

Positive Youth Development (PYD)

PYD Program Director - Mrs. Maria Modzelewski

PYD Program Coordinator - Ms. Julia Boyd



What is Positive Youth Development (PYD)? PYD is an intentional, pro-social approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances youths' strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

PYD has its origins in the field of prevention. In the past, prevention efforts typically focused on single problems before they surfaced in youth, such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse and juvenile delinquency.

Over time, practitioners, policymakers, funders, and researchers determined that promoting positive asset building and considering young people as resources were critical strategies. As a result, the youth development field began examining the role

of resiliency—the protective factors in a young person's environment—and how these factors could influence one's ability to overcome adversity. Those factors included, but were not limited to: family support, caring adults, positive peer groups, strong sense of self and self-esteem, and engagement in school and community activities.

Researchers and practitioners began to report that young people possessing a diverse set of protective factors can, in fact, experience more positive outcomes. These findings encouraged the development of interventions and programs that reduced risks and also strengthened protective factors. These programs and interventions are strengthened when they [involve and engage youth as equal partners](#), ultimately providing benefits both for the program and for the involved youth.

PYD at Iroquois:

#PYDONEFAMILY Community Coalition is comprised of over 60 members who represent various roles in Wesleyville/Lawrence Park and are committed to improving positive youth outcomes in their community. The coalition meets on a bi-monthly basis to address their mission of identifying and mobilizing resources through a collaborative problem solving approach in an effort to prevent and reduce youth substance abuse.

PYD Ambassadors Club is comprised of 17 students grades 7-12. PYD, formerly known as Youth Empowerment Cabinet (YEC), was developed in the latter half of 2013/2014 school year by School Psychologist, Mrs. Modzelewski. Currently, PYD Club meets on a weekly basis with advisor, Mrs. Boyd, to plan strategies which will educate and empower their peers. PYD is always accepting new members.

For more information on PYD and Coalition activities, please visit www.pydonefamily.org or contact Julia Boyd at jgabrys@iroquois.iu5.org.