

IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE: TRANSITIONS

Minimum Time Required: 90 minutes

Slide #2: Youth Involvement Scale

Consider the posted measuring scale.

To what extent are young people involved in planning, operating and evaluating opportunities that exist to create a safe & respectful school?

Write your response (a number from 0 to 10) on a post-it note in LARGE numbers. As a group, post your responses.

- ▶▶ Participants will post numbers all over the scale. Typically, we find that the largest number will end up in the low to middle range. As adults, we have work to do!
- ▶▶ Allow participants to discuss/reflect upon what they see.

Slide #3: Youth as Resources Learning Task

With a partner, sort the provided cards into 3 columns that reflect the following viewpoints:

Youth as Objects, Youth as Recipients and Youth as Resources.

- ▶▶ Youth as objects – “I’m the adult, I know best so do what I tell you to do.”
Youth as Recipient – “I want you at the table because of what you will take away from the experience, i.e. a skill you will learn that will help you in the future.”
Youth as Resources – “I want you at the table because of what you bring to the table, a unique perspective or skill set.”
- ▶▶ This task should be done with a partner and not in a small group. The cards are small and it is too easy for group members to get off track.

- ▶▶ This is not an easy task! Participants may get frustrated, but that is not a bad thing.
- ▶▶ After participants have started to sort the cards, tell them that the cards have sets of 3 – 3 cards that all have a similar theme, such as leadership – and that each set should have one card in each column.
- ▶▶ Once participants have sorted (or mostly sorted) the cards, process as a large group. Using the resource sheet as a guide, ask someone to read a card from the “Youth as Objects” column (this is the easiest column to sort) and work for consensus. Once that card is in the right place, find the other two cards in the set and sort them.
- ▶▶ This is not an easy task to process. Participants get frustrated and may have difficulty focusing, but there is much value in the task.

Slide #4: All the Angles Learning Task

As a small group, move to the assigned posted flip chart. Consider the question and record your responses.

When asked (not before), move as a group to the next indicated chart. We will continue until every group has visited every question.

- ▶▶ The idea is to have each group respond to each of the 4 questions, one at a time. You may also give each table a piece of paper with the question on the top and then have them switch papers with other groups until each group has answered all 4 questions. This takes some thinking to avoid overlap and repeating of questions!

Slide #5: All the Angles Questions

- 1) What are the benefits of youth participation?*
- 2) What are the barriers to youth participation?*
- 3) What are the dangers of not involving young people?*
- 4) What are strategies for involving young people in key roles?*

Slide #6: One Point to Consider Learning Task

Select one of the questions and the corresponding responses to visit. With the other participants at the same chart, synthesize the responses. We will hear an overview from each group.

- ▶▶ When responding to the questions, participants do not tend to take time to process and dig deeper. This task provides an opportunity to explore one of the questions in depth.
- ▶▶ The overview sharing provides an opportunity to extend the learning to the other questions.

Slide #7: Now What Synthesis

In a small group, reflect on the information from the previous tasks. Consider Peer Leadership efforts in your school(s).

What can you do individually and as a system to increase the level of youth involvement in planning, operating and evaluating opportunities that exist to create a safe & respectful school?

- ▶▶ Allow groups the opportunity to develop specific strategies for increasing student involvement. Depending on the groups (same school, department, etc) you may want to provide flip chart paper to record strategies.
- ▶▶ Once all groups have had time to consider the task, process as a large group.