Making It Happen:

Relationship Building

CNYD

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On-line resources for professional development

Preface

Making It Happen: Relationship Building Training Materials

The use of these Materials

Making It Happen: Relationship Building was originally developed as part of a blended learning youth development training course. This curriculum which included ten hours of online training complemented by and two half-days of in-person training, focused on relationship building, one of the five youth development supports and opportunities that CNYD's *Youth Development Framework for Practice* highlights. These training resources focus on building strong relationships between youth and adults and among young people. The course is intended to build the skills of adults working with young people, especially youth workers in community and afterschool settings.

Making It Happen: Relationship Building is broken down into five chapters. You can use it in its entirety to guide your professional development efforts or you can pull out the readings, activities or tools that work best as supplements to what you are already doing.

Courses were similarly developed for two other *Framework* supports and opportunities, Skill Building and Youth Participation. All three curriculums have since been edited and reformatted and are now available as an online training resource available in the public domain. It is the hope of CNYD that these materials can support the professional development efforts of afterschool programs and other youth serving organizations.

Changes to the Copyright
The *Making It Happen: Relationship Building Training Materials* were originally developed as copyrighted materials of the Community Network for Youth Development. We are now making these materials available for educational use pursuant to the Creative Commons copyright license below. We intend for these materials to be used as broadly as possible to promote higher-quality programming and developmental support for young people. You are free to copy, transmit and distribute this work, and to adapt this work. However, you may not use this work for commercial purposes. We ask that when you do use CNYD's materials you acknowledge CNYD as the source.

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About CNYD

The Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) functioned as a critical youth development intermediary organization from its founding in 1992 to its closing in 2013. Working deeply within Bay Area communities and statewide in California to institutionalize quality youth development practice, CNYD's focus on capacity-building was unique in its systems-wide approach to influencing change at policy, organizational and practitioner levels.

We are placing selected training materials and publications into the public domain with the hope that the knowledge and tools that were developed over two decades of work can continue to be a resource to the youth development field. These materials represent the best of what our many talented staff members learned about how to effectively train adults working with young people. We are grateful to the organizations that are making CNYD's resources available in the public domain and for keeping our work accessible and relevant.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Relationship Building

Welcome

Welcome to Chapter One of Relationship Building! This first chapter begins to explore the foundations of relationship building, considers the importance of this practice and how it's a key factor in the success of *youth programs*.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to introduce you to key concepts of relationship building through readings, assessments and exercises.

By the end of this chapter you'll be able to:

- Define "relationship building" and its four dimensions
- Relate "relationship building" to the other components of the youth development framework.
- Identify key practices that support "relationship building"
- Assess and identify your current practice of relationship building

Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and exercises in this chapter. Each section builds upon the next.

Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 1:

45 – 60 minutes: Readings and activities

30 – 45 minutes: Exercise with youth

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1.1 Self Reflection: Reflect on Your Own Experience

Reflecting on your own time as a *youth* can help you gain insight into how to build relationships with young people. Begin by thinking about the important adults in your own life. As this youth worker below remembers, just one caring adult can make a big difference in a young person's life….

Ms. Hernandez

"I hated almost everything about high school except for my best friend and one class in senior year. Even now many years later I can remember that sociology class vividly. The room had a cheerfulness about it – and it had nothing to do with the space itself. It was because of the teacher and the environment she created for learning. Ms. Hernandez not only laughed at my jokes, she listened to me and every student in the class. Her assignments were interesting, relevant and she allowed us to choose our topics and projects.

Sometimes I would stay after class to ask her questions and talk about stuff. One day during the last month of school she asked me what college I was going to. I told her that I wasn't going to college – that I lined up a job as a short-order cook. I couldn't believe her reaction. She jumped out of her seat and said, "You're too smart not to go to college!" and began asking me lots of questions. To make a long story short, Ms. Hernandez got me thinking. She was the only adult who helped me believe that more was possible for my life. Before I knew it, I agreed to have her help me research schools and complete applications. It was really late in the process but thanks to Ms. Hernandez's help I got accepted to a state university and even got some grant money.

I believe if it wasn't for this teacher I wouldn't be where I am today…"

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Worksheet 1

1.1 Self-Reflection: An Important Adult in Your Life

Think back and remember an important adult that contributed to your life in a positive way. For the purpose of this exercise please focus on an adult other than your primary caregiver. It could be any adult who played an important role -- a teacher, a coach, a neighbor, an aunt or an uncle.

Adults name: _____

List below six or seven characteristics this person embodied:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

How did this person:

- Get to know you?

- Support you emotionally?

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- Provide you guidance?

- Support you in practical ways?

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1.2 Concept Exploration: Understand Relationship Building (Part 1)

1.2.1 Define Relationship Building

The following definition of Relationship Building is based on the *CNYD Youth Development Framework for Practice.*

Definition of Relationship Building

Relationship building is the development of caring, supportive relationships between adults and young people, and among young people and their peers

Relationship building means that youth workers spend time with young people of any age getting to know them and developing trust. In successful after-school or youth programs, adults respect young people and treat them with courtesy and care. Young people learn to treat each other with respect as well and develop a group identity that includes everyone. Staff members know that building positive trusting relationships with young people is not a separate part of their work, rather an integral part of every activity and interaction.

Research has provided overwhelming evidence that relationship building between youth and adults is one of the most critical factors in the healthy development of young people.

The benefits of relationship building are many. As mutual respect and trust increase between program staff and youth, discipline problems often diminish. Young people are more likely to voice their ideas and opinions and a sense of group membership is fostered.

Youth workers report that their job satisfaction increases when they develop and foster meaningful relationships within their programs.

To form healthy, meaningful relationships youth need:

- **Guidance** regarding the direction their lives are taking and decisions they are making. For instance an adult may offer a young person supportive advice or help them to move through a difficult personal challenge.

- **Emotional support** in both times of accomplishment and crisis. Being present with a young person's feelings by listening or empathizing can help them to reflect or work through a difficult time.

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- **Practical support** that helps young people in their everyday lives to get what they need. This could include sharing knowledge of community resources that will help a young person take a next step in their lives such as helping them gain access to essential services or youth activities.

- The experience of **being known** by both adults and other youth. This means that adults seek to truly know and understand every youth beyond superficial facts. Youth also need a variety of opportunities to get to know more about each other during program time.

These four elements of relationships are relevant and important in the many environments in which youth find themselves – whether at school or home, in peer gatherings and groups, and in extracurricular programs and activities.

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1.2.2 What You Can Do to Support Relationship Building Youth Programs

There are specific things you and your program can do to support positive relationships. Although they have been categorized for you, keep in mind that these and most strategies fall under more than one of the four key dimensions of relationship building. Some examples include:

Guidance:

- Model caring and respectful communication by expressing compassion and courtesy in all your interactions.
- Maintain *boundaries* for sharing appropriate personal information with youth.
- Uphold the program values.

Emotional Support:

- Create safe atmosphere through establishing and upholding group agreements with your youth.
- Include daily check-ins or community circles that allow young people to reflect on what is happening in the community and in their own lives.
- Address changes and transitions in your program. Give everyone clear, timely and honest information about youth and/or staff members who join or leave the program
- Create *rituals* that welcome in and transition out the members of the group.
- Acknowledge and create opportunities for youth to express their feelings about changes.

Practical support:

- Stay connected to other staff in your program (and school) who can act as resources for youth
- Keep information about outside services on hand to offer to youth and families for issues that are beyond the scope of your program (transportation, social services, community health, education, libraries, etc.).

Sense of being known:

- Intentionally build a sense of positive community within the program through team-building activities
- Seek to know the names of all youth as well as their caregivers
- Create opportunities to celebrate and highlight individual and group talents and accomplishments
- Make an effort to know all the youth in your program:

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- Get to know their teachers and caregivers
- Ask about their brothers and sisters, etc.

- Make yourself available outside program time:
  - Go to their school for special events (games, assemblies, etc.)
  - Attend important life events like birthdays and family celebrations
  - Hang out with youth and play with them during free time or after program

Trusting relationships between individuals and groups cannot be forced and take time to develop. Practice patience with yourself and with your youth on this journey. When introducing group building activities, make sure that personal revelations are low risk. It is important to let trust develop before you ask youth, especially adolescents to do anything that makes them feel silly or vulnerable.

It's also important for you to take time to invest in your own growth and development. Seek out training and/or coaching in group development, facilitation and communication skills. These include:

- Becoming skilled at team building and group processes that allow for communication, cooperation, and appreciation among group members.
- Identifying and developing your skills in *cross-cultural interactions*.

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1.2.3 What do Supportive Relationships Look Like in Youth Programs?

Relationship building in action takes many different forms. You can tell that healthy relationships are supported and encouraged in youth programs by:

How people engage with each other…

- Adults and youth know each other's names and treat others respectfully
- Adults squat down when interacting with small children, to speak to them at their eye level.
- Young people approach adults to discuss their problems and concerns.
- Conflicts are resolved with words, not raised voices or fists. If needed, adults are asked to assist with the situation.
- Young people are able to work together in groups and across differences of age, gender, ethnic background, ability, and social status.

How program time is scheduled and allocated…

- There are opportunities for group discussions and one-to-one meetings between adults and young people
- Time is set aside to reflect on the group's interactions and recognize accomplishments.
- There is also open time for young people to socialize with one another and have informal contact with adult staff.

What is posted on the walls…

- A schedule of the week's activities is posted that includes both structured time and open time.
- Pictures on the walls that celebrate program participants, their cultures, and the group's accomplishments within the program.
- Posters of program guidelines or ground rules prominently displayed. The guidelines specify how young people want to be treated and will treat each other. These posters are hand made by youth and sometimes in other languages.

Opportunities for relationship building exist at all levels of youth programs and organizations. While these opportunities take different forms depending on the age of the young people, the goal of fostering supportive relationships is appropriate for all ages.

See below for examples of programs that actively support relationship building.

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Relationship Building in Action *Case One*

Project Yield -- Oakland, CA

Project Yield is a great example of a program that supports staff in very specific ways to build relationships with and among youth. After discovering that staff did not have enough time to just “chill” and hang out with youth, Project Yield decided to prioritize relationship building by extending staff hours each week beyond formal programming.

Since its start in 1997, Project YIELD has become a part of the West Oakland community, and families rely on its high quality after school programs for their children. Youth receive daily academic and youth leadership support in visual, performing, literary, digital and public art programs.

“At Project Yield program staff members are paid to spend up to eight hours per week helping young people with problems outside the program, getting to know them in their neighborhood, or just hanging out and chatting with young people. Staff members are also evaluated partly on the basis of the strengths of the relationships they build with young people. One way the program gathers information on relationship building is by asking young people, through surveys, to identify staff members with whom they've established a significant relationship. This, along with other indicators of relationship building, is factored into staff evaluations.” – Nancy Netherland

Relationship Building in Action *Case Two*

High School After School Program in Lincoln Square – New York, NY

Centered in the heart of a major urban area, The After School Program in

Lincoln Square makes its home within the doors of MLK Jr. High School.

Operating five days a week throughout the school year with occasional weekend activities, this program provides students with critical academic support and other activities including; tutoring, homework assistance, study skills, SAT and college preparation, computer and writing support, drama and music clubs, quality recreational activities, and real career and job opportunities through internships in the community.

Program participants range in age from fourteen to eighteen and come mostly from low-income families. Enrollment in this afterschool program is open to all youth at the school with the expectation that they will attend a minimum of three days a week.

Unlike many programs, The After School Program in Lincoln Square has its own dedicated program space within the school facility. This has allowed the program to create a youth-friendly space where youth feel welcomed and respected. Youth always know where they can find an interested adult who youth-initiated conversations or requests for assistance and support.

The staff at Lincoln Square places a very high value on the development of supportive, caring relationships between adult staff and program participants. These relationships are

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viewed as critical doorways for engaging youth and promoting their learning of academic and practical life skills.

The Lincoln Square program is very clear about what it takes to build meaningful relationships with youth. It has intentionally configured their program space, operating hours, hiring practices, and expectations of how staff should spend their time to ensure that these relationships are established. Viewed as critical doorways for engaging youth and promoting their learning of academic and practical life skills. The afterschool program ensures that staff members have "unstructured time" to interact with the youth, free from the responsibilities of leading formal activities. Staff are expected to be accessible for youth-initiated conversations or requests for assistance and support. Sometimes this means accepting a challenge to a game of scrabble or checkers.

The staff at The After School Program in Lincoln Square take time at every staff meeting to reflect on their youth participants – perhaps voicing a concern about a young person who has not participated recently, an individual who has made a positive breakthrough relative to their goals, or others that may be experiencing difficult personal challenges outside of the program. In this way, staff members build their knowledge of their participants, agree on how best to support them, and are reminded that youth belong at the center of the program's work.

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1.2.4 Assessment

Assessing Relationships in Own Program

Purpose: The purpose of this assessment is to help you assess the overall quality of adult-youth relationships, from your own perspective and from that of youth in the program.

1. Overall, how comfortable are YOU, personally, with the quality of youth-adult relationships in your program?

_____ The staff do all they can to build high quality relationships with youth.

_____ The staff do an acceptable job in building quality relationships with youth.

_____ We have to do much better in forming quality relationships with youth.

2. Overall, how comfortable are YOU, personally, with the quality of youth-youth relationships in your program?

_____ The staff do all they can to ensure that youth have the opportunity and support to build quality relationships with their peers.

_____ The staff do an acceptable job in helping youth build quality relationships with their peers.

_____ We have to do much better in providing youth the opportunity and support to form quality relationships with their peers.

3. Consider the four components of relationship building. Check the component(s) that you believe program staff should pay more attention to when strengthening their relationships with youth.

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

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_____ Knowledge of Youth

4. Consider the four components of relationship building. Check the component(s) that you believe program staff should pay more attention to when helping youth strengthen relationships with their peers.

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

_____ Knowledge of Youth

5. In your opinion, how comfortable are YOUTH with the quality of youth-adult relationships in your program?

_____ Almost all of the youth believe that they have high quality relationships with at least two staff members.

_____ The youth are generally pleased with the quality of the relationships that they have with staff.

_____ Too many youth feel isolated from staff in this program.

6. Consider the four components of relationship building. Which component(s) would YOUTH say that staff need to strengthening their relationships with program participants?

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

_____ Knowledge of Youth

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Worksheet 2

1.3 Self- Reflection: Supportive Relationships in Your Program

Take a minute to think about your program.

1. What kinds of things do adults do in your program to build supportive relationships with youth?

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

2. What does your program do to support relationship building among youth?

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

3. What else could your program do to support staff members in relationship building?

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

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1.4 Concept Exploration: Understand Relationship Building (Part 2)

1.4.1 Research that Supports the Importance of Relationship Building

In your work as a youth worker, you may have heard or read about the importance of childhood resiliency. You may be wondering, what does it have to do with building relationships in youth programs?

Resiliency is the quality that allows young people to "bounce back" – to recover from negative experiences or overcome obstacles and risk factors in their lives. Research on childhood resiliency has shown that a caring relationship with a committed and encouraging adult “who believes in me and my future” is an essential ingredient for most youth who succeed and become healthy and productive adults despite economic adversity or other risk factors. (Werner & Smith, 1989)

For example, a resilient youth who experiences the divorce of their parents is better able to recognize and express their feelings; seek and accept support from others; and eventually understand and integrate their experience. The event may have a negative impact on them in the short-term, but their resiliency allows them to thrive and continue to form and sustain healthy relationships in their own life.

Research on young people's resiliency fueled the *youth development movement*. It shifted the focus from young people's *deficits* and problem behaviors to the factors and conditions that help young people succeed in the face of obstacles.

By providing opportunities for relationship building, we ensure that our programs are contributing to the important developmental needs of the young people we serve.

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1.4.2 Relationship Building and other YD Framework Components

To promote and foster caring and respectful relationships in your program, other youth development practices need to be present. The Youth Development Framework for Practice provides a practical roadmap for youth programs and organizations. This framework, based on many years of research, includes four other "Supports and Opportunities" (in addition to relationship building) that all young people need to develop into healthy adults.

- **Physical and Emotional Safety**: Young people must feel secure that adults will protect them from harm, to know that they are protected by a set of fair and consistently applied rules; to feel accepted and valued by the group.

- **Skill Building**: Young people need challenging and engaging learning experiences through which they can build a wide array of skills and competencies – and experience growth and mastery.

- **Meaningful Participation:** Young people need to have their voices heard, to make decisions and lead their peers, and to experience the connection that comes from belonging to a group.

- **Community Involvement**: Young people need to extend their sense of belonging beyond the program walls; to gain a greater understanding of their communities; to give back and be productive contributors in their world.

These factors are dynamic and interdependent. None can truly succeed without the presence of all the others. For example, relationship building is a critical factor in whether or not young people experience a sense of physical and emotional safety in youth programs.

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1.5 Self-Assessment

1.5.1 Understand Assessment

Why Assessment?

Assessments are tools that allow you to evaluate your practices and programs for the purpose of supporting continuous learning and program improvement.

Assessment activities focus on the real work that you do in your programs. They provide indicators to help you review and reflect on the practice of youth development in your program. Different types of assessment activities serve different purposes:

- **Self-Reflection**: Help you think about your application of youth development practices. Some activities ask you to assess your strengths and identify areas for improvement in your interactions with youth.
- **Program Assessment**: Help you think about the quality of programming in your organization. Some ask you to evaluate the capacity of your program to support youth development practices.
- **Shared Learning**: Help you share your insights and knowledge with staff and youth within your program. Some activities ask you to brainstorm practical implications of assessments with your colleagues and with the youth in your program.

When used as a learning tool, assessments can challenge you to grow and improve your work. Assessments are not tests. They are designed to benefit you – to help you understand yourself and set goals for your work and your program.

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1.5.2 Assessment

Defining the Dimensions of Strong Staff-Youth Relationships

The purpose of this activity is to explore the essential dimensions of relationship building, from your perspective, and from the perspective of the youth with whom you work.

