



Southeast (HHS Region 4)

**PTTTC**

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# A Social Justice Approach to Working with and For Young People in Substance Use Prevention

May 15, 2024

*Presented by*

Dr. Parissa Ballard, Dr. Heather Kennedy,  
and Allyson Howe





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# Disclaimer

- This training is 100% supported SAMHSA of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by SAMHSA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

The use of affirming language inspires hope.

LANGUAGE MATTERS.

**Words have power.**

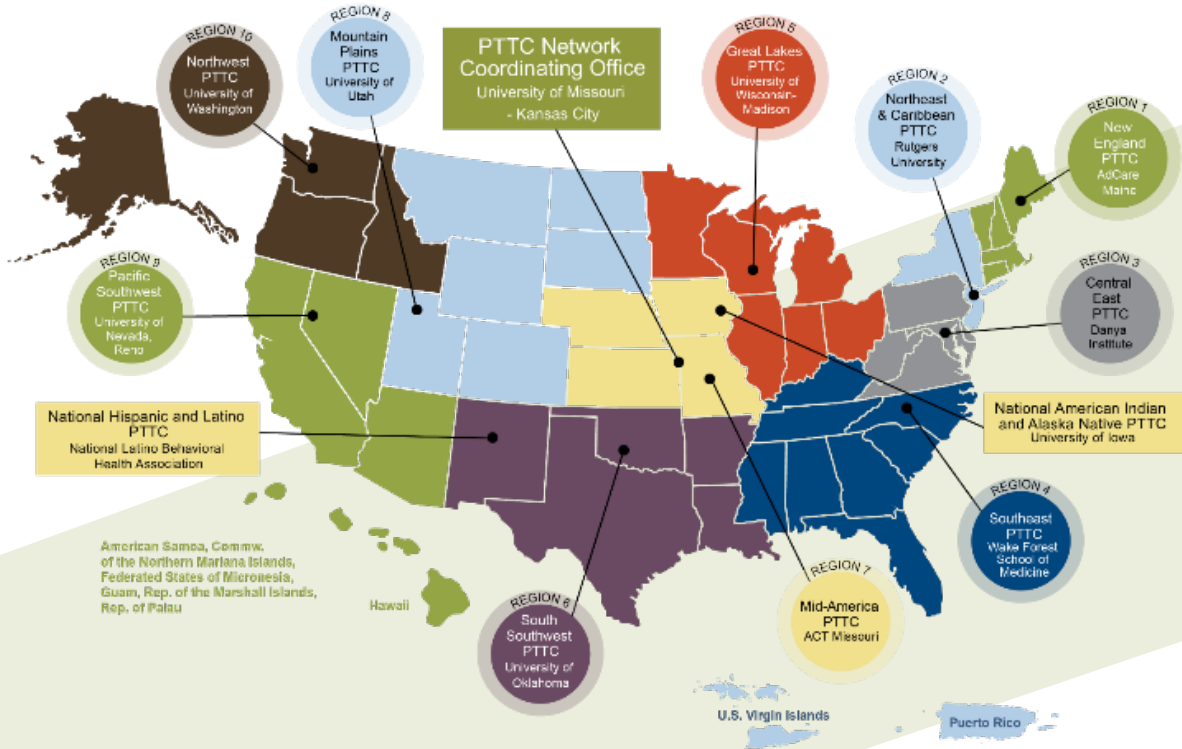
===== **PEOPLE FIRST.** =====

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.



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PTTC Network



Co-Directors  
 Kimberly Wagoner, DrPH, MPH  
 and Mark Wolfson, PhD



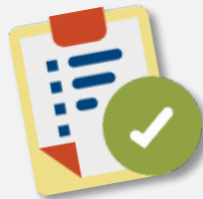
**Wake Forest University**  
**School of Medicine**

# Housekeeping

**Webinar  
Recording**  
available in 2-3  
days on our  
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## After the webinar:

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A download of the  
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**Bottom of our main  
webpage**

[pttcnetwork.org/southeast](http://pttcnetwork.org/southeast)

The screenshot shows a green banner with two dark green call-to-action boxes. The left box is titled "JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST" and includes the text "Stay up to date on what's happening in our region." and a "SUBSCRIBE" button with a person icon. The right box is titled "WATCH OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL" and includes the text "Watch our entire webinar series and subscribe for future episodes." and a "WATCH" button with a hand cursor icon.

Sign up for our newsletter here!



