W Y M A N

Make it Meaningful: Incorporating Youth Voice & Leadership into Program Planning and Implementation

Crystal Smith & Nathaniel Hilliard

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Icebreakers & Introductions

Workshop Objectives:

- Identify models for prioritizing youth voice in program design and implementation
- Identify at least two methods for incorporating youth leadership opportunities during the program year
- Identify opportunities for their agency to amplify youth voice within existing program models
- Develop preliminary timelines for implementing meaningful Youth Voice and Leadership as a model of collaborating with youth

What do you need to…

Learn?

Feel Safe?

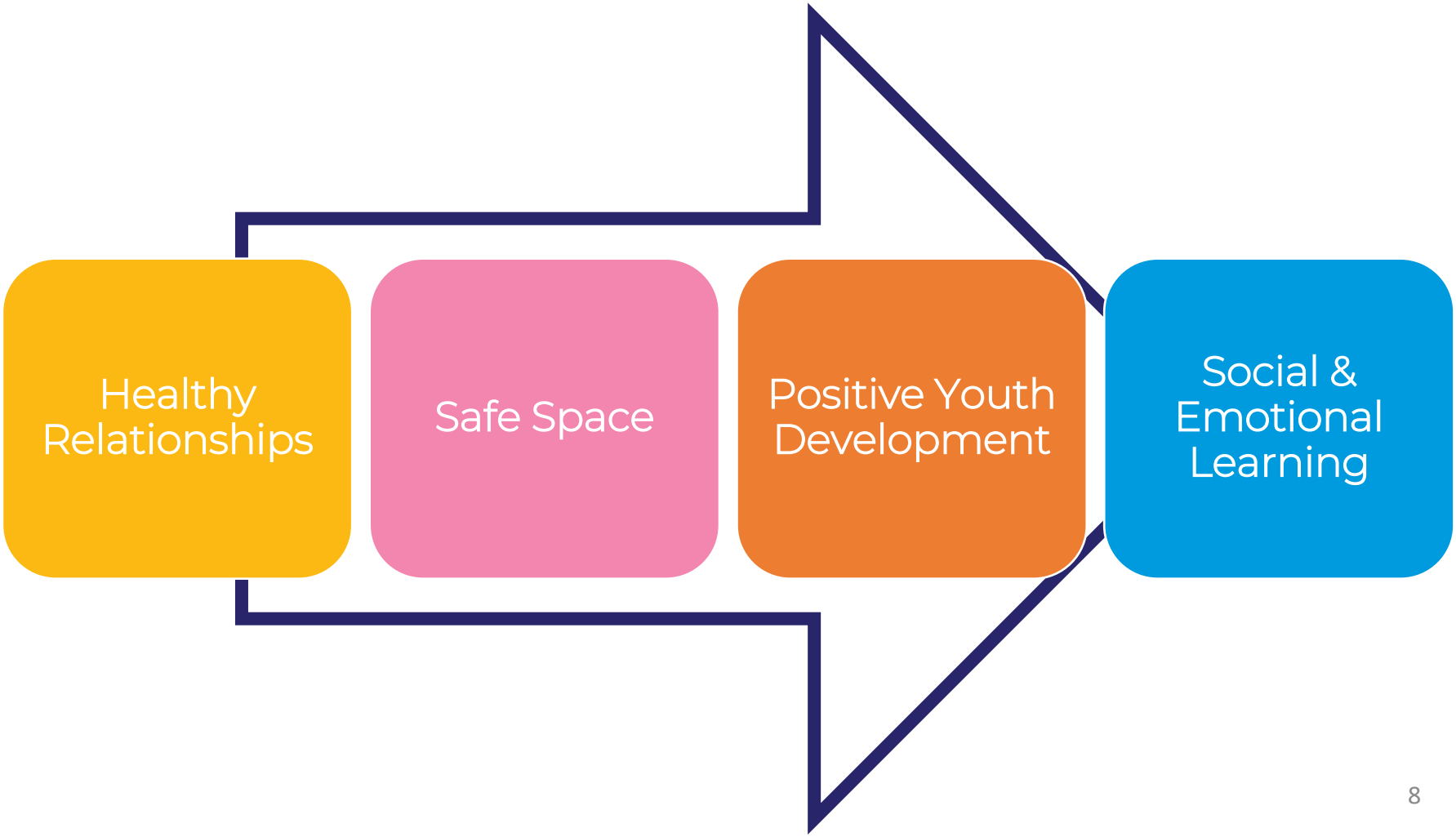
Engage?

Why Does Youth Voice Matter?

