

## West Virginia National Youth Leadership Initiative (NYLI) Project Evaluation PARENTAL/LEGAL GUARDIAN PERMISSION FORM

### **WHAT IS THIS PROJECT AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY CHILD PARTICIPATES?**

The West VA NYLI Project is designed to help youth become effective leaders in their local communities by training them in the skills and capacities needed to influence community change. As part of this project, a team from Michigan State University will be tracking the impact this training has on participants and the community. We are asking for your permission to include your child in 3 parts of this research project: **a PhotoVoice project, a survey, and focus groups.**

As part of this evaluation, participants will be involved in a **PhotoVoice project** that will happen at the same time as the leadership training. The primary purpose of the PhotoVoice project is for youth to share their voice and vision of their communities and themselves as leaders.

As part of PhotoVoice, youth will:

- Be trained in photography and supplied a digital camera to use throughout the project.
- Take pictures of their community and leadership development experiences.
- Post their pictures to a password-protected website and discuss their own and other participants' photographs online and in-person. In-person conversations that occur at the NYLI training sessions will audio-recorded and transcribed.
- Identify similar themes in the pictures and stories and come up with strategies, solutions, and recommendations for improving their community based on the themes.
- Create websites, digital stories (e.g., video clips, audio clips), and a photography exhibit based on the photos, stories, and recommendations. Youth will be trained in effective writing and the development of the digital content and the photography exhibit.

The photographs, stories, websites, and digital stories will be used to inform and teach the local community and organizational leaders, residents, and other key stakeholders about how young people view themselves as leaders and change agents and their perceptions of their community. The photo exhibit will have public showings around West Virginia, and the website and digital stories will be available to the public online. The conversations, photos, and any other products participants create may also be used to promote awareness of the needs in your community and help us better understand how to support youth as leaders.

We are also asking participants to fill out an **anonymous 60-minute survey** four times during the project. The survey asks questions about leadership and community service experiences, organizing skills, goals for their future, and the community's responsiveness to youth and youth needs. The survey also asks some background questions about participants' friends, family, community, and past behaviors (e.g., school engagement, substance use, sexual behavior). This anonymous information will help us understand the supports and challenges in the lives of youth, which may affect their NYLI experience. The survey data will be used to understand the impact of the NYLI project on participants and what might be done to improve this project in the future. You may review a copy of the survey by contacting the evaluation project director (see contact information below). Participants will fill out the survey three times while attending the in-person training sessions. The last survey will be mailed to participants with a postage-paid return envelope approximately 6 months after the last in-person session.

Lastly, we are asking participants to participate in **focus groups**. In these small group discussions we will ask participants about things like their experiences throughout the project and their perceptions of their role as leaders in their communities. These focus groups will be audio-recorded and transcribed, and will take place during the last in-person meeting in September, 2011.

### **ARE THERE RISKS?**

Participant safety is our highest priority. A possible risk of PhotoVoice is staying safe when youth are taking photographs. All participants will be trained in how to take photographs safely. It is also possible that some of the questions on the survey or questions asked during the focus group may make your child uncomfortable. If your child wishes to, he or she may choose not to answer a question at any time.

**ARE THERE BENEFITS?**

Participants will receive training in photography, how to use photographs to tell a story, writing and effective communication, website development, digital storytelling, and the creation of photography exhibits. In addition, the photos, stories, and other products they produce could inform community change efforts in your community.

**WHAT ABOUT PRIVACY?**

The participation of your child in this evaluation is strictly confidential. Only members of the evaluation team and NYLI training team will have access to your child's PhotoVoice materials. Participants' photographs and comments about their photos will only be used with their consent, and if participants do not wish to be identified, then their photo will be included without their name or other identifying information. No photographs that identify your child, your family, or other individuals will be released without separate written consent of others photographed. Only members of the evaluation team will have access to your child's survey and focus group data. To further protect your child's privacy, your child's survey and focus group data will be anonymous. Their name will NEVER be linked with their responses. Your child's name or individually identifying information will NEVER be used in any reports of the survey or focus group findings. All project data will be stored in locked file cabinets and/or on password protected computers. The privacy of you and your child will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

**DOES MY CHILD HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participation is completely voluntary. Your child does NOT have to participate in the evaluation. If you choose to allow your child to participate, he or she may refuse to participate in any aspect of the evaluation, or withdraw from the project at any time, without any penalty or loss of benefits.

**WHO DO I CALL WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EVALUATION OR TO REPORT ANY PROBLEMS?**

If you have questions about this project or need to report any problems or injuries, please contact the principal investigator, Pennie Foster-Fishman, or the project director, Lauren Lichty, toll-free at 1-866-343-5279, or e-mail: WestVA.NYLI@gmail.com. If you have any questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this project, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, Michigan State University Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, FAX 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu, or regular mail at: 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

**CONSENT**

**I have read and understood the information given above.**

*(Please check yes or no next to each project component to indicate your consent or refusal to allow your child to participate in the project and sign below)*

- Yes**, I consent OR  **No**, I do not consent to allow my child to participate in **PhotoVoice**.
- Yes**, I consent OR  **No**, I do not consent to allow my child to participate in the **Survey**.
- Yes**, I consent OR  **No**, I do not consent to allow my child to participate in the **Focus Group**.

***If I did not check yes or no next to the project components, then my signature below may be interpreted as consent to all project components.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date