



FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MODULE 5:

Positive Youth Development and Developmental Youth Outcomes



PART 1

Reflect

Exercises and ideas to
help you think about your
own beliefs and practices



ACTIVITY

What Does it Mean to Matter?

Think back to a time in your childhood or teenage years when:

- You felt like you really mattered
- You felt like you were a part of something important
- Your voice was heard
- You were passionate about something

What were you doing? Who was involved? Were there adults there, and what were they doing?

Share your thoughts.



Reflection Questions

UNDERSTANDING MATTERING

As you reflect on what you wrote about your experiences as a young person, ask yourself:

- Did your investment in learning or engaging with others change when you felt heard by the adults around you?
- Did your relationships with the adults around you affect your ability to develop in a positive way?

Young people feel they matter when their voice is heard, and when they are in caring and supportive relationships with the adults in their lives.

This is the essence of a youth development approach.





ACTIVITY

What Do We Want for Young People?

Think of a young person you know:

- How do you know that they are healthy or that they are moving forward on a “positive” path?
- What can they do, and how do they interact with others?
- How do they negotiate the world?
- What skills and attributes do they have? What skills and attributes are they developing?

Draw a picture of a young person, combining your ideas. Use colors, symbols, and designs (no words).



Reflection Questions

WHAT DO WE WANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Review the list skills and attributes below:

- Confidence
- Relationship/social skills
- Organizing skills
- Leadership skills
- Ability to connect with others
- Appreciating diversity
- Sense of responsibility
- Respect for the environment
- Ability to control behavior

Did any of your ideas expressed in your drawing match the list above?
What other ideas did you have through creating your drawing?
Create your own list to the right of ways you know the young people you know, and care about, are thriving and “on a positive path.”

Use the list and your own words/ideas.



Idea: Understanding Positive Youth Outcomes

POSITIVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

Positive Youth Outcomes are the behaviors, skills, knowledge, perceptions, and values that reflect a healthy, successful young person. They are internal — what youth build and carry with them as they move through their lives.

As you reflect on the ways young people you know are demonstrating that they are thriving, ask yourself:

- What do young people hear from adults and the world around them about success?
- What are the things that adults tell young people they have to do to be successful in life?
- What are the things adults say about being successful in the field of public health?
- What are things that adults tell youth NOT to do? What risks are adults afraid young people might take that will hurt them or stand in the way of them reaching their goals?





Idea: Understanding Positive Youth Outcomes

POSITIVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

Look back at the drawing you made of a healthy and thriving young person. This time, in the space around your picture, write words that depict the **messages and pressures young people** feel from many adults and society, in order to succeed and to stay away from trouble.

These external pressures and messages often lead young people to focus on what we call **Achievement Outcomes** and **Prevention/ Problem-Free Outcomes**.

Look back at the list of words describing a youth you know who is on a “positive path.” It is likely that the majority of the ideas you generated described key abilities youth have, or indicators that they have a positive sense of self. These outcomes, which youth are building and carrying with them, are called **Developmental Youth Outcomes**.

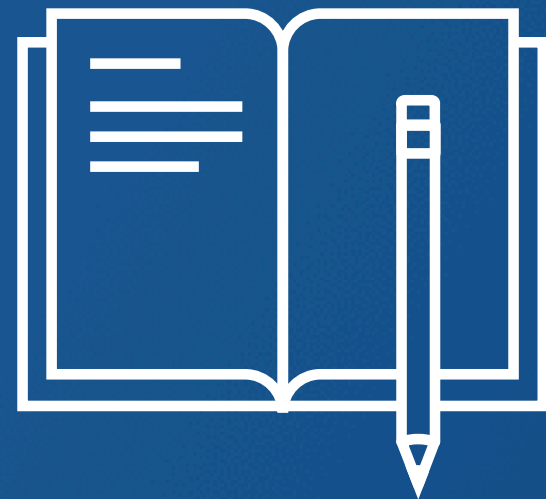
ACHIEVEMENT, DEVELOPMENTAL, & PREVENTION/PROBLEM-FREE OUTCOMES

Achievement Outcomes, Prevention/Problem-Free Outcomes, and Developmental Outcomes are three important types of Positive Youth Outcomes. Some examples of these outcomes are below. Are there ideas on this list that you also came up with in your brainstorm or drawing?

