

FINAL REVIEW REPORT  
on  
YOUTH EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, INC.  
of  
NORTH CAROLINA

Submitted by  
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A. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the other members of the review team, the team leader wishes to express his gratitude to the Youth Educational Services, Inc. of North Carolina and the North Carolina Fund for providing us an opportunity to review a program with exciting potentials. The team leader wishes to also express his appreciation to the person and/or persons having the responsibility of selecting the team. It would be difficult under any circumstances to put a more dedicated group of professional men and women together in a group who were more capable of empathizing. This report, which is being submitted in summary form, will focus on three main topics:

- 1) strengths of the Youth Educational Services, Inc., 2) weaknesses as identified by the team, and 3) recommendations.

B. STRENGTHS OF THE YOUTH EDUCATIONAL SERVICES OF NORTH CAROLINA

Before identifying in specific terms the strong points in the program, the writer wishes to make it clear that the entire review team felt that the concept of YES was in and of itself very innovative.



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The youths who gave birth to this idea of YES must first of all be congratulated, and the adults who supported them, especially in the initial stages of the organization, must also be congratulated. The review team did not at anytime overlook the political atmosphere in the State of North Carolina when YES was created. North Carolina is a southern state and is traditionally, like all other southern states, somewhat conservative. The philosophy behind YES leads one to accept the fact that within the State of North Carolina there are men and women of goodwill who are not afraid to work with youths for the good of all of North Carolina. There is absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind that other states, particularly in the South, could learn something from North Carolina and its YES Projects.

Specifically these are the strong points which were identified in the program by all the members of the review team.

- 1) Tutors in almost every case have shown significant improvement in their own school grades. In cases where tutors are "A" average students, their grades do not change as a result of their tutoring other youths. The implications here are very fascinating. One would normally expect that if a ninth grade "C" average student is used to tutor a sixth grade student the tutor's average should fall below "C". This has never been the case. The tutors average goes up and occasionally the tutees average goes up also. For this reason, public schools in North Carolina should do everything in their power to support YES and its philosophy.
- 2) Negro teachers and parents alike are overly impressed with the program and seems to think that it is truly helping the youths.



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- 3) YES has set the stage for creative and independent thinking among its tutors. Unfortunately YES is not exploiting this opportunity nearly as much as it should. This will be elaborated on in Section C, but it must be mentioned here that YES and its non-directive tutoring approach (tutor-tutee relationship) may have uncovered some teaching techniques that could revolutionize formal education.
- 4) YES is likely to bridge the academic performance gap between Caucasian youths who are being exposed to better elementary education and Negro youths who are the products of poor elementary education. The implications here for the State of North Carolina are great and exceedingly important. Many large cities are today spending an enormous amount of money for compensatory education, North Carolina is getting it done at very little cost. An expanded and well-organized YES program in North Carolina could, over a very few short years, remove the differences and have all normal youths performing at average or above average in any educational setting.
- 5) In many instances, YES and its local staff are helping indigenous persons identify community problems. They are also, in most instances, working through established channels to solve these problems. Their approach in dealing with community problems may be regarded in one or two instances as unorthodox but then it must never be overlooked that the entire program is being run by youths and they are yet to be seasoned by the experiences which they are now getting.
- 6) Local communities in North Carolina are aware of YES's presence and they are aware of their function. Their function cannot be objectively measured by local communities, but at least the local community is identified with YES. In instances where the local power structures are not helping they are at least not doing anything to prevent the operation of the program. This attitude on the part of the different power structures is positive not negative. The rural areas could be hostile to YES and these areas could overtly object to YES operating within the respective communities. The fact that they are not or at least they are no longer



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hostile to them is clear evidence that some form of progress have been made.

- 7) YES greatest long-term contribution to the area is in terms of building up a cadre of local leaders that are well trained. All the tutors are potential local leaders, and this new breed of leadership will not be the marching type or the riotous type. They will no doubt be the intellectual type of which North Carolina can be proud. The overall long term effects of YES cannot be objectively predicted at this time, but it is only a very dense person that could overlook the possibility of its great contribution.

The seven points set forth are the overall strong elements in the YES program. These strong points must be considered in relative terms depending on the county and/or community involved. The degree of relativity depends largely also on the local YES staff and their ability to operate within a complex social system which to them may appear as very simple. Youths are not always aware of the depth to which mores and folkways are entrenched within a culture, they see in general a society in transition just as much as they see their own youthful lives in transition. Time and the events of time will teach them that their effort as tutors and tutees was designed to maintain and strengthen the good elements in our society and that the transition which they thought they saw through their youthful eyes was not really so.

