EPIC:
IGNITING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS, INTERESTS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS IN ADOLESCENTS

AYPF OCTOBER 2015
KANSAS ENRICHMENT NETWORK

- Advocate for youth
- Create opportunities for youth, with youth
- Provide them with the experiences & tools they want and need
Adolescent: Why do I need to know this?
   Adults: Adolescents are unmotivated.

Adolescent: When will I ever use this?
   Adults: They just don’t get it.

Adolescent: How is this relevant?
   Adults: Trust me. You will need it when you get older.
WHAT DO WE KNOW?

ADOLESCENCE IS THE SECOND MOST CRITICAL PERIOD OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT
WHAT DO THEY NEED?

- Project-based learning
- Critical thinking opportunities
- Hands-on, high level of engagement
- Experiences, opportunities, experiences, opportunities
- Connections
- Gentle guidance

Without these – “Impoverished environments”
VOICE
BLENDING RESEARCH WITH NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issues

Out-of-school can build youth workforce skills
Soft skills/essential skills/21st Century skills can be addressed
STEM/STEAM/STEM +A² can be incorporated

Getting the word out

Kansas Workforce Summit Presentations
Connections with Kansas Department of Commerce Youth Services
Working to address Kansas DCF poverty
EPIC—
EDUCATION, PRACTICE, & IMMERSION FOR CREDIT

Middle School youth
Engaging, hands on-programming introducing career pathways
Field Learning Experiences (FLE)
Opportunities to earn digital badges as milestones
Reflection through private Youtopia platform
Goal – high school credit
PARTNERS

Out-of-school programs: Hutchinson B&G Club; The City in Salina
Other out-of-school program and partners
School districts
Jobs for American Graduates
United Way
Chambers of Commerce
Higher education institutions
Regional workforce boards
Community businesses
Rocket 21
HOW IS IT GOING?

Research

Youth engagement, social skills improvement, interviews
Culinary, construction sciences, manufacturing, medical sciences
Small engine repair, rockets & gliders, astronomy, solder art, movie-making, wind/solar power
Targeted essential skills: conscientiousness/work ethic; positive core self-evaluation; social skills; cognitive processes

Cross-walk

Alignment with Rose Standards, NGSS, P21

Toolkit/documentation
CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

• Data sharing
• Collaboration takes time, commitment, structuring and restructuring
• Are businesses youth-ready?
• They don’t know what they don’t know.

• It is exciting.
NEXT STEPS

Policy work
Conversations with school districts regarding high school credit
Potential badging around ‘work keys’
Youth-ready work with businesses
Policy work
YOUTH RESPONSE

“There must be hundreds of people to get this done. I wish everyone worked well as a team.”

“But I don’t want to do welding”….to top welder of the session.

Student with severe visual handicap becomes a proud commentator.

“But I found my inspiration, I felt lost and frustrated.”

Learning through real-world situations.
THANK YOU!

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