

You Were Never Their Age: Understanding & Engaging Youth

NJPN 19TH ANNUAL ADDICTION CONFERENCE



**CREATING
CONNECTIONS**
THE PATH TO WELLNESS

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UNDERSTANDING & ENGAGING YOUTH

Lindsey Meyer Teen Institute

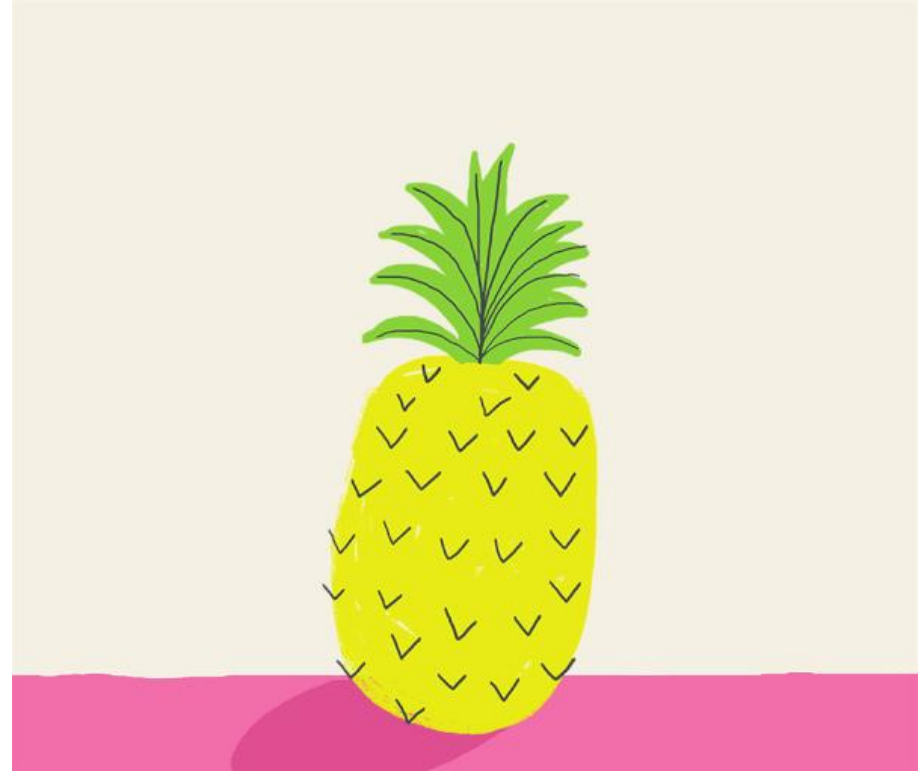


Corey Donetz
Rachel Taylor, MT-BC



GOALS OF THIS SESSION

- Understand the importance of the youth role in prevention programs
#GetWoke
- Understand the role we play as adults in youth programs
#WeGotThisFam
- Learn some new techniques & theories to help us make prevention FUN
#Goals



THINK BACK TO WHEN YOU WERE 16....

- What was your favorite band?
- What did you do in your free time?
- What was your favorite movie?
- How did you get in touch with your friends?
- What did you want to be when you grew up?



Write It Before You Talk

*Michael Brandwein



COREY AT 16

- Employee of the month at PathMark
- Ranked #13 nationally in NBA Live
- Biggest Red Sox supporter
- Joe Budden super fan
- Working for weekend
- Class clown
- Favorite subject: Lunch



RACHEL AT 16

- Very Punk Rock, but also very opera
- Knew every word to the American Idiot soundtrack
- Top 8 changed on a weekly basis
- Theatre geek
- Queen of Sass
- Favorite subject: music





DIANE LITTERER AT 16

- Class President
- Wise beyond her years
- A devoted leader in her community
- Favorite subject: all of them
- Life-long learner

