

# Making It Happen: Skill Building



**CNYD**

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On-line resources for professional development

## Preface **Making It Happen: Skill Building Training Materials**

### ***The use of these Materials***

*Making It Happen: Skill 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 skill building, one of the five youth development supports and opportunities that CNYD's *Youth Development Framework for Practice*. 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: Skill Building* is broken down into six 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, Relationship 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: Skill 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 Skill Building

### Welcome

Welcome to Chapter One of Skill Building! This first chapter begins to explore the foundations of skill building and why this youth development practice is important to the success of afterschool programs.

### Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to introduce you to key concepts of skill building through readings and activities.

In this chapter you will learn:

- The definition of skill building and its three dimensions
- The importance of skill building
- How skill building contributes to a young person's success in school
- The characteristics of quality youth programs that foster skill building

In addition, you will:

- Read about high quality programs in the Bay Area to see what skill building looks like in action
- Facilitate a brief discussion with your youth

### Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the topics and exercises in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 1:

75 – minutes to 2 hours

## 1.1 Self-Reflection: Remembering a Favorite Teacher

Taking time to think back on your own experience as a youth can help you gain valuable insight into what things made a difference in shaping who you are today. Let's begin by thinking about an adult that inspired you to excel and to be curious about learning. As this youth worker below remembers, one teacher can have a profound effect on how we think of ourselves and related to learning...

*The most interesting thing about my relationship with my favorite teacher, a man very influential in my life, was the fact that we were so different. Mr. Atwood was very small in stature, white and soft spoken. I'm very tall and large in stature, African-American and loud. He made sure that I didn't feel alone even though I was one of two African-American students in the class. He asked me to be the lead defense attorney in "Mock Trials" defending a slave ship captain. He demanded that I enter into the mind-set of people living at that time. This was extremely challenging, but I persevered and won the case. He made me want to teach history.*

*Mr. Atwood's favorite people were John F. Kennedy and Franklin D. Roosevelt and he put the fire of leadership in my heart. "Ask what you can do for your country" can be scaled down to your community, neighborhood, and even your own block.*

*—Reggie, Site Director, Wilson Afterschool Program, West Contra Costa County*

# Worksheet 1

## 1.1 Self-Reflection: Remembering Your Favorite Teacher

Think back and remember an adult who contributed to your curiosity about learning.

1. How did the adult engage you? What specifically did they do to get to know your interests?
2. How did the adult make the learning challenging? What specifically did they do to challenge you?
3. How did you know you were learning? What specifically did the adult do to help you recognize that you were growing and progressing?



## 1.2 Concept Definition: What is Skill Building?

To prepare for young people for adulthood, they must be provided multiple learning opportunities. They need to expand their understanding and knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live. They also need to master new skills and concepts.

Quality youth development programs complement school by creating intentional and reflective learning environments where young people can gain a wide range of skills – academic, artistic, recreational, personal, and interpersonal. These programs allow young people to explore subjects and disciplines, which they might not be able to explore elsewhere.

Recently, the role of afterschool in the public sector has greatly expanded. More and more youth development programs are being asked (or are required) to demonstrate how afterschool experience contributes to a student's success in school.

**Instructions:** Please read and reflect on the following questions before reading the next section.

What kinds of measures define school success today? What is the role of afterschool in a young person's school performance and success?

## **The Role of Afterschool in School Success**

For better or for worse, school success is measured today by academic and quantitative indicators, including:

- Grades
- Standardized test scores
- Number of days in attendance
- Graduation

Although afterschool and community-based youth programs cannot demonstrate their impact through academic measures, they play a unique and important role in a young person's learning and success. Many programs are building partnerships with schools, parents, and other community stakeholders to help improve students' performance in school.

Afterschool programs can complement in-school learning when they leverage their unique strengths. These include:

- Individual relationships between youth and adults
- Participant choice
- Connections with family and the greater community
- Flexibility in scheduling, program content, and physical space

Studies have shown that opportunities for skill building in collaborative, respectful, developmentally appropriate environments have a positive influence on students' levels of motivation, self-discipline, and commitment.

## **The Three Dimensions of Skill Building**

Based on the Youth Development Framework for Practice, Skill Building means that young people experience learning as:

### **CHALLENGING**

Participants stretch beyond their current range of knowledge, abilities and skills in the real world.

### **INTERESTING**

Programs tap into young participants' natural curiosity and interest in discovery – and connect learning to practical situations that are relevant to their lives.

### **GROWTH and PROGRESS**

Programs offer opportunities for young people to take charge of their own learning, measure their own progress, and develop mastery in their work.

### **1.3 Activity with Youth: Discuss Skill Building with Youth**

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

#### **Step 1: Self-Reflection**

Record your thoughts on the worksheet provided (1.3.1).

1. How do you know when you have successfully engaged the interests of your youth?
2. What are your most effective strategies for challenging youth to do what they think they cannot do?
3. What strategies do you use to recognize and celebrate young people's accomplishments?

#### **Step 2: Discussion with Youth**

Select 3 to 5 youth and engage them in a group conversation about skill building for about 15 minutes. Explain to them that this is an opportunity for you to learn from them.

Orient the conversation around the following questions:

1. What kinds of things have you learned to do in your lives that are important to you? What about these things is important?
2. Sometimes learning new things pushes us beyond where we feel comfortable. What do you do when learning is hard? What kinds of things could I do when I notice you are struggling, but I really want to help you stick with it?
3. It can feel really great when we learn something new. How do you like to be recognized or celebrated when you learn something new?

You may also want to chart participant responses during the activity.

#### **Step 3: Self-Reflection**

Reflect on your discussion with youth. Please write your responses on the worksheet provided (1.3.2)

1. Briefly describe what you learned or what was reinforced for you through the experience of talking with youth about skill building.
2. What did you learn from your youth that you had not thought about before the group conversation?
3. Did your perception of skill building change in talking with youth in your program? For example, do you think that skill building is more important than before and/or did you learn new ways that youth think about learning?

## **Worksheet 2**

### **1.3.1 Self-Reflection: Skill Building With Youth (part one)**

1. How do you know when you have successfully engaged the interests of your youth?

2. What are your most effective strategies for challenging youth to do what they think they cannot do?

3. What strategies do you use to recognize and celebrate young people's accomplishments?

## Worksheet 3

### 1.3.2 Self-Reflection: Skill Building with Youth (part two)

1. Briefly describe what you learned or what was reinforced for you through the experience of talking with youth about skill building.
2. What did you learn from your youth that you had not thought about before the group conversation?
3. Did your perception of skill building change in talking with youth in your program? For example, do you think that skill building is more important than before and/or did you learn new ways that youth think about learning?

## 1.4 Concept Exploration: The Importance of Skill Building

“Afterschool programs can increase young people’s engagement in school learning through activities directly linked to school goals and well as through the promotion of a broad range of skills that children and adolescents need in order to succeed.”

From *“Getting the Most From Afterschool: The Role of Afterschool Programs in a High-Stakes Learning Environment”* Written by Sam Piha and Beth M. Miller in partnership with the Network of Leaders of Citywide Afterschool Initiatives.

Ideally, students are supported in school, in their homes, and in their communities as they build academic, cognitive, social, and personal skills. Unfortunately, for too many young people, schools are the only environment where they are exposed to positive learning experiences. Parents and other older family members often do not have the time or capacity to complement what their young people are learning in school.

Fortunately, afterschool and community-based programs do have the time, opportunity, and responsibility to complement young people’s learning in a variety of ways. These include:

- Helping students with their in-school homework assignments
- Taking youth on trips to places in the community such as museums and performances
- Planning and completing projects that originate from and build on students strengths and interests and have a practical implication on the community
- Facilitating informal reading and discussions on important topics in history or current events
- Helping students navigate the school system and advocating for their needs as learners

In their paper *“Beyond the Classroom: Complementary Learning to Improve Achievement Outcomes,”* The Harvard Family Research Project focuses on the concept of complementary learning:

“Being strategic about the way in which contexts [where young people learn] connect, and building on the strengths of multiple learning contexts, can be a more effective way to improve child outcomes than if these contexts continue to operate independently of one another.”

As schools and out-of-school programs partner with one another, it is important to remember that students do not need to have “school after school” in order to enhance their experiences as learners. Each learning environment should build on its strengths and complement each other without replicating what the other does well.

## 1.5 Application: Learning Environments that Foster Skill Building

Skill building does not happen in a vacuum. Quality afterschool and community-based programs intentionally create learning environments that are based on all of the youth development practices. As you look at quality out-of-school learning environments, notice how crucial it is for all of the other youth development supports and opportunities to be present.

Think about your programs. What would be the impact to your young learners if these practices were not in place?

### 1. **Safety** (emotional and physical)

Safety is foundational. Building skills requires taking risks and challenging oneself. It is essential that a young person be in an environment where he or she feels safe to make mistakes and try new things.

### 2. **Relationship Building** (adult-to-youth and youth-to-youth)

Successful youth development programs give adult staff plenty of opportunity and support to know all the youth; where they are from and what interests them. Adult staff understands that learning is social and that allowing young people to work and learn together in groups is critical. Young people build skills by engaging in activities and experiences that are interesting and enjoyable.

### 3. **Youth Participation** (decision-making, leadership, and belonging)

Quality youth programs offer opportunities for young people to make decisions about things that will have a real impact on the program and their own lives. As learners, these opportunities lead to young people becoming responsible for their own learning; allowing them to strengthen the skills it takes to reflect on their work, solve tough problems for themselves, and recognize their own growth.

### 4. **Community Involvement** (knowledge and impact)

Skills are acquired when concepts are applied to real situations in the real world, for example, learning how to navigate the public transportation system, use the library, or visit a new restaurant. Community involvement also means giving young people opportunities to impact the community through service and social justice-related projects. These are essential learning activities where young people can actually see how their new skills are being applied to make a difference.

## **Quality Programs: What does a skill-building environment look like?**

A skill-building environment can take many forms. Here is a sampling of how five different afterschool and community-based programs apply the practices of skill building in a youth development context.

### **Jamestown Community Center** (<http://www.jamestownsf.org/ourprograms.html>)

Founded in 1971 in San Francisco's Mission District, Jamestown currently runs afterschool programs that serve 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through high school and focus on arts, sports, leadership, science, and academic success. The real strength of this program lies in its connection to its home community. The organization employs youth workers and teachers who are both talented in their area of discipline and familiar with the specific and cultural needs of its participants. Many staff have been connected to the organization for many years. Jamestown also engages community volunteers in their One-on-One Tutoring Program – where underachieving students have opportunities to improve their outcomes while building crucial relationships.

### **Out of Site Center for Arts Education** (<http://www.outofsite-sf.org/classes.html>)

High school afterschool programs are faced with unique considerations in program design. High students need their out-of-school activities to lead to some practical results, i.e. income, connections to job/career, or instruction in high-level skills. Out of Site is based at City Arts & Tech High School in the Ingleside District of San Francisco. Its goal is to blend high quality arts instruction with meaningful community engagement. Out of Site serves as a community center for students from various high schools and offers credits needed for graduation and assistance with job and internship placement. The program also focuses on developing and supporting high caliber faculty who design and lead innovative, university-level courses that take students out of the classroom and into the surrounding community.