Step 1: Self-Reflection: Take about 15 minutes to reflect on the following questions. Record your thoughts on another piece of paper.

(1) How do you know when you have successfully formed a strong relationship with youth in your program?

(2) What are the most effective strategies that you use to form a strong relationship with youth?

(3) What do you expect from youth in terms of their efforts in forming a relationship with you?

Step 2*:* ***Discussion with Youth:*** Select 3 to 5 youth and engage them in a group conversation about relationship building for about 15 minutes. Orient the conversation around the following questions.

(1) What makes a good youth worker?

(2) How do you know when a youth worker really respects you and wants to have a positive relationship?

(3) How do you know when a youth worker really does not care about you or about forming a strong relationship with you in the program?

Step 3: ***Self-Reflection:*** Reflect on your discussion with youth.

(1) What did you learn from youth that you had not thought about before the group conversation?

(2) Briefly describe what you learned or what was reinforced for you through the experience of talking with youth about relationship building.

(3) Did your perception of relationship building change in talking with youth in your program? For example, do you think that relationship building is more important than before and/or did you learn new ways that youth think about relationships?

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1.5.3 Assessment

Building Relationships with Youth in Programs

Complete the following assessment. Please be honest with yourself when answering these questions. This assessment will help you "benchmark" your current practice – through identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement your practice.

Listed below are fourteen statements. Please circle the number that best represents your opinion about the statement.

1. I will go out of my way to approach a youth when I see that she/he is upset or having difficulties.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

2. To provide guidance to the group, I am always clear about how I expect everyone to treat one another in my program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

3. When I give guidance, I am comfortable sharing relevant information about myself

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

4. When a youth is having a problem, I'm effective in helping him/her deal with it.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

5. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that I always listen to and respect their personal concerns or issues.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

6. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that I give them lots of praise when they deserve it.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

7. I am able to create a spirit of teamwork among youth so that they care about each other and want to work together.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

8. Youth readily come to me when they need help dealing with a personal problem.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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9. When designing youth activities, I make sure that everybody has a chance to “check in” and express their personal wants or needs.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

10. If you asked youth in my program, they would say that I “go the extra mile” in terms of giving them advice on practical issues (e.g., dealing with bullies at school, relating to a girl/boyfriend, finding a job).

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

11. I am confident in my knowledge about all of the youth with whom I work on a regular basis (e.g., I know what is important to them; their personal needs).

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

12. When designing youth activities, I always make sure that there are opportunities for youth to build relationships with their peers.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

13. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that they know what I stand for.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

14. I know some effective strategies for helping diverse youth learn together and work together.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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Worksheet 3

Chapter Review

This review will help you retain key concepts about Relationship Building. Please answer the following seven questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. What is relationship building as defined by the Youth Development Framework for Practice?

2. What do young people need to form healthy, meaningful relationships? (Name and describe the four dimensions of relationship building.)

3. Why is relationship building important?

4. What is resiliency? How did it fuel the youth Development movement?

5. Name and briefly describe the other “supports and opportunities” that are essential to relationship building.

6. List some specific things you can do to support relationship building.

7. Self-Reflection: What have you learned about yourself? What can you focus on to improve your practice of relationship building?

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Worksheet 3

Chapter Review Answers

This review will help you retain key concepts about Relationship Building. Please answer the following seven questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. What is relationship building as defined by the Youth Development Framework for Practice?

Relationship building is the development of caring, supportive relationships between adults and young people, and among young people and their peers

Relationship building means that youth workers spend time with young people getting to know them and developing trust. In successful after-school or youth programs, adults respect young people and treat them with courtesy and care. Young people learn to treat each other with respect as well and develop a group identity that includes everyone. Staff members know that building positive trusting relationships with young people is not a separate part of their work, rather an integral part of every activity and interaction.

2. What do young people need to form healthy, meaningful relationships? (Name and describe the four dimensions of relationship building.)

To form healthy, meaningful relationships youth need:

- **Guidance** regarding the direction their lives are taking and decisions they are making. For instance an adult may offer a young person supportive advice or help them to move through a difficult personal challenge.

- **Emotional support** in both times of accomplishment and crisis. Being present with a young person's feelings by listening or empathizing can help them to reflect or work through a difficult time.

- **Practical support** that helps young people in their everyday lives to get what they need. This could include sharing knowledge of community resources that will help a young person take a next step in their lives such as helping them gain access to essential services or youth activities.

- The experience of **being known** by both adults and other youth. This means that adults seek to truly know and understand every youth beyond superficial facts. Youth also need a variety of opportunities to get to know more about each other during program time.

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3. Why is relationship building important?

Research has provided overwhelming evidence that relationship building between youth and adults is one of the most critical factors in the healthy development of young people. By providing opportunities for relationship building, we ensure that our programs are contributing to the important developmental needs of the young people we serve.

4. What is resiliency? How did it fuel the youth Development movement?

Resiliency is the quality that allows young people to "bounce back" – to recover from negative experiences or overcome obstacles and risk factors in their lives. Research on childhood resiliency has shown that a caring relationship with a committed and encouraging adult “who believes in me and my future” is an essential ingredient for most youth who succeed and become healthy and productive adults despite economic adversity or other risk factors. (Werner & Smith, 1989)

Research on resiliency shifted the focus from young people's deficits and problem behaviors to the factors and conditions that help youth succeed in the face of obstacles.

5. Name and briefly describe the other “supports and opportunities” that are essential to relationship building.

Youth Development Framework for Practice:

- **Physical and Emotional Safety**: Young people must feel secure that adults will protect them from harm, to know that they are protected by a set of fair and consistently applied rules; to feel accepted and valued by the group.

- **Skill Building**: Young people need challenging and engaging learning experiences through which they build a wide array of skills and competencies – and experience growth and mastery.

- **Meaningful Participation:** Young people need to have their voices heard, to make decisions and lead their peers, and to experience the connection that comes from belonging to a group.

- **Community Involvement**: Young people need to extend their sense of belonging beyond the program walls; to gain a greater understanding of their communities; to give back and be productive contributors in their world.

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6. List some specific things you can do to support relationship building.

Some ideas for supporting relationship building:

1. Seek to know the names of all youth as well as their caregivers
    - Create safe atmosphere through establishing and upholding group agreements with your youth.
    - Include daily check-ins or community circles to allow young people to reflect on what is happening in the community and in their own lives.
    - Keep information about outside services on hand to offer to youth and families for issues that are beyond the scope of my program (transportation, social services, community health, education, libraries, etc).
    - Model caring and respectful communication by expressing compassion and courtesy in all your interactions.
    - Maintain boundaries for sharing appropriate personal information with youth
2. Create opportunities to celebrate and highlight individual and group talents and accomplishments
3. and….

7. Self-Reflection: What have you learned about yourself in this chapter? What can you focus on to improve your practice of relationship building?

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Chapter 2: Role of Adults

Welcome

Welcome to Chapter Two of Relationship Building! In this chapter you will look more closely at strategies for relationship building by considering the roles adults play in supporting relationships.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to provide you with an overview of positive role modeling and key communication skills – through readings, exercises and assessments.

By the end of this chapter you'll be able to:

- Identify opportunities for being a role model for youth
- Identify youth worker actions that promote and undermine good modeling
- Recognize the unique nature of the youth to youth worker relationship
- Identify five key communication skills and how they are applied in relationship building with youth
- Identify challenges and surface strategies for building relationships with and among youth
- Assess and evaluate your communication skills – identifying your strengths and possible areas for improvement.

Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and exercises in this chapter. Each section builds upon the next.

Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 2:

45 – 60 minutes: Readings and activities

30 – 45 minutes: Exercise with youth

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2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Exercise: Five Dialogues

Think about the various roles you play in your life. Besides your role as a youth worker, are you… a parent? a coach? a spouse? Each role serves a different purpose and helps shape your behavior in relationship towards others. As a youth worker you may take on a number of roles in your work depending on the particular needs of your youth and the context of any given situation. In this exercise, you are going to look at and consider various adult / youth roles.

The following are slices of six dialogues between two people. Please choose **three** dialogues and, on a separate piece of paper, first identify the kind of roles present and then answer the following questions:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever assume one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

(For instance, if a dialogue is between an older and a younger sibling, when would it be appropriate for you to act as an older sibling to a youth in your program? Or is it ever appropriate?)

Dialogue 1: Saturday Night

Person A: Can you take me to the mall later? I want to buy a new shirt for Saturday night…

Person B: The mall? I don't think so. I told you you're not going to the party…

A: What?? That is so unfair!

B: I'm sorry you feel that way.

A: Pleeeeaaaase! Come on…Jessica and Melinda are going to the party….

B: You knew the rules ahead of time yet you chose to ignore your curfew last Saturday.

A: It wasn't my fault. Melinda wanted to go to her friend's house near the lake and it took us extra long to get home..

B: Maybe you should have thought about the consequences before you went with her and broke our agreement.

A: My life will be ruined — I'll never be invited anywhere ever again. Everyone from school is going to be there….

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Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

Dialogue 2: The Accused

Person A: Can you stay for dinner?

Person B: Sure, my mom is working late tonight.

A: I have to tell you what happened today in my math class! You won't believe it!

B: What?

A: While I was taking my exam, I glanced over to the next row and caught the kid next to me staring at my test – and it looked like he was copying my answers….

B: No way! What did you do?

A: I tried to ignore him. But a few seconds later the teacher noticed and asked him to step outside the room. And then he tapped my shoulder and told me to come too!

B: No way! You weren't cheating – were you?

A: Of course not!! I studied really hard for that exam but the teacher wants my mom and dad to come to school for a meeting…

B: Oh my god, that's awful…

A: Yeah, my mom is going to be so upset. With all the trouble my little brother has been getting into, she doesn't need this.

B: You know your mom is really cool. I think she will back you up – she knows how hard you work and trusts you…….

A: Yeah, you're right. I just hate being accused of something I didn't do!

Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

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Dialogue 3: Have a Seat

Person A: Hello, please have a seat.

Person B: Thank you.

A: I haven't seen you for, let's see here, it looks like about eight months. How's your stomach since your last visit? Any more cramps?

B: No, my stomach's fine.

A: So, What brings you here today?

B: Well, my ankle hurts and it's swollen. I'm having trouble walking on it.

A: Have you been playing sports at school?

B: Not really.

A: Did you fall or have an accident?

B: No, not that I can remember.

A: I see, mind if I take a look?

B: Okay.

Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

Dialogue 4: Take a Chance on Me!

Person A: Let's go, let's go, let's go! I want to see hustle people!!

Person B: Put me in—come on, put me in!

A: Are you kidding? Last time you deliberately fouled the other team. Why should I jeopardize the team on your behalf?

B: I lost my cool, but I learned my lesson. I've been out the last four games! I won't let the team down I promise! You're going to have to take a chance on me sometime.

A: If I see you dogging it out there I will yank you so fast and bench you for the rest of the season—do you understand me?

B: Yes sir.

A: I want you to be the role model for teamwork.

B: I will!

A: All right, go out there and show me what you've got.

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Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

Dialogue 5: So Glad to See You

Person A: Hey…I'm really glad to see you. The other youth were asking about you today. Want a hug?

Person B: Yeah. (crying)

A: Want to go somewhere we can talk?

B: Thanks (crying)

A: So, how are you? How are you feeling right now?

B: He's shot…(crying)…I can't believe he got shot…(crying)

A: Oh, I'm so sorry it happened.

B: I feel horrible, I've been crying for hours… I can't stop crying…

A: Its okay to cry, it's perfectly natural. I can hang out with you for a while…

B: Thanks – but I was wondering…can you go with me to the hospital to see him?

A: Sure, we can go right after program. But first, have you called your parents?

B: No. I guess I should call them.

A: Yes. And we should probably call ahead to the hospital to make sure they're allowing visitors…

B: Okay.

A: Let's go inside and find a phone…

B: Thanks so much.

Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

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Dialogue 6: A Tight Schedule

Person A: Okay, let's move on to the second word problem. Remember, the test will include problems like these.

Person B: Excuse me, I still have questions about the first problem. I don't get it.

Person C: Me too!

A: I'm sorry, I don't have time now, we need to move on.

B: How am I supposed to understand the next one if I don't understand the first!

A: I hear that your frustrated John, but our class is on a very tight schedule today with the special program planned this afternoon. But I do have a few minutes at the end of the day. I can help you and Maria then.

B: Okay.

C: Thanks.

Please respond:

- What is this relationship and how do you know?
- How are these roles the same or different from those you take on with youth?
- Would you ever take on one of these roles with your youth?
- When and why?

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Worksheet 1

2.2 Self-Reflection: Your Role as a Youth Worker

Reflecting on the various roles in the previous exercise, consider your role as a youth worker.

1. What is unique about your relationship with youth?

2. How does it give you more flexibility in supporting young people than those in other roles?

3.What kind of support do you offer that's different from other adults?

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2.2.2 What Makes the Youth Worker Role Unique?

As a youth worker you have the opportunity to develop a truly unique relationship with your youth. In your position you get to play multiple roles, be more informal with youth, and act as a guide and mentor.

Play multiple roles:

As you discovered in the dialogues exercise, you get to play many roles when working with youth. You'll need to set boundaries and limits like a parent and tend to physical and emotional hurts like a doctor or counselor. Sometimes you're a teacher – helping youth to build new skills. The role you assume is dependant on the situation at hand and the needs of your youth.

Be more informal:

The informal and playful setting of a youth program allows you to connect closely with and know youth possibly more than other adults in their lives. You can nurture and pay attention to the broader development of young people in a way that teachers often do not have the time or freedom to do. But by virtue of job status you are not a peer, even though you may be just a few years older than your youth.

Act as a guide and mentor:

Perhaps the most powerful role you can play is that of an ally to young people. This means you can take opportunities to "step into their shoes", learn about their concerns, and help your youth gain access to resources. You can advocate on behalf of youth to other adults. In your relationship you may have more flexibility to be a guide and mentor – unlike other adults who often have a range of agendas for a young person. You can seek to empower young people by working with them to discover new ideas and find their own solutions.

Of course your role also depends on the age of the youth in your program. With younger children you may need to be more directive in your approach. With teenagers you may take a more advisory role.

Once you develop rapport and earn the trust of your youth, you may have a big influence over their behavior and choices. You can help youth make healthy decisions and offer emotional support as they deal with the challenges of their pre-adolescent and teen years.

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2.3 Concept Exploration: Role Modeling

2.3.1 Importance of Role Models

Role models serve a critical function in the lives of youth. They can be teachers, parents, friends, siblings, celebrities, athletes, etc. – anyone who sets a good example for young people. Mentoring research validates the importance of role models in lives of youth. (Benson, 1998; McGill,1997).

As young people grow and develop, they look at the adults and peers around them to see who they want to be and what choices they want to make. Role models provide youth with means of identification and offer guidelines for behaviors and actions. Youth see possibilities for their futures especially when they see what adults "like them" have accomplished. Of course not all role models are "positive". Some lead youth to making unhealthy decisions. Positive role models are conscious of how their behavior impact young people – and exhibit only behaviors that they want imitated.

2.3.2 Youth Workers Influence Young People

Young people are astute in their ability to look at the actions of adults around them and determine if they are ethical, just, appropriate, etc. As a youth worker ALL your actions and choices provide a model for how young people behave and shape their beliefs. Consider the various ways you influence your youth:

What you model	Some examples…	Questions to consider:
Appearance	How you dress for work	What messages do your clothes and overall appearance communicate to youth?
Speech	How you speak about others, including your colleagues and workplace	Do you speak positively about others and refrain from gossip and put owns?
Interpersonal relations	How you interact with youth and your colleagues	Do you complement others? Provide positive feedback and appreciations? Are you respectful and refrain from hurtful teasing? Are you able to handle conflict in a healthy way?
Work Ethic	How you care about doing a good job	Do you show up for work on time? Do you express energy and enthusiasm for your work?
Language	How you use words	Do you use refrain from using swear words? Do you use age and culturally appropriate expressions and language?

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What you model	Some examples…	Questions to consider:
Boundaries	How much you share about yourself and how you expect others to behave	Do you make yourself accessible but maintain healthy boundaries? Do you refrain from telling youth your personal problems? Do you make it clear what kind of behavior is not acceptable?
Views	How you express your views about the world	Do you talk candidly with youth about your views on political and social issues and refrain from self-righteousness? Do you listen to others' views?
Values	How you express your personal values	Do you know and disclose your core values with youth? Do you "walk the talk"?

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Worksheet 2

2.3.3 Exercise: What's the Message?

Below are four fictional scenarios that could take place in a youth organization.

As you read, consider the message that each youth worker's actions communicate to the youth with whom they work.

Choose one example, imagine yourself as that youth worker and, at the bottom of this page, reflect on the message behind your actions. For example: "I speak well of colleagues: This demonstrates that I respect and care about them…"

Example #1:

While rushing to get to work on time, you throw on a tee shirt but do not notice the design on the front. It has a large graphic of a marijuana leaf. Then before leaving the house you answer the phone and have a conversation with a friend. By the time you get to work you are 20 minutes late and your kids are sitting around. What is the message behind your clothes and actions?

Example #2:

You are new to a high-school afterschool program. During your first day, you tell your group that they are not to call you by your first name – that they should address you as Miss Smith. You also explain that you will use each youth's full name and not use nicknames. You tell the youth they need to do the same. What is the message behind your words?

Example #3:

You are hanging with the youth in your program during an unstructured period. One boy comes up to you and asks to talk to you alone. He tells you that he thinks his parents are homophobic. They told him he can't hang out with Rupert and Max anymore. He's upset and doesn't know what to do. You tell him you empathize and then share a detailed personal story with him. You say that you lied to your parents about who you hung out with after school and they never found out. What is the message behind your response?

