

Youth Development Worker Competency

Understands and APPLIES
basic child and adolescent
DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES.

- Uses activities that are well-suited to the age and abilities range of the group.
- Provides multiple opportunities for positive growth and development.
- Ensures that program and activities are intentionally designed to build skills and abilities.
- Divides large groups of youth into smaller, more age appropriate groupings for learning.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Communicates and DEVELOPS
POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS
with youth.

- Engages in active listening while youth are speaking: keeps focused on the speaker, eyes are attentive, gestures are appropriate, etc.
- Responds positively to the range of youths' feelings, temperaments and emotions; comforts upset youth.
- Encourages youth to build positive peer relationships.
- Shows concern about the well-being of young people.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Adapts, facilitates and evaluates
AGE-APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES
with and for the group.

- Demonstrates skill in choosing appropriate activities and in adapting, during the session, when the activity must be changed.
- Recognizes when an activity is inappropriate for an age group (too difficult, too easy, too long, too short).
- Involves youth in expressing ideas, making suggestions for improvement and in determining the direction of the activity and their own learning.
- Encourages youth to set goals and reflect on process in completing activities.
- Supports mistakes as opportunities and reinforces appropriate risk-taking.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Respects and HONORS cultural and
human DIVERSITY.

- In verbal and non-verbal exchanges, the youth worker affirms, is sensitive to, and respectful of a youth's culture, religion, home language and the values of the family.
- Makes appropriate challenges to stereotyping and discriminatory statements or practices.
- Selects materials (coordinates displays) that reflect the language, music, stories, games, and crafts from various cultural traditions.
- Invites youth to share traditions, stories, and photos representing their culture and experience.
- Speaks with youth and families in their own language whenever possible.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Involves and EMPOWERS YOUTH.

- Expects that youth will make decisions and determine the direction of the program and individual activities.
- Fosters a sense of connectedness by creating positive relationships with and among young people.
- Develops skills in youth to speak confidently about their power and find ways to contribute to the program.
- Encourages youth to reflect on their level of involvement and make suggestions on how to increase that level.

Youth Development Worker Competency

IDENTIFIES potential RISK FACTORS (in a program environment) and takes measures to reduce those risks.

- Prepares the program space to be free of foreseeable hazards.
- Arranges activities to ensure adequate adult supervision is available.
- Intervenes when potentially unsafe situations arise that put others at undue risk.
- Plans progressive activities, assuring that participants have the lead up skills for safe involvement and skill development.
- Observes constantly and is prepared with preventative interventions, alternate approaches and added support.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Cares for, involves and WORKS WITH FAMILIES and communities.

- Responds in a respectful and timely manner to family questions.
- Greets family members warmly and invites family members into program and activities.
- Actively pursues information and understanding on issues and culture(s) of the youth, families and communities.
- Communicates to families about individual youth strengths, successes and achievements.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Works as a part of a team and SHOWS PROFESSIONALISM.

- Articulates a personal vision of youth development that aligns with the organization's vision, mission and goals.
- Protects and appreciates the need for confidentiality in youth programs.
- Strives for self-improvement through professional development opportunities.
- Fulfills responsibility for assignments as expected—on time and with attention to high-quality.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Demonstrates the attributes
and qualities of a POSITIVE
ROLE MODEL.

- Is truthful with youth; answers their questions. If unable to answer the question, he or she explains why.
- Uses body language, facial expressions and approach to youth that show respect (no rolling eyes or folded arms in a combative stance).
- Demonstrates a healthy lifestyle.
- Addresses instead of avoids conflict.
- Uses appropriate words to express anger; is direct; works toward problem solving.

Youth Development Worker Competency

Interacts with and relates
to youth in ways that
SUPPORT ASSET-BUILDING.

- Focuses on identifying, celebrating, and building on the strengths and capacities of all young people.
- Encourages self-direction and personal responsibility for choices.
- Offers encouragement and praise to youth who take the initiative and leadership.
- Understands and uses asset-based approaches in interactions with youth, parents and community.