### **Prescott Circus** ([http://www.prescottcircus.org/html/what\\_do\\_we\\_do.html](http://www.prescottcircus.org/html/what_do_we_do.html))

Based at Prescott Elementary School in West Oakland since 1984, the Prescott Circus is a unique afterschool program for older elementary students. This program focuses on teaching circus skills such as clowning, juggling, stilt walking, unicycle, and the African American tradition of Hambone. In addition to learning these challenging and fun physical and artistic activities, circus members are also supported in their homework, encouraged as leaders, and given the opportunity to see a wide variety of performances throughout the Bay Area.

### **Playworks** (<http://www.playworks.org>)

This program recognizes and effectively articulates the learning outcomes associated with athletic engagement for elementary school students. Teamwork and collaborative skills, conflict resolution, navigating loss as well as winning, and self-discipline are at the heart of Playworks' curriculum. Playworks' positive partnerships with a wide variety of public school sites throughout the Bay Area have led to both in-school and afterschool programming featuring physical activity, homework help, snack, and field trips. The organization also runs sports leagues, allowing students to engage in skill building activities over time with people from outside their immediate schools.



**Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center** (<http://www.snbc.org/>)

This Beacon Center, located at A.P. Giannini Middle School in San Francisco's Sunset District, houses the After-School Learning Center (ASLC). The ASLC focuses on preparing middle school students for the future through a curriculum that incorporates the California Department of Education's Content Standards with the latest in technology. The program's intention is to complement school-based learning with their project-based learning "clubs" where students can apply their lessons of mathematics, science, and language arts to activities such as building robots, making films, and designing video games.

## What Do Quality Programs Have in Common?

Present in all of these high quality learning environments are several essential elements.

1. **Each program identifies with the basic principles and practices of youth development at every level of its organizational structure.** Every staff member from the Executive Director to the once-a-week volunteer is bought into the concept of youth development and the staff is provided professional development opportunities to strengthen their skills in that area.
2. **The staff who plan learning experiences for young people are both skilled in their discipline and familiar with the developmental and cultural needs of the young people they serve.** This combination is necessary to encourage youth to challenge themselves to move beyond their present comfort level. A youth worker who teaches painting may be great at building relationships but if he does not understand the technical skills required to become a better painter, he is doing the student a disservice. At the same time, the best web designer in the world won't be able to share her skills with a young person if she cannot build trust and establish a connection.
3. **Quality programs offer a wide variety of skill building opportunities to appeal to different kinds of learners.** Although many of these example programs seem to have a singular focus (circus arts, sports, etc.), each program is designed to be inclusive of various learning styles and support different elements of learning. In addition, they all recognize the value in helping students have a snack after school and get their homework done.
4. **Each program has built effective partnerships with schools and families in order to complement, not replicate, students' learning.** Opportunities to perform in a group or play sports or engage new technology are not often found in schools or at home. These quality learning environments take advantage of their position, as youth development programs to provide unique opportunities students would not otherwise receive.

## **Worksheet 4:**

### **1.6 Reflect on Your Program**

Take a minute to think about the learning experiences and opportunities your program offers. What are the strengths and areas for improvement in your program?

1. How does your program support skill building among youth?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What kinds of things do adults do in your program to create challenging, interesting skill building?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What else could your program do to support staff members in creating challenging, interesting learning environments?

## Chapter 2: Assessment as Learning Tool

### Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 2 of Skill Building! This chapter introduces the use of assessment as a central learning strategy.

### Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to introduce you various kinds of assessments and to familiarize you with their benefits. You will also:

- Complete a survey to help you reflect on your personal practice of skill building
- Complete a survey to help you reflect on how your program supports skill building

The information you gather from these assessments will also help you create an action plan for improvement.

### Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the readings and activities in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 2:

24 – 40 minutes

## 2.1 Concept Definition: Assessment in Learning

### Assessments as Tools Not Tests

What do you think of when you hear the word “assessment”? Most people think of tests. But there are many forms of assessments. In this training, assessments are being used not as tests, but as tools to help you review and reflect on your practices and program, for the purpose of learning. These assessments will help you consider what you are doing well and what you could be doing better. When used as a learning tool, assessments can spark personal and programmatic growth and improvement.

### Types of Assessments

All of the assessments introduced here focus on the real work that you do in your programs. Four types of assessment activities have been included:

- **Self-Reflection:** To help you think about your personal practice as a youth worker. Some activities ask you to assess your strengths and identify areas for improvement in your practice of skill building.
- **Program Assessment:** To help you think about the quality of youth development programming in your organization. These assessments ask you to evaluate how well your program is structured to support skill building.
- **Shared Learning:** To help you share your insights and knowledge with staff and youth in your program – and to reinforce your own learning. Some activities ask you to brainstorm with colleagues and youth in your program about its strengths, and how to make it even better.
- **Youth Survey:** To help you understand your youths’ experiences of your program(s). This activity will ask you to administer an anonymous survey of questions to your youth and then analyze the data.

### Assessments Lead to Action Plans

The purpose of these assessments is to help you determine goals for yourself and for improving skill building in your program. They will guide your thinking as you create an action plan with concrete steps for achieving your goals.

## **Worksheet 1**

### **2.2 Survey 1: Assess My Current Practice of Skill Building**

In this first assessment, you will think about your practice from the point of view of your young people. The questions ask you to reflect on what youth would say about your ability to support their skill building, specifically:

- Your ability to assess youth interests
- Your ability to provide a challenging environment
- Your ability to provide opportunities for reflection on young peoples' growth and progress.

## Survey 1

### Assess My Current Practice of Skill Building

1. How many youth in your program would say that you have a strong knowledge of their interests?

- ☐ Almost no youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Some youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ About half the youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Most of the youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Almost all of the youth would say I know their interests

2. How many youth would say that you are patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or learning activity?

- ☐ Almost none would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Some would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ About half would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Most would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Almost all would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.

3. Do youth in your program believe that you achieve a good balance between directing youth and letting them learn on their own?

- ☐ Youth would say that I too often direct youth too much
- ☐ Youth would say that I sometimes direct youth too much
- ☐ Youth would say that I achieve a good balance
- ☐ Youth would say that I sometimes ask them to learn too much on their own
- ☐ Youth would say that I too often ask them to learn too much on their own

4. If you were to ask the youth in your program, how often would they say that you are successful in promoting a feeling of competence and a “can do” attitude?

- ☐ Youth would say almost never
- ☐ Youth would say seldom
- ☐ Youth would say about half the time
- ☐ Youth would say usually
- ☐ Youth would say almost always

5. If you were to ask the youth in your program, would they say that you provide them with sufficient structure and directions on how to master the activity, task or game at hand?

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost never provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I seldom provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that about half the time I provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I usually provide sufficient structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost always provide sufficient structure and directions

6. How often would the youth in your program say that you provide them with useful feedback about their growth and progress during a project?

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost never provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I seldom provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I provide useful feedback about half the time when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I usually provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost always provide them with useful feedback when they need it

7. How often do you provide youth with high and clear expectations before beginning a learning activity, task, or game?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost never

\_\_\_\_\_ Seldom

\_\_\_\_\_ About half the time

\_\_\_\_\_ Usually

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always

8. How often do you communicate clear benchmarks for success before the group begins a new learning activity, task or game?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost never

\_\_\_\_\_ Seldom

\_\_\_\_\_ About half the time

\_\_\_\_\_ Usually

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always



9. How often do you provide youth with a chance to debrief or reflect on their own growth and progress?

- ☐ Every time we meet day
- ☐ About every other time we meet
- ☐ It depends, I don't debrief or reflect on a regular basis

10. Do youth in your program believe that you give them positive recognition when they accomplish something or meet high expectations?

- ☐ Youth would say that I almost never provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I seldom provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I provide recognition about half the time
- ☐ Youth would say that I usually provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I almost always provide them with recognition

11. How many youth in your program would say that you listen and respond to their concerns and ideas?

- ☐ Almost none would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Some would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ About half would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Most would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Almost all would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns

## **Worksheet 2**

### **Survey 2: Assess Skill Building in My Program**

This next survey asks you to reflect on the ways in which your program supports skill building. Specifically, it asks about structures in place that support youth interests, challenging activities and on-going reflection.

## Survey 2

### Assess Skill Building in My Program

Listed below are 15 statements about community and after-school programs for young people. Please identify the extent to which each statement is “true” for your program, using the following scale:

- 1. Is not usually true in our program. We can do much, much better.**
- 2. Is sometimes true in our program. We still need to really work hard on this.**
- 3. Is most often true in our program. There are still a few ways that we could improve.**
- 4. Is very true in our program. We don’t need any improvements**

1. We intentionally organize learning activities to ensure that the young people interact with others who have different skills and backgrounds.

1      2      3      4

2. The learning activities in the program are age appropriate (based on young people’s developmental needs and interests).

1      2      3      4

3. In the program, we achieve a good balance between having participants learn in groups and individually.

1      2      3      4

4. The activities in the program are intentionally designed to ensure that young people learn a variety of problem-solving strategies.

1      2      3      4

5. The activities in the program challenge young people to demonstrate new abilities and apply their skills to new tasks.

1      2      3      4

6. Young people in the program are given formal opportunities to share their feedback on the program, including whether or not they feel challenged by activities. (For example, staff ask feedback questions or provide session evaluations).

1      2      3      4

7. In the program, young people have the chance to learn from many kinds of “teachers,” not just the program staff (for example, parents, other students, classroom teachers, community leaders).

1      2      3      4

8. The learning activities in this program provide participants with a chance to express themselves and their opinions.

1      2      3      4

9. The learning activities in this program lead to a tangible outcomes based on clearly established goals.

1      2      3      4

10. In this program, we give youth the chance to define their own learning goals and expectations.

1      2      3      4

11. The program provides youth with choices about how they wish to participate (e.g., choosing topics, deciding who to work with, choosing how to conduct a project).

1      2      3      4

12. In this program, we regularly schedule time for youth to reflect on the learning activities, and on their own growth and progress.

1      2      3      4

13. In this program, staff are actively and personally involved in learning with participants during activities.

1      2      3      4

14. In this program, staff are able to clearly express the mission of our work with young people, and how our learning activities are different from what happens in school.

1      2      3      4

15. In this program, staff are able to clearly express how our learning activities promote the growth and progress of young people.

1      2      3      4

## Chapter 3: Learning Theories and Resources

### **Welcome**

Welcome to Chapter 3 of Skill Building! This chapter offers supplemental material to enrich your knowledge and practice of skill building. It includes an overview of learning theories and developmental stages – and an introduction to experiential learning and the experiential learning cycle. It also includes exercises for you to explore key concepts and activities to facilitate with youth.

### **Instructions**

Proceed sequentially through the readings and activities in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### **Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 3:**

1 to 2 hours

## Worksheet 1

### 3.1 Self Reflection: How Do I Learn?

You process information and learn new skills and behaviors in very particular ways. How are you most fully engaged? Are there things that make you “tune out” to learning? How would someone know that you are engaged in the learning?

#### **Word Splash**

Study the words on the following page entitled, “Word Splash.” and answer these questions:

- What do these words have in common?
- Do they have any connection at all?
- What else stands out to you about this page?
- How did you respond when you first saw this page? Why?
- What can you learn from the Word Splash about how we process information?
- How did this activity engage you (or not)?



# Word Splash

Communicating

Thinking

Generalizing

Writing

Reading

Evaluating

Performing

Synthesizing

Applying

Demonstrating

Interpreting



## 3.2 Concept Exploration: How Do Young People Learn?

### Developmental Stages

“In creating learning activities for youth it is important to understand not only how they learn, but WHAT they are in the process of learning for their particular age. Young people are learning machines in multiple areas. If you can create activities that tap into what they are naturally learning at a particular stage of development you will have a captive audience.”

