



Highlights from 2011

Youth Communication publishes teen-written magazines and books that inspire voluntary reading, convey important information, and promote thoughtful decision making. We target struggling teens who need to improve their reading and writing skills.

WWW.YOUTHCOMM.ORG

Youth Communication | 224 W. 29th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10001 | 212-279-0708

We Reach Reluctant Readers

I wrote for Youth Communication’s teen magazine in 1993. I was proud back then to help the organization accomplish its mission: providing important information to teens and introducing reluctant readers to the power of the written word.

Without that introduction, many teens will never understand how important reading and writing can be in their lives—which will undermine their efforts to graduate from high school, do well in college, find rewarding jobs, and become effective citizens.

I feel so strongly about this mission that I am now the marketing director here. I educate teachers and other staff about the value of using Youth Communication’s anthologies, magazines, and web-based stories to awaken the reading and writing spirits in young people.



I’m also worried. Teens aren’t reading as much as they did just a generation ago. (You may have seen the recent *New York Times* story about the drop in reading scores nationwide. Experts attributed the drop to a decline in voluntary reading.)

But I feel hopeful when teachers like Marjory Zaik (left) rave about how teens who read nothing else will immerse themselves in Youth Communication stories. I hear these raves almost every day, and I am excited that we are playing an important part in helping teens improve their literacy skills.

—Loretta Chan

Helping Teachers to Help Teens

“The high-quality, high-interest articles and the accompanying teacher guides have repeatedly and consistently proved to be some of the most valuable resources I have encountered in promoting standards-based literacy and self-expression.”

—Marjory Zaik,
English Teacher,
Automotive High
School in Brooklyn

Real Men Named Best High School Character Education Curriculum

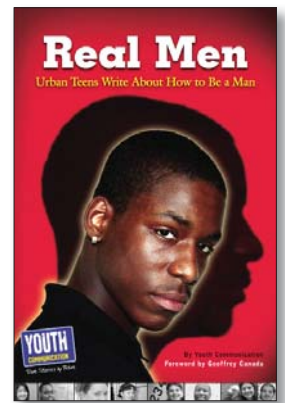
Actors covet Oscars.

Educational publishers yen for awards from the Association of Educational Publishers’ annual competition.

This year **we won the top prize in each of the four categories we entered.**

Real Men won for Best Character Education Curriculum. Its 35 stories help young men reconsider behaviors and attitudes that hold them back from succeeding in school and at work. The lesson plans in the *Real Men Leader’s Guide* help reinforce positive change. (See next page for our other winners.)

Teachers, after school staff, counselors, and foster care staff bought over 20,000 copies of Youth Communication anthologies and leader guides.



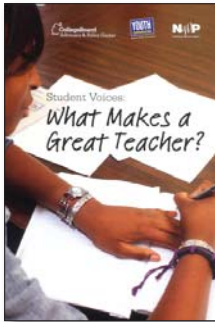
“This book is like GOLD. No matter the age, gender, or affinity for reading, the youth want to take the book home. This is my 3rd year using the reading material as part of my lessons and the response is always the same: Youth ask me where to purchase the book, if we can continue reading the next lesson, and if it can be awarded as an incentive prize.”



—Mallory Romero,
After School Educator,
Harlem RBI, describing the Youth Communication book,
Strong Teens, Strong Neighborhoods

We Help the College Board Bring Student Voices to the Table

There's a furious national debate about teacher quality, but one group with almost no voice in this discussion is the one that has first-hand knowledge: students.



The College Board wanted to learn what works for students, so

it came to Youth Communication. We ran intensive writing workshops where teens reflected on what works (and doesn't work) for them in the classroom.

The College Board published a booklet of their essays and distributed it to more than 200,000 educators and policy-makers nationwide.

Nurturing Young Writers

Teens wrote our award-winning stories in a rigorous, months-long writing program. We also provided college counseling and mentoring support. (Our alumni have published more than 60 books.)



Former *Represent* writer Ashley Rivera, now a freshman at SUNY Plattsburgh, wrote to us:

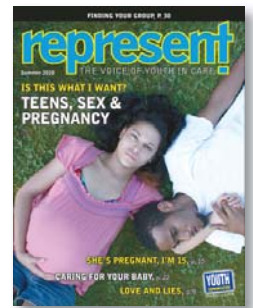
"I am writing for my school newspaper! I have been published twice already. I am so excited. I want to thank Represent for giving me an opportunity to write and discover my passion. I am writing for the paper only because Represent gave me the opportunity. Otherwise I would be taking a remedial course."

—Ashley Rivera

Represent Magazine Wins Top Award For Coverage of Teen Pregnancy

Represent, our magazine by teens in foster care, won **Best One-Theme Issue** from the Association of Educational Publishers for its exploration of pregnancy and parenting among teens in foster care.

In 2011, over 300 staff distributed 32,000 copies of the magazine to teens in foster care. Staff used the stories to show young people how their peers confronted the challenges of being in care. The stories also helped young people in care build the skills and attitudes they will need to succeed after leaving care.



YCteen: Periodical of the Year!



The Association of Educational Publishers bestowed its top magazine award for 2011 on *YCteen*: Periodical of the Year.

The judges honored the teens' stories about the environment, economic mobility, getting into college, the dropout crisis, the dangers of gangs, family dynamics, healthy eating, and many other topics.

More than 600 English teachers, public school health educators, librarians, and after school group leaders circulated 420,000 copies of *YCteen* in 2011. We provided them with 60 detailed lesson plans to supplement their academic and counseling work with 70,000 teens.

YCteen also took **First Prize for Best Series** for its issue on war and civil conflicts.

"Students that avoid reading...excitedly ask for the latest copy of YCteen. It guarantees an engaged reading experience and discussions among students."

—2011 teacher survey respondent

"Your website is excellent. I have used [the stories] with foster care youth and in detention centers. I have also shared them with incarcerated mothers in my writing group at the Sheriff's Detention Center."

—Sky Edeawo, Savannah, GA

The Web = Thousands of Additional Readers

In 2011 we created two new websites that are attracting thousands of readers each month:

- ycteen.org contains hundreds of stories from current issues of *YCteen* and from our 8,000 story library;
- representmag.org features stories from our foster care magazine.

We're also partnering with **The Huffington Post**, which began including selected Youth Communication stories this year.

And **we're using video** to attract teens to our stories, including powerful shorts in which teens from many backgrounds describe why reading is important to them.

We continued to maintain the NYC website for youth aging out of foster care, www.youthsuccessnyc.org. It's a major resource for thousands of young people in care and staff who work with them.