

YOUTH ADULT PARTNERSHIPS

Objectives:

After this lesson, the students:

- Know how to have healthy youth adult partnerships
- Can give examples of how this can be implemented

Lesson Outline

Introduction

You can introduce the topic by showing some video's, which you can find on the website. Introduce the quote too. Read it out loud and ask what students think of it.

“We are working with young people, rather than for young people.”
- Peter Poit, director United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

For the introduction it is really important to connect to the students' real life experience. After the video you can ask some reflective questions like: do you recognise this situation, can you relate to the person in the video, what do you feel after watching the video,...?

Warm-up

A warm-up is important to introduce students to a certain topic and make them feel comfortable with each other and the topic they are going to discuss. For this warm-up you can ask students to discuss how they experienced partnerships or working with adults.

Information

Let the students read through the lesson content on their own, give them some time to form their own opinions and ask them if they have any questions.

A true partnership exist when each person has the opportunity to make suggestions and decisions, and when everyone's contribution is recognize and valued. A youth-adult partnership exists when adults see young people as full partners on issues facing youth and the programs and policies that affect youth.

Unfortunately, we live in a society that does not always give young people many opportunities to make their own decisions. The idea that children should not be seen and not heard is still common for many adults. To be effective partners, adults must respect and have confidence in youth. If they are truly sharing the power to make decisions with young people, it means adults are letting go of their traditional roles, listening rather than telling, and working with, rather than for youth.

A youth-adult relationship is one that integrates youth's realistic perspectives and skills with professional adults' experience and wisdom. It offers young people and adults the opportunity to share wisdom, make suggestions and decisions. All contributions are equally valued and appreciated in a good youth-adult relationship. It allows youth and adults to work in full partnership envisioning, developing, implementing, and evaluating programs.

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Often, tokenism is mistaken for youth-adult relationships. However, tokenism is not equal partnership. Examples of tokenism are;

- Having youth present but with no clear role
- Assigning to youth tasks that adults do not want to do
- Having youth make appearances without training
- Having only one youth on a board or council

There are different ways to approach a relationship between youth and adults;

Youth as Objects: Adults know what is best for young people and control situations in which they allow youth to be involved

Youth as Recipients: Adults allow young people to take part in decision-making because they think the experience will be “good for them”

Youth as Partners: Adults respect young people as having something significant to offer, recognizing the greater impact youth bring to a project. Youth are encouraged to become involved

Youth have the right to be involved in decision-making processes which concern their lives. It makes programs more relevant and sustainable, and is good for the personal development of young people;

- Social competence
- Problem-solving skills
- Autonomy
- Sense of purpose and future

Activities

There are different types of activities which can be done in the order of your preference! Also, you don't have to do all activities together. You can encourage youth to read stories or do quizzes at home!

These activities are important because they help the students to process the information by practicing and reflecting on how this information is related to their own situation.

Discussion: you can facilitate a discussion by using the reflective questions. Or use the story as a starting point for a debate.

Reflective questions

- What do you see are the benefits of youth-adult relationships?
- What are the challenges?
- Can you give some tips on working in an youth-adult relationship?

Storytelling: use the story as a starting point for the students to come up with their own story based on their realities. This can be in the form of a roleplay, comic, story etc.

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Story

(to be collected)

Advisors: let students use the reflective questions or stories to come up with their advice for other youth. This could be in the form of a poster, roleplay, slogan etc.

Quiz: Let students do the quiz on the platform to test if they understood the content.

[Myth Buster Game – Ok/Not Ok] The students are presented to various statements. For each statement, the student needs to decide if it is OK/Not OK. A feedback shows up at the end of the game. They also get to see if their answer was right or wrong.