Youth Voice: Adult/Youth Partnership Self Assessment

Where are you currently?

Instructions: Based on the opinion scale below, select the level that best describes your own belief or approach regarding each statement. Circle the appropriate number.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always

1. As an adult leader, I engage young people in program decisions when I think this engagement will be a growth experience for them.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. It is most appropriate that adults determine what the programs for young people will be.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Young people have a unique vantage point that is valuable for evaluating the successes and failures of specific programs.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Adults should make the decisions.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. I believe that allowing young people to participate in organizational roles can open up valuable learning opportunities for them.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. As an adult leader, I engage young people in making program decisions at the earliest point.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Asking young people to review adult-determined program plans will communicate to young people that adults respect them.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Adults are in the best position to evaluate the successes and failures of a specific program.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Youth participation can enhance and enrich the various management roles within our organization.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Fewer mistakes are made when carrying out a program for young people if adults perform the leadership roles.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. I believe experiences of young people give them valuable perspective that can become useful in efforts to plant, operate, and evaluate the way the organization functions.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Asking the opinions of young people will help them sharpen their thinking and observation skills.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. Allowing young people to assume some leadership roles can help them develop skills for the future.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Adults and young people should make decisions together.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. I believe that allowing young people to participate in organizational decision-making would mislead them into thinking they can influence matters beyond their control.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
**Inventory Worksheet scoring instructions:**

For each statement you scored on the previous page, transfer the number you gave to that statement into the empty box to the right of the statement number. For example, if you gave the first statement a score of 4, place the four in the empty box (under Style Two).

Total the numbers at the bottom of each column. The box with the highest score indicates which style corresponds to your attitude toward youth. Explanations of each style are on the following page.

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<th>Statement Number</th>
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Style One: 
People Viewed as Objects.

The basis of this attitude is that one person or group of people “knows what’s best” for another person or group. The first person or group may decide they have a right to determine the circumstances under which the second person or group will exist. The person being viewed as an object usually knows it. In an extreme case, the adult sees little value in the young person except how the young person can serve the desires of the adult. As a result, the adult controls the young person to serve whatever interests the adult may have.

A less extreme attitude is that adults know what is best for young people and see young people as objects of their good intentions. This is not an uncommon parental attitude.

Style Two: 
People Viewed as Recipients.

Here the first person or group still believes they know what is best for the other, but they give the opportunity to participate in decisions because it will be good for the other person or group. Thus, the other is supposed to receive the benefits of what the first person gives them. An example of this attitude can be found in an organization that includes youth participants in the design of the program, but keeps the primary emphasis on how the young person will benefit from participation and not on what the young person has to offer the group. This attitude demonstrates a concern for preparing young people for the future as responsible decision-makers. This relationship cannot really be described as youth/adult partnership, though there is some opportunity to build a sense of youth ownership in the outcome.

Style Three: 
People Viewed as Resources.

The attitude is based upon respect for the contribution young people can make to the community in the present. It acknowledges that any leadership and decision-making roles can be shared by adults and young people. Here there is an attitude of respect by the first person or group toward what the other person or group can do. This attitude and the behaviors that follow it can be closely associated with two matters of great concern: self-esteem and productivity. Creating a culture in which people are viewed, respected, and involved as resources is a worthy goal.

Young people would be regarded as resources, not recipients; subjects, not objects. The purpose of youth participation is not just to do something that is good for young people. It is to help us by tapping the resources and abilities of young people in order to better the community.

Now that you have completed and scored your assessment, take some time to reflect on the outcome. What style of person are you? Is this where you thought you would be? How will this affect your ability to work with young people?

Would you like to make any changes to your style? If so, what are some ways you can bring those changes about?

Based upon your style, what responsibilities would you be best suited for?

All Lift materials are based in the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice, available at www.nylc.org/standards.