#tbt

16 YEAR OLD IN 1979

- Jimmy Carter is the President
- The average cost for a gallon of gas was 86 cents*
- Average cost of a new house was \$67,700*
- The Deer Hunter wins best picture at the Academy Awards
- The Dukes of Hazzard premieres on CBS on January 26
- Billboard magazine lists "My Sharona" by The Knack as the top song of the year
- Sony introduces the Sony Walkman for \$200

ASTEROIDS



16 YEAR OLD IN 1999

- Bill Clinton is the President
- The average cost of a gallon of gas was \$1.17*
- Average cost of a new house was \$182,900*
- Shakespeare in Love wins best picture at the Academy Awards
- SpongeBob SquarePants premieres on Nickelodeon on May 1st
- Billboard magazine lists "Believe" by Cher as the top song of the year
- Myspace was officially introduced to the internet



FRESH



*energy.gov/eere/vehicles

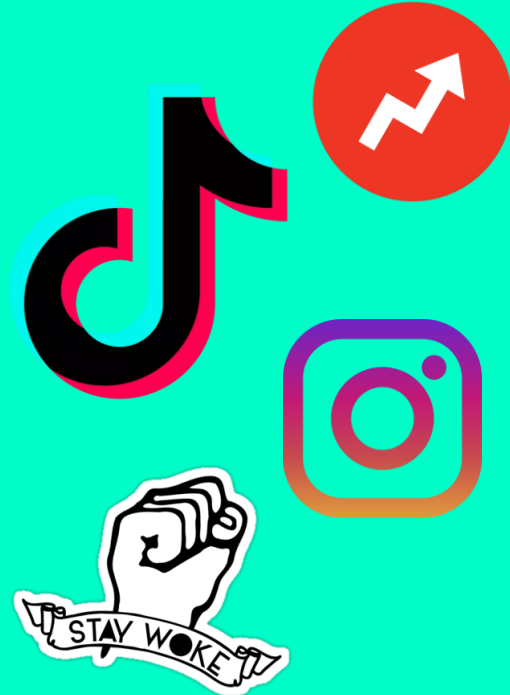
*census.gov/const/uspricemon

16 YEAR OLD TODAY

- Donald Trump is the President
- The national average cost for a gallon of gas is \$2.88
- Average cost of a new house is \$398,900
- Academy Award for best picture goes to Green Book
- Netflix reboots the classic animated series "Carmen Sandiego"
- Billboard currently has "Old Town Road" by Lil Nas X ft. Billy Ray Cyrus
- Apple releases its 18th model of the iPhone

NETFLIX

**MARCH
FOR OUR
LIVES** 



BACK IN MY DAY...

 "Thank u,
next"

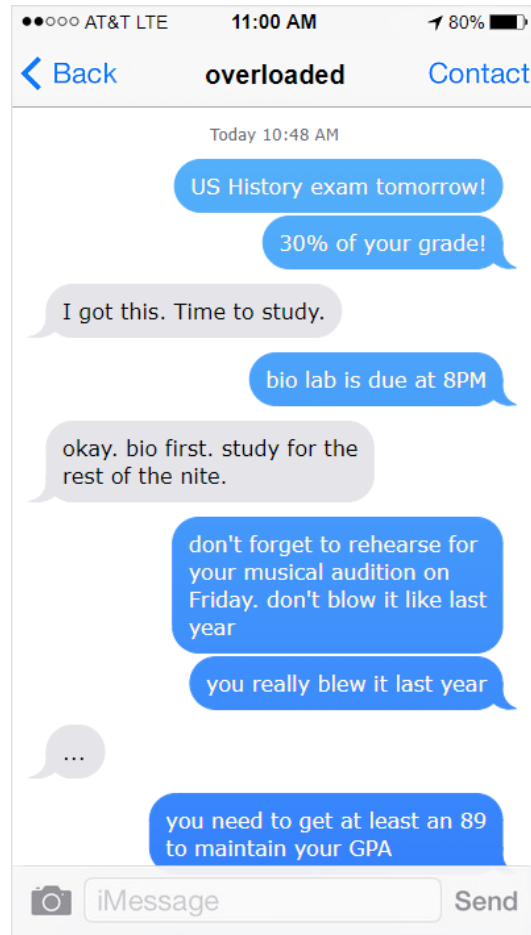
You were never their age

Differences in:

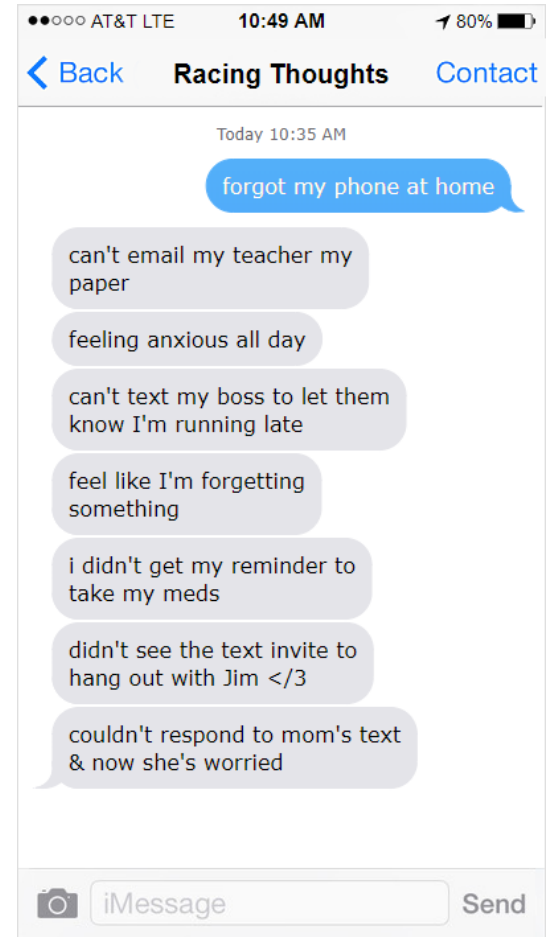
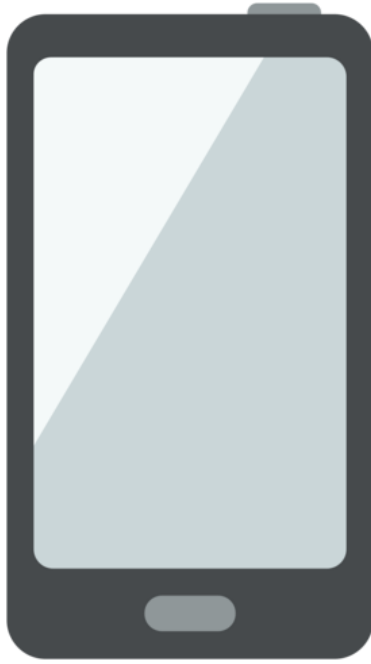
- Technology
- Communication
- Economy
- World view
- Education



