

5 Ways to Engage Youth Meaningfully

Are you trying to engage youth through advisory committees? To improve services? To gain direct feedback? Consider these five tips as a starting point for implementing youth engagement strategies that are inclusive and supportive.

Questions? Email us:
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01

CREATE SAFE & ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS

Resource: [Youth Empowered Solutions](#)

Youth might only be free on Sunday evenings, and they may not want to meet at a government or agency building. Find locations and times that accommodate their unique needs; they will very likely be different than adult-centered meetings.

It's not always in the budget, but compensate youth when you can to value their time just like paid adult labor. This could be part-time positions, paid stipends, gift cards (ideally cash equivalent or flexible ones), or even school credit.

02

VALUE THEIR TIME WITH COMPENSATION

Resource: [Paying Youth Fairly](#)

03

LEVERAGE PEER LEADERS

Resource: [mPowerment model](#)

The evidence-based *mPowerment* model verified that peer leaders matter. Train particularly engaged youth who reflect the community to be peer leaders. They can help facilitate, recruit, and mentor their peers.

Building trust with youth takes time. Is there someone in your community who has already done this, like a teacher, coach, or involved parent who can co-lead conversations or trainings?

04

PARTNER WITH TRUSTED ADULTS

Resource: [Advocates for Youth - Building Youth-Adult Partnerships](#)

05

AVOID GENERATION GENERALIZATIONS

Resource: [Institute for Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis](#)

Believe it or not, despite best intentions, it's easy to slip into ageist or adult-biased lenses when interacting with youth.

Try to avoid things like "young people are always doing x, y, z." Ask them their thoughts and goals as individuals, not just an age group.