

# Module 2: Introduction to Positive Youth Development Facilitator Guide

Youth Development Practitioner Pre-Apprenticeship

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## Overview

Module 2 consists of six sessions and will introduce pre-apprentices to the foundational concepts of positive youth development theory including the basic stages of adolescent growth, the use of assessments in supporting youth, and the benefits of positive youth-adult interactions.

## Objectives

- Participants will understand the basic principles of positive youth development theory.
- Participants will be able to identify the difference between traditional youth services approaches and positive youth development.
- Participants will be able to describe the core tasks of adolescent development.
- Participants will be able to name the core competencies that young people need to succeed.
- Participants will understand the role of observation and assessment in youth development.
- Participants will be able to define youth engagement and provide examples.

## Sessions

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2.5	Youth Engagement and Relationships	90 minutes	14
2.6	Module 2 Reflection	30 minutes	16
TOTAL TIME		8 hours	

## Session 2.1: Principles of Positive Youth Development

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90 minutes

### Purpose

Participants will learn the basics of positive youth development and why youth development matters.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector with sound
- PowerPoint presentation: 2.1 Principles of Positive Youth Development
- Whiteboard or flipchart paper
- Markers
- 10 wooden pencils
- Large rubber band
- 8-10 small plastic or foam balls

### Participant Passport Materials

- Positive Youth Development Overview

### Preparation

- Review the session materials and customize as needed to support your participants.

### Instructions

#### What is Positive Youth Development? (20 minutes)

- **Slides 1-2:** Welcome participants and share that in this module they will be learning about the key theory behind youth service work, called positive youth development.
- Do a brief demonstration to help participants begin to conceptualize the topic:
  - ✎ Standing in front of the group, hold up one pencil and say: *Imagine this pencil is a young person in high school. What type of pressures and challenges might this young person face?* Encourage the group to name several challenges such as drugs, violent neighborhoods, emotional stress, or family concerns.
  - ✎ Next, ask: *What might happen if this young person has to face all these issues alone?* Wait for a few responses, then snap the pencil in half. This represents the young person struggling under the weight of stress.
  - ✎ Pick up another pencil and share that this is the same young person as before, but now they have supportive adults in their life. Call on the group to name different adults (i.e., parents, coach, counselor, teacher, neighbor, etc.). Each time they name a different adult, pick up another pencil, holding them all vertically in a bunch. Wrap the rubber band around the bunch.

- ✎ Hold up the bunch of pencils and ask the group: *Do you think this young person will break as easily with all the support they have now?* Try to break the bunch. Pass it around to participants and encourage them to try breaking it.
- **Slide 3:** Debrief the demonstration with the questions on the slide.
- **Slide 4:** Ask the question: When you hear the term “positive youth development,” what comes to mind? Call on a few volunteers to share responses and write the ideas on the whiteboard or flipchart paper.
- **Slide 5:** Read the definition and let participants know that you will unpack the definition later in the session.

### Research Overview (30 minutes)

- **Slides 6-8:** Review the research and theories that support positive youth development. Remind participants that they do not need to learn all the details of these concepts, but it is important to understand that PYD is a well-researched approach that has been shown to help children and youth thrive.
  - ✎ Note that you will return to some of these concepts in later sessions as pre-apprentices start to practice and apply the ten competencies for youth workers.
- **Slide 9:** Show the 5-minute video on the Science of Learning and Development (SOLD).
- **Slide 10:** Wrap up this section by sharing the key takeaways.

