

Sparks Interview Questions

1. Did you know what your sparks (interests, passions) were as a teenager? What were they? (What were you excited about? How did you find your sparks?)

2. How did you work on your spark? What did you do to improve it? What skills did you learn along the way?

3. Who were your spark champions (people who supported your spark)? How did they help you?

Adultism Scenarios

Scenario 1

Two young people are planning to do a presentation about a recently completed community service project at the agency's annual meeting. The day before the event the adult program leader sees that the young people are not that well prepared and decides to take over as the lead presenter.

How would the young people respond to this?

What are the long-term effects for young people if they have many similar experiences?

What would alternative adult behavior look like?

Scenario 2

In a work readiness program a young person is repeatedly missing sessions and appointments (he relies on his parents for transportation). The program coordinator sees the young person as irresponsible and unreliable and decides to drop him from the program.

How would the youth respond to this?

What are the long-term effects for young people if they have many similar experiences?

What would alternative adult behavior look like?

Scenario 3

An agency administrator uses new funding to start up an afterschool program for teenagers. He develops the program to best fit the structure of programming in his agency. Trying to maximize space utilization, he puts the new program into a room originally designed for a nursery school.

How would the youth respond to this?

What are the long-term effects for young people if they have many similar experiences?

What would alternative adult behavior look like?

Scenario 4

An agency decides to have young people on their board of directors. One young person is selected and asked to be on the board. The youth is expected to attend every board meeting. The board meets once a month from 7-9PM in the agency's main office downtown.

How would the youth respond to this?

What are the long-term effects for young people if they have many similar experiences?

What would alternative adult behavior look like?

Scenario 5

A group of young people is planning a teen center. Two group members are charged with investigating zoning regulations and related city policies. They decide to go directly to city hall to do the research. The receptionist initially ignores them; finally she asks what they are doing there. Asking to meet with a staff person at the planning department, they are told that staff does not have time to meet with them.

How would the youth respond to this?

What are the long-term effects for young people if they have many similar experiences?

What would alternative adult behavior look like?

Agency Climate Bingo

Without using the same person twice, find others in the room who experience the following conditions in their workplace. Ask them to give an example and sign the appropriate square.

Décor (especially pictures & posters) is culturally diverse and representative of community	Agency clearly communicates positive behavior expectations	Agency is open at times convenient to youth and families (evenings, weekends)	Agency is easily accessible to individuals with disabilities	Translation services are provided for non-English speaking families
Agency is accessible by public transportation	Staff engage youth in a range of skill building activities	Staff use everyday language (non-technical, inclusive)	Staff are easily identified by name badges/t-shirts, etc.	Agency provides space for community events/groups
Has a well-publicized grievance/complaint procedure for youth/families	Offices are easily identified by signage	Youth/family message board for improvements & feedback	Reception area is welcoming; comfortable chairs, access to restroom and water	Program activities lead to tangible products/performances that reflect ideas of youth
Staff deal with conflicts and negative behavior in a non-threatening way (calm, stop hurtful actions, acknowledges youth's feelings)	Agency mission and goals are clearly posted	Staff seeks input from youth in order to determine cause and solutions to conflict	Effective, small staff-youth ratio	Open door policy (easy access to administration, board)
Outdoor spaces invite social & recreational use (benches, flower boxes, murals, play areas)	Youth take on meaningful roles in the agency	Agency invites community regularly (open house, etc.)	Phone system is user friendly	Agency is clean, well-lit, and well-maintained, indoors and outdoors