

# Youth Citizenship Engagement: The Experience of a Local Service-Learning Program at Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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# Are Young People Becoming More Apathetic?

# AGENDA



1. Conceptualizing
  - a. Youth Voice
  - b. Youth Citizenship Engagement
2. Relationship Between Youth Citizenship Engagement & Service-Learning
3. Example: Service Learning Program at Chung Chi College
4. Conclusion



# YOUTH VOICE



# YOUTH VOICE

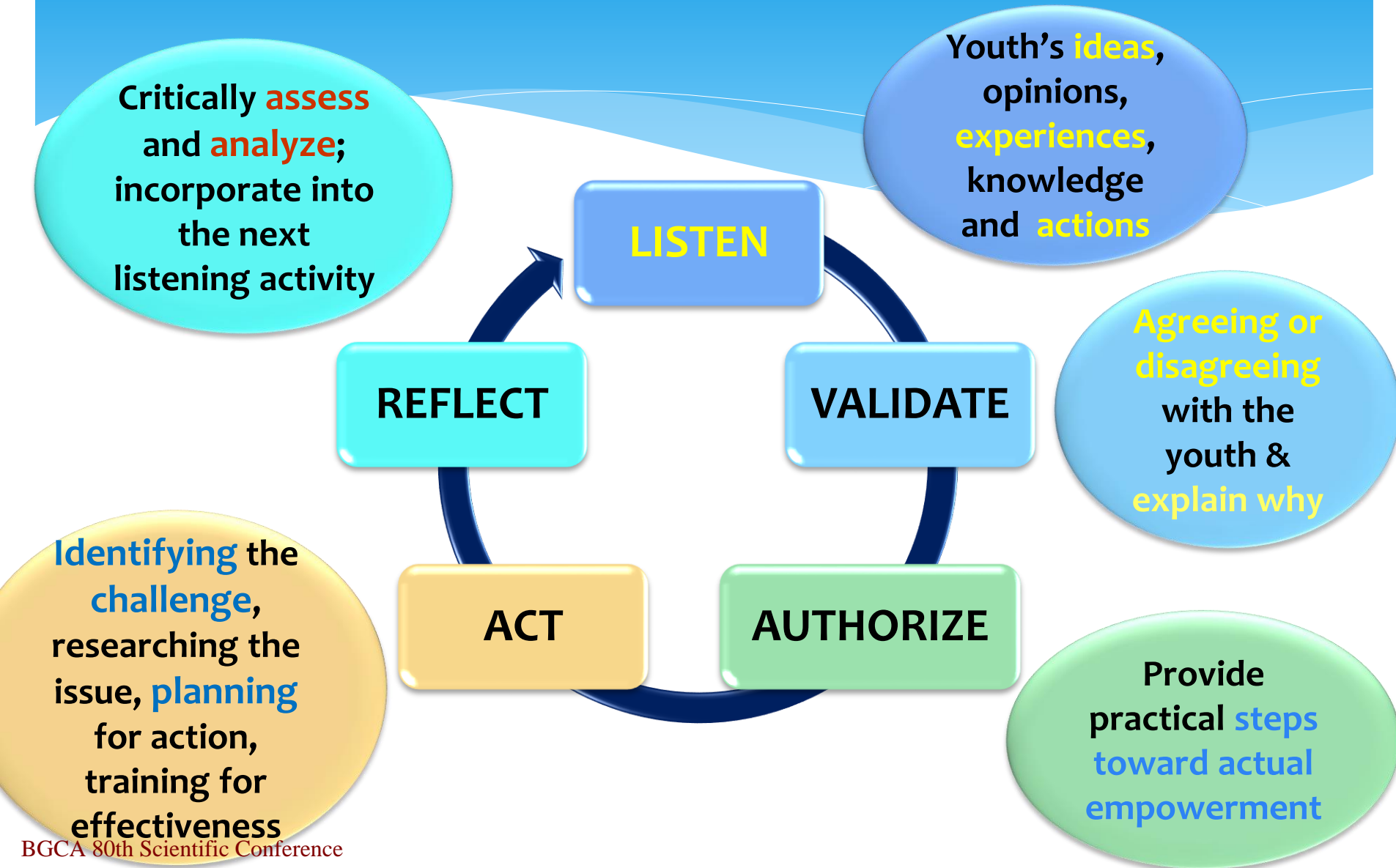


Youth voice means the **unique ideas**,  
opinions and **concerns** of young  
people are **respected** and youth feel  
**free to express** them within an  
organization or program



