Who are people in your school that could help with the issue?	Who are people in your community that could help with the issue?

- As a class, come together and have students share the issues that they identified individually. You can write the issues on the board (many times students will brainstorm similar issues, point out when that happens). When you have all the issues on the board, group together issues into related categories or themes. The goal of this discussion is to elevate several issues for the class to consider and to have students share their personal connection to the issue.
- Using a consensus-building approach, help the YPAR team(s) **choose two or three issues that they would most like to address through their YPAR projects**. For example, teams could try to organize each student's written issue on the Matrix into thematic categories.

### SUMMARY (10 Minutes)

- Encourage the YPAR team(s) to share the outcomes of their consensus-building discussion and the issues they have chosen to focus on moving forward.
- Take home assignment (in process journal):** Ask students to identify sources of information that help build more understanding of the issue.
- Extension: If you have more time to devote to issues identification, consider bringing in guest speakers to discuss the issues the YPAR team(s) identified,

making connections between the issues and other issues already discussed in class, or framing the issue identification process with a class theme.

**Assessment:**

The assessment will be based on participation in class discussion, the selection of an issue, and their engagement with the activities. You can also use the students' issues to determine their understanding of the material and ability to apply it in their YPAR project.