Example #4:

While facilitating a group inclusion activity one of your youth starts hiccupping. The others begin laughing and teasing the young boy. You pause the activity and ask the group to remember their group agreements. You ask, is teasing allowed? If not, why not? You facilitate a discussion about the importance of group agreements and treating each other with respect. What is the message behind your approach?

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2.4 Assessment

2.4.1 Assessing Your Own Communication Abilities

Building strong relationships with youth requires strong communication abilities. There are five core communication skills (active listening, establishing trust, empathy, being present, and providing feedback). Most workers have a preferred style. That is, you are better equipped – in terms of personal comfort and ability – to use one or more communication skills as compared to others.

The purpose of this activity is to help you identify your preferred communication style when working with (a) individual youth and (b) groups of youth.

Working with Individual Youth

Please assess your overall ability in communicating with *individual youth* by circling the number that best represents your ability.

1. Being an Active Listener (e.g., seeking to hear what the youth is really trying to communicate to you).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

2. Establishing Trust (e.g., demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

3. Being Empathetic (e.g., demonstrating that you genuinely care about the young person)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

4. Being Present (e.g., demonstrating that you are in the moment, and not distracted, when relating to the young person).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

5. Providing Feedback (e.g., responding in ways that explicitly address the concerns of the youth)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

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Working with Youth Groups

Please assess your overall ability in communicating with *youth groups* by circling the number that best represents your ability.

6. Being an Active Listener (e.g., working hard to hear points of difference and consensus within the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

7. Establishing Trust (e.g., demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you to respect the group and keep it emotionally safe for all)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

8. Being Empathetic (e.g., demonstrating that you genuinely care about everybody in the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

9. Being Present (e.g., demonstrating that you are in the moment, and not distracted, when being in the group).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

10. Providing Feedback (e.g., responding in ways that explicitly acknowledge the concerns of all the youth in the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability, 4-high ability

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2.5 Skill Development: Communication Skills

Relationship building ultimately requires that you understand and respond to the unique needs of individual youth. Your ability to do so is dependent, in large part, on effective use of communication skills.

2.5.1 Five Communication Skills

Messages are communicated with much more than just your words. At the same time, words are very powerful – for what you say and how you say it can have a big impact on the lives of young people. By strengthening a few key communication skills you can become more effective in building and fostering relationships with and among youth.

The skills you use to communicate with an individual are the same skills you use in supporting a group of youth to communicate with each other. They are:

1. ***Active Listening*:** Seeking to hear what the youth is really trying to communicate to you.
2. ***Establishing Trust*:** Demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you.
3. ***Being Empathetic*:** Demonstrating that you can see things from their perspective.
4. ***Being Present*:** Demonstrating that you are in the moment and not distracted when relating to the young person.
5. ***Providing Feedback*:** Responding in ways that explicitly address the concerns of youth.

Each of these skills builds on the other. For example, an excellent way to build trust is to really listen to young people. Listening is also a doorway for true empathy.

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Active Listening

Learning to hear what the youth is really trying to communicate to you.

How do you listen attentively? Below are some of the steps to consider:

Active Listening	
Steps	**Description**
Be present	Give the speaker your full attention and eye contact
Keep an open mind	Withhold your comments / opinions or need to respond
Affirm the speaker	Paraphrase key words to encourage the speaker and let them know they have been heard
Nonverbal response	Communicate through your body language you that you are listening and open to what is being said
Listen fully	Listen not just to the words of the speaker but to how they are speaking, their body language and the feeling behind the words

(Adapted from the section on Attentive Listening in Tribes, pages 93 & 94)

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Establishing Trust

Demonstrating to the youth that they can have confidence and depend on you.

How do you gain the trust of your youth? Below are some of the steps to consider:

Establishing Trust	
Steps	**Description**
Do what you say you will do	Adults break promises to youth daily without giving them a valid excuse. The quickest way to win trust is to follow through on what you say you will do.
Be consistent	Deal with rule infractions and non-compliant behavior in the same way. This does not mean that everyone is treated the same. Youth understand ambiguity—the grey zone. Deal with each situation consistently while also taking the context and individual into account.
Be open with the facts	Let youth know all the facts that you know. Bring them into a situation and allow them to participate in decision making or help problem solve an issue at hand.
Prepare youth	Let them know in advance about any changes that might be occurring—schedule changes, new staff changes, up coming holidays, etc.
Tell youth that you trust them	Let the youth know that you trust them with information, decisions, and their own ability to figure things out.

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Being Empathetic

Demonstrating that you can see things from another's perspective.

How do you show someone you empathize? Below are some of the skills to consider:

Being Empathetic	
Skills	Description
Attending, acknowledging	Providing verbal or non-verbal awareness of other, i.e., eye contact, facial expression, etc.
Restating, paraphrasing	Responding to person's basic verbal message
Reflecting	Reflecting feelings, experiences, or content that has been heard or perceived through cues
Interpreting	Offering a tentative interpretation about the other's feelings, desires or meanings
Summarizing, synthesizing	Bringing together in some way feelings and experiences; providing a focus
Probing	Questioning in a supportive way that requests more information or attempts to clear up confusions
Giving feedback	Sharing perceptions of the other's ideas or feelings; disclosing relevant personal information
Supporting	Showing warmth and caring in one's own individual way
Checking perceptions	Finding out if interpretations and perceptions are valid and accurate
Being quiet	Giving the other time to think as well as to talk

The information in the table below comes from:
http://crs.uvm.edu/gopher/nerl/personal/comm/e.html

SOURCE: Pickering, Marisue, "Communication" in EXPLORATIONS, A Journal of Research of the University of Maine, Vol. 3, No. 1, Fall 1986, pp 16-19.

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Being Present

Demonstrating that you are in the moment and not distracted when relating to the young person.

Presence has to do with your awareness and attention being focused on what is happening NOW. It is a non-judgmental stance in which you are taking in all that is occurring. When you are fully present, young people can sense that you are 'really there' for them.

It can be difficult to be present in the daily bustle and stress of youth programs and living your own life. However, when working with young people it is critical that you find space to relax, reflect and rest in order to be fully present in your program.

Being present requires energy. When you share your own vitality and passion with young people they can trust that you are being real with them. Youth appreciate adults who can be flexible and aware and show that they authentically care about young people.

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Providing Feedback

Responding in ways that explicitly address the concerns of youth.

Often feedback is given in an offhanded way that is not thoughtful, specific or supportive. It tends to look and feel like criticism. But feedback is an important communication tool that enables honest and open relationships. When you share the steps and intention of giving feedback it helps both the person sharing *and* receiving the feedback to be open, positive and receptive.

Steps to consider when giving feedback:

- Listen with an open mind
- Give acknowledgements and affirmations
- Ask clarifying questions
    - "What have you previously tried?"
    - "What are you thinking of doing?"
- Offer ideas: "Would you like some ideas/feedback?"
- Be specific and offer an detailed example of what you are talking about

Steps to consider when receiving feedback:

- Agree to the process
- Keep an open mind
- Listen fully
- Reflect on the new information
- "Try on" the new ideas
- Appreciate the focus being given to you!

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2.6 Assessment

2.6.1 Identifying Key Challenges and Strategies in Building Relationships

What gets in the way of forming close and trusting relationships with young people at any age – elementary, middle and high school? What challenges do you face in promoting and encouraging supportive relationships between young people?

Purpose: Relationship building ultimately requires that you understand and respond to the unique needs of individual youth. One's ability to do so is dependent, in part, on the effective use of communication strategies.

The purpose of this assessment is to deepen your understanding of three key communication strategies and how they directly affect your ability to form relationships.

Communication Strategies

Setting Boundaries: It's important to set clear limits with young people to let them know what you can and cannot do or share as a youth worker. Boundaries set the parameters for appropriate emotional and practical support. Knowing your limits does not mean that you are distant and aloof. Young people appreciate adults who are "real" with them. As a role model, you are also helping youth learn how to set appropriate boundaries for themselves.

Promoting Cross-Cultural Interactions: Learning to reach out and interact appropriately with people different from yourself is important in building relationships in diverse groups. As a youth worker you can model openness, respect and interest in other cultures and encourage youth to get to know youth outside their group. Engaging in cross-cultural interactions enriches your life – and also requires risk-taking and good communications skills.

Facilitating Positive Group Interactions: In the context of relationship building, facilitation involves the ability to nurture healthy group process and support youth to build relationships with each other. As a facilitator, creating a safe and democratic environment where all voices are heard encourages development of positive relationships. In your role as a youth worker you can model accountability, fairness and sensitivity. And the more you know all young people in your program, the more you can support each individual to participate and contribute in their own way.

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Relationship #1: Identify a youth with whom you HAVE BUILT a strong relationship. What is the youth's name? _____.

Think about what you did to build this relationship.

a. I have established clear boundaries with the young person, and the young person understands my expectations for our relationship.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

b. When the youth is in a group, I encourage him/her to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

c. When the youth is in a group, I facilitate the group to ensure that s/he has an opportunity to contribute and to speak and be heard.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

Relationship #2: Identify a youth with whom you HAVE NOT BUILT a strong relationship. What is the youth's name? _____.

Think about why a strong relationship has not been formed.

a. I have established clear boundaries with the young person, and the young person understands my expectations for our relationship.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

b. When the youth is in a group, I encourage him/her to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

c. When the youth is in a group, I facilitate the group to ensure that s/he has an opportunity to contribute and to speak and be heard.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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Self-Reflection:

- What do you see as your strengths in nurturing relationship #1?

- What are your challenges in relationship #2?

- What strategies(s) would you like to strengthen: setting boundaries, promoting cross-cultural interactions, and/or facilitating healthy group process?

- What specifically can you do to build a stronger relationship with each of these youth?

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Worksheet 2

2.7 Case Study: The Role of Adults

There are many different kinds of "hats" you wear when working with young people. Sometimes you're a teacher, other times you're a coach, and some times you need to take on a parental role. But your role is also unique. As a youth worker you have an opportunity to be an advocate, counselor, guide and mentor for your youth.

Instructions: Below are four typical dilemmas youth workers face in mediating relationships at the fictitious youth center, 123 Youth Center. Based on what you know about working with and communicating with youth, what would you instruct the youth worker to do in each situation?

123 Youth Program:

- located in a large city
- runs programs at elementary, middle and high schools
- serves a diverse population of 300 youth annually
- provides programs that include arts, academic support, sports, and service learning
- serves youth ages 7 – 18 years of age

Scenario 1: Tamara

Tamara works at 123 Youth Center and also lives in the neighborhood. When returning to her house one Friday evening (around midnight), she finds one of her youth is sitting on her steps. When she approaches the youth it is clear that the young person is intoxicated.

Please answer the following questions:

- What challenges may surface in this interaction?

- What role should Tamara take in relationship to her youth?

- In what ways can Tamara be a role model?

- What communication skills can she employ?

- What will be the impact on their relationship?

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Scenario 2: Andre

Andre is in the middle of facilitating a recreation activity with his group. He gets a call on his cell phone from Crystal, a youth in his program, who has become involved in gang activity. She asks that he come and pick her up now—because she's afraid and thinks something is going down.

Please answer the following questions:

- What challenges may surface in this interaction?

What role should Andre take in relationship to his youth?

- In what ways can Andre be a role model to Crystal and the young people at the recreation program?

- What communication skills can he employ?

- What will be the impact on their relationship?

Scenario 3: Cedric

Cedric is teaching an after school art class with 10-12 year olds. The ethnic make-up of the group is about half South East Asian and half African-American youth. Cedric notices that the group segregates along racial lines during the activity.

Please answer the following questions:

- What challenges may surface in this situation?

- What role should Cedric take in relationship to his youth?

- In what ways can Cedric be a role model to the young people in his art class?

- What communication skills can he employ?

- What will be the impact on his relationship with the youth?

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Scenario 4: Alisha

Alisha works with a group of eight-year girls. One day during check-in many of the girls say they want a time to talk about 'girl things'. Alisha notices that a recent newcomer to the group, Samantha, is withdrawn and is unwilling to participate in discussions or activities.

Please answer the following questions:

- What challenges may surface in this interaction?

- What role should Alisha take in relationship to Samantha?

- In what ways can Alisha be a role model to the young people in her girls group?

- What communication skills can she employ?

- What will be the impact on her relationship to the group?

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2.8 Activity With Youth

The following activity is an opportunity for you and your youth to look at issues of identity, culture and tradition. It's also a chance for you to get to know them better by encouraging them to inquire and share stories about their names. Sharing personal stories helps us know each other and build deeper relationships.

This activity is adapted from *Tribes: A New Way of Learning and Being Together,* Gibbs, Jeanne, 1995 CenterSource Systems, p.p. 276-277.

What's in My Name?

Time: Homework activity and 20 minute group discussion

Materials: Distribute worksheet

Objectives of Activity

1. To build knowledge of youth
2. To encourage group members to share feelings
3. To practice attentive listening

Instructions

1. Explain the activity to your group:

   "When you go home (tonight, this weekend, etc), ask your caregiver about how you were named.

   - How was your name picked?
   - Were you named after someone?
   - Does your name have a particular meaning in your culture or native language?

   After your discussion, think about and answer the questions on the worksheet and bring it with you for our circle (day/date)."

   (Note: Please be sensitive to any youth who may be living with caregivers who may not know this information, such as youth living in foster homes. You may want to add a question that they can more easily explore and discuss so they don't feel left out.)

2. Meet back in a circle at the designated time.

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3. Facilitate a discussion about their conversations with their caregivers. Ask the youth to take turns sharing how their names were selected, what nicknames they may have and how they feel about their names or nicknames.

Suggested Reflection Questions

Content/Thinking

- What similarities did you notice about how people's names were selected?
- Why is it interesting to know how you got your name?

Social

- How does this activity help us get to know one another?
- How can this type of activity help this group feel better about each other?

Personal

- How did you feel when you learned how your name was selected for you?
- Would you consider changing your name? Why?
- What did you learn about the meaning of your name?

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What's In My Name? Worksheet

Name_____

Instructions:

Answer the following questions about your name. Interview your caregiver if you do not know all the answers.

1. Why did your caregivers choose your name?

2. Were you named after someone?

3. Does your name have a particular meaning in your culture or native language?

4. What nicknames do you have and how did you get them

5. Do you like your name? Why or why not?

6. If you could choose another name, would you, and what would it be?

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Worksheet 3

Chapter Review

This review will help you retain key Relationship Building concepts. Please answer the following six questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. What makes your role as a youth worker unique?

2. Briefly explain the importance of positive role models in the lives of youth.

3. List some of the things about yourself and your behavior that set examples for young people.

4. Name the five key communication skills and briefly describe each.

5. Name three strategies for handling relationship building challenges and briefly describe each.

6. Self-Reflection: What have you learned about yourself? What can you focus on to improve your communication skills and role modeling?

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Worksheet 3

Chapter Review Answers

This review will help you retain key Relationship Building concepts. Please answer the following five questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. What makes your role as a youth worker unique?

As a youth worker I get to play multiple roles, be more informal with youth, and act as a guide and mentor. Depending on the situation at hand, I get to play roles such as a parent, doctor, counselor, or teacher.

The informal and playful setting of my program allows me to connect closely with and know youth possibly more than other adults in their lives. I can nurture and pay attention to the broader development of young people in a way that teachers often do not have the time or freedom to do.

In my relationship I may have more flexibility to be a guide and mentor – unlike other adults who often have a range of agendas for a young person. I can seek to empower young people by working with them to discover new ideas and find their own solutions. I can help youth make healthy decisions and offer emotional support as they deal with the challenges of their pre-adolescent and teen years.

2. Briefly explain the importance of positive role models in the lives of youth.

Role models serve a critical function in the lives of youth. They can be teachers, parents, friends, siblings, celebrities, athletes, etc. – anyone who sets a good example for young people.

As young people grow and develop, they look at the adults and peers around them to see who they want to be and what choices they want to make. Role models provide youth with means of identification and offer guidelines for behaviors and actions. Youth see possibilities for their futures especially when they see what adults “like them” have accomplished. Of course not all role models are “positive”. Some lead youth to making unhealthy decisions. Positive role models are conscious of how their behavior impact young people – and exhibit only behaviors that they want imitated.

3. List some of the things about yourself and your behavior that set examples for young people.

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Appearance: How I dress for work

Speech: How I speak about others, including my workplace and colleagues

Interpersonal relations: How I interact with youth and my colleagues

Work Ethic: How I care about doing a good job

Language: How I use words (no swearing, etc.)

Boundaries: How much I share about yourself and how you expect others to behave

Views: How I express my views about the world

Values: How I express my personal values

4. Name the five key communication skills and briefly describe each.

Active Listening: Seeking to hear what the youth is really trying to communicate to you.

Establishing Trust: Demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you.

Being Empathetic: Demonstrating that you can see things from their perspective.

Being Present: Demonstrating that you are in the moment and not distracted when relating to the young person.

Providing Feedback: Responding in ways that explicitly address the concerns of youth.

5. Name three strategies for handling relationship building challenges and briefly describe each.

Setting Boundaries: It's important to set clear limits with young people to let them know what you can and cannot do or share as a youth worker. Boundaries set the parameters for appropriate emotional and practical support. Knowing your limits does not mean that you are distant and aloof. Young people appreciate adults who are "real" with them. As a role model, you are also helping youth learn how to set appropriate boundaries for themselves.

Promoting Cross-Cultural Interactions: Learning to reach out and interact appropriately with people different from ourselves is important in building relationships in diverse groups. As a youth worker you can model openness, respect and interest in other cultures and encourage youth to get to know youth outside their group. Engaging in cross-cultural interactions enriches our lives – and also requires risk-taking and good communications skills.

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Facilitating Positive Group Interactions: In the context of relationship building, facilitation involves the ability to nurture healthy group process and support youth to build relationships with each other. As a facilitator, creating a safe and democratic environment where all voices are heard encourages development of positive relationships. In your role as a youth worker you can model accountability, fairness and sensitivity. And the more you know all young people in your program, the more you can support each individual to participate and contribute in their own way.

