

WHO IS IT FOR AND WITH?

INTRODUCTION

Component 4 provides volunteers with an introduction to working with young people. Firstly, it introduces volunteers to the stages of development of young people and the basic factors impacting on their development as well as the importance of acknowledging young people's strengths. It also provides an opportunity for volunteers to consider the local contexts impacting on young people i.e. the local social, geographical and cultural contexts.

This component also introduces volunteers to the critical importance of building relationships with young people through the youth work process, revisiting the core principles of empowerment, participation and equality as well as the rights of young people.

This component also considers the importance of building relationships with other key stakeholders including parents and the wider community.

At the end of this component learners will be able to:

- Discuss the relevant developmental stage pertaining to the young people they are working with.
- Discuss the basic factors impacting on young people's development.
- Describe young peoples' strengths.
- Discuss the local contexts impacting on the lives of the young people they work with.
- Understand the impact of these contexts on young peoples' lives.
- Understand the importance of empowerment, participation and equality when working with young people.
- Understand the importance of respecting young peoples' rights.
- Apply these principles when working directly with young people.
- Describe how parents interface with the organisation.
- Identify where their role as a volunteer interfaces with parents.
- Identify how the organisation interfaces with the local community.

OVERVIEW

CORE CONTENT

Working with Young People:

Stages of development of young people.

Basic factors impacting on young people's development and acknowledging young people's strengths.

Local contexts impacting on young people i.e. the local social, geographical and cultural contexts impacting on the young people the organisation is working with.

Building relationships with young people.

Revisiting the key youth work principles of empowerment, participation and equality.

Young peoples' rights.

How to engage with young people.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learners will be able to:

Discuss the relevant developmental stage pertaining to the young people they are working with.

Discuss the basic factors impacting on young people's development.

Describe young peoples' strengths.

Discuss the local contexts impacting on the lives of the young people they work with.

Understand the impact of these contexts on young peoples' lives.

Learners will be able to:

Understand the importance of empowerment, participation and equality when working with young people.

Understand the importance of respecting young peoples' rights.

Apply these principles when working directly with young people.

MATERIALS INCLUDED

- Worksheet and factsheet on the basic stages of young people's development.
 - Basic factsheet on factors impacting on a young person's development.
 - Worksheet on identifying and building young peoples' strengths.
 - Worksheet on how to conduct a profile of the local area.
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- Worksheets on building relationships with young people.

CORE CONTENT	LEARNING OUTCOMES	MATERIALS INCLUDED
<p>Building relationships with parents.</p> <hr/> <p>The rights and role of parents in the organisation.</p>	<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <hr/> <p>Describe how parents interface with the organisation.</p> <p>Identify where their role as a volunteer interfaces with parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factsheet on the rights and role of parents. • Worksheets/exercises.
<p>Building relationships with the local community.</p> <hr/> <p>Consideration of how the organisation engages with the local community e.g. young people's involvement in community activities, involvement with other organisations in the community.</p>	<p>Learners will be able to:</p> <hr/> <p>Identify how the organisation interfaces with the local community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet on development of a community mapping exercise.

