

Report of the SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON YOUTH PROGRAMS to the UUA Board of Trustees

"The turtle only advances by sticking its neck out."

November, 1977

CONTENTS

- Introduction
- Committee Procedure
 - Gathering of Information
 - Position Papers
 - Meetings
 - Readings and Resources
 - Objectives
 - Position Statements on:
 - § Youth Programming
 - § Adult-Youth Relationships
 - § Youth Relationship to Church / Fellowship and Denomination
- Some Observations and Needs
 - About Local Groups
 - About Districts
 - About the UUA
 - About Adults
 - About Youth Groups
 - About LRY
 - Some General Observations
 - Some Additional Identified Needs
- Recommendations
 - Office for Youth Programs
 - Youth Adult Advisory Committee
 - Liberal Religious Youth
 - Recommendations to all UUA District Boards
 - Youth Field Work Teams
 - Proposal for Dialogue
 - § Local
 - § District
 - § Continental
- General Recommendations
- Summary of Budget Proposals
- Proposed Time Table
- Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a growing concern over the lack of support for youth programming in the Unitarian Universalist denomination. In 1976 members of the Continental LRY Executive Committee became acutely aware of these inadequacies and, as a result of their proposal, the UUA Board of Trustees in April, 1976, voted to establish a Special Committee on Youth Programs (SCOYP) with the following charge:

" . . . to study the existing youth programs in the denomination, including LRY, and to make proposals, including budget proposals, to the Board as to the best ways for the UUA to develop, offer and support programs for youth generally of high school age."

"The Board agreed that the budget recommendations of the Committee should include alternatives."

The following committee was appointed, for reasons of both personal qualifications and geographic representation:

- Elaine Smith, Chairperson, Seattle, Washington
- Kim DeRidder, Knoxville, Tennessee
- Tom Greenspon, Birmingham, Alabama
- Anne Oden Heller, San Francisco, California
- Leon Hopper, Boston, Massachusetts
- Eric Joselyn, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Jennifer Shaw, Lawrence, Kansas

The Committee has held four meetings and has spent over 15 months compiling information and examining youth programs throughout the Unitarian Universalist denomination.

Each member of the Committee would like formally to express appreciation to the UUA Board for the opportunity to work on SCOYP. We would also like to acknowledge and commend the Board for their recognition of the need for the Committee. The response the Committee received from every sector of the denomination has been overwhelming -- in both quantity and content. Awareness of the immensity of this task has moved us to especially thoughtful consideration. Our work has been an emotional and painful process; we have worked hard, learned much, and developed a special sense of committee.

As a result of a year's deliberations we have come to feel deeply that there are two things of critical importance. First, the *status quo* is inadequate and a disservice to youth. It seems clear to us that if the *status quo* continues, the situation will only become worse. Second, it is difficult to ignore the massive abdication of adult responsibility. Therefore, change is required and will entail broader and different funding.

We believe the work of the Committee has called attention to the problem of the need for more effective youth programming, and in many cases the existence of the Committee raised awareness in *both* youth and adults. A number of things we typically think of as youth problems have emerged as denominational problems and will only be resolved by a strong denominational effort.

A high school student once wrote a canto:

"We often look through a pane of glass when we should be looking in a mirror"

COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

In seeking to fulfill its charge, the Committee has taken these steps and followed this process:

A. Gathering of information. Questionnaires and requests for information were sent to the following groups and individuals:

- LRY Federations
- UUA District Boards
- UUA Interdistrict Representatives
- Unitarian Universalist ministers and Directors of Religious Education - 1976-77 LRY Continental Executives
- Directors of UU Camps and Conferences (Summer)
- LRY'ers attending the 1977 LRY Continental Conference

Summary statements from the questionnaires have been compiled and are available to the UUA Board of Trustees.

Information from the 1977 UUA Annual Questionnaire from Churches and Fellowships regarding youth groups was tabulated.

Statements of Goals from the 1976-77 Continental LRY Executive Committee were received.

B. Position Papers. Each member of the Committee developed an individual position paper to help clarify key concepts of concern:

- Goals of youth programming, including the gaining of a religious perspective and rites of passage
- Role of advisors and adults working with youth
- Youth autonomy

C. Meetings. The Committee held four meetings:

October 22-23, 1976, Boston, Massachusetts; included a meeting with LRY Continental Executives

March 16-20, 1977. Atlanta, Georgia; included attendance at the Southeast Program Development Institute on Youth Programming (on the 19th and 20th)

May 19-22, 1977. Minneapolis, Minnesota; included a consultation with Gisela Knopka, D.S.W., and staff from the Center for Youth Development at the University of Minnesota

October 26-29, 1977, Boston, Massachusetts; included sessions with representatives from the LRY Board, LRY Continental Executives, and Dr. Paul Carnes, UUA President