CYCC Network (2013)

# CYCLE OF YOUTH VOICE



# LADDER OF YOUTH VOICE

## Ladder of Youth Voice



8. Youth/Adult Equity

7. Completely Youth-Driven

6. Youth/Adult Equality

5. Youth Consulted

4. Youth Informed

3. Tokenism

2. Decoration

1. Manipulation

\* The **higher up the ladder**, the more meaningful the action is for the youth

\* The **bottom four rungs** demonstrate the adults clearly have the power and control (not necessarily bad but less meaningful to the youth)

\* **In the top four rungs**, the power and control begin to shift



# Conceptualizing Youth Citizenship Engagement



# YOUTH CITIZENSHIP

## Perspective 1 : Traditional

Product of **civil, social** and **political rights** that a policy offers to its members

- Citizenship as a **status** that **only applies to adults**
- Young people are **citizens in the making**

## Perspective 2: Socially Constructed

**Actively** seeking to **engage**, so as to **realize one's rights, exercise one's responsibilities, be empowered** and **share a sense of belonging** to the community

- Young people are viewed as **full members of society**, and **citizenship is conceived through the way young people make sense of it and identify their experiences within it**

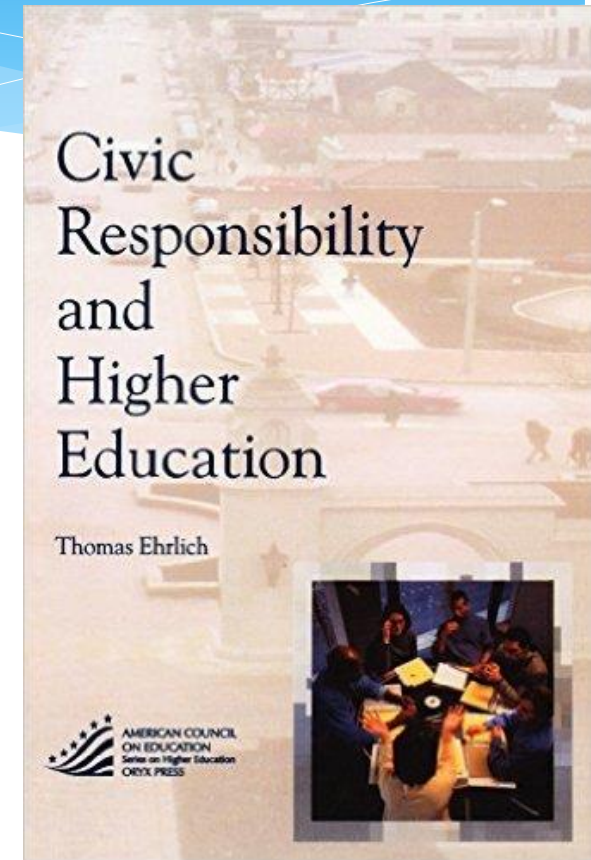
(Sarrica, Grimalda, & Nencini, 2010)



# WHAT IS YOUTH CITIZENSHIP ENGAGEMENT?

Young people come to see themselves as valued members of society and develop a sense of belonging to it

- \* **See the moral and civic dimensions of social issues**
- \* **Make and justify informed moral and civic judgments**
- \* **Take action when appropriate**



(Ehrlich, 2000: xxvi)

# REASONS FOR YOUTH CITIZENSHIP ENGAGEMENT



- \* A key responsibility and an **important investment** for policymakers
- \* **Developing** the **well-being** of young people as well as our community
- \* Young people with a **clear sense of identity**, a **positive sense of self-worth** and **opportunities to achieve** are likely to be **successful in the future**

## Aim

1. Redresses the lack of interest in civic engagement among youth
2. Fuels their capacity and desire for participation

(Swartz & Arnot, 2013)

# PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH CITIZENSHIP ENGAGEMENT



- \* **Initiatives should be based on a sustainable approach to youth engagement with clear aims** that young people understand and agree. They will have a better motivation to continue to be engaged
- \* **Youths should be in leading roles** in agenda-setting, supported by adults who share power when addressing social issues. Emphasis should be on learning through experiences
- \* **Activities should promote “whole society” approach,** mixing youth with people from different backgrounds

(Youth Citizenship Commission, 2009)

# PRINCIPLES FOR YOUTH CITIZENSHIP ACTIVITIES(CONT.)



- \* **Feedback should be provided** so that young people are aware of the outcome of their contribution
- \* **Benefits of youth citizenship activities should be publicized and promoted**, possibly through young people themselves to combat negative media coverage of young people and in reaching out to disengaged young people

