Positive Youth Development III: Youth Voice & Engagement

ACT for Youth

June 15, 2021

Zoom keeping

Experiencing delays?
Try closing out the other programs running on your computer
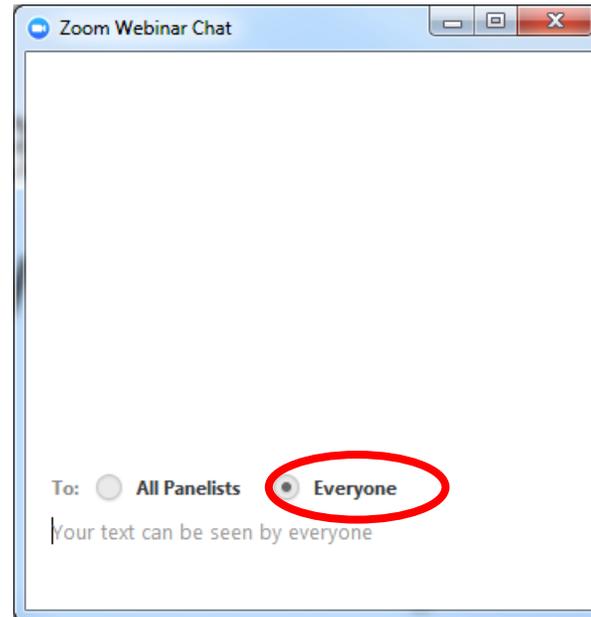
Questions?
Use chat function. Post to Everyone.

Audio.
You control the volume. Please mute yourself during the presentation.

Agenda

o Recap – What is Positive Youth Development?

o Defining youth engagement

o Examples of meaningful youth engagement

o Challenging adultism

o Questions & Resources

Recap: Positive Youth Development

A philosophy or approach that guides communities in the way they organize programs, supports and opportunities so that young people can develop to their full potential.

- Focus on building positive outcomes

- Youth voice and engagement

- Long-term involvement/Developmentally appropriate

- Universal/Inclusive

- Community-based/Collaborative

Youth Voice & Engagement -
What does this mean to you? Why is it important?

Youth Engagement as Human Right

...the active and meaningful involvement of young people in all aspects of their own development and that of their communities, including their empowerment to contribute to decisions about their personal, family, social, economic, and political development (United Nations, 2007)

- Such engagement requires recognition of young people's knowledge, perspectives, and experiences as valuable contributions to decision making at all levels (United Nations, 2007)

- It requires structures and systems put in place by adults to support them (Patton et al, 2016)

Youth Engagement

… can be defined as involving youth in responsible, challenging action that meets genuine needs, with the opportunity for planning and/or decision-making affecting others…

there is mutuality in teaching and learning (between youth and adults) and … each group sees itself as a resource for the other and offers what it uniquely can provide.

National Commission on Resources for Youth, 1974

Examples of Youth Engagement?

Examples of Youth Engagement

Youth in Governance

Forum for Youth Investment: Building Effective Youth Councils
http://www.readyby21.org/resources/building-effective-youth-councils

Social Activism

Akiva, et al. Reasons youth engage in activism programs: Social justice or sanctuary? Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 53. August 2017
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320107376_Reasons_youth_engage_in_activism_programs_Social_justice_or_sanctuary

Youth in Media/ Education

❑ Video PSAs: Example: The Accidental Bully

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97de0hsC7xI&list=UUSS0AF2Eg9Bbbq4QpmjasMw

❑ How Youth Learn: Ned's GR8

http://www.whatkidscando.org/featurestories/2013/01_how_youth_learn/index.html

Meaningful Roles for Young People

Leadership Positions Voting Board Members **Board Committees (Hiring, Program)**	**Shared Leadership**
Youth Forum Youth Advocacy Consultants **Youth Advisory Group Media Focus Groups**	**Voice & Consultation**
Peer Education Peer Mentoring Youth Facilitators **Community Service Projects Youth Theater**	**Participation**

Scenario: Youth on Hiring Committee

You want to bring young people onto the hiring committee for youth workers. You want them to be part of the hiring process from beginning to end: reviewing the job description, recruitment materials, and applications, as well as interviewing and decision making.