TONS of great trainings to share/watch with your coalition members

# Upcoming Events:

#1: Planning for Successful Grant Writing

May 20<sup>th</sup>

#3: Analyzing & Learning From Real-World Examples

June 10<sup>th</sup>

June 3<sup>rd</sup>

#2: Writing a Winning Proposal Narrative

# Today's Presenters

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# PTTC Webinar Series

## Workshop 2: A Social Justice Approach to Working With and For Young People In Substance Use Prevention

Welcome!



# Agenda

- Introductions
- Learning objectives
- Narratives about adolescents
- One problem in Youth Engagement Work: Adulthood
- Small group activity: Reflecting on adultist practices
- A solution: A Social Justice Approach to Youth Development
- Practices that enhance collaboration between youth and adults



# Introductions

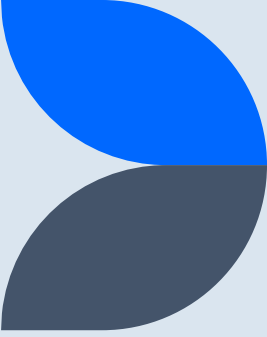


## Facilitators:

- Parissa Ballard
- Heather Kennedy
- Allyson Howe

**We invite you to introduce yourself in the chat with the following:**

- Your name and pronouns
- Where you are from
- Shout out a positive mentor from your adolescence





# Learning Objectives

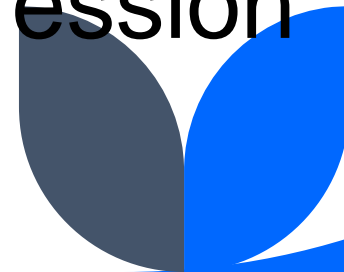
After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify unequal distributions of power in youth-adult relationships
- Describe the five core elements of social justice youth development
- Identify at least one practice to enhance youth-adult collaboration



# Assumptions at the root of this session material

- We value equity
  - the absence of systematic disparities between groups with different levels of underlying social advantage/disadvantage—that is, wealth, power, or prestige (Braverman & Gruskin, 2003)
  - extend this to think about how age provides power
- We operate in oppressive systems
- We are all our own path with thinking about issues related to equity and oppression



# Group Norms

- Share from your experience (use “I” statements)
- Circle back
- Own impact and intent
- Listen to understand
- Practice curiosity
- Practice using asset-based language when talking about youth



# Youth Engagement (Innovation) Specific Capacity

Code	Definition
Resources	Funding for youth/adult or travel, time/duration/dose/length of partnership, space, transportation, communication tools, technology, data
Training & preparation	Training for youth, training for adults, using a curriculum or existing tool, receiving support/coaching
Student characteristics	Connection between youth, shared identities, prior relationships with adults, interests, students have time to participate, dev. stage
Adult characteristics	Commitment, # of years of experience, academic degree, arts/photography/other relevant background, facilitators from community, racial concordance with participants
Facilitator skills	Relationship building, flexibility, power-sharing

The background is a solid blue color. It features several decorative elements: a large white leaf shape on the left side, a smaller light grey leaf shape below it, and several semi-transparent blue circles of various sizes scattered across the background.

# In the Chat

What are some of the common words/phrases you hear used to describe adolescents/teens?



# Narratives about Adolescents

- Media representations
- Our own experiences
- Research/science
- Cultural norms and values
- Laws and policies



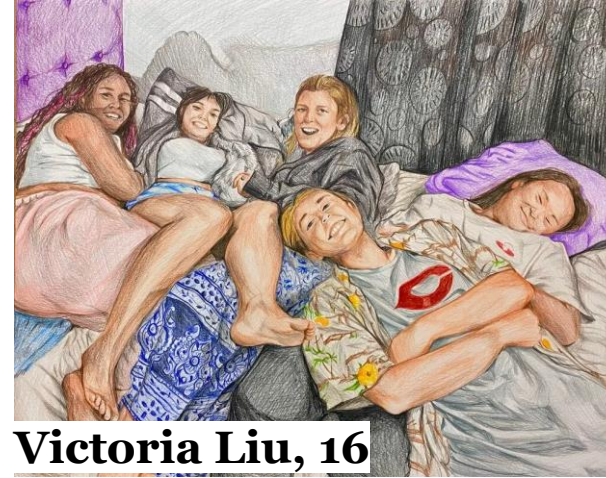
# Narratives about adolescents change over time