ACHIEVEMENT	DEVELOPMENTAL	PREVENTION/PROBLEM-FREE
• High school diploma • Getting a job • Getting into college • Recommendation or referral • Certification	• Confidence • Empathy • Organizing skills • Ability to keep a job • Sense of responsibility • Ability to engage in groups	• No unsafe sex • No violence • No smoking • No misuse of drugs • Not dropping out of school

While these can all be important outcomes to work towards, programs that use the **Youth Development Approach** have demonstrated that by focusing on building developmental outcomes, youth will be healthier, happier, and more successful, and more likely to build both the Achievement Outcomes and Prevention/Problem-Free Outcomes that follow as indicators and evidence of that success.

Funding for youth programs in the field of public health often centers around promoting Prevention/Problem-Free Outcomes, such as not smoking, not misusing drugs, not eating junk food, and not engaging in violence. Research has shown that **prevention curriculum has been the most successful when it focuses on decision-making and communication skills** instead of just delivering information about the issue.



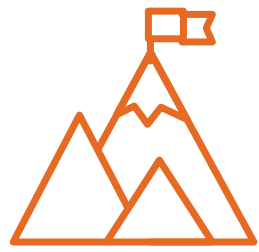
PART 2

Learn

Definitions and frameworks to
help deepen your understanding

Positive Youth Outcomes Definition: A Deeper Dive

Positive Youth Outcomes are the behaviors, skills, knowledge, perceptions, and values that reflect a healthy, successful young person. There are three kinds of Positive Youth Outcomes: Achievement, Prevention, and Developmental Outcomes.



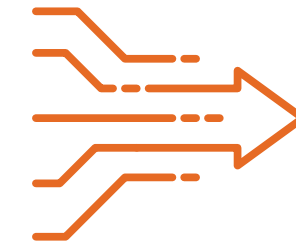
DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES

are what young people are building as they are living and growing in their environments. The two types of developmental outcomes are “aspects of identity” and “areas of ability.”



ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES

are “status” achievements. These are often the messages young people hear from adults and society in general about success.



PREVENTION/PROBLEM-FREE OUTCOMES

are considered “risk behaviors” — what adults and some parts of society tell young people not to do.

Although these are all positive outcomes, we are selling young people short if we only give them messages of “do achievement outcomes” and “don’t do prevention outcomes.”





Framework: 12 Developmental Youth Outcomes

This list of 12 key Developmental Youth Outcomes was created by the Advancing Youth Development AED/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Washington DC, 1996.

ASPECTS OF IDENTITY	Young people demonstrate a positive identity when they have a sense of personal well-being and a sense of connection and commitment to others.
Safety & Structure	A perception that one is safe in the world and that daily events are somewhat predictable
Self-Worth	A perception that one is a "good person" who contributes to self and others
Mastery & Future	A perception that one is "making it" and will succeed in the future
Belonging & Membership	A perception that one values and is valued by others in the family and in the community
Responsibility & Autonomy	A perception that one has some control over daily events and is accountable for one's own actions and for the consequences on others
Self-Awareness & Spirituality	A perception that one is unique and is intimately attached to extended families, cultural groups, communities, higher deities and/or principles



ASPECTS OF ABILITY

Young people demonstrate ability when they gain knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare them for adulthood.

Physical Health

The ability and motivation to act in ways that best ensure current and future health for self and for others

Mental Health

The ability and motivation to respond affirmatively to and cope with both positive and adverse situations, to reflect on one's own emotions and surroundings, and to engage in leisure and fun

Intellectual Ability

The ability and motivation to learn in school and in other settings, to gain the basic knowledge needed to graduate from high school, to use critical thinking, to be creative, to use problem-solving and expressive skills, and to conduct independent study

Employability

The ability and motivation to gain the functional and organizational skills necessary for employment, including an understanding of careers and options, and the steps necessary to reach goals

Civic & Social Ability

The ability and motivation to work collaboratively with others for the larger good, and to sustain caring friendships and relationships with others

Cultural Ability

The ability and motivation to respect and affirmatively respond to differences among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and traditions



Youth Definition

According to the United Nations, “Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence” and is defined for statistical purposes as “those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.”

Internationally, the definition of youth changes depending on circumstances — including demographic, financial, economic and socio-cultural settings. In many United States based programs, because of the public school system structure, the term “youth” can start as young as 10 years old — during the elementary or middle school years.

Although the Youth Development Approach was originally developed for teens and young adults, many programs have successfully used the key concepts in developing programs for school-aged children as young as 5 years old.