6. Self-Reflection: What have you learned about yourself in this chapter? What can you focus on to improve your communication skills and role modeling?

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Activity: "Getting to Know Your Youth – Inside & Out"

PURPOSE:

- To provide opportunities for youth to reflect on themselves
- To create a sense of community and inclusion through personal sharing
- To build knowledge of youth in your program
- To establish a safe community space

MATERIALS:

Construction paper, tape or glue, index cards, markers **TIME:** 45 - 60 minutes

BRIDGE:

Tell the group that part of creating community is getting to know ourselves and each other. There are many ways for us to do this. The following activity will model one approach. Guide a brief discussion about the importance of creating community space so that everyone can truly come forward and be him or herself.

PROCEDURE:

- Ask the youth: "How well do you think others know you?" "How well do you think we know each other in this program?" Each of us are really interesting people with a lot to share, and often we only know a little bit about a person. This activity will give us a chance to get to know each other a little better.
- Have each student select a piece of construction paper and several index cards
- Fold the paper in half to turn it into an envelope. Tape or glue the sides so it can hold things.
- Have students put their name on the outside of the envelope.
- On the outside of the envelope, ask them to write things about themselves that they think other people can see, or opinions that they think other people have about them. For example: People see I am tall, people say I am friendly.
- Have students write things about themselves on the index cards that people don't often see. For example: I am scared of dogs, I hope to be a fireman, I like to dance but am too shy
- Have students put these index cards into their envelopes.
- You may choose to chart the instructions or make a sample envelope to clarify instructions
- Once everyone has completed their envelopes and cards, bring the group into a circle.
- Each person should take turns going around the circle and sharing at least one thing from the outside of the envelope, and one from the inside.

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The envelopes can then be hung on the walls, and students can write acknowledgements to each other throughout the week or month about things they notice. For example: “I liked that you helped me with my homework”, etc. This teaches young people to notice and acknowledge the positive behavior of their peers, and shows them that their actions make a difference to others.

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Chapter 3: Supporting Youth as Group Members

Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 3 of Relationship Building! In this chapter you will look at the youth role and how the foundation of solid relationships can support youth in becoming group members.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to provide you with an overview of equity and diversity and the role of group development in relationship building - through readings, exercises and assessments.

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- Identify dimensions of diversity that exist in your program
- Recognize how diversity and equity impact your program and develop strategies to support cross-cultural understanding and communication
- Identify a model of group development and analyze the current stage of your group's development and any current challenges
- Collect strategies to strengthen your group process

Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and exercises in this chapter. Each section builds upon the next.

Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 3:

60 – 90 minutes: Online and workbook readings and activities

30 – 45 minutes: Exercise with youth

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3.1 Self Reflection: My Life and History

In this section you will have a chance to reflect on the role of culture and diversity in your own life. Knowing who you are within the context of your program and the larger society will help you support youth as members of diverse groups. As a youth worker, your sensitivity around diversity and equity issues will help you create programs that meet the needs of the young people you serve.

In this exercise, you will spend some time thinking about yourself and your background.

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Worksheet 1

3.1 Self-Reflection: Reflecting on My Own Life and History

Think about yourself, your family and your background. Please list all the groups that you belong to or you feel are important in describing who you are.

Did you include any of the following?

- Ethnicity
- Class
- Language group
- National Identity
- Race
- Culture
- Sexual orientation
- Disabilities
- Gender
- Birthplace
- Religious affiliation

Why did or didn't you include the above categories?

What other categories did you include that are not on this list?

In what circumstances and times in your life have you been the *target* of stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination?

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For what reasons do you believe you were targeted? Please describe the circumstance.

How did this experience affect you?

Has there been a time when you were *celebrated* for being a part of a particular group? Describe the circumstance.

What was this experience like for you?

Now that you've reflected on your experiences of difference, in what ways do you think your own history impacts your relationships with youth?

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Have you gained any new insights about the youth in your program and their experiences of diversity as a result of this reflection? If so, please explain.

Adapted from: *Our Roots, Our Future: Affirming Culture and Language in After School & Youth Programs,* A Tool for Self-Reflection, pp 73-76. Permission to use granted by California Tomorrow, Oakland, CA.

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3.2 Concept Exploration: Culture, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Supporting cross-cultural interactions is a critical strategy in building relationships in diverse groups. In youth programs throughout the country, the ethnic and language diversity of young people has grown dramatically in the last few decades – reflecting changing *demographics* in society. This diversity brings wonderful opportunities and important challenges to youth programs.

So how do you manage and fully celebrate the diversity of your program? How do you intentionally create communities that welcome all ethnicities, *learning styles* and languages spoken while addressing issues of equity?

The following definitions are from California Tomorrow (CT), an Oakland-based organization that works to create a fair multi-racial and multicultural society.

Culture refers to the values, beliefs, and traditions of a particular group of people, and how they make sense of and create a way of life.

Diversity refers to the wide range of dimensions around which people differ. These dimensions include race, culture, language, class, age, gender, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability/disability.

Equity means that each person is treated fairly and has equal access to economic, social and educational opportunity.

Inclusion means being fully accessible, reflective, and representative of the diversity in a program, in a community, and in society.

How can you embrace these concepts and put them into practice? In the attached article, California Tomorrow looks at how cultural and linguistic diversity affect youth development. They describe many ways in which youth programs can respond to the imperatives of diversity and equity.

Instructions: Please read the article, *"Equity Diversity and Youth Development".* Permission to use granted by California Tomorrow, Oakland, CA.

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Equity, Diversity, and Youth Development

HELPING AFTER SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS RESPOND TO THE IMPERATIVES OF CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Each year, in response to increasing safety concerns, work demands, and hopes for new learning, more and more families are seeking after school opportunities for their children. Our nation's policy makers and foundations are responding by expanding funding and support for after school and other youth programs. These programs are an important means for supporting working parents and providing recreation and enrichment to a wide variety of children and youth. In addition, they are increasingly being seen as one way to address under achievement and poor social outcomes that persist among certain groups of youth.

The expansion of funds for out-of-school programs has come with an increase in demands for accountability and in the range of expectations being placed on programs. Sports programs might be asked to improve literacy, arts programs to provide conflict resolution skills, and almost all programs are being asked in some way to help raise scores on the high-stakes exams that teachers and youth face in schools.

Fortunately, there are critical resources that can be drawn on to meet the soaring performance expectations and to nurture young people in ways that honor their budding identities, their hopes and dreams, their talents, and their family and community backgrounds. One set of these resources comes from a professional field referred to as "youth development" which, over the past two decades, has sought to define the social and academic needs young people have at different points in their lives, and to show how programs can support them in fulfilling those needs to become healthy, successful, and thriving adults. We would like to share some of this field's insights with you and highlight the many ways youth development connects with culture, language, race and the increasing diversity of our society.

In the last few decades, the ethnic and language diversity of young people attending after school programs has grown dramatically, reflecting

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SAN DIEGO, CA.
PHOTO: DEXTER DONG

the changing demographics of the nation and adding to both the challenges and the opportunities of after school and youth programming. (Please see "Findings from the Field," on page 18, for more details). These realities need to be incorporated into our definitions of healthy youth development and used to shape after school program goals, practices and intended outcomes in school settings, national youth programs, community based organizations, churches, childcare programs and other contexts.

What is "youth development"?

"Youth development" refers to a process that takes place from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. It is a social, emotional, intellectual, and physical process, and all young people go through it. During this process, they seek to meet their basic physical and social needs, to understand and shape their own identities, and to develop the core competencies they will need for adulthood. What youth need, how they see themselves, and what skills they develop are affected by all the settings in which they live, learn, work, or play – including at home, before, during and after school, with friends, at formal community events and organizations, and while out in their neighborhoods or at jobs. The way a child and teen develops is a collective process, deeply involving their family and community as well as formal institutions like schools and out-of-school programs.

The youth development field – under the leadership of organizations such as the Academy for Educational Development, the Carnegie Corporation, the Community Network for Youth Development, the Forum for Youth Investment, the Fund for the City of New York, and the Search Institute – suggests five key areas of support which young people need if they are to achieve academic and social success, economic self-sufficiency, a strong sense of self, and active participation in their communities and society. These areas include:

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- Physical and emotional safety;
- Learning, skill building and intellectual growth;
- Self esteem, identity and a sense of belonging;
- Leadership, empowerment and civic participation; and
- Meaningful, respectful relationships with peers and adults.

How do cultural, linguistic, ethnic and racial diversity affect youth development?

Our society is blessed with rich cultural and multicultural contexts, offering many linguistic and cultural resources and the opportunity to learn across differences in this increasingly global era. At the same time, minority groups across the nation often face discrimination, cultural or linguistic challenges, and unequal division of resources. And many children and youth are growing up in a world of ethnic and racial separation and intergroup violence. As a result of all this, after school and youth programs – regardless of the type of institutions that sponsor them or the particular demographics they serve – now face five important diversity-related imperatives if they are to fully provide and honor the youth development supports listed above. This is because young people cannot feel safe if they are worrying about cross-group harassment or if they fear even subtle criticism about their customs, languages, or families. Learning – whether academic or artistic, civic or recreational – is often most effective when it draws upon children's cultural and linguistic experiences. And the development of self-esteem, leadership, and strong relationships requires that young people feel understood and valued in who they are and where they have come from, as well as equipped to deal with the complex realities of their diverse world.

The five program imperatives are as follows: *First*, because children's cultural, family, language, ethnic and racial backgrounds are core to who they are and how they learn, as well as to what supports they may need, programs should offer activities that are supportive, accessible, and responsive to these aspects of their lives and identities. *Second*, because minority youth experience consistent devaluation of their home cultures and pressures to assimilate to the dominant or mainstream culture (which tends to reflect white, middle class, English-speaking values and traditions), they need to be actively supported to develop strong cultural and linguistic identities, and to feel fully comfortable in both their home cultures and the dominant culture. *Third*, programs should help all youth develop the cross-cultural social skills and the language capabilities needed to participate in our increasingly diverse society. *Fourth*, youth-related institutions should find ways to address persistent disparities among youth along the lines of cultural, language and ethnic diversity, and to challenge the material conditions that produce them. And *fifth*, programs should help minority young people heal the emotional wounds caused by living in a society that often devalues and excludes them and their communities.

A. Programs should provide curriculum and experiences which are culturally and linguistically supportive, accessible, and responsive.

Babies are born receptive to the broad range of human possibilities. The family they are born into, the nation, the culture, the time in history, and the environment begin to inform and shape them as they come to understand who they are, how the world works, and how they fit into it. Children are socialized to acquire the specific skills and behaviors that are traditional and func-

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tional for their cultures. A child's family culture and language are the foundations of who they are, of how they see, how they learn and how they act in the world.

For children who grow up in cultural or language minority groups, the cultural knowledge and norms they learn in their families – the values, beliefs, expectations, actions, emotional responses, and forms of communication – are often different from the ones presumed in most public settings and institutions, including schools and many youth programs. Their experience is different in this regard from the experience of majority-group youth, who usually find cultural similarities across the various arenas of their lives.

MINNEAPOLIS, MI.
PHOTO: JIMENA QUIROGA

In order to meaningfully provide youth development supports to all children, after school and youth programs need to attend to the importance of culture and the frequent reality of cultural disconnections for non-dominant groups. This means they need to do everything they can to create inclusive, culturally and linguistically accessible environments which allow all participants to feel safe and capable as they explore new skills, opportunities, and relationships. Central to making this happen is having an explicit goal of inclusion which is shared across the program and a commitment to holding the program accountable for addressing that goal. It is also essential that program staff not be afraid to discuss issues of culture and language, and that they openly acknowledge cultural and linguistic differences rather than trying to minimize them for the sake of their own or others' comfort.

Culturally and linguistically accessible programs are programs where:

- Staff are sensitive to the cultures and speak the languages of participants and families;
- Young people's cultural customs, holidays, and traditions are recognized and respected;
- Cultural knowledge and norms are valued – including norms around participation, communication, behavior, and discipline;
- Young people are free and encouraged to speak their home languages, as well as to speak English;
- Culture and cultural differences are openly and positively acknowledged;
- Language and language differences are openly and positively acknowledged
- Parents and other family members can become involved, even if they do not speak English;
- The program atmosphere and materials reflect participants' cultures and languages; and
- Stereotypes and discriminatory practices are not tolerated.

The stakes of not providing environments like this – in after school programs and elsewhere – are high. A recent California Tomorrow survey revealed that most language minority youth in after school programs in the U.S. today, for example, are in programs where no staff speak the language of their homes. This makes it very difficult for staff members to communicate with their families. It also limits the strength of relationships between young people and

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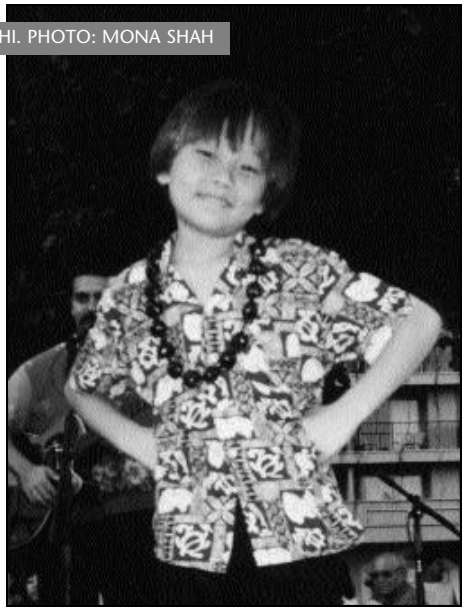
staff, because deep communication is difficult when there is no shared language. Youth of different cultures can also feel disconnected or invisible in programs where their own heritages are not acknowledged or present in the curriculum or program structure. They are silenced in many ways when they cannot draw upon their cultural backgrounds or use their home languages, even if they are also fluent in English.

Programs can use a variety of different strategies to honor and incorporate the life experiences of children and families. Some examples from California Tomorrow's national study of after school programs include: hiring staff from participants' neighborhoods or ethnic communities; providing outreach materials and communication with parents in their home languages; offering bilingual academic support; dividing youth into culture- or language specific groups for certain activities; incorporating cultural history, cultural activities or open-ended cultural questions into youth projects and performances; and drawing upon local youth cultures in developing activities, environments and recruitment strategies.

Doing any of this, of course, requires knowing the backgrounds of the young people in the program and partnering with youth, families, and community members to identify their unique needs, the resources they bring from their heritage cultures and languages, and their hopes for program learning and participation.



HONOLULU, HI. PHOTO: MONA SHAH

B. Programs should support the development of strong cultural and linguistic identities.

For generations, it has been the pattern in the United States to expect minority, indigenous, and immigrant children to adopt the customs and behaviors of the dominant culture and give up their family cultures and traditions. It has been an "either-or" way of thinking about culture and identity. We have expected young people to leave behind their histories in the process of becoming educated, becoming economically successful, and becoming "American." This has frequently caused ruptures in families and been a source of deep pain.

Today also, minority children absorb messages from the dominant culture suggesting a relative lack of value to their own cultures and languages. This throws many into deep conflicts that cause them to deny their heritage and repress those parts of themselves connected to their heritage. In the process they may sever relationships to parents or grandparents, and thus lose access to the rich wisdom and support that would be normally transmitted through family cultures and languages. Others develop resistance to the efforts of schools and programs that fail to recognize and embrace their home communities – resistance that cuts

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PHOTO COURTESY ST. CHARLES MISSION SCHOOL, SAN CARLOS, AZ

them off from opportunities to participate fully in the dominant culture and society. Either way, when programs and other youth-serving institutions do not include and support the cultural and language realities of children's lives, healthy youth development is greatly compromised.

Strong, thriving youth need a sense of belonging in the world, a sense of their own competency and the ability to meet the challenges of their lives. Strong cultural and linguistic identities are an important part of this, offering connections to resources in one's family and community, history and heritage. For young people living in two or more different cultural worlds, developing such identities requires knowing how to participate in multiple realms and to move effectively between and across them. This includes having the cultural knowledge and knowing the languages of each realm, possessing the ability to integrate different cultural experiences and expectations, and developing/maintaining resiliency against stereotypes and racism.

Supporting young people to be safe and confident in themselves and to maintain strong relationships with their families and communities means creating spaces which value and nurture their identities and which help those who have been raised in more than one culture and/or who speak more than one language learn to embrace and integrate both (or all) their worlds. Incorporating the kind of culturally accessible program elements discussed above is just one aspect of doing this. Because of the centrality of culture and language in young people's lives and the frequent disconnects that marginalized youth encounter between home and school or youth services, after school programs need to go beyond just being "supportive and responsive" to actively ensure that youth develop positive identities related to their cultural heritage, and that they learn how to effectively navigate the dominant culture. For these to happen, direct affirmation of marginalized youths' heritage cultures and/or instruction in the norms of the dominant culture may be necessary.

If the context is right, programs can provide direct cultural instruction – for example, by working with Appalachian youth to build an old-time mountain farm, teaching African American children the music and dance of their ancestors, or talking with South Asian adolescents

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about their community's cultural and socio-political history. Many young people from California Tomorrow's study have told us that role models from their communities have had a huge impact on the development of their identities, and that it is extremely valuable to have after school program staff from their neighborhoods or ethnic groups, or who speak their languages.

Finally, building positive identities involves teaching young people to recognize and challenge stereotypes and biases, replacing negative cultural images with positive understandings – ones which celebrate the richness and beauty of all backgrounds and experiences. For some marginalized youth in programs, explicit instruction about dominant cultural norms – for example, job interview expectations or conventions of standard English – provides cultural information they are otherwise unable to access. Programs can also use art, oral history and/or community service projects to strengthen the connection children have with their families and communities, and they can provide formal or informal environments for young people to talk together about their experiences dealing with the dominant culture, language, or race.

