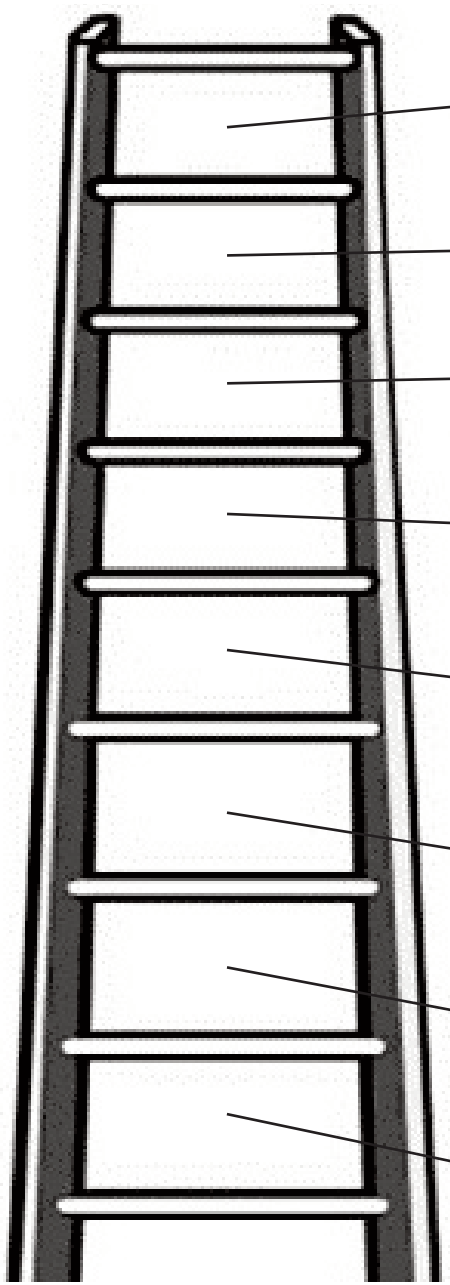
Ladder of Youth Engagement



8. **Youth-initiated and shared decisions with adults.** Youth have a central role in the organization and are empowered to share in the decision-making processes.

7. **Youth-initiated and directed.** Youth serve as peer leaders and lead activities with their peers and/or with adults. Adults are involved in a supportive capacity.

6. **Adult-initiated and shared decisions with youth.** Adults serve as the leaders of programs or projects, but share the decision-making with youth.

5. **Consulted and informed.** Youth offer advice on programs or projects that are designed and run by adults. Youth are informed about the process, but adults ultimately make the decisions.

4. **Assigned, but informed.** Youth are assigned specific roles and are informed about their involvement. Youth involvement is typically inconsistent.

3. **Tokenism.** Youth appear to be given a voice, but in reality, have little or no say in the decisions or how they are assigned to participate.

2. **Decoration.** Youth are only involved (often in an indirect way) to give face to the work, but have little understanding of the cause. Active participation is not encouraged.

1. **Manipulation.** Youth are forced to be involved, regardless of interest or a direct connection to the cause.

Degrees of Participation

Non-Participation