



# Positive Youth Development V: Youth Work Ethics

ACT for Youth

June 22, 2021

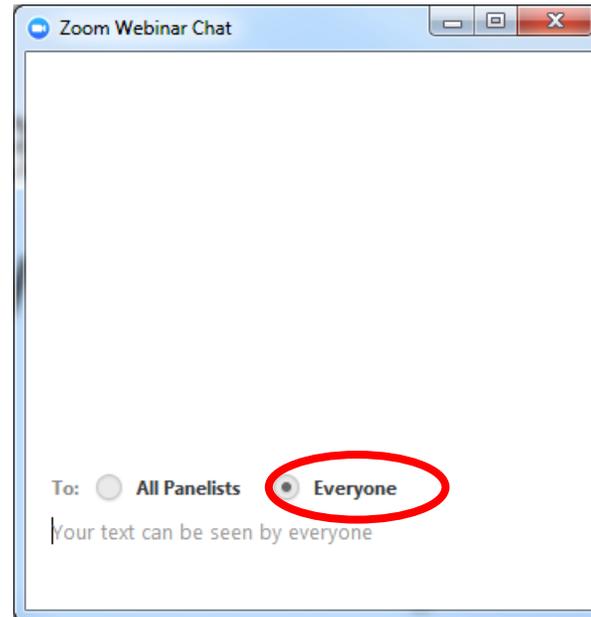
# Zoom keeping

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## Experiencing delays?

Try closing out the other programs running on your computer



## Questions?

Use chat function. Post to Everyone.



## Audio.

You control the volume. Please mute yourself during the presentation.

# Agenda

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- Recap – What is Positive Youth Development?
- Youth work – a profession?
- Competencies and professional development
- Youth work ethics
- Resources and questions



# Recap: Positive Youth Development

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A philosophy or approach that guides communities in the way they organize programs, supports and opportunities so that young people can develop to their full potential.

- Focus on building positive outcomes
- Youth voice and engagement
- Long-term involvement/Developmentally appropriate
- Universal/Inclusive
- Community-based/Collaborative



## Youth Work – An Unchartered Profession



# Youth Work Field is Fragmented

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No clear definition & professional degree

No clear professional development curriculum & infrastructure for development

Range of core competencies

Range of settings (youth ages 5-25 in OST)

Pozzoboni & Kirshner. 2016

Malone & Donahue (eds). 2018



# What is a Youth Worker?

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Youth workers are “individuals who work with or on behalf of youth to facilitate their personal, social and education development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society as they make the transition from dependence to independence” (Stone, Garza & Borden, 2004)

What does it take to be a youth worker?



Skills

Knowledge

Characteristics

# Frameworks of Core Competencies



## Youth Work Core Competencies A Review of Existing Frameworks and Purposes

Developed for School's Out Washington  
by Betsy Starr, Nicole Yohalem and Ellen Gannett, Next Generation Youth Work Coalition  
October 2009



[http://www.niost.org/pdf/Core\\_Competencies\\_Review\\_October\\_2009.pdf](http://www.niost.org/pdf/Core_Competencies_Review_October_2009.pdf)



# Competencies: Content Areas

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- o Curriculum
- o Professionalism
- o Connecting with Families
- o Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- o Child & Adolescent Development
- o Cross-cultural Competence
- o Guidance
- o Professional Development
- o Program Management
- o Connecting with Communities
- o Environment

To be added:  
Digital learning  
Trauma-informed youth work



# Ongoing Professional Development

## NYS Networks

PASE <https://pasesetter.org/>

NYS Network for Youth Success  
<https://networkforyouthsuccess.org/>

Association of NYS Youth Bureaus  
<https://anysyb.net/>

NYS 4-H <https://nys4-h.org/>

Where do you go?

- In-house?
- In the community?
- Online?

# Remember – Adolescents Increasingly Diverse

National Academies of Sciences,  
Engineering, and Medicine.  
(2019). The Promise of  
Adolescence



Diversity Wheel as used at Johns  
Hopkins University



# “Homo Categoricus”

Our mind thinks with the aid of categories

Stereotypes are a consequence or by-product of category making

Group stereotypes are usually not favorable

Stereotypes affect our behavior/ decisions



Ways it can impact our work

❖ Microaggressions

How else can our biases surface?