Youth Voice

- Ownership creates buy-in and motivation
- Strengthens self-efficacy and promotes learning
- Improves sense of community & commitment
- Provides needed opportunity to practice autonomy
- Ensures programs & services are responsive to the needs & interests of youth

Foundations of Youth Voice



Essentials of Interacting with Youth

- Positive Youth Development
- Youth-Centered Relationships
- Appropriately Supporting Abilities
- Trauma Informed
- Safe Space
- Committed to meaningful Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Social & Emotional Learning

Considerations for Meaningful Youth

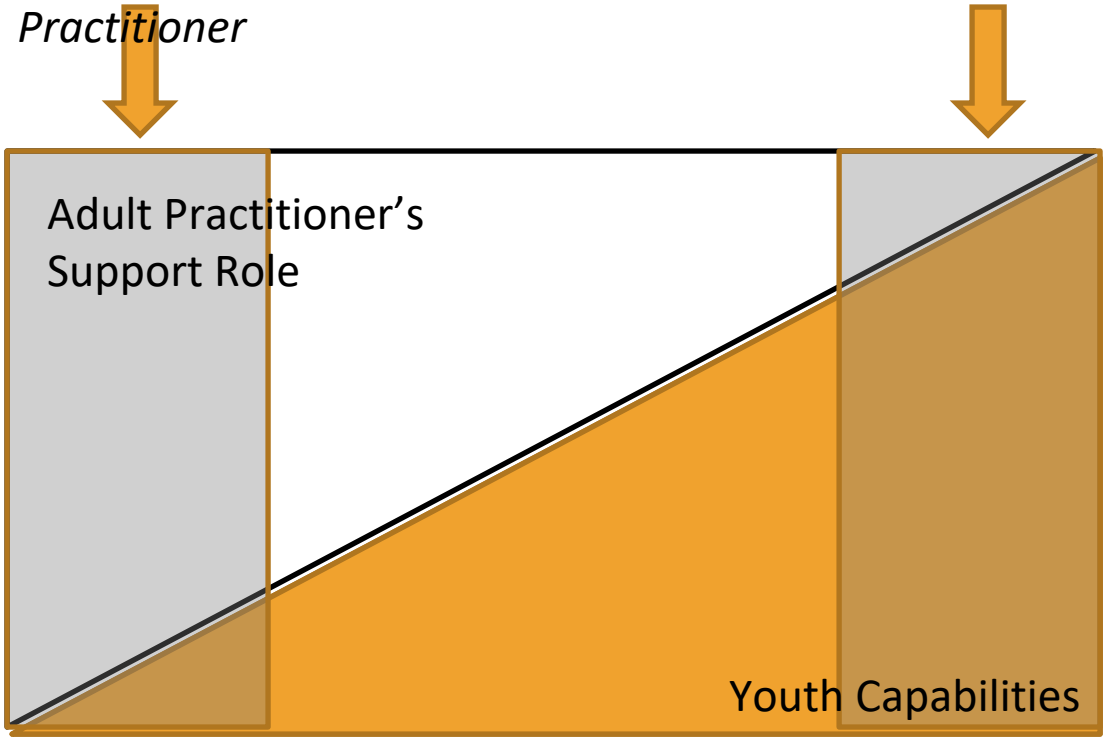
Intentional Staff Practices

- Intentional and responsive staff practices provide high quality learning experiences that support young people's development of social and emotional skills and competencies.

Scaffolding Young People for Success

Lower youth capabilities=higher level of support needed from Adult Practitioner

Higher youth capabilities=youth need less support from Adult Practitioner



Empowering Youth Voice

Collaboration Resource: Hart's Ladder

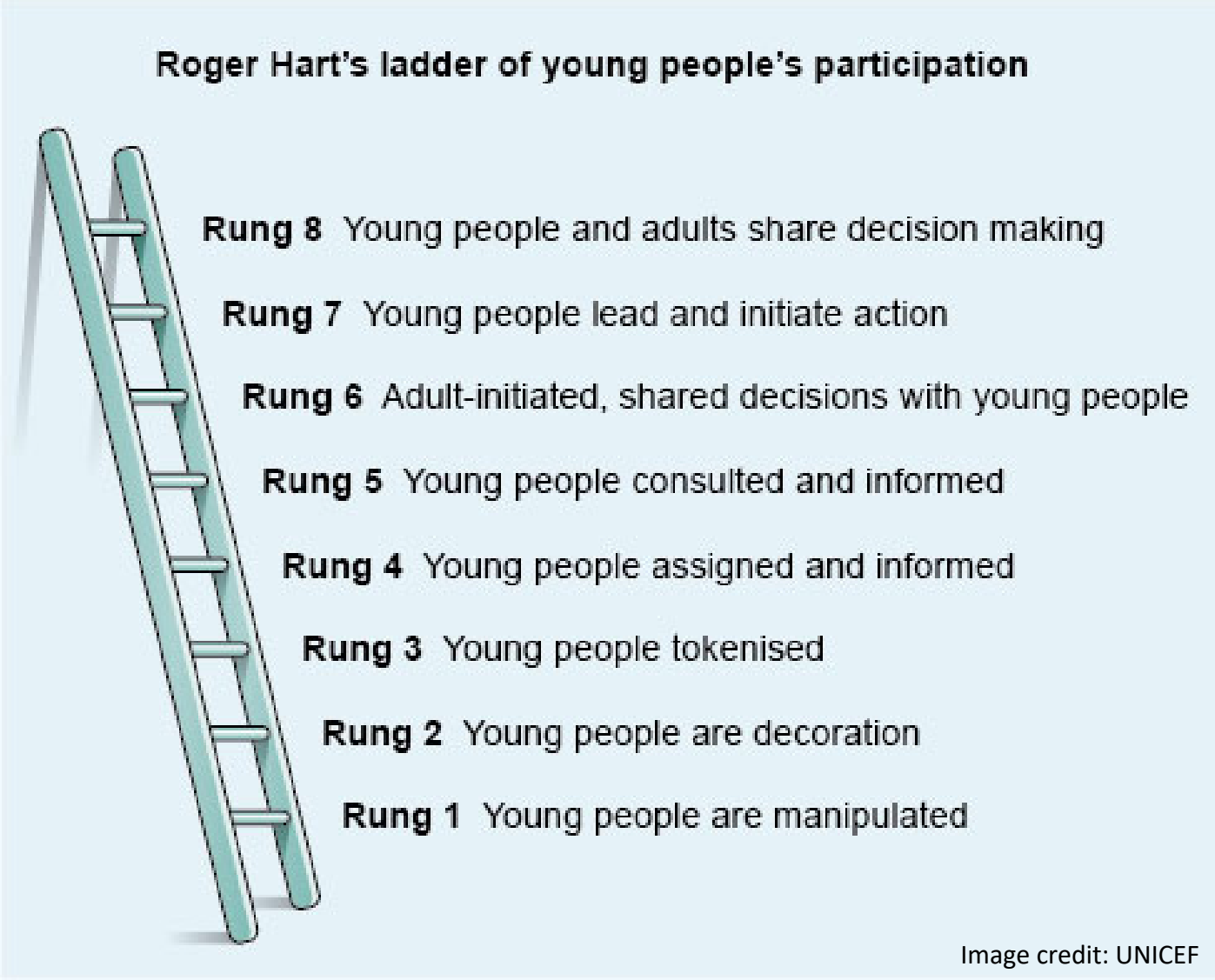


Image credit: UNICEF

Hart's Ladder

- Input—base activities and learning in youth interests and needs
- Choice—can be limited or open-ended; make it relevant & meaningful
- Shared Leadership—should be formal & informal; develop complexity over time

Engagement

- When Partnering with Youth in a power-sharing entity, engagement is the minimum level of interaction
- Engagement keeps power firmly with adults

Collaboration

- Collaboration seeks youth's input, not just activity
- Collaboration can be limited, or expansive
- Adults control parameters & opportunities for youth voice & choice

Partnership

- Adults remove the power dynamics and other obstacles that prevent youth from being full participants
- Empowers youth as experts in their own experiences, interests & needs
- Youth are invited into the process of developing & managing agency guidelines, policy, program implementation, etc.

Creating Authentic Opportunities for

Meaningful Youth Voice

- Youth have self-determination, autonomy, responsibility & accountability
- Requires dedicated planning & scaffolding
- Everyone needs to be committed to both learning & unlearning behaviors
- Adults support & follow Youth Initiative

Considerations for Youth Voice

- Will this be a formal or informal undertaking?
  - Informal practices may be a limited snapshot in time, invite insight on only specific topics or be casual conversations that inform adults
  - Informal practices may support “in the moment” feedback & leadership, but lack long-term commitments & goals
  - Formal Youth Voice Initiatives are agency commitments that cede authority to youth in a manner that provides responsibility & accountability
  - Formal initiatives require youth collaboration from the beginning of the effort!

Challenges to Empoweri ng Youth

Considerations for Your Work

Image Credit: Wyman

More Models…

PATCH®
Providers And Teens Communicating for Health

Image credit: PATCH Wisconsin
Image Credit: East St. Louis School District 189

Project & Program Planning

Organizational Structure & Support

- Are Staff Prepared?
- How will the Council be introduced to agency/community/stakeholders?
- Logistics for Youth Council Meetings & Events
- Who gets to make meaningful decisions?

Next Steps & Action Items

- Timeline for developing roundtable
- Action Plan for preparing to engage youth
- Identifying Youth
- Recruitment & Retention
- Establishing & Empowering the Youth Council

Questions, Observations & Feedback

Reflection, Debrief & Applicatio n

Session Evaluation

Please complete a brief evaluation form for all workshops and panels on Tuesday, May 23 and Wednesday, May 24 by scanning the QR code below or visiting the following link:

https://tinyurl.com/SessEval232323

Contact Us!

crystal.smith@wymancenter.org
nathaniel.hilliard@wymancenter.org

References & Resources for Incorporating Youth Voice and Leadership Initiatives

Dive Deeper!

New Orleans Children & Youth Planning Board

More Information on Hart's Ladder

Youth-Led Agency Case Studies

Assess/Evaluate Your Commitment to Youth Engagement:

Focal Point

YouthRex

Portland Research & Training Center

Youth.Gov

More Research & Best Practices

Misguided & Modest

Fostering Youth Engagement

Dismantle Adultism

Recommendations from Advocates for Youth

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