YOUTH FRIENDLY

APATHY IS BORING.™

Youth Voices, Greener Futures

Youth-Friendly Lessons & Impact in Vision 2030

Presentation to The Sustainability Network
October 14, 2026

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Apathy is Boring (**Tiohtiá:ke**/Montreal) is situated on the traditional territory of the **Kanien'kehà:ka**, a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst many First Nations including the Kanien'kehá:ka of the **Haudenosaunee Confederacy**, **Huron/Wendat**, **Abenaki**, and **Anishinaabeg**.

We recognize and respect the Kanien'kehà:ka as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

Agenda

How we'll spend the next hour together!

- Introduction to you & to your facilitators
- 3 Years of Impact
- Future Thinking: What do YOU want to see for Vision2030's Youth Friendly Initiatives?
- Check-out





Our Outcomes for this Session

What to expect:

- Reflecting on Youth Friendly Principles and the last 3 Years of Vision 2030's Youth Friendly programming

- Celebrating the last 3 years and thinking about the next 3 years

WHO ARE WE?


YOUTH
FRIENDLY
APATHY IS BORING™

YOUTH FRIENDLY
APATHY IS BORING.™



Sydney Penner



Erika De Torres



HOW 'BOUT YOU?

In the chat, please let us know you're name, where you're calling in from, your org and which Youth Friendly (if you did!) services you accessed the last 3 years.

3 Years of Youth Friendly x Sustainability Network!

What do young people care about?

All respondents (n=2,502). Alpha (n=500); Gen Z (n=2,002)

While the concerns of the two generations differ, cost of living is top of mind for both.

TOP 3 CHOICES		α	Z
The cost of living*	61%	60%	61%
The housing crisis*	31%	22%	34%
Education	21%	36%	17%↓ -13
The environment (climate change and natural disasters)	21%	22%	21%↓ -15
Access to healthcare*	21%	25%	20%
The situation in the United States*	18%	22%	16%
Immigration*	18%	15%	19%
The stock market and the economy	15%	6%	18%↓ -15
Homelessness*	14%	18%	13%
Discrimination and inequality	13%	15%	12%↓ -7
Health crises	13%	9%	14%↓ -22
The Israeli-Palestinian conflict	12%	7%	13%↓ -14
Advances in artificial intelligence	12%	11%	12%↓ -11
Reproductive rights	7%	5%	8%↓ -12

Leger, 2025

What we learned:

"Youth" is not a monolithic identity.

Each generational cohort is made up of diverse social values and identities among youth.

Understanding this allows us at AisB create diverse programs and initiatives that reach as many young people as possible.

The Youth-Led Democratic Innovation Framework



SHAKERS



MAKERS



UPTAKERS

Examples:

Protest Organizers
Petition Collectors
Movement Leaders

Examples:

Youth Lobbyists
Youth-Led Orgs
Youth Policy Advisors

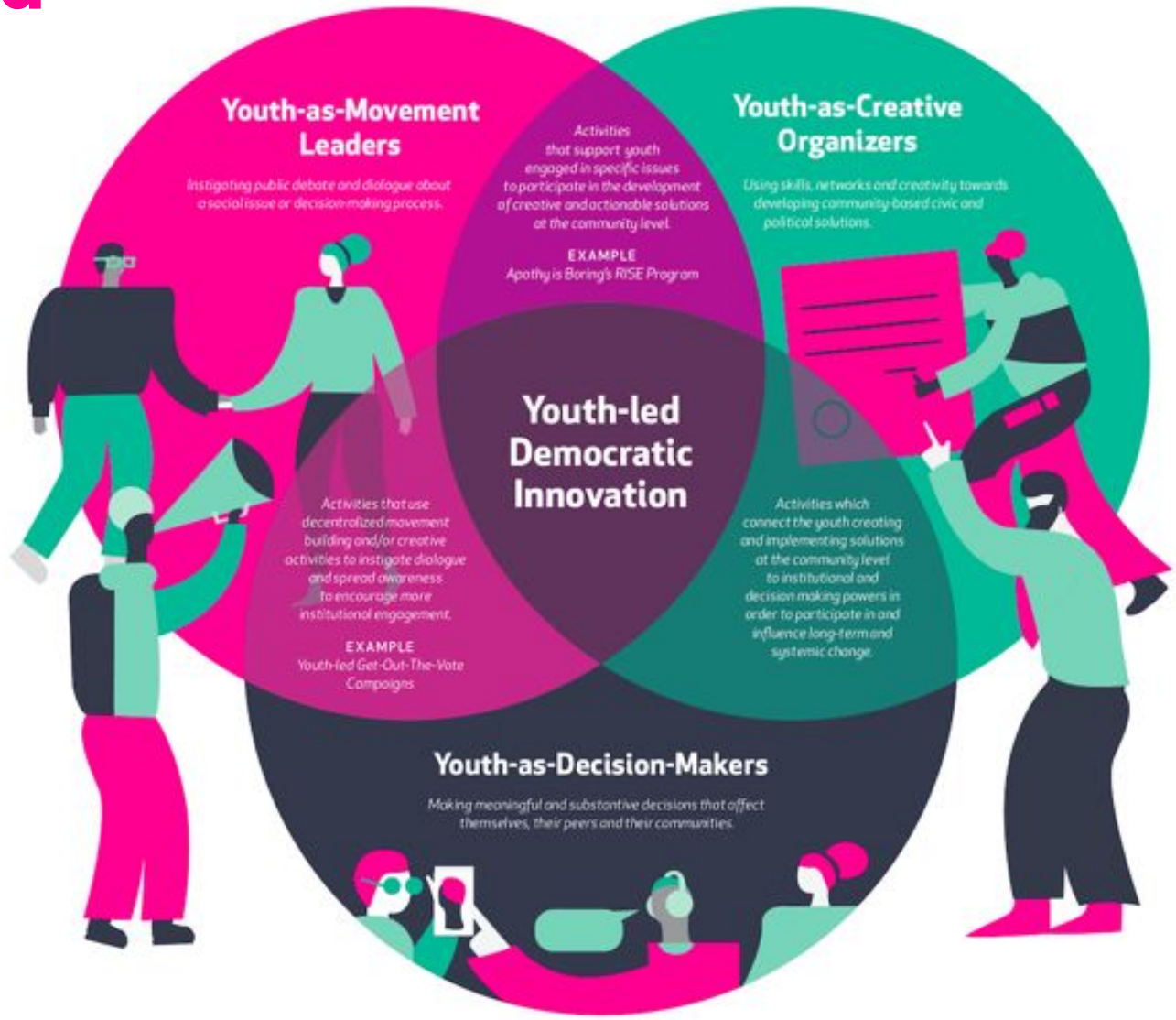
Examples:

School Boards
Workplace Leadership
Governments

The New & Improved Youth-Led Democratic Innovation Framework

People between 15 and 25 years of age display characteristics that are conducive to innovation like being:

- collaborative
- creative
- observant,
- curious
- action-oriented
- visionary



Youth Friendly & You: What has your organization done to be more youth friendly?

The 8 Youth Friendly Principles

1. EMPOWER YOUTH IN DECISION MAKING

2. PRIORITIZE ANTI-OPPRESSION TRAINING AND TOOLS

3. INCORPORATE (CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE) MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT

4. CREATE AND COMMUNICATE THE "SANDBOX" FOR INNOVATION

5. REINFORCE THE VALUE OF THE SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND POWER OF YOUNG PEOPLE

6. WHEN IT COMES TO RECRUITMENT: DO THE WORK

7. INCORPORATE FEEDBACK AND BE RESPONSIVE TO YOUTH

8. INTEGRATE AI INTO YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WHERE POSSIBLE

The Last 3 Years + looking forward to the next...

Apathy is Boring hosted three workshops annually for participating organizations:

- **From Outreach to Connection:** Youth-friendly approaches to engaging young people
- **Vibe Check Your Feed:** Making social media more youth-friendly
- **From "For Youth" to "With & By Youth":** Creating programs that continuously support and engage young people

Each workshop was grounded in Apathy is Boring's **8 Youth-Friendly Principles**.

Sessions incorporated real-life examples from:

- Social media, outreach, and newsletter content
- Apathy is Boring's programs

These examples demonstrated the power and practical application of the eight principles.

Organizational Audits: Leveling Up Youth-Friendly Practices

- Over three years of collaboration with the Sustainability Network, Apathy is Boring committed to completing three organizational audits annually.
- The audits used the **8 Youth-Friendly Principles** as their foundation.
- Participating organizations selected one area for improvement, such as:
  - Outreach
  - Social media
  - Youth engagement

It was an absolute pleasure working with Apathy is Boring to assess and improve the youth engagement of our organization. During our sessions, the AiS team provided support and resources that were relevant to our organization's capacity, goals, and audience. This included an audit of our volunteer services and youth cohort, and a detailed final report that identified our strengths and areas for improvement. Green Calgary completed these sessions with a clear plan to leverage social media, volunteer platforms, and relevant networks to provide more meaningful and tangible opportunities for young people to become environmental leaders. I would highly recommend this program to other organizations seeking to improve youth participation.

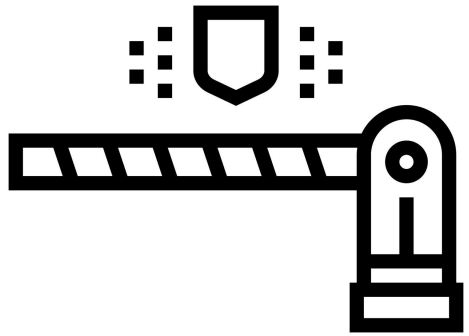
- Louise Bwandinga, Green Calgary

What we heard from ENGOs

Barriers. Limited funding, staffing, time and organizational capacity can make it difficult to develop and sustain comprehensive youth engagement strategies.

Organizations may also be managing **competing priorities, short-term funding cycles and staff turnover**, all of which can affect their ability to maintain consistent relationships with young people.

- **Ex: Social media support, volunteer retention, outreach…**



What we heard from ENGOs

Needs. Meaningful youth engagement also requires dedicated resources. Organizations may need to provide **compensation, mentorship, training, accessible technology, transportation assistance** and other forms of support.

While these investments are essential to equitable participation, they can be challenging for smaller organizations or teams operating with limited budgets. The workshop and audits highlighted this as a major challenge when it comes to youth engagement.



THE WAY FORWARD: *MINDSET*

These constraints **do not indicate a lack of commitment.** Rather, they demonstrate the need for practical tools, adaptable approaches and shared resources that allow organizations to improve their practices within their existing capacity.

Creativity and collaboration are essential. Organizations can make meaningful progress through incremental changes, partnerships, shared programming and the exchange of resources and effective practices.



THE WAY FORWARD: *ACTION*



NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS:

- Exchange practical tools and promising practices (especially free tools for social media!);
- Discuss challenges openly;
- Learn from each other's experiences;
- Collaboratively solve problems;
- Share resources and reduce duplication;
- Maintain accountability and momentum;
- Develop coordinated approaches to youth participation.

STRATEGY & FUNDING:

- Embed the learnings from Youth Friendly with Apathy is Boring into strategic planning processes
- Find the places where youth can thrive in their existing structures
- Learn how to secure funding that will allow them to invest in youth and enhance their internal capacity



We want to hear from you:

What else would you like to learn?

Do you have any questions?

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THANK YOU!

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