

## **Recommendations for Effectively Engaging Youth**

- Instill confidence in youth by allowing them to take ownership of projects
- Value youth for who we are and our strengths by eliminating the idea of a cookie cutter youth.
- Providing an opportunity to broaden perspective and impact the broader community.
- Consult with youth by beginning a youth advisory board, if you don't already have one or partner with an already existing advisory board.
- Take the time to listen to youth and give us a chance.
- Youth and adults should be prepared to partner with each other by having a clear open mind to work fully.
- Building trust is extremely important ways to do this includes being honest and humble.
  - Don't be afraid to be in a partnership with youth, as long as you are genuine, it will work out.
- Take time to understand the projects and each other's capacity.
- Help set up tangible goals that youth come up with, but that are attainable!
- Take the time to make sure young people have a clear understanding of the purpose and goals of the project.
- Take time to create personal connections that can be done through being you.
- Have meetings at times when youth can be there. Provide transportation or other means for the youth to participate if they can't be there in person- such as Google Hangouts, Zoom, or FaceTime.
- Communicate youth roles to them clearly. (For example: don't tell them they have room to talk about anything that comes to their mind when you really want them to have a conversations around public health or social initiatives.)
- Communicate in a way that youth understand. Use simple lay person language, engage with them through tools that they use and understand such as social media.
- Prepare youth ahead of time to do the work you expect them to do. Otherwise you are setting them up for failure.
  - Dedicate time to building their capacity both professionally and personally.
- Youth and adults have to know that it's a process just like every other relationship thats real and authentic. There will be tough conversations and these conversations need to happen.
- Take youth feedback seriously, let them know what feedback you can use and which ones you cannot. For feedback that you can use, run with it- it builds trust when a youth knows that you will defend them and their work and their ideas.
- Youth should be held to the same standards as adults, of course in the context of the work that they are doing. The populations we work with are already faced with so many goal and dream crushing labels.
- Youth should know about the factors that impact their holistic health such as where they live, learn, work, play, pray.
- Youth should be able to collaborate with each other. Youth councils and groups that are working together should be able to come together and share a project.
- Do your best to sustain the relationships, opportunities and resources that you build, create, or present to youth. Set up programs that have a longer timelines and alert the youth ahead of time about the ending of a program or initiative.