

Youth Work Methods Workshops

The Youth Work Methods are powerful strategies that build on more than 50 years of research and practice in positive youth development. Available as live or self-paced online workshops, these 10 interactive methods are modeled on the Weikart Center's pyramid of program quality & designed to give point-of-service staff practical skills that can be implemented immediately.

ENGAGING ENVIRONMENT

Youth Voice. This workshop guides staff to support young people by providing opportunities for voice and choice. With proper support and scaffolding over time, young people grow in responsible decision-making and leadership.

Planning and Reflection. This workshop provides practical and fun tools for engaging young people in the Plan-Do-Reflect learning process. It focuses on establishing clear, comprehensive plans at the beginning of an activity and reflecting on the results and process after the activity has been completed.

INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Building Community. This workshop introduces methods for building supportive, youth-centered relationships and prepares participants to ask effective questions, listen actively to youth, and encourage young people by tapping their intrinsic motivation.

Cooperative Learning. This workshop gives strategies for successfully incorporating interactive, interdependent, goal-oriented group work into youth programs. Working in pairs or groups supports young people in being active, self-directing, and expressive.

Homework Help (Live) | Academic Support in Out-of-School Time (Online). This workshop explores staff practices to effectively support young people with academic efforts at any time by framing academic support as an opportunity to build relationships and nurture positive growth, beyond getting the work done.

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Active Learning. This workshop provides practical strategies for actively engaging young people in their own learning process by providing meaningful, challenging content with strong adult support.

Ask-Listen-Encourage. This workshop provides strategies for carrying out positive, purposeful interactions with young people through asking effective questions, letting young people speak, and making specific observations about their decisions that encourage them to succeed.

Reframing Conflict. This workshop provides a six-step, youth-centered, nonthreatening way of resolving conflicts that occur in youth settings. It is a problem-solving approach that seeks to turn conflicts into learning opportunities.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Structure and Clear Limits. This workshop helps staff establish appropriate structure (routines and rituals) and clear limits (norms and behavior guidelines), fostering a feeling of fairness and predictability that supports young people to explore and express themselves in a conducive learning environment.

Introduction to the Active-Participatory Approach. This workshop introduces the "active-participatory approach," which is the foundational philosophy for all other Youth Work Methods workshops. In this approach, adults engage young people socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically as active participants in their own learning and development.