**Shashank Salgam, 17**



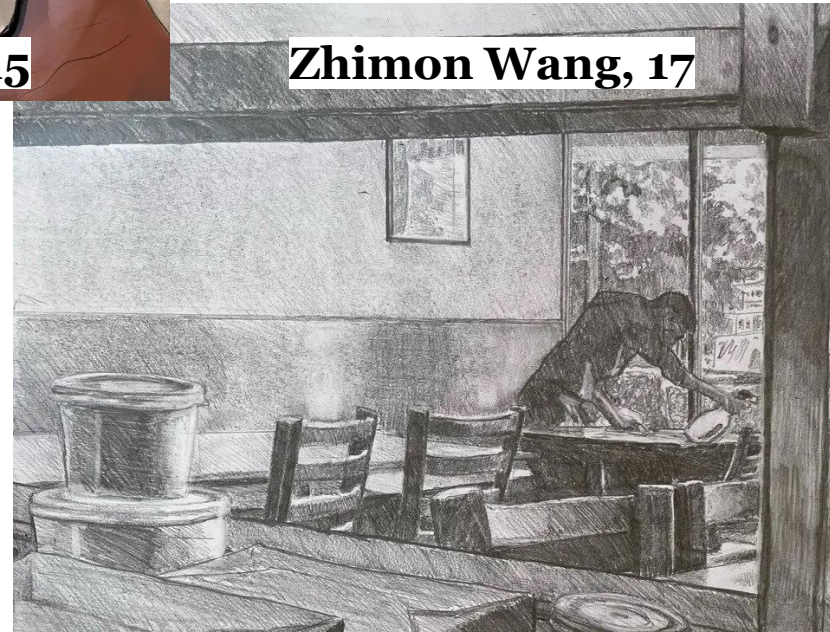
**Gigi Greene, 15**



**Victoria Liu, 16**



**Celeste Wang, 16**



**Zhimon Wang, 17**



**Changrong Qu, 16**

Source: NYT Coming of Age in 2022 Contest  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/18/learning/what-its-like-to-be-a-teenager-now-the-winners-of-our-coming-of-age-in-2022-contest.html>