You need to convince the administrators …

Name Benefits

Anticipate Challenges

Benefits for Youth

Civic Development (skills, attitudes, awareness)

Social/Emotional Development (belonging, efficacy)

Vocational Development (skills, social capital)

Benefits for Adults, Organizations, and Communities

Professional Development (skills, confidence)

Social/Emotional Development (connectedness)

Organizations reflect & respond to youth concerns

Organizations are more appealing to potential funders

Public policies/programs are more effective & equitable

New coalitions emerge to address issues

https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/youthadultpartnership/files/2012/12/Youth_in_Decision_Making.pdf

Ladder of Youth Participation

Degrees of Participation

- Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults
- Youth-initiated and directed
- Adult-initiated, shared decisions with youth
- Consulted and informed
- Assigned but informed

Non-Participation

- Tokenism
- Decoration
- Manipulation

https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf
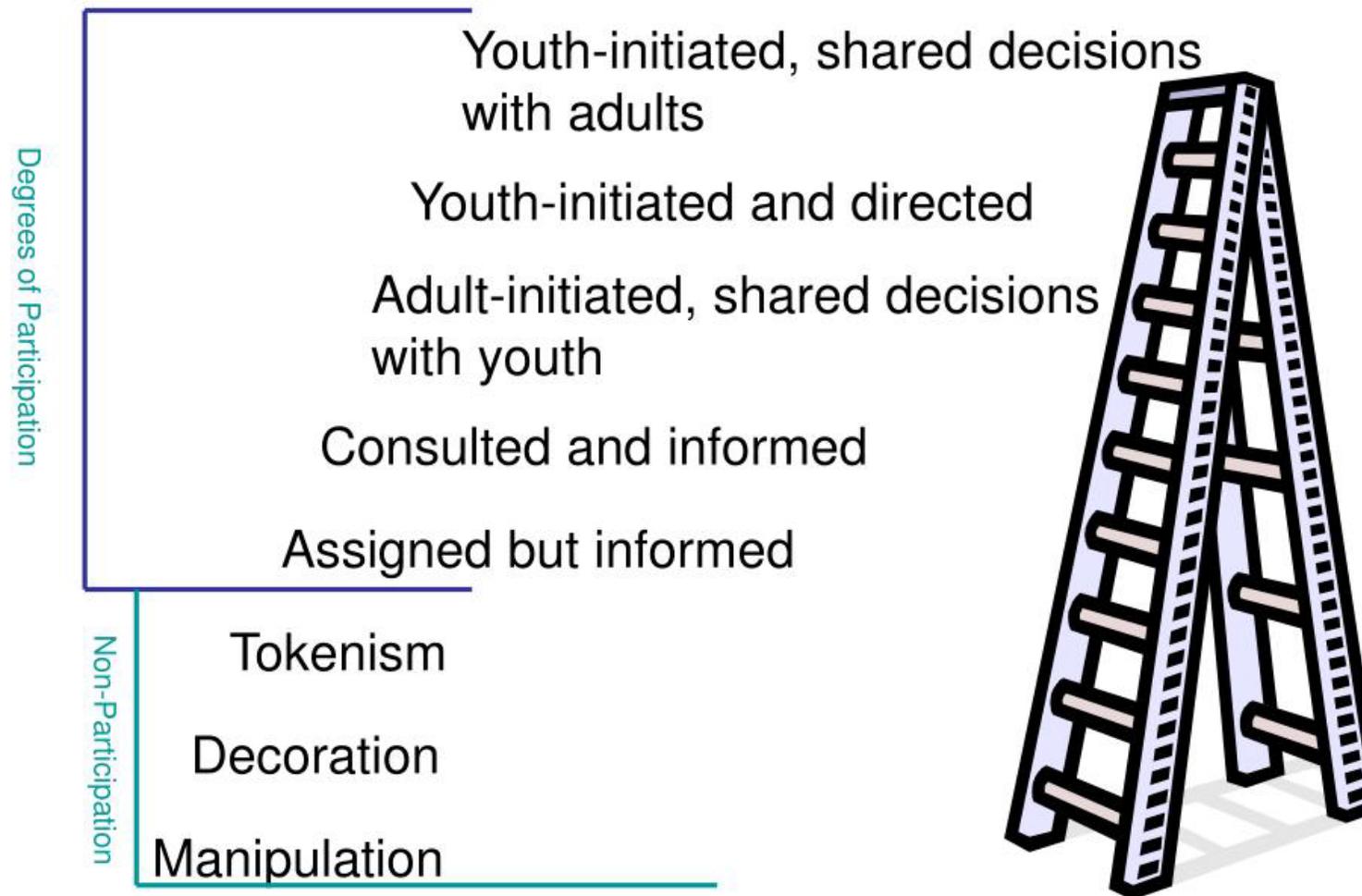
Think back to your teen years -
Have you experienced adultism?

