ACTIVITY: SPECTRUM OF ATTITUDES

Charting Youth Involvement

Overview

This activity "maps" the existence and nature of youth participation in the community. It can also be a great activity to warm people up to evaluation or to provide some training in needs assessment, data gathering and analysis.

Objectives

* To distinguish the various types of youth–adult relationships
* To identify existing areas and opportunities for youth participation in the community

Materials Needed

Flip chart

"Spectrum of Attitudes" handout, page 9

"Spectrum of Attitudes Activity" handout, page 10

"Charting Youth Involvement" handout, page 11
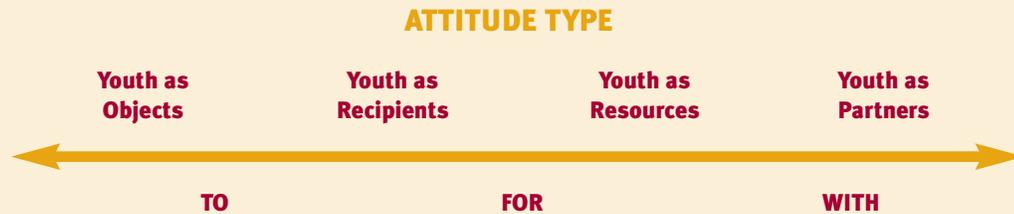
Pens

Markers

Time Required

Approximately 1 hour

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIAL
Step 1 Setting the context	15 min.	* Introduce the spectrum of attitudes using the "Spectrum of Attitudes" handout or a flip chart with key points. * As you describe each relationship, ask the group for a few examples, emphasizing the viewing of youth as TO, FOR, FOR/WITH, and WITH. * Distribute the "Spectrum of Attitudes Activity" handout. * Ask participants, in pairs or small groups, to identify whether youth are viewed as objects, recipients, resources, or partners in each example. * Ask for the answers to be shared with the total group, and discuss differences in perception. * Say to the group, "Now we are going to look at this more closely by mapping youth involvement in our own community."	Flip chart "Spectrum of Attitudes" handout Pens Markers "Spectrum of Attitudes Activity" handout

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIAL
Step 2 Mapping	20 min.	✴ Give everyone a copy of the handout "Charting Youth Involvement" and go through the instructions. It is helpful to refer to an example that you have created. ✴ Have each person create a map of youth involvement in the community.	"Charting Youth Involvement" handout Markers
Step 3 Sharing	10 min.	If the group is small, offer each person a chance to share his or her map with the group. If it is large, split into smaller groups with a facilitator in each group.	
Step 4 Reflection and discussion	10 min.	Ask the following questions: ✴ What images from the maps stand out to you? ✴ Were there any surprises for you as people shared? ✴ What similarities did you see in people's maps? ✴ What differences did you see? ✴ In general, how are youth involved in this community? ✴ What opportunities for new roles for youth exist? Where? ✴ What does this tell us about our work as a group?	

(Adapted from the Points of Light Foundation "Mapping Youth Programs for Youth Involvement" handout)

HANDOUT: SPECTRUM OF ATTITUDES

It is helpful to look at attitudes underlying youth–adult relationships along a spectrum.

ATTITUDE TYPE

Youth as Objects	Youth as Recipients	Youth as Resources	Youth as Partners

← ——→

TO	FOR	WITH

Youth as Objects: Adults exercise arbitrary and near total control over youth. Programs and activities are TO youth.

Youth as Recipients: Based on what they think is in the youth's best interest, adults determine needs, prescribe remedies, implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes with little youth input. Programs and activities are FOR youth.

Youth as Resources: Youth help adults in planning, implementing, and evaluating work. Programs and activities are FOR and WITH youth.

Youth–Adult Partnerships: Youth and adults share decision-making power equally. Programs and activities are WITH youth.

Adapted from Lofquist, W. (1989). *The Technology of Prevention*. Tucson, AZ: Associates for Youth Development.

HANDOUT: SPECTRUM OF ATTITUDES ACTIVITY

Use this handout to determine whether young people are involved as **Objects?** (TO)
Recipients? (FOR) **Resources?** (FOR/WITH) **Partners?** (WITH) in the following examples:

_____   1. Youth participants take a test at the completion of the program to demon-
strate that it is effective.

_____   2. Young people and adults jointly determine what evaluation methods will be
used.

_____   3. To help young people develop their communication skills, adults allow
young people to conduct interviews with program participants using a script
written by an adult.

_____   4. Young people participate in focus group interviews to help adults better
understand how the program is functioning.

_____   5. Young people review a draft of a questionnaire and make editorial
suggestions regarding how it could be written in teen-friendly language.

_____   6. To help young people improve their computer skills, adults have them enter
survey data into a spreadsheet for analysis.

_____   7. Young people present evaluation findings to relevant stakeholder groups,
with adults available to help, if needed.

_____   8. Young people provide adults with suggestions regarding the evaluation
methods they feel would be appropriate.

_____   9. Young people help adults understand and interpret comments made by
other youth.

_____   10. Adults allow young people to distribute and collect questionnaires in their
classrooms.

_____   11. Youth who participate in the program are randomly assigned into control
and experimental groups by adults conducting the study.

_____   12. Young people and adults participate in a brainstorming session to identify
questions they want to see answered by the evaluation.

Answers: 1, 4, and 11 describe youth as objects.

3, 6, and 10 describe youth as recipients.

5, 8, and 9 describe youth as resources.

2, 7, and 12 describe youth as partners.

NOTE: This activity can also be conducted as a card-sort exercise. For example, you can write each item on a separate card and
distribute the cards to participants. Each person selects the appropriate category for the situation on his or her card and shares
the answer with a partner. Afterwards, participants share their answers with the total group.

HANDOUT: CHARTING YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

1. Draw a map of your connections to organizations and groups in the community. Include the organizations and groups that you are a part of, that many youth are a part of, and that many adults are a part of.

2. With a different color pen, highlight the points at which young people participate. Make a note about how they participate using the following codes:
   * P = as partners (with youth)
   * RS = as resources (for/with youth)
   * RC = as recipients (for youth)
   * O = as objects (to youth)

3. With another color pen, make a star to indicate where new opportunities exist for youth to participate.