(Youth Citizenship Commission, 2009)



# Relationship Between Youth Citizenship Engagement & Service-learning



# FIVE IMPORTANT FEATURES FOR SERVICE LEARNING



1

It **combines community service with curriculum-based learning**, and represents a coordinated effort among schools, young people and the community

2

It is focused on **meeting human needs in the community**

3

**Key academic and/or civic objectives are identified and incorporated into the activity**

4

Offer opportunities for young people to **reflect on their experience**

5

It is reciprocal in nature, **benefiting both the community and young people**, and seeks to foster active citizenship as a part of public education

# SERVICE-LEARNING AS A FORM OF YOUTH CITIZENSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Research has documented the occurrences of civic engagement and the advancement of democratic values as outcomes of service

- These experiences brought attention to **social change**, worked to **redistribute power**, and developed **authentic relationships**. Youth came to see themselves as **belonging to**, and **responsible for**, the **community**, developing a civic identity that persists long after graduation (Mitchell, 2014)

Young people's engagement in service-learning activities increases the chance of being an active citizen in later life

# WAYS IN WHICH SERVICE-LEARNING CAN ENGAGE YOUTH



# 4

1 DISCUSS Civic Issues

2 MODEL Civic Behaviors

3 BUILD Supportive Relationships

4 PROVIDE opportunities

## Strategies

# 1. DISCUSS Civic Issues



With the youth, we can

- \* Address social issues/inquiry in 'real world'
- \* Identify needs of the community
- \* Group discussions, assignments and presentations to explore the issues in greater depth

When given opportunities to **identify and discuss social issues and their potential solutions**, young people's commitment to **civic participation increases**

(Kahne & Sporte, 2008)

## 2. MODEL Civic Behaviors



- \* Educators, civic leaders, community partners, parents and peers can act as **positive role models**
- \* They can play an important role in inspiring young people to **learn strategies for achieving goals, overcome obstacles**, and **understand** that **positive values** can be lived each day
- \* Positive role models are linked to **self-efficacy**, whereby young people become more self-assured and strive for making a difference in the world

(Price-Mitchell, 2011)



### 3. BUILD Supportive Relationships

- \* Supportive relationships are necessary for youth because they need to feel cared for and feel supported to have their relational needs met before they helping others
- \* They foster hope, encouragement, accountability and support for civic engagement of young people
  - Educators and community partners are sources of inspiration, encouragement, and advice in helping youth know how to best engage in their civic endeavors on and off campus



(Scott, 2008)

# 4. PROVIDE Opportunities

- \* To become involved in community service and other civic activities, so young people can obtain first-hand knowledge about the social issue
- \* To **voice out** their thoughts and share their ideas in the decision-making and problem solving process (e.g. discussions/meetings/reviews)
- \* It also helps develop interpersonal skills that make them a productive citizen of the society

(Office of Civic Engagement &  
Service Learning, 2016)





ILLUSTRATION:

# Service-Learning Program at Chung Chi College



崇基學院 服務學習計劃

Service-Learning Programme

Chung Chi College



香港中文大學

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

# OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

- \* To cultivate a **sense of service-learning** among students
- \* To provide them with an opportunity **to serve** the **socially disadvantaged groups** in the community
- \* To create a platform on which students can **discuss, share and evaluate** what they have learned from their **service-learning experience**



# PROGRAM STRUCTURE



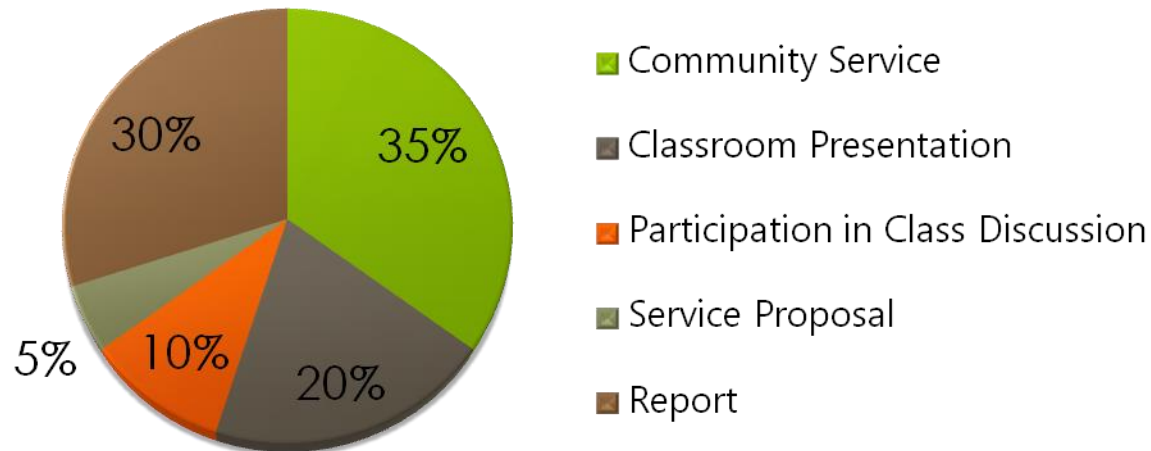
- This service-learning program runs in the form of a 3-unit college general education course
  - **On-campus academic study and service activities in community organizations** in Hong Kong, mainland China and overseas countries
- Here, the local service-learning program, which I have assisted in running, is going to be the focus of this presentation



# ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The local program encompasses both **academic study** and **community service**. On the one hand, in small teams, students **work in projects for their assigned NGOs** for no less than 3 days/21 hours per week over a span of 6 weeks in the summer. On the other hand, they are required to attend regular class sessions and submit a 6000-word **report**

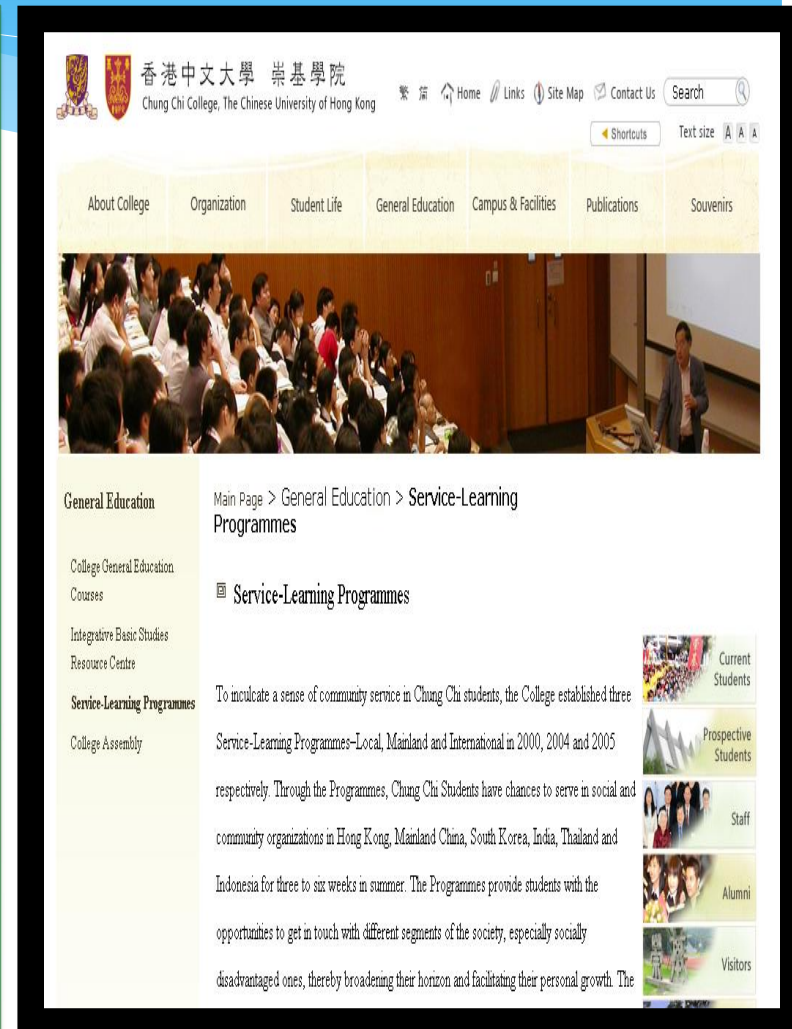
## Assessment Scheme



Only 'Community Service' is graded by the supervisor of the agency. All other components are graded by the course instructor

# PROGRAM OPERATION: ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS

- ❑ **The Service-Learning Center at Chung Chi College (CCC):**
  - ❑ providing administrative support to the program
  - ❑ performing clerical duties and handling liaison affairs of the program
- ❑ **The Management Board of CCC Service-Learning Center:**
  - ❑ setting the goals and objectives of the program
  - ❑ monitoring the progress and development of the program
- ❑ **All participating students are provided with a traffic subsidy, whereas the service agency is responsible for all other expenses**



