

## The Youth Leadership Development Survey

### SONYC EVALUATION

In 2014, the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) contracted with American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an evaluation of the School's Out New York City (SONYC) initiative. Since the SONYC expansion in 2014, the initiative has nearly quadrupled the number of sixth- through eighth-grade participants in afterschool and expanded learning programs, and has nearly tripled the number of programs across the city.

The purpose of the evaluation is to explore implementation of SONYC programs, the perceptions of stakeholders, and outcomes among SONYC participants. It is designed to answer the question: *What does SONYC program implementation look like and how are programs achieving the goals of the SONYC initiative?*



**NYC**  
Department of  
Youth & Community  
Development

The School's Out New York City (SONYC) Youth Leadership Development Survey measures a young person's **perception** of his or her attitudes and skills related to youth leadership development. The survey is for youth in middle school, between the ages of 10 and 14.

The Youth Leadership Development Survey aligns with the SONYC framework for youth leadership development (Figure 1). The survey includes items in three categories: Inner/Self Characteristics, Communication Skills, and Collaboration With Others. Within these three categories, there are 11 subcategories that help to define youth leadership attitudes and skills for middle schoolers. The categories and subcategories are presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. DYCD Youth Leadership Development Framework Attitude and Skill Categories and Subcategories**



**The survey results can be** used to describe youth leadership development at the program level. It can also be used to *inform* practice at the activity or program level.

**The survey is not** designed to be used as a pre/post measure or as a diagnostic tool. Finally, the survey is designed as a *self-report* measure for middle school youth – it is not intended as an adult report of youth attitudes or skills.

AIR developed the SONYC Youth Leadership Development Survey using information from a series of activities: 1. technical review panels with experts in the fields of youth development, 2. focus groups with youth at SONYC programs, 3. cognitive (“think-aloud”) interviews with youth. In spring 2016, AIR and DYCD piloted the survey across the five boroughs in a variety of afterschool settings. Additional details regarding the survey development process may be found in the SONYC Initiative Evaluation Year 2 Technical Evaluation Report. Findings from the survey pilot informed the final survey revisions, and AIR is administering the survey more broadly with a representative sample of programs. DYCD plans to make the survey publicly available and administer across all SONYC programs within the next year. For more information, please send e-mail to [SONYC\\_eval@air.org](mailto:SONYC_eval@air.org).