D. Readings and Resources Used by the Committee.

- "Follow the Gleam," an unpublished history of LRY by Wayne Arnason
- Review of the denominational history of financial support for youth
- "The Problems of Faith Development in Young Adults," pamphlet by the Alban Institute
- "A Short Subjective History of UU Youth Movement." by C. Leon Hopper
- Material describing LRY given the Committee by LRY
- People Soup
- LRY Advisors Handbook
- Attended the Southeast Interdistrict Program Development Institute on Youth Programming
- Interview and consultation with Dr. Gisela Knopka and her associates at the Center for Youth Development and Research, National Youth Worker Education Project, University of Minnesota
- Individual Committee members met with or attended five UUA District Boards, FUURL, three UUMA Chapter meetings, the 1977 LRY Continental Conference, RE Continental Conclave, Rowe Camp, IARF conference, Starr King School, LRY Federation conferences, UUA General Assembly, UUA Staff, UUA Youth/ Adult Committee, and 76-77 and 77-78 Continental LRY Executive Committees in addition to having many conversations with individuals representing, many different aspects of youth concerns.

E. Objectives. Following discussion of the individual position papers and review of responses from Committee questionnaires, the Committee formulated the following statements of the Committee's position for denominational objectives for Youth Programming, Adult/Youth Relationships, and Youth Relationship to Church/Fellowship and Denomination:

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Young adults are searching for meaning in life and for personal identity. They seek continuity, power, and a responsible place in the world. Because of extended adolescence and the dissolving nature of contemporary community, the search and the space to find personal answers are increasingly disparate. UUA program goals for youth must be responsive to the needs of youth, or youth will continue to drop out and vanish. UU societies should provide meaningful programs to their youth in a consistent way. A program for youth needs to offer a safe space for transition and passage; it needs to offer experience with real power, an opportunity to develop a personal religious philosophy, and significant, meaningful work. The programs should foster a commitment to the larger UU body, celebrate potential for continuous growth and change throughout life, and affirm the questioning stance of adolescence.

If a program or group works well, a family-type, bonded atmosphere will prevail. Inclusive gatherings yield the essence of community and offer a safe place in the world to explore, learn, enjoy life, and care for others.

The conditions for healthy development should provide young people with the following opportunities:

"to participate as citizens, as members of a household, as workers, as responsible members of society;

to gain experience in decision making;

to interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging;

to reflect on self in relation to others and to discover self by looking outward as well as inward;

to discuss conflicting values and formulate their own value system;

to experiment with their own identity, with relationships to other people, with ideas; to try out various roles without having to commit themselves irrevocably;

to develop a feeling of accountability in the context of a relationship among equals;

*to cultivate a capacity to enjoy life," **

ADULT/YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS

Adults working with youth must be authentic, secure in their adulthood, and able to stand by their principles without trying to "program" young people. Adults should be able to facilitate self-exploration, the facing of difficult decisions, and the examination of the consequences of decisions on the part of youth in an open, growth producing fashion. Adults should set limits with respect to their rights as human beings and should be ready to confront issues related to this at every opportunity. They should realize that abuse of sexuality and intoxicating chemicals by adolescents is frequently a purposeful attempt at control of self and others, or is goal directed in some other way, and that these issues should be explored. Adults who work with young people should be optimistic about the possibilities for growth and should inspire self confidence in youth. Manipulative personal involvements between group advisors and youth are divisive and destructive of the group's efforts at personal empowerment.

Most important in adults working with youth is a constant commitment to freedom and responsibility as inseparable ideals, and a feeling of security in one's adulthood. Some expertise in human relations, familiarity with counseling and growth and development would be valuable. Adolescence is a time of self-examination and of developing a commitment to others. Young people (and adults) need love, acceptance, security, and approval.

Adults working with youth should be members of the UU community. They should be familiar with the goals of the church or fellowship and see the young people as valuable members of the UU community. The denomination has the responsibility to adults working with youth to provide training and support that will enable them to carry out their charge. Responsibilities between adults and youth are reciprocal--they go both ways. The youth advisor should be an indicator that adults care about young people and feel that what they are doing is of importance.

YOUTH RELATIONSHIP TO CHURCH/FELLOWSHIP AND DENOMINATION

A youth group can create an environment that encourages the friendships that develop as youth learn from each other in their struggle with transition. To create community in our churches and fellowships we must have positive interaction between all ages. Communication may be more difficult between youth and adults. So it is necessary that we encourage ourselves to listen and interact.

The relationship of the youth group to its church or fellowship must be one that will affirm the experience of youth in determining their own direction and learning the responsibility implicit in that freedom. Youth need support from adults as they strive to build self-esteem. The church or fellowship must welcome youth, help them to feel they are appreciated, accept them as an integral part of the UU community. Youth programs in our churches and fellowships deserve and are entitled to the same kind of personal, financial, and staff support that other activities receive. Youth must be able to trust that adults do care about them and will support them in their growth. In turn, youth should honor this relationship with the church fellowship through respect, commitment, and a sense of responsibility.