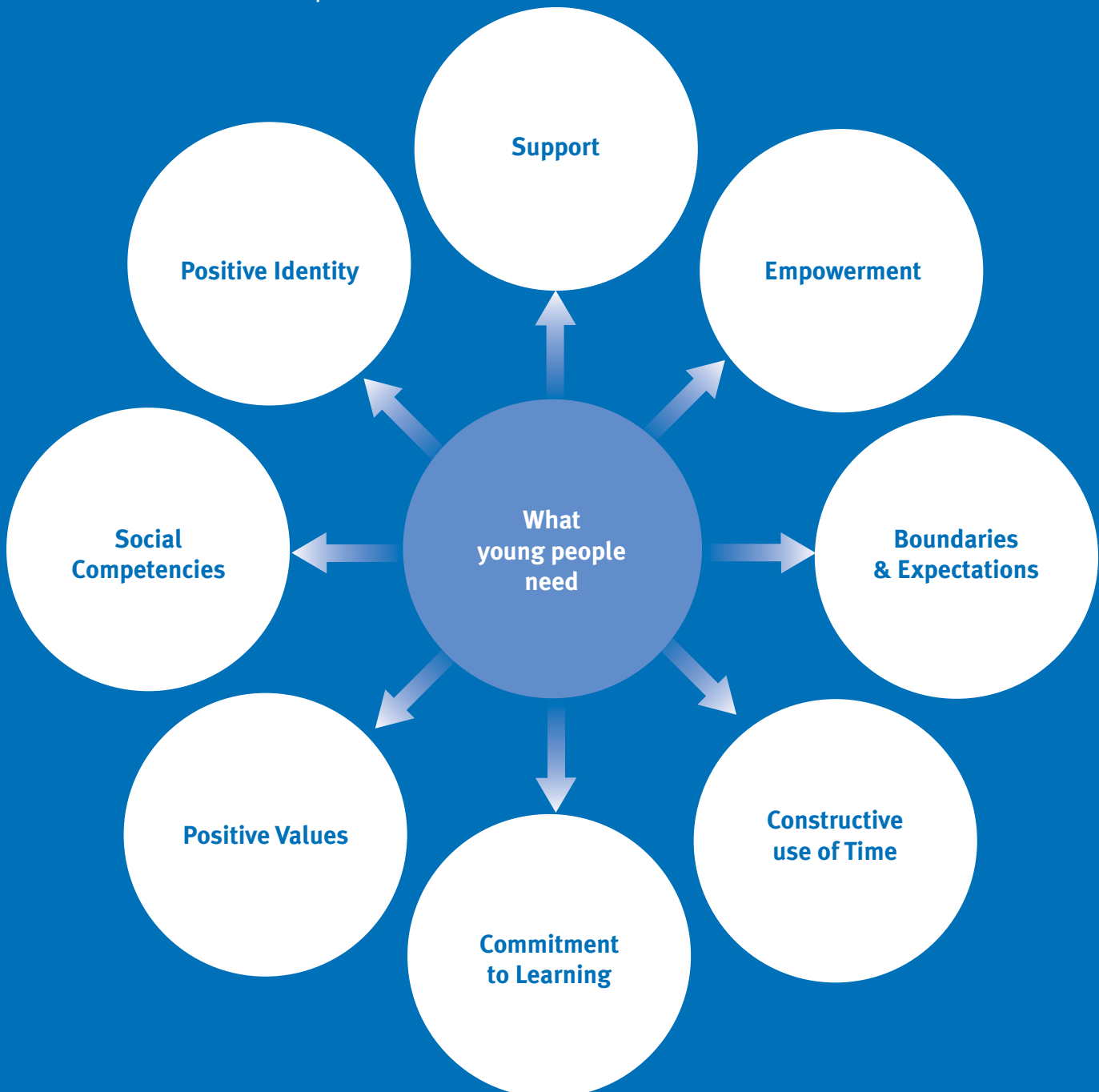
FACTSHEET:**STAGES OF HEALTHY ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT**

(<http://whs.juhsd.k12.ca.us/09-10Source/adolescentdevelopment.pdf>)

Stage with Age range (Approx)	Early Adolescence (ages 10-14 years)	Middle Adolescence (ages 15-17 years)	Late Adolescence (ages 18-21 years)
CHARACTERISTIC DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES AND TASKS			
Physical Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty: Rapid growth period • Secondary sexual characteristics appear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary sexual characteristics advanced • 95% of adult height reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical maturity and reproductive growth levelling off and ending
Intellectual/ Cognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete thought dominates “here and now” • Cause-effect relationships underdeveloped • Stronger “self” than “social awareness” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in abstract thought; reverts to concrete thought under stress • Cause-effect relationships better understood • Very self absorbed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract thought established • Future oriented; able to understand, plan and pursue long range goals • Philosophical and idealistic
Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge authority, family; antiparent • Loneliness • Wide mood swings • Things of childhood rejected • Argumentative and disobedient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict with family predominates due to ambivalence about emerging independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emancipation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – vocational/technical college and/or work – adult lifestyle
Body Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preoccupation with physical changes and critical of appearance • Anxieties about secondary sexual characteristic changes • Peers used as a standard normal appearance (comparison of self to peers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less concern about physical changes but increased interest in personal attractiveness • Excessive physical activity alternating with lethargy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually comfortable with body image
Peer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves a developmental purpose • Intense friendship with same sex • Contact with opposite sex in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong peer allegiances – fad behaviors • Sexual drives emerge and teens begin to explore ability to date and attract a partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions/values less influenced by peers • Relates to individuals more than to peer group • Selection of partner based on individual preference
Identity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Am I normal?” • Daydreaming • Vocational goals change frequently • Begin to develop own value system • Emerging sexual feelings and sexual exploration • Imaginary audience • Desire for privacy • Magnify own problems “no one understands” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimentation – sex, drugs, friends, jobs, risk-taking behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue realistic vocational goals with training or career employment • Relate to family as adult • Realisations of own imitations & mortality • Establishment of sexual identity, sexual activity is more common • Establishment of ethical and moral value system • More capable of intimate, complex relationships

FACTSHEET:**THE BASIC FACTORS IMPACTING ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGING YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS****DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS¹¹**

The developmental assets framework encompasses eight broad categories of human development to form a picture of the positive things all young people from birth to age 18 need to grow up healthy and responsible.



