



## LESSON SERIES: ELEMENTS OF HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

### EMPOWERING THE YOUTH - OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Age Range: 15-18

Lesson Plan: 1 of 4

#### What is Youth Empowerment?

Youth empowerment is the process of equipping young people with the necessary tools, knowledge, and confidence to take control of their lives and make informed decisions by:

- **Providing Access to Key Resources:** this includes sharing tools and resources related to education, healthcare, financial support and other essential services.
- **Creating Opportunities:** Creating pathways for personal growth, skill development and meaningful engagement, encouraging the value of youth's perspectives in all that we do.
- **Championing Support:** Creating a space for mentoring, encouragement and a safe environment for youth to express themselves, explore their potential and build confidence.

#### How Youth Can be Empowered in their Community

Empowering young people in the community can happen in many ways, here are some practical options to consider when looking to get involved in your community:

- **Forums that Encourage Self-Confidence:** Seek out activities, groups and events where youth voices are acknowledged and encouraged, including forums that provide a safe space.
- **Seek to find Empowerment Activities:** Look for opportunities which allow youth to take on leadership roles and contribute to decision-making processes.
- **Seek Partnerships for Learning:** Think about finding an older person to provide mentorship supports, they can transfer knowledge and encourage your leadership and growth.
- **Participate with those who have Common Goals:** Look to join an organization who welcome the involvement of youth in tackling issues that may be of interest such as poverty, education or environmental conservation.
- **Seek those who Aim to Inspire Youth Leadership:** There are many great initiatives underway that seek to inspire youth to become leaders in work they are passionate about, don't be afraid to reach out and see if there are opportunity for you.
- **Participate in Skill Building Workshops:** Getting ahead of the curve by learning basic skills to help you along the journey can have multiple benefits in building confidence and supporting your priorities moving forward.

Empowering youth is an investment in a brighter future for everyone, there are many organizations and individuals who are interested in supporting youth in their communities, it is just about finding the right opportunities that fit within your priorities and values!



## The Power of Youth

The potential of young individuals to drive change is immense and remarkable! Their fresh perspectives, energy and passion can ignite transformative movements. Whether it's advocating for climate action, championing social justice or inventing groundbreaking technologies, young people have the power to shape a better world. Here are some ways to make an impact:

- **Innovation and Creativity:** Young minds often think outside the box and come up with fresh ideas, their creativity fuels technological advancements, social innovations, and artistic expressions, think about where your innovation and creativity may fit into a brighter future.
- **Passion and Idealism:** Youth are passionate about causes they believe in. Their idealism drives movements for justice, equality, and environmental sustainability, don't be shy to get involved in an initiative that excites you.
- **Activism:** Young activists fearlessly challenge the status quo - they organize protests, advocate for policy changes, and demand accountability. We are so thankful for all youth activists in our ever changing world!
- **Digital Influence:** Social media platforms empower youth to amplify their voices. Hashtags, viral campaigns, and online petitions create global awareness. There is no greater age group to create digital influence than the youth who have been part of the digital world for most or all of their lives, youth are the experts in this field.
- **Education and Awareness:** Youth are becoming increasingly involved in education and awareness, they raise awareness about mental health, climate change and other critical issues. Consider getting involved in an education or awareness initiative that speaks to you.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** Youth collaborate across borders, races, age and social demographics - global networks foster solidarity and collective action and an opportunity to learn from one another. Think big, the sky is the limit.

## How Youth Can Get Involved in Policy and Community Action

Youth voices play a crucial role in shaping policy decisions and community actions. Let's delve into how you can make a difference:

- **Participate in Youth Advisory Boards:** Many organizations establish youth advisory boards where young people actively participate in decision-making processes, influencing policies and programs that align with their values and aspirations.
- **Seek a Seat on Governance Boards:** Allocating seats for young individuals on governance boards ensures their perspectives are considered at the highest levels, contributing fresh ideas and challenging conventional thinking.
- **Local Partnerships and Collaboration:** Youth-led groups collaborate with other stakeholders and help to drive local community action, these efforts can result in direct local measurable change in your community.
- **Participatory Research:** Get involved in research to contribute to an initiative first hand, this will help to guide evidence-based policies and intervention.
- **Policy Change Advocacy:** youth can become instant great leaders in policy advocacy movements, their passion and determination can help to meaningfully move the yardstick to better policy and a better world.



## Youth Role in Eco Communities

The youth's role in an eco community is perhaps the most important role in the entire community, as youth are the future leaders of our world. Here are a few ways in which youth can get involved in an eco community setting:

- **Advocacy:** Youth have a powerful voice in advocating for environmental causes, which is a great fit in an eco community setting where they can raise awareness and engage with local and global communities to drive positive change.
- **Education:** Youth can play a fundamental role to empower peers and community members by conducting workshops, seminars and awareness sessions on sustainable practices - with a unique youth perspective.
- **Innovation:** Young minds have the most brilliant ideas, they can help others in the community of various ages think outside of the box and can propose innovative solutions to community challenges and opportunities, which may include new technologies or different ways to go about potential solutions.
- **Knowledge Transfer:** Youth who are interested in participating in knowledge transfer are critical in the process of taking the best we have to learn from old ways and bringing it forward into the current world. Working with Indigenous elders is a great way to support this knowledge transfer.

Remember - every action counts! By embracing these roles youth are enabled to contribute significantly to building sustainable and thriving communities.

## Youth as the Future

Youth are the future, they are the one's who will be here when the rest of us are not. They are the vision, the energy and the inspiration we can all learn from to create a better world.

Never underestimate the power of a single action and the ripple effect you can have for generations to come.