Obstacle: Adultism
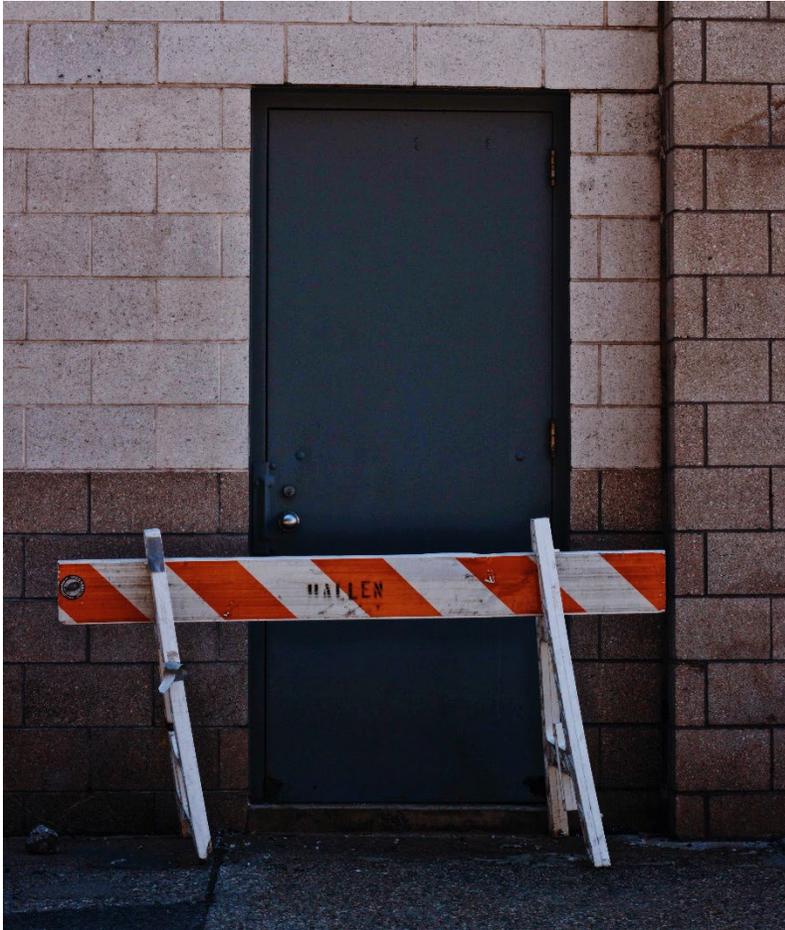
…the behaviors and attitudes which flow from negative stereotypes adults hold about youth.