# PROGRAM OPERATION: BEFORE THE SERVICE BEGINS(JAN-APR)

**Project publicity,** participant recruitment, and confirming partner organizations

**Briefing seminar:** Introducing partner organizations, bringing up important issues

**Site visit:** Knowing more about the service agencies and service users; students start their service plans

**Drafting proposal:** Encouraging students to use their creativity and academic knowledge in the proposal, while the needs of their service users remains the top priority

# PROGRAM OPERATION: ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE PERIOD OF SERVICE (MAY-JUN)



Students are divided into teams of 4, with each student coming from different departments



Agency Orientation Program: Making sure students have **a solid understanding of the service agency**, its service users and administrative procedures



Staff from partner agencies hold **weekly reflection sessions** with students. Students are responsible to write service logs and progress reports for their supervisors



Course instructor visits the service organizations regularly, **monitoring students' progress** and settle any contingent problems that may arise

# SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM AT CHUNG CHI COLLEGE

Agency	Service Target
District Elderly Community Center, St. James' Settlement	Senior citizens in old urban areas
District Elderly Community Center, Chan Hing Social Service Center	
Early Education & Training Center/ Parents Resource Center, Heep Hong Society	Children with developmental delay and their parents
Community Rehabilitation Network, The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation	Chronic patients (stroke/ renal disease)
Kwai Chung Children and Youth Integrated Services Centre, The Boy's and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong	Children from low-income/ ethnic minority families
Small Group Home, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	Children who cannot be cared for by their families because of crises arising from illness, death and desertion
Integrated Service Project for New Arrivals, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	New arrivals from Mainland China
Youth Support Scheme, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group	Adolescents cautioned under the Police Superintendent's Discretionary Scheme





# *District Elderly Center, St. James' Settlement*

Service Target: Senior Citizens in Old Urban Areas

## Service includes :



**Outreach Service**



**computer Lessons**



**Chinese  
Medicine Seminar**

**Seminar on  
drugs and  
prescriptions**



**‘Inter-generational  
interaction’**





# *Integrated Service Project for New Arrivals, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups*

Service Target: New Arrivals from Mainland China

## Service includes :



**Music  
Appreciation**



**Handicraft  
Class**



**Day Trip in  
CUHK**



**Day Trip in  
Tung Chung**



*Early Education & Training Center/  
Parents Resource Center, Heep Hong Society*

Service Target: Children with developmental delay  
and their parents



Service includes :



Training in  
Observation –  
‘Little Farmer’



Computer Class  
for Parents



Training in  
Concentration  
-‘Music World’



*Community Rehabilitation Network, The  
Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation*

Service Target: Chronic Patients

# Service includes :



Supporting the fraternity  
of chronic patients



**Computer Class**



**Drugs and Nutrition  
Seminar**



**Barrier-free access**

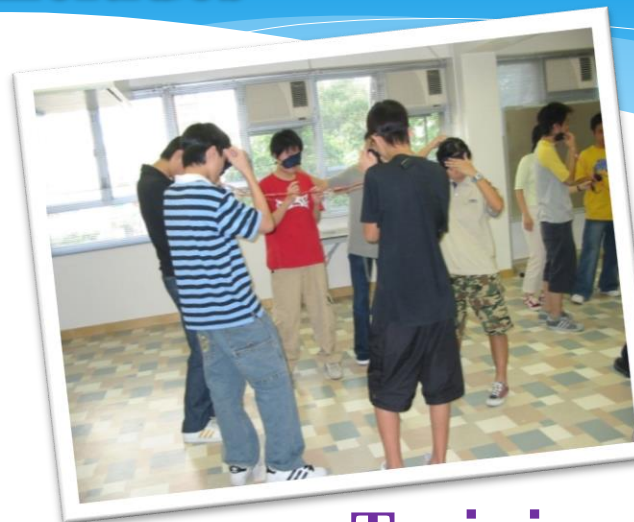




## *Youth Support Scheme, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group*

Service Target: Adolescents cautioned under the  
Police Superintendent's Discretionary Scheme

Service includes :



## Training in Interpersonal Skills and Team-building



## Designing and Organizing activities for a seminar



# Celebration Ceremony



Sharing and  
Appreciation

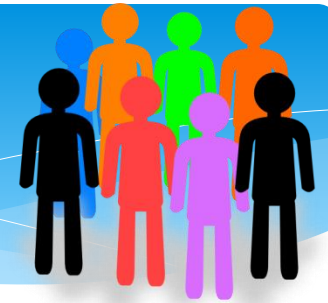
*Sharing their experience with  
teachers and fellow classmates*

