DAY ONE

It's in Every One of Us

DAY ONE
Theme: It's in Every One of Us

Focus: Learning about others who are present, who the trainers are, what this training is about. Reflecting on youth, in nonformal educational youth programs and the significant work of youth professionals.

8:00   Welcome/Protocol   Why Are We Here This Week?

8:10   Overview   Training Structure
                               Outcomes for Participants (Goals)
                               Conceptual Overview
                               Schedule and "Housekeeping" details

9:00   Group Process   Getting Acquainted

9:30   Session I   About Youth, About Caring Adults, and About Current Roles
                               Objectives:
                               • To identify specific successes, big challenges,
                                 and exciting, fun times of growing up.
                               • To identify specific characteristics of powerful
                                 adults in the lives of youth.
                               • To understand needs and competencies critical
                                 to youth for healthier growth and development.

10:00   BREAK

10:15   Session I   continued…

12:00   LUNCH

1:00   Session II   About You: Personality I.Q.™
                               Objectives:
                               • To develop an awareness of a variety of styles
                                 of communicating, problem-solving, working/
                                 learning, resolving conflict.
                               • To know our own preferred styles and how
                                 to work effectively with other styles.
                               • To appreciate the differences among us and
                                 celebrate them because we need each other.

2:45   BREAK

3:00   Session II   continued…
3:45   Session III   Setting Ground Rules—Establishing Norms
                                    Objective:
                                    • To create a safe environment for sharing and
                                       processing learning experiences.

4:15   Reflecting and Applying
                                    Objective:
                                    • To integrate the day's experience with your
                                       work with youth.

5:00   Close for the Day

OVERVIEW

•Purpose of This Training
•Training Goals and Objectives
•Conceptual Overview

Preparing the Youth Development Professional

TRAINING GOALS

The purpose of this training is to prepare youth development program staff to implement a comprehensive initiative which fosters positive growth and development for youth.

By the end of this week-long training, participants will have the understanding, knowledge, and skills to:

Goal 1: Articulate the significance and benefits to communities of nonformal programs delivered through positive youth development programs.

Objectives: Youth Development Professionals will:
1. Understand the link between positive youth development and their program.
2. Understand the connection between their program and development.
3. Understand how advocating for nonformal educational youth programs enhances and supports the their program.

Goal 2: Demonstrate improved skills in communicating effectively with the children, youth, and families with whom you work.

Objectives: Youth Development Professionals will:
1. Practice useful skill-building activities.
2. Receive feedback from colleagues and teaching staff.
3. Assess their own strengths and weaknesses in communication skills, set personal goals, and identify improvements.
4. Develop skills in bridge-building, compromise, win-win thinking, and cooperation.

Goal 3: Apply knowledge of positive youth development and family resiliency to minimize the risk behaviors of young people with whom they work.

Objectives: Youth Development Professionals will:
1. Understand the philosophy and principles of positive youth development.
2. Understand the everyday life of youth today.
3. Understand the concept of risk and protective factors in society today.

Goal 4: Deliver programs for children and young people that minimize risk and reinforce principles of positive youth development.

Objectives: Youth Development Professionals will:
1. Understand the basic developmental needs and tasks of children and adolescents.
2. Gain skills in designing programs that match youth needs with the

        principles of programs that work.

3.   Recognize the essential elements of programs that work in the promotion of positive youth development, prevention of high-risk behaviors, and intervention for existing high-risk behaviors.

Goal 5:   Become advocates for young people and resources for youth, families, and community members.

Objectives: Youth Development Professionals will:

1.   Understand the support systems necessary for youth to grow and develop healthily, the ecological model that demonstrates the relationships of these systems to youth development, and their place as staff in that model.

2.   Understand the concept of a circle of support—an interactive or cooperative support system of family, peers, and caring adults.

3.   Know resource people and systems available to assist the families and young people with whom they work.

Preparing the Youth Development Professional

CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

Assumptions Underlying Training

1. All children and youth need support and productive experiences to grow to their fullest capacity. Vulnerable, isolated, and troubled young people may need extra support and attention. Solid youth development programs meet the needs of both groups (Russell, 2001).