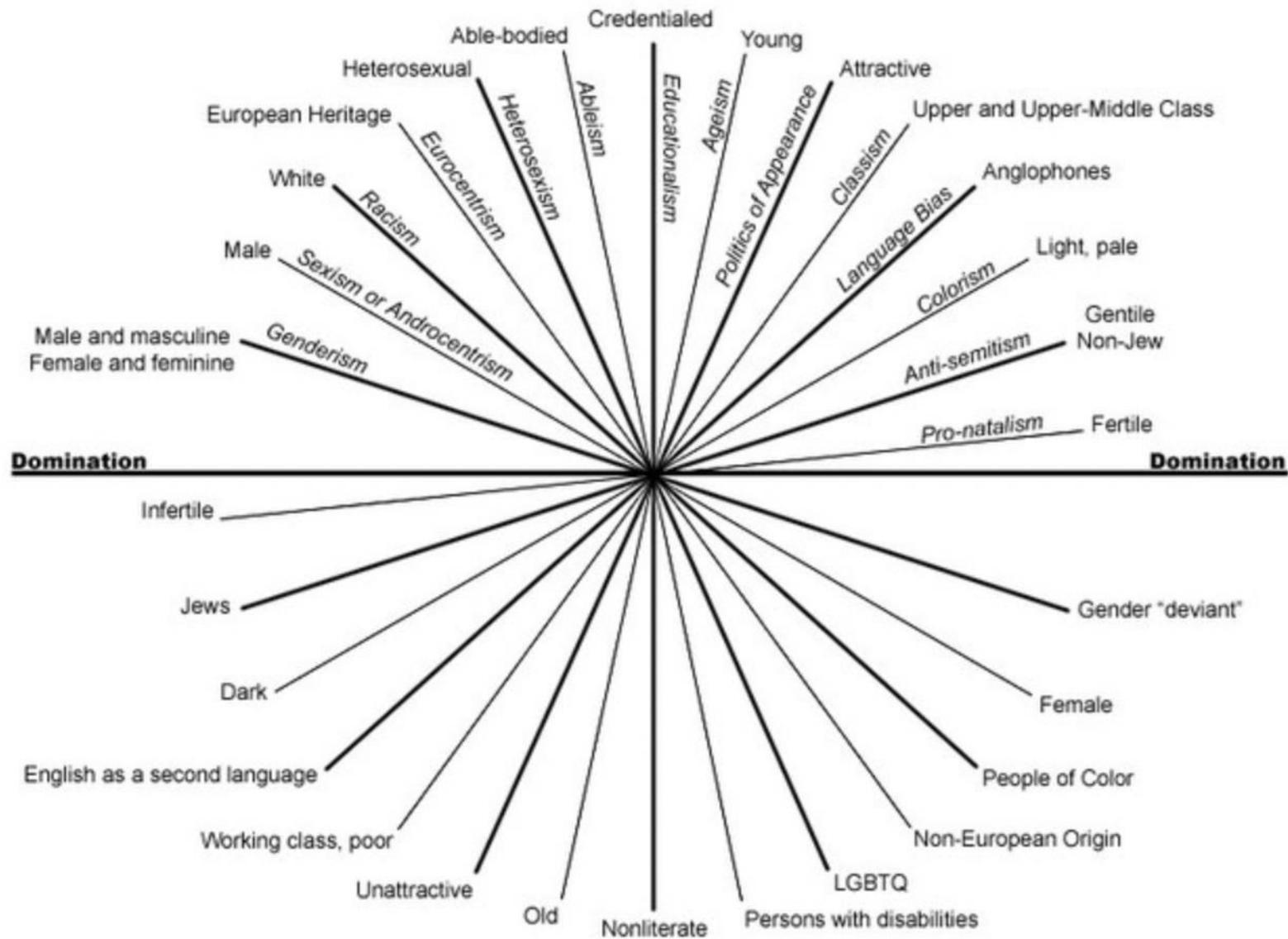
# Adultism or Anti-youth Ageism

adultism refers to behaviors and attitudes based on the assumption that adults are better than young people, and entitled to act upon young people without their agreement (Bell, 1995)

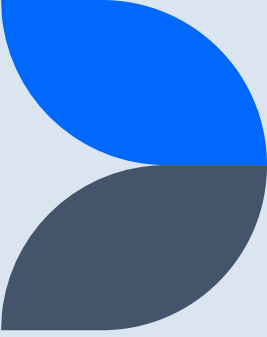


# Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Oppression

Adapted from Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In)Equality."  
The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy & Politics, Ann Diller et al., Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996.



# Adulthood operates in systems



## Laws/Policies

- Render youth powerless over most decisions that impact them
- Rights afforded to adults not always for “school children”
- Easier to punish youth than hold industries accountable

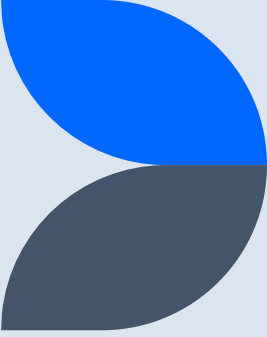
## Adults/organizations/leadership

- Derail youth’s transformative/progressive ideas
- Feign over youth being “articulate” without engaging authentically with their ideas- Discourse of surprise
- Do not allocate appropriate resources/time/funding to support youth
- Romanticization of youth voice without the reality to make it effective
- Decorative programming in lieu of transformative work