<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/illustration-microaggressions-in-the-classroom.html>

# Attitude Check



## Project Implicit®

**PROJECT IMPLICIT SOCIAL ATTITUDES**  
Log in or register to find out your implicit associations about race, gender, sexual orientation, and other topics!

**LOGIN** **REGISTER**

Or, continue as a guest by selecting from our available language/nation demonstration sites:

  **GO!**

**PROJECT IMPLICIT HEALTH**  
Find out your implicit associations about exercise, anxiety, alcohol, eating, marijuana, and other topics! **GO!**

**PROJECT IMPLICIT FEATURED TASK**  
Measure your implicit association between different social groups and Human/Animal. **GO!**

LOG IN TAKE A TEST ABOUT US EDUCATION HELP CONTACT US DONATE

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<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>



## Arab-Muslim IAT

*Arab-Muslim ('Arab Muslim - Other People' IAT).* This IAT requires the ability to distinguish names that are likely to belong to Arab-Muslims versus people of other nationalities or religions.

## Disability IAT

*Disability ('Disabled - Abled' IAT).* This IAT requires the ability to recognize symbols representing abled and disabled individuals.

## Gender-Science IAT

*Gender - Science.* This IAT often reveals a relative link between liberal arts and females and between science and males.

## Weapons IAT

*Weapons ('Weapons - Harmless Objects' IAT).* This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Black faces, and images of weapons or harmless objects.

## Gender-Career IAT

*Gender - Career.* This IAT often reveals a relative link between family and females and between career and males.

## Sexuality IAT

*Sexuality ('Gay - Straight' IAT).* This IAT requires the ability to distinguish words and symbols representing gay and straight people. It often reveals an automatic preference for straight relative to gay people.



**Asian IAT**

*Asian American* ('Asian - European American' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Asian-American faces, and images of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

**Skin-tone IAT**

*Skin-tone* ('Light Skin - Dark Skin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize light and dark-skinned faces. It often reveals an automatic preference for light-skin relative to dark-skin.

**Age IAT**

*Age* ('Young - Old' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish old from young faces. This test often indicates that Americans have automatic preference for young over old.

**Presidents IAT**

*Presidents* ('Presidential Popularity' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize photos of Donald Trump and one or more previous presidents.

**Religion IAT**

*Religion* ('Religions' IAT). This IAT requires some familiarity with religious terms from various world religions.

**Native IAT**

*Native American* ('Native - White American' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Native American faces in either classic or modern dress, and the names of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

**Race IAT**

*Race* ('Black - White' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of European and African origin. It indicates that most Americans have an automatic preference for white over black.

**Weight IAT**

*Weight* ('Fat - Thin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of people who are obese and people who are thin. It often reveals an automatic preference for thin people relative to fat people.

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# Hidden Biases are Robust but also Malleable

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## Trends

- Sexuality IAT: 37% decrease (automatic preference for straight)
- Race IAT: 13% decrease (automatic preference for white)
- Slight decrease: gender and science IAT (automatic preference for men in science)
- Increase: body weight IAT (automatic preference for thin people)



# What can we do as youth work professionals?

Become aware – do the test

Question your decisions/assumptions/first impressions

Be mindful how you engage with young people

Create a sense of belonging in program groups

Build in empathy activities

Assess your program environment/create inclusive environments



# OHM outsmarting human minds

| WATCH | LISTEN | READ | TEST

How does the mind work – and what are its **blindspots**?

[Learn more](#)



**The Universe Inside Your Mind**

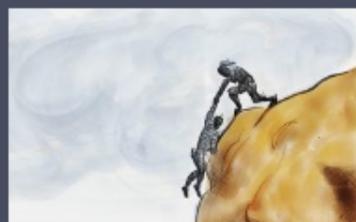
An introduction by Mahzarin Banaji. 400 years ago, we began to explore the universe with simple tools, and it challenged our beliefs about our place in the universe. Are investigations of the universe inside our minds any different?



**About Face: How First Impressions Fool Us**



**Can You Solve The Surgeon Riddle?**







Why talk about youth work ethics?