2. Youth development programs exist to promote the positive, healthy development of young people. Their mission is to provide the challenges, experiences, support, and help young people need to develop to their fullest potential (Russell, 2001).

3. Youth development programs are based on the idea that children learn practical life skills through structured programs emphasizing fun, play, action, and group and individual challenges. Clubs, teams, camps, workshops, classes, social events, training sessions, volunteer work, and youth exchanges are all vehicles to get youth involved in positive activity and learning (Russell, 2001).

4. Caring adults play an absolutely essential role in the healthy development of youth (Scales et al., 2001). As a rule of thumb, every young person needs three active adults involved in his/her life. These adults can be called leaders, guides, mentors,advocates, helpers, friends, and teachers; they are adults who care.

5. Each child and family (whatever its configuration) has strengths and assets that can be mobilized to serve as a source of power and support (Lynch, 2000). As youth service professionals, we must learn to reframe what at first glance appear to be negative, deficit behaviors into positive, protective forces for the child and family.

6. Young people are an essential resource; they must be active in the planning, execution, and evaluation of any program (Larson, 2006). In this way, they learn from us, and we adults learn from them.

SESSION I:

About Youth,
About Caring Adults,
and About Current Roles

- Group process: Getting acquainted
- Meeting needs
- Building competencies
- Basics of youth development
- Understanding youth development work
- Youth development as nonformal education
- Working in the youth development profession
- Key youth development concepts

GROUP PROCESS
Getting Acquainted

Techniques for Building Trust

Time spent in doing activities which will develop closeness within the group and a team feeling is not wasted time. Plan to spend one fourth to one third of your meeting time in group-building activities at the onset of putting your group together and you will save a great deal of time later in the learning experience. What happens when people first arrive at a meeting will set the tone for the entire experience, so it is extremely important that something positive be planned to do upon their arrival. They should not be left to stand around or be alone. Once you have your group together and are ready to do some formal team building or getting acquainted activities, there are a few basics to remember:

A.   Begin with an individual activity which will help members identify some aspect of self that they will be comfortable sharing with others.

B.   Move from individual to partner activity, one to one, preferably a partner acquired through some common interest or activity.

C.   Move from partner activity to small group activities, with a maximum of six per small group.

D.   Finally, involve the total group in sharing experience.

SESSION I
Basics of Youth Development Programs

Meeting Needs

and

Building Competencies

SESSION I
Meeting Needs

Young people have basic needs critical to survival and healthy development (Maslow, 1970). These are a sense of:

Safety
and structure

Belonging
and membership

Self-worth
and ability to contribute

Independence
and control over one's life

Closeness
and several good relationships

Competence
and mastery

Self-awareness
and ability to act on that understanding

SESSION I
Building Competencies

A review of research suggests that to succeed as adults, youth must acquire adequate attitudes, behaviors,and skills in several areas (Huebner, 2003):

Physical Health

Good current health status and evidence of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that will assure future well-being; for example, exercise, good nutrition, and effective contraceptive practices.

Emotional Health

The ability to respond affirmatively and cope with positive and adverse situations, to reflect on one's emotions and surroundings and to engage in leisure and fun.

Personal/Social

Intrapersonal skills—in understanding emotions and practicing self-discipline. Interpersonal skills, such as working with others, developing and sustaining friendships through cooperation, empathy, negotiation, and developing judgment skills and a coping system.

Knowledge, Reasoning, and Creativity

A broad base of knowledge and an ability to appreciate and demonstrate creative expression. Good oral, written, problem-solving skills, and an ability to learn. Interest in lifelong learning.

Vocational

A broad understanding of life options and the steps to take in reaching them. Adequate preparation for work and family life, and an understanding of the value and purpose of family, work, and leisure.

Cultural

Respecting and affirmatively responding to differences between groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and tradtions.

Civic

Understanding of their nation's, their community's, and their racial, ethnic, or cultural groups' history and values. Desire to be ethical and to be involved in efforts that contribute to the broader good.

SESSION I
Understanding Youth Development Work

What Is Youth Development?

An understanding of positive youth development is critical before skills in delivery can be enhanced. Youth development is an ongoing process through which young people attempt to meet their basic needs and to develop the competencies they perceive as valuable, both now and in the future. This typically takes place in the context of the family, the peer group, the school, and the neighborhood or the community. Positive youth development results when that process is positive and productive for both youth and their communities.

