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OFF TO A START

Every recreation program begins with the recognition of a basic human need: the need for relaxation, for play and for a satisfactory social life. At no time in our lives is this need more urgent than during the "in-between" years of adolescence. War did not create this need, but war intensified it, pointed it up, brought it to the attention of hundreds of American communities. And hundreds of communities are doing something to meet it.

Often the teen-agers themselves have been the first to recognize their needs and to lay them before their elders. Their practical ideas and enthusiasm have sparked many community recreation programs.

Youth Makes Its Point

Here is a record of successful teen-age projects which originated with the boys and girls themselves:

The high-school boys in *Kalamazoo, Michigan*, began their campaign for a recreation center of their own by gathering facts to prove their need. They checked court records of juvenile delinquency, teen-age patronage of bars. They surveyed youth programs in nearby towns. Then they took their problem to the Council of Social Agencies, and with its help were able to open a part-time canteen at the YWCA. This fell short of their needs, but they still boycotted adult-organized dances, held out for their own program. Finally, they were allowed to take over the city's dance-band contract, managed it well, and proved themselves capable of running their own show. Today, they have a center of their own, self-supported, self-governed, and highly popular.

A high school junior in *Walla Walla, Washington*, wrote to the mayor, asking for a youth center. He told of boys