Excerpted from National Network for Child Care:  
<http://www.nncc.org/Child.Dev/ages.stages.6y.8y.html>

What follows is a detailed account of the social, emotional, physical and intellectual developmental milestones for youth ages 6-18 years old. Please note that adults working with youth are referred to as “caregivers” rather than youth workers.

Reprinted with permission from National Network for Child Care - NNCC. Oesterreich, L. (1995). Ages & stages - six through eight-year-olds. In L. Oesterreich, B. Holt, & S. Karas, Iowa family child care handbook [Pm 1541] (pp. 211-212). Ames, IA: Iowa State University Extension.

## **Ages and Stages: Six, Seven and Eight-Year Olds**

Six, seven, and eight-year-olds build on the important developments of the first six years of life and settle down to a steadier pace of growing and learning. Young school age children are interested in real life tasks and activities, while pretend and fantasy lessen considerably. School-agers want to make "real" jewelry, take "real" photographs, and create "real" collections.

School-age children have longer attention spans. They are more likely to stick with things until the project is finished, the problem solved, or the argument resolved. Doing things together with friends, teamwork, and following rules become very important. This age group is fascinated by rules and can develop games with extensive rules and rituals.

### **Social and Emotional Development: Ages 6-8**

- Being with friends becomes increasingly important
- Interested in rules and rituals
- Girls want to play more with girls; boys with boys
- May have a best friend and an enemy
- Strong desire to perform well, do things right
- Begins to see things from another child's point of view, but still very self-centered
- Finds criticism or failure difficult to handle
- Views things as black and white, right or wrong, wonderful or terrible, with very little middle ground
- Seeks a sense of security in groups, organized play, and clubs
- Generally enjoys caring for and playing with younger children
- May become upset when behavior or school-work is ignored

### **Physical Development: Ages 6-8**

- Skilled at using scissors and small tools
- Development of permanent teeth
- Enjoys testing muscle strength and skills
- Good sense of balance
- Can catch small balls
- Can tie shoelaces
- Enjoys copying designs and shapes, letters and numbers
- Can print name
- Long arms and legs may give gawky awkward appearance

### **Intellectual Development: Ages 6-8**

- May reverse printed letters (b/d)
- Enjoys planning and building
- Doubles speaking and listening vocabularies
- Reading may become a major interest
- Increased problem-solving ability
- Interested in magic and tricks
- Longer attention span
- Enjoys creating elaborate collections
- Able to learn difference between left and right
- Can begin to understand time and the days of the week

### **Ideas For Caregivers**

- Provide opportunities for active play. Throwing at targets, running, jumping rope, tumbling, and aerobics may be of interest.
- Provide opportunities to develop an understanding of rules by playing simple table games: cards, dominoes, tic-tac-toe, etc.
- Provide opportunities for children to do non-competitive team activities such as working a jigsaw puzzle or planting a garden.
- Encourage children's sense of accomplishment by providing opportunities to build models, cook, make crafts, practice music, or work with wood.
- Encourage children's collections by allowing them to make special boxes or books in which to store their collections.
- Encourage reading and writing by allowing children to produce stories with scripts, create music for plays and puppet shows, produce a newspaper, record events, go on field trips, or conduct experiments.
- Help children explore their world by taking field trips to museums, work places, and other neighborhoods. Invite community helpers to your home.

### **Age-appropriate Skill Building Ideas:**

One very effective way to incorporate this information about developmental stages into skill building with this age group is to use games as a learning strategy.

## **Developmental Stages**

### **Ages and Stages: Nine, Ten and Eleven-Year Olds**

Children of ages 9-11 develop a sense of self and find it important to gain social acceptance and experience achievement. Friends become increasingly important. Secret codes, shared word meanings and made up languages; passwords and elaborate rituals are important ways to strengthen the bonds of friendship. Close friends are almost always of the same sex, although children in this age group are usually increasingly interested in peers of the opposite sex.

Be prepared to use all your "patience" skills if caring for children this age, as they tend to think that they do not need any adult care or supervision. Yet, when they are left to care for themselves, they are lonely, unhappy, and sometimes frightened.

### **Social And Emotional Development: Ages 9-11**

- Begins to see parents and authority figures as fallible human beings
- Rituals, rules, secret codes, and made-up languages are common
- Enjoys being a member of a club
- Increased interest in competitive sports
- Outbursts of anger are less frequent
- May belittle or defy adult authority

### **Physical Development: Ages 9-11**

- Girls are generally as much as 2 years ahead of boys in physical maturity
- Girls may begin to menstruate
- Increases body strength and hand dexterity
- Improves coordination and reaction time

### **Intellectual Development: Ages 9-11**

- Interested in reading fictional stories, magazines, and how-to project books
- May develop special interest in collections or hobbies
- May be very interested in discussing a future career
- Fantasizes and daydreams about the future
- Capable of understanding concepts without having direct hands-on experience

### **Ideas For Caregivers**

- Provide opportunities for older school-agers to help out with real skills. Cooking, sewing, and designing dramatic play props are useful ways to utilize their skills.

- Provide time and space for an older child to be alone. Time to read, daydream, or do schoolwork uninterrupted will be appreciated.
- Encourage children to participate in an organized club or youth group. Many groups encourage skill development with projects or activities than can be worked on in your childcare program.
- Encourage older children to help you with younger children, but don't overdo. Avoid burdening older children with too many adult responsibilities. Allow time for play and relaxation.
- Provide opportunities for older children to play games of strategy. Checkers, chess, and monopoly are favorites.
- Remember to provide plenty of food. Older children have larger appetites than younger children and will need to eat more.

### **Age-appropriate Skill Building Ideas: Ages 9-11**

Here is an initial list of ideas for how you might incorporate information about developmental stages into skill building with your youth:

- Have youth create their own game, e.g. take any content area and ask youth to create a game in which the rules of the game become the learning, e.g. take the rules spelling and make them into a game.
- Have youth invent a recipe and then make the food, i.e. using information about how ingredients go together have youth create a cake recipe, critique it for how edible they think it will be and then have them make it.
- Use any strategy that involves movement, e.g. facilitate a learning activity that asks “yes or no” questions—and instead of having youth write their answers, instruct them physically move to the left side of the room if they think the answer is “no” or to the right side of the room if the answer is “yes”.

## **Ages and Stages: Twelve through Eighteen-Year Olds**

The material in this section from: National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth

Adolescence is a time for young people to define their place in the family, peer groups, and the larger community. During this stage of their lives, youth struggle with the transition from childhood to adulthood. During childhood, they depended mainly on their parents for economic and emotional support and direction. In adulthood, though, they will be expected to achieve independence and make choices about school, work, and personal relationships that will affect every aspect of their future.

Without question, adolescence is a difficult time for many young people. During this period, they must contend with physical changes, pressure to conform to current social trends and peer behaviors, and increased expectations from family members, teachers, and other adults. Adolescents also must deal with sometimes conflicting messages from parents, peers, or the media. They struggle with an increasing need to feel as if they "belong." Young people also feel pressure to perform academically or socially.

For some young people, difficult family situations, overcrowded classrooms, disintegrating neighborhoods, or exposure to alcohol or other drugs compounds the usual challenges of adolescence. Without support and guidance, these young people may fall victim to behaviors that place them, and others, at risk. In our society, those behaviors include dropping out of school, running away from home, joining gangs, and using alcohol or drugs or becoming involved in other law-breaking behaviors. Some youth may become despondent, leading to academic problems, social isolation, or self-destructive behavior.

### **Movement Towards Independence: Ages 12-18**

- Struggle with sense of identity
- Feeling awkward or strange about one's self and one's body
- Focus on self, alternating between high expectations and poor self- concept
- Interests and clothing style influenced by peer group
- Moodiness
- Improved ability to use speech to express one's self
- Realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their faults
- Less overt affection shown to parents, with occasional rudeness
- Complaints that parents interfere with independence
- Tendency to return to childish behavior, particularly when stressed

### **Future Interests and Cognitive Changes: Ages 12-18**

- Mostly interested in present, limited thoughts of future
- Intellectual interests expand and gain in importance
- Greater ability to do work (physical, mental, emotional)

### **Sexuality: Ages 12-18**

- Display shyness, blushing, and modesty
- Girls develop physically sooner than boys
- Increased interest in the opposite sex
- Movement toward heterosexuality with fears of homosexuality
- Concerns regarding physical and sexual attractiveness to others
- Frequently changing relationships
- Worries about being normal

### **Morals, Values, and Self-Direction: Ages 12-18**

- Rule and limit testing
- Capacity for abstract thought
- Development of ideals and selection of role models
- More consistent evidence of conscience
- Experimentation with sex and drugs (cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana)

### **Ideas For Caregivers: Ages 12-18**

- Provide time and space for an older child to be alone. Time to read, daydream, or do schoolwork uninterrupted will be appreciated.
- Ask questions to engage in dialogue about what is most pressing for adolescents: i.e. peer groups, music, movies, injustice, etc.
- Encourage youth to identify their skills and ways they can apply those skills to problems they identify in their communities.
- Allow time for play and relaxation.
- Encourage responsible decision-making
- Provide multiple opportunities for practicing leadership

### **Age Appropriate Skill Building Strategies: Ages 12-18**

Here is an initial list of ideas for how you might incorporate information about developmental stages into skill building with your youth:

- Use Role Plays to explore your content area, e.g. if you are exploring history, have youth play characters from a significant event in a particular time period.
- Use Scenarios, e.g. if you are trying to reinforce math skills have a group of youth pretend that they are going on a road trip across country. Give them a map, a list of Internet resources and \$300.00 and ask them to plan their trip.

- Use Ideal Worlds, e.g. if you are exploring health, have youth design their ideal society with rules for how people interact in their ideal world. Reinforce collaborative skills.
- Use Project-Based Learning (PBL). e.g. if you are teaching a unit on ecology, have youth investigate how pollution affects the community around the school and publish an article or produce a video. See Chapter 4 for more information and ideas about PBL.



### 3.3 Concept Definition: Experimental Learning

#### Experiential Learning Cycle

Broadly speaking, experiential learning is any learning that results from doing. However, youth (or adults) do not automatically learn from experience. They need to reflect upon experience, gain valuable insights and share their insights with each other.

The most renowned proponent of the experiential learning cycle is David A. Kolb. His work is sometimes mischaracterized as relevant to adult learners only. This is not the case. The principles of experiential learning also apply to any informal learning setting including afterschool and other youth programs.

You may be familiar with some form of Kolb's model or cycle (Act—Reflect—Apply) and the typical activity debrief questions (What?—So What?—Now What?).

Kolb's original model presents a four-stage cycle: Concrete Experience—Observation and Reflection—Forming Abstract Concepts—Testing in New Situations.

An excellent site on David A. Kolb's work can be found at: <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-explrn.htm#introduction>.

### 3.4 Activity with Youth: Experimental Learning Cycle

Test out the experiential learning cycle with your youth. Invite them to play a game with you. Let them know that you are learning how to better help youth learn things. Explain to them that they are giving you an opportunity to practice a new learning model by playing this game with them.

Play a non-competitive game like “Moon Ball”.

#### Instructions:

##### 1. Experience

Have participants stand in a circle. Pass a beach ball from one person to another around the circle. If the ball drops, start again. The object is to keep the ball in the air for as long as possible. You may want to say, “Let’s see if we can keep it up in the air for ten hits,” and then increase that amount in five or ten “hit” increments.