C. Programs should help young people develop cross-cultural skills and understanding.

Young people today are growing up in a global, multicultural world. With hundreds of different ethnic and language groups in the United States, most children live in communities where they must learn to understand and get along with people of different ethnic backgrounds and/or from different parts of the globe. More and more young people themselves live in transnational families – spending time and maintaining family relations in two or more different nations. Even for those that don't, the immediacy of the worldwide web and communication technologies puts them in instant contact with people from throughout the world. We live in an era in which all children need to grow up with multiple language skills, and with the commitment to reach across and understand people of cultures and religions other than their own. If young people are to become secure and competent adults in the 21st century, if they are to become leaders and contribute to their communities and to our world, they need to learn to bridge cultural divides, move past legacies of racial and ethnic tension and pain, and find the deep value of being able to see the world through multiple lenses. After school and youth programs can help with all of these.

An important first step that youth providers can take is to challenge the view that ethnic, cultural, racial and language diversity is threatening or unnecessary, and to emphasize instead – with youth, families, communities, and partnering institutions – the benefits of cross-cultural exchange and dialogue. Programs can also:

- Educate children and youth about cultures, communities, nations and languages other than their own;
- Challenge ethnic stereotypes, assumptions and racism whenever they arise;
- Counter assumptions that some languages are better than others;
- Encourage young people to work and play with peers of different backgrounds;
- Teach conflict resolution skills, including skills for resolving conflicts across cultures or languages;
- Help young people to think critically about the world and their place in it;
- Provide opportunities for cultural sharing; and
- Encourage compassion for all people.

With such a high level of diversity in after school contexts, most programs have many opportunities every day

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– both formal and informal – to help young people develop cross-cultural skills and understanding. When divisions or tensions emerge on the playground, for instance, staff members can point them out and help children build common ground. Activity groups can be intentionally mixed across cultural and/or language groups. And cultural sharing can take place around art or writing activities, or by inviting family members to visit and tell stories. Even programs without multiple ethnicities represented can teach different languages, model cross-group adult interaction, incorporate multicultural music, videos, books, or performances into regular projects, and critically discuss relevant news events or events from young people's lives. And any work on listening skills, peer relationship-building, or challenging stereotypes can help provide a foundation for cross-cultural connection later in life.

D. Programs should seek to address the conditions that produce social disparities and inequities.

Despite a history in the United States of movements toward greater inclusion, participation, democracy, and open access, disparities between cultural, language and racial groups persist. Statistics on almost any measure of achievement, health, economic, and social outcomes show that access to resources and learning opportunities differ considerably across ethnic communities. For example:

- In the year 2000, median family incomes for African American and Native American families were only 2/3 of what they were for white and Asian/Pacific Islander (API) families, and for Latino/Hispanic families only 3/4 of what they were for white and API families. (www.census.gov)
- While 7.5% of whites lived below the poverty level in 2000, poverty rates for Native Americans were 31%, for African Americans 22%, for Latinos/Hispanics 21%, and for Asians/Pacific Islanders 11%. (www.census.gov)
- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the year 1999 saw 33% of Latinos/Hispanics without health insurance, along with 21% of Asians/Pacific Islanders and 21% of African Americans. By comparison, 11% of whites lacked health coverage.
- In the last ten years, the academic gaps between minority and white children and between English Language Learners and other students have increased. (www.nces.ed.gov)
- The high school dropout rate for Latino/Hispanic 16-24 year olds is 28%, double the rate for African Americans (13%) and four times the rate for whites (7%). Although API students overall have the lowest dropout rate of any group in the country (4%), up to 50% of Southeast Asian refugees leave school in some communities. (www.nces.ed.gov and www.asian-nation.org)
- Schools with more minority students have fewer computers, less internet access, and more outdated text books. (www.nces.ed.gov)
- Only 11% of Latinos and 21% of African Americans leave high school prepared to go to a four-year college.[1] (www.beedu.org)
- Bachelor's degrees are held by 29% of Asians/Pacific Islanders and 23% of whites, but only 14% of African Americans and 9% of Latinos/Hispanics and Native Americans. Within the API community, only 6% of Tongans, Cambodians, Laotians and Hmongs have completed

1. As reflected in the statistics of California.

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WOODSIDE, NY.
PHOTO: JHUMPA BHATTACHARYA

college. (www.census.gov and www.apamsa.org)

Such chronic inequities in the conditions under which children and youth grow up create considerable barriers to learning and healthy development. If we are to fully realize the youth development outcomes of safety and mastery, self-worth and leadership – especially for youth from marginalized groups – after school and youth programs can and must contribute to reducing these barriers and ending inequities.

Programs cannot do this alone, of course, but they can help. They can help by creating a climate within their programs that equalizes the status of "minority" communities and their cultures and language. They can help alleviate disparities in neighborhood resources by targeting their own resources to those most in need and being sure to provide equitable access to all groups. They can help close academic achievement gaps by providing educational support for underachieving populations, including support that is culturally relevant and/or offered in the home languages of limited-English-speaking populations. They can offer job skills or employment counseling to young people in areas with limited economic opportunities. After school programs can link their work to other equity agendas in the community. And they can support young people in coming to understand and critically analyze the disparities and inequities, and gain the practical and leadership skills for acting to change those conditions.

E. Programs should help to heal the wounds of social distress, exclusion, and discrimination.

Every day, many children come to youth programs battered by living in a political, economic, and social climate that hurts them. Poor children dealing with the effects of poverty, children of color feeling the impacts of racism, immigrant children dealing with the stresses of trying to understand a new country that is in many ways hostile to their presence – each enters the after school context not only with the same needs as all other children, but also with scars and wounds related to living in a society that undermines and devalues them. Programs can be dedicated to helping all youth develop a sense of belonging, but the

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task of doing so is different for those young people who daily face societal messages that they don't really belong. One aspect of supporting the healthy development of youth in this context is recognizing and helping to heal the wounds.

The after school and youth development arena can help children and youth heal from negative self-images, the pain of violence and exclusion, and the cognitive consequences of being denied learning opportunities, safe neighborhoods, adequate health care, and other community necessities. Programs can do so by acknowledging the forces that undermine young people's healthy development and by helping children and youth learn to identify, cope with, negotiate, and change harmful aspects of their environments. Young people need support and non-violent and non-self-destructive outlets for expressing the pain, anger, and hurt they feel. Programs can provide these and can support healing in a variety of other direct and indirect ways. They can, for instance:

- Provide access to culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and support services;
- Link after school activities to other settings that support healing and social justice;
- Incorporate cultural and/or spiritual healing elements into the program;
- Incorporate community change activities into the program;
- Provide creative outlets (arts, writing, spoken word) to express what young people are feeling; and
- Build skills in conflict resolution, collective action, and leadership.

The healing inherent in each of these is critical for the development of self-esteem and positive emotional and social identities. It also underlies academic and social success, and is an important prerequisite for cross-cultural engagement. Often the strongest healers are those who have struggled themselves with similar challenges and pain, but anyone can support the healing process. Though after school programs cannot – and need not – be fully responsible for alleviating young people's hurt and anger, taking the step of validating the often difficult realities of childhood can have a profound impact and can help set a respectful foundation for addressing other youth development goals.

Making a difference

The youth development field and out-of-school programs across the country have a strong commitment to providing safe and caring environments for young people that support their social, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth. Recognizing the life realities of the young people in our programs, and the ways in which culture, race, language, and other factors impact what they need from programs is an essential piece of creating those environments. Beyond this, after school and youth programs also have a wonderful opportunity to help bring people together and create a more inclusive, respectful, and just multicultural society. The many options related to staffing, curriculum, and organizational context in the after school arena and the strong partnerships that programs often enjoy with each other and with communities mean that they have the ability to speak to some of young people's deepest personal and social needs in a more holistic way than many other institutions. By targeting resources to those who most need them, drawing upon the assets present in the diverse roots of our children, and teaching youth to honor both themselves and others, after school experiences can help this generation create together a future for our country that is wiser, fairer, safer and stronger than ever.

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3.3.1 Application: Program Practices that Affirm Culture and Language

The California Tomorrow article identified five important program imperatives for affirming culture and language. Since this article was published, these imperatives have been expanded to address broader issues of diversity and equity.

Program Imperatives to Address Equity and Diversity

1. **Cultural Responsiveness:** After school and youth programs should offer curriculum and experiences that are supportive, accessible, and responsive to young people's ethnic, racial, class, gender, sexual orientation and other experiences, and to their family, language and community backgrounds.

2. **Support Social Identities**: Programs should actively support the development of strong cultural and social identities. They should help youth to feel fully comfortable in their home cultures and the dominant culture when the two differ.

3. **Intergroup Understanding:** Programs should help all youth develop the cross-cultural awareness and skills needed to participate and become leaders in our increasingly diverse communities and globally interconnected society. They should actively support young people to identify and counter stereotypes and prejudice against themselves and others.

4. **Healing:** Programs should help heal the wounds of social distress, exclusion and discrimination and support young people in coping with family or community distress.

5. **Address Inequities:** Programs should seek to address — and to support young people in addressing — the conditions that produce and maintain social disparities and inequities.

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Program Practices

Can you see how the California Tomorrow Program Imperatives to Address Diversity and Inequity parallel the youth development supports and opportunities? Below is a summary of examples offered in the article.

Affirm Culture and Language / Support Social Identities

Examples of practices that are culturally and linguistically accessible and support development of social identities:

- Staff are sensitive to the cultures and speak the languages of participants and families
- Young people's cultural customs, holidays and traditions are recognized and respected
- Cultural knowledge and norms are valued—including norms around participation, communication, behavior, and discipline
- Young people are free and encouraged to speak their home languages, as well as to speak English
- Culture and cultural differences are openly and positively acknowledged
- Language and language differences are openly and positively acknowledged
- Parents and other family members can become involved, even if they do not speak English
- The program atmosphere and materials reflect participants' cultures and languages
- Stereotypes and discriminatory practices are not tolerated

Support Cross-Cultural Skills and Understanding

Examples of practices that support the development of cross-cultural skills and understanding:

- Educate youth about cultures, communities, nations and languages other than their own
- Challenge ethnic stereotypes, assumptions and racism whenever they arise
- Encourage youth to work and play with peers of different backgrounds
- Teach conflict resolution skills
- Help youth to think critically about the world and their place in it
- Provide opportunities for cultural sharing
- Encourage compassion for all people

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Heal the Wounds of Social Distress

Examples of practices that help heal the wounds of social distress, exclusion and discrimination:

- Provide access to culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and support services
- Incorporate cultural and/or spiritual healing elements into the program
- Incorporate community change activities into the program
- Provide creative outlets to express what youth are feeling
- Build skills in conflict resolution, collective action, and leadership

Address Social Disparities and Inequities

Examples of practices that address conditions that produce social disparities and inequities:

- Create a climate that equalizes the status of minority communities
- Target resources to those most in need in the community
- Provide educational support for under-achieving populations
- Offer job skills or employment counseling to youth in areas with limited economic opportunities
- Link the work of the agency with other equity agendas in the community
- Support youth in understanding and analyzing the disparities and inequities in their communities
- Give youth practical and leadership skills for acting to change conditions that impact them

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Worksheet 2

3.3.2 Self-Reflection: Affirming Language and Culture

1. Of the five program imperatives, which one in particular does your program address quite well? Please describe.

2. What specific kinds of things do you do to support this program imperative?

3. What program imperative would you like to strengthen? What ideas do you have for better addressing this imperative?

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3.4 Exercise: Who are we serving, Who are we not serving?

In order to effectively serve your youth and implement diversity and equity program practices, you need a clear understanding of your youth population and the surrounding community – their demographics, challenges, and needs.

This exercise is designed to help you:

- Generate a demographic profile of the young people in your program
- Identify populations whose particular concerns or needs may warrant your attention
- Highlight demographic categories that you need or want more information about
- Identify gaps in who you serve compared to who lives in the surrounding community
- Assess the mix of staff you have in relation to the mix of youth you serve

Some Resources for Gathering Neighborhood Data

U.S. CENSUS: http://www.census.gov.

The Census Bureau website offers a variety of data about different geographic areas. This data is collected across the U.S. every 10 years. You can find data on: ethnicity, immigrant status, language, gender, income, poverty rates, housing, families, health, education level, disability and many other topics. The unit of analysis can be national, state, city, county or zip code area.

The *American Fact Finder* section on the US Census website is easiest to use. It allows you to search both by type of information you want and by area you're interested in. The site's "fact sheets" are general overviews; other sections focus on specific topics.

Your District Website: a source of information for school-based programs

GREATSCHOOLS: www.greatschools.net

A resource for school data throughout California and the U.S. It offers similar info to the district websites, and includes all schools in the state and nation.

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Worksheet 3
3.4 Exercise: Who are we Serving, Who are we not Serving?

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY WORKSHEET*: Please fill out the following chart, using estimated percentages for each group. If you don't know about a particular group, indicate that in a note to yourself so you can follow up at a later time.*

Adapted from worksheet created by California Tomorrow and CNYD.

Percentage of	Youth in Program	Neighborhood Demographics	Program Staff	Comments
ETHNICITY				
African American				
Asian/Pacific Islander				
Latino				
Native American				
White				
HOME LANGUAGE *(please list)*				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
FAMILY INCOME				
High income				
Middle income				
Low income				
Homeless				
GENDER				
Female				
Male				
SEXUAL ORIENTATION				
Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual / Transgendered (LGBT)				
From LGBT family				

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Worksheet 3
3.4 Exercise continued: Who are we Serving, Who are we not Serving?

Percentage of	Youth in Program	Neighborhood Demographics	Program Staff	Comments
DISABILITIES *(please list)* Physical, learning, etc.				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS *(please list)*				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				

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Worksheet 3

3.4 Exercise Continued: Who are we Serving, Who are we not Serving?

- Did you learn anything new about the demographics of your youth and community?

- Are you surprised by who you are NOT serving?

- Is there a group you would like to reach out to?

- Why do you think this group is not represented in your program? What can you do to reach out to them?

- What can you change about your program so that it truly reflects the surrounding community of your program?

- How can you create an environment that is more sensitive to equity and celebrates diversity?

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- What are some of the challenges and inequities you see for the youth in your program?

- What can you do on a program and personal level to address the inequities your young people face? How can you create a safer space for all groups?

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3.5 Concept Exploration: Overview of Group Development

Issues of diversity and equity have a big impact on your program. Every youth program is a unique community of people with a wide range of experiences and backgrounds. Once you are conscious about who is in the group and what potential issues may come up, you can find creative ways to build community.

There is often the assumption that youth will have powerful and positive connections just because they come together to learn and have fun. However it's important to find ways to pro-actively support the healthy development of group process – for the benefit of both the program as whole and for each class or club.

A Model of Group Development

There are many different ways of looking at how groups grow and develop. One comprehensive highly recommended model comes out of a process called *Tribes.* An amazing woman named Jeanne Gibbs developed this process for teachers. This is what she says about Tribes:

> "Tribes is a democratic group process not just a curriculum or set of cooperative activities. A "process" is a sequence of events that lead to the achievement of an outcome. The outcome of the Tribes process is to develop a positive environment that promotes human growth and learning" (pg. 21, *Tribes: A New Way of Learning and Being Together,* 1995).

The Tribes Model of Group Development

The Tribes model describes a process of group evolution that takes place in three stages: Inclusion, Influence and Community.

The following is a brief overview of the Tribes model adapted from the book *Tribes: A New Way of Learning and Being Together* by Jeanne Gibbs, CenterSource Systems, Sausalito, California. Although this is only intended as an introduction, it should help you think about ways you can support the development of your group.

1. Inclusion – a sense of belonging

As the starting point for any group, Inclusion requires that you pay attention to every youth's need to be recognized for his/her unique qualities and experiences. You need to create an environment where everyone experiences safety and a sense of belonging. This involves establishing agreements and breaking the group down into smaller units for activities to help minimize anxiety and encourage connections. Members also learn to listen attentively to others, not only for what they say but how they feel.

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How can you tell if your group has entered the stage of Inclusion? All members are given opportunities to:

- Introduce themselves and share feelings, interests, resources, talents or special qualities
- Express hopes or expectations for what will happen during the group's time together
- Feel a sense of belonging and being part of the group

2. Influence – to feel of value

The second stop along the Tribes trail is when your group begins to show signs of restlessness and conflict. This is a positive sign because it means your youth feel safe to express themselves as individuals and know that their voice will be heard. In the Influence stage you need to consider how to support youth in expressing themselves in a way that contributes to the group as a whole. You'll also see an increase in commitment and motivation in your group members as each youth feels valued and important. During this stage you will need to handle differences and embrace conflicts and misunderstandings as a natural part of the process. You can help youth resolve issues by providing opportunities for reflection, feedback, role-playing, and discussions.

How can you tell if your group has entered the stage of Influence? All members are given opportunities to:

- Express diverse attitudes, positions, opinions and personal feelings
- Say what they think and feel knowing that individual differences are respected
- Work together to make decisions so that everyone feels they can influence others.
- Contribute to the group and share leadership responsibility with the support of others and the facilitator
- Work to resolve, rather than avoid, uncomfortable problems and conflicts that begin to separate members.

3. Community - working together creatively

The third and final stage of group development is when your group becomes a Community. By this point, all members feel included and all issues of influence are dealt with and worked through. By becoming a community, youth share responsibility to achieve goals for the common good. There is kindness, care and affection evident in the group. The interdependence and connections that happen in community support the building of healthy and supportive relationships and youth development as a whole. Community does not just happen, it must be intentionally developed.

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Your group has entered the stage of Community when members are:

- Dedicated to resolving rather than avoiding problems and conflicts
- Learning and practicing skills that enable collaboration
- Following agreements about how to treat each other
- Sharing leadership and responsibility in the group
- Taking time to reflect on the group and celebrate achievements and successes.

In reality, group development doesn't occur in such neat stages. It's actually a messy process in which groups move back and forth through the stages. Sometimes groups simply do not move out of the stage of Inclusion! You must always support Inclusion. In fact, each time your group comes together you need to do something to build group relationships. This is especially true when new staff or youth join the group.

