Young Researchers
connecting teens to the research process

Areas of Focus
- Participatory research WITH youth
- Youth technology practices
- Youth exposure to STEM
- Youth interest in STEM careers
- Media device use for information seeking and learning

What We’re Doing
- Developing day camp curriculum on research methods and ethics
- Designing research projects with youth
- Supporting youth conducting research
- Examining youth perceptions of STEM
- Observing youth tech behaviors during camps

Youth as Co-Researchers
“Closer collaboration with youth themselves as partners in constructing research (rather than as objects of it)“ an opportunity that shifts “from investigations that assume adults will study children to one in which adults and children learn from each other” [2, p. 1127]

Science Literacy/Proficiency
Literacy includes understanding reports and discussions of science that appear in the popular media, teaching students to be informed citizens, and preparation for the world of (science) work [1, p. 593, parenthetical added]
Proficiency includes ability to “understand the nature and development of scientific knowledge and participate productively in scientific practices and discourses” [2, p. 2]

Connected Learning
Agnostic “advocates for broader access to learning that is socially embedded, interest-driven, and oriented toward educational, economic, or political opportunity” [4, p. 4]
CL experiences are production-centered, have shared purpose among community members, and are openly networked, taking advantage of “online platforms and digital tools” [4, p.22]

(Near) Future Work
- Start Second Round Camps
  Spring 2017 – Fall 2018
  - Select additional locations (2-3 Illinois locations), aiming for diverse participants
  - Schedule camps and recruit Young Researchers
  - Refine and implement iteratively designed camp, based on evaluation of first round
- Finish First Round Camp
  Fall 2016
  - Develop co-designed study
  - Conduct co-analysis
  - Present findings with Young Researchers at UIUC during Undergrad Research Week

The Young Researchers
- Come from diverse backgrounds
- Learn about research methods, careers, and ethics at camps
- Conduct research on tech habits of peers
- Collect, analyze, & present findings
- Have an opportunity to visit UIUC to present findings
- Develop research & STEM expertise
- Gain exposure to research careers

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References