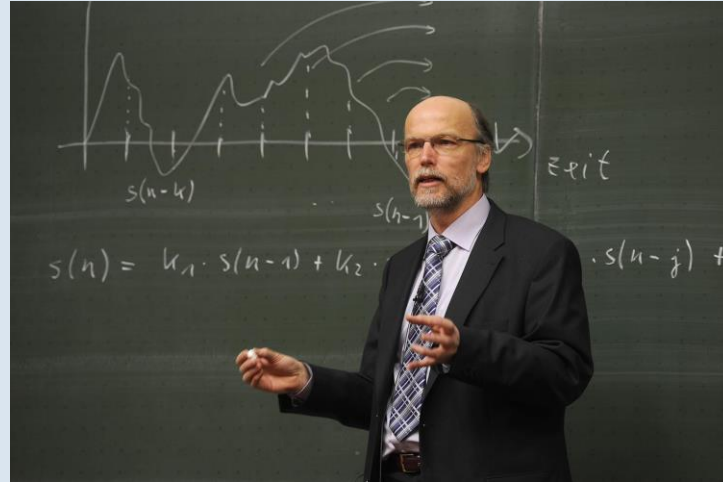


**NO KIDS**

# Adulthood operates in youth programs



Policing



Lecturing



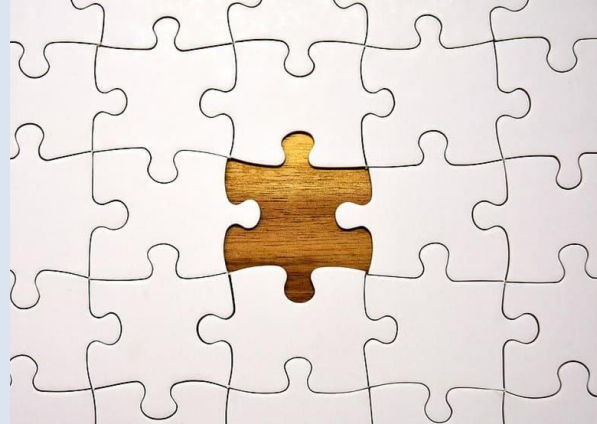
Disengaging



# Adulthood operates in youth programs



Obvious  
separation  
between  
youth/adults



Incomplete  
instruction



Excluding youth



Negative  
Comments

# Youth internalize inferiority



- Defer to adults to make decisions
- Higher internalized adultism- worse decision-making capacity, poorer problem solving





# **Small Group Activity**



# Debrief

What examples of these adultist practices came up in your group discussion? How do these show up?

What specific ideas emerged to address them?

# A solution: A Social Justice Approach to Youth Development

Youth “contest, challenge, respond to, and negotiate the use and misuse of power in their lives” (Ginwright & James, 2002, p. 35).



## Embrace Youth Culture

- Celebrate youth culture in organizational culture
- Language
- Personnel
- Recruitment Strategies



## Encourage Collective Action

- Involve oneself in collective action and strategies that challenge local and national systems and institutions
- Community Organizing
- Rallies and Marches
- Walkouts
- Boycotts and Hunger Strikes
- Electoral Strategies



## Analyze Power in Social Relationships



- Political Education
- Political Strategizing
- Identifying Power Holders
- Reflecting on power in one's own life

## Make Identity Central



- Join support groups and organizations that support identity
- Read material where one's identity is central and celebrated
- Critique stereotypes regarding one's identities

## Promote Systemic Social Change



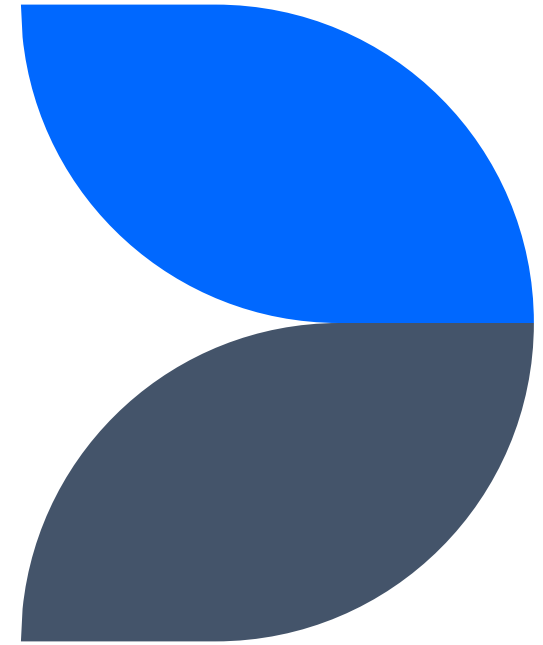
- Work to end social inequality
- Refrain from activities and behaviors that are oppressive to others

5  
Core Principles  
S J Y D

# Applying SJYD in Prevention

Situation: There has been an uptick in vaping in bathrooms at your local high school. School leaders ask the local coalition to suggest solutions.

Thinking about adultism and the SJYD framework, what considerations feel most important?



<b>Core Component of SJYD</b>	<b>Curious questions</b>
<b>Embrace youth culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Can you help me understand what is happening? What feels most important about this right now?</li><li>● What are your current school climate initiatives or goals?</li></ul>
<b>Make Identity Central</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● In what ways have you involved youth who are most impacted by this (e.g. those who use nicotine, those who have expressed concerns?)</li><li>● How are you centering health equity considerations in any potential solutions?</li></ul>
<b>Analyze power in social relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Can you help me understand the current disciplinary approach? Who engages with students when they are identified as using tobacco/nicotine?</li></ul>
<b>Encourage collective action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Who are the various people involved/stakeholders who should be part of this conversation?</li><li>● How are other schools/coalition addressing this issue, are there models that might work well in our context?</li></ul>
<b>Promote Systemic Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● In what ways are youth involved in co-designing solutions to this challenge?</li><li>● Do you have formal opportunities for students to provide input?</li><li>● If resources, funding, and capacity were of no concern, how would you imagine addressing teen vaping at your school?</li></ul>





