

WSSC TEAM

# ENGAGING YOUTH

> Handout Packet



## Handout Packet for Engaging Youth

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*“Nothing about us without us is for us”*

## Handout #1: Youth Engagement Survey

Youth Engagement Survey
<b>Where does your school or organization stand on youth engagement in school health?</b>
Youth display a willingness to accept leadership responsibilities in their school/organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No
Youth have full access to information that is needed to make decisions in their school/organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No
Youth express a genuine interest in their school/organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No
Youth are given opportunities to contribute to decision-making in their school/organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No
Youth come up with their own ideas for improving their school/organization. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No
A majority of projects in their school/organization are led by youth. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Score your responses: 2 points for each “Yes,” 1 point for each “Somewhat,” and 0 points for each “No.”**    **SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If you scored 10–12 points,** it looks like you are already engaging youth in school health. Are they members of your School Health Team?

**If you scored 6–9 points,** it looks like youth are viewed as potential partners in school health and would be a great asset to the School Health Team.

**If you scored 0–5 points,** your school has a great opportunity to bring the youth voice into school health work and leadership.

Partially adapted from Jones, K.R. (2006). *Youth-adult partnerships: Are you there yet? How to evaluate your youth development program*. Cooperative Extension Service. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky.

## Handout #2: Levels of Youth Engagement

*Directions: Read the descriptions below and place a checkmark adjacent to your school's current level of youth engagement. Then, draw an asterisk alongside the level you aspire to achieve.*

Current Level	Goal Level	Engagement Level
		<p><b>Organizing and Governing</b> Youth have a central role in the organization's structure, driving programmatic or strategic decisions. Youth are empowered to be part of shared decision-making processes and have the opportunity for youth to learn from life experiences and expertise of adults.</p>
		<p><b>Youth-Initiated Leadership</b> Youth serve as peer leaders in a paid or volunteer capacity. Youth lead activities with their peers or with adults. Adults are involved only in a supporting role.</p>
		<p><b>Youth-Initiated Partnerships</b> Youth and adults join together as equals to accomplish programming, plan activities, operate the program, or complete specific tasks.</p>
		<p><b>Adult-Initiated, Shared Decision-Making</b> Projects or programs are initiated by adults, but the decision-making is shared with youth. Attempts are made to use youth-friendly procedures and language.</p>
		<p><b>Informed Dialogue</b> Youth give ongoing advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. Youth are informed as to how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults. Youth are involved in evaluation of programming.</p>
		<p><b>Assigned But Informed</b> Youth are assigned a specific role and informed as to how and why they are being involved. This includes inconsistent youth involvement or temporary consultations such as focus groups or surveys.</p>
		<p><b>Tokenism</b> Young people appear to be given a choice, but in fact they have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.</p>
		<p><b>Decoration</b> Young people are used to bolster a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.</p>

Adapted from works by J. Nowicki and R. Hart.

### Handout #3: “Don’t Say No!” Challenge

For each real-life scenario on the left, develop some facilitation dialogue to help the students realize their idea. Avoid dismissing their idea, and coach them in the right direction. Write the questions you would ask or the statements you would make to guide the conversation. Write your responses in the box to the right of the arrow.



In order to achieve their goal of students eating more fruits and vegetables during the day, kindergarteners through second graders wanted to build a Walmart on the playground.



Some students arrive at school early. Many of those students want to be more active before school instead of sitting in the gym and cafeteria having to be quiet. They have thought of a morning walking program. Teachers have said that parking lots are busy, and the number of teachers on duty are limited.



High school students hate school lunch and want healthier and more tasty options. Food services is on a tight budget and suggests that it would require additional purchasing funding.



## Handout #4: Engaging Youth — Next Steps

**Step 1:** Look back to Handout #1 to see if you still agree with all of your responses. Make any necessary changes.

**Step 2:** Look back at Handout #2. Do you still agree with your placement and future goal? If you disagree, make your changes.

**Step 3:** Identify two action steps you can take in the next 30 days to increase student engagement in school health at your site. Identify who can help or what resources or allies you might need.

Action Steps	Potential Facilitators
How can you engage youth more in school health work?	A. Who can help? B. What resources are needed?
1:	A. B.
2:	A. B.

## Handout #5: Additional Resources

ACT for Youth Center for Community Action. (2019). What is youth engagement, really? Retrieved from [http://actforyouth.net/youth\\_development/engagement/](http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/engagement/)

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