-
- Knopka,-Gisela. Director, Center for youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota.

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND NEEDS

A review of the responses to the Committee's surveys and questionnaires led us to the following observations of the present state of youth programming within the UUA and provided the basis for the recommendations we make to the UUA Board of Trustees.

I. About Local Groups

- There is wide variety of youth programming going on in our individual societies.
- There is a feeling on the part of adults for a need of a greater sense of the relationship of youth programming to local societies.
- There is evidence at the level of the local society of a strong need and desire for program support from the denomination.
- The Committee notes the lack of youth input at the local level because of the nonexistence of a listing of local youth group contacts.

II. About Districts

- There is evidence of a need for district organizations to assume responsibility for involvement in and knowledge of youth programming in their districts.

III. About the UUA

- There is a strong need for a denominationally articulated rationale for youth programs and the disbursement of money to youth programs.
- There is a strong need to state clearly and forcefully the relationship of youth programs to Unitarian Universalism with an emphasis on the 'religious' core in the program.
- There is neither program or organization nor support from the denomination at the present time for junior high groups outside of RE, this notwithstanding that there are more junior high groups reported than either high school or LRY.
- There is a need for strengthening the communication of information on good programming to groups and churches.
- There is evidence of the need for a sense of continuity that programs and groups can be ongoing rather than engaged in a series of isolated and unrelated events.
- There is a need to develop some adequate model for youth programming that will include local group programs, advisor training, district youth and adult relations, district youth and adult committees.
- There are some Religious Education kits adaptable, to and for youth programming, i.e., About Your Sexuality, Employing Your Total Self, Disagreements Which Unite Us, but they do not appear to be widely used.
- There is a need for the UUA to assume an initiative in support for youth programs, to give evidence of the importance of youth programming in the life of the church and the denomination. The UUA must take this initiative to demonstrate to the local churches evidence of denominational concern. Giving recognition to a youth caucus or providing

minimal contact at the continental level does not seem to nurture programs or leadership at the local level.

IV. About Adults

- Where there is evidence of adult interest, concern, involvement, sensitivity and continuity, there is also apt to be strong youth activity. Where there is neglect, noninvolvement, lack of adult concern or continuity, the programs are most apt to be weak or nonexistent.
- There is little evidence of ministerial involvement in youth programming and almost no evidence of ministerial involvement in youth programming beyond the local level. Ministers should be encouraged to increase involvement with and for youth programming and to help provide the religious/theological dimension to youth programming.
- There is a need for the identification, support, and training of competent adults to work with youth on both local and area levels and to help them with program ideas, the identification of the nature of an ideal youth program, exchange of experiences and the exploration and definition of the role of adults working with youth.
- There is such a great need for adults willing to work with youth that many adults are involved for self-serving reasons, which can be unconstructive and manipulative.

V. About Youth Groups

- 51% of the churches and fellowships responding to the 1977 UUA Annual Questionnaire as of September, 1977 reported having at least one youth group in their society (junior high, high school, or LRY). There were 281 junior high groups, 225 high school groups, and 155 LRY groups, for a total of 661 youth groups in churches and fellowships.
- There are more programs/groups identified as high school (225) than were identified as LRY (155).
- There are groups functioning with essentially LRY programs but refusing that label because of stigma attached with the name; likewise, there are groups labeling themselves as LRY groups but do not acknowledge a relationship to the other levels of LRY structure (I.e., federations, continental).
- The LRY considers itself responsible for relating to LRY'ers (groups and individuals). Since there are a number of groups that are not related to LRY, there are a number of individuals and programs not receiving any denominational support at all.
- Individual slimmer camps or conferences for youth are being planned and promoted and sponsored without relationship to any other organization, either youth or adult.

VI. About LRY

- There are a significant number of churches and fellowships with youth programs that have no relationship or tie to continental LRY.
- If there is only one group in a church, it is more apt to be an LRY group (73) than high school (40) or junior high (65).

- There seems to be a lack of continuity in LRY continental programming due to an almost annual 100% turnover of LRY continental executive membership, coupled with a need to build on experience gained only by time in the office.
- Federation leadership has a tendency to end up on the shoulders of a single person, with the consequence of perpetuating a "burned out" leadership syndrome.
- From the perspective of the majority of adults, continental LRY does not now relate to nor does it seem to be serving the local level in programming.
- There seems to be a weakening of ties between continental LRY, federation and local groups.
- There remains a residue of hostility and antagonism in some places toward LRY.