John Bell, 1995

Manifestations of Adultism

➢ Dysfunctional Rescuing

➢ Blaming the Victim

➢ Avoidance of Contact

➢ Denial of Distinctiveness of Youth Culture

➢ Denial of the Political Significance of Adultism

Advancing Youth Development (AYD) Curriculum

Defeating Adultism

o Self-Reflection

o Check your biases: Harvard's Implicit Test
https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectat est.html

o Deconstruct adultism
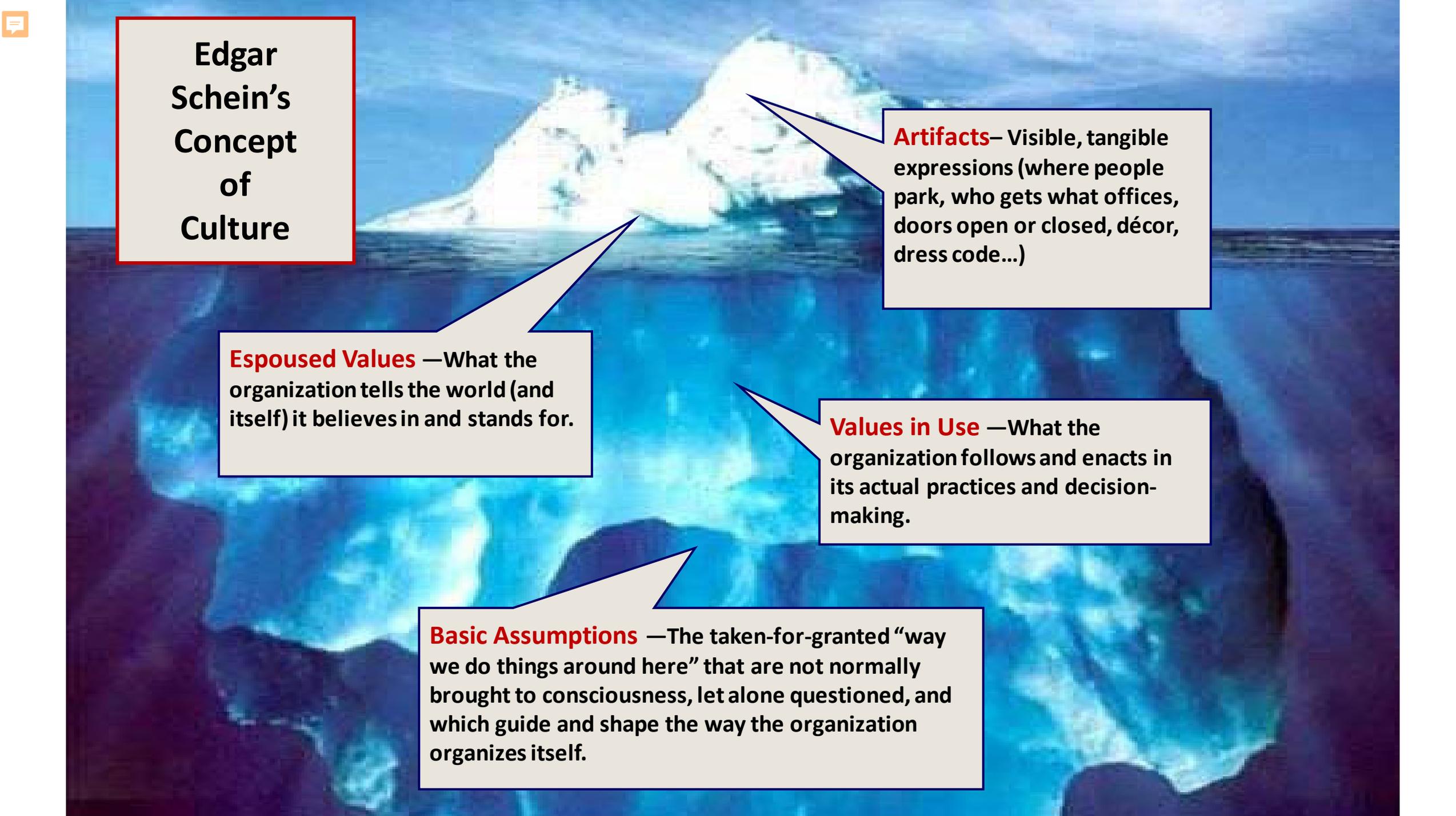
Edgar Schein's Concept of Culture

