



talking it over: learning to give and receive feedback

purpose • To create a format for a constructive dialogue between two parties to identify the action steps each can take to improve the relationship

time 45 minutes

group size 20 to 30 participants

materials • Flip chart paper
• Markers

trainer note: This activity can be used to resolve conflict or to work on the relationship before problems set in. It can be helpful in resolving issues in a relatively low-risk manner because both parties frame issues as positive suggestions for improvement. Because both parties contribute equally, the exchange feels mutual and supportive.

introduction

Set a positive climate for the exercise by talking about the value of giving and receiving feedback. Make sure the appropriate group norms are in place to encourage participants to speak freely and honestly. Divide the participants into two small groups. (This exercise also can be used with two individuals volunteering to give and receive feedback.)



trainer note: You could insert a scenario or do a role play if the group is hesitant to use a real situation.

step one

Explain the process to all participants. Tell them that the groups will be separated for about 15 minutes. During that time each group will think about the following questions:

- What do I/we need from you in order for our partnership to be effective?
- What do I/we offer in return to meet your needs?

Ask each group to write its ideas on a flip chart under the titles, “I/we need” and “I/we offer.”

step two

When each small group has completed its list, bring the participants together to share each group’s thoughts. Ask each small group to withhold any comments or reactions until the other group has completed its presentation. When finished, discuss participants’ reactions:

- What words or phrases caught your attention?
- Which ideas are similar?
- Which ideas are different?
- What ideas are effective in giving or receiving feedback?
- What is an example of something you could offer to meet one of the stated needs?

step three

Have each small group prepare action steps toward implementing their needs or offers.

step four

Conclude by asking each small group to make a summary statement about what his or her commitment and action steps will be.

section three: advancing youth-adult partnerships



trainer note: If the group is continuing to work together, you may want to have the group plot its follow-up action steps on a calendar or create a process to implement those actions. It is important to help the group maintain momentum.