



Generation Y

Program Description and Research

Introduction

Generation Y (also known as Gen Y) is a research-based program that works to infuse technology throughout the school. The model blends authentic student learning with classroom-based, sustainable professional development for teachers. Gen Y is grounded in methods that have been tested in real schools and woven into a comprehensive semester program. The program has enjoyed success in diverse schools throughout the nation. See the links below for articles, evaluation studies and information about this award-winning program.

Gen Y students develop technological fluency while learning how to share their knowledge with others. Each student is paired with a classroom teacher who needs help integrating technology into their practice. Each student/teacher team decides on a curriculum component or lesson to enhance with technology. Students learn about pedagogy and lesson plan design while developing their communication, planning and project management skills. The partner teacher receives support for their technology projects when and where they need it – in their classroom.

Comprehensive Program

Generation YES (the publisher of Gen Y) supplies the comprehensive support system that ensures program success. Each Generation Y class license includes the following:

- ❑ **Teacher Training** - Hands-on training for the Gen Y teacher to ensure program success.
- ❑ **Gen Y Curriculum Materials** – 238 page printed curriculum guide, CD-ROM, video and online materials.
- ❑ **Student Materials** – student notebook and sample project CD for each student.
- ❑ **Online Mentoring for Student/Teacher Teams** – every project is assigned a virtual coach to move projects towards excellence.
- ❑ **Online Support Tools** –online tool suite of project organizing and reporting tools, archive of completed reports, access to collaboration network and consultations, program assessment and evaluation tools.
- ❑ **Stakeholder Support Resources** - handouts and videos for administrators, parents and staff.
- ❑ **Evaluation services** – NWREL provides evaluation services for the project and associated survey data. Each school and district is provided with this summary data. This is useful for reporting progress to boards, administrators, or grant funders.



Generation Y Features

Scientifically-proven and research-based – Developed as a federal Technology Innovation Challenge Grant, Gen Y is backed up by 6 years of studies by the Northwest Regional Labs (NWREL) showing improvement in student achievement, teacher understanding and use of technology and attitudes.

Recognized – Rated “exemplary” by the U.S. Department of Education expert panel in technology. Only 2 out of hundreds of extensively reviewed programs were given this rare rating. □

Authentic project-based learning for students – Extensive curriculum materials and online project management tools support rigorous projects. Grade and subject level experts work with every Gen Y student to provide feedback on their projects in order to ensure excellence. Every student/teacher project results in technology enhanced lessons aligned to content standards that teachers report using year after year. □

Sustainable technology professional development support for teachers – teachers are supported with in-classroom resources to help them realize their technology potential, and to fulfill the educational goals of the school. □

ISTE NETS technology standards alignment – Generation Y classes provide a rich, project-based learning experience while satisfying application skill standards. Generation Y exceeds these technology standards, and places all the tech skills in the context of how they can improve education. Many students traditionally left out of technology classes (girls, non-math/science majors) do extremely well in Generation Y. Students also report an increased interest in teaching as a profession as a result of their Gen Y experience.

Reduce support costs - Professional development staff can focus on the big picture knowing that teachers will be supported in the classroom. The cost benefit is also realized by reducing your tech support costs. With students helping teachers with easily solvable problems, you will realize a lower demand on scarce technology support personnel.

Immediate Return on Investment (ROI) – For less than the cost of running a one-day workshop for 25 teachers, those same 25 teachers receive support to succeed in their technology initiatives all year long.

Supports YOUR technology plan – Gen Y student projects can focus on any hardware or software initiatives of the school. For example, investing in new hardware, such as Palm Pilots, laptops or video streaming can be a huge initiative. Even with workshops for teachers, there may be a longer than anticipated ramp-up time to integrate new hardware into daily teaching. Gen Y student projects may be directed to setting up and supporting the new initiatives, and providing “just-in-time” help for teachers learning to setup hardware, create lessons, and provide the



day to day troubleshooting that tends to stall new hardware projects. Harnessing the energy and ability of these students can take your technology dreams and turn them into achievable goals.

Self-sustainability – The Generation Y model is designed to become self-sustaining by the third year of implementation. During the first two years, the license fee covers extensive training and support systems that allow the program to take root in a school. After the second year, the program generally becomes entrenched and the need for these support systems fades. Generation Y schools who move into this affiliate status can maintain access to the collaboration network and online tools for a minimal fee. And even better, Gen Y students maintain free access for life no matter where they go to school. Gen Y students are a self-renewing resource as they stay in the school system, eager to continue to help their teachers improve education through technology.

Real Results in Real Schools

"Over the past 5 years we have implemented a variety of staff development models and found that Gen Y was the defining factor that moved all our training efforts to success."

Greg Partch
Director of Educational Technology of the Hudson Falls Central School
District and the director for the North Hudson Electronic Educational
Empowerment Project

"Many of our teachers have had student partners over the years, yet each student partner brings a fresh new perspective and new talents, which create a new synergy. As a result, our teachers increasingly take advantage of the technology available in our school to help students learn in new and different ways."