¹¹ The Search Institute (www.search-institute.org). Cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, Ontario, Canada. http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/40_Dev_Assets/What-Are-Assets.htm

FACTSHEET:**DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS –WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE NEED****WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE NEED?¹²**

The first four asset categories focus on external structures, relationships and activities that create a positive environment for young people.

The next four categories reflect internal values, skills and beliefs that young people also need to fully engage with and function in the world around them.

Support

Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate and accept them.

Empowerment

Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected.

Boundaries and Expectations

Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to be and do their best.

Constructive use of Time

Young people need opportunities outside of school to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.

Commitment to Learning

Young people need a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.

Positive Values

Young people need strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices.

Social Competencies

Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions and to cope with new situations.

Positive Identity

Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them.

¹² The Search Institute (www.search-institute.org). Cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, Ontario, Canada. http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/40_Dev_Assets/What-Are-Assets.htm

FACTSHEET:**BUILDING ON THE INTERESTS AND TALENTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE¹³**

Each person is unique with their own talents and interests. Each young person is an individual with their own unique potential. If youth work can help a young person to discover their unique qualities, talents and interests, it is invaluable.

- What do you know about the interests and talents of the young people you are working with?
- How can you find out more about young peoples' interests and talents?

Leaders should talk to the young people, to each other and work together to find out the interests and talents of young people. The following are ways of finding out the interests of young people:

- Chat informally with them about the things that interest them.
- Set aside structured time to chat to young people, either on an individual or group basis.
- Ask them about everyday things such as school, hobbies, interests etc.
- Ask them what they would like to do in the club/group.
- Listen attentively to what they say.
- Watch young people when they take part in the group and activities. Do they show a particular interest, trait or talent?
- Have a suggestion box where young people can submit their ideas.
- Ask young people to fill out questionnaires outlining their interests and talents.
- Talk to parents about the interests/talents of their children.

¹³ Adapted from Foroige Level II Leader Training Handbook

FACTSHEET:**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE****Getting to know the young people:**

It is very important that leaders spend time getting to know the young people in their groups. As young people get to know the leaders their level of trust increases and they are much more likely to get involved in activities. Here are some ways of building relationships:

Take part in games and activities with young people – where appropriate:

Taking part in games and activities with members is an excellent way to build trust and informal relationships. The relaxed and ‘fun’ atmosphere helps young people and leaders to be themselves. Young people find it easier to express themselves and can begin to ‘break out of their shell’. Young people can also see leaders in a more human and informal setting.

Setting up opportunities just to chat:

It is a very good idea to use opportunities on club nights where young people and leaders can just chat informally – for example about what happened during the week, what was on television, sport, school etc. Young people become accustomed to talking and expressing themselves and leaders get a better understanding of the young people.

Use small groups:

Young people initially find it easier to express themselves in small groups as it is less threatening. Small groups should be used constantly and regularly during club meetings especially to discuss issues and generate ideas for activities and programmes. Young people can also carry out projects in small groups.

Older members as mentors:

Older members could take on a role as mentors for new and younger members. They can take time to welcome new members into the club/group, help them feel comfortable and get to know them.

Delegation:

Leaders and committee members can involve young people in carrying out certain tasks and roles within the club/group. This will not only help in developing a relationship but will also give the young people a sense of responsibility.

FACTSHEET:

YOUNG PEOPLES' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES (I)¹⁴

Introduction:

This section is aimed at informing young people of their rights and their entitlements, based on the U.N. Convention of the Rights of the Child. Ireland signed up to the Convention in 1992. This means that, although not all of children's rights have been made into law, there is still a responsibility on people to abide by these rights. Knowing your rights leads to empowerment. The more aware you are of what you are entitled to, the more you can stick up for yourself and campaign against things that infringe upon your rights. This section should be used as a guide to inform youth groups about their rights in relation to a wide range of issues and topics they may wish to address and take action about in the future.

Youth rights:

Refers to a set of philosophies intended to enhance civil rights for young people. Youth Rights Movements seek to enhance the role of young people in society through equal rights, youth participation, youth/adult partnerships, and ultimately, intergenerational fair play and justice.

