AUTHENTIC YOUTH COLLABORATION

National Youth Forum on Homelessness
Session Starting Shortly!

We will be recording today’s webinar.
Everyone is muted to reduce background noise.

Event Center Audio Options:

1. Audio defaults to your computer speakers.

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Troubleshooting Tips

- Close the Webex window and re-launch the webinar from your transcript in the Online Training Center.
- Or send a chat to CSH Events or email training@csh.org for assistance.
Welcome!

We will be recording today's webinar. Everyone is muted to reduce background noise.

Activate Chat

1. Make sure chat bubble on bottom is blue (active).

2. Make sure your chat box is expanded so you can see chats – click the blue greater than symbol.

3. Make sure your chat “To” is set to “Everyone.”
Enter chat question here.

Click the Chat button.

Send to EVERYONE.

Waiting for others to join
Submit your questions!

Click the Chat button.

Send to EVERYONE.
AUTHENTIC YOUTH COLLABORATION

National Youth Forum on Homelessness
OBJECTIVES

In this session, we will:

★ Explain the Authentic Youth Collaboration Philosophy and why it’s important to our work to end youth homelessness
★ Provide a list of best practices for authentically engaging young people
★ Provide concepts and ideas to consider when building a framework of how to work with youth and young adults
★ Provide concrete examples to address adultism as an adult
★ Provide an index of related resources to supplement your learning
★ Provide a framework for collaborating with youth participants who are engaging in services or programs
What we do:

- Training & Education
- Advocacy
- Youth Collaboration
What does authentic partnership look like with youth who’ve experienced housing instability or homelessness?
What does meaningful partnership entail?

1. Be intentional about the decision-making power that youth have in your work.
2. Youth are the experts of their own truth.
3. When asking young people to be involved in your work, hear them out and build a reciprocal relationship where you honor their experiences, allowing their experiences and ideas to inform the process.
Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration:

Building Trust

Establishing and building trust is essential in any effective working relationship. Once positive rapport is established, genuine collaboration can begin.
Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration:

Meaningful Engagement

An issue that often gets in the way of effective collaboration between youth and service providers is showy engagement, in which young people are invited to participate simply to create the impression of inclusion and diversity.
Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration:

Leadership Development

Young adults should have the freedom and agency to be the leaders of their own lives. Their autonomy should be promoted as they make decisions about the issues that impact their lives.
Introduction to Adultism:

What is adultism?
Adultism describes the systems of privileged attitudes and behaviors that adults have regarding young people.

What is the difference between adultism and ageism?
Ageism describes the systems of privileged attitudes and behaviors that younger people have regarding elders.
How To Identify & Reframe Adultism

Like many -isms or systemic oppressions, adultism is learned very early in life and, though it’s all around, it is often invisible until it is pointed out. The learned ideas and behaviors of adultism come with harmful effects, including creating and perpetuating divisive power imbalances in collaborations between young people and adult partners.

Let's discuss common ideas that are rooted in adultism and suggestions for reframing those ideas to be more authentically collaborative.
Input and Feedback from Youth and Young Adults

1. Set youth and young adult leaders up for success.
2. Create a collaborative environment for input and feedback.
3. Set deadlines.
4. Uplift the impact of their work.
The Listening Session

Listening sessions are facilitated conversations where youth and young adults’ ideas and suggestions are uplifted in an essential way. Adult partners in the room are asked to remain silent throughout the process, centering the perspectives of young people with lived experience toward several goals.

5 Tips for a successful Listening Session:

- Build Trust
- Have an open mind
- Identify and reframe adultism
- Engage in active listening
- Be Specific
What are other YABs doing, you ask?
Some successes...

1. YAB members being paid at least $15/hour.
2. Full integration within the CoC
   ○ YAB members holding at least 2 voting seats
3. Capacity Building/ Education
   ○ YAB members are being equipped with the proper knowledge in order to make informed decisions
4. The CoC governance complements the structure of the YAB
   ○ Pushes towards the YAB mission and vision
Some challenges...

1. Rural areas
   ○ Location challenges
   ○ Access to internet
2. YAB that is representative of the community being served
   ○ Usually predominately white members
   ○ In most cases, the YAB directly reflects CoC leadership
3. Landing on a governance structure/mission/vision
4. Working through/ calling out adultism when it shows up
   ○ YAB members and CoC stakeholders being able to recognize adultism
Some suggestions....

1. Listen to the YAB
   ○ They are the experts
2. Do not attempt to have a governance structure/mission/vision in place for YAB
3. Allow the YAB to decide what the work will “look like” for them
4. Focus on demographics
   ○ If your recruitment yields one type of person as the majority, keep recruiting
5. Be transparent early and often
Don’t worry... Here’s a few more resources
Youth Collaboration Toolkit

YOUTH COLLABORATION TOOLKIT

Welcome

Youth decisions are being made but youth people. It is important that youth are at the table and have equal say in decision making responsibilities. This can look a number of different ways working with young people in education, youth building, including one or more youth representatives on a board of directors, and creating opportunities for young people to speak for themselves. Young people who are receiving services should be encouraged to participate in decisions that directly impact their funding and wellbeing.

Developed as a partnership between the National Youth Office on Homophobia, Biphobia and the True Colors Fund, this toolkit was initiated by NYOH and the content was shaped by the voices. The ideas and concepts included in this toolkit will help ensure that young people are authentically engaged while collaborating with the affirming adults in their lives.

Identifying Barriers

Make a point to identify and address any barriers that may inhibit authentic youth collaboration. Here are some potential barriers to overcome along with strategies you can use to overcome them.

Building Trust

Easing and building trust is essential to any effective working relationship. Once rapport is established, genuine collaboration can begin.

Potential Barriers:

- Cultural incongruence:
  - Misunderstanding of ideas and values of young adults who feel different from your own
- Cultural insensitivity:
  - The inability to understand or identify strategies to consider

Strategies to Consider:

- Understand common traumas and challenges your youth clients may be facing
- Practice active listening and recognizing that your youth clients may be triggered
- Maintain an accepting and affirming environment that builds physical and psychological safety
True Inclusion Directory

The True Inclusion Directory is a national database of organizations that provide services to LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness.
State Index on Youth Homelessness

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking: 17
Overall Score: 51

Performance Breakdown

- Law & Policy: 30% of metrics met
  - Less authoring comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 22% of metrics met
  - Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 48% of metrics met
  - Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 30% of metrics met
  - Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
  - Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 72% of metrics met
- Systems: 79% of metrics met
- Environment: 6% of metrics met

Take Action
Send a message to your governor with your state's score and recommendations for improvement. Complete this form and we'll generate a personalized email and tweet for you.
True Colors Learning Community

We provide short, engaging, and interactive educational content about LGBTQ youth homelessness that allows learners to move at their own pace.

Who said learning can't be fun?
THANK YOU!
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