Youth Development Definition

Youth Development is defined in two ways: The **conceptual definition** describes a phase in a young person's life. The **practical definition** describes a way to work with young people.

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

A process by which all young people seek to meet their basic physical and social needs and build outcomes necessary to succeed in adolescence and into adulthood.

PRACTICAL DEFINITION

An approach to supporting youth that focuses on outcomes necessary for adolescence and adult life based on their capacities, strengths and formative needs.



Framework: Tips for Successfully Engaging Youth in Your Program, Coalition, or Work

RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS

- Personal attention, phone calls, rides home
- Hanging out, spending time with young people
- Knowing information about their lives
- Having fun

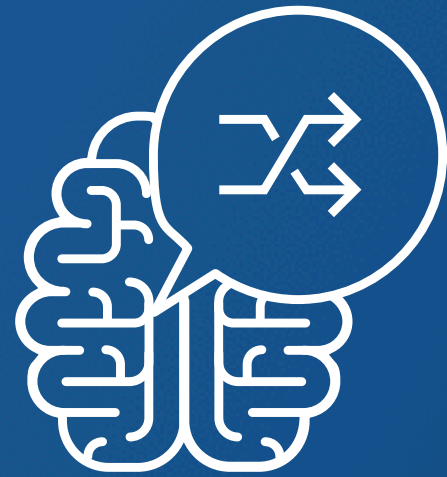
MEETINGS/EVENTS INVOLVING YOUTH

- Convenient meeting time (after school)
- Food provided
- Youth input to agenda
- Youth co-facilitator
- Buddy system with adults (one-on-one pairing with the adults and youth in the group)
- Youth-only time to talk in meetings (a time set aside in the meeting when only youth may speak)
- Youth agenda time (a consistent place on the agenda when youth report or speak about their views)

YOUTH ADVISORY GROUPS

- Involve youth in primary projects (content focused), not just ancillary ones (stuffing envelopes, social events)
- More youth at the table
- Regular meetings with adult groups
- Training for youth and adults





PART 3

Observe

Spotlight on programs and projects that use a youth development approach



Program Spotlight: Start Strong, Boston Public Health Commission

START STRONG

Start Strong is a peer leadership program based at the Boston Public Health Commission, where teens work to promote healthy relationships and prevent teen dating violence.

Using a trauma-informed youth development framework, they host conversations on systems of oppression, intersectionality, and prevention/promotion work using a media literacy lens. The youth create, drive, and inspire all of the programming, including the yearly Break Up Summit and The Halls.



Program Spotlight: Start Strong, Boston Public Health Commission

START STRONG

Rather than focusing strictly on Achievement Outcomes or avoiding Prevention/Problem-Free Outcomes, Start Strong promotes some key Developmental Outcomes among its participants, such as:

- Civic and social ability through helping youth build strong communication skills and healthy boundaries
- Self-worth through activities that increase confidence
- Responsibility and autonomy through providing authentic opportunities to make creative decisions