Finally, it must be recognized that tutoring programs cannot take over the entire educational tasks of the schools. These programs cannot truly educate in the sense of the academia and scholastics as can the schools but they can fill a vacuum left void



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by the schools. Tutorial programs may serve to significantly stimulate creativity and attitudes toward learning. They can be a valuable supplement that will save human time, talent, and the energies of both the teacher and the student. It is, in the judgment of the review team, imperative that tutorial programs such as YES orientate themselves to this kind of thinking.

#### C. WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN THE YOUTH EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The weaknesses identified in the program are many and varied. These weaknesses however do not warrant the cessation of the program. As a matter of fact, it was implied under Section B that the program should be accelerated. The points that will be subsequently discussed should be viewed pragmatically and in the light of the circumstances under which YES was created and the circumstances under which it is now operating. If YES intends to be of national significance, which it should be, then these criticisms should be considered only in their constructive context. Additionally, if immediate action is taken in correcting them then YES would have actually done all that is necessary to perpetuate its functions.

##### 1) ADMINISTRATION

The central administrative structure of YES is weak. The Durham office is administered by a group of very intelligent youths who are too self-centered and egotistic to identify their own shortcomings. They have no established personnel policy. One would get the impression that the director makes all decisions concerning



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personnel, present his decisions to a figure-head personnel policy committee who accepts what the Director recommends. The Durham office is an all Caucasian office and this certainly does not speak well for a group of young people who are trying, among other things, to develop leadership. The "great white father" philosophy is much too evident---they are saying in effect and by virtue of the racial composition of the administrative office that "we as good white folks know what is best for you Negroes." Philosophically this is wrong; administratively it is worst; for public relations it is still worst; and it is unforgiveable in terms of its apparent intent.

Lines of communications, both formal and informal, between the central office in Durham and the field staff leaves much to be desired. Formal reports from field directors, tutors and others are not requested as regularly as one would expect. There is apparently no built-in system to monitor the program. The central office in Durham does <sup>not</sup> have at its disposal the necessary data on employees, tutors and tutees from which to construct a meaningful profile. For example, it is doubtful as of this time that YES could give accurately and objectively the average age of employees, tutors and tutees, how many tutors are A, B or C students, how many tutees are A, B, C or D students, and what concrete changes have occurred in the tutees grades. There is no formal relationship between YES central office and the various school systems and schools from which tutors and



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tutees come and YES Central Office does not even know the names of school teachers whose students are tutors and tutees. There is a volume of documentary evidence that could be gathered from individual teachers, principals and school superintendents. This evidence would unquestionably be of great value to YES, the North Carolina State Department of Education and the National Office of Education.

The administrative office in Durham needs a mature coordinator who can set up the machinery to get a tight administrative unit going. The functions and/or job descriptions of all paid employees must be clearly spelled out and there must be some effective in-house means to monitor the program. There is evidence that accepted administrative practices are alien to YES and there is evidence that the administrative staff in Durham needs training in administrative techniques.

## 2) STAFF TRAINING

There is no meaningful pre-service and in-service training program for the YES field staff. This is evidenced by the different answers one get from staff members who are on the payroll. It is also more evident from the methods in which they attempt to handle various community problems. Most times they get away with their unconventional approach primarily because they are looked upon as youths who know no better. There is absolutely no reason in the world, however, why YES field staff should disrupt the tranquility of a community to the point where they are charged by the school



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superintendent as being an immoral bunch of kids. True or false, if the youths were trained and given guidance into how to make entry into a community the probabilities that local officials could charge them with immorality would be almost non-existent. It is very obvious that YES staff who were brought in from the outside had little or no respect for local mores and folkways, it is also obvious that at least one field staff member (an outsider) was more concerned about promoting his own creative writing career than he was about the career of tutees and tutors. YES tutors of all persons, need training most and they were given none. YES concept of sensitivity training is not in keeping with their basic objective. One of the fundamental objectives<sup>9</sup> YES is to provide tutorial assistance to students who need it most. It seems therefore that a sensitivity training program is grossly inadequate for the persons (tutors) who would be involved in the tutoring. Had the outside helpers (young men and women from outside the state) given sensitivity training dealing primarily with the accepted norms of the decent people in North Carolina there would be little conflict with the local power structures anywhere. A comprehensive training program involving tutors, project directors and adults in the respective communities would apprise the tutors and staff members of their responsibilities, and what is specifically expected of them. Many members of the YES staff knew nothing about the historical background of the rural communities in North Carolina before they go in to work.