##### 2. Observe and Reflect

Ask participants WHAT just happened, probe for a deeper response than just “we played a game”. Probing can be as simple as “What did you see?” and “Yes! And what else happened?”

Ask participants HOW they felt during the game. Did they feel challenged, excited, committed, frustrated, etc?

Ask participants WHAT made them feel challenged, excited, committed, frustrated, etc. Again, probe for deep responses. If someone says, “I was frustrated when the ball dropped.” Ask, “What about the ball dropping was frustrating?”

##### 3. Generalize

Ask participants what they think is the goal of the game. Ask, “Did we reach this goal?” You may want to ask participants what got in the way of achieving the goal or what helped you reach the goal.

Pull your abstract concepts from their answers. Some concepts might be: teamwork, participation, patience, etc.

##### 4. Apply

Ask participants to tell you of another example of when people have to work together to accomplish a goal. Ask them to apply what they learned to one of the examples they give, e.g., ask, “So, how would patience help in a situation like that?”

Thank participants for helping you. Ask them if they enjoyed what you just did with them. Ask them about the parts they liked and disliked.

After you have completed this activity, continue to use the experiential learning cycle in your work with youth. This is a simple way to engage your youth and deepen many of your activities.

## Chapter 4: Facilitating Skill Building

### Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 4 of Skill Building! In this important chapter you will be introduced to effective and proven strategies for facilitating skill building in afterschool settings.

### Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to introduce you to the basics of project-based learning and game facilitation through readings, an assessment and activities.

In this chapter you will learn:

- The basics of project-based learning including what it is and why its effective
- How to plan an engaging and challenging project based on youth interests
- How to create lesson plans for learning activities
- The basics of using games as a skill building strategy

In addition, you will:

- Assess your current abilities to plan and implement projects
- Facilitate an activity with youth that will help you choose a relevant project

### Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the readings and activities in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 4:

2 – 3 hours

## **Worksheet 1**

### **4.1 Self Reflection: Remembering and Engaging Project**

Perhaps, when you were a youth, you had the chance to participate in a group project – where you worked with others to complete a product or an event. Bring to mind a project that was a learning experience for you and answer the questions below. (Reflecting on a more recent project is fine too.)

1. What did you accomplish through this group project?

2. Who was on your project team?

3. How was it a learning experience for you?

4. In what ways was the group process a success?

5. What obstacles or challenges did you encounter in the process?

## **4.2 Concept Exploration: PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

### **Define Project-Based Learning**

Project-based learning is a style of teaching that engages young people in hands-on, student-centered, experiential activities culminating in a real-time product or event. Students and teachers work in partnership to:

1. Pose real questions – What do we want to know or learn? What problem do we want to solve? What do we want to accomplish?
2. Develop a project plan – When will our project be completed? What are the steps it takes to get to that point? What materials will we need?
3. Work together as a group – Who will do what? What will happen when problems and obstacles arise?
4. Determine assessment measures – How will we know we have succeeded? How will we know what we've learned from the process?

### **Examples of learning rich projects include:**

- Creating a community garden
- Building a website for your youth program or other program
- Hosting a Halloween festival
- Redecorating a room to use for a new purpose
- Producing a literary magazine
- Conducting surveys and/or research about a youth-centered topic and making a presentation of the results
- Investigating how pollution affects the community around the school and publishing an article or producing a video
- Running a clothing drive for homeless families

What projects have you completed with your young people? What are some other examples of projects that you can think of?

## **Project-Based Learning and Skill Building**

Project-based learning has roots in the educational philosophy of **John Dewey** <http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/innovators/dewey.html> who sought to bring instruction out of the classroom into practical situations in the real world. He believed that learning happened through doing and that actual experience was necessary in building skills.

The three dimensions of skill building make project-based learning a natural match for afterschool and community-based programs.

### **Project-Based Learning:**

#### **Interesting**

In project-based learning, students' ideas and interests are central. Students' curiosities are engaged as they take responsibility for their learning. They are encouraged to ask questions, create hypotheses, and research ideas that are important to them.

#### **Challenging**

Working within a group to create a performance, prepare a presentation, or build a working machine is a complex process with many steps. The skills required to complete a project are often sophisticated technical skills used by adults in professional situations. Projects also require planning and implementing as a group, problem solving, and evaluation – all challenging skills

#### **Growth and Progress**

Due to the finite nature of a project, there is a natural point where the whole group can stop the activity and reflect on their learning highlights, accomplishments, and the process itself. There is also opportunity throughout the process to recognize individual and group efforts, successes, and areas for improvement.

Afterschool and community-based programs are ideal learning environments for project-based learning. Because you do not have to “teach to the tests,” you can provide more flexible opportunities for young people to follow their own interests and ideas, structure their own time, and take charge of their own learning.

There is a lot of information on the Web about project-based learning. Here are a few recommended links:

- For a great overview of project-based learning, visit **Buck Institute for Education** (link: <http://www.bie.org/pbl/index.php>)
- For a great description of how project-based learning translates to an afterschool environment, read “**The Learning that Lies Between Play and Academics in After-School Programs**,” an article by David Alexander (link: [http://www.niost.org/publications/learning\\_article.pdf](http://www.niost.org/publications/learning_article.pdf))

### **4.3 Activity with Youth: Choosing Relevant Projects**

In project-based learning, you and your young people work together to plan the steps of project implementation and assessment. It is also necessary for you, as the adult to hold the process, set some boundaries, and do some preplanning in order to determine what kind of project would be the most successful for your group of learners.

#### **Pre-Planning Questions**

##### **What are the learning goals?**

At the onset of a project, it's important to clearly identify what you want your young people to learn through the experience. You also need to incorporate the learning goals of your program, whether they are broad (such as an arts-based organization) or specific (your program has been funded to work with middle-school girls in the area of pregnancy prevention). In addition, you may want to complement what young people are learning in school by connecting with school-day teachers and/or by becoming familiar with your state's education content standards.

##### **What are the strengths and limitations of your program?**

A great benefit of project-based learning is that young people have the opportunity to experience the outcome or product of their work. Therefore, it is crucial that you don't start a project that you can't realistically finish. When beginning to plan the project, you need to guide them in understanding how much time, money, space, and people resources are actually available.

##### **What are the strengths and limitations of your young people?**

As an adult leader in your program, it is your job to assess your students' strengths and challenges. Their ages, developmental stage, and academic proficiency are all important to keep in mind when preplanning. A project that is too simple for your group won't hold their interest. A project that is too difficult will make students feel anxious and ultimately want to drop out. You have to find projects that challenge students to stretch beyond their current limits while also allowing them to be successful. *(Note: see the "Ages and Stages" section in Chapter 3 for more information about developmental learning stages.)*

##### **How will the learning be captured and acknowledged?**

Finally, it's your responsibility as the adult leader to help students recognize what they have learned in a project and share that learning with others. You need to plan how students will reflect after each lesson/daily activity, how the students will document their process (through journals, portfolios, video, etc.), and how others will witness the overall project (performance, presentation, exhibit, published materials, etc.). Engagement in these activities ultimately empowers young people to articulate what they have learned and their learning process.

The preplanning stage is also a good time to talk to your young people directly to discuss the kinds of projects that are most interesting and relevant to them. The more they are involved in the visioning and creation of the project, the more invested they will be in the project itself.



### 4.3.1 Conduct Focused Discussions to Determine Youth Interests

#### Mission Possible: What do I want to learn?

##### Activity Goals:

- To write personal mission statements
- To collect ideas for future activities or projects by engaging students in a conversation about their goals and interests related to learning

##### Learning Outcomes:

- Goal-setting
- Working with a partner
- Noticing how various goals intersect and can complement each other

This activity can also strengthen a sense of belonging in your program by asking young people to consider how the goals of the program are in line with their own personal long-term goals.

**Age of Youth:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade and older (modifications can be made for younger students)

**Number of Participants:** 20 or less

**Time:** 35 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Worksheets and pencils. (8 1/2 x 11 paper divided into quadrants with questions.)

##### Activity Directions:

1. **Read Mission Statement:** Share with your group the mission statement of your organization or program. Explain to them that a mission statement is a public declaration of a group's values and long-term goals. It guides the group's actions and decisions.
2. **Discuss Mission Statement:** Guide a conversation with the group related to your program's mission statement. Ask questions like, "What do you think/feel about this mission?" "What does the mission statement mean to you?" and "How does the goal or mission of the program relate to your goals?"
3. **Explain Individual Activity:** Tell the students that next they will take a few minutes to individually think about their own long-term goals. In other words, what kinds of things they want to do when they are adults? It is important not only to set goals, but also to recognize what steps it takes to reach their goals. They will think about what they are already doing now to work towards their goals as well as what they are not doing, but would like to. They will think about how the program can be a source of support as they work to achieve their goals. (Distribute the worksheet if you haven't done so already.)
4. **Begin Individual Activity:** Instruct students to fill out their worksheet.

## Activity Worksheet:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MY LONG-TERM GOALS</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- go to college</li><li>- travel the world</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THINGS I DO NOW THAT HELP ME GET TO MY GOALS</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- get good grades</li><li>- watch travel shows</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THINGS THAT I WANT TO DO TO SUPPORT MY GOALS</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- get better grades in language arts</li><li>- take a trip to Mexico</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HOW THIS PROGRAM CAN HELP ME GET TO MY GOALS</b></p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- tutor me in language arts</li><li>- take a field trip to Mexico</li></ul>

5. **Call “time”** to end individual activity.
6. **Begin Pair-Share:** After they fill out their forms, ask students to take turns sharing worksheets briefly with a partner.
7. **Begin Partner Activity:** Ask students to work together in pairs to try to write their own personal mission statements, using the program’s mission statement as a model.
8. **Call “time”** to end partner activity.
9. **Guide Full Group Share:** Bring the full group back together to share personal mission statements.

### Debrief/Acknowledgments:

1. What was it like to think about your long-term goals? Was it easy or difficult?
2. What is the purpose in having long-term goals?
3. What was it like to think about the steps it takes to reach your long-term goals?
4. How was it sharing and working with your partner? How did your partner help you do your work? How did you help your partner?
5. After working on your own mission statement and listening to everyone else’s, what kinds of activities or projects could we do in our program that could help us all reach our long-term goals?

## Mission Possible Worksheet

### My long-term goals:

*For example:*

- *Go to college*
- *Travel the world*

### Things I do now that supports my goals:

*For example:*

- *Get good grades*
- *Watch travel shows*

### Things I want to do to support my goals:

*For example:*

- *Get better grades in language arts*
- *Take a trip to Mexico*

### How this program can support my goals:

*For example:*

- *Tutor me in language arts*
- *Take a field trip to Mexico*

## 4.4 Application: Project Planning

Now that you have a better understanding of what project-based learning looks like in an after-school context, you will use a scenario to take a closer look at what goes into planning a project.

### **Scenario:**

*You are working with 12 middle school students in an urban school-based afterschool program. Your group meets twice a week, two hours per meeting. Violence is on the rise at the school lately and in the latest incident a student brought a knife to school and was expelled. After a group discussion, you and your young people decide to create an original anti-violence performance and present it to family, friends, and the rest of the school community. Its now early September and your group wants to stage the performance before the winter holidays.*

### **To plan this project you need to answer the following questions:**

1. What is the ultimate goal of the project? What do you want to accomplish?
2. What kind of impact will our project have? What problem will it solve? What question will it answer?
3. What are the activities that need to be completed in order to reach our goal?
4. What's our timeline? When will the activities need to be completed by?
5. What are our roles? Who will be responsible for/involved in the completion of which activities?
6. What are our learning outcomes? What kinds of skills or competencies will we need in order to reach our goal?
7. What resources will you need to complete our project? What kinds of materials, spaces, and access to other people will we need? How much money will it all cost?
8. What are our measures of success? How will we know that we are learning and succeeding along the way? What will it actually look and feel like?

An effective way to answer these questions and begin planning is through using a project planning worksheet.

**Instructions:** Use the project planning worksheet to plan the anti-violence performance project from this scenario. Keep in mind that in a real project, you and your young people work together on the planning process. Their learning is maximized when they are involved at each level of planning.

## Project Planning Worksheet

**General description of project:**

**Goal(s):** *What does the group want to accomplish and what impact will it have?*

**Learning Outcomes:** *What do we want to learn by the end of this project?*

**Due Date:** *When do we want to complete this project?*

### PROJECT BREAKDOWN:

Activity	Date to be completed by:	Who's involved in what ROLES?	What SKILLS do we need to complete this activity?	What RESOURCES do we need?
Step 1:				
Step 2:				
Step 3:				
Step 4*:				

*\*Add as many steps as needed (see page 3)*

**Measure of Success:**

- How will we know our project is successful?
- How can we show our success to others?
- How will we know we are learning and succeeding along the way?
- How often will we check in on our progress?

**Acquiring Resources:**

Look at all the resources needed to complete the project and consider the following questions.

**Money:**

- How much will it cost?
- What can we get for free?
- How much money do we currently have to spend?
- How will we raise the rest of the money we need?

**People:**

- What kind of help do we need from people outside our group?
- Who can we partner with on this project?

## Project Breakdown: *(for any additional steps)*

Activity	Date to be completed by:	Who's involved in what ROLES?	What SKILLS do we need to complete this activity?	What RESOURCES do we need?
Step #				
Step #				
Step #				
Step #				
Step #				
Step #				
Step #				

## 4.5 Developing Lesson Plans

Now that you have identified the steps that it takes to plan a project, it is time to explore lesson planning.

A lesson plan and a project plan have a lot in common. They are the essential planning tools that aid in the completion of a learning goal. However, the lesson plan is probably your most critical tool. It is through effective lesson planning that you will be able to guide your group in putting all of the individual pieces of the project puzzle together.

A lesson plan describes a set of activities that are implemented over the course of a single session...for example, a lesson plan would describe what happens in an out-of-school program with one group of children on one day. This is distinct from a project, which is a series of interrelated lessons, implemented over sequential sessions that result in a product or group of products.

From YouthLearn: <http://www.youthlearn.org/learning/planning/creating.asp>

To continue with the scenario:

You and your students have completed the project plan and have a pretty good picture of what the overall process will look like in the creation of your performance. As the adult leader it is clear to you that before jumping into the artistic part of the project, you and your students need to explore the concept of violence – so everyone can be better prepared to talk about its causes as well as possible ways to ending violence. It is time for you to plan your first lesson.

**Instructions:** Using the lesson planning worksheet, develop a lesson to explore the concept of violence with your youth.



## Lesson Planning Worksheet

**Activity Title or Subject:**

**Goals:** *(What will be accomplished or produced by the end of the session?)*

**Learning Outcomes:** *(What skills or competencies will be acquired or strengthened through this lesson?)*

**Age of Youth:**

**Number of Participants:**

**Time Required:**

**Materials Needed:**

**Activity Procedure/Process:** *(What are the actual steps of the activity and how will they be explained to students?)*

#### **4.6 Self Assessment: “Assess My Ability to Plan and Implement Projects”**

This survey asks about your ability to plan and facilitate learning through projects. In addition to reflecting on your ability, you will also reflect on the amount of time you take to plan and facilitate learning through projects. The results of this survey will help you develop some goals for your action plan.

## 4.6 Self Assessment

### Assess My Current Skills/ Abilities in Planning and Implementing Learning Activities

The ability to plan and facilitate learning activities (project-based learning) is critical to skill building among youth. This survey asks you to assess your ability to effectively plan and facilitate these learning activities. In addition to reflecting on your ability, we would also like you to reflect on the amount of time you take to plan and facilitate learning through projects. The results of this survey will help you develop some goals for your action plan.

1. I have the ability to clearly state the goals of the project to participants.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

2. I always take the time to discuss the goals of projects with participants before we begin the activity.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

3. When a project is implemented over an extended period, I regularly schedule time at the beginning of each session to discuss project goals and expectations with participants.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

4. I always check to make sure that all members of the group clearly understand the project tasks prior to beginning the day's activity.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

5. I have the ability to help groups of youth "debrief" about their processes and performance after project tasks and activities.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

6. I always schedule sufficient time for groups to debrief on group processes and performance after project tasks and activities.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

7. I have the ability to engage individual young people in reflecting about their own growth and progress.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

8. I schedule sufficient time for the young people to reflect on their own growth and progress.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

9. I have the ability to design and plan project-based learning that challenges the growth and development of young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

10. I consistently implement activities challenges the growth and development of all the participating young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

11. I am able to “break down” the tasks embedded in project-based learning and clearly express them to young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

12. I always schedule sufficient time to “break down” and discuss upcoming tasks with young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

13. When I see upcoming challenges in project implementation, I seek out my staff colleagues and brainstorm solutions before discussing the issues with the full group of youth.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

14. When I see upcoming challenges in project implementation, I seek out young people and brainstorm solutions before discussing the issues with the full group of youth.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

## 4.7 Skill Development: Games as a Skill Building Strategy

### Competitive and Cooperative Games

It is widely accepted that play is the work of children. By engaging in playful, fun, and social activities, young people build essential skills crucial to their overall development.

There are two types of games in which valuable learning happens: competitive games and cooperative games.

**Competitive games** are those that are played with the primary objective of winning. Sports offer the best examples of competitive games. Through positive competitive play, young people learn skills associated with mastery and discipline needed to push oneself beyond one's current limits, navigating the emotions associated with winning and losing, and functioning as part of a team.

**Cooperative games** are those that are played with the primary goal of overcoming challenge through the participation of all players involved. Games associated with leadership development, teambuilding, and theater games are good examples of cooperative games. Through positive cooperative play, young people learn skills associated with building trust, strengthening communication, and creative problem-solving.

Quality learning environments for young people are safe, fun, playful spaces. Afterschool and community-based programs are the ideal environments to provide young people with a wide variety of opportunities to learn and grow through a healthy mix of both competitive and cooperative games.

For more information about how to use both competitive and cooperative games in your program, check out the free resources from Playworks. <http://www.playworks.org>.

For more specific information about cooperative games, check out the free on-line resources from Learning for Life.

The Improv Encyclopedia website is a great resource for theater games. <http://improvenyclopedia.org/games/index.html>.

## **Game Facilitation**

To maximize the value of games and play, it is helpful to think about your role as the facilitator. There are three major components of game facilitation:

### **1. Set-up the game**

As in any effective learning activity, it is important to identify the goal of the activity before you begin. As the facilitator, you must give clear and simple instructions so that the players know what is being asked of them. During the game set up, it may also be important to demonstrate or do a practice round before starting so that every player feels comfortable with the goals, rules, and activities of the game.

### **2. Be 100% present during game play**

Once the play begins, the facilitator's job is not over. You must be present the whole time as a coach on the side. Side coaching involves reminding players of the goals and rules, providing new information and modifications as the play progresses, and being a source of general encouragement and enthusiasm. You must model the same level of energy you want young people to invest in the game.

### **3. Debrief the game**

In games, debriefing is really where the learning happens. After the playing is over, it is the facilitator's job to ask the group reflective questions that will allow them to notice what they experienced, learned, and accomplished by playing the game.

## Chapter 5: Fostering Growth and Progress

### Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 5 of Skill Building! In this chapter you will explore the third dimension of skill building – growth and progress.

### Goals and Objectives

This chapter is designed to introduce you to feedback, reflection and recognition strategies through readings and activities. This chapter also guides you through the process of surveying youth in your program about skill building.

In this chapter you will learn:

- The importance of supporting youth to recognize their own growth and progress in the development of new skills
- A process for facilitating debrief/reflection sessions with your youth
- The basics of giving productive feedback
- Individual and group recognition strategies

In addition, you will:

- Survey your youth about skill building
- Analyze survey results
- Conduct a focus group with your youth

### Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the readings and activities in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 5:

2 – 3 hours

## Worksheet 1

### 5.1 Self Reflection: What Did I Learn, and What Do I Remember?

Consider this fact: When young people learn, the *physical* structure of their brains actually changes!

*“Learning occurs when the synapses make physical and chemical changes so that the influence of one neuron on another also changes. For instance, a set of neurons “learns” to fire together. Repeated firings make successive firings easier and, eventually automatic under certain conditions. Thus, a memory is formed... **Learning** is the process by which we **acquire** new knowledge and skills; **memory** is the process by which we **retain** knowledge and skills for the future.”*

(Sousa, David A. *How The Special Needs Brain Learns*. Corwin Press, Inc. A Sage Publications Company. Thousand Oaks, CA. 2001.)

The paragraph above reminds us of the Zen koan (riddle): If a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? A parallel question might be: if you don't remember what you've learned, have you really learned it?

#### Instructions:

Take a moment to think about something you have recently learned. It might be how to download songs to your iPod, a new recipe, or directions from your home to a new friend's house. Or some of you may be in the process of studying a new language or taking college courses such as child development. You can also think about something you've learned during this course!

Can you distinguish between the two processes of learning that Sousa refers to above—the process by which you **acquired** the new knowledge and skills, and the process by which you **retained** that knowledge? What are the differences? How do you know if you have learned something?

**Write your response to these questions below.**



## 5.2 Concept Exploration: Fostering Youth Growth and Progress

In this section, you will explore ways to provide youth opportunities for assessment, feedback and recognition. Everyone needs opportunities for reflection (individually and in groups) in order to chart their paths as learners, and capture how they have grown over a period of time.

Young people are intrinsically invested in making progress and achieving their goals. They need to be able to recognize their own progress so they can internalize a sense of mastery and competence – and take charge of their own learning. Setting objectives for learning new skills is critical so young people know where they are going and have measures for evaluating their progress.

**Assessment and feedback**, both powerful parts of skill building with your youth, can take a variety of forms from informal coaching between young people and adults to structured opportunities where young people write about or describe their own progress.

As a youth worker, your role is to give young people **supportive feedback** and provide them with opportunities to **reflect on their learning**. When you employ these practices in combination, you are helping youth to develop strategies for recognizing their own growth and progress.

### Debriefing Activities and Exercises

Debriefing is a focused process that allows participants to reflect on what they have learned during an exercise, activity or project. The debriefing process is more than an essential part of an experiential learning process. In fact, it is where and how the actual learning occurs. The job of the learning facilitator is to help participants identify what they have learned through a process of 'reflective questioning'.

#### Good reflective questions:

- Can double the rate of knowledge retention
- Help learners understand that they are not just learning information, but also higher-order thinking, social and personal skills
- Will help you immediately assess how well the learners have met your objectives.

The following three step debriefing process is based on David A. Kolb's model of experiential learning.

- 1) Observe and Reflect: What?
- 2) Generalize: So What?
- 3) Apply: Now What?

#### Observe and Reflect: *What?*

The learning facilitator asks questions specific to the experience or activity. Participants talk about what happened, and what they experienced or felt.

Sample Questions:

- What happened in that activity?
- What did you notice about...?
- How did it feel when you...?

### **Generalize: So *What*?**

The learning facilitator asks questions that connect the experience to previous learning, outside knowledge, or to the specific content being taught.

Sample Questions:

- Have you ever been in a situation like that (from the experience) in your home (or another setting)?
- Why is teamwork so important for our group?
- What kinds of communication skills did we use to play this game?

### **Apply: Now *What*?**

The learning facilitator asks questions that allow students to apply what they have learned to situations outside the classroom or in the real world.

Sample Questions:

- When else is it important to work as a team?
- What would you do if you were working in a job and... ?
- What activities should we do next to build on our learning?

## **Productive Feedback**

Through giving young people productive feedback about their work, you help them better understand their own growth and progress.

What is important in giving feedback? Take a moment to reflect on the last time you were given feedback on your performance. How do you like to receive feedback?

One strategy for giving feedback is to balance positive feedback (*warm feedback*) with feedback on improvement (*cool feedback*.) The following sentence starters provide examples of both types of feedback:

### ***Warm Feedback***

- I really liked it when I saw/heard you do \_\_\_\_ because...
- I loved it when you \_\_\_\_ because you really demonstrated a knowledge of...
- Keep doing \_\_\_\_ because I saw...

### *Cool Feedback*

- Can you tell me what was happening when...
- I was surprised to see/hear you...
- I wonder if you could try...
- It seems to me that you are having trouble with \_\_\_\_ can I help you with that?
- I'd like to see more of...

Always make sure that you ask young person permission before you give them feedback. Pick the appropriate time and place to give the feedback. You will be amazed at the results you get!

Remember that the ability of young people to accept and make use of candid feedback from adults is dependent on the trust and sense of safety they feel in the program – and in your relationship.

### 5.3 Application: Individual and Group Recognition Strategies

In addition to receiving productive feedback, opportunities for public recognition are also vital to building young people's sense of confidence and accomplishment. These might include youth presentations, public celebrations of accomplishment, and events and performances that showcase the new skills and talents that young people have gained through their experiences in the program.

Consider some familiar examples of individual recognition strategies:

- **Martial Arts:** As a young person progresses through a martial arts program, they receive belts of different colors to mark their growth and progress and to show they have arrived at a certain level of mastery.
- **Swim Classes:** At the YMCA, youth who take swimming classes graduate from 'polliwog' to 'minnow' to 'guppy' and so forth, to mark mastery of a new set of swimming skills.
- **Summer Reading List:** To recognize the completion of each book on a summer reading list, a teacher will create a display to recognize each student's reading accomplishments.

Group recognition strategies for youth usually come in the form of celebrations—large and small—that focus on group accomplishments. For example, San Francisco's Glitter & Razz Productions <http://www.glitterandrazz.com>, an organization that offers learning experiences to youth through arts and theater in a summer camp venue, places a high priority on celebrations. In addition to their mission of "taking fun very seriously" Glitter & Razz devotes a part of each day to celebrating as a means of recognizing accomplishments. At the end of every day the staff ask the youth what they accomplished, and encourage the youth to respond in the form of a group brainstorm. The youth may say things like, "We finished the set, we defined our characters, we learned our lines, we finished the choreography," and so forth. After the group discussion, the youth are asked to reflect on their learning by writing in their journal, completing the sentence "Today I would like to celebrate..."

These examples of individual and group recognition strategies help youth become conscious of what they are learning while contributing to their sense of mastery and accomplishment.

## 5.4 Worksheet 2

### Case Study: Violence Prevention Performance

In this activity, return to the scenario you worked with in Chapter 4:

You are working with 12 middle school students in an urban school-based afterschool program. Your group meets twice a week, two hours per meeting. Violence is on the rise at the school lately and in the latest incident a student brought a knife to school and was expelled. After a group discussion, you and your young people decide to create an original anti-violence performance and present it to family, friends, and the rest of the school community. Its now early September and your group wants to stage the performance before the winter holidays.

Now refer back to the Project Planning worksheet you completed in section 4.4.

1. Review your learning outcomes. What kinds of skills or competencies did you identify in order to reach your goal?

Now imagine the performance is over.

2. What are some ways you would know youth reached the learning outcomes?
3. What are some indicators to show you that they learned the skills or competencies necessary to reach the goal?
4. How would you celebrate their growth and progress?

## 5.5 Activity with Youth: Survey Your Youth About Skill Building

This is a three-part activity. In the first part, you will conduct a survey with your youth to get their input about skill building in your program. In the second part you will analyze and interpret the data. In the final part of the activity, you will conduct a youth focus group and begin to set priorities for your program based on what you've learned.

### Part 1: Conduct Youth Survey

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. You may administer the survey to youth individually or in a group setting.

#### Tips for administering the survey to youth

- Conduct the survey where it is relatively quiet and there are few distractions.
- To minimize talking and distractions, you can also conduct the survey in small groups (or one or two youth at a time).
- Explain to your youth that you and other staff are interested in their feedback and opinions about the program. Their surveys will help you better understand their needs so you can make program improvements.
- Tell the youth that the survey is confidential and to NOT write their names on the surveys.
- For the survey to be useful, explain that it's important they answer the questions as honestly as possible.
- 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.)

# YOUTH SURVEY

## "OPINIONS ABOUT MY PROGRAM"

Staff are interested in your honest opinions about our program. Your opinions will help us make the program better. Please do NOT put your name on the survey, because we want to make sure you share your honest opinions.

**Instructions:** There are 19 questions. For each question, please show your opinion by putting a check (✓) or an X by the statement you most agree with.

1. Do staff know what your interests are and what you like to do?  
☐ **No**, hardly any staff know my interests and what I like to do  
☐ **Sort of**, about half of the staff know my interests and what I like to do  
☐ **Yes**, almost all of the staff know my interests and what I like to do
2. Are staff patient with you?  
☐ **No**, staff here hardly have any patience  
☐ **Sort of**, about half of the staff are patient  
☐ **Yes**, almost all of the staff here are patient
3. Do staff balance teaching you with letting you learn on your own?  
☐ **No**, staff don't teach enough here, so often I don't know what I'm doing  
☐ **Sort of**, but staff here spend too much time teaching and don't let me learn on my own often enough  
☐ **Yes**, staff are good at balancing teaching and letting me learn on my own
4. Do staff give you enough help when working on a project?  
☐ **No**, staff almost never help me enough  
☐ **Sort of**, staff help me about half the time  
☐ **Yes**, staff almost always help me enough
5. Do staff give you useful feedback about how to improve your skills?  
☐ **No**, staff rarely give me feedback about how to improve  
☐ **Sort of**, the staff sometimes gives me feedback

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, they often give me useful feedback
6. Do staff challenge you to do your best during activities?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I do not feel challenged to do my best
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, I feel challenged to do my best about half the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I almost always feel challenged to do my best
7. Do staff help you to understand the goals of the activities and projects?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, staff do not help me understand goals often enough
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, staff help me understand goals about half the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, staff almost always help me understand goals
8. Do you often get a chance to reflect or debrief about how you're doing in the program?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I hardly ever get to reflect on how I'm doing in the program
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, I get to reflect on how I'm doing about once a week
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I get to reflect on how I'm doing almost every day
9. Do staff recognize and celebrate your accomplishments frequently?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, staff almost never recognize and celebrate my accomplishments
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, staff sometimes recognize and celebrate my accomplishments
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, staff are great at recognizing and celebrating my accomplishments
10. Do staff in this program listen to you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, staff do not listen to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, about half the staff listen to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, almost all of the staff are good at listening to my ideas and concerns
11. Do you get to do what you like to do in this program?
- \_\_\_\_\_ **No**, I do not get to do what I like very often
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sort of**, I get to do what I like about half the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes**, I almost always get to do what I like



*OK, you are more than halfway done! Now, please circle the number that best shows how you feel about each statement. 1="Strongly Disagree", 2="Disagree", 3="Agree", 4="Strongly Agree".*

12. In this program, I'm learning how to do things that are important to me.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

13. In this program, I get to do things that I don't get to do in school.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

14. This program is "hands on"—we learn by doing things.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

15. In this program, we take the time to talk about what we've done, and what we are learning from it.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

16. In this program, I learn from other youth who have different skills and backgrounds from myself.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

17. The staff here care about whether I learn something or not.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

18. In this program, others don't put me down if I make a mistake.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

19. Staff in this program have high expectations—they expect me to do my best.

(Strongly Disagree) 1      2      3      4      (Strongly Agree)

☺ Thank you for completing this survey! ☺

## Part 2: Analyze and Interpret Youth Survey 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 survey data**, all you need is a pencil, a calculator and the data analysis worksheet. It is important to note that Questions 1 to 11 have three possible responses. The top response is always a “1,” the middle response is a “2”, and the bottom (most positive) response is a “3.” (“No”=1, “Sort of”=2, “Yes”=3)

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

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

### For example (Question #1):

1. Total number of completed surveys: 9 (response number)
2. Scores for question #1: 1,1,1,3,3,3,2,2,2
3. The sum total of all scores for this question: 18
4. Divide the score total by the response number:  $18 \div 9 = 2$  (average score)

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
1. Do program staff understand your interests and know what you like to do?	1,1,1,3,3,3,2,2,2	18	2

To **interpret** questions 1 to 11, all you need is a quiet space and a little time.

Consider the average scores for each of the 11 questions. Overall, are the assessment results favorable (closer to 3) or unfavorable (closer to 1)? 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 skill building in your program?

Consider the overall pattern of the youth responses as they compare to your own assessments of your skill (Assessment 2.2 – Survey 1) and the quality of your program (Assessment 2.2 – Survey 2). Do you and the youth have similar perceptions? Where are the greatest commonalities and the greatest differences?

To interpret Part 2 of the survey (questions 12 to 19), use the second page of the worksheet and follow the same steps as above. Note, however, that questions 12 to 19 have a four point scale. (1=“Strongly Disagree”, 2=“Disagree”, 3=“Agree”, 4=“Strongly Agree”)

**SKILL BUILDING YOUTH SURVEY****DATE:****Data Analysis Worksheet**

Response Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 1** (Scale: "No" = 1, "Sort of" = 2, "Yes" = 3)

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
1. Do staff know what your interests are and what you like to do?			
2. Are staff members patient with you?			
3. Do staff balance teaching you with letting you learn on your own?			
4. Do staff give you enough help when working on a project?			
5. Do staff give you useful feedback about how to improve your skills?			
6. Do staff challenge you to do your best during activities?			
7. Do staff help you to understand the goals of the activities and projects?			
8. Do you often get a chance to reflect or debrief about how you're doing in the program?			
9. Do staff recognize and celebrate your accomplishments frequently?			
10. Do staff in this program listen to you?			
11. Do you get to do what you like to do in this program?			

## PART 2 (Skill Building Youth Survey)

(Scale: 1="Strongly Disagree", 2="Disagree", 3="Agree", 4="Strongly Agree")

Question	All Scores	Total	Average
12. In this program, I'm learning how to do things that are important to me.			
13. In this program, I get to do things that I don't get to do in school.			
14. This program is "hands on"—we learn by doing things.			
15. In this program, we take the time to talk about what we've done, and what we are learning from it.			
16. In this program, I learn from other youth who have different skills and backgrounds from myself.			
17. The staff here care about whether I learn something or not.			
18. In this program, others don't put me down if I make a mistake.			
19. Staff in this program have high expectations—they expect me to do my best.			

**Notes:**

### **Part 3: Develop Program Priorities with Youth: Conduct a Focus Group**

Conduct a focus group with youth to discuss the data that you just analyzed and interpreted. At the end of this discussion, work with the youth to develop one to three recommendations that will strengthen skill building in your program. (Conducting this focus group will also give you a time to practice your group facilitation skills.)