VII. Some General Observations

- There is evidence of a general feeling of aloneness, separation, removal--of being without direction at all levels of youth programming--local, area, federation, district, and continental.
- There appeared as a result of responses received from districts and churches strong evidence of concern for youth programming (whether there is also strong motivation to help do something remains a question).
- While there is evidence of a sense of drift and apathy and lack of meaning and vitality, at the same time there is also a sense of tremendous potential and of a hope for new beginnings and a desire to become enthusiastic.
- If youth programs are to be developed and be significant to both youth and churches, it will not happen by the process of benign neglect.
- There appears to be an absence of any particular "religious" dimension in youth programming or in many instances any comprehension of the sponsorship or relationship of those programs with a religious institution.
- It is a need of youth to feel wanted by the adult community and to receive a sense of belongingness.
- Undergirding our recommendations are--the assumptions that youth:
 - need to be able to think through the questions of meaning and life
 - need to be taken seriously and to be listened to as persons
 - need to have a support system that permits freedom within the group
 - need significant adults who understand how to work with youth, who listen but also retain their own strengths and values
 - need to live in the "real world"
 - need to have a sense of adventure and their own competence and to have their strengths affirmed
 - need to be understood and also to understand adults

VIII. Some Additional Identified Needs

- There is a need to develop adequate models for youth programming that will include local group programs, advisor training, district youth and adult relations, district youth and adult committees.

- There is evidence of need for help and support in the training of adults working with youth--to strengthen their skills and develop their understanding of their roles.
- There is a need to bring continuity in youth activities from adults.
- There is evidence of a strong desire and need for help and suggestions and support for programming.

There is a need for strengthening the communication of information on good programming to groups and churches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In preparing our proposals for recommendations to the UUA Board, each member of the Committee drafted an individual proposal that was circulated to all members of the Committee. (These proposals are available in the proceedings of the Committee.) Viewpoints varied considerably (what else could be expected from UUs?); proposals ranged from recommendations for the continuation of the status quo in funding and programs to total discontinuation of funding for LRY and the establishment of UUA programming for youth.

Through three days of meetings, the Committee examined each individual proposal, combining, adapting, adding and eliminating, in the process of preparing these proposals for presentation to the UUA Board.

I. OFFICE OF YOUTH PROGRAMS (concern for both Junior High and Senior High).

We recommend that an office of youth programs be established, with the following functions, staff, and budget.

A . Functions

1. To develop and sponsor in cooperation with UUA Districts training seminars and workshops for adults working with youth. Such advisor workshops and seminars could include:
 - o a. Role of adults working with UU Youth groups
 - o b. Needs of adolescent youth (particularly as they relate to groups and to adults)
 - o c. Relationship of youth groups to church or fellowship
 - o d. Possible youth program development and examples
 - o e. Ways to help youth and adults identify competent adults who can work with youth
 - o f. Relationship of youth group to federation and wider UU organization
2. To stimulate the development and production of printed resource material for youth groups and adult advisors and to conduct and sponsor workshops on resources for youth groups at district, religious education, and summer conferences.
3. To develop a relationship to theological schools and the Independent Study Committee for religious education and ministerial candidates in order to provide background and training in youth programs for individuals entering fields of professional religious leadership within the UUA.
4. To serve as denominational staff liaison to and with the LRY.
5. To work with and serve as the Executive Secretary for the UUA Youth Adult Advisory Committee.
6. To provide consultation where possible with and for individual churches on youth programming.

B . Staff

1. Position of Associate Director for Youth Programming to be within the Department of Ministerial and Congregational Services -- the Education Section.
2. Full-time secretarial support.

C. Proposed Budget

1. Salary of Associate Director for Youth Program and Benefits	\$21,000
2. Secretarial and Benefits	9,000
3. Travel	5,500
4. Office expenses, publication and program workshop expenses	5,000
Total:	\$40,500

II. YOUTH/ADULT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The SCOYP recognized that the present Youth / Adult Committee of the UUA Board has responsibility for denominational contact with both high school and college age programs.

We recommend that the focus of the Youth /Adult Committee be narrowed in its concept to youth generally of high school age and that the UUA Board establish another means for denominational contact with and for college age persons.

This recommendation represents a significant change in the nature of the Youth/Adult Committee, a change that we believe is critical to the support of youth programs for the denomination.

A. Functions of Continental Youth/Adult Committee

1. To be advisory to the Associate Director for Youth Programs.
2. To serve as program and training resource to youth group advisors (for example, G.A. Workshops)
3. To be responsible for recommending to the UUA Board of Trustees, on an annual basis, action on an itemized budget for youth programs (youth to be generally of high school age). The total amount should be no greater than the amount recommended to the Board by the Finance Committee.
4. To be responsible for evaluating the existing denominational youth programs (high school) so that the Association's money is spent wisely and effectively.
5. To be advisory to youth programs (for those generally of high school age), activities and organizations within the UUA.
6. To gather and disseminate information on youth programming when necessary and/or appropriate.
7. To contract with LRY following LRY's decision-making process regarding the expectations of closer interaction between adult UUs, the UUA, and LRY members and groups.
8. To provide a model for District Youth Activities Committees.
9. To be in contact with and support of UUA District Youth Activities Committees.

