Integrating Science Learning and Civic Engagement
Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)

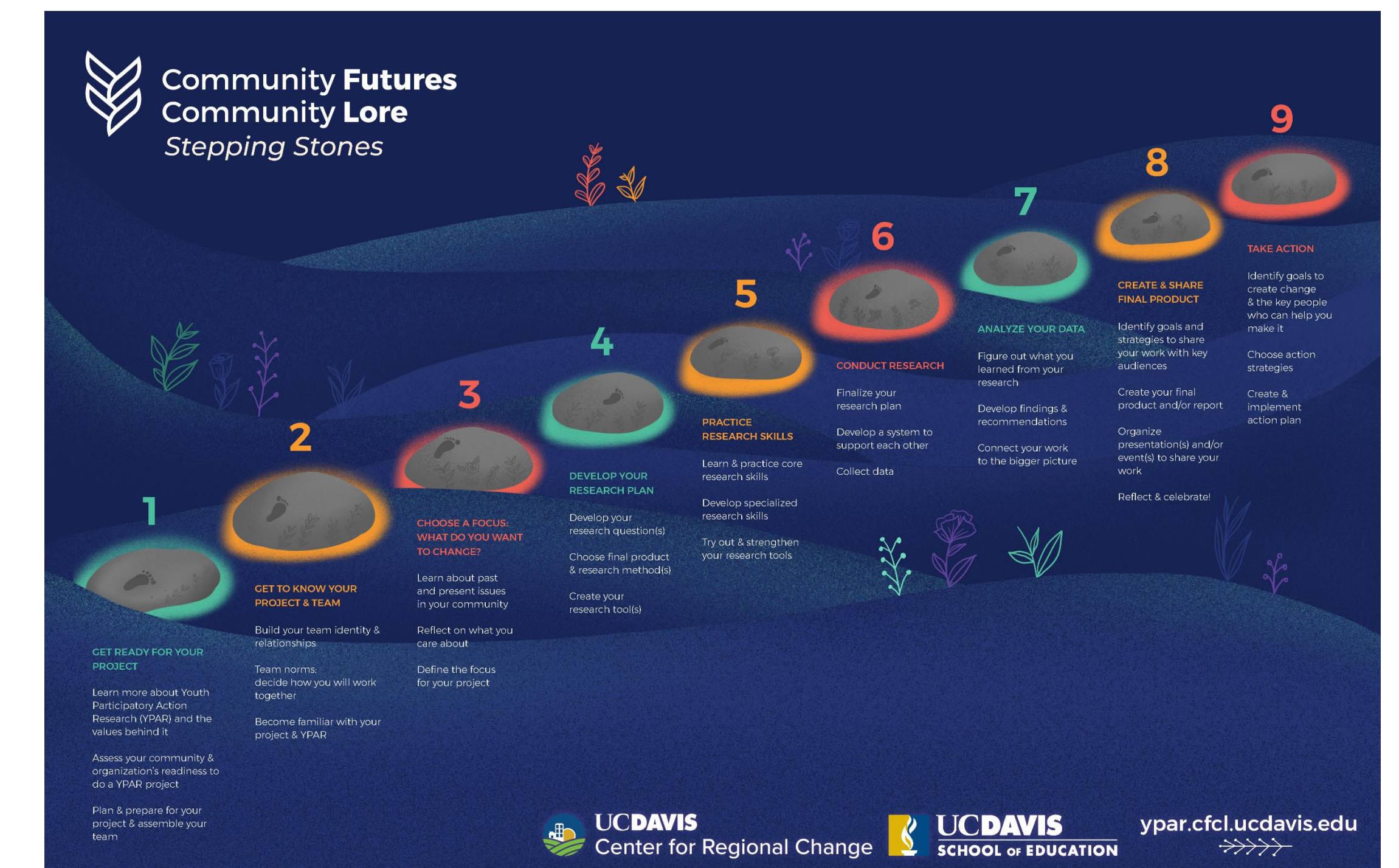Steven Worker, Dorina Espinoza, Car Mun Kok, Sally Neas, Diego Mariscal, Miguel Delgado Chavez, Martin Smith

Youth Participatory Action Research

Youth undertake a research project and take action on issues relevant to their lives.

In YPAR, youth decide upon a research topic, design and implement the research (including choosing methods, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting and sharing results), and then plan a service project based on the research findings to improve their lives or community.

A key factor is the presence of supportive, caring adults, who are willing to share power and establish productive youth-adult partnerships.

Youth Outcomes

▪ **Repositioning of Science as a Tool for Social Change**
Youth begin to grow their awareness that science can be a tool for social transformation; science becomes a set of practices youth may use to change something directly relevant to their lives.

> *[YPAR] helped us analyze the problems of society, and if we would teach it to someone else, I think they would be equally equitable with all people.*

▪ **Growing Critical Consciousness**
Youth participants grow their awareness of social injustices they experience while living in their communities. They analyze inequities, strengthen their common purpose and aspirations by conducting a collective research project, and begin to actively seek to make positive change.

> *A lot of discrimination on the part of people who tell you that you are less for not knowing how to speak the language (English), because this is a country where only that language is spoken, or it is the main language of the country. And you could have regular classes as a normal student, so to speak, for the ones who do speak the language.*

Community Futures, Community Lore
YPAR Curriculum
https://ypar.cfcl.ucdavis.edu/

Preparation Checklist

☐ Identify your learning objectives relative to both scientific literacy and civic engagement.

☐ Explore other YPAR projects (ypar.cfcl.ucdavis.edu/Stories.html)

☐ Identify funding and capacity (YPAR requires 40+ hours with a cohort of youth, thus is a long-term commitment).

☐ Find your partners, implementation sites, and organizations that share the same goals.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources ▪ 4-H Youth Development Program

Find our resources and published manuscripts →

ucanr.edu