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- ☺ Foster a sense of caring among students
- ☺ Promote the spirit of community service

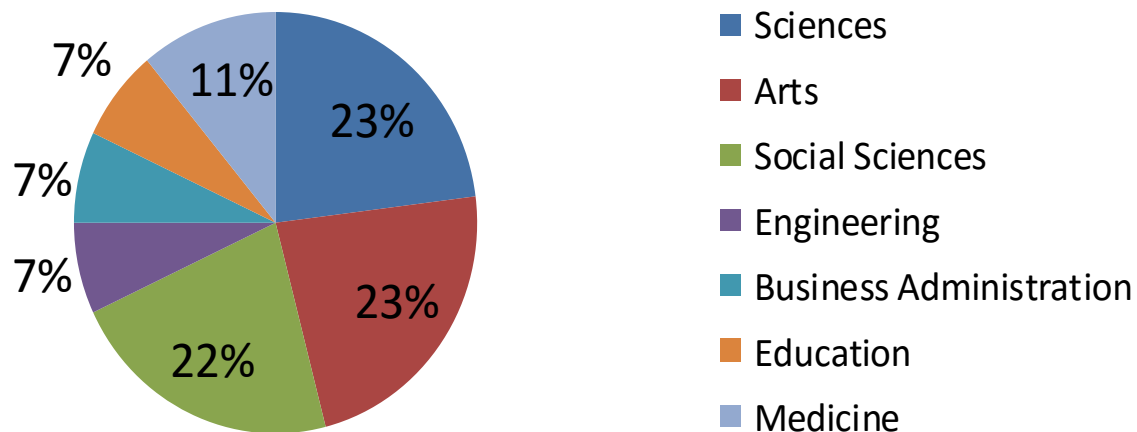


# Background of Participants



Age	19 – 22 years old
Sex	75% were female
Year	All of them were in their third or above years of undergraduate studies

## Disciplines of study

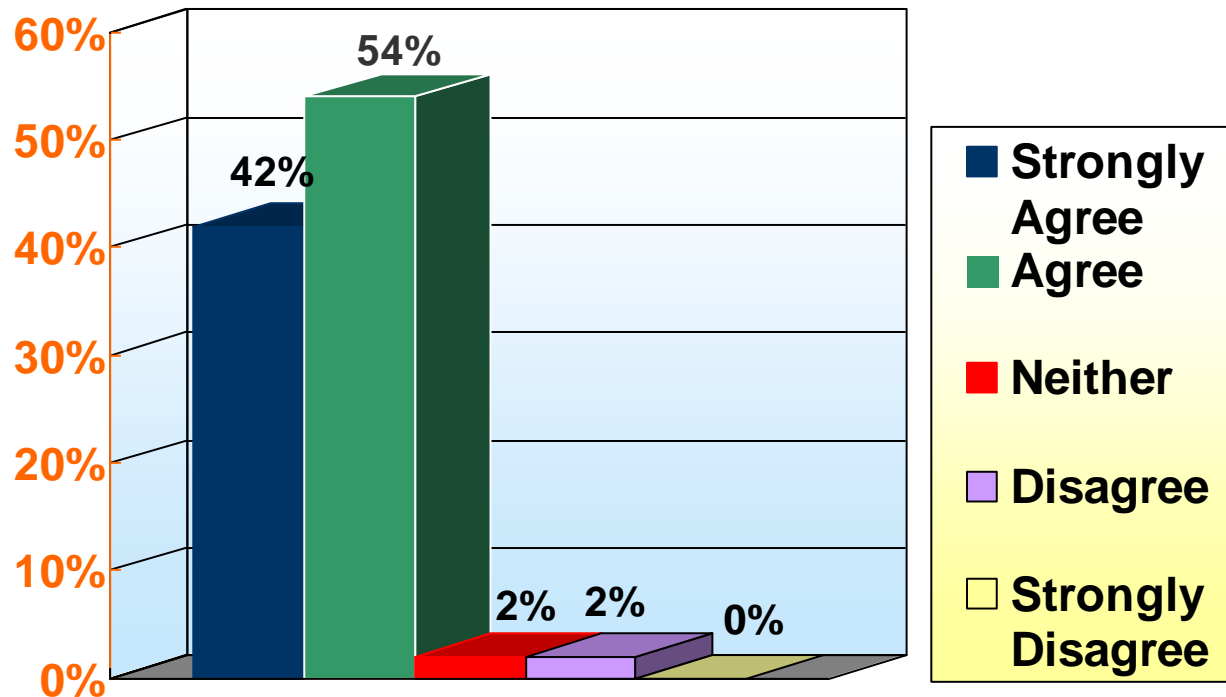


# Results

## Service-learning experience :

- ✓ Around 88% reported **positive experiences** with their service agencies
- ✓ 96% **enjoyed the service process**