10. To meet a minimum of three times a year.

B. Membership

Membership on the Committee shall be made up of eight members--four adults and four youth--with consideration given to the following qualifications and categories:

- adults who have demonstrated expertise in adolescent development and youth work
- commitment to denominational youth activities
- participation in LRY at the local and federation levels
- a UUA Board of Trustees member
- professional religious leadership presence
- broad geographic representation shall be taken into account when appointing the members of the Committee

C. Budget

Meetings	\$7,000
Publications	\$ 500
	\$ 7,500

III. LIBERAL RELIGIOUS YOUTH

The Committee's recommendations regarding denominational financial support for the Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) evolved from the following observations and perspective:

The history of Unitarian and Universalist youth movements spans many decades of growth and change. The current youth organization, Liberal Religious Youth, is the product of a merger of groups that preceded merger in the adult denominations by seven years. LRY and its predecessors have been the vehicle for personal growth for many young people, and they have provided a starting point for many of our denominational leaders. In the face of this, it comes as a blow that LRY is currently held in disfavor or ignored by a majority of our churches and fellowships, that it does not represent anything approaching a majority of UU teenagers, and that many locals have little programmatic or guiding philosophy that can be called Unitarian Universalist in intent, even though the continental LRY charter does have such.

An important guiding principle for a denominational youth movement should be a strong connectedness to Unitarian Universalism. The Committee believes that a denominational youth organization should examine, espouse, and live the ideals of our religion. A strong argument could be made for complete withdrawal of denominational funding for LRY, and for funding a new group with a clearer denominational identity (i.e., Unitarian Universalist Youth). Such a change might clear the way for renewed interest and support from ministers and church or fellowship leaders who view the name "LRY" as a red flag.

Such an action, however, would be a withdrawal of commitment to those young people who struggle to make LRY a productive organization. The Committee feels these young people need to be encouraged and supported, and, while not recommending a name change, urges that it be considered.

Peter Drucker, in The Age of Discontinuity, noted:

"Young people in the society of organizations (today's society) need systematic information on how to make organizations serve their own purposes, values, and aspirations. They will have to learn organization as their forefathers learned farming." (pp. 259-260)

An effective youth group helps its members to face organizational and institutional realities, to assume full and responsible participation in denominational affairs, and to develop the idea of accountability for one's actions. This implies the nurturing of decision making abilities.

The Committee recommends that our denomination adopt strategies for the development of a youth organization with the characteristics defined in . . .the position papers and noted above. The Committee makes no specific suggestions, since such changes will have to come through a joint effort of youth and adults.

The Committee has specific recommendations relating to denominational financial support of LRY. Our study indicates that the continental executive committee, as presently constituted, is not entirely representative of LRY local interests, is frequently out of contact with locals, and is frequently in itself a discouraging experience for the exec officers. The Committee recommends that financial support for the LRY officers in Boston be discontinued and that funds allocated to LRY be designated as support for continental LRY Board meetings, leadership and program planning workshops (including travel), dues to international organizations, and/or other purposes that LRY may designate.

The Committee further recommends that LRY develop expenditure guidelines for presentation to the Youth/Adult Committee before funds are allocated. The Committee urges LRY to consider maintaining its continental executive officers in various locales, and that these individuals promote much closer contact between themselves and the federations.

The Committee reminds all congregations that LRY itself initiated the formation of the Special Committee on Youth Programs, and strongly urges that all congregational leaders take an active role in making denominational action on youth affairs a top priority.

Budget:

Allocation to the Liberal Religious Youth for programs listed above	\$ 20,000
---	-----------

IV. RECOMMENDATION TO ALL UUA DISTRICT BOARDS

We recommend that all Districts establish a District Youth Activities Committee (with equal number of youth and adults and with appropriate budget). The purpose of the Committee would be:

1. Sponsorship of advisor training workshops
 2. Support for and advice to districts/area youth activities, including LRY federations
 3. To help as resources for local churches in development of youth programs at the local level
 4. To be familiar with program resources and leadership available for youth programming
 5. To serve as trouble shooters where and when called upon
 6. To be responsible for extending and strengthening existing youth programs
 7. To aid in the recruitment, training, and confirmation of LRY federation advisors
 8. To participate with and support inter-district field work teams, and actively to encourage their use
-

V. YOUTH PROGRAM FIELD WORK TEAMS

We recommend that a resource bank of people with demonstrated skill in working with youth and adults be appointed. These people would be appointed by the Interdistrict Council with the assistance of the I.D.R. and would have the support and resource skills of the Continental Youth Adult Committee available to them.