### PYD in Action (25 minutes)

- Lead pre-apprentices through another demonstration of positive youth development:
  - ✎ Choose one volunteers who will imagine that they are 14-year-old “teenager” again. Select another volunteer who will pretend that they are the “parent.”
  - ✎ Ask the group to call out challenges that young people face in their community and society today. Hand each respondent a light foam ball. Stop at eight responses.
  - ✎ Bring the participants with balls to the front of the room and line up a yard or two away from the teen and the parent.
  - ✎ Instruct the parent that their responsibility is to protect the teen from all the challenges lined up in front of them. The parent can move themselves and/or the teen to try and protect them. However, the teen cannot move on their own. Instruct the participants to throw their balls at the teen after you count to three.
  - ✎ Ensure that everyone understands the task before counting to three. After the balls are thrown, debrief with the questions 1 and 2 on **slide 11**.
  - ✎ Next, ask the “teen” to name other adults who they could call in to help protect against challenges. Choose a few volunteers to represent these other adults.
  - ✎ Now, ask the parent and adults to come up with a plan to protect the teen. Line up the challenges again and direct them when to throw the balls.
  - ✎ Debrief with questions 3-5 on **slide 11**.

- **Slides 12-17:** Share the definition of positive youth development again and review its components. Participants can follow along with the **Positive Youth Development Overview** in the Participant Passports. Ask the group if they can make any connections between these concepts and the two demonstrations.

### Conclusion (15 minutes)

- **Slide 18:** Go through each line and explain the differences between traditional youth services and positive youth development. Ask if pre-apprentices have experienced any elements of PYD in the youth programming that they participated in.
- Wrap up the session by answering any questions participants may have about the information shared.

### References

- Jutta Dotterweich, 2021, Act for Youth, Positive Youth Development 101: A Curriculum for Youth Work Professionals,  
[https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd\\_pyd101curriculum.pdf](https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd_pyd101curriculum.pdf)
- Edutopia, 2019, The Science of Learning and Development,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1VoUImKYDE>

## Session 2.2: Understanding Youth Part 1

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*90 minutes*

### Purpose

Participants will learn the definition of child and youth, the stages of development, and some basic concepts of adolescent brain development.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector with sound
- PowerPoint presentation: 2.2 Understanding Youth Part 1
- Flipchart paper or large poster paper
- Markers

### Participant Passport Materials

- Tasks of Adolescent Development
- Social Identity Wheel

### Preparation

- Review the session materials and customize as needed to support your participants.

### Instructions

#### Adolescent Development (40 minutes)

- **Slides 1-2:** Welcome participants and share that in this session they will begin to learn about how youth development, starting with their brains.
- **Slide 3:** Divide participants into three groups and provide each one with flipchart paper and markers. Pose this question to the groups: When does adolescence begin and end?
  - ✎ Each group should huddle together to discuss and provide their answer.
- **Slide 4:** Share the age ranges for adolescence. Note that these stages overlap as each person's development is unique.
- **Slide 5:** Assign each group a time in young people's lives – elementary school, middle school, and high school. Note that elementary is included since puberty may begin for some youth during this time. Instruct them to describe the tasks and milestones of that stage.
  - ✎ Groups should write down the major milestones and events in the various areas listed on the slide.
  - ✎ Have each group report out, starting with elementary school. After each presentation, ask the rest of the pre-apprentices if they have questions or if anything is missing. Add important tasks and events if so.

- **Slides 6-7:** Review the tasks of adolescence and compare the information to what the groups wrote. Encourage participants to follow along with the **Tasks of Adolescent Development** handout in the Participant Passport.
- **Slide 8:** Show the 4-minute video [Why the Teenage Brain Has an Evolutionary Advantage](#) which provides a brief overview of adolescent brain development.
- **Slide 9:** Review risk taking behavior in teenagers. Ask for examples of healthy risks, such as trying out for a team, leading a school project, or learning a new skill.

### Identity Formation (30 minutes)

- **Slide 10:** Share that another key theme of adolescence is identity formation. This process of figuring out who you are and how you fit in starts in childhood and grows in significance during adolescence.
- **Slide 11-12:** Review the definitions of identity, self-identity and social identity.
- **Slides 13:** Share the **Social Identity Wheel**, which participants also have a copy of in their workbooks. Next, lead them through an activity to help them reflect on their own social identities. Start by inviting participants to think about their time in high school and the social identities they explored. Who or what influenced you the most?
- **Slide 14:** In the blank circle in their workbooks, they should write 5 or 6 social characteristics other people most likely identified with them in high school.
- **Slide 15:** Once everyone has written something, ask participants to form groups of three and discuss the reflection questions, then debrief with the full group.