Role of Facilitator

Your role as facilitator also changes as your group's stage of development changes. In the first phase of Inclusion, you are very much involved providing structure and direction. In the Influence stage, your direction begins to decrease as group members begin to assume leadership and responsibility for the group. Finally as the group moves into the community phase, you pull back to an advisory role and transfers leadership to the group members.

As your group evolves, you need to continually assess your group while asking yourself, "What skills does this group need?" and "Is my level of engagement appropriate?"

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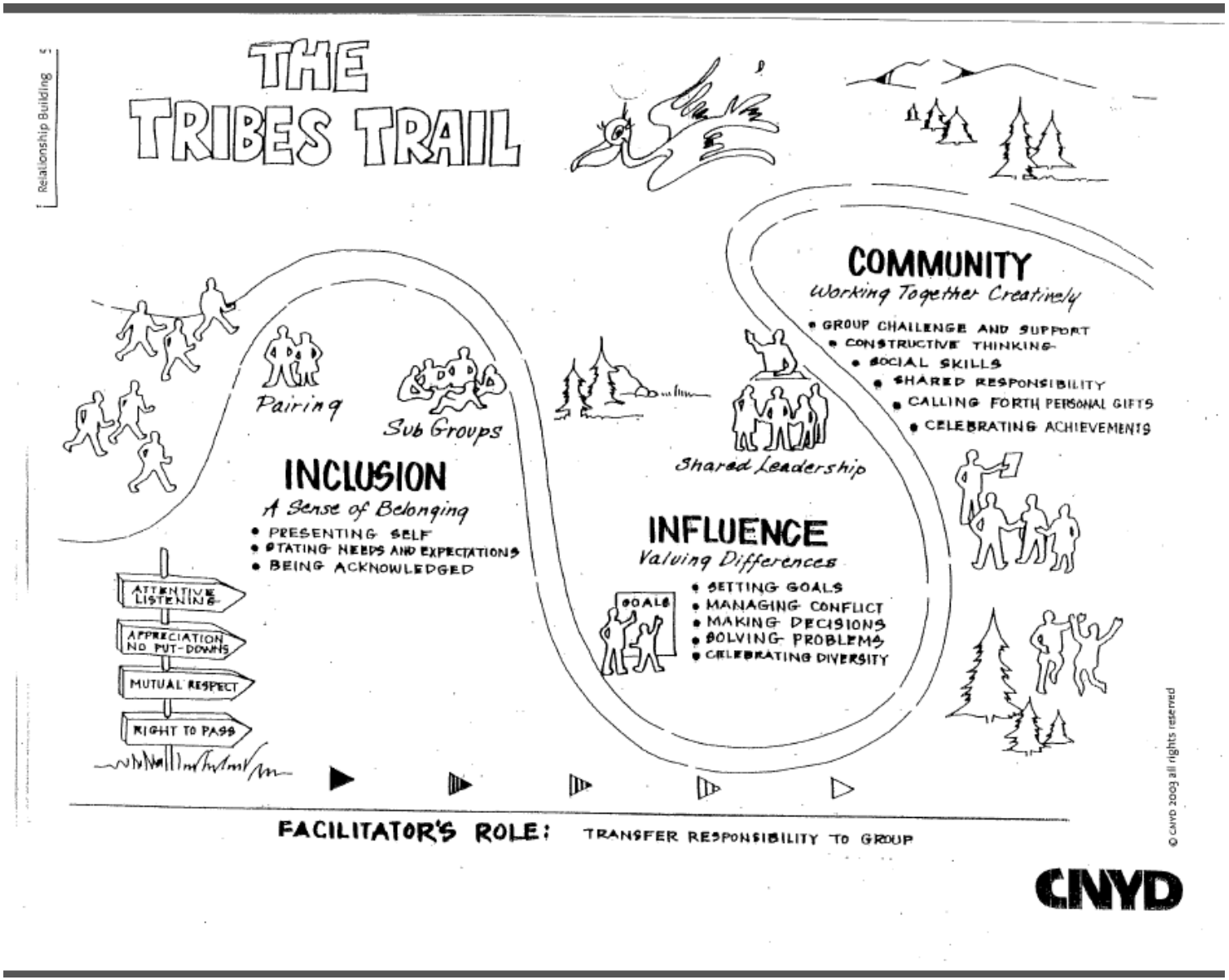

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Worksheet 4

3.5.2 Locating Your Program's Stage of Group Development

1. Which of the Tribes stages best describes the current development of your group?

2. Explain why you know they are in that stage.

3.What specifically have you done to support them at this stage?

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3.6 Skill Development: Collaborative Skills

Moving from one stage of group development to another does not happen magically. Youth need to learn new skills to work together productively in a group setting. The Tribes process describes a set of collaborative skills that youth need to be taught at each stage of development. These skills help young people become fully responsible community members.

Tribes Collaborative Skills:

- Listening Attentively
- Expressing Appreciation
- Reflecting on Experience
- Valuing Diversity of Culture/Ideas
- Thinking Constructively
- Making Responsible Decisions
- Resolving Conflict
- Solving Problems Creatively
- Working together on Tasks
- Assessing Improvement
- Celebrating Achievement
- Participating Fully

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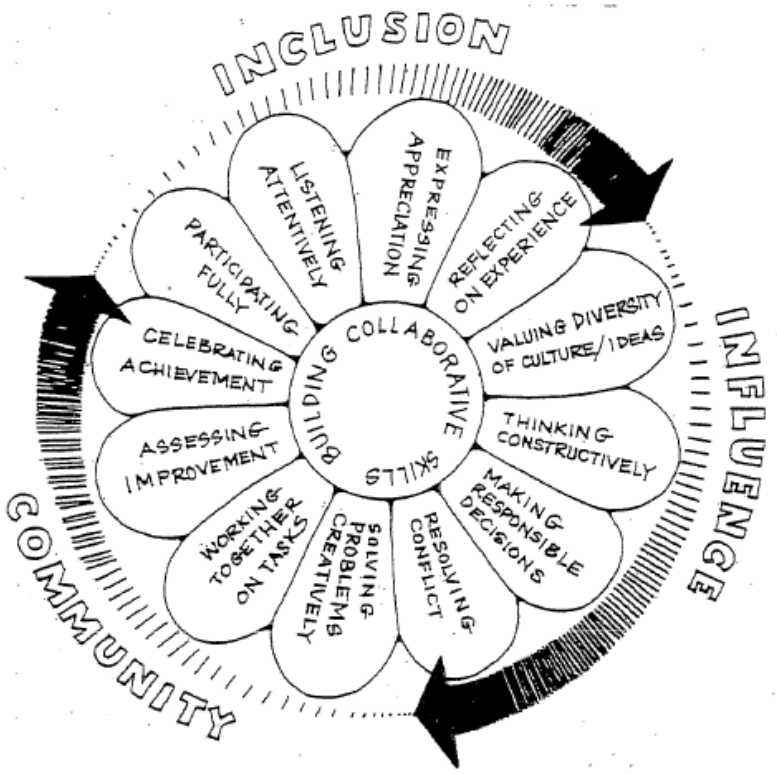
TRIBES Learning Community



Seven Steps in Teaching Collaborative Skills

1. Engage students in identifying the need for the skill (using discussion, role-play, story, or situation).
2. Teach the skill (using the Looks/Sounds/Feels-Like structure or other strategy).
3. Practice the skill regularly, and have students give feedback on how well it was used.
4. Transfer the responsibility to the tribes to remind each other to use the skill.
5. Ask reflection questions about the use of the skill in tribes, the class, the playground, at home, etc.
6. Point out times when you notice people using the skill well.
7. Notice and celebrate when the skill is "owned" as a natural behavior in the classroom or school.

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Worksheet 5

3.6.2 Collaborative Skills Development

Now that you've reviewed the graphic and determined the current stage of your group's development, please consider the following questions:

1. What skill(s) do you think your youth need to work on at this stage or to move to the next one?

2. What is one exercise or game you could facilitate to teach this skill to your group?

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3.7 Assessment

Group Relationships In My Program

The purpose of this activity is to help you assess the overall quality of group interactions in your program. Using the Tribes model, this asks you to rate your program on its ability to build community – to form collective, group relationships – among youth and adults in the program.

Assessing Group Relationships In My Program

1. Youth always have a chance to express their needs and expectations during group activities.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

2. Staff always have a chance to express their needs and expectations during group activities.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

3. The contributions of youth are consistently acknowledged by others in the program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

4. The contributions of staff are consistently acknowledged by others in the program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

5. The youth in this program are good at valuing differences and celebrating diversity.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

6. The adults in this program are good at valuing differences and celebrating diversity.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

7. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

8. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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9. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

10. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

11. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

12. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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3.8.1 Reflection: Youth Voices

Young people know exactly what they need from adults and each other. The Beacon Centers in San Francisco were recently evaluated by a group of researchers from Stanford University with help from youth ethnographers in the program. The young people interviewed shared candidly about power and the importance of building strong relationships.

The following content is excerpted from: *Youth Voices on Learning After School: A Qualitative Evaluation of the San Francisco Beacon Initiative, Executive Summary. July 2003 Stanford University School of Education pg. 6.*

Staff members need to simultaneously support autonomy while providing concrete guidance to youth.

Adults who are effective mentors and educators play different roles with youth than those typically played by teachers in school settings. These adults respect youth's wish to make choices and be a part of decisions that affect them while at the same time offering focused guidance and support. At the Beacons, youth valued the guidance as much as they did choice, especially when it helped youth solve personal problems or manage an interpersonal conflict. This was not an easy balance to manage, but something that many adults were able to pull off. Part of doing this means not just training adult staff members but also providing staff positions where this form of relationship building can be a priority.

Young people value adult staff members who have a deep understanding of what it is like to grow up in the local neighborhood.

One way to think about this problem is youth-worker credentialing. How can the field recruit more young adults with community knowledge and expertise—a "PhD in the streets"? Some Beacons had success in this because of their efforts to bring in community-based organizations with links to the immediate neighborhood.

Relationships and community-building happen when there are common areas for people to hang out.

It is difficult to develop a sense of community if that community rarely gets to be together or interact with one another outside of "program time." Young people appreciated having spaces set aside where they could hang out together, where they had some control over what they were doing and who with. While it was important that this space be youth-friendly, it did not mean that adults should be absent. Generally youth felt safer when more adults were around.

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Youth valued opportunities to talk to adult staff outside of specified "program time."

One suggestion would be to build into job descriptions the time and responsibility for staff to develop relationships with youth. At a concrete level, for example, this means making sure adults have opportunities to hang out during unstructured time with youth, that there be down time outside of specific programs.

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Worksheet 6

3.8.2 Self-Reflection on Youth Voices

- How does the Beacon Evaluation summary of what youth say about building positive relationships compare to what you have been learning?

- Are there any areas you feel your program needs to strengthen?

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Worksheet 7

Chapter Review

This review will help you reflect on the activities you just completed as well as reinforce new concepts. Please answer the following six questions on a separate piece of paper..

1. Please offer a real-life example for each of the following terms:

   Culture:

   Diversity:

   Equity:

   Inclusion:

2. Which of the California Tomorrow program imperatives needs to be implemented or strengthened in your program? What are some things you can put into practice immediately?

3. What are some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Inclusion?

4. What are some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Influence?

5. List at least three of the Tribes collaborative skills. Please offer one real-life example for each skill.

6. In reviewing your completed assessment from section 3.7, what did you learn about your program's ability to build community? What would you like to strengthen or improve?

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Worksheet 7

Chapter Review Answers

This review will help you reflect on the activities you just completed as well as reinforce new concepts.. Please answer the following six questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. Please offer a real-life example for each of the following terms:

    Culture:

    Diversity:

    Equity:

    Inclusion:

2. Which of the California Tomorrow program imperatives needs to be implemented or strengthened in your program? What are some things you can put into practice immediately?

3. What are some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Inclusion?

Some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Inclusion:

- The group has established and follows agreements or ground rules
- The group sometimes breaks into smaller units for activities to help minimize anxiety and encourage connections
- Members listen attentively to others, not only for what they say but how they feel
- Members introduce themselves and share feelings, interests, resources, talents or special qualities
- Members express hopes or expectations for what will happen during the group's time together
- Members express a sense of belonging and being part of the group

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4. What are some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Influence?

Some things you can observe in a group that has entered the Tribes stage of Influence include:

- Members demonstrate an increased motivation and commitment to group
- Members express diverse attitudes, positions, opinions and personal feelings
- Members say what they think and feel knowing that individual differences are respected
- Members work together to make decisions so that everyone feels they can influence others.
- Members contribute to the group and share leadership responsibility with the support of others and the facilitator
- Members work to resolve, rather than avoid, uncomfortable problems and conflicts that begin to separate members.
- Facilitator handles differences between members and embraces conflicts and misunderstandings as a natural part of the process
- Facilitator helps youth resolve issues by providing opportunities for reflection, feedback, role-playing, and discussions

5. List at least three of the Tribes collaborative skills. Please offer one real-life example for each skill.

Tribes Collaborative Skills:	
• Listening Attentively • Expressing Appreciation • Reflecting on Experience • Valuing Diversity of Culture/Ideas • Thinking Constructively • Making Responsible Decisions	• Resolving Conflict • Solving Problems Creatively • Working together on Tasks • Assessing Improvement • Celebrating Achievement • Participating Fully

6. In reviewing your completed assessment from section 3.7, what did you learn about your program's ability to build community? What would you like to strengthen or improve?

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Chapter 4: Moving Forward

Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 4 of Relationship Building! In this chapter you'll consider what you've learned thus far and begin to formulate ideas for implementing personal and program change.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to help you identify opportunities for improving relationship building in your program – through self-reflection, youth surveys, and discussions with youth and colleagues.

By the end of this chapter you'll be able to:

- Identify opportunities for relationship building in current program design
- Use assessments to determine how your youth experience group relationships in your program
- Compile and analyze assessment data
- Develop program priorities with youth and colleagues

Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and activities in this chapter. Each section builds upon the next.

Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 4:

45 – 60 minutes: Online readings and activities

60 – 90 minutes: Activities with your colleagues and youth

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4.1 Program Assessment

Planning Time for Relationship Building

Although one normally builds relationships right in the moment, it is necessary to plan and structure your program to allow time and space for positive relationships to develop.

The purpose of this assessment is to help you reflect on your program, and to identify times and activities in which you can create strong opportunities for relationship building.

Please read and complete all questions below.

Scenario 1
Think about your "typical" week. Consider the "informal times" when you are able to talk with and provide guidance to the youth who most need it (e.g., before programming begins, during breaks, at the close of programming).

Do you have ample opportunity to provide guidance to the youth who need it?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, go to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to increase the space and times which you can offer guidance to youth.

a.

b.

c.

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Scenario 2

Think about the last time you facilitated a youth group or an activity with many youth.

Did you provide sufficient emotional support to the group and to individual youth? For example, did you praise the group and call people by their preferred names?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, move to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to remind yourself to provide emotional support to young people.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 3

Think about your reputation among youth in the program and how they view your strengths and weaknesses.

Do the youth perceive you as a person to whom they can go to in a crisis, or when they require personal advise or assistance?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, move to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to assure the youth that you are a good source of practical support.

a.

b.

c.

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Scenario 4
Think about the youth with whom you work. Consider how much you know about their lives outside the program.

Are you satisfied with how much you know about them (e.g., their family situation, their interests, their passions, what classes they like in school)?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, move to next scenario..

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to increase your knowledge of the youth with whom you interact.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 5:
Think about the last time you facilitated a youth group or an activity.

Did you provide sufficient time for the youth to get to know each other? For example, did the youth get an opportunity to exchange ideas, to find out about each other's interests or to reflect on their common and different perspectives?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, you are done with this assessment activity.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to support youth getting to know each other more deeply.

a.

b.

c.

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4.2 Skill Development: Teach About Relationship Building

The purpose of this activity is to support shared learning within your program. In this activity you will deliver a presentation and facilitate a discussion with your colleagues about relationship building.

Instructions: Read and follow the steps below to conduct a discussion with colleagues.

Step 1*:* Begin by reflecting on what you have learned or what was reinforced for you about relationships over the past few sessions. Consider the following questions and write down some brief notes to prepare for your presentation.

- What has been most surprising or compelling to you about relationship building and all supporting topics?
- What made "light bulbs" go off for you?
- What would be most useful to share with your colleagues?

Step 2: Choose a group of colleagues (between 2 and 5 persons) and schedule a time for your presentation and discussion. A good time to do this might be at a staff or project meeting.

Step 3: Give a short presentation to your colleagues, sharing things that you identified in Step 1. When you are done with the presentation, facilitate a discussion using some of the questions below. Encourage the group to ask questions and to share their views. End the session with a quick brainstorm about how relationships could be strengthened in the program. This session should take about 45 minutes.

Conversation starters for the focused discussion:

- What ideas or pictures came to mind when listening my presentation?
- What jumped out for you as most important about relationship building?
- What do you think we should focus on in order to strengthen relationships in our program?
- Now that we have talked for a while, what is most significant for our future work?

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4.3 Activity with Youth

Survey Youth About Relationships in Program

In this activity you will administer a survey to your youth to help assess the overall quality of group interactions in your program.

Using the Tribes model of group development, this survey asks youth to rate the program on its ability to build community – to form collective, group relationships – among youth and adults in the program.

Randomly select up to 15 youth who attend your program on a regular basis to complete the *"Youth Survey: Opinions about my Program*," provided below. This survey can be administered individually to youth or you may have them complete it in a group situation.

After administering the survey, you will analyze, interpret and set priorities based on the collected data.

Tips for administering the survey to youth

- Administer the survey where it is relatively quiet and there are few distractions.

- To minimize talking and distractions, you can also administer the survey in small groups (or one or two youth at a time).