Artifacts– Visible, tangible expressions (where people park, who gets what offices, doors open or closed, décor, dress code…)

Espoused Values —What the organization tells the world (and itself) it believes in and stands for.

Values in Use —What the organization follows and enacts in its actual practices and decision-making.

Basic Assumptions —The taken-for-granted "way we do things around here" that are not normally brought to consciousness, let alone questioned, and which guide and shape the way the organization organizes itself.

Poll: Youth-Adult Partnerships
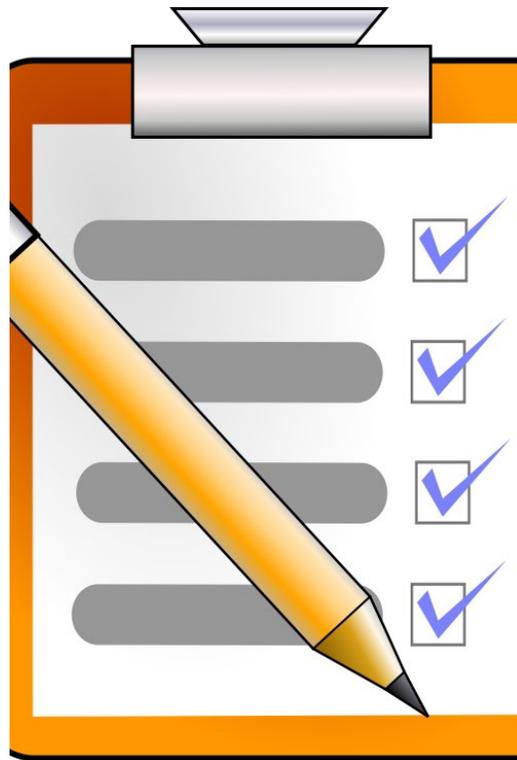
Think about your own agency or program and respond to the following statements. Check off which feels right to you.

A. The idea of engaging youth in decision making excites me.

B. Youth have the right to be heard on matters impacting their lives.

C. The idea of engaging youth in decision making makes me nervous.

D. Our program/agency regularly solicits the input of young people.

Preparing Adults

Being Y-AP Savvy:

A Primer on Creating & Sustaining Youth-Adult Partnerships

http://fyi.uwex.edu/youthadultpartnership/files/2011/02/YAP-Savvy12.pdf
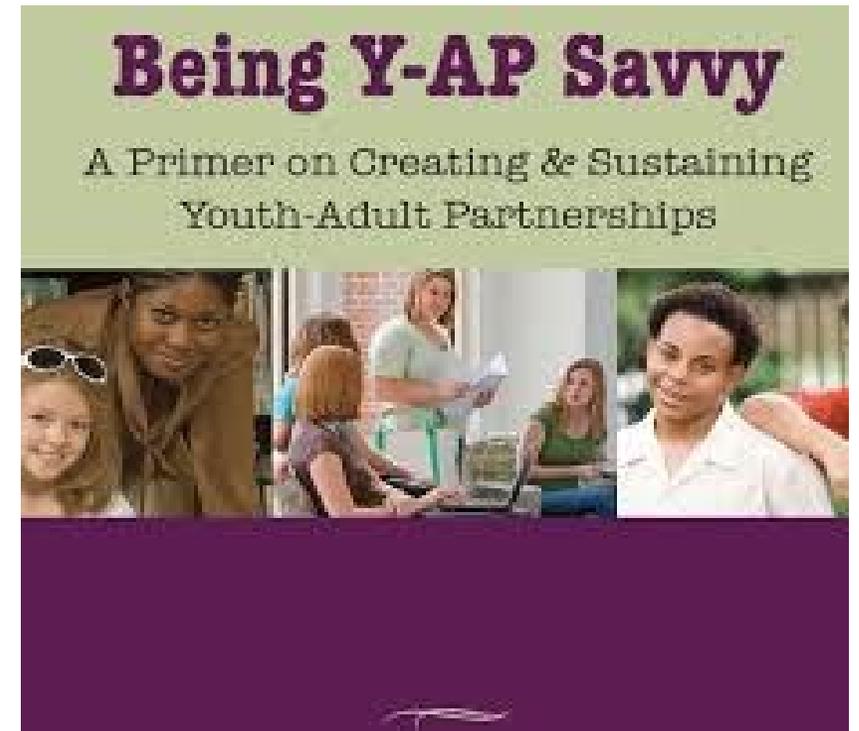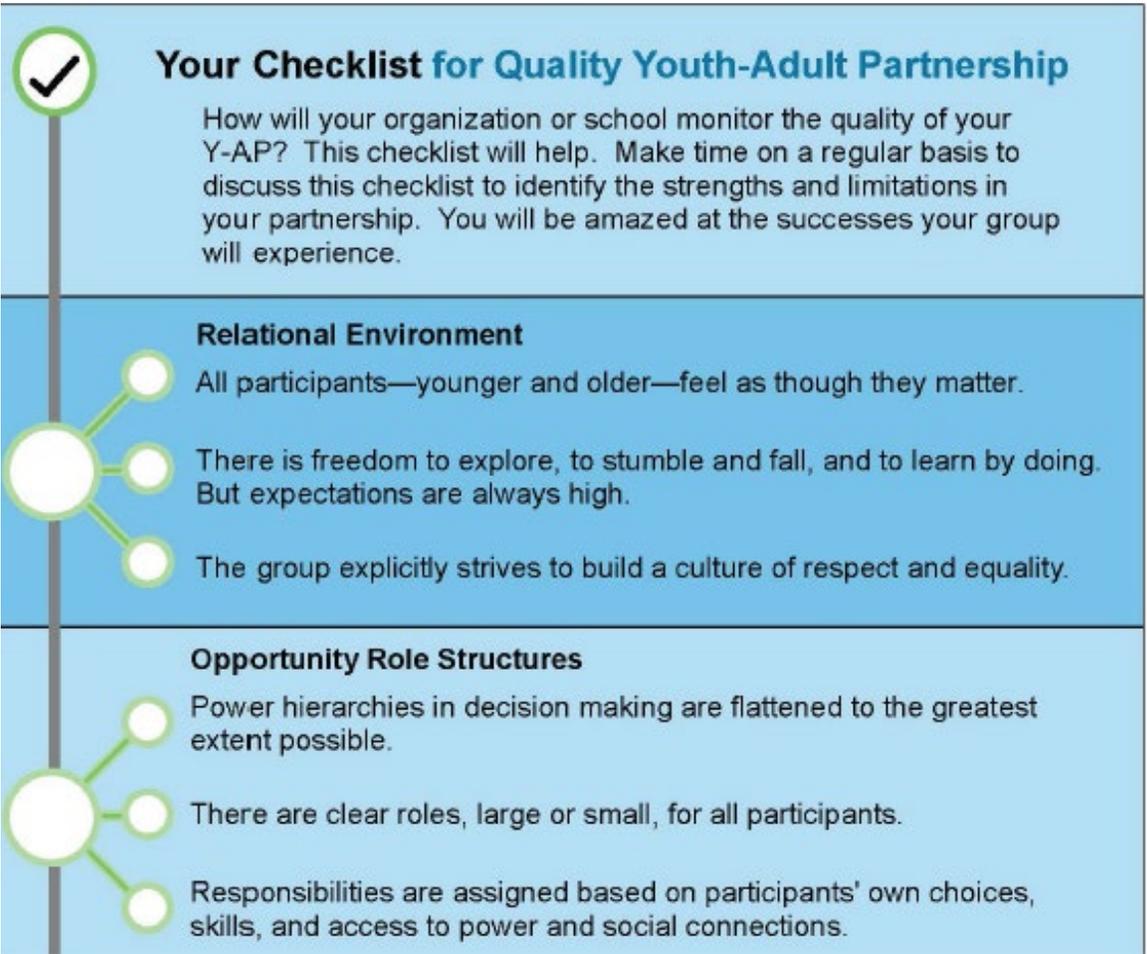
Your Checklist for Quality Youth-Adult Partnership