### Social Media and Identity (20 minutes)

- **Slides 16:** Show the 4-minute video [Does Social Media Impact Teen Mental Health?](#)
- **Slide 17:** Review the effects of screen time on teen's connection, focus, and rest. Have the pre-apprentices experienced or observed these impacts in themselves or others?
- Wrap up the session by facilitating a discussion about combating the effects of social media on youth identity and health. Have the group make a list of recommendations that they could share with other youth.

### References

- Jutta Dotterweich, 2021, Act for Youth, Positive Youth Development 101: A Curriculum for Youth Work Professionals, [https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd\\_pyd101curriculum.pdf](https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd_pyd101curriculum.pdf)
- Edutopia, 2019, The Science of Learning and Development, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1VoUImKYDE>
- ABC News, Does social media negatively impact teen mental health?, <https://youtu.be/gnEpRDh4Y2A?feature=shared>

## Session 2.3: Understanding Youth Part 2

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*90 minutes*

### Purpose

Participants will learn about the importance of observation and assessment in the practice of positive youth development. They will also learn about strategies for supporting youth with a variety of needs.

**Note:** Facilitators should be mindful that this session includes a brief overview of common learning and mental health conditions in youth. It may be the case that there are pre-apprentices with these conditions who may or may not have disclosed them to the facilitator. Be mindful of, and help participants avoid stigmatizing any of the conditions or support resources. Connect participants to additional supports if they need it.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector with sound
- PowerPoint presentation: 2.3 Understanding Youth Part 2
- Flipchart paper or large poster paper
- Markers
- Laptop/computer with Internet, *1 per group*
- Online collage maker such as [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

### Participant Passport Materials

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

### Preparation

- Review the session materials and customize as needed to support your participants.
- Print and cut out the **Ten Tasks of Adolescent Development** into strips.

### Instructions

#### Observation and Assessment in PYD (40 minutes)

- **Slides 1-2:** Welcome participants and remind them that they learned about the basics of adolescent development in the previous session. In this session they will continue exploring adolescent development by examining the various needs of youth and how to support them.
- **Slide 3:** Pose this question to the group: How do we know if a young person is “on-track” with their development? Call on a few volunteers to share their responses.

- **Slide 4:** Remind participants of the ten tasks of adolescent development and share that one way to determine if youth are on-track is to evaluate their progress on the different tasks. Pre-apprentices will do a short activity to practice.
  - ✎ Organize participants into ten groups and give each group a strip of paper with one of the **Tasks of Adolescent Development**.
  - ✎ Provide each group with flipchart paper and markers. Their task is to make a list of example criteria for each of their assigned tasks. They should list behaviors or actions that might indicate a teen is progressing well for that task, as well as behaviors or actions that might indicate that they are not progressing.
  - ✎ **Slide 5:** Share the examples on the slide; answer any questions participants may have before beginning.
  - ✎ Allow groups 5-10 minutes to work. Ask each group to share their task and criteria and ask the remaining participants to add any additional ideas.
- **Slides 6:** Share that the previous activity helped to demonstrate the concepts of observation and assessment.
- **Slides 7-10:** Review the definitions, benefits, and areas of focus for observation and assessment.
- **Slide 11:** Let participants know that there are a variety of formal and informal observation and assessment tools that youth development practitioners and organizations may use based on the youth they serve, programming, and support services. One common tool used by providers is the **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** (SDQ), a screening tool to assess young people's mental health and well-being.
- **Slide 12:** Direct participants to review a copy of the SDQ in the Participant Passports and discuss the reflection questions with a partner or in trios. After a few minutes of discussion, call on each pair to share out highlights.
- **Slide 13:** Wrap up this section by reviewing some key considerations for the use of assessments.

