

AYCO Educators Conference 2006

Programming Committee Kick-off Meeting

Tuesday, November 22, 2005 9:00 – 10:15am

This is a summary of the first programming meeting held last week. Our objective was to brainstorm and itemize the values, objectives, and topics to be covered for the weekend conference to accompany the previously compiled outline of topics submitted by many from the AYCO community (listed below). The following is a summary of our discussion. We invite comments and questions.

In Attendance: Donna-Wood Babcock, Karen McCarty, David Hunt (facilitator)

Key Discussion Points

What AYCO's Social Circus Conference will entail, how inclusive, etc.

- Agreement that the 2006 AYCO Social Circus Educator's Conference will focus on circus arts training as it is used for the enrichment and development of youth from all socio-economic backgrounds. We aim to create a conference that supports this aspect of circus education relevant for all. Some workshops will directly address working with lower-income youth and youth facing specific difficult situations as well as overall youth development topics.

Outcome / Action Objectives from the Conference

- Stronger sense of community with lasting communication among participants thru: Active online email newsgroup participation and participant contact sheet w/ program information
- Creation of an Assessment Committee to:
 - Gather program and student evaluation and assessment tools
 - Create standard tools appropriate for circus arts youth programs
- National Initiative for research on benefits of circus learning for youth
- Initiative to create a book of games for circus programs

Conference Schedule and Activities

- Morning activities / meetings with all participants – active, on feet
- Schedule plenty of free time for meeting one another and developing relationships.
- 2 – 3 workshops / discussions at a time

- Interest to bring in professionals from social work, education, other fields outside of circus education to present. Institute on out – of-school- time programming, etc.
- Carrie Heller has offered to present on Circus Therapy

Workshop / Roundtable Programming Areas

- Administrative / Programming
 - Fundraising/Grants, Grant Writing for circus workshop, Finding Teachers – establishing qualifications, Community Partnerships – Look to models of success – Cirque, Circus Day Foundation, etc. Finding students, Connecting Social Workers with circus programs, Parent involvement, Parent/Adult + Youth programs (workshop topic – active), Approaching circus education as physical education vs. Arts programming, Student and Program Assessment and Evaluation, Integrating youth from different backgrounds
- Teacher / Education
 - Addressing personal bias (regarding race, class, ethnicity), Games, National Standards for After school Programs, How to Put on a Show (with those who have little skills), Classroom Management, Conflict / Resolution, Children and Critical Incident / Post Traumatic Stress, Cultural Connections and Culturally Appropriate Activities.
- Roundtables
 - How much do I want to know about my kids? Many of the topics listed above would be more appropriate for roundtable format.

Decisions Made

Next phone meeting in December. Will be sure to schedule to include Paul Miller 100%. Will continue to look over the growing list of topics previously compiled by community input and include incoming comments / input about topics.

Key Issues / Next Steps

David: will outline a rough conference schedule to begin planning
Next Meeting will review topics and begin schedule. Begin to assign Presenters if time.

Create a timetable / set goals and deadlines from now through the F06 Conference. Prepare to solicit community and outside professionals for workshop presentations.

9.27.05

Planning for 2006 Educator's Conference

Topics Compiled (ongoing) from recommendations from AYCO community

Submissions by: Jessica Hentoff, Reg Bolton, Kevin O'Keefe, Neal Goldberg, Carrie Heller, Karen McCarthy, David Hunt

Theoretical

➤ Definitions

- "Social Circus"
- Circus vs. Sport
- "Youth at Risk"

➤ Discussions (roundtable?)

- Who is Doing What
- Funding sources
- Pre-professional vs. just for fun
- School based vs. after-school
- Therapeutic
- Potential for pedophilia
- "Appropriate" activities within Social Circus work
 - Concerns for over-training / overworking youth
 - Aesthetics

Administrative

➤ Community Partnerships

- Advocacy to policy makers
- Educating the Media
- Cirque Partners and partnership models

➤ Assessment

- Evaluation, Performance indicators
- Data Collection
- Empirical Studies on 'effects' of Circus Learning in Lives of Youth
 - Culturally diverse student populations

➤ Accreditation (AYCO Committee Work?)

- International
- United States

➤ Funding

➤ Insurance Specific

- Finding Teachers
- Finding Students – where do they come from / who are they

Teaching Tools

- Curriculum Building
 - Cultural Connections (Aileen Moffitt)
 - Combining Youth from different Economic + Cultural Backgrounds
- Skill building approaches
- Cirque's training methodology
- Teaching Materials
- Instructor / Student Relations
 - When to give up / let go
 - When and how to persevere
 - Setting boundaries with students who need so much

Experiential

- Experiential games and exercises

Conference Structure and Logistics

Roundtable Discussions
Break – Out Sessions

Follow-Up

Continuing the Conference Work – post Conference
What's Next

Conference Participation Suggestions

- Lily Blue
- Elleboog +/-or Brazil
- Paul Laporte
- Michael Christainsen
- AYCO Community