
Positive Youth Outcomes

2.2 Adolescence – Positive Outcomes

Objectives: Participants will learn about the concept of positive youth outcomes.

Participants will understand that youth development happens in different environmental settings.

Material: Newsprint, pens, markers, tape
Slides: 5 C's
Environmental Settings
Handout: 2.2.A. Success Bingo
2.2.B. 5 C's

Time: 45 minutes

Audience: General

Lesson Plan

We look at adolescence as the transition period from childhood to adulthood. During adolescence young people learn the skills and values they need to succeed as adults. We want all young people to become healthy and productive adults. What exactly do we mean by that? What are we looking for? Let's go about it pro-actively. Let's not list the things we do not want to see such as...*Ask group to name a few.* Just imagine you are hiring a 20 year old to work you. What are you looking for? No sex, no drugs, no depression? Or are you looking for skills, motivation, attitude, personality, etc.

Step 1> Activity: Success Bingo (20 min)

Distribute handout: 2.2.A. Success Bingo, and pens.

Let's find out what you would like to see at the end of the adolescent journey. You all know how to play bingo. Imagine your child (or a young person you know) celebrating his or her 21st birthday. Which characteristics would we collectively like to see in him or her? Go around the room, introduce yourself to another person and ask them for one characteristic they would like to see. Write down their first name and the characteristic. Your task is to ask 9 different people for 9 different attributes. You have 10 minutes. The first person to complete the bingo will get a prize (*optional*).

Thank you for playing along. Let's hear which attributes or positive outcomes you want to see in your children or other young people you know.

Ask volunteers to name characteristics. Have a volunteer write them down on newsprint. Process; highlight that there is a lot of consensus in desired outcomes. Identify and organize themes (skills, values, character, connections).

Step 2> Brief lecturette (10-15 min)

Karen Pittman, often called the Mother of Youth Development, has a good head for rewording complex things into understandable frameworks. She listed desired outcomes in 5 C's – competencies, confidence, character, connection and contribution.

Slides: 5C's

Competence

The ability and motivation for

- Civic and social engagement
- Cultural engagement
- Physical health
- Emotional health
- Intellectual achievement
- Employability

Confidence

- Having a sense of mastery and future
- Having a sense of self-efficacy

Character

- Having a sense of responsibility and autonomy
- Having a sense of spirituality and self-awareness
- Having an awareness of one's own personality or individuality

Connection

- Membership and belonging
- Having a sense of safety and structure

Contribution

- Being involved as active participant and decision maker in services, organizations and community

Briefly review all 5 C's. Give examples of how these outcomes can be nurtured through program activities and practices. Distribute handout: 2.2.B 5C's.

Talking Points

Slide 1: Competence

Civic and social: Develop social and cooperative skills – activities can highlight team projects, community service projects, cooperative games, teambuilding; agency promotes and recognizes pro-social norms

Cultural: Develop cultural competence and awareness – activities can inform about different cultural backgrounds, include research on historic struggles, multicultural experiences (food, art/dances, celebrations); agency uses pictures/posters highlighting different cultural groups in community

Physical health: Promote healthy choices and healthy life styles – activities include physical activities, healthy nutrition, peer education on health issues

Emotional health: Develop and practice ability to recognize and express emotions appropriately – activities include a reflection process to recognize and express emotional reactions, include exercises on handling anger and frustration; provide support for stressful circumstances; caring adult relationships

Intellectual: Promote basic academic skills as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills – programs provide opportunities to do research, tutoring and homework support, community projects that include research and problem solving components; program promotes independent or small group projects; recognition

Employability: Develop basic work skills and provide information on career paths – activities foster communication and socialization skills, field trips, speakers (community members and parents) discussing career paths

Slide 2: Confidence

Having a sense of mastery and self-efficacy – opportunities to demonstrate skills, recognition and feedback

Slide 3: Character

Having a sense of responsibility, one's own personality, pro-social values – program provides positive role models, adult relationships, recognition of responsible behavior