### **Supporting the Needs of Youth (35 minutes)**

- **Slide 14:** Now that participants have an idea of how to assess development in youth, it is important that they keep in mind that every child develops at their own pace. There may also be unique needs that practitioners should be aware of and address to promote healthy development for all youth.
- Take a moment to note that youth may not always disclose if there is a learning or mental health condition that might impact their ability to engage. Ask participants why this may be the case and call on a few volunteers to share their thoughts.
- Share that youth may not share a condition due to the stigma attached to it, lack of a diagnosis, or there could be other reasons. Whether or not a young person discloses a

learning or mental health condition, youth practitioners should strive to create an engaging and welcoming environment.

- **Slide 15:** Click through the celebrity photos one at a time and ask participants to share which learning or mental health condition they think the person grew up with. Afterward, share that these individuals represent that we cannot always see a disability and that youth of all abilities can pursue and be successful in a variety of careers.
- **Slide 16:** Note that the purpose of diagnosis is not just to label people but to provide treatment and support services. Youth workers collaborate with other mental health professionals to offer support and resources that enable youth to function better in school, work, with family, friends, and their community.
- **Slides 17-24:** Review some of the hidden or undisclosed disabilities that youth service workers may encounter. These conditions are “hidden” in the sense that they may not present in a physical manner. Pause as needed for participants questions or reactions, while reminding them that this section is meant as a brief overview.
  - ✎ **Slide 18:** Learning disabilities are usually assessed and diagnosed with testing. However, some young people are never tested while others are tested incorrectly.
  - ✎ **Slide 20:** While it is common for people to show these behaviors some of the time, for people with ADHD, the behaviors are frequent and occur across multiple situations, such as at school, at home, at work, or with family and friends.
  - ✎ **Slide 24:** A traumatic event could be something that happens once or be reoccurring. Share that Module 3 will include a session that covers more about using trauma-informed care practices with youth.
- **Slide 25:** It may be a bit overwhelming for participants to learn about the various challenges youth may face. However, there are strategies and approaches that youth service workers employ to create inclusive environments that promote healthy growth.
- **Slides 26-29:** Briefly review the strategies, noting that each youth-serving organization will take its own approach and may borrow from multiple models.

### Comfort Corners (15 minutes)

- To wrap up the session, participants will practice one of the strategies by designing their own Comfort Corner for high school-aged youth. Organize participants into four groups and instruct them to use an online collage maker such as [Canva.com](https://canva.com) to visualize their corner. Allow about ten minutes for groups to work on their designs then share out.

### References

- Jutta Dotterweich, 2020, Act for Youth Creating Inclusive Program Environments for Youth with Different Abilities, <https://actforyouth.org/resources/ipe/inclusive-program-environments-manual.pdf>

## Ten Tasks of Adolescent Development

1. Adjust to sexually maturing bodies and feelings
2. Develop and apply abstract thinking skills
3. Develop and apply new perspectives on human relationships
4. Develop and apply new coping skills in areas such as decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution
5. Identify meaningful moral standards, values, and belief systems
6. Understand and express more complex emotional experiences
7. Form friendships that are mutually close and supportive
8. Establish key aspects of identity
9. Meet the demands of increasingly mature roles and responsibilities
10. Renegotiate relationships with adults in parenting roles

## Session 2.4: Positive Youth Outcomes

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*90 minutes*

### Purpose

Participants will be introduced to various models of positive youth outcomes and the necessary supports to achieve those outcomes.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector with sound
- PowerPoint presentation: 2.4 Positive Youth Outcomes
- Flipchart paper or large poster paper
- Markers

### Participant Passport Materials

- 6 Cs of Positive Youth Outcomes

### Preparation

- Review the session materials and customize as needed to support your participants.