### I enjoy the service process

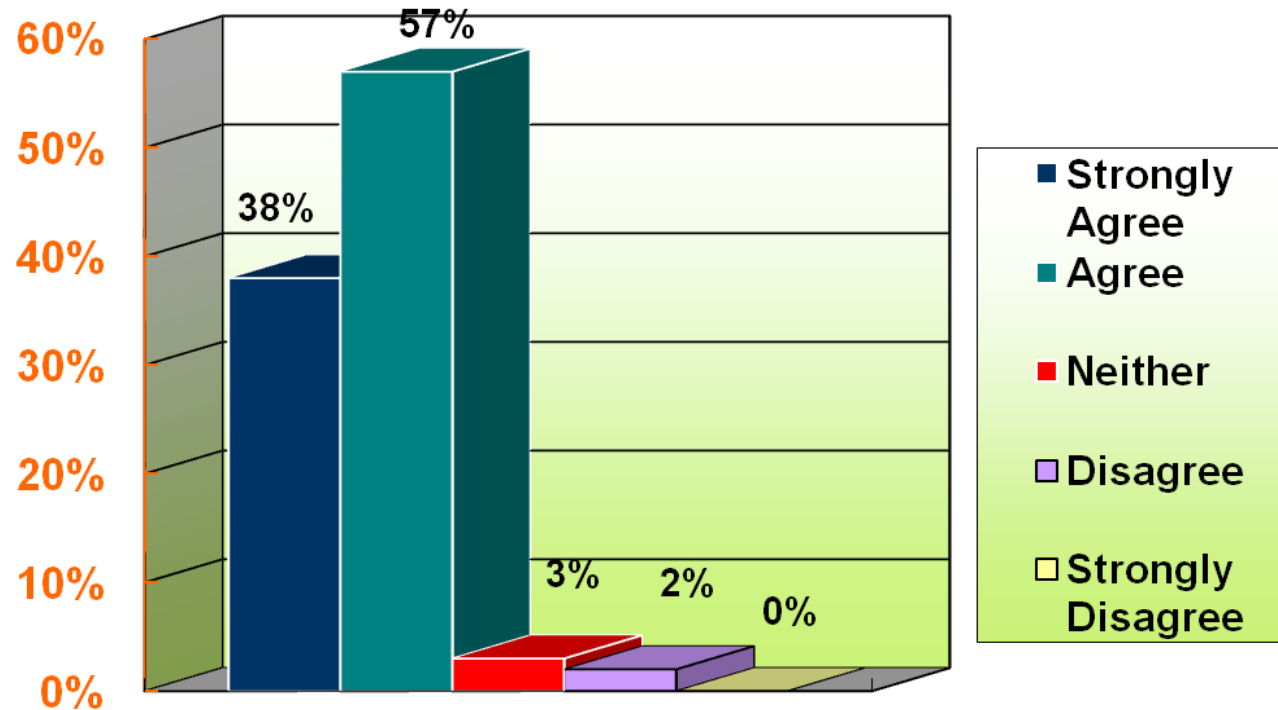


# Results

## Classroom Reflection :

- ✓ Over 90% of students found the classroom reflection useful for their learning
- ✓ 95% of students agreed that the classroom discussions were fulfilling