How will your organization or school monitor the quality of your Y-AP? This checklist will help. Make time on a regular basis to discuss this checklist to identify the strengths and limitations in your partnership. You will be amazed at the successes your group will experience.

Relational Environment

All participants—younger and older—feel as though they matter.

There is freedom to explore, to stumble and fall, and to learn by doing. But expectations are always high.

The group explicitly strives to build a culture of respect and equality.

Opportunity Role Structures

Power hierarchies in decision making are flattened to the greatest extent possible.

There are clear roles, large or small, for all participants.

Responsibilities are assigned based on participants' own choices, skills, and access to power and social connections.
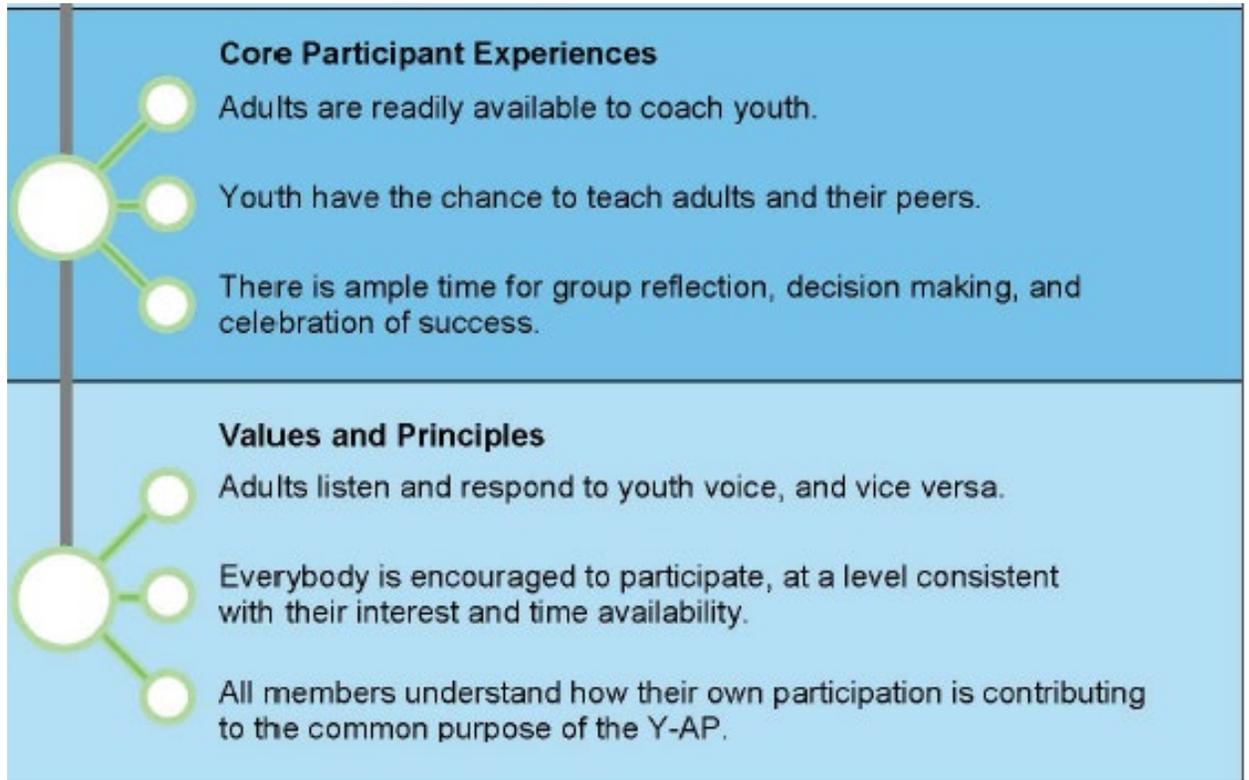
Core Participant Experiences