### Instructions

#### Positive Outcomes Frameworks (45 minutes)

- **Slides 1-2:** Welcome participants and share that in this session they will learn about the desired impacts of positive youth development on young people's behavior.
- **Slide 3:** Share the quote about youth from Karen Pittman, Founder of Ready by 21, a national youth development initiative. Ask participants to share what they think it means.
- **Slide 4:** Lead a group brainstorm to unpack the quote some more. Ask participants to make a list of the abilities, attitudes, character, and values that they would want to see in healthy, well-adjusted youth. Capture their ideas on flipchart paper.
- **Slide 5:** Share the definition of positive youth outcomes and that there are various frameworks for naming and organizing these qualities.
- **Slides 6-10:** Review some of the popular positive youth outcome frameworks.
  - **Slide 6:** The Cs framework emerged in the 1990s with contributions from many researchers and youth practitioners. It provides a vocabulary list for what young people need to succeed.
  - **Slide 7:** The field of social and emotional learning field is represented here by CASEL – the Collaboration of Academic, Social and Emotional Learning. The CASEL list expands the social emotional competencies mentioned in the 6 Cs.

- ✎ **Slide 8:** 4-H is a hands-on and community-focused youth development program. The essential elements of a 4-H experience are the “best practices” that help staff and volunteers address the four basic developmental needs of youth.
- ✎ **Slide 9:** The Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets is a popular framework that includes external and internal assets young people need across all aspects of their lives and to make good decisions.
- ✎ **Slide 10:** There may be other frameworks developed by specific organizations. Facilitators can share examples from their work, or one used by the employer partner.
- **Slide 11:** Ask the reflection questions and call on volunteers to share responses.

### Using the 6Cs (25 minutes)

- **Slide 12:** Share with pre-apprentices that they will now practice applying one of the frameworks. Organize participants into six groups, assign them one of the **6 Cs of Positive Youth Outcomes**, which are listed in the Participant Passports.
- ✎ **Round 1:** Each group will have four minutes to brainstorm and write out approaches and activities to build young people’s capacity in this area.
- ✎ **Round 2:** Each group will pass their paper to the next group in a clockwise manner. Each group will then have three minutes to add more strategies to the list generated by the previous group.
- ✎ **Round 3:** Do another rotation of the papers and allow three more minutes for groups to add to the list.
- ✎ **Share Out:** Have each group present the last list they worked on. Ask the participants if there are any ideas to add to any of the lists.
- Share with pre-apprentices that the purpose of this activity is to highlight that activities are not the only way to develop positive outcomes in young people. Relationships, organizational supports, and supportive environments all help youth to thrive.

### The SOS Framework (20 minutes)

- **Slide 13-16:** There is one final framework that participants will learn about in this session called SOS. Review the framework and provide examples of each element.
- **Slide 17:** Wrap up the session by reminding participants that youth development work is not the sole responsibility of an organization, it requires a community approach to be successful.

## References

- Jutta Dotterweich, 2021, Act for Youth, Positive Youth Development 101: A Curriculum for Youth Work Professionals, [https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd\\_pyd101curriculum.pdf](https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd_pyd101curriculum.pdf)
- Positive Outcomes, <https://actforyouth.org/pyd/outcomes.cfm>

## Session 2.5: Youth Engagement and Relationships

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*90 minutes*

### Purpose

Participants will learn what meaningful youth engagement looks like and the benefits of positive youth-adult interactions.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector with sound
- PowerPoint presentation: 2.5 Youth Engagement and Relationships
- Flipchart paper or large poster paper
- Markers

### Participant Passport Materials

- Developmental Relationships Framework

### Preparation

- Review the session materials and customize as needed to support your participants.