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They apparently assume that this is the South and the South is backward so they are going to show them a new and progressive style of life. By now YES has recognized the error in its judgment and future staff members as well as those that are aboard will be exposed, it is hoped, to at least two weeks of intensive pre-service training program and regular in-service training program.

### 3) LACK OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO BE CREATIVE

Under Section B-3, the writer implied that YES is not exploiting the magnificent opportunity it now has to uncover new teaching techniques that could revolutionize formal education. This is a serious weakness in the program. The teaching materials in most cases are conventional printed materials prepared by other people other than the tutors. The tutors should be encouraged and maybe it should even be mandatory that each tutor develop some teaching materials of their own and devise ways and means to present them to the tutees. Recognizing that all the tutors are young and are at least sufficiently motivated to tutor then there is no reason why the administration of YES should not earnestly tickle the imagination of these youths. YES must recognize early that the "preferred staff members" do not hold a monopoly on knowledge, in the circumstances, they should begin real early to exploit the imaginations of the tutors and the tutees as well.

This could be done on a simple experimental basis. If YES



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chooses to use tutor-made teaching materials only in two counties, conventional and tutor-made teaching materials in two counties, and conventional materials only in two counties then there is absolutely no doubt that after objectively measuring the results YES would be able to give some very significant information to educators. YES could no doubt get the cooperation and assistance of the many universities and colleges in North Carolina in setting up the experiment and in determining the results.

For all practical purposes and intent the experiment would reveal some finding on the following design:

Counties 1 and 2 - Tutor-made teaching materials only

Counties 3 and 4 - Tutor-made and conventional printed materials only

Counties 5 and 6 - Conventional printed materials only

There could be a series of other breakdown in each county but as it now stands the YES research staff is too <sup>in</sup> experienced to tackle the problem in its entirety and they may be too "sophisticated" to honestly ask for help.

#### 4) RECRUITMENT OF TUTORS

The recruitment of tutors needs serious tightening up and coordination. One member of the review team pointed up very clearly in his report that a majority of the staff responsible for recruiting



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tutors have not been involved in a YES program before and in most cases have had no tutorial involvement at all. It seems evident that the YES administration must be held responsible for such a loose system of recruiting tutors. It maybe, that up to this point, they are relatively lucky in that they have not recruited tutors with serious behavioral or psychopathic problems, however, their luck can run out and the outcome could be more serious than anyone imagine<sup>s</sup>. The extent to which teachers and other knowledgeable persons are involved in the recruitment process is questionable. There are no written guidelines as of yet that can be used in recruiting. At this point and time in YES's youthful history they should be able to give some insights as to what are the characteristics of good tutors and poor tutors. YES has no documentary evidence on this very important phase of their work.

The criticism that YES is using average or below average students as tutors is not valid. Even though this may be true, the evidence is undeniable that tutors in general do show improvements in their school grades. There is no evidence available that tutors who are "C" average students have any adverse effects on the school grades of tutees. The chances are that both tutor and tutee have benefited from the interaction.

#### 5) RECRUITMENT OF TUTEES

The policy seems here that its whoever will may come. The evi-



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dence is inconclusive that the youths who need help most are getting the tutoring. No special effort is made by YES to recruit slow learners for the tutoring programs. Many of the tutees are above average and some are B+ students. The above average and B+ students may need tutoring as well, depending on the school from which they have been recruited, but then it might be more fruitful if YES leaves the cream of the crop to the teachers in the schools and concentrate their effort on those that are at the bottom or near the bottom of the grading scale.

The recruitment of tutees could be a relatively easy process if the teachers in all the schools involved were brought into the planning stages of the recruitment process. Teachers could supply YES with the names and addresses of youths who need tutoring most. YES, of course, would have to learn how to develop rapport with not only those people who share YES's philosophy but also with those who don't. The team leader seems to have gathered the idea that the YES staff in general is willing to work with those who agree with their philosophy but those who don't can go to "hell". They have yet to recognize that they can learn more from the opposition sometimes than they can from their supporters, they also fail to realize that once they convert the opposition they would receive the strongest kind of support they will need to defend their philosophy, YES's administration and staff must learn to keep all lines of



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communications open and they must learn to listen and think about criticisms more than they do now.

The entire team recognize that not all school boards, superintendents, principals and teachers are in agreement with YES's philosophy, however, the team also recognize that no special effort is being made by YES to convert these key persons in the state.