A. Functions:

1. To train people interested in making a serious commitment to youth activities within our denomination. Areas of investigation could include:
 - o a. essentials of adolescent growth and development
 - o b. basics of counseling and advising teenagers
 - o c. adolescent sexuality
 - o d. communication skills
 - o e. goal setting and problem solving
 - o f. values clarification
 - o g. successful group programming
2. To provide an intensive training workshop at an interdistrict level for selected youth workers from each district. These people could then return to their districts and act as resources for local societies and area councils.
3. To be available to districts for the conducting of workshops focused on youth concerns and the needs of adults working with youth, at the request of the District Board of Trustees.
 - o a. To provide an opportunity for youth leadership and adult youth workers to experience learning and working together in a process-focused setting.
 - o b. To introduce youth leaders and advisors to the various programs within our denomination that are available to youth:

(1) Youth service projects and summer camps

(2) UU Service Committee projects

(3) Dept. of Education multi-media kits

B. Membership of "Resource Bank"

1. Team members must be people skilled in areas relating to youth as well as to group organization.
2. Members should have a proven track record of successful experiences in relating to UU young people within a group setting.
3. Members should have credibility with the adults as well as with youth.

Budget

It is expected that the services of the Youth Program Field Work Team members will be volunteered. Transportation, housing, child-care, or any other expenses incurred by their participation on the Field Work Team would be paid by the fees of the workshop participants or their district or local society.

VI. PROPOSAL FOR DIALOGUE

"Thank someone for being that one. Walk with them to the center of a place and back again singing a little song. Burn something. "

--Seneca

The first question that we must ask ourselves -- society, district, or denomination -- is: "Why do we do it?" Decisions about specific youth programs, about what they will be like, about the distribution of money, about staffing and training, cannot really be addressed until we have answered this first question. One clear theme in response to the work of the SCOYP was that we have no real sense of purpose about program for high school people. Folks of all generations within the denomination need to converse and to confront the reality that if it is worth investing money in our youth, it is worth taking the time to invest it wisely and well. We cannot do that until we have resolved some fundamental issues, all of them responsive to the question: "Why do we do it?" We need to determine:

- if what we offer individually and denominationally is meaningful, useful, and of interest to youth.
- if we care, don't care, or oppose the notion of a youth program, funded by UUA, that has little or no connection to the larger body.
- if we want to put energy into a program or structure that is not specifically helpful to youth who are maturing into a difficult and increasingly complex world.
- if we care whether or not our youth remain in the denomination or leave it.

- if the adult community is effectively willing to assume a long abdicated responsibility to their youth.
- if the youth are effectively willing to resume a long abdicated responsibility to the larger body.

Until we have entered this conversation or dialogue, it is doubtful if anything we fund will be really satisfying. We are concerned about the many questions raised by youth and adults in every level of the denomination, but only briefly considered within this report. We feel strongly that these more philosophical questions, or ethical questions, should be discussed broadly within the denomination by the largest number possible.

Therefore, this recommendation of SCOYP to the Board is designed to facilitate the process of dialogue in hopes that purposeful and lasting youth programs will evolve and remain strong.

In consideration of the above and of the proposal that follows, we wish to stress the importance of the following:

1. First, we cannot deny the ill-favor that LRY has fallen into. The LRY itself is in disarray; reports from the Federations bear this out. Feds report numbers dropping, scattered leadership, interest diminishing, and organizational decay. Churches express anger, concern, distaste.
2. Second, we cannot deny the abdication of adult responsibility for youth program. Very few societies report successful youth program of any kind. The greatest wish was to do something, only few societies seemed to have an idea about what it was that should be done. Many wanted the UUA to take the initiative. We believe profoundly that results will come only from dealing with this problem on a large scale. And it is a problem -- deep rooted and not to be resolved by the few.
3. Third, the creative, great commitment to the future comes from the greatest labor and participation by the greatest number. Interest will come by doing, and that can be an important beginning.
4. Fourth, it is important to take the time and to spend the money to do what we do well. Thoughtful interaction is essential to the process.
5. Fifth, and perhaps most important, is that all parts of the denomination must be heard -- youth, adults, and elders. A critical and immeasurably large part of the DIALOGUE will be hearing each other, and we suspect the effect of that will reach beyond youth program into our societies and our denomination.

General Outline

The Dialogue would be entered into three times over a two-year period: first, on the local level; next, on the District level; and finally, on the denominational level.

A. Local Dialogue

The local Dialogue would take place between October and May of the first year. It would take place in every fellowship and society possible, several times during the year.