Slide 4: Connection

Having a sense of membership and belonging and safety – agency provides a psychological and physical safe space; clear behavior expectations and consequences; branding (logo or product identifying membership), caring relationships, connection with family and other community groups

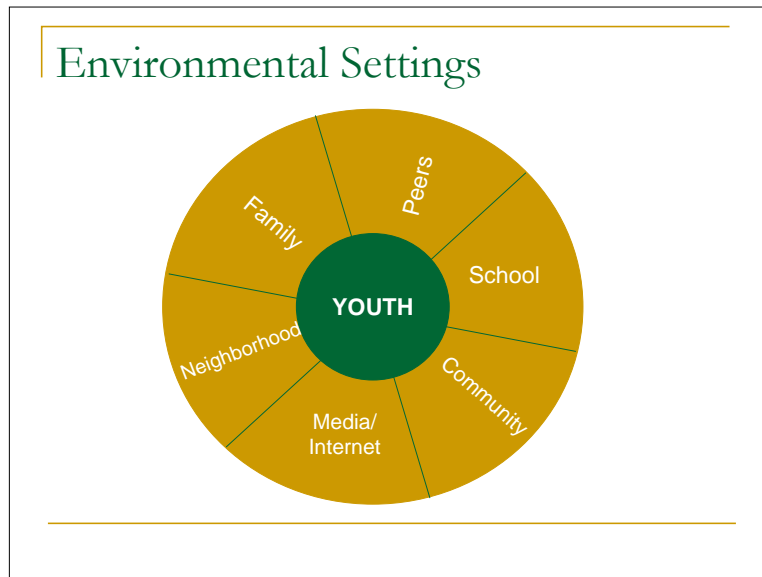
Slide 5: Contribution

Being an active participant, having an impact – agency provides opportunities for leadership, youth voice; community service; civic engagement. Entertain questions and facilitate a brief discussion.

Step 3> Brief lecturette (10 min)

How are young people reaching these outcomes? We as parents, service providers, and community members need to provide opportunities for young people to have a range of experiences, to learn and engage in meaningful activities throughout their journey to adulthood. Many of you are doing this already in different settings. Using a framework like the 5C's will help us to be more intentional about it.

Slide - Environmental Settings



Talking Points

- *Learning can and needs to happen in all environments. It's not just the responsibility of schools or parents.*
- *It happens 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*
- *It's a long term commitment. Young people need opportunities throughout childhood and adolescence.*
- *Learning opportunities and experiences need to be developmentally appropriate. A 12 year old has different abilities and needs than a 16 year old.*

Focusing on positive youth outcomes represents a major shift in thinking. For a long time we have been concentrating on preventing or fixing negative behaviors and outcomes. Along with that approach we have reduced young people to problems and deficiencies. Striving for positive outcomes allows us to open our eyes and look at young people holistically and strengths based. Who are they? What skills, interests, and talents do they bring to the table? Identifying and building on their strengths will engage and motivate them to learn and experience more. I know from my own experience that it is easier to do new things if you can bring in my skills and talents. But if I am challenged to do something totally out of my range, (example: I am asked to write a computer program) I would get nervous and uptight. I am sure you would react similarly, right?

The key concepts we discussed were:

- ❖ Focus on positive outcomes
- ❖ Using a strengths based approach
- ❖ Development happens in an environments and over time

Facilitate brief discussion. What did participants take away from the presentation? How does the information presented influence what they do for and with young people in the community?

Facilitator Tips

1. For a comprehensive review of the 5C's, see Karen Pittman et al. 2005. Preventing Problems, Promoting Development, Encouraging Engagement (www.forumfyi.org/files/PPE.pdf).
2. Alternative concepts/handouts: There are different models of positive youth development such as the Search Institute's 40 Development Assets or the Circle of Courage. They use different language but reflect the same concepts (see references).
3. An alternative wrap up would be to divide the participants into small groups and have them discuss ways they can work on the 5C's in their community. See also next activity.
4. This activity could be combined with activity 2.4 Building on Strengths.