Who Does the Work of Youth Development?

Youth development is the work of youth. Adults cannot do this work for them. However, adults can and must support youth in their efforts to grow and develop into healthy and productive adults. Caring adults can play an important role in assisting young people to reach their full potential (Scales, et al., 2001).

Many young people do not have the advantages that promote optimal, healthy development of the body, mind, and spirit. Many youth do not have the opportunities to experience positive stimulation for growth or nurturing support from family, friends, and the community. Youth development is a natural process, but it cannot be left to chance. Intentionality in structure, supportive relationships, opportunities for belonging, skill building, and mastery are essential (National Research Council, 2002).

What Is a Youth Development Organization?

Youth development organizations are community-based support systems for young people (Russell, 20001). They exist to promote the positive, healthy development of youth. They provide opportunities for youth to make connections with others, to learn and demonstrate caring and compassion toward others, to develop moral character, gain confidence in themselves, and learn specific skills that allow them to make meaningful contributions to their world. The mission for these organizations is to provide the challenges, experiences, support, and help that will assist young people in gaining the competencies they need to make a successful transition to adulthood. These community-based organizations work to meet needs in the environment and enhance the learning experience of young people. Youth development organizations involve people of all ages and both sexes, although some target specific audiences.

Youth development organizations are different from agencies and systems that exist to provide social control, treatment, or training for young people. Positive youth development organizations recognize that being problem free does not mean that a young person is fully prepared to face life's challenges and succeed in the world (Pittman, Irby & Ferber, 2000). Young people can avoid harmful behaviors and yet not be mastering the skills they need to be ready for adulthood (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). Positive youth development organizations do more than keep youth busy and "out of trouble". They provide opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes needed for adult life. Effective positive youth development organizations encourage long-term involvement and provide a progression of experiences promoting developmental growth. They emphasize learning strategies based upon fun, play, action, and group and individual challenges teaching life skills rather than academic lessons.

What Is the Role of a Youth Development Professional?

The role of the youth development professional is two fold. First, they must strive to develop a positive, supportive relationship with young people (Walker, 2003). Second, they must provide environments that meet the needs of youth and offer opportunities within those environments to master competencies that help to prepare youth for successful adulthood (Lerner et al., 2005). To do this, youth development professionals must understand the basic needs of youth that must be met before young people can learn and grow, and must assure that these needs are met through the environments their organizations provide. Youth development professionals know the critical competencies that must be mastered for a successful and happy adulthood and are skilled in providing experiences that will assist youth in mastering these skills (Walker, 2003). Youth development professionals carry out their work in nonformal settings and utilize experiential learning methods.

Youth Development as Nonformal Education

Nonformal education is organized, systematic teaching and learning carried on outside the formal school system. Generally, nonformal education is sponsored by community groups that provide particular types of teaching and learning experiences for specific youth populations. It is not an alternative to formal education offered in the schools; it is another kind of education essential for helping young people to grow to optimal maturity (Russell, 2001).

The schools that provide formal education are typically chronologically graded and hierarchically structured. They offer credits, grades, and diplomas to document learning and achievement. Increasingly, schools are asked to document more closely the competency of their learners as proof that the credits, grades, and diplomas have real value.

For several reasons, nonformal education provides the ideal system for youth development education to take place (Russell, 2001):

- Nonformal youth development programs are most often voluntary, reflecting the values, priorities, and goals of the adults and young people who support them.

- Nonformal youth development programs identify their own mission, their curriculum priorities, their population of learners, and their teaching methods.

- Nonformal youth programs commonly use club structures, camps, sporting activities, regular group meetings, expressive arts, and youth-conducted events to carry out their educational work.

- Nonformal programs operate largely outside the scope of public funding and public policy directives, hence they can respond to community-based agendas.

- Nonformal programs typically reward learning, achievement, and positive growth through recognition and incentives such as certificates, ribbons, badges, and increased opportunities for leadership.

The Curriculum for Nonformal Youth Development Education

When curriculum is defined as any planned sequence of learning experience (Schneider, 1983), a curriculum for youth development education has two major components. First, the curriculum has content or subject matter upon which the planned sequence is built. Second, the curriculum has a method or a set of principles that guides the design of the learning experiences. The synergy of content and method promotes learning and competence in life skills critical for the healthy development of young people.