# Defining Ethics

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Principles, norms, and standards of behavior people use to determine what is good or bad, right or wrong in their interactions with other people

Practice ethics – application of ethical standards to problem solving and decision making

Joyce A. Walker et al. 2006. Shaping Ethics: Youth Workers Matter



# Poll: Boundaries

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1. Sam asks you to borrow \$10. He'll pay you back in a few days.
2. Jenny is asking you to go with her to the prom.
3. Shaun invites you to his birthday party.
4. Trevor asks you for a ride home.
5. Sara is calling you late at night to talk about problems with her boyfriend.
6. Nicole wants to befriend you on your personal Facebook account.



# Research: Dilemmas of Practice

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## The Youth Development Experience

113 youth – 661 interviews

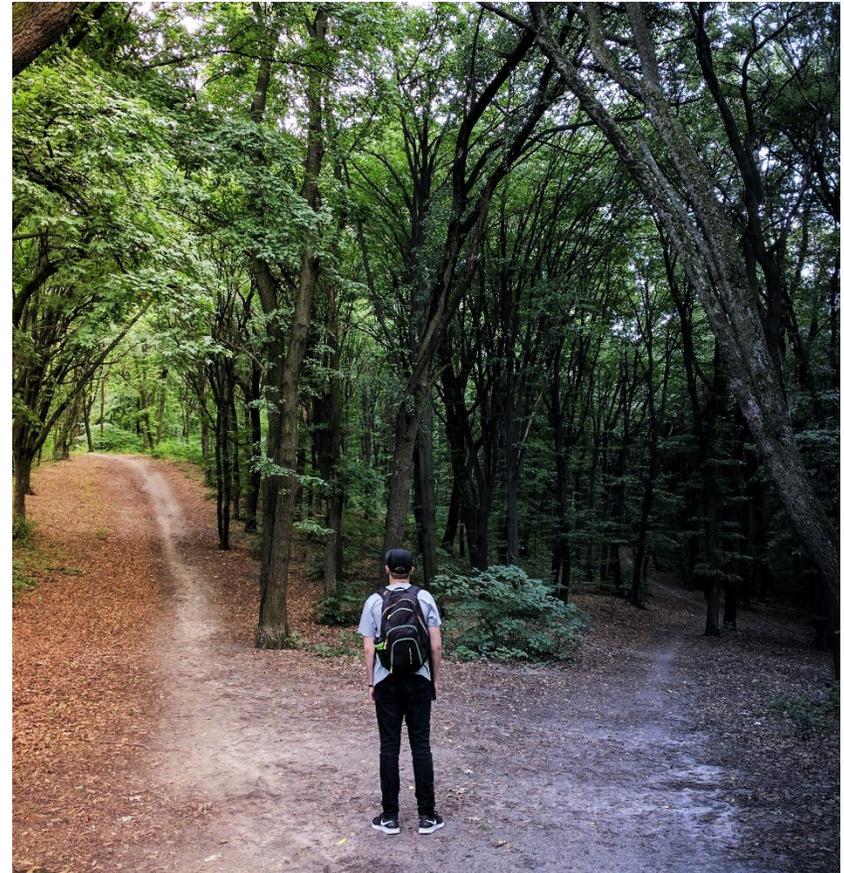
25 program leaders – 125 interviews

167 site observations

Resulting in 250 dilemmas

Reed Larson, University of Illinois

[www.youthdev.illinois.edu/](http://www.youthdev.illinois.edu/)





# Categories of Dilemma

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1. Supporting Youth's Work in Program Activities
2. Cultivating Norms and Enforcing Rules
3. Youth's Personalities and Relationships
4. Reconciling the Organizational System with Youth Development
5. Interfacing with External Worlds (ethical, social-cultural)



# Experienced Program Leader Responses

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## 1. Youth-Centered

Engaged with youth

Turned dilemmas into opportunities for youth's development

Incorporated youth into the solution

Advocated for youth

## 2. Balancing Multiple Considerations

Addressing, accommodating, negotiating, reconciling, integrating

*Larson et al. 2009*



## Building Expertise through Deliberate Practice

Core competencies are important, but are they sufficient? Do they provide youth workers -- in particular professionals who are just starting out -- the knowledge, skills, and good judgment needed to handle challenging situations and dilemmas?