### Instructions

#### Developmental Relationships (40 minutes)

- **Slides 1-2:** Welcome participants and share that in this session they will learn how adults can form healthy relationships with youth and how to meaningfully connect.
- **Slide 3:** Share the “sparks” definition from the Search Institute. Go around the room and ask each participant to share their spark.
- **Slides 4-5:** Show the 3-minute video [What’s Your Spark](#) where young people of all ages share their sparks. Quickly debrief with the reflection questions.
- Share that sparks can be important motivators for young people to engage in activities and pursue their goals. For practitioners, knowing what sparks youth can inform programming and help to establish positive relationships between adults and youth, as it shows that the adult is interested in learning about the young person.
- **Slide 6:** Review the definition of developmental relationships and their significance in youth development work.
- **Slides 7-12:** Review the **Developmental Relationship Framework** and the five strategies and actions. Each strategy is framed from the perspective of a young person speaking to an adult. A copy of the framework is included in the Participant Passport.
- **Slide 13:** Now that participants have an initial understanding of the strategies to strengthen relationships between youth and adults, they will have an opportunity to apply it.

- ✂ Divide participants into five groups, assigning each group one of the five strategies. Their task is to make a list of recommendations to enhance the pre-apprenticeship program by incorporating the 20 actions. Each group should focus on the actions associated with their strategy. For example, the Express Care group may recommend starting each session with a quick check-in so that facilitators know how participants feel before jumping into the lesson.
- ✂ Allow groups 5-10 minutes to brainstorm and create their lists before sharing out with the larger group. Facilitators are encouraged to incorporate some of the participants' ideas into future sessions, when possible.

### Youth Engagement (50 minutes)

- **Slide 14:** Transition the session to youth engagement, an important aspect of healthy development and adult-youth relationships.
- **Slide 15:** Review the definition of youth engagement. This specific definition emphasizes the collaboration and joint action between youth and adults.
- **Slide 16:** Review the misconceptions of youth engagement. It can be difficult for adults to share power with young people but working together and sharing expertise has benefits for everyone.
- **Slide 17:** Show the 2-minute [video clip from the movie \*Matilda\*](#). Although it is an exaggeration, this scene represents the concept of “adultism” – when adults display negative assumptions, behaviors, or attitudes towards young people simply because they are younger.
  - ✂ Lead a brief discussion with pre-apprentices about adultism and if they have experienced it and what the impact is on young people and their development.
- **Slide 18:** Review the chart of meaningful roles for young people. Youth practitioners and other adults can combat adultism and engage youth with meaningful opportunities in planning and decision making.
- **Slide 19:** Define participation, voice and contribution, and shared leadership.
- **Slide 20:** The Ladder of Youth Participation is similar to the chart but visualizes youth engagement as a ladder. Moving up the ladder requires more skills and effort from youth and adults; however, it provides a path for future growth and allows organizations to assess their programming and stay accountable to their young people.
- **Slide 21:** Show the 10-minute video [Why Youth Participation is Key](#) and debrief with participants about the speaker's recommendations for meaningful youth participation.

### References

- Jutta Dotterweich, 2021, Act for Youth, Positive Youth Development 101: A Curriculum for Youth Work Professionals, [https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd\\_pyd101curriculum.pdf](https://actforyouth.org/resources/pyd/pyd_pyd101curriculum.pdf)

## Session 2.6: Module 2 Reflection

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*30 minutes*

### Purpose

Participants will reflect on their learning and assess their comprehension of the key concepts from the module.

### Materials

- Laptop/computer with Internet and projector
- PowerPoint presentations from Module 2

### Participant Passport Materials

- Module 2 Reflection

### Preparation

- Review the Module 2 Reflection activity in the Participant Passports and be prepared to answer questions about the list of competencies.

### Instructions

- Direct pre-apprentices to the **Module 2 Reflection** activity in their workbooks. Share that in this session they will reflect on their learning of the key concepts from the Module 2 sessions.
- Review the instructions on the first page of the activity.
- Read aloud each of the Module 2 competencies on the second page. Ask if there are any questions about the competency to ensure that participants can accurately assess their understanding.
  - ✎ Use the slides from Module 2 sessions to highlight key learnings or provide examples of the competencies.
- Instruct pre-apprentices to write responses to the reflection questions. Afterwards, they should pair up to discuss and develop a mini-action plan for the competency they would like to develop.
- As time permits, have pre-apprentices share out their action steps with the group.