#### 6) LACK OF EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

Evaluation is a continuous process and in voluntary programs it should be even more continuous. YES has no objective method of evaluating the progress of tutors and tutees. It has no visible method of evaluating the "temperature or pulse of a community" (community spirit) and as a result has on occasions got into awkward situations with local power structures and indigenous leaders. Field directors and their staff must be taught the importance of continuous evaluation. Let me quote from a member of the review team's report.

"Since tutors do not use a uniform method to determine what area they will work with the tutee on, it is difficult to understand how the central staff can be supplied records of the activities of the tutors and how the tutor can judge whether or not he is actually helping a tutee, for instance, it seems a waste of time for a tutor to spend time with a B+ student in history, helping him to become an A student when so many kids in the area are failing."

Had there been a structured built-in method to evaluate all phases of the program it would have been impossible for any review team to make such strong statements criticizing the program. The YES organization is not a unit in space, it is at least responsible to society



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for "all" its action and YES should have the responsibility to furnish monthly objective and subjective reports to some one else. There is no reason why all the organizations responsible for funding YES should not insist on a monthly report which reflects the total health of the organization.

#### 7) INEFFECTIVE USE AND DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR

The tutors are tutoring in nearly every case on a one to one basis---one tutor to one tutee. In view of the fact that many of the tutees are above average it seems clear that the above average tutees could be grouped in numbers of 2 to 6, while the below average tutees could continue on a one to one basis. The YES administrative staff has strong objections to this but actually they have never tried homogeneous grouping in terms of school performance before. Many more youths would have been served and YES is also missing an opportunity here for further research. The program, as it now stands, could be restructured to facilitate this type of approach.

#### 8) LACK OF EFFECTIVE COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

There is no effective counseling and guidance component built into the program. In the absence of this component YES is operating precariously dangerous. First, they are working with youths at both end of the continuum, these youths in general are from poor families, if not altogether culturally deprived families, the tutors themselves are from poor families and/or culturally deprived families and there



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is a vacuum that needs to be filled and filled real early. This vacuum can best be filled by a trained matured counselor with some experiences. It is extremely important that much of the counseling should be concentrated on the tutors but it is also necessary that the parents of tutees be exposed regularly to this type of expertise. The counselor would be the one person in each county who could honestly deal with the family as a unit. If the time ever comes when the aspirations of the youthful tutee outstretches the aspirations of mother and father before mother and father are conditioned to accept this change YES will be charged for creating family conflicts. The mature counselors role in this entire program must never be overlooked.

As implied earlier, the weaknesses pointed out here should not be considered as an indictment of YES because they are not, they should be studied and where feasible be corrected within a reasonable time. At no time must it be overlooked that YES is comprised of an energetic group of youths whose energies must be continuously directed into more and more constructive endeavors.

#### D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Like all other programs in our society today which are caught up in the business of helping to rapidly change the way of life of minority groups, YES seems to have been caught up in the mounting demands often made upon them by poor people, who for the first time



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are being heard. YES is a unique organization, both in structure and objectives. Its youthful composition holds great promise and maybe it should be kept that way; its youthful history has also taught us many lessons. Can the youths capitalize on what they have learned? This question is crucial if YES is to survive. The evidence so far indicate that YES cannot analyze a situation as well as a group of adults can and until they have been taught to take time out and analyze critical situations they will get caught in minor and/or major conflicts with themselves and society. The program can be structured so that little or no problem can arise in its overall operations.

Recognizing that the review team and all concerned admire the philosophy behind YES, it should be recognized also that it is with a great sense of dedication and duty that the following recommendations have been made.

- 1) All additional funds granted to YES by the North Carolina Fund should be designated for staff training and evaluation. Staff training here means pre-service and in-service training.
- 2) Staff roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined and a greater degree of staff support should be given by the central office.
- 3) An organized and mutually efficient system of communication between the central YES office and the various YES projects should be established.
- 4) Personnel procedures need to be completely revamped and very strict guidelines established.
- 5) Counseling directed towards motivating high school students to raise their college going aspirations should be instituted.



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- 6) Counseling directed toward involving the total family unit in the tutorial process and helping the family take advantage of community resources should be established.
- 7) It should be made mandatory for the future that YES provides the evidence that they are keeping lines of communications open between the YES staff and all Federal, state and county agencies that have relevance to education in the state.
- 8) YES should begin to change its "know-it-all" attitude and begin to work directly with key persons in the state. YES should be taught to appreciate the blessings and goodwill of those persons and organizations that are helping them and those persons and organizations that are not doing anything to hinder them.