Societies would attempt to include every spectrum of age -- junior high, senior high, college age, adults, and elders. It would be open to all who wished to participate; larger churches might choose to move from neighborhood dialogue to a larger congregational dialogue.

The conversations would address the general question, "Why do we do it?" in such a way as to give articulation and direction to future youth program. They would explore and begin to define the relationship of UUA youth to the larger body, and vice - versa, considering what youth program frameworks will allow the greatest flexibility and still preserve the integrity of a denominational program.

Hopefully, the Dialogues will be facilitated by people with experience and expertise in group work, within the congregation. Following the Dialogues, a team of adults and youth would be selected to participate in the District Dialogue.

Budget:	\$00.00
---------	---------

B. District Dialogue

The District Dialogue would take place between October and May of the second year and would span a two - or three - day time period. It would be held at a central, convenient location in the District where hospitality would be provided to participants. It would include adult and youth representatives from societies within the District. We suggest that this Dialogue replicate the model being developed in the Greenspon proposal funded by the UUA Board and using the Interdistrict Field Teams, should the Board choose to advise them.

The District Dialogue would be focused on developing and strengthening leaders and leadership skills, effecting communications, and building communications skills. It would be the purpose of the Dialogue workshops to train, rather than to converse on topics. It may be that Districts will select representatives to the Continental Dialogue from among the participants of the workshops.

It will be helpful for Districts to locate and recruit volunteers from their churches and fellowships who will work as trainers for the workshops. High quality trainers will be of great importance, and trainers should be prepared to meet with the Interdistrict Team to work through the training design.

Every effort would be made for diversity of age among participants. Therefore, accurate information from District to churches would be essential. Every fellowship and church would be contacted and encouraged to participate following their local dialogue. Diversity of experience would be important, as would the ability to articulate ideas and think creatively.

In addition to communications skills, training in futures would be a desirable component of the Dialogue training. Training for leadership, in both youth and adults, together and separately, would be an important focus -- it was one of the most strongly expressed requests in responses to SCOYP.

The organizational aspects of the Dialogue would be implemented by District YAC'S.

Budget:	for local churches and fellowships, transportation expense of participants in Dialogue; for Districts, food expenses of participants and minimal program expenses such as paper, markers, flyers, etc.
---------	--

C. Continental Dialogue

This would take place in June or July of the second year for a five - to seven-day period. It would be held in an outdoor residence setting within the northeast, preferably owned within the denomination. The site use for the duration of the Dialogue would be donated if possible.

Food services would be provided, the cost to be absorbed by the UUA. Transportation subsidies, provided by the UUA, would be along guidelines recommended for GA.

Facilitators, in a ratio of ten to one, would be recruited as volunteers if possible, with food and transportation costs provided. Interested clergy would be a valuable resource.

Each District would send five representatives to the Dialogue. The Dialogue agenda would be built from suggestions from District and local Dialogues; topics might include:

- use of drugs and alcohol, noting and speaking of double standards for youth and adults.
- participation, support, and responsibility of adults and YAC's in the efforts of LRY and all youth programs.
- participation of LRY in developing strategy or praxis to move toward the larger body.
- how we can get to know and hear each other.
- explanation of our relationship to each other.

Continental Dialogue would seek all ages, as in local and District Dialogue.

Continental Dialogue would hire a Director to administer, help, and train staff for the event.

The Continental Dialogue's prime purpose would be to develop a position statement from which the broadest range of denominational youth activities could be affirmed or designed and program recommendations made. Specific findings and recommendations would be passed on to the existing structure (staff, YAC, LRY, other youth groups, Districts, and local groups) for implementation. Youth staff and denominational YAC, and the Dialogue Director, will be responsible for planning, promoting, administering, and evaluating the event.

UUA Budget:

Transportation Subsidy for Dialogue meeting	\$12,000
---	----------

Food and administrative costs for Dialogue	\$3,000
Administrative overhead	\$2,000
Program and office supplies	\$1,200
Continental Dialogue Director, 2-month salary	\$1,800
Total	\$20,000

There would also be supportive contributions from individual societies and groups as well as Districts.

Continental Dialogue Director - Job Description

Accountability and Responsibility

Accountable to the UUA YAC through the Youth Staff member, and responsible for all administrative and functional aspects of the Continental Dialogue.

General Responsibilities:

6. Assist in planning with YAC and YSM.
7. Recruit necessary volunteer and paid staff for the event. Supervise staff during the event. Conduct staff meeting.
8. Assist in promotion of the event and interpretation of it as needed.
9. Responsible for health, safety, and legal standards during the event.
10. Evaluation and reports.
11. Attend YAC meetings as required.

Job Requirements

12. Experience in directing camp, including functional services.
13. Experience in UUA and with youth in UUA.
14. Experience and capacity to interpret, promote, and organize a new project/event,
15. Maturity, sound judgment, sense of humor, and good health.
16. Drivers license and car.
17. Experience in interviewing and hiring.