Project Spotlight: The Halls

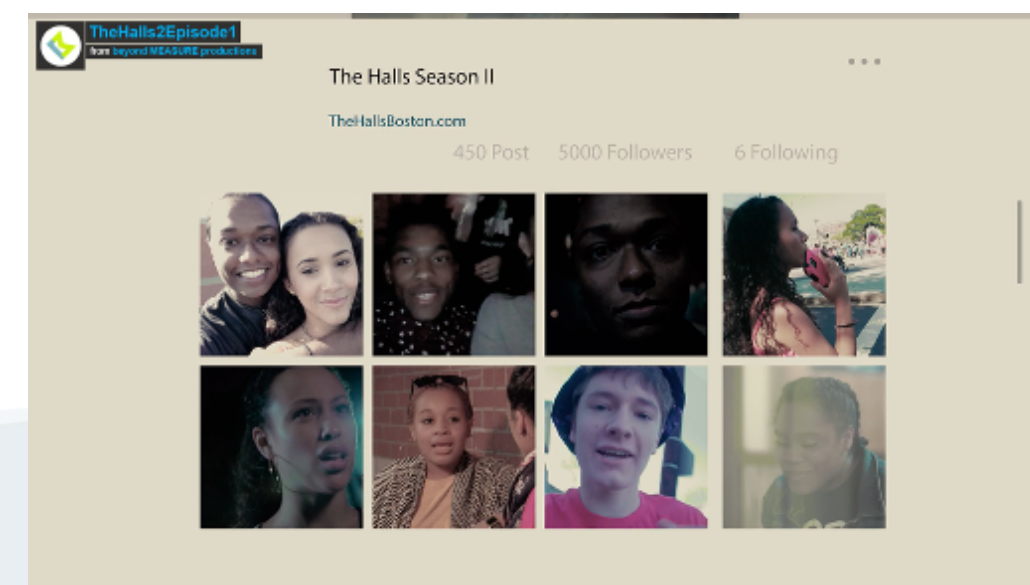
THE HALLS

Created by youth in the Boston Public Health Commission's Start Strong program, in collaboration with Casa Myrna and Beyond Measure productions, The Halls is a web series, discussion guide and podcast exploring healthy and unhealthy relationships. The Halls tells stories of teenagers in Boston and their struggles with relationships, trauma, masculinity, LGBTQ+ acceptance, and their own identities.

When describing their goals for the web series, the youth creators say, "We hope this web-series inspires viewers to critically think and challenge themselves on messages we are fed by the media about how young people are supposed to act in relationships. This helps them to free themselves and engage in positive alternatives."

On their website, the Boston Public Health Commission makes it clear that the goal of The Halls is for youth to work towards Prevention Outcomes while also building Developmental Outcomes:

"We seek not only to work to prevent gender-based violence, but to also promote healthy relationships amongst adolescent populations."



Watch Episode 1 of The Halls [here](#).

Review the 12 Developmental Outcomes after your viewing.

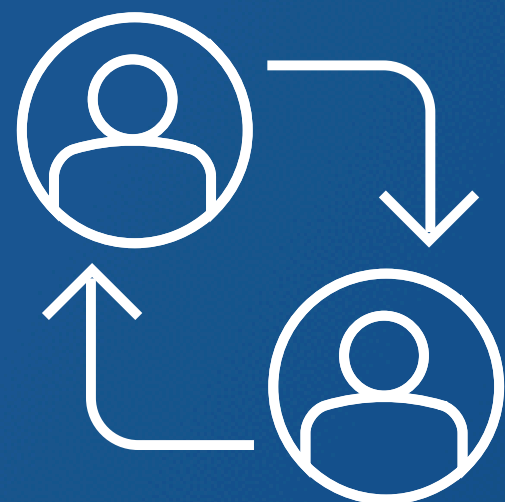


Reflection Question

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

Which Developmental Outcomes do you think the youth participants in Start Strong were building when they worked on The Halls?





PART 4

Engage

Reflection and planning tools to move towards implementation



REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Developmental Youth Outcome Indicators

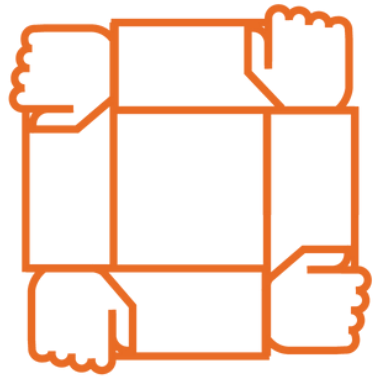
In this section is the list of Developmental Youth Outcomes with a series of “indicators” below each outcome (adapted from the Academy for Educational Development (AED) by Health Resources in Action). Indicators are the attitudes and actions that demonstrate to us that a young person is building a specific outcome.

REVIEW THE LIST OF OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

- Circle the outcomes that your program or coalition helps youth to build.
- Within those outcomes, circle the indicators you see youth in your program demonstrate.



Aspects of Identity



SAFETY & STRUCTURE

- Feels safe at home
- Feels safe at school
- Perceives predictability in key aspects of life



SELF-WORTH

- Has positive self-concept: "I'm okay"
- Able to identify three things that one likes about oneself
- Able to cite three satisfying accomplishments
- Perceives that one is liked and respected by others
- Demonstrates a healthy sense of humor



MASTERY & FUTURE

- Perceives ability to learn, accomplish, and contribute
- Able to identify three future goals and how to attain them
- Able to identify three recent accomplishments
- Perceives ability to survive into future
- Perceives ability to thrive in future

Aspects of Identity



BELONGING & MEMBERSHIP:

- Has one or more close friends
- Interacts easily with peers
- Forms mutually supportive relationships with family members
- Perceives belonging to a family
- Perceives ability to thrive in future



RESPONSIBILITY & AUTONOMY:

- Consistently takes responsibility for own actions
- Shows respect for others
- Shows compassion for others
- Does not lie or cheat
- Understands difference between right and wrong