**Practices that enhance collaboration  
between youth & adults**

# WORKING WITH YOUTH

## PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT GENUINE YOUTH-ADULT COLLABORATION

Findings from research on youth participatory action research at the Bridge Project



### FACILITATE WITH INTENTION

- Outline session activities
- Provide clear guidance on activity steps
- Connect content from previous sessions to current session
- Debrief activities in a way that allows youth to understand how the skills they've learned might be useful in the future



### LET YOUTH LEAD



Voting or day-to-day decisions



Project level decisions



### ACKNOWLEDGE POWER

- Apologize when you make mistakes
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Discuss different identities of youth and adults and how power may be associated with those identities
- If you make a decision without youth, explain and justify.



### WORK TOGETHER

Work, play, participate, problem-solve, and clean together.



### LEARN TO LET GO

#### Let Go of:

- Rigid behavioral expectations
- Desire to control dialogue
- Punitive discipline

#### Embrace:

- Curiosity
- Relationships
- Authenticity
- Fun/Silliness



### ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE

- Ask open-ended questions
- Moderate don't punctuate
- Allow for silence



### CELEBRATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Honor birthdays and other special events
- Recognize productive behavior
- Acknowledge unique contributions of youth
- Celebrate completion of activity not just project

*“Do not say things that are dismissive, like: “Oh it’s life, get over it”. Instead, teachers could let students take a breather if they need one, because they are getting angry or upset.”-HS Student*

(Kennedy, Anyon, Engle, Schofield Clark, 2021)



# Resources for further learning

Lessons in Adolescence Podcast (particularly Episode 24):

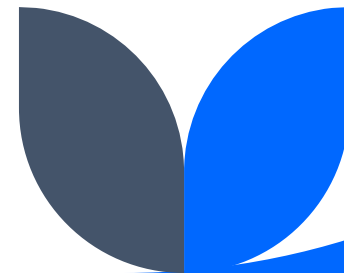
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/lessons-in-adolescence/id1535500075>

Frameworks Reframing Adolescence and Adolescent Development toolkit:

<https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/toolkit/the-core-story-of-adolescence/>

Adulthood TEDx Talk: (Heather Kennedy): [https://youtu.be/QOznObRok\\_4](https://youtu.be/QOznObRok_4)

Should you let Gen Z "save us"? Youth Liberation explained with Saint Andrewism | Khadija Mbowe <https://youtu.be/QkTjlf6BTFU>



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- Hinson, L., Kapungu, C., Jessee, C., Skinner, M., Bardini, M & Evans-Whipp, T. (2016) *Measuring positive youth development toolkit: A guide for Implementers of youth programs*. Washington DC: YouthPower Learning, Making Cents International. Retrieved from <https://www.icrw.orh/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/pyd-measurement-toolkit-final.pdf>
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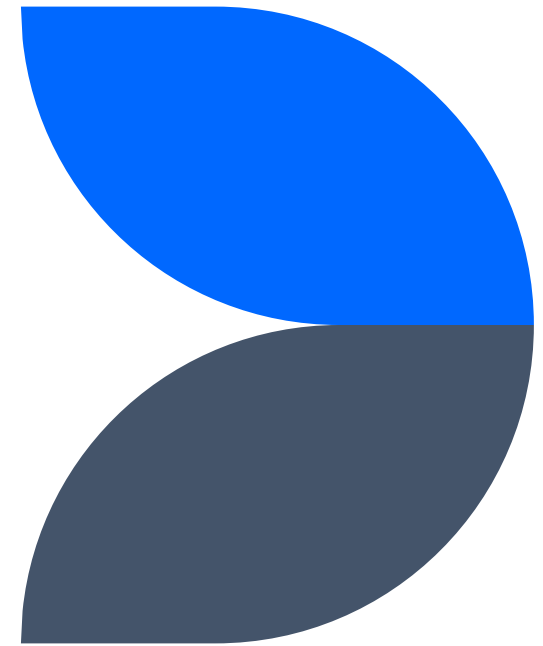
# Thank you!

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# Questions?



# Q&A



<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=368841>



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The purpose of the Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network is to improve implementation and delivery of effective substance abuse prevention interventions, and provide training and technical assistance services to the substance abuse prevention field.

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<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/OaIT5aj/SignUp>



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