Adults are readily available to coach youth.

Youth have the chance to teach adults and their peers.

There is ample time for group reflection, decision making, and celebration of success.

Values and Principles

Adults listen and respond to youth voice, and vice versa.

Everybody is encouraged to participate, at a level consistent with their interest and time availability.

All members understand how their own participation is contributing to the common purpose of the Y-AP.

Shepherd Zeldin et al. 2018. *Preparing for Youth Engagement*
http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/pm/pm_preparing-youth-engagement_0818.pdf

Youth Adult Partnership Tools
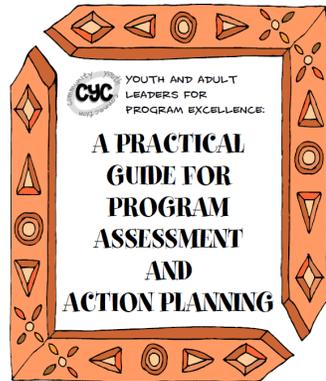
Youth and Adult Leaders for Program Excellence (YALPE)

https://fyi.uwex.edu/youthadultpartnership/yalpe-workbook/

Youth-Adult Partnership RUBRIC

https://cerc.msu.edu/yaprubric

Preparing Youth (Resources)

Gardner Center, Stamford University. YELL
http://jgc.stanford.edu/our_work/yell.html

Advocates for Youth. 2009. Building Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships
https://advocatesforyouth.org/resources/fact-sheets/building-effective-youth-adult-partnerships/

Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, National 4-H Council, National Network for Youth, Youth Leadership Institute. 2003. Youth-Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual. Youth-AdultPartnershipsTrainingManual.pdf (wisc.edu)

Adolescent Health Initiative: Creating and Sustaining a Thriving Youth Advisory Council
https://www.umhs-adolescenthealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/manual-for-website.pdf

Any questions, comments or takeaways?

Thank you!

Resources

Resources

ACT for Youth: Youth Work Professionals
http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/

ACT for Youth: Youth-Adult Partnerships for Change
http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/engagement/partnerships.cfm

Adam Fletcher: Youth/Adult Partnerships Tip Sheet   https://freechild.org/yaptips/

Ramey, H. L. et al. Youth-Adult Partnerships in Work with Youth: An Overview. *Journal of Youth Development.* Vol 12, No.4 (2017)
http://jyd.pitt.edu/ojs/jyd/article/view/171204FA003

Paul Kivel: Adultism
http://paulkivel.com/resource/adultism/

References

United Nations. (2007). *World Youth Report.* New York, NY: United Nations. https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/world-youth-report/world-youth-report-2007.html

Patton, G.C. et al. (2016). Our Future: a Lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing. *The Lancet*, 387 (10036), 2423-2478.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). The Promise of Adolescence: Realizing Opportunity for All Youth. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. nap.edu/catalog/25388/the-promise-of-adolescence-realizing-opportunity-for-all-youth

National Commission on Resources for Youth. (1974) *New Roles for Youth in the School and Community*. New York: National Commission on Resources for Youth