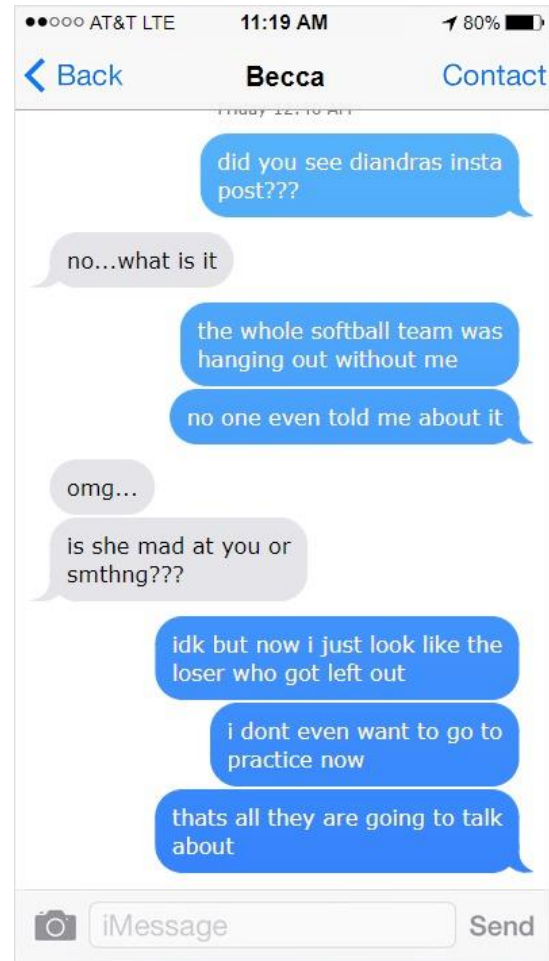
DIFFERENCE: SCHOOL WORK



DIFFERENCE: TECHNOLOGY



DIFFERENCE: #FOMO



●●○○○ AT&T LTE

11:39 AM

📶 80% 🔋

⬅ Back

Yeet

Contact

Today 10:48 AM

We are 🧑.

Let's learn about 🧑 🧑

but 🏆 we need to

🛑 🧑 ing & 🌟 + 🧑
🧑 ing

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ADULTS ON THE TOPIC OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT?

What advice would you give to adults on the topic
of youth engagement?

DEFINING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement defines it as “the **sustained** and **meaningful** involvement of a young person in an activity focused **outside of themselves**”

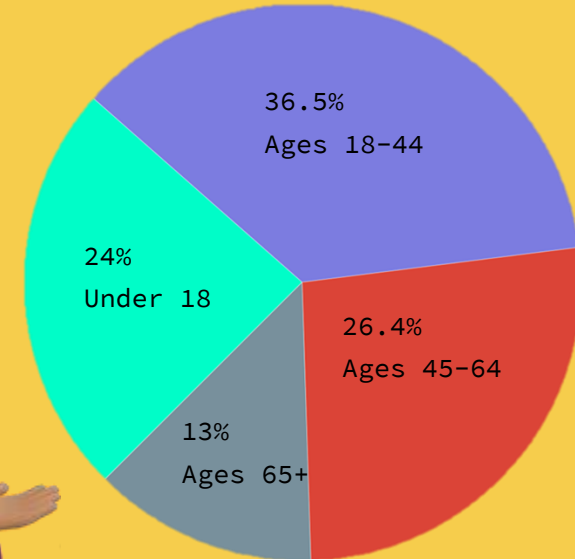
- Sustained: it leads to positive outcomes over time
- Meaningful: relevant to young people
- Outside the self: are they connected to others or contributing to something larger than themselves?



SO WHY IS YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

- People under 18 are 24% of the nation's population*
- They are the leading experts in the field
 - They know what is meaningful to them
 - They offer a unique perspective
- Youth gain
 - Skills, confidence, experience
- You gain
 - Fresh ideas, credibility, community capacity, and so much more!

Age Distribution: 2010



YOUTH-LED INITIATIVES



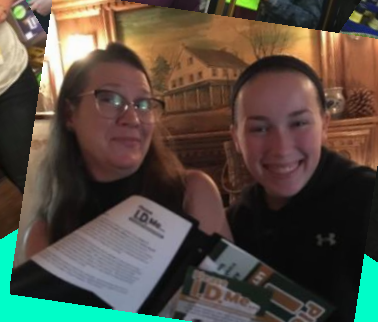
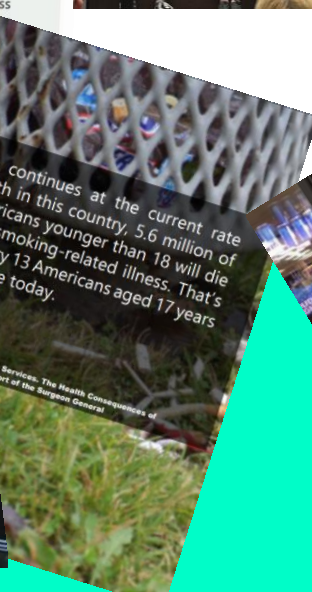
SMOKERS DIE YOUNGER

Corfield

The person in this photo is showing awareness campaign about smoking cigarette is alerting people about the of smoking. This relates to our because people are smoking polluting the earth with the smoke. Even with warnings on the box, addicted to tobacco use the leads to serious lung and cancer.

If smoking continues at the current rate among youth in this county, 5.6 million of today's Americans younger than 18 will die early from a smoking-related illness. That's about 1 of every 13 Americans aged 17 years or younger alive today.

Health Services: The Health Consequences of Report of the Surgeon General



CYCLE OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

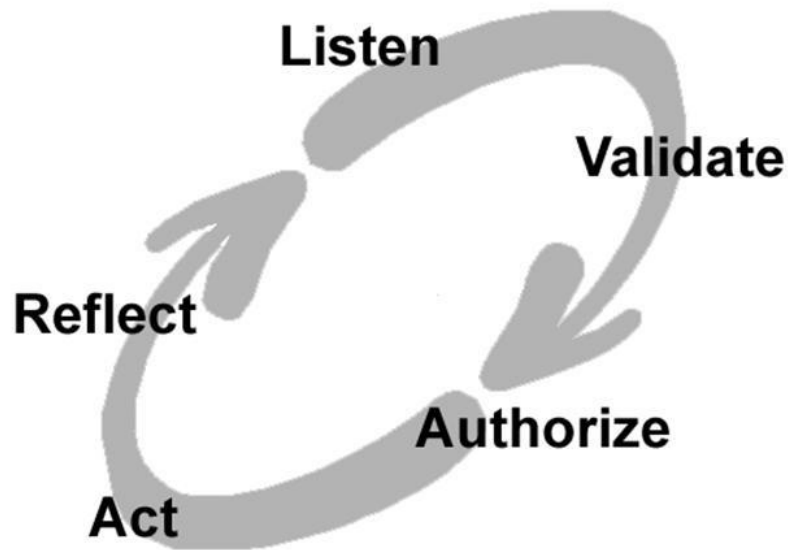
Listen– Without judgement

Validate– Honestly & respectfully

Authorize– Allow them to take ownership

Act– Youth & adults work together

Reflect– Evaluate the process





That's all Folks!

BUT WAIT...



THERE'S MORE!

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

It all starts with you!

Who me?





ROLE OF ADULT

Respect: Give it, get it

Communication: Listen up

Investment: It takes time

Authentic: Keep it real

And by nurturing...



INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS



WHAT DO YOU LOVE BEST ABOUT YOUR ADVISOR?



The Walkers were some of the most dedicated and loving people I've ever interacted with

Reply



I love that my honorary advisors (Kate & Doug) treat me like they would one of their own kid

Reply



Kate's like my mom!

Reply



Even in college, we still like family

Reply



She's always been my biggest supporter and is always there for me. She's my Mama Bear

Reply



She is the most accepting and kind person ever! She has helped me through it all

Reply



She brings out the best version of me!

Reply



My advisor is 100% dedicated to our action group. She is the best!

Reply



His sense of humor!

Reply



She's always there for me

Reply



She was very motivated and always ready for something

Reply



They were patient and always listened

Reply



BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS



- Understanding boundaries
 - *can depend on setting*
 - Mentor vs therapist
 - Teacher vs friend
 - More critical for youth
 - They're more trusting, easier to victimize, less familiar with the resources/their rights, conditioned to listen to adults
- Setting clear expectations
 - Outline their responsibilities
 - Give them information in a timely fashion



HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH

- PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES
- BUILD SKILLS
- PROVIDE RECOGNITION

By providing...

OPPORTUNITIES SKILLS RECOGNITION

...in families, schools, communities and peer groups



ABC'S OF ENGAGEMENT*

WHAT ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO / QUALITIES YOU CAN EMBODY TO PROMOTE ENGAGEMENT?

- Available
- Be present
- Communication
- Don't be dismissive
- Energy
- Fun
- Genuine
- Humor
- Interests/ing
- Joy (spark it!)
- Knowledge
- Listen
- Movement
- Non-judgemental
- Open-minded
- Positive
- Question
- Relevant/real
- Support
- Takes time
- Understanding
- Variety
- Welcoming
- X-citement!
- Youth driven
- Zen

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Youth trainings
- Youth focus groups
- Youth task forces
 - Youth leadership (e-board, execs of group)
 - Determining agendas, activities, and facilitating when appropriate
 - Recruitment events/health fairs
 - Peer mentors
- Youth being heard/advocacy efforts
 - Organizing the meetings with stakeholders
 - Prepare handouts/presentations for meetings
- Youth-led prevention initiatives
 - Brainstorming ideas
 - Picking what/where to implement



EVEN MORE OPPORTUNITIES!

- Give students responsibility
 - Facilitate sections (ex: games, rules, etc)
 - Even if it's asking for a volunteer to write or be in charge of the sign in/passing out papers, it makes a difference!
- Maximize involvement
- Give them options/choices
- Utilize youth talents



PROVIDE YOUTH WITH TRAINING

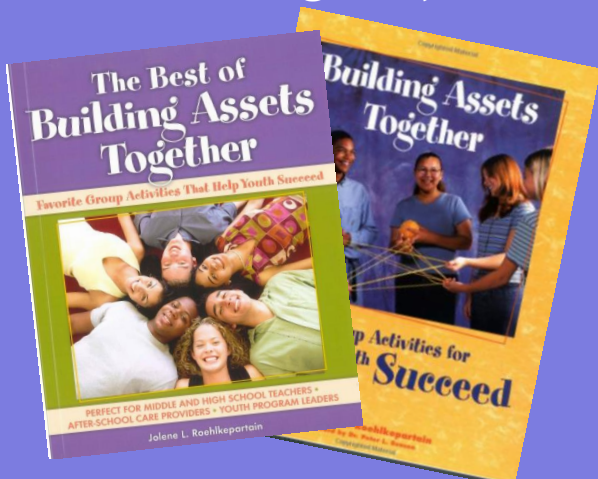
Give them the expertise & knowledge in the field that **YOU** have so they can be effective leaders

- Develop confidence in self & abilities
- Learn and practice leadership skills
- Connect with other youth
- Develop meaningful projects



FRAMEWORK: 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

- Positive supports & strengths that young people need to succeed
- Focus on relationships, opportunities, social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments



40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. The percentages of young people who report experiencing each asset were gathered from the administration of the *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey of almost 90,000 youth in the 2010 school year.

Asset type		Asset name and definition	
EXTERNAL ASSETS	Support	1. Family Support -Family life provides high levels of love and support.	72%
		2. Positive Family Communication -Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.	32%
		3. Other Adult Relationships -Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.	50%
		4. Caring Neighborhood -Young person experiences caring neighbors.	40%
		5. Caring School Climate -School provides a caring, encouraging environment.	35%
		6. Parent Involvement in Schooling -Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	33%
	Empowerment	7. Community Values Youth -Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	25%
		8. Youth as Resources -Young people are given useful roles in the community.	32%
		9. Service to Others -Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	50%
		10. Safety -Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	54%
	Boundaries & Expectations	11. Family Boundaries -Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.	47%
		12. School Boundaries -School provides clear rules and consequences.	56%
		13. Neighborhood Boundaries -Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.	48%
		14. Adult Role Models -Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	28%
		15. Positive Peer Influence -Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.	68%
		16. High Expectations -Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	55%
	Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative Activities -Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.	20%
		18. Youth Programs -Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.	61%
		19. Religious Community -Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.	51%
		20. Time at Home -Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	56%
INTERNAL ASSETS	Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement Motivation -Young person is motivated to do well in school.	71%
		22. School Engagement -Young person is actively engaged in learning.	62%
		23. Homework -Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	53%
		24. Bonding to School -Young person cares about her or his school.	61%
		25. Reading for Pleasure -Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	23%
	Positive Values	26. Caring -Young person places high value on helping other people.	52%
		27. Equality and Social Justice -Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	54%
		28. Integrity -Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.	71%
		29. Honesty -Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."	69%
		30. Responsibility -Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	67%
	Social Competencies	31. Restraint -Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	47%
		32. Planning and Decision Making -Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	33%
		33. Interpersonal Competence -Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.	48%
		34. Cultural Competence -Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	42%
		35. Resistance Skills -Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	45%
	Positive Identity	36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution -Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	44%
		37. Personal Power -Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."	45%
		38. Self-Esteem -Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	52%
		39. Sense of Purpose -Young person reports that "my life has purpose."	63%
		40. Positive view of personal future -Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.	75%

SKILLS

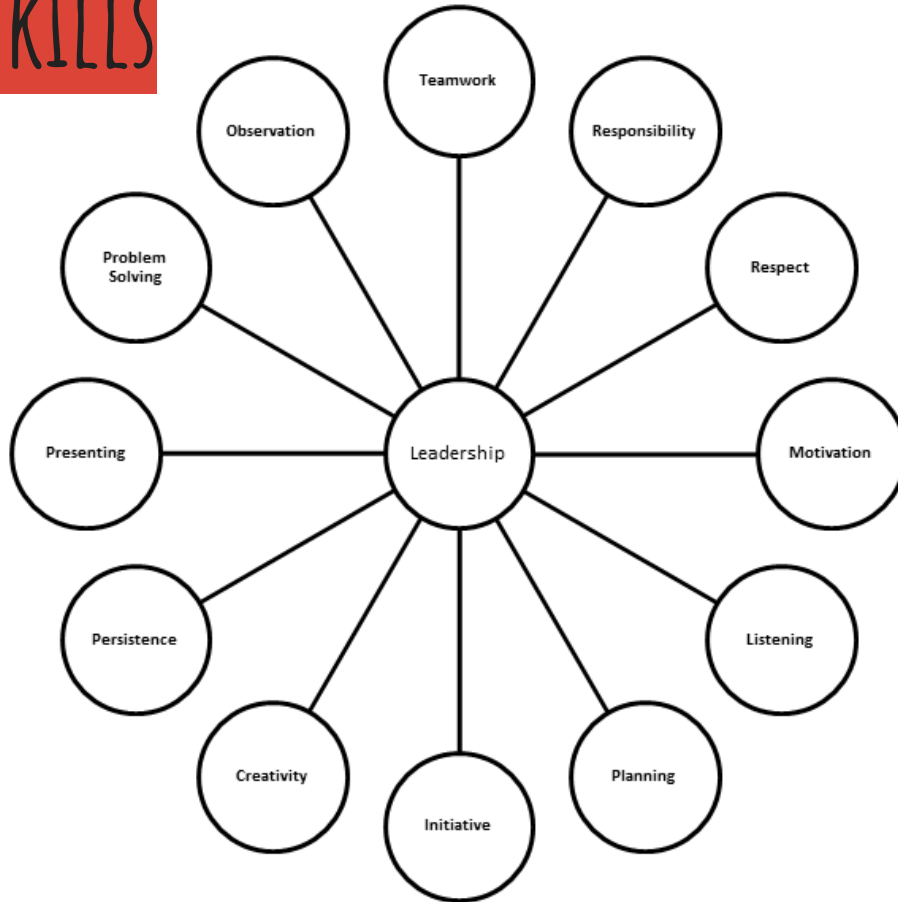


Fig 1. The Hamburglar Strikes

- Knowledge
- Motivation
- Action
- Change



TRAINING IN ACTION!

- Make it relevant
 - Appropriate language
 - Try and tie it to something they know
- Address different types of learners
 - Visual
 - Aural
 - Read(write)
 - Kinesthetic
- Presenting techniques
 - Be authentic
 - Highlight your strengths!
 - Use humor
 - Be energetic (show them your passion!)