Experiential methods of learning are most commonly associated with youth development education programs in nonformal settings (Enfield, 2001). These emphasize exploration and critical thinking and focus not only on the learner doing work, but on sharing, processing, analyzing, and applying the understandings of skills gained. This method is a powerful approach for learning life skills essential to socialization, skills that rely on interaction and demonstration over time.

The subject matter should strive to help youth develop competence in a variety of areas (Huebner, 2003), including:

1.   Phsyical Health

2.   Emotional Health

3.   Personal/Social Competence

4.   Knowledge, Reasoning, and Creativity

5.   Vocational

6.   Cultural

7.   Civic

While these content areas are an ideal focus for intentional learning experiences for nonformal youth development education programs, they are also central to many school curricula. It is the educational design and delivery system that commonly distinguishes formal and nonformal education.

Learning: Greater Than the Sum of the Parts

Neither subject matter content nor experiential method alone tells the story. In the hands of leaders and teachers, they combine to create the curriculum, the planned sequence of learning experiences. But it is only when the learner enters the picture that life skill competencies and the fundamental tasks of healthy youth development are understood. This dynamic evolves from the process of youth engaged in active work on topics of interest that build competence and address basic youth developmental needs. This strategy should result in youth development outcomes described as the 6 C's of Positive Youth Development (Lerner, 2004; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

COMPETENCE in academic, social and vocational areas

CONFIDENCE or a positive self-identity

CONNECTIONS to community, family, and peers

CHARACTER or positive values, integrity and moral commitment

CARING AND COMPASSION for self and others

CONTRIBUTION to community

These C's become legitimate criteria to assess the impact of teaching important life skills in a youth development program. As an example, young people may decide they want to learn public speaking skills to build their personal and social competence. Youth development professionals would then be responsible for assuring that the activities and materials used in the learning experiences foster a sense of safety and structure, allow for active participation, provoke self-understanding, and demonstrate that success is possible. Not every intentional learning experience will address all of the needs identified as essential elements for healthy youth development, but performance outcomes based on meeting these needs are as important as content competency. Indeed, they are often more important, depending on the age of the child and the stated goals of the program.

Working in the Youth Development Profession

Fields of work attain credibility as professions when they can identify their research and knowledge base, when they base their work on agreed upon standards of practice, when criteria for preparation and ongoing professional development are outlined, and when there is a common language to use in advocating for the work. These elements provide a basis for an expectation of reliable and consistent service. In the past 15 years, youth development delivered in the nonformal educational setting has met, to a large extent, these criteria and is emerging as a recognized profession (National Research Council, 2002).

Those working in programs addressing the needs of youth in the out-of-school hours have been utilizing knowledge and research from a variety of academic disciplines to do

their work for years, but it has only been in the past decade that the knowledge and research specific to this youth development work has been highlighted for the field and for the public. The result of the identification of this knowledge and research base across organizational boundaries has created professional recognition for the youth development field.

This recognition has led to a more clearly understood definition of the role of the youth development professional. No longer are these roles defined by the organization through which the work is done. Youth development professionals work with youth through many youth development organizations: 4-H, Army Child & Youth services, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc. Within those organizations, their work is the promotion of growth and development of youth. The organizations, in turn, support that work through the structure and program opportunities that are unique to those organizations. If, for example, your organization is 4-H, you are a youth development professional working in 4-H. If your organization is the Army, you are a youth development professional working in Army Child and Youth Services. If your organization is Girl Scouts, you are a youth development professional working in Girl Scouts. The acceptance of the professional status of the work opens the door for professionals to find employment across organizational boundaries.

As the role of the professional became more clearly defined, criteria for the training needed to do the work could be established. At this time, several universities offer degree programs in youth development and opportunities for professional development within the field are abundant.

Recent work to establish the components for effective youth organizations and programs and the critical elements by which programs can be measured for effectiveness has provided the field with an initial set of agreed-upon principles of practice. During the last ten to twelve years of efforts to lift youth development work to professional status, a language has emerged to advocate for the work, for youth, and for the profession.