**Step 1:** Select approximately six youth for your focus group. Choose a diverse range of youth, but select only those young people who have an interest in discussing skill building 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.

**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” or agreements for the focus group (e.g., confidentiality, the importance of give and take in conversation, it is ok to disagree, respect for all, etc.).

#### **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.

## Chapter 6: Making It Happen

### Welcome

Welcome to Chapter 6 – the final chapter of Skill Building! In this final chapter you'll reinforce your knowledge and insights about skill building. You'll also reflect on your experience and learning and prioritize ideas for future change.

### Goals and Objectives

Chapter 6 is designed to help you reinforce your learning and select your priorities for program and personal change.

In this chapter you will:

- Teach some of what you learned about skill building to your colleagues and facilitate a discussion about ideas for program improvements
- Reflect on your learning and select areas for improvement
- Formulate two goals (one program and one personal)
- Create the first draft of a personal action plan

### Instructions

Proceed sequentially through the readings and activities in this chapter at your own pace. Each section builds on the one before.

### Estimated Time to Complete Chapter 6:

2 – 3 hours

## 6.1 Skill Development: Teach About Skill Building

Teaching others is a powerful way to reinforce your learning. In this activity, you will do just that by delivering a presentation and facilitating a discussion with your colleagues about skill building. This is also a great opportunity to practice your presentation and facilitation skills.

**Step 1: Plan Your Presentation.** Begin by reflecting on all the topics and activities in this training. Select a few key concepts to present. Consider the following questions and jot down some brief notes to prepare for your presentation:

- What has been most surprising or compelling to you about skill building and all supporting topics in this training (including using project-based learning and games)?
- What “light bulbs” went on for you?
- What would be most useful or helpful to share with your colleagues?

After surfacing your key topics, take a few minutes to outline your presentation. Prepare charts if you want. You may also want to consider facilitating a short activity that will allow you to demonstrate the experiential learning cycle. And if you can, practice your presentation ahead of time.

**Step 2: Set Time and Place.** Choose a group of colleagues (between 4 and 8 people) and schedule a time and place for your presentation and discussion. A good time to do this might be at a staff or project meeting.

**Step 3: Deliver Presentation and Facilitate Discussion.** Present to your colleagues, sharing topics that you identified in Step 1. When you are done presenting, 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 skill building could be strengthened in the program. This entire session should take about 45 minutes.

### Conversation starters for your discussion:

- What ideas or pictures came to mind when listening my presentation?
- What is most important for you about skill building?
- What are some ideas for strengthening skill building in our program?
- Now that we have talked for a while, what is most significant for our future work? What should we prioritize?

You may also want to chart participant ideas during the discussion (or ask for a volunteer to do so while you facilitate.)

## 6.2 Self-Reflection: Think About Areas for Improvement

This assessment is designed to help you begin the action planning process by thinking of areas for improvement. The assessment lists 13 staff competencies that are important in building the skills of young people. Reflect on the list and choose **6 priorities** for your own professional development based on what you learned about yourself and your program. Specifically, please identify the competencies that will help you best contribute to the program in which you are currently working.



## Skill Building: Develop Personal and Program Priorities

This assessment is designed to help you begin the action planning process by thinking of areas for improvement. The assessment lists 13 staff competencies that are important in building the skills of young people. Reflect on the list and choose **6 priorities** for your own professional development based on what you learned about yourself and your program. Specifically, please identify the competencies that will help you best contribute to the program in which you are currently working.

### I WOULD LIKE TO INCREASE MY ABILITY TO:

1. \_\_\_\_ Design project-based learning activities that promote the positive development of young people.
2. \_\_\_\_ Choosing activities that facilitate the positive development of young people.
3. \_\_\_\_ Effectively facilitate learning activities.
4. \_\_\_\_ Provide opportunities for youth voice and youth choice in my program.
5. \_\_\_\_ Communicate clear benchmarks for success to the youth.
6. \_\_\_\_ Listen to the youth, and respond to their interests and concerns.
7. \_\_\_\_ Provide youth with opportunities to share their feedback on learning activities.
8. \_\_\_\_ Assess my own strengths and weaknesses in terms of being able to build the skills of young people.
9. \_\_\_\_ Make accurate and fair assessments about the quality of our programming in terms of building the skills of young people .
10. \_\_\_\_ Accurately assess the skill needs of the youth with whom I work.
11. \_\_\_\_ Celebrate the growth, progress, and achievements of youth during their participation in the program.
12. \_\_\_\_ Clearly explain the importance of project-based learning to my colleagues.
13. \_\_\_\_ Offer my program supervisor recommendations for strengthening project based learning in our program.
14. \_\_\_\_ Provide assistance/guidance to my colleagues on how to choose learning activities that meet the developmental needs of young people.

## 6.3 Application: Action Planning

Now that you've selected specific areas for improvement, consider the action planning process and why it's important. Action planning is critical to your professional development for it supports you in applying practical skill building strategies (the goal of this course). By putting your plans for action on paper, you hold yourself accountable and focus on moving your personal practice and program forward. (Action plans are a lot like project plans!)

### Goal Setting

Before drafting your action plan, you must first formulate a clear goal based on one of your priorities. Goals translate intentions into specific statements that can motivate you and provide direction for future change. A goal is like a destination – it specifies exactly where you want to end up. With a destination (goal) you know specifically where you are going and can plan your journey (actions) accordingly.

#### Your goals should be:

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

#### To formulate and write clear goals:

- Review your areas for improvement (section 6.2)
- Pick one of your six chosen priorities 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 a piece of paper. For example:  
I will (develop / improve / learn, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

### Action Steps

After writing your goal, you need to write action steps (or tasks) to make sure you can achieve your goals. A goal without action steps is like deciding to go out of town 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 (how will you demonstrate that that you've accomplished this action step?)

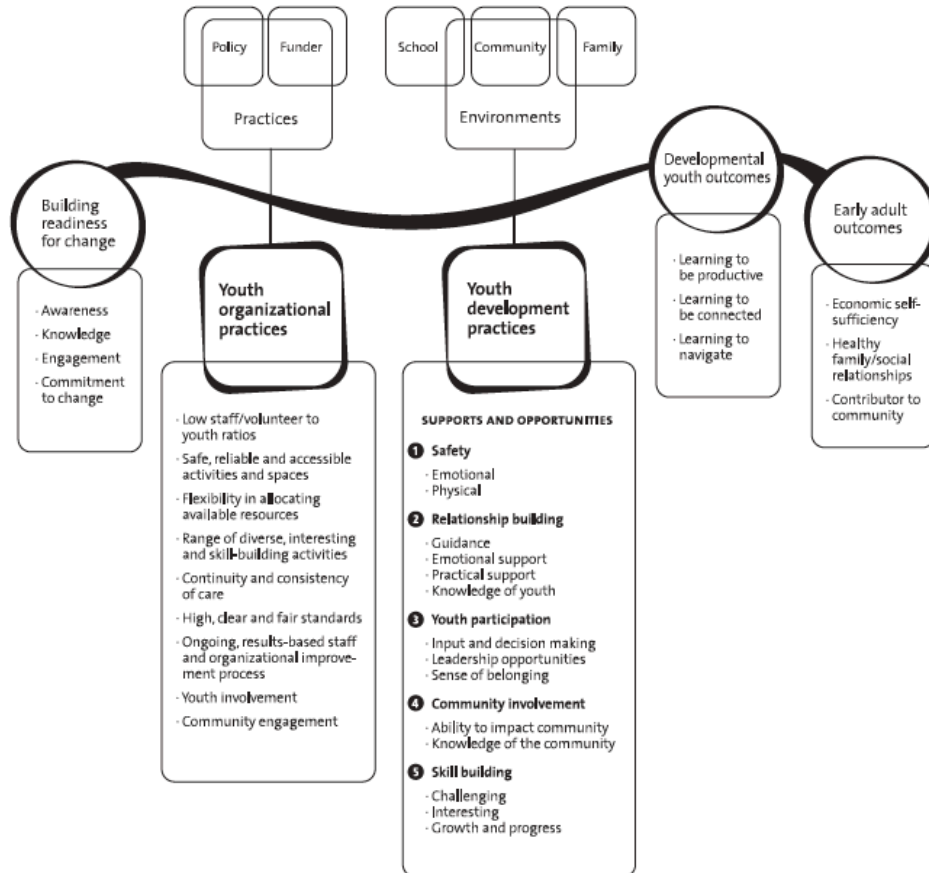
**Important:** Always identify who is responsible for completing each task (or for coordinating the activities of others) in your program plan. Accountability is important to the success of any action plan.

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

- Brainstorm specific steps (tasks) necessary to achieve your goal
- Write and sequence action steps, making sure each includes a verb
- Check off which tasks are short term that 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 (in program action plan)
- Identify resource(s) needed for any tasks (people, technical, financial)

**Instructions:** Formulate two goals (one personal and one program) and then draft a Personal Action Plan using the template.

## Youth Development Framework for Practice



**CNYD**

Developed by CNYD in collaboration with Michelle A. Gambone (YDSI) and James P. Connell (JRRE)  
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## Skill Building Assessment

### 2.2 Survey 1

#### Assess My Current Practice of Skill Building

1. How many youth in your program would say that you have a strong knowledge of their interests?

- ☐ Almost no youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Some youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ About half the youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Most of the youth would say I know their interests
- ☐ Almost all of the youth would say I know their interests

2. How many youth would say that you are patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or learning activity?

- ☐ Almost none would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Some would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ About half would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Most would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.
- ☐ Almost all would say that I am patient when they are having a hard time mastering a task or activity.

3. Do youth in your program believe that you achieve a good balance between directing youth and letting them learn on their own?

- ☐ Youth would say that I too often direct youth too much
- ☐ Youth would say that I sometimes direct youth too much
- ☐ Youth would say that I achieve a good balance
- ☐ Youth would say that I sometimes ask them to learn too much on their own
- ☐ Youth would say that I too often ask them to learn too much on their own

4. If you were to ask the youth in your program, how often would they say that you are successful in promoting a feeling of competence and a "can do" attitude?

- ☐ Youth would say almost never
- ☐ Youth would say seldom
- ☐ Youth would say about half the time
- ☐ Youth would say usually
- ☐ Youth would say almost always

5. If you were to ask the youth in your program, would they say that you provide them with sufficient structure and directions on how to master the activity, task or game at hand?

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost never provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I seldom provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that about half the time I provide structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I usually provide sufficient structure and directions

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost always provide sufficient structure and directions

6. How often would the youth in your program say that you provide them with useful feedback about their growth and progress during a project?

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost never provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I seldom provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I provide useful feedback about half the time when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I usually provide them with useful feedback when they need it

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth would say that I almost always provide them with useful feedback when they need it

7. How often do you provide youth with high and clear expectations before beginning a learning activity, task, or game?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost never

\_\_\_\_\_ Seldom

\_\_\_\_\_ About half the time

\_\_\_\_\_ Usually

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always

8. How often do you communicate clear benchmarks for success before the group begins a new learning activity, task or game?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost never

\_\_\_\_\_ Seldom

\_\_\_\_\_ About half the time

\_\_\_\_\_ Usually

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost always

9. How often do you provide youth with a chance to debrief or reflect on their own growth and progress?

\_\_\_\_\_ Every time we meet day

\_\_\_\_\_ About every other time we meet

\_\_\_\_\_ It depends, I don't debrief or reflect on a regular basis

10. Do youth in your program believe that you give them positive recognition when they accomplish something or meet high expectations?