Reed Larson has shown that youth workers experience a multitude of challenges or dilemmas every day [1]. Dilemmas are created by tensions between youth participants, staff, program structures, agency policies, cultural norms, and the realities of the complex world young people live in. Consider the examples below:

### Pushing personal or professional boundaries:

- Sean asks you for a ride home.
- Nicole asks you to go with her to the prom.

### In conflict with program/agency rules:

- Will brings a knife to the program in case he has to defend himself on the way to the center.

### Crossing cultural norms and expectations:

- Naima wants to participate in the leadership training, but her parents do not approve because they do not see this as appropriate behavior for a girl.

How do youth workers learn to respond to challenges like these without harming or penalizing young people?

Walker and Walker suggest that professional development alone is not sufficient: youth workers need to be able to reflect and work through difficult situations, and also to learn from feedback and suggestions offered by experienced professionals. They recommend *deliberate practice*, defined as "taking on tasks that are appropriately challenging and chosen with the goal of improving a particular skill" [2]. Deliberate practice is best accomplished with regular, authentic feedback during staff meetings or in community round tables with other youth work professionals.

[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/competencies.cfm](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/competencies.cfm)



Self-reflection (reflect on your own values)

Review agency policies on confidentiality, liability, transportation, etc

Discuss scenarios of common dilemmas in staff meetings (& supervision)

Create opportunities to dialogue with colleagues in the community

## Moving Forward

Any questions,  
comments or  
takeaways?



# Resources



The screenshot shows the ACT for Youth website. The header features the logo on the left and the tagline "Your Online Source for Positive Youth Development" on the right. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: Youth Development, Adolescence, Sexual Health, Publications and Events, and About Us. The main content area displays a breadcrumb trail: Home > Youth Development > Youth Work Professionals > Professional Development. On the left, a sidebar menu lists various sections, with "Professional Development" highlighted. The main content area features the title "Professional Development for Youth Workers" with a "printer-friendly" link. Below the title is a paragraph explaining ACT for Youth's commitment to promoting positive youth development (PYD) and integrating core PYD principles into the field of youth work. The page also includes a section for "Positive Youth Development 101 Training" with a brief description of the 10-hour curriculum.

**ACT for Youth**

Your Online Source for Positive Youth Development

Search

Youth Development Adolescence Sexual Health Publications and Events About Us

Home > Youth Development > Youth Work Professionals > Professional Development

Feature Section

Youth Work Professionals

Professional Development

Positive Youth Development 101

PYD 101 Online Courses

Inclusive Program Environments

Competencies

Facilitation Tips

## Professional Development for Youth Workers

printer-friendly

ACT for Youth is committed to promoting the language of positive youth development (PYD) and integrating core PYD principles into the field of youth work. We aim to enhance the capacity, knowledge, and competencies of adults who work with and for young people, as well as their organizations.

### Positive Youth Development 101 Training

The 10-hour training curriculum **Positive Youth Development 101** offers an orientation to positive youth development for new youth work professionals. The curriculum includes five sections:

[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/)

# Resources

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Youth Today: OST Hub: Professional Development, Training and Staffing  
<https://youthtoday.org/hub/program-quality/professional-development-training-and-staffing/>

University of Minnesota Extension: Center for Youth Development  
<https://extension.umn.edu/working-youth/about-extension-center-youth-development>

ACT for Youth: Supervisor's PYD Toolkit  
[http://www.actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/professionals/supervisors/](http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/supervisors/)

Weikart Center Youth Program Quality <http://www.cypq.org/>

National Institute on Out-Of-School Time <https://www.niost.org/>

# Resources: Digital Learning

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- National Afterschool Association: Tech Toolkit

<https://naaweb.org/afterschooltecht toolkit>

- Common Sense: Education <https://www.common sense.org/education/>

- Wide Open School: <https://wideopenschool.org/>

# Resources: Trauma-Informed Approach

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- CDC: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>

- ACT for Youth: Using a trauma-informed approach

[http://www.actforyouth.net/sexual\\_health/community/capp/trauma.cfm](http://www.actforyouth.net/sexual_health/community/capp/trauma.cfm)

- Transforming Education: Trauma informed SEL

<https://www.transformingeducation.org/trauma-informed-sel-toolkit/>

# References

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