

YOUTH MUSIC PROGRAM

A custom 8 week music program manual designed specifically for youth community organizations



Written by Geraud Blanks' Public Allies service with Safe & Sound Community Partners

Inspired by the Running Rebels Community Organization music program,
A Safe & Sound funded organization





Youth Music Program Manual

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Introduction

The Running Rebels Community Organization was one of the first community organizations to provide an “urban” music education program in the city of Milwaukee. The emphasis of the Running Rebels program was to not only to teach kids how to write and produce their own songs, but to design, manufacture, market and perform their music.

The Running Rebels program is considered one of the most successful Youth Music Programs (YMP) in the state of Wisconsin. The program has been in existence for more than five years and has produced some of Milwaukee’s best young musical talent. Using the basic concept established by Running Rebels this manual will provide the necessary knowledge for any community organization to implement their own program.

Through a collaborative effort with Public Allies and Safe & Sound, 10 months were spent with youth and staff putting together the program knowledge that has been acquired into a simple and easy manual. The objective is to get youth organizations started down the road to their own music program.

What is a Youth Music Program (YMP)?

An YMP is a 2-3 hour workshop style activity that combines educational instruction and hands on creative expression. Students work with each other as one big group or separate smaller groups based on their musical interest. A typical workshop could look like the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| - Current events/announcements | 15minutes |
| - Lesson plan/discussion | 30-60minutes |
| - Break | 5-10minutes |
| - Breakout groups | 30-60minutes |
| - Studio Time (staff discretion) | As needed |
| - Wrap-up | 15minutes |

The above categories can be eliminated or substituted based on the specific needs of the program.

Some of the topics you will touch upon include:

- Issues of musical content
- Music history and culture
- General music composition & concepts
- Recording and production techniques
- Music business concepts

Some of the skills and intangibles learned include:

- Songwriting
- Music production
- Music/recording technology
- Music marketing and promotion





What you need to know about music

Your staff does not need to have degrees in music recording or technology to get a music program started at your community organization. However your instructors will need to be experienced musicians, producers, or engineers. There are a lot of educated music professionals and enthusiasts who will be willing to provide their time and knowledge for a small price or free of charge. You will need to evaluate whether or not your organization has the resources to adequately support the program.

Why is an YMP important?

Music has always been a major part of American life, trends driven by youth interest have helped shape America's popular culture. Music however has begun to influence young people in a way that other forms of entertainment can not match.

With all of the negative images present in Pop culture it is more important than ever to reinforce positive messages through creative expression. Hip-Hop, Pop and Rock icons from 50 Cent to Britney Spears are the role models for a generation seeking to identify itself by their appearance rather than their character.

A properly run music program will allow students to express themselves through the medium of music while learning a craft that will bring them great joy beyond their time in your organization.

Getting Started

How do you establish an YMP?

The basic requirements for developing an YMP are identifying what type of room and equipment you have to work with. As long as you have available space to house the program any equipment you need can be acquired. If you already have qualified instructors then you are off to a good start, if not then you will have to recruit enthusiastic people to help teach basic concepts of music, production and business.

Instructors

Staff should be encouraged to learn as much as possible about the equipment in order to allow them to be involved in all aspects of the creative process. Staff will be utilized primarily as facilitators for discussions and to supervise break out groups.

Additional instructors will include:

- Recording/mixing engineer
- Music producer
- Singer/songwriting professional or educator



Facilities

Meeting space

You will need access to a least one conference room for students to gather for lesson plans. Additional breakout rooms will be needed based on the size of your group.

Studio

It is recommended that you use two connected rooms with glass between them for the engineer to be able to see the performer.

If space is limited your studio can be one room which houses the recording equipment as well as the vocal booth. The vocal booth is the area in which the vocalist performs and should be as sound proof as possible.



Equipment

The following equipment suggestions are examples of what you will need to adequately implement your program. The equipment you purchase will depend on the style of music your students are most interested in producing, and your budget.