What is a right?

To explain what a 'right' is, people often talk about the difference between 'wants' and 'needs'. Sometimes there are things that we really want to have or do, like a new computer game perhaps, or going to see our favourite band playing live. These kinds of things can feel like needs because we want them so much. However, these things aren't needs: we might not want to live without them, but we can.

¹⁴Adapted from Why Don't We - NYCI

Needs are things that we have to have, or be able to do, so that we can live and live well.

For example, to stay alive and be healthy, we need food, clean water, sleep, a place to live and people to look after us when we are sick. Rights are like needs. They are basic things that people must have or be able to do to live a healthy, safe and good life. We need food, for example, and so we have a right to food. We need to be able to learn and so we have a right to education. Other people have a duty to respect and meet these basic needs or 'rights'. The Government has the main responsibility to make sure that people's rights are respected.

The Government also has a responsibility to help parents and guardians to meet children's and young people's rights and needs.

What are 'children's rights?'

In Ireland, youth rights are also referred to as 'Children's rights', i.e. human rights for children and young people under 18 years of age. A separate set of rights has been created for children and young people because childhood is a very special and important time in all our lives. It's a time when we do a lot of growing, learning and exploring. It's a time when we are more likely to need others to look after us and help keep us safe. And it's a time that should be about having fun and enjoying ourselves.

FACTSHEET:**YOUNG PEOPLES' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES (2)****Do children and young people have responsibilities too?**

Yes. Children and young people have rights and responsibilities. In fact, rights and responsibilities are very closely linked. They're a bit like two sides of the same coin. There are two kinds of responsibilities that children and young people have.

Firstly, if you can, you should play a part in protecting your own rights. For example, you are doing something about your right to education when you make the most of the chances you have to learn. And you are doing your bit to protect your right to health if you avoid doing things that you know can damage your health - like eating too much fast food or smoking.

Secondly, you have a responsibility to respect the rights of other people. For example, you have a right to have a say and be heard. You also have a responsibility to let other people have their say and to listen to what they have to say.

What is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a very important agreement between almost all of the governments in the world. If you look at our summary of what this agreement says (Your Rights), you will see that the Convention names 41 different rights for children and young people. These rights are for all children and young people under 18 years of age.

What has the Convention got to do with me?

The Irish Government has promised to do everything it can to make the rights named in the Convention a reality for all children and young people in this country who are under 18. The reason why this promise is for children and young people under 18 is because the Convention defines a 'child' as a person who is under 18 years of age. Of course, some of you will not think of yourselves as being 'children' any more. However, if you are under 18, this Convention is your Convention too, and the rights named in it are your rights.

FACTSHEET:**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS****GOOD PRACTICE IN WORKING WITH PARENTS**

The communication process with parents should begin at the start of the young person's journey with the youth group/organisation and it should be fostered and built upon as that young person progresses. When a young person joins a group their parents should be made aware of how the group operates and what they can expect in terms of communication from the group in relation to their child and to group activities. They should also be made aware of policies and procedures that operate in the group (e.g. anti-bullying policy, procedures for dealing with disruptive/challenging behaviour) as well as the organisation/group's policy and procedures in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

The relationship with parents needs continuous attention.

The following pointers are helpful:

- Employees and volunteers should appreciate the trust which parents place in them.
- Listen carefully to what parents say about their children.
- If parents are expressing a concern, don't be defensive, try to understand it from the parents' perspective and seek to establish a common ground.
- Inform parents of any accidents and how they happened. Parents are understanding and accept scrapes and bumps occur.
- Should a difficult issue or misunderstanding arise with a parent always use calm, respectful, and supportive language when communicating with them to avoid the situation becoming confrontational. Small issues can easily turn into a stand-off situation and, when this occurs, it is the young person who is caught in the middle and who loses out.
- Introduce parents to the policies and procedures of the organisation/group, especially in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

- Provide a factsheet and hold an open night/induction meeting to brief parents of new members as soon as possible after they join the group/organisation.
- Ensure that anything you distribute to parents in writing is accurate and clearly stated. Be accurate on times, dates and location and avoid the use of jargon.
- For notes, consent forms, requests and explanations of youth group activities, use a form of reproduction that is easy to read.
- Send your communication to the parents far enough in advance so that they can consider it and act, if you expect a response.
- Keep a copy of written communications.
- Share good news of activities in the group through such activities as an annual general meeting, a newsletter etc.

WORKSHEET:

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY

