



**For The
Children Inc.**

A place where children come first

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Youth Empowerment Center (YEC)

Summary Report 2016-2017

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The mission of For The Children Inc. is to provide children ages 3-18 with quality and affordable educational, recreational, and family support services that foster positive physical, social, emotional, cognitive growth, and development. The goal of its Youth Empowerment Center (YEC) at Lake Worth is to support youth to succeed in school and to contribute to their positive personal development by offering a variety of activities that suit their needs. Participants at YEC range from 11 to 18 years of age and over the fiscal year 2016-2017, YEC served a total of 126 youth of which 57 were males and 69 were females. Most participants were of Black/African American and Haitian (121) descent and 5 were Hispanics.



Attendance:

The YEC opens year round and operates from Monday to Friday from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm during regular school and school holidays and through the summer from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The current daily program capacity is 50 youth and it averages 35 (70%) participants in attendance every day. Regular program attendance in this age group is influenced by factors including enrollment in virtual classes, sports participation, attendance to ACT/SAT instruction at Lake Worth High, as well as, simultaneous school and college enrollment and part-time jobs. Because of this, YEC's enrollment is so high. It should be noted, nonetheless, that YEC participants attended sessions relevant to their school success and personal development at it is described on the accomplishments section below.

Accomplishments:

During the 2016-2017 fiscal cycle, YEC's participants had several academic and personal accomplishments. They include:

- a. 8 participants reported dual enrollment at both Lake Worth High School and Palm Beach State College.
- b. 2 students graduated from high school.
- c. 9 participants made honor roll.
- d. 126 (100%) students were promoted to the next grade level or graduated.
- e. Of 12 students invited to the apprenticeship summer training, all of them secured summer jobs and three other participants secured part-time position in the private sector.

Activities:

1. To promote education:

College tours: Youth were offered to visit Palm Beach State College and Florida International University.

Academic games: Participants had access to games like bingo, jeopardy, spelling bee, and kahoot to help them with different subjects that they might need help at.

Tutoring: Homework assistance was provided in English, Spanish, or Creole. Most of the time, students helped each other.

2. To promote health:

Once a month, the youth discussed health related topics and occasionally, visiting students from South University provided information about nutrition, STD's, and different diseases.

Healthy Eating & Nutrition



The YEC in collaboration with Living Hungry provides educational workshop and cooking demonstration on healthy eating. During the cooking demonstration, each group took turns preparing a healthy snack. Living Hungry in partnership with the Youth Services Department provides each teen weekly with a box of fresh fruits, produce, vegetables, and other food items so that the teens will have food for the weekend.

We are thankful to Palm Beach County Youth Services & Commissioner, Melissa McKinley for creating this collaboration with Living Hungry to design a weekend bag of food so that our teens will have enough healthy nutrition to last the weekend.



Exercise: Three to five times a week after academics, the youth participated in yoga, Zumba, basketball, tennis.



3. To Empower youth:

Arts: During the summer, six (6) youth participated in *pottery class* to make face sculptures. Because of the quality of their work, they were invited to exhibit at a Lake Worth's art gallery.

In addition to pottery, *painting* offered another area to excel evidenced by one of the students producing the best painting in its age group at the Lake Worth Street Painting Festival, 2017.

Dance Class: Girl's rehearsals occurred several times a week in anticipation of FTC's annual talent show. Additionally, both girls and boys practiced on regular bases for upcoming events.

Teen Advisory Council:

Top to bottom decisions at YEC are a collaborative process where youth's input is highly considered and include.

- Staff hiring by participating in the interview process.
- Monthly discussions on budget, finances and upcoming events.



Middle School Teen Council at work



High School Teen Council meeting with the County Commissioner at her chamber

4. To promote Career Readiness and Career opportunities:

College Tour: Forty (40) teens visited PBSC and FIU. They talked to the college students and received some advice while planning on the college of their choice and future.



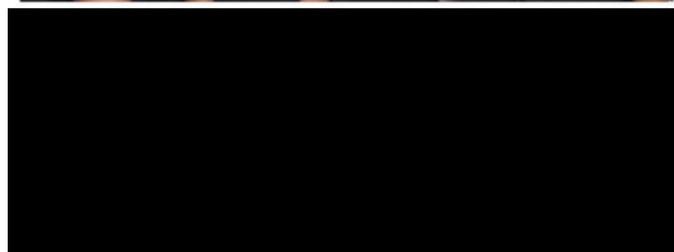
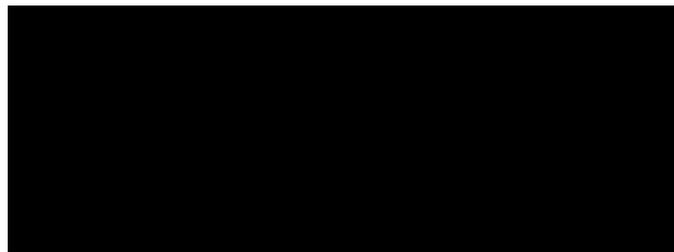
Youth@Work Program presents Teen Entrepreneurship:

FTC contracted to serve up to 15 youth in the Youth@Work program which ended June 1st, 2017, A total of 18 youth were enrolled and a few participants were terminated (4) in April by the Teen Council due to poor attendance. The summer internship began June 5, 2017 and only 12 youth were invited to be part of the summer employment due to limited funding. All of them were hired to work 20 hrs. per week at a minimum salary rate. Three other project participants secured a part-time employment within the private sector.

Based on program surveys all (100%) of participants reported that the program was helpful.

.Rocky Gedeon, age 16, was one of the interns. He indicated that the internship was fun because he enjoyed seeing how it feels to be in an office. However, it was stressful because there was so much work to be done. Rocky was also amazed by how the kids helped each other. Rocky really liked working at the gym and looks forward to doing it again next year.

Another satisfied participant was Adrianna Rosier. She stated: *“My experience was good. I’m currently taking early childhood education courses. I really enjoy working with the kids. I look forward to doing this again next summer.”*



Future TEENPRENEURS!!!

5. Special Events:

Shark Tank: After taking the entrepreneurship class, the youth participated in a competition between themselves where they presented their different projects to the investors. First prize winner was awarded \$900, second place \$400 and third place \$200 as shown in the picture below:



Shark Tank Winners: From right to left depicts first, second and third prize winners respectively: Ketena Jean Jacques, Anestacha Jean Mary, and Shenya Belizaire

FTC got talent: Girls from the LWYEC program competed with other FTC sites. The girls gave a wonderful performance and enjoyed every moment.



My Brother's keeper: LWYEC youth participated in an event that was carried out by My Brother's Keeper. One of our attendees, Ketena Jean Jacques said: *"I learn things about my black communities that I didn't know before."* Ketena stated that *"one of the guest speakers told that we should not let people conform and let people tell us how to speak properly because we have our own language and people have been trying to take that away from us for years. Things like that I didn't know, I am now open to a whole new perspective."*



The youth here at YEC are excited and willing participants to learn new things. They love coming and the staff love having them. We are family and look forward to their bright future.