Salary: \$1,800 for two - month period, first month for 20 hours per week, second month full time.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Special Committee on Youth Programs presents the following general recommendations to the UUA Board of Trustees for additional programs and opportunities for the strengthening of youth programs throughout the denomination.

A. Recommendations with regard to Summer Camps and Conferences for Youth

Although there are many camps and conferences for youth sponsored by the denomination, there does not appear to be either a formal or informal communication channel among them. The Committee believes that the opportunity to share experiences, information, and programs would help to strengthen our youth camps and conferences. The summer camp experience is potentially one of the most exciting opportunities for junior high and high school aged youth. It seems crucial that a network for this continental - wide sharing be established to continue the vitality of our camps for youth.

Therefore, we recommend that the UUA Board designate a person to contact representatives of each camp to discuss this need and to consider possible action, which could include a newsletter; a conference specifically for camp directors, staff, and other related persons; or a sharing of resources.

B. Post High School Age

The Committee recognizes that its recommendations for the appointment of a Youth Adult Advisory Committee alters the nature and function of the present Youth/Adult Committee by recommending that the focus of the Committee be narrowed to youth generally of high school age. Therefore, we recommend that the UUA Board establish a distinct program, committee, or agency for denominational interaction with post high school age persons in the denomination.

C. UU Ministers and Directors of Religious Education

We recommend that the professional leadership within the UUA -- ministers and Directors of Religious Education -- strengthen and increase their involvement with denominational youth programs.

D. Support for Adults Working with Youth

We recommend that programs be developed to establish support systems for adult advisors of local youth groups and that local societies be encouraged to reimburse out of pocket expenses incurred by adults volunteering time to work with local youth groups.

E. Youth Involvement in Denominational Meetings

We recommend that the participation and involvement of youth leaders at denominational meetings be promoted. Continued involvement and interaction of youth and adults will contribute to denominational strength and growth.

F. Internship Programs for Youth

We recommend consideration of an Internship Program for Youth to work with professionals in our denomination. The purposes of the internship would be to: (a) offer an opportunity for youth to gain skills and a working knowledge of the UUA; (b) secure youth perspectives in the processes of our Association; and (c) demonstrate to youth that they are wanted by the adult community.

The actual development of this program could be the responsibility of the Associate Director of Youth Programs working with the Youth Adult Advisory Committee. Various positions could be with the head- quarters of the UUA, UUSC, the UU-UN office, camps, etc, Money to fund this program might be available from private or government agencies such as CETA. School credit might be available for some interns.

G. Youth Column in the UU World

We recommend the establishment of a designated "Youth Column" in the UU World for announcements of youth programs and activities and exchange of information.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Special Committee on Youth Program recommends:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That an Office of Youth Programs, with the position of Associate Director for Youth Programs, be established. <p>Budget:</p>	\$40,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That a Youth Adult Committee with specific functions and responsibilities for high school age programming be established and funded. <p>Budget:</p>	\$7,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That there be an allocation for specific functions of the Liberal Religious Youth, with a contract for goals and evaluation between LRY and YAC devised. <p>Budget for allocation:</p>	\$20,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That the UUA Board of Trustees recommend the establishment by all UUA Districts of District Youth Activities Committees. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That Youth Program Field Work Teams be established. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That an intergenerational dialogue be conducted in the year 1978-79 at the local and district level to establish the basis for denominational youth programming. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That in the year 1979-80 there be an intergenerational dialogue at the continental level to serve as the culmination of local and district dialogues. <p>Budget for fiscal 79-80:</p>	\$20,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That other recommendations included in the report be forwarded to the appropriate agencies or departments of the UUA by the UUA Board of Trustees. 	

PROPOSED TIME TABLE

Establishment of the position of Associate Director for Youth Programs by the UUA Board	January 1978
Budget allocation for fiscal 1978-79 by UUA Board Office for Youth Programs Youth Adult Advisory Committee Liberal Religious Youth	January 1978
Appointment of Associate Director for Youth Programs	June 1978
Appointment of Youth Adult Advisory Committee by UUA Board	June 1978
Endorsement by UUA Board of Continental Dialogue on Youth Programs for Local and District levels in 1978-79	April 1978
Endorsement by the UUA Board of Dialogue on Youth Programs to be conducted and funded at the continental level for 1979-80	April 1978

CONCLUSION

The UUA Special Committee on Youth Programs respectfully concludes its report, recognizing:

" . . . of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh . . ."

-Ecclesiastes 12:12

Elaine Smith, Chairperson

Members:

Kim DeRidder

Tom Greenspon

Anne Oden Heller

Leon Hopper

Eric Joselyn

Jennifer Shaw