- **Hardware**
 - Mixing boards (Behringer, M-Audio)
 - Speakers/Monitors (KRK, Behringer, M Audio.)
 - Microphones (Shure sm7)
 - Pre-Amp (Avalon 737)
 - Keyboard (Motif, Trinity, Triton)
 - Drum Machine (MPC 2000, 2500, 3000; Roland MV)
 - Drums (DW, Pearl)
- **Software**
(FL Studio, Reason 4, Fast Track Pro (M-Audio))
- **Computers**
 - Mac (Mac Pro, Mac book Pro)
- **Accessories**
 - Cables/cords
 - External effects
 - Headphones (Sony)



Curriculum

Lessons Plans

Music Industry basics: Introductory level training in artist development, music production, and the business side of the music industry. In addition youth are encouraged to examine and interpret the messages that are presented to them by mass media.



Basic Music Concepts: Everything from the basic fundamentals that make up music, songwriting and contemporary music production.

Studio Basics: Students will be introduced to recording studio equipment and proper studio etiquette.

Music & Culture: Social issues dealing with music and media will start every session before students begin working on their group projects.

Breakout groups

Students will be split up into groups based on their particular skill set or area of interest. For instance: Singers; Rappers; Writers; Producers; Musicians. These groups will enable students to work with youth who have similar musical interest. The breakout groups will stay together for the duration of the program.

Studio Time

Once you have split the students into groups allow them to experiment with different song concepts. The idea is for the groups to further develop their comfort level for the studio environment before you begin doing any extensive recording.

Once each group has had a sufficient amount of time to become familiar with the equipment, engineer and recording process, they should be put on a daily or weekly (depending on the frequency your program meets) recording schedule. After every lesson plan, groups should be allotted a certain amount time to work on a particular project.

Once projects are completed all participants should critique the work of each group before returning to the studio to tweak or re-record song projects. Although studio time is an integral part of the music program experience, it should be granted to participants only as a reward for finishing other aspects of the lesson plan.

8 week program sample schedule

Daily schedule

4:00pm – 4:30pm greeting/agenda/announcements

4:30pm – 5:30pm Icebreaker Topic
These conversations consist of issues involving youth today and how music affects them.

5:30pm – 5:45pm Break
Participants should get something to eat or drink or use the bathroom at this time.

5:45pm – 7:00pm Studio Time/practice
Students breakout into their respective groups to work on song projects.

7:00pm – 7:30pm Recap
Groups come back together to talk about their songs or the program in general.

8 week program (sample schedule):

Weekly Schedule

Week 1-2: Introduction/Individual assessments

Music Concepts: What is music? What makes a good song/hook? Songwriting basics

Music Business: The basics of music publishing

Week 3-4: Breakout Groups

Individual skill set

Group projects

Week 5-6: Studio Projects

Song concepts/practice

Studio recording

Song completion

Week 7-8:

Song Critiques

Additional Song work

Presentation of finished songs



Resource Index:

PEOPLE (who can assist you)

- Anthony Kennedy Studio engineer (The Shell Studio) 414-708-5080
Young studio engineer with a wealth of knowledge and expertise.
- Trevor Sadler Studio engineer 414-614-8773
Nationally renowned mastering expert, who has worked with major label artist.
- Anderson Gonzalez Studio engineer/producer 262-385-8761
Well known producer and engineer
- Alex Julien Musician 414-393-7654
Talented musician who plays several different instruments
- Brian Mir Musician/Videographer 414-899-2572
Musician and videographer for major companies nationwide.
- Alex Solis Graphic designer 414-241-6447
Graphic designer for Time Warner Cable

PLACES (you can call for guidance)

- Madison Media Institute (800) 236-4997
www.madisonmedia.edu
2702 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53718
- Running Rebels Community Organization (414) 264-8222
www.runningrebels.org
1300 W Fond Du Lac Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53205
- Wisconsin Conservatory of Music (414) 276-5760
1584 North Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

THINGS (you need to checkout; books)

- This Business of Music: The Definitive Guide to the Music Industry, Ninth Edition
- Start and Run Your Own Record Label (Start & Run Your Own Record Label)
- Modern Recording Techniques (David Miles Huber, Robert E. Runstein)
- All You Need To Know About the Music Business: 6th Edition
- Pro Tools for Music Production: Recording, Editing and Mixing
- The Elements of Music: Concepts and Applications, Vol. I
- Composing Music with Computers (Eduardo Miranda)
- How to Get the Sound You Want (Michael Prochack)
- The Art of Music Production