- ☐ Youth would say that I almost never provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I seldom provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I provide recognition about half the time
- ☐ Youth would say that I usually provide them with recognition
- ☐ Youth would say that I almost always provide them with recognition

11. How many youth in your program would say that you listen and respond to their concerns and ideas?

- ☐ Almost none would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Some would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ About half would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Most would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns
- ☐ Almost all would say that I listen and respond to their ideas and concerns

## Skill Building Assessment

### 2.2 Survey 2

#### Assess Skill Building in My Program

Listed below are 15 statements about community and after-school programs for young people. Please identify the extent to which each statement is “true” for your program, using the following scale:

- 1. Is not usually true in our program. We can do much, much better.**
- 2. Is sometimes true in our program. We still need to really work hard on this.**
- 3. Is most often true in our program. There are still a few ways that we could improve.**
- 4. Is very true in our program. We don’t need any improvements**

For each statement below, circle one number to indicate your answer.

1. We intentionally organize learning activities to ensure that the young people interact with others who have different skills and backgrounds.

1      2      3      4

2. The learning activities in the program are age appropriate (based on young people’s developmental needs and interests).

1      2      3      4

3. In the program, we achieve a good balance between having participants learn in groups and individually.

1      2      3      4

4. The activities in the program are intentionally designed to ensure that young people learn a variety of problem-solving strategies.

1      2      3      4

5. The activities in the program challenge young people to demonstrate new abilities and apply their skills to new tasks.

1      2      3      4



6. Young people in the program are given formal opportunities to share their feedback on the program, including whether or not they feel challenged by activities. (For example, staff ask feedback questions or provide session evaluations).

1      2      3      4

7. In the program, young people have the chance to learn from many kinds of “teachers,” not just the program staff (for example, parents, other students, classroom teachers, community leaders).

1      2      3      4

8. The learning activities in this program provide participants with a chance to express themselves and their opinions.

1      2      3      4

9. The learning activities in this program lead to a tangible outcomes based on clearly established goals.

1      2      3      4

10. In this program, we give youth the chance to define their own learning goals and expectations.

1      2      3      4

11. The program provides youth with choices about how they wish to participate (e.g., choosing topics, deciding who to work with, choosing how to conduct a project).

1      2      3      4

12. In this program, we regularly schedule time for youth to reflect on the learning activities, and on their own growth and progress.

1      2      3      4

13. In this program, staff are actively and personally involved in learning with participants during activities.

1      2      3      4

14. In this program, staff are able to clearly express the mission of our work with young people, and how our learning activities are different from what happens in school.

1      2      3      4

15. In this program, staff are able to clearly express how our learning activities promote the growth and progress of young people.

1      2      3      4

## 4.6 Self Assessment

### Assess My Current Skills/ Abilities in Planning and Implementing Learning Activities

The ability to plan and facilitate learning activities (project-based learning) is critical to skill building among youth. This survey asks you to assess your ability to effectively plan and facilitate these learning activities. In addition to reflecting on your ability, we would also like you to reflect on the amount of time you take to plan and facilitate learning through projects. The results of this survey will help you develop some goals for your action plan.

1. I have the ability to clearly state the goals of the project to participants.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

2. I always take the time to discuss the goals of projects with participants before we begin the activity.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

3. When a project is implemented over an extended period, I regularly schedule time at the beginning of each session to discuss project goals and expectations with participants.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

4. I always check to make sure that all members of the group clearly understand the project tasks prior to beginning the day's activity.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

5. I have the ability to help groups of youth "debrief" about their processes and performance after project tasks and activities.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

6. I always schedule sufficient time for groups to debrief on group processes and performance after project tasks and activities.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

7. I have the ability to engage individual young people in reflecting about their own growth and progress.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

8. I schedule sufficient time for the young people to reflect on their own growth and progress.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

9. I have the ability to design and plan project-based learning that challenges the growth and development of young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

10. I consistently implement activities challenges the growth and development of all the participating young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

11. I am able to “break down” the tasks embedded in project-based learning and clearly express them to young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

12. I always schedule sufficient time to “break down” and discuss upcoming tasks with young people.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

13. When I see upcoming challenges in project implementation, I seek out my staff colleagues and brainstorm solutions before discussing the issues with the full group of youth.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

14. When I see upcoming challenges in project implementation, I seek out young people and brainstorm solutions before discussing the issues with the full group of youth.

Strongly Agree      1      2      3      4      Strongly Disagree

## Skill Building: Develop Personal and Program Priorities

This assessment is designed to help you begin the action planning process by thinking of areas for improvement. The assessment lists 13 staff competencies that are important in building the skills of young people. Reflect on the list and choose **6 priorities** for your own professional development based on what you learned about yourself and your program. Specifically, please identify the competencies that will help you best contribute to the program in which you are currently working.

### I WOULD LIKE TO INCREASE MY ABILITY TO:

1. \_\_\_\_ Design project-based learning activities that promote the positive development of young people.
2. \_\_\_\_ Choosing activities that facilitate the positive development of young people.
3. \_\_\_\_ Effectively facilitate learning activities.
4. \_\_\_\_ Provide opportunities for youth voice and youth choice in my program.
5. \_\_\_\_ Communicate clear benchmarks for success to the youth.
6. \_\_\_\_ Listen to the youth, and respond to their interests and concerns.
7. \_\_\_\_ Provide youth with opportunities to share their feedback on learning activities.
8. \_\_\_\_ Assess my own strengths and weaknesses in terms of being able to build the skills of young people.
9. \_\_\_\_ Make accurate and fair assessments about the quality of our programming in terms of building the skills of young people .
10. \_\_\_\_ Accurately assess the skill needs of the youth with whom I work.
11. \_\_\_\_ Celebrate the growth, progress, and achievements of youth during their participation in the program.
12. \_\_\_\_ Clearly explain the importance of project-based learning to my colleagues.
14. \_\_\_\_ Offer my program supervisor recommendations for strengthening project based learning in our program.
14. \_\_\_\_ Provide assistance/guidance to my colleagues on how to choose learning activities that meet the developmental needs of young people.

## PERSONAL Action Plan: Skill Building

[Example]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**STRENGTHS:** PLEASE LIST OR DESCRIBE YOUR STRONGEST PERSONAL ABILITIES IN TERMS OF PROMOTING SKILL BUILDING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WORK WITH YOUTH.

I know what the youth are interested in, I have a high level of skill and knowledge in my content area, and strong presence in leading and debriefing activities

**Goal:** Please describe one personal skill or ability that you would like to strengthen in support of skill building.

**Strengthen my ability to facilitate project-based learning (PBL) through planning and implementing a successful and meaningful project with youth in my program. Target date: Feb 15<sup>th</sup>.**

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1. Facilitate first meeting with youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share idea about creating an original play to be performed mid-Feb.</li> <li>Brainstorm ideas for play</li> <li>Start building our skills as an ensemble</li> </ul>	12/9	Buy into the idea of both creating and performing the show. Participate in discussion of what steps need to be taken in the process.	Ask a colleague for support in this process. Make sure we can use the auditorium when we need it.	Rehearsal space. Games to use in these first few ensemble-building rehearsals.
2. Create a project plan with young people that details project goals and all of the steps we will complete to implement a successful project.	12/16	Engagement as primary project planners	Ask colleague and supervisor to review project plan and provide input.	Project planning worksheet
3. Design lesson plans to teach specific skills (based on the project plan) to carry us through the whole rehearsal process (Jan 4 – Feb 14, 2x per week)	12/21	Incorporate skills that youth say they want to and need to learn along the way.	Ask colleague to review and provide feedback on my lesson plans. Perhaps attend workshop.	Staff time, access to computer and printer
4. Determine process of assessment for both learning outcomes and the project goals	12/21	Input from project plans	Meet with supervisor for advice	Staff time, examples of arts-based assessment
5. Engage youth and staff in publicizing for the show	1/16	Lead the effort with my support	Get staff to buy in and agree to come and bring their students	Computer, printer, copier, paper, art supplies
6. Performance and celebration	2/17	All of it	Ask colleagues to attend all events	Food & supplies for celebration, video camera to capture all
7. Reflect on and debrief project	2/22	Participate in process	Ask colleagues for feedback	Chart paper and markers

## Personal Action Plan: Skill Building

Name \_\_\_\_\_

This activity gives you an opportunity to reflect on this course and create a personal action plan for the future.

**Strengths:** *Please list or describe your strongest personal abilities in terms of promoting skill 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 skill building. Set a target date.*

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

## PROGRAM Action Plan: Skill Building

[Example]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Strengths:** Please list or describe what your program does really well to promote skill building.

**Our staff is highly skilled in their content areas. They also know how to facilitate learning to allow students to set their own goals and reflect on their learning.**

**Goal:** Please describe one aspect of your program that could use some improvement. Write a goal statement.

**Improvement: Offer more choice in programming. Students often take the same courses many times because our program does not offer enough variety in subject areas and types of teachers.**

**Goal: Recruit 5 volunteer “teachers” from the community (with diverse areas of expertise). Target date: March 30<sup>th</sup>.**

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Person Responsible	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1. Organize a meeting with program staff and administrators to their get buy-in on this goal. Brainstorm ideas for attracting volunteers. Ask 2-3 colleagues to form subcommittee to assist in volunteer recruitment.	12/14	Me	None	Supervisor buy-in to call the meeting.	Staff meeting time, Conference room, chart pads and markers
2. Create a plan to engage youth interests and support their representation on subcommittee. Recruit youth for subcommittee.	1/11	Me	None	Participation of subcommittee	Staff meeting time, Conference room, chart pads and markers
3. Convene first meeting of the full volunteer search subcommittee.	1/25	Me	Participate as members of subcommittee	Participation of subcommittee	Staff and youth meeting time, Conference room, chart pads and markers
4. Create youth interest survey and develop plan to get input from program youth about the types of new classes they would like. Survey youth and summarize results.	2/15	Committee	Youth from subcommittee help create survey and work with other youth to fill out surveys	Staff attendance in meeting to listen and respond to presentation	Access to computer, time to prep youth survey, copy machine
5. Create plan for recruiting volunteers to offer new classes. Present to full staff.	3/3	Committee	Participate in creation of plan	Staff attendance at presentation	Access to computer, materials to aid in presentation design



<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Youth Role</b>	<b>Support Needed</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>
					and delivery
6. Implement volunteer recruitment plan to sign up at least 5 volunteer teachers.	3/15	Committee	As determined by committee	Full staff to give general support	Time and money to design, create and distribute written materials, time for visits and phone calls to reach volunteers
7. Form a subcommittee to create and deliver volunteer orientation/training.	3/15	Me	As determined by committee	Supervisor to assist with training design	Examples from other programs of volunteer orientations
8. Deliver orientation/training for new volunteers beginning Monday April 3.	3/30	Committee	As determined by committee	Supervisor and other staff to attend to welcome volunteers and support training	Conference room, food and drinks, materials for training

## Program Action Plan: Skill Building

Name \_\_\_\_\_

This activity gives you an opportunity to reflect on this course and create a program action plan for the future.

**Strengths:** *Please list or describe what your program does really well to support skill building.*

**Goal:** *Please describe one aspect of your program that could use some improvement. Write a goal statement and set a target date.*

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Person Responsible	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

ACTION STEPS	Target Date	Person Responsible	Youth Role	Support Needed	Resources Needed
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					