SESSION I
Key Youth Development Concepts

Youth Development: an approach to youth work that has preparation and development rather than prevention and problem solving as its goal.

Youth in Families and Communities: all young people play an active role in the world and youth development applies to all young people, but individual youth experience the world differently. Where youth live, how they live, and with whom they live affect how we work with and think about them.

Youth Outcomes are about young people feeling competent, committed, confident, and connected. A "problem-free" youth is not a "fully prepared" youth.

Youth Workers must expand their definitions of what young people need to develop. In short, youth need people to talk to, places to go, things to do, and meaningful roles.

Principles of Practice for youth work focus specifically on participation of young people, on the people who relate to youth, on the places in which young people develop best, on the possibilities offered to young people, and on the impact that partnerships with youth and for youth have on their healthy development.

Youth Service Workers need competencies in the basic areas of knowledge, in skills, and in behaviors necessary to provide young people with the services, supports, and opportunities they need to develop healthfully.

Supportive Organizations and Communities are crucial to youth development programming accountability for youth needs to be shared. The absence of adult stakeholders, in addition to systems and organizations, weakens efforts to promote and practice youth development.

SESSION II:

About You:
Personality I.Q.™

PERSONALITY I.Q.™

Use the following two pages to take notes over the discussion of styles related to the color categories introduced in the Personality I.Q.™ Inventory.

Gold:
Likes:

Needs:

Is Frustrated by:

Orange:
Likes:

Needs:

Is Frustrated by:

PERSONALITY I.Q.™

Blue:
Likes:

Needs:

Is Frustrated by:

Green:
Likes:

Needs:

Is Frustrated by:

SESSION III:

Setting Ground Rules – Establishing Norms

• Establishing norms and defining purpose

SESSION III
Establishing Norms and Defining Purpose

Establishing group norms

Norms are simply unspoken rules of conduct or values (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Every group struggles with norms. This is easy to understand when you consider that groups begin as a collection of strangers, each of whom comes to the group from his or her own life perspective. When these perspectives begin to interact, there will be some conflicts. Eventually, norms will emerge. Most often they will emerge without discussion. In fact, groups are seldom aware of norms until somebody breaks one. For example, an unspoken norm might be that quiet members are allowed to be silent. There may be enough members in the group to interact effectively with only a nonverbal involvement by the quiet ones. Suddenly, one member begins to demand participation from another quiet member. The group may react with vehement hostility. One of its unspoken rules has been violated.

You can help group members in identifying their underlying rules and bringing those into the open. It is helpful for a group to decide consciously on norms. Then members can be clear as to what behavior is appropriate and what is not.

Defining group purpose and agenda

Once a group progresses past the collection of individuals stage, it has a purpose or a task that is clearly understood and important to the members. The group purpose can be to produce a play, to plan and take a trip, to make decisions about running the program, or to function as an emotional support group. While each member has his or her own reasons for being a part of the group, all members contribute something toward achieving the group purpose, and this purpose is of some importance to them.

The group also has an agenda or strategy for reaching its goal. The members have decided upon this approach, usually after considerable discussion and compromise. Groups of adolescents often look to adult youth workers for the skeleton of a strategy to accomplish group goals. For example, few 13- and 14-year-olds have had the experience of planning a community street fair and dance. They would look to older, experienced adolescents or adults to outline the major tasks to be done. Given the major tasks of securing a band, obtaining police permits, publicizing the event, and organizing the clean-up, they could probably develop specific strategies for getting these jobs done. Sometimes it is most appropriate for youth workers to allow groups of young adolescents to define their purpose with no adult intervention. An example is a pick-up game of basketball or a self-directed group that decides it wants to start a computer club. At other times, youth workers can identify a common concern or interest among several young adolescents and propose a task (which becomes the group's purpose) that relates to those interests.

In other situations, youth workers may define a purpose they see as important to the healthy development of young adolescents and attempt to get youth involved in a group to address that purpose. For example, a youth worker may try to form girls into a group whose purpose it is to do things in which the girls are especially interested. The youth worker may have the ultimate goal of raising the girls' sense of self-worth and self-determination. This ultimate goal may not be clearly stated to the girls for quite a while, but it guides the youth worker's suggestions to the group.