“A brand of chocolate sandwich cookie with a creamy white filling”



COOKIE FACE*



RECOGNITION



- **Meaningful** recognition
 - Motivates individual
 - Motivates the group
 - Builds confidence
- Internal & external motivators!
- Recognizing successes
 - Specific praise
 - ASAP



RECOGNITION

- Certificates
- Hand-written thank yous
- Mention in the newspaper
- Prizes/incentives
- Shout-out at the meeting
- Member of the month
- Food/snacks (PIZZA PARTY!)
- Promoting to leadership position
- Opportunities to present at conferences or be a part of the state YTAG
- Golden Spoon
- Superlatives
- Retreat/party for the group



- Modeling healthy behaviors
- Setting group norms
- Providing information



- Safe space
- Encouraging connections
- Recognition

10 WORDS TO LIVE BY

What worked?

What didn't?

What will we do next
time?



*Substance Abuse Mental Health
Services of America

RESOURCES

HOW TO YTAG: YOUTH GROUPS 101

Recruitment

Consider the WIIFM factor - What's In It For Me? Joining this type of group can give students tons of new experiences, like the chance to make a difference in their community or the opportunity to make new friends. Consider what youth will get out of your program as you recruit.

- Don't be afraid to tap into pre-existing resources. The easiest way to reach young people is through the organizations and institutions they frequent. Some potential recruitment sources may be:
 - Guidance counselors
 - Local churches
 - YMCAs
 - Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts
 - Community centers
 - Teen centers
 - Volunteer centers
 - Department of Health
- In addition to having contacts who already know the youth recruiting, you'll want to get your face out there, too! Whether it's having a table at a health fair or speaking at a local meeting, your showing up will make a difference!
- Advertising for your meetings is key! Make sure you are using media that appeals to youth. Creating fun and eye-catching materials that clearly convey your message is the goal. You may consider developing flyers, brochures, and recruitment forms.

...creates a great incentive to attend a meeting. Reach out to restaurants or stores to see if they would be willing to provide incentives, or other incentives for students to attend.

...recruitment is not a one-shot deal, it is a part of managing a youth group!

...create a welcoming & fun environment!

...your agenda in advance. Clear communication sets the foundation for a successful meeting.

...significant amount of time on the agenda to allow for socializing within the group and building relationships.

...moving, both verbal and non-verbal, in conversation. If energy seems to be dropping, get up and get everyone moving.



SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

Objectives of this Meeting

- establish shared objectives & mission of the group
- set group guidelines & norms
- build group rapport
- introduce kick butts day activity

- **Brief Introductions (5 minutes)**
 - Adults: who you are & your position
 - Youth: name, grade, school
- **Games & Icebreakers (15-20 minutes)**
 - Name game
 - Categories
 - Human scavenger hunt
- **What is YTAG? (5-10 minutes)**
 - Mission & Goals
 - Group discussion: why did you join?
- **Developing group norms (5-10 minutes)**
 - norms: & Do's/Don'ts
- **Kick Butts Day activity (20-30 minutes)**
 - Show & tell - explain activity & share materials
 - Action planning
- **Membership Form (10 minutes)**
 - Pass out & collect
- **Closing Activity (5 minutes)**
 - X-treme Rock, Paper, Scissors

Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health: Youth Engagement Toolkit

Youth Engagement Toolkit from Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Georgia Teen Institute's GUIDE blog guideinc.org



ti is...
MY FAMILY
PEACE

ti is...
Integral

ti is...
fun and I
never want to
leave. 😊

ti is...
empowering

ti is... for
EVERYONE.

ti is...
learning you're
lovable and capable

ti is...
FAMILY! 😊

ti is...
Family ♥

ti is...
My
Family

ti is...
beautiful ♥

ti is...
Community
😊

ti is...
IMPACTFUL

ti is...
life
Changing

ti is... where I
recharge with
positive energy

ti is...
my happy
place

ti is...
Pure, unrelenting,
no questions asked,
unconditional
LOVE!

ti is...
Consistently
impacting my
life.

ti is...
a Movement of
Empowerment

ti is...
the reason I
am who I am!

ti is...
life
changing

ti is...
Powerful
Unrelenting

ti is...
Down for the
Fight!



CONTACT US!

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@NJLMTI



@LMTI



LMTeenInstitute.org

ANY QUESTIONS?



Ask me a question!

Type something....