- It's fine to walk the group through the survey by reading each question aloud. Especially for younger children, you may explain each question or give examples if necessary. Just be sure to read slowly and give everybody time to finish. This is a good strategy for youth who do not read well or have difficulty "taking tests". (Although you should explain that this is not a test.)

- Remind the youth that the survey is confidential and that they should not write their names on it.

- For the survey to be useful to the program, explain that it's important they answer the questions as honestly as possible.

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4.3.1 Youth Survey

Opinions About My Program

Staff are interested in your honest opinions about our program. Your opinion will help us strengthen the program to meet the needs and interests of youth. Do not put your name on the survey.

Instructions: Listed below are 12 questions. For each question, please circle the answer that best represents your opinion.

Assessing Group Relationships In My Program

1. I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

2. Staff always have a chance to express their interests and ideas during group activities.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

3. I feel like staff appreciate and respect the contributions that I make to the program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

4. The youth appreciate and respect the contributions that staff make to the program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

5. The youth get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

6. Staff get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

7. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

8. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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9. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

10. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

11. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

12. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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4.3.2 Assessment

Analyze and Interpret Youth Data

The purpose of this activity is to make sense of the survey responses and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program, from the perspective of the young people.

To analyze the data, all you need is the data analysis worksheet, a pencil, and a calculator.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to analyze the data from the youth surveys.

1. Add up and total the number of completed surveys you collected. This is your "response number."
2. Beginning with question #1, write down the scores from each survey in the "All Scores" column on the worksheet.
3. Add up and total all the scores for this question. Write this in the "Total" column.
4. Divide the total score by the response number and write this in the "Average" column. This is your average score.
5. Repeat steps 2 – 4 for each question.

For example (Question #1):

1. Total number of completed surveys: 8 (response number)

2. Scores for question #1: 1,2,4,3,2,2,4,3

3. The sum total of all scores: 21

4. Divide the score total by the response number: 21 ÷ 8 = 2.62 (average score)

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
1. I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.	1,2,4,3,2,2,4,3	21	2.62

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To interpret the data, all you need is a quiet space and a little time.

Consider the average scores for each of the 12 questions. Overall, are the assessment results favorable (average scores between 2.5 and 4) or unfavorable (average scores between 1 and 2.4)? Which assessment questions received particularly favorable results? Unfavorable?

Jot down notes in response to the following questions:

- How did the scores confirm what you expected?
- How did the scores surprise you?
- How do these scores provide insight into the relative strengths and limitations of relationships in your program?

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4.3.3 Assessment Continued

Youth Survey Data Analysis Worksheet

Response Number: _____

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
1. I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.			
2. Staff always have a chance to express their interests and ideas during group activities.			
3. I feel like staff appreciate and respect the contributions that I make to the program.			
4. The youth appreciate and respect the contributions that staff make to the program.			
5. The youth get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.			
6. Staff get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.			
7. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.			
8. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.			
9. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.			
10. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.			
11. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.			
12. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.			

Key:

Questions 1 to 4 assess **inclusion and a sense of belonging**

Questions 5 to 8 assess **influence and valuing differences**

Questions 9 to 12 assess **community and working together creatively**

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4.4 Assessment with Youth

Develop Program Priorities with Youth

Your next step is to conduct a focus group with youth to discuss the data that you just analyzed and interpreted. At the end of this discussion, you will work with the youth to develop one to three recommendations that will strengthen relationships in your program. [Note: Conducting this focus group will also give you a time to practice your group facilitation skills].

Instructions: Read and follow the steps below to conduct a focus group with your youth.

Step 1: Select six or so youth for your focus group. Choose a diverse range of youth, but select only those young people who have an interest in discussing youth participation for the purpose of strengthening the program. The focus group should take about 45 minutes to complete.

Step 2: Begin the focus group by presenting data from the Youth Survey (as derived from Assessment Activity 4.3).

Step 3: Engage the youth in a focused conversation, by asking and answering three types of questions.

- Ask some "what" questions. For example, what do the survey results tell us? What are the findings that stand out the most?

- Ask some "gut" questions. For example, how does this information make you feel? Does anyone doubt whether the data represent everybody's opinions?

- Conclude the focus group with some "so what?" questions. For example, what needs to change about our program or the way we work? How can we make changes, and who will take the lead? Try to brainstorm no more than three priorities for future action.

Tips on Preparing for Focus Groups:

- Plan in advance what questions you want to ask. Estimate the amount of time you want to spend on each question.

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so that everybody can see each other.

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- Be sure to tell the youth the purpose of the focus group. If you express the purpose seriously, youth will take it seriously.

- Briefly get agreement on the "ground rules" for the focus group (e.g., confidentiality, the importance of give and take in conversation, it is ok to disagree, respect for all).

Tips for Facilitating Focus Groups:

- Your job as the facilitator is to keep the discussion on track. Generally, facilitators do not participate in the actual discussion.

- Listen carefully to what is being said by all participants, and help bring together common themes.

- Make sure everyone gets involved.

- Bring participants who get off track back to the main discussion.

- Ask a colleague to take notes for you and capture youth feedback during the focus group

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Worksheet 1

Chapter Review

This review will help you reflect on the outcome of activities in this chapter and synthesize the information you collected. Please write a short answer to each of the review questions on a separate piece of paper. There are no "right" answers to these questions.

1. Review your responses from 4.1 Program Reflection.
   - Overall, how well does your program structure support relationship building?
   - What are some of the strategies you identified for increasing relationship building?
   - What can you implement or start doing right now?

2. Reflect on the discussion with your colleagues.
   - What did you do well in facilitating the discussion?
   - What would you do differently next time?
   - What are some new insights or ideas about relationship building that emerged for you?

3. Reflect on the survey and focus group activities with your youth.
   - What did you do well in facilitating the group?
   - What would you do differently next time?
   - What feedback from your youth surprised you? Why?
   - What are some new insights or ideas about relationship building that emerged for you?

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Chapter 5: Making It Happen

Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 5 of Relationship Building! Throughout this training, you've had opportunities to reflect on, read about and discuss the many issues and dimensions of relationship building from a Youth Development perspective. You've assessed many of your skills and strengths in applying relationship building practices in your program. You've also begun to apply some new skills and concepts through facilitating activities with your colleagues and youth.

In this final chapter you'll continue the work you began in Chapter 4 – reflecting on your learning and formulating ideas for program and personal change.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to help consider your priorities for future change in preparation for setting goals and creating action.

By the end of this chapter you'll be able to:

- Identify areas for improvement in relationship building at a program and personal level
- Identify criteria for writing clear goals and action steps

Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and exercises in this chapter. Each section builds upon the next.

Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 5:

30 – 45 minutes: Readings and activities online

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5.1 Assessment

Areas for Improvement

In this final assessment activity, you will have an opportunity to:

- Reflect on what you have learned about yourself, your program and relationship building
- Consider the viewpoints of your youth and colleagues
- Establish priorities for the future.

Instructions: Before you begin this final assessment, you may want to review information from all previous assessments (sections 1.5, 2.4, 2.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4.).

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5.1 Self-Assessment

Areas for Improvement

Step 1: **Learning Highlights**

Consider your own learning throughout this process. Now, please identify three topics or activities that were most important to you in terms of learning how to improve your ability to promote strong relationships.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2: Personal Changes – Relationship Building

Please list three areas you would like to focus on for improving your personal practice of relationship building.

1.

2.

3.

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Step 4: Program Changes – Adult to Youth Relationships

Please list or describe three things that you can do in the future to help your program better support stronger adult to youth relationships.

1.

2.

3.

Step 5: Program Changes – Youth to Youth Relationships

Please list or describe three things that you can do in the future to help your program better support stronger youth to youth relationships.

1.

2.

3.

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5.2 Skill Development: Consider Goal Setting Process

Setting goals and creating action plans are powerful tools for making positive changes and moving your personal practice and program forward. They help to clarify and prioritize what's important and focus your activities and decisions. The following is offered as an overview the goal setting process.

It's first important to understand what a goal is and is not. Goals are more than intentions which are often ill-defined and fuzzy. Goal-setting is the process of translating intent into specific statements that can motivate us and provide direction for future change. A goal is like a destination – it specifies exactly where you will end up. With a destination or goal you know specifically where you are going and can plan your journey and actions accordingly.

Goals are:

- Clear, concise statements that define what you want to achieve and when
- Based on a larger vision or mission (e.g. increase relationship building opportunities in my program)
- Realistic and attainable

To formulate and write clear goals:

- Review your areas for improvement
- Pick an idea you want to work towards immediately (remember to pick something realistic and attainable – build upon your existing knowledge, skills, and capacity)
- Write your goal as an affirmative statement on the your worksheet, for example: I will (develop / improve / learn, etc.) _____ by _____.

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5.2 Skill Development: Consider Goal Setting Process, cont'd

After writing your goals, you need to write action steps (or objectives) to make sure you can achieve your goals. Goals without action steps is like deciding to go somewhere without having a vehicle or form of transportation. You probably won't get to where you want to go!

Action Steps are:

- Specific tasks that support achievement of your goal (also called objectives)
- Descriptions of what you will do and when you will do it
- Measurable (what demonstrates that I've accomplished this action step?)

Important: Always identify who is responsible for completing each task in your program plan (or for coordinating the activities of others.) Accountability is important to the success of any action plan.

To formulate and write your action steps: *(using Action Plan template)*

- Review your goal
- Brainstorm specific tasks necessary to achieve the goal
- Write and sequence action steps, making sure each includes a verb
- Check off which tasks are short term and can be done immediately (within the next month)
- Check off which tasks are long term and need more time and resources
- Set a target date for the completion of each task.
- Identify person(s) responsible and/or who can provide support (program plan)
- Identify resource(s) needed for any tasks (people, technical, financial)

Examples:

Program Goal: Our program will institute daily group check-ins by February 1st.

Action Steps:

- Choose five check-in questions by January 15th. (Me, Marta and Sam)
- Choose two check-in games that support group development by January 21st. (Me, Marta and Sam)

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Personal Goal: I will improve my ability to facilitate group check-ins by February 15th.

Action Steps:

- Review communication skills that support group building by December 30th.
- Practice three key communication skills with Marta by January 15th.

Goal setting does not have to be an arduous process. Setting goals and planning for change can be exciting and fun!

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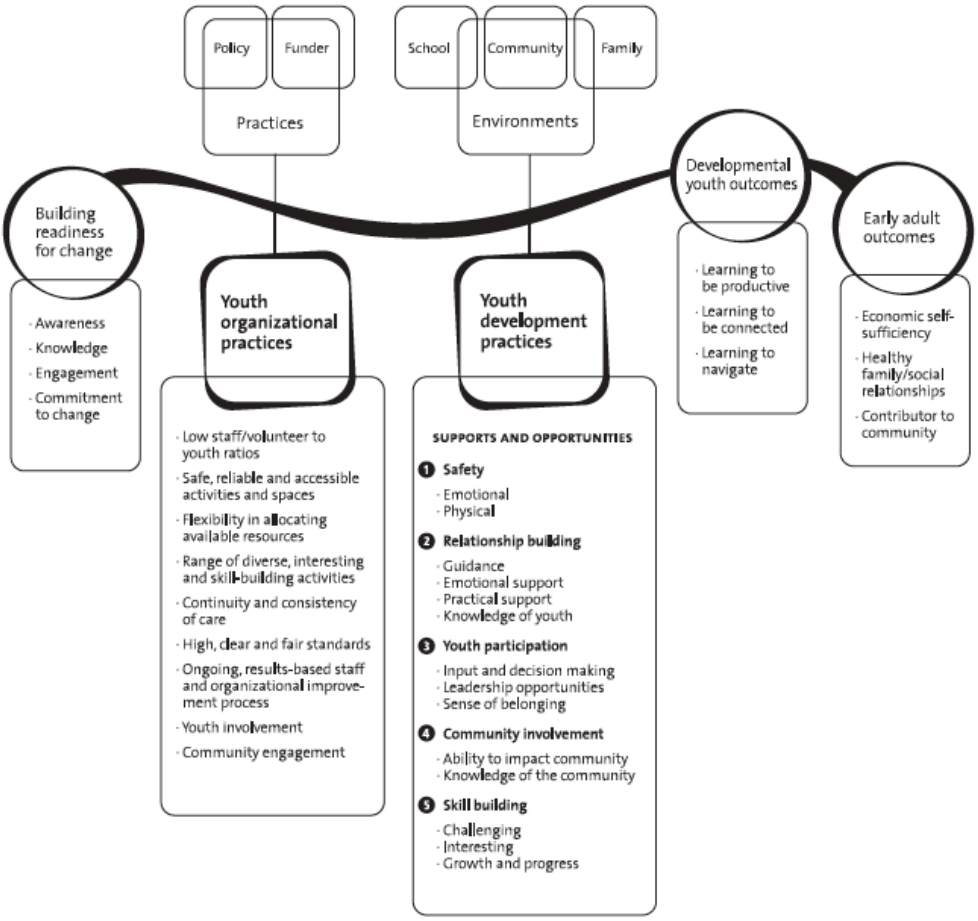
Youth Development Framework for Practice



CNYD

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5.3 Action Plans

Personal Action Plan

This activity gives you an opportunity to create a personal action plan for the future.

Strengths: *Please list or describe your strongest personal abilities in terms of promoting relationship building in your day-to-day work with youth.*
Goal: *Please describe one personal skill or ability that you would like to strengthen in support of relationship building.*

ACTION STEPS	Short Term	Longer Term	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

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ACTION STEPS	Short Term	Longer Term	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						

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Action Plan: Relationship Building **[Example]** **Name** _____

Strengths: *Please list or describe your strongest personal abilities in terms of promoting relationship building in your day-to-day work with youth.*
Good listener, empathetic, respect youth, engage youth when leading activities

Goal: *Please describe one personal skill or ability that you would like to strengthen in support of relationship building.*
Get to know all of the youth in my group at a deeper level – their families, interests, concerns. Target date: April 1st.

ACTION STEPS	Short Term	Longer Term	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1. Brainstorm ideas for games and activities that help me get to know youth • Ask youth for ideas • Research outside sources (Tribes, etc.) • Ask colleagues for ideas	√		1/14	Let youth know my intention to know them better, pointing out my strategies. Get feedback on impact to group.	Ask a colleague for support in this process	Staff Time Access to computer
3. Examine program design and list opportunities for building knowledge of youth and areas for improvement	√		1/21	Ask youth for input	Ask colleague to review my list and provide input	Staff time
4. Design youth survey (ask about birthdays, sports games, school activities, family events, etc.)	√		2/4	Ask youth for input in designing for survey	Ask colleague to review and provide feedback on my survey	Staff time, access to computer, printer and copy machine
5. Administer survey to youth and review data	√		2/11	Complete survey		Staff time
6. Schedule 1:1 time with each youth in my group (even just a few minutes each)	√		1/21	Participate in meetings		Quiet space to meet
7. Talk to colleagues to find out what they know about my youth	√		1/28	None	Time with colleagues	Create a journal of info about my youth
8. Plan an event that invites parents to visit program		√	3/1	Ask youth for input in planning of event	Site coordinator	Access to a computer
9. Host an event for parents and youth at program site		√	3/25	Ask youth to collaborate in organizing event	Colleagues, site coordinator	Meeting space Refreshments

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Program Action Plan: Relationship Building **[Example]** **Name** _____

Strengths: *Please list or describe what your program does really well to promote relationship building.*
We have clear group agreements that are posted and followed. Our staff truly cares about all the young people and are eager to build positive relationships with and among our youth.

Goal: *Please describe one aspect of your program that could use some improvement. Write a goal statement using the handout provided.*
Improvement: Youth tend to segregate by racial or cultural group during activities and social time. We need to support youth to engage in positive inter-cultural interactions. Goal: Transform our program into an environment that encourages people to work together across differences, i.e. age, gender, ethnic background, culture, disability, sexual orientation. Target date: April 1st.

ACTION STEPS	Short Term	Longer Term	Target Date	Person Responsible	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1. Meet with program staff and administrators to their get buy-in on this goal. Brainstorm ideas for encouraging cross-cultural interactions. Conclude meeting with at least two action steps to involve staff in meeting this goal.	√		1/7	Me	None	Colleague to support this process and to co-facilitate the meeting (Mario?)	Staff time: me and Mario? Conference room, chart pads and markers
2. Meet with youth leadership council to discuss this issue and get their buy-in on goal. Brainstorm ideas for encouraging cross-cultural interactions. Conclude meeting with at least two action steps to involve youth in meeting this goal.	√		1/14	Me	Ask council to add this topic to the agenda of their next meeting or schedule a special meeting. Ask for a youth volunteer to co-facilitate meeting.	Support from colleague at this meeting Support from program director	Staff time: me and Mario Conference room, chart pads and markers
3. Form staff and youth diversity committee to carry action steps forward	√		1/21	Me & youth council represent-ative	None	Ask a colleague to help me	Staff time: me and Zoe (?)

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ACTION STEPS	Short Term	Longer Term	Target Date	Person Responsible	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
4. Plan two diversity/equity trainings: one for staff and one for youth. • Meet with program director to get agreement • Research resources (California Tomorrow, To-dos, etc.) • Set date for training • Plan publicity, food, etc. • Research costs and budget	√		1/28	Me & program director	Youth council review our recommendations and provide input	Partner with program director and another colleague	My time, access to phone and computer
5. Deliver diversity/equity training for staff.		√	2/25	Consultant	Possibly include a youth panel as part of training	Program Director	Money to pay for consultant & food Staff time Training Room Training supplies
6. Deliver diversity/equity training to youth.		√	2/25	Consultant	Participate in training	Program Director	Money to pay for consultant & food Staff time Training Room Training supplies
7. Convene a meeting of the staff/youth diversity committee to de-brief training and check on status of action steps		√	3/4	Me & Youth council represent-ative	Participate in meeting	Program Director	Meeting Room

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1.2.4 Assessment

Assessing Relationships in Own Program

Purpose: The purpose of this assessment is to help you assess the overall quality of adult-youth relationships, from your own perspective and from that of youth in the program.

