

PERCEPTIONS OF POWER

Purpose: To examine what participants feel is their position of power in the group. To explore whether young people feel equally as powerful as adults.

Materials: Space for all to stand in one line.

Time: 15 minutes

Procedure:

Explain to participants that they are to put themselves in just one line that stretches from the person who feels they have the most influence in the group to the one who feels they have the least influence. Explain that this must be done non-verbally, they are not to talk and compare notes - they are doing this only on their own perception of their influence, not anyone else's. Once they are in a single line, have the group number off "1 to whatever number of participants there are" with number one beginning with the person that feels they have the most influence.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did it feel to do this activity? How did it feel to be at one end of the line or the other?
How about the middle?
2. What did you notice when everyone stood up?
3. How do you think your groups would stand up that you work with? Where do you think the adults would be standing? The youth?
4. What do you think made different people stand in different places?
5. What can we learn about youth-adult partnerships from this activity?
6. What would you most like to remember about this activity?

Leader's Notes

Be clear about which end you want the strongest influence on the group and the least influence on the group to go.

7. How will you tie this activity to what you are doing?

Understanding the balance of power in true partnerships is critical to the work we are trying to do with youth and adults. This power balance can often be one of the challenges. We are going to look at a variety of challenges now - the ones you've generated in your youth or adults groups.

Leader's Notes

If your group hasn't had the opportunity to work separately and create challenges, then you can offer them challenges that have been created by other teams in the trainings conducted across the nation.