Ann Marie Ratliff
Librarian
Olympia, Washington



What the Research Says About Generation Y

The Generation Y model started in the Olympia School District in Washington State in October of 1996 as a 5-year U.S. Department of Education Technology Innovation Challenge Grant. Extensive external evaluation was required and the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL) provided the bulk of assessment tasks. In addition, the U.S. government established an Expert Panel on Educational Technology to evaluate 134 promising models of educational technology to see if improved learning occurred. After two years of intense evaluation only Generation Y and one other model met all the Panel's stringent criteria for an effective technology model for K-12 schools. This report is a summary of those two major studies. Complete results can be found at

<http://www.genyes.org/products/geny/genyresearch>

Seven years of data collected by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) from the nationwide Gen Y project indicate that the program is an effective alternative for schools wishing to integrate technology into their regular curriculum and increase their use of project-based, student-centered learning practices. The model provides individualized support for educators who wish to increase their use of technology without becoming distracted from the essence of their jobs -- building and delivering effective curriculum units and lesson plans.

More than 40,000 teachers have received technology integration support from trained Gen Y students. Surveys of these teachers reveal that they had overwhelmingly positive responses to the Gen Y program and believed it had an impact on the way they would teach in the future.

- ❑ 89% agreed that as a consequence of Gen Y, their students learned content better
- ❑ 97% would like to work with another Gen Y student next year
- ❑ 98% reported that as a consequence of Gen Y, they would continue rebuilding their lessons to make more use of technology
- ❑ 82% reported that the Gen Y experience would change the way they teach in the future.

The U.S. Department of Education's Expert Panel on Educational Technology concluded,

"The evaluation documents substantial learning gains on the part of participating students. The reviewers were impressed by the creativity of the project, creating a role reversal in which students help support the school's technology infrastructure and partner with teachers in curriculum development. The latter is crucial to the success of the project and to fostering learning gains for all students in participating districts. While a few projects have taken similar approaches, this particular implementation is better



conceived, more thoroughly implemented, and more carefully documented than other comparable programs."

Other conclusions made by the Expert Panel included:

- ❑ "The program goals and designs are convincingly supported by research"
- ❑ "There is compelling demonstration that the program develops complex learning and thinking skills."
- ❑ "There is complete and compelling demonstration that the program contributes to educational excellence for all. Gen Y was able to demonstrate that they have increased both the participation and the performance of underserved groups of learners."
- ❑ "There is complete and compelling demonstration that the program promotes coherent organizational change."
- ❑ "The research design carried out by the NWREL meets high standards of quality."
- ❑ "There is compelling demonstration that the program is adaptable for use in multiple contexts."

No Child Left Behind

The stringent criteria used by the Expert Panel closely parallel the current No Child Left Behind funding criteria. The states of Maryland, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Washington, Utah, Texas, and others have provided substantial funds to districts implementing Gen Y, specifically from the Title IID, Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) portion of No Child Left Behind.

No Child Left Behind emphasizes a new commitment to focus on "proven strategies" and a stronger emphasis on "high-quality professional development activities to prepare teachers to integrate technology into instruction." Proven strategies mean research results, like the years of research available on the effectiveness of the Gen Y program in hundreds of schools, both large and small, across the country.

To make the professional development goal a reality, the law mandates that 25% of funding be devoted to these professional development activities. Generation Y provides these high-quality professional development activities in an extremely cost-effective manner, by setting up partnerships with students and teachers in the school. These partnerships provide teachers with ongoing, cost-effective professional development support. Support for the "practice" of new skills, can be an expensive, yet necessary component of a well-rounded professional development program. But by using Generation Y students, teachers have support in the classroom, when and where they need it, to change their practice in the use of technology. Workshops alone cannot fulfill the criteria for "ongoing, sustained, high-quality" professional development. No other support system for teachers integrating technology in the classroom can approach the cost-effective Gen Y model.



Generation Y Links and Videos

Note: In the initial implementation, Generation Y was known as "Gen www.Y" and "Generation Why". Most people call it "Gen Y".

Generation YES website <http://www.genyes.org/>

Generation Y Evaluation Studies

<http://www.genyes.org/products/geny/genyresearch>

U.S. Department of Education Exemplary Educational Technology Program

Panel web site

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/LTD/panel.html>

Report section

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edtechprograms/generationy.html>

George Lucas Educational Foundation

Article and Video - Turning the Tables - Students Teach Teachers

[NOTE – you may need to cut and paste this URL into your browser]

http://glef.org/FMPro?-DB=articles1.fp5&-format=article.html&-lay=layout#1&learnlivekeywords::jargonfree=Teacher Preparation&-token.3=Skillful Educators&-token.2=Teacher Preparation&-token.1=Art_797&-max=200&-find

Students As Change Agents – Generation Y Evaluation Studies

U.S Department of Education – Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

<http://ericit.org/newsletter/Volume22-2/harper.shtml>

David Thornburg on Generation Y

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/thornburg/thornburg499.shtm>

District Administration Magazine - Education's Brave New World

<http://www.districtadministration.com/page.cfm?id=126>

Converge Magazine - Generation www.Y: Students and Teachers Learning & Working Together

<http://www.convergemag.com/magazine/story.phtml?id=3030000000006767>

There are many more on the Generation YES website – click on "News" and then "Articles" or go to: <http://www.genyes.org/news/articles>