SPIRITUALITY & SELF-AWARENESS:

- Identifies with cultural group, higher deity
- Believes that one is unique, with unique personal characteristics
- Regularly attends church, mosque, synagogue, or other institution
- Understands, appreciates and reflects on own emotions
- Expresses own ideas and opinions

Areas of Ability



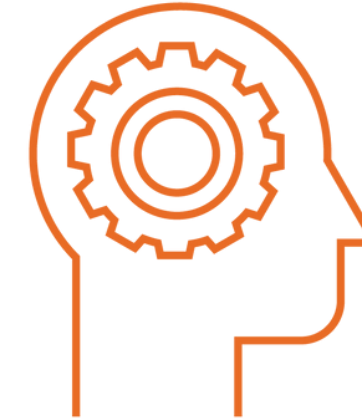
PHYSICAL HEALTH:

- Able to perform daily tasks
- Weight proportionate to height
- Low incidence of illness
- Accesses helping resources
- Eats healthy diet
- Exercises regularly
- Abstains from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Abstains from sex or regularly uses contraceptives



MENTAL HEALTH:

- Regularly engages in recreation
- Has hobbies
- Identifies, pursues constructive alternatives to stressful situations
- Demonstrates coping skills
- Demonstrates conflict resolution skills



INTELLECTUAL ABILITY:

- Consistently attends school
- Communicates well orally and in writing
- Able to apply core concepts from studies to daily life
- Plans, solves problems, and makes decisions

Areas of Ability



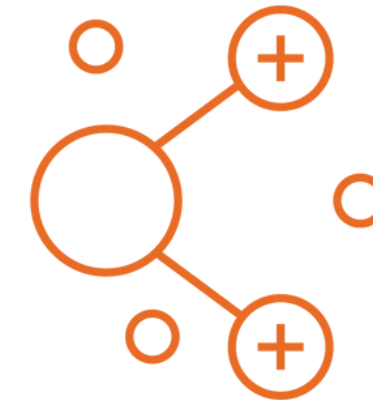
EMPLOYABILITY:

- Schedules time and plans ahead
- Works collaboratively with others
- Understands and operates effectively within systems
- Monitors and corrects performance
- Chooses and applies technologies appropriate to task



CIVIC AND SOCIAL:

- Demonstrates ethical behaviors toward others
- Takes responsibility for own actions and their consequences
- Manages interpersonal conflict
- Regularly makes contributions to individuals and organizations
- Reflects on and refines own values



CULTURAL ABILITY:

- Identifies with cultural group
- Has one or more close friends of different race or ethnicity
- Listens to and respects opinions and needs of others
- Appreciates / respects differences among individuals and groups



Planning Tool: Developmental Outcome Goal Setting

As you read through the list of Developmental Outcomes and Indicators on the previous slides, choose one outcome of each type that you would like to work more deeply on. Ask yourself:

1

Which outcomes are we already helping youth build that we should be working on more intentionally?

2

Which outcomes do youth in our program express that they need or want to build?

3

Which outcomes is our program uniquely positioned to help youth build?

Keep in mind that you don't need to do it all! Programs typically specialize in helping youth build a handful of outcomes.



Planning Tool: Developmental Outcome Goal Setting

OUTCOME TYPES

Program practices we ALREADY DO
that help build this outcome

PREVENTION/PROBLEM-FREE Program practices
we COULD DO that would help build this outcome

ASPECT OF IDENTITY:

AREA OF ABILITY:





PART 5

Research

Resources to further
your learning



Resources

Denise Montgomery, “The Rise of Creative Youth Development”

<https://www.creativeyouthdevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Rise-of-Creative-Youth-Development.pdf>

Kev Geoghegan, “YolanDa Brown: Music education creates more well-rounded people”

<https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-49083146>

An Introduction to Youth Development Concepts: Questions for Community Collaborations by Shepherd Zeldin from AED/Center for Youth Development Policy Research

<https://sparkaction.org/content/center-youth-development-and-policy-research>

Warren Simmons, “Smart Education Systems: Your Role in a Community-Wide Approach to Public Education” (presentation, National Guild’s Conference for Community Arts Education, Chicago, IL, October 30–November 1, 2013).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrNsIVvClzU&list=UUVunE-j_LXMn9bVGiM3cRaw

Jutta Dotterweich, “Positive Youth Development 101: A Curriculum for Youth Work Professionals,” ACT for Youth Center for Community Action

http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/manual.cfm

Thank You!

