

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT *checklist*

Many service providers, researchers, and communities are already actively engaging young people as a way to support their positive mental health and well-being. This checklist can help create, review, or revise youth engagement strategies and policies. To see how you are doing, check the following as they apply.

1) Youth engagement is a best practice for supporting the positive mental health and well-being of young people. It is an effective strategy to promote resiliency.

We understand the value of youth engagement and pursue it as a best practice.	
We are initiating youth participation as a first step towards engaging young people.	
We are moving towards full youth engagement, where appropriate.	

3) The process for engaging youth needs to be relevant to the needs of children and youth from diverse contexts and cultures, across gender and age groups.

We recognize that children and youth from challenging contexts have diverse and changing needs. We engage youth from different cultures and contexts so that our engagement process reflects their needs.	
We have and follow a protocol for checking that children and youth from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds can understand resources (spoken and written).	
We prioritize the availability of translators when needed and ensure that they are people who can be trusted by young people.	
We have and follow a protocol that ensures that, where culturally appropriate, a young person's family is also engaged.	

2) Best practices support youth being involved in organizational decision-making processes and at all levels of program development, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Our organization's governance structure has a place for youth representation at multiple levels.	
There are planned opportunities for youth to speak during meetings.	
We have established an all-youth Youth Advisory Council that represents a cross section of the population that our organization serves. This advisory council has a strong voice in organizational decision making.	
We have safety policies to ensure vulnerable youth are not re-traumatized through their participation.	
We provide youth with necessary training and education, and/ or mentoring and partnership opportunities, so that they feel comfortable participating in decision making and speaking at meetings.	
We provide staff and volunteers with education and training on youth engagement processes and why the organization values youth voice.	
We continually monitor and assess the level of youth participation in decision making to make sure we are moving towards fuller youth engagement.	

4) Involving youth in research, program monitoring and evaluation will result in better services for youth.

Youth are co-researchers and co-evaluators in a participatory research and evaluation process. They have opportunities to be involved in all stages of the research, monitoring and evaluation process.	
We follow an ethical framework when doing research involving children and youth to prevent further vulnerability and risk.	
We monitoring the level of youth involvement in monitoring and evaluation practices to ensure we are moving towards fuller youth engagement where appropriate.	

5) Children and youth in challenging contexts are better served when they are given opportunities to influence their care plans.

There is a protocol developed and followed that provides children and youth with meaningful opportunities to give input into their care plans.	
--	--

6) Involvement in community, as well as participating in mentoring and partnerships, supports youth wellbeing.

We provide youth with empowering opportunities to contribute to their community, such as volunteer activities and political participation.	
We have created mentoring and partnership opportunities.	

7) Youth engagement is a process. The needs of youth and the community constantly change. The engagement processes need to be flexible and able to adapt to changes. Other organizations can benefit from our experiences.

We have a set schedule for review and adjustment of current engagement practices.	
Young people are involved in the review and adjustment of current engagement practices.	
We are documenting as best we can our process so that we can share what we are learning.	
We are connected to other organizations that use youth engagement so that we can share and learn from each other.	