1. Overall, how comfortable are YOU, personally, with the quality of youth-adult relationships in your program?

_____ The staff do all they can to build high quality relationships with youth.

_____ The staff do an acceptable job in building quality relationships with youth.

_____ We have to do much better in forming quality relationships with youth.

2. Overall, how comfortable are YOU, personally, with the quality of youth-youth relationships in your program?

_____ The staff do all they can to ensure that youth have the opportunity and support to build quality relationships with their peers.

_____ The staff do an acceptable job in helping youth build quality relationships with their peers.

_____ We have to do much better in providing youth the opportunity and support to form quality relationships with their peers.

3. Consider the four components of relationship building. Check the component(s) that you believe program staff should pay more attention to when strengthening their relationships with youth.

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

_____ Knowledge of Youth

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4. Consider the four components of relationship building. Check the component(s) that you believe program staff should pay more attention to when helping youth strengthen relationships with their peers.

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

_____ Knowledge of Youth

5. In your opinion, how comfortable are YOUTH with the quality of youth-adult relationships in your program?

_____ Almost all of the youth believe that they have high quality relationships with at least two staff members.

_____ The youth are generally pleased with the quality of the relationships that they have with staff.

_____ Too many youth feel isolated from staff in this program.

6. Consider the four components of relationship building. Which component(s) would YOUTH say that staff need to strengthening their relationships with program participants?

_____ Guidance

_____ Emotional Support

_____ Practical Support

_____ Knowledge of Youth

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1.5.2 Assessment

Defining the Dimensions of Strong Staff-Youth Relationships

The purpose of this activity is to explore the essential dimensions of relationship building, from your perspective, and from the perspective of the youth with whom you work.

Step 1: Self-Reflection: Take about 15 minutes to reflect on the following questions. Record your thoughts on another piece of paper.

(4) How do you know when you have successfully formed a strong relationship with youth in your program?

(5) What are the most effective strategies that you use to form a strong relationship with youth?

(6) What do you expect from youth in terms of their efforts in forming a relationship with you?

Step 2*:* ***Discussion with Youth:*** Select 3 to 5 youth and engage them in a group conversation about relationship building for about 15 minutes. Orient the conversation around the following questions.

(4) What makes a good youth worker?

(5) How do you know when a youth worker really respects you and wants to have a positive relationship?

(6) How do you know when a youth worker really does not care about you or about forming a strong relationship with you in the program?

Step 3: ***Self-Reflection:*** Reflect on your discussion with youth.

(4) What did you learn from youth that you had not thought about before the group conversation?

(5) Briefly describe what you learned or what was reinforced for you through the experience of talking with youth about relationship building.

(6) Did your perception of relationship building change in talking with youth in your program? For example, do you think that relationship building is more important than before and/or did you learn new ways that youth think about relationships?

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1.5.3 Assessment

Building Relationships with Youth in Programs

Complete the following assessment. Please be honest with yourself when answering these questions. This assessment will help you "benchmark" your current practice – through identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement your practice.

Listed below are fourteen statements. Please circle the number that best represents your opinion about the statement.

15. I will go out of my way to approach a youth when I see that she/he is upset or having difficulties.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

16. To provide guidance to the group, I am always clear about how I expect everyone to treat one another in my program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

17. When I give guidance, I am comfortable sharing relevant information about myself

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

18. When a youth is having a problem, I'm effective in helping him/her deal with it.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

19. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that I always listen to and respect their personal concerns or issues.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

20. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that I give them lots of praise when they deserve it.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

21. I am able to create a spirit of teamwork among youth so that they care about each other and want to work together.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

22. Youth readily come to me when they need help dealing with a personal problem.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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23. When designing youth activities, I make sure that everybody has a chance to “check in” and express their personal wants or needs.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

24. If you asked youth in my program, they would say that I “go the extra mile” in terms of giving them advice on practical issues (e.g., dealing with bullies at school, relating to a girl/boyfriend, finding a job).

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

25. I am confident in my knowledge about all of the youth with whom I work on a regular basis (e.g., I know what is important to them; their personal needs).

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

26. When designing youth activities, I always make sure that there are opportunities for youth to build relationships with their peers.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

27. If you asked the youth in my program, they would say that they know what I stand for.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

28. I know some effective strategies for helping diverse youth learn together and work together.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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2.4 Assessment:

Assessing Your Own Communication Abilities

Building strong relationships with youth requires strong communication abilities. There are five core communication skills (active listening, establishing trust, empathy, being present, and providing feedback). Most workers have a preferred style. That is, you are better equipped – in terms of personal comfort and ability – to use one or more communication skills as compared to others.

The purpose of this activity is to help you identify your preferred communication style when working with (a) individual youth and (b) groups of youth.

Working with Individual Youth

Please assess your overall ability in communicating with *individual youth* by circling the number that best represents your ability.

1. Being an Active Listener (e.g., seeking to hear what the youth is really trying to communicate to you).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

2. Establishing Trust (e.g., demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

3. Being Empathetic (e.g., demonstrating that you genuinely care about the young person)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

4. Being Present (e.g., demonstrating that you are in the moment, and not distracted, when relating to the young person).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

5. Providing Feedback (e.g., responding in ways that explicitly address the concerns of the youth)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

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Working With Youth Groups

Please assess your overall ability in communicating with *youth groups* by circling the number that best represents your ability.

6. Being an Active Listener (e.g., working hard to hear points of difference and consensus within the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

7. Establishing Trust (e.g., demonstrating that the youth can have confidence and depend on you to respect the group and keep it emotionally safe for all)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

8. Being Empathetic (e.g., demonstrating that you genuinely care about everybody in the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

9. Being Present (e.g., demonstrating that you are in the moment, and not distracted, when being in the group).

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

10. Providing Feedback (e.g., responding in ways that explicitly acknowledge the concerns of all the youth in the group)

1-low ability, 2-somewhat low ability, 3-somewhat high ability , 4-high ability

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2.6 Assessment

Identifying Key Communication Strategies in Building Relationships

What gets in the way of forming close and trusting relationships with young people at any age – elementary, middle and high school? What challenges do you face in promoting and encouraging supportive relationships between young people?

Purpose: Relationship building ultimately requires that you understand and respond to the unique needs of individual youth. One's ability to do so is dependent, in part, on the effective use of communication strategies.

The purpose of this assessment is to deepen your understanding of three key communication strategies and how they directly affect your ability to form relationships.

Communication Strategies

Setting Boundaries: It's important to set clear limits with young people to let them know what you can and cannot do or share as a youth worker. Boundaries set the parameters for appropriate emotional and practical support. Knowing your limits does not mean that you are distant and aloof. Young people appreciate adults who are "real" with them. As a role model, you are also helping youth learn how to set appropriate boundaries for themselves.

Promoting Cross-Cultural Interactions: Learning to reach out and interact appropriately with people different from yourself is important in building relationships in diverse groups. As a youth worker you can model openness, respect and interest in other cultures and encourage youth to get to know youth outside their group. Engaging in cross-cultural interactions enriches your life – and also requires risk-taking and good communications skills.

Facilitating Positive Group Interactions: In the context of relationship building, facilitation involves the ability to nurture healthy group process and support youth to build relationships with each other. As a facilitator, creating a safe and democratic environment where all voices are heard encourages development of positive relationships. In your role as a youth worker you can model accountability, fairness and sensitivity. And the more you know all young people in your program, the more you can support each individual to participate and contribute in their own way.

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Relationship #1: Identify a youth with whom you HAVE BUILT a strong relationship.

What is the youth's name? _____.

Think about what you did to build this relationship.

a. I have established clear boundaries with the young person, and the young person understands my expectations for our relationship.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

b. When the youth is in a group, I encourage him/her to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

c. When the youth is in a group, I facilitate the group to ensure that s/he has an opportunity to contribute and to speak and be heard.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

Relationship #2: Identify a youth with whom you HAVE NOT BUILT a strong relationship. What is the youth's name? _____.

Think about why a strong relationship has not been formed.

a. I have established clear boundaries with the young person, and the young person understands my expectations for our relationship.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

b. When the youth is in a group, I encourage him/her to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

c. When the youth is in a group, I facilitate the group to ensure that s/he has an opportunity to contribute and to speak and be heard.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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Self-Reflection:

- What do you see as your strengths in nurturing relationship #1?

- What are your challenges in relationship #2?

- What strategies(s) would you like to strengthen: setting boundaries , promoting cross-cultural interactions, and/or facilitating healthy group process?

- What specifically can you do to build a stronger relationship with each of these youth?

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3.7 Assessment

Group Relationships In My Program

The purpose of this activity is to help you assess the overall quality of group interactions in your program. Using the Tribes model, this asks you to rate your program on its ability to build community – to form collective, group relationships – among youth and adults in the program.

Assessing Group Relations In My Program

1. Youth always have a chance to express their needs and expectations during group activities.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

2. Staff always have a chance to express their needs and expectations during group activities.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

3. The contributions of youth are consistently acknowledged by others in the program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

4. The contributions of staff are consistently acknowledged by others in the program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

5. The youth in this program are good at valuing differences and celebrating diversity.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

6. The adults in this program are good at valuing differences and celebrating diversity.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

7. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

8. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.

    1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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9. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

10. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

11. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

12. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.

1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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4.1 Program Assessment

Planning Time for Relationship Building

Although one normally builds relationships right in the moment, it is necessary to plan and structure your program to allow time and space for positive relationships to develop.

The purpose of this assessment is to help you reflect on your program, and to identify times and activities in which you can create strong opportunities for relationship building.

Please read and complete all questions below.

Scenario 1

Think about your "typical" week. Consider the "informal times" when you are able to talk with and provide guidance to the youth who most need it (e.g., before programming begins, during breaks, at the close of programming).

Do you have ample opportunity to provide guidance to the youth who need it?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, go to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to increase the space and times which you can offer guidance to youth.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 2

Think about the last time you facilitated a youth group or an activity with many youth.

Did you provide sufficient emotional support to the group and to individual youth? For example, did you praise the group and call people by their preferred names?

_____ yes _____ no

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If yes, move to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to remind yourself to provide emotional support to young people.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 3

Think about your reputation among youth in the program and how they view your strengths and weaknesses.

Do the youth perceive you as a person to whom they can go to in a crisis, or when they require personal advise or assistance?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, move to next scenario.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to assure the youth that you are a good source of practical support.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 4

Think about the youth with whom you work. Consider how much you know about their lives outside the program.

Are you satisfied with how much you know about them (e.g., their family situation, their interests, their passions, what classes they like in school)?

_____ yes _____ no

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If yes, move to next scenario..

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to increase your knowledge of the youth with whom you interact.

a.

b.

c.

Scenario 5:

Think about the last time you facilitated a youth group or an activity.

Did you provide sufficient time for the youth to get to know each other? For example, did the youth get an opportunity to exchange ideas, to find out about each other's interests or to reflect on their common and different perspectives?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, you are done with this assessment activity.

If no, write down some strategies that you can use in the future to support youth getting to know each other more deeply.

a.

b.

c.

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4.3 Activity with Youth

Survey Youth About Relationships in Program

In this activity you will administer a survey to your youth to help assess the overall quality of group interactions in your program.

Using the Tribes model of group development, this survey asks youth to rate the program on its ability to build community – to form collective, group relationships – among youth and adults in the program.

Randomly select up to 15 youth who attend your program on a regular basis to complete the *"Youth Survey: Opinions about my Program*," provided below. This survey can be administered individually to youth or you may have them complete it in a group situation.

After administering the survey, you will analyze, interpret and set priorities based on the collected data.

Tips for administering the survey to youth

- Administer the survey where it is relatively quiet and there are few distractions.

- To minimize talking and distractions, you can also administer the survey in small groups (or one or two youth at a time).

- It's fine to walk the group through the survey by reading each question aloud. Especially for younger children, you may explain each question or give examples if necessary. Just be sure to read slowly and give everybody time to finish. This is a good strategy for youth who do not read well or have difficulty "taking tests". (Although you should explain that this is not a test.)

- Remind the youth that the survey is confidential and that they should not write their names on it.

- For the survey to be useful to the program, explain that it's important they answer the questions as honestly as possible.

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4.3.1 Youth Survey

Opinions About My Program

Staff are interested in your honest opinions about our program. Your opinion will help us strengthen the program to meet the needs and interests of youth. Do not put your name on the survey. It is confidential because we want your honest opinion.

Instructions: Listed below are 12 questions. For each question, please circle the answer that best represents your opinion.

Assessing Group Relationships In My Program

1. I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

2. Staff always have a chance to express their interests and ideas during group activities.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

3. I feel like staff appreciate and respect the contributions that I make to the program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

4. The youth appreciate and respect the contributions that staff make to the program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

5. The youth get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

6. Staff get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

7. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

8. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.

   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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9. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

10. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

11. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

12. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.
   1-Disagree, 2-Somewhat Disagree, 3-Somewhat Agree, 4-Agree

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4.3.2 Assessment
Analyze and Interpret the Youth Data

The purpose of this activity is to make sense of the youth data, with the aim being to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program, from the perspective of the young people.

To analyze the data, all you need is the data analysis worksheet, a pencil, and a calculator.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to analyze the data from the youth surveys.

1. Add up and total the number of completed surveys you collected. This is your "response number."
2. Beginning with question #1, write down the scores from each survey in the "All Scores" column on the worksheet.
3. Add up and total all the scores for this question. Write this in the "Total" column.
4. Divide the total score by the response number and write this in the "Average" column. This is your average score.
5. Repeat steps 2 – 4 for each question.

For example (Question #1):

1. Total number of completed surveys: 8 (response number)
2. Scores for question #1: 1,2,4,3,2,2,4,3
3. The sum total of all scores: 21
4. Divide the score total by the response number: 21 ÷ 8 = 2.62 (average score)

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
1.I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.	1,2,4,3,2,2,4,3	21	2.62

To interpret the data, all you need is a quiet space and a little time.

Consider the average scores for each of the 12 questions. Overall, are the assessment results favorable (average scores between 2.5 and 4) or unfavorable (average scores between 1 and 2.4)? Which assessment questions received particularly favorable results? Unfavorable?

Jot down notes in response to the following questions:

- How did the scores confirm what you expected?
- How did the scores surprise you?
- How do these scores provide insight into the relative strengths and limitations of relationships in your program?

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4.3.3 Assessment Continued

Youth Survey Data Analysis Worksheet

Response Number: _____

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
13. I always have a chance to express my interests and ideas during group activities.			
14. Staff always have a chance to express their interests and ideas during group activities.			
15. I feel like staff appreciate and respect the contributions that I make to the program.			
16. The youth appreciate and respect the contributions that staff make to the program.			
17. The youth get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.			
18. Staff get along with those who have different backgrounds or ideas from themselves.			
19. Overall, we manage conflict quite well in this program.			
20. Overall, we set goals in this program and try our best to meet them.			
21. As a group, we draw on the creativity that each person brings to the program.			
22. As a group, we share responsibility for the successes of the program.			
23. As a group, we share responsibility for the limitations of the program.			
24. As a group, we are good at meeting challenges and solving problems.			

Key:

Questions 1 to 4 assess **inclusion and a sense of belonging**

Questions 5 to 8 assess **influence and valuing differences**

Questions 9 to 12 assess **community and working together creatively**

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4.4 Assessment with Youth

Develop Program Priorities with Youth

Your next step is to conduct a focus group with youth to discuss the data that you just analyzed and interpreted. At the end of this discussion, you will work with the youth to develop one to three recommendations that will strengthen relationships in your program. [Note: Conducting this focus group will also give you a time to practice your group facilitation skills].

Instructions: Read and follow the steps below to conduct a focus group with your youth.

Step 1: Select six or so youth for your focus group. Choose a diverse range of youth, but select only those young people who have an interest in discussing youth participation for the purpose of strengthening the program. The focus group should take about 45 minutes to complete.

Step 2: Begin the focus group by presenting data from the Youth Survey (as derived from Assessment Activity 4.3).

Step 3: Engage the youth in a focused conversation, by asking and answering three types of questions.

- Ask some "what" questions. For example, what do the survey results tell us? What are the findings that stand out the most?

- Ask some "gut" questions. For example, how does this information make you feel? Does anyone doubt whether the data represent everybody's opinions?

- Conclude the focus group with some "so what?" questions. For example, what needs to change about our program or the way we work? How can we make changes, and who will take the lead? Try to brainstorm no more than three priorities for future action.

Tips on Preparing for Focus Groups:

- Plan in advance what questions you want to ask. Estimate the amount of time you want to spend on each question.

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so that everybody can see each other.

- Be sure to tell the youth the purpose of the focus group. If you express the purpose seriously, youth will take it seriously.

- Briefly get agreement on the "ground rules" for the focus group (e.g., confidentiality, the importance of give and take in conversation, it is ok to disagree, respect for all).

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Tips for Facilitating Focus Groups:

- Your job as the facilitator is to keep the discussion on track. Generally, facilitators do not participate in the actual discussion.

- Listen carefully to what is being said by all participants, and help bring together common themes.

- Make sure everyone gets involved.

- Bring participants who get off track back to the main discussion.

- Ask a colleague to take notes for you and capture youth feedback during the focus group

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5.1 Self-Assessment

Areas for Improvement

Step 1: Learning Highlights

Consider your own learning throughout this process. Now, please identify three topics or activities that were most important to you in terms of learning how to improve your ability to promote strong relationships.

1.

2.

3.

Step 2: Personal Changes – Relationship Building

Please list three areas you would like to focus on for improving your personal practice of relationship building.

1.

2.

3.

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Step 3: Program Changes – Adult to Youth Relationships

Please list or describe three things that you can do in the future to help your program better support stronger adult to youth relationships.

1.

2.

3.

Step 4: Program Changes – Youth to Youth Relationships

Please list or describe three things that you can do in the future to help your program better support stronger youth to youth relationships.

1.

2.

3.

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