### Classroom discussions are fulfilling

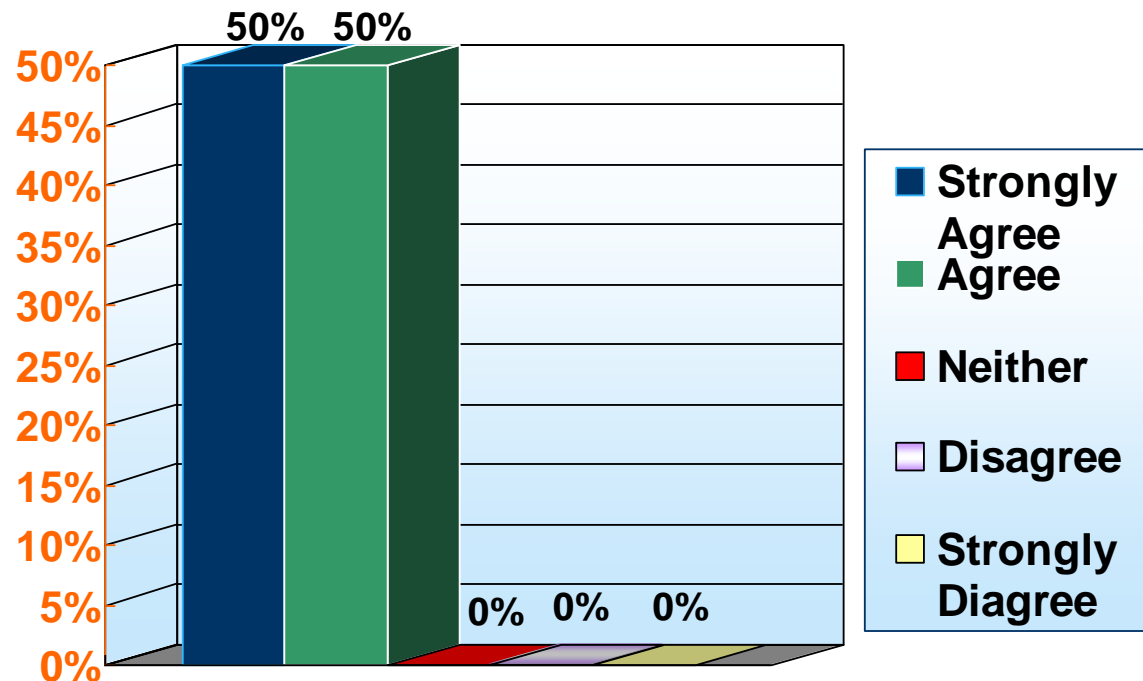


# Results

## Service-Learning Outcomes :

- ✓ Over 90% students believed that the program enhanced personal growth and social commitment
- ✓ 100% students agreed that through the program they came to have greater concern for the disadvantaged groups in society

Through the program, I come to have greater concern for the disadvantaged groups in society







## **Perhaps more enlightening were students' responses to the three open-ended questions**

The following are excerpts of students' responses to the program,  
which share converging themes

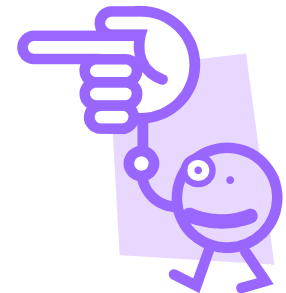
## *What is the most meaningful aspect of service-learning?*



'Thinking of their difficulties, I come to realize that my own problems are so small.'

**Insight about Oneself and Other People**

'I learn to treasure life and everything surrounding me.'



'I learn about the **unique significance of different individual** undergraduate programs and what we might contribute from our fields of study.'



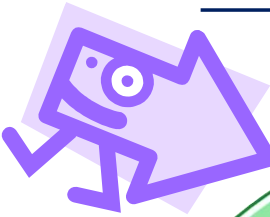
'I truly helped some service users, and this gave me a **new sense of confidence.**'

'The different problem-solving approaches among group members are challenging.'

'We have different perspectives and strengths.'

Opening my eyes,  
boosting my self-confidence

# What do you like least about the program??



**'That I was not able to do more – that you get to know the young people, and then you have to walk out of their lives and hope they make it.'**

**Logistics:  
Scheduling and  
Transportation**

**Concerns Specific to  
the Placement and  
Working with  
Service Users**



# How does service-learning have an impact on your future in terms of educational and career aspirations?

‘Service-learning made this course more interesting. I do wish to pursue a degree in social work or related disciplines.’



‘Service-learning made me realize more fully the diversity of individuals in this world and the fact that every one of them has something worthwhile and meaningful to share.’

**‘I come to be aware of the barriers posed to disabled people in everyday life.’**



*‘Greater understanding of the situation of developmentally delayed children and their parents, from an outsider to an insider.’*





# Conclusion

**In sum, we suggest that fostering appreciation of the call of service-learning is an important and laudable goal for engaging young people**

**“We are now moving beyond the ‘me’ generation and into a new generation where the concept of ‘we’ matters, a generation just as concerned about giving out its learning as it is with taking it in.” (Anson, 1993, p.81)**

**Service-learning has the capacity to transform lives, to touch the heart as well as the mind, and to teach many valuable lessons beyond what we can provide within the confines of their classrooms**

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Thank You

