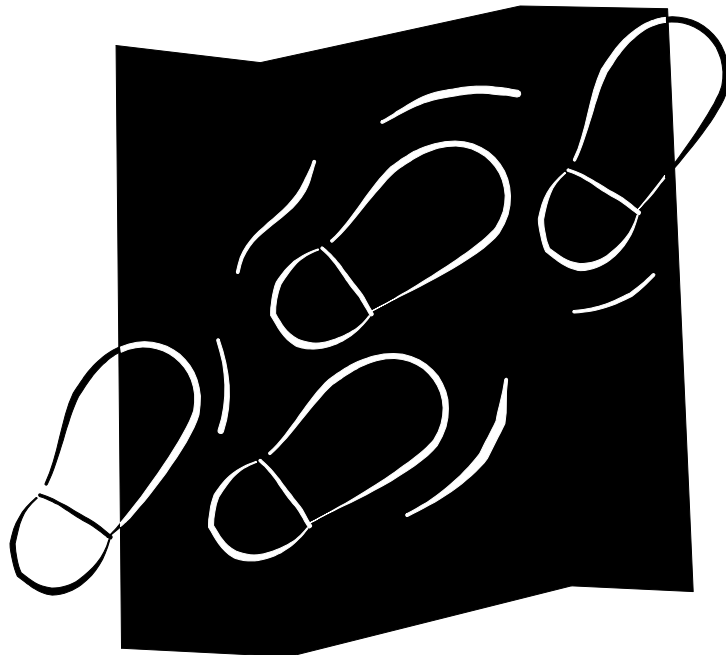


Session Two:

Follow the Leaders

Exploring Youth Leadership in Groups



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Facilitators Need to Know:

Youth tend to view leadership in a group context. They recognize that each person has something to contribute and can share in the overall leadership of the group. For this reason, it is important for adults who work with youth to have an understanding of group functioning in order to better assist youth in the leadership development process.

Groups, like human beings have a lifespan and progress through certain stages of development. These stages are defined in a variety of ways. One of the most common ways to describe group development stages is recognized by Levi (2001) as forming, storming, norming, and performing.

Forming is the initial stage where group members come together and begin to get to know one another. Few measurable accomplishments occur in this stage. Time needs to be spent defining goals and task responsibilities.

In the storming stage, group members are more familiar with one another. Conflict arises due to confusion over the roles and responsibilities of group members. Group members may be defensive, and sub-groups may form. Ultimately (and ideally) the conflict should serve to help group members clarify their goals.

When groups enter the norming stage, roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined, rules and relationships are established, and support increases.

Performing is the stage where the group is most mature. Members are comfortable with one another and are focused on their goals and tasks.

Part of working with groups is being able to help individuals identify their strengths and weaknesses and engage in productive discussion with each other. The best way to do this, especially with youth, is to provide simple questions which are open-ended (allowing for more than a “yes” or “no” response) and get those involved to reflect and consider a variety of perspectives. For example: “How would you feel about that?” or “What would happen if. . . ?” Allowing youth opportunities for exploration and expression are key.

Session Objectives:

- Adult volunteers and professionals who work with youth will be able to identify the stages of group development and function.
- Adult volunteers and professionals who work with youth will be able to facilitate group discussion with youth.
- Adult volunteers and professionals who work with youth will be able to assist youth in identifying their own strengths and weaknesses.

Total Time Needed: Approximately two hours and ten minutes of activities are recommended in this session. You will need to allow extra time for breaks and additional discussion.

Materials:

- LCD or Overhead Projector
- Power Point Slides or Transparencies (Master Slides 2.1 – 2.16)
- Easel & Flipchart
- Markers
- Masking Tape
- Nametags
- Notepads & Post-it Notes
- Pens or Pencils
- Envelopes
- Activity Sheets 2.1 – 2.2

Room Set-Up:

- Round tables or chairs arranged in theatre style
- Chairs that can be re-arranged into circular work groups
- Extra chairs should be available at the front of the room for panel discussion
- Table and screen for LCD or overhead projector
- Access to electricity

Welcome/Icebreaker

Time: 10 minutes

Slides: 2.1 and 2.2

1. Welcome participants.
2. Explain the purpose of the training session: (Show slides 2.1 and 2.2)

Welcome to today's session, "Follow the Leaders." During our time together, we will explore the characteristics and challenges of groups, discuss the various stages of group development, and learn how to help groups identify strengths and weaknesses, engage in productive discussion, and work together. Since youth tend to view leadership as something that happens in groups rather than something that only one person does, it is important that those of us who work with youth are able to understand how groups function so that we can help youth in our groups develop leadership skills.

3. Ask one member of the group to stand and introduce themselves. They should give their name and their role in working with youth. After that, they can provide bits of information that they would like to share. (For example, I have two children, I like to garden, I live on a farm, etc.)
4. When someone else in the group hears them mention something that they have in common, that person should rise and introduce themselves. (For example, if Jeff plays on a baseball team and Mary identifies with that, because she plays on a softball team, Mary should stand up, tell the group that she is also on a ball team, and then introduce herself.)
5. This process continues until everyone has made a connection and been able to introduce themselves.

To Group or Not to Group

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Pens or Pencils, Post-it Notes

Discussion Questions:

- Do you enjoy working in groups? Why or why not?
- What have been some of your most positive group experiences?
- What have been some of your most negative group experiences?

1. Ask participants to continue sharing, verbally, their perceptions and experiences of working with groups. Use some of the questions to the left as a guide.
2. Give each participant four post-it notes.
3. Ask them to use two post-it notes to record advantages of working with groups and two to record disadvantages of working with groups.
4. Ask the group, as a whole, to share what they have written.
5. Allow each person to take a turn, and ask them should share one advantage and one disadvantage.
6. Ask participants to avoid using items that have already been listed.
7. Place responses can be placed on the flip chart so that they can be seen and referred to throughout the session.

Group Stages

Time: 25 minutes

Slides: 2.3 – 2.9

1. Review slides (2.3 – 2.9) describing the stages of group functioning and their characteristics.
2. Refer to the advantages and disadvantages of working in groups (as brainstormed by the group during “To Group or Not to Group”) where they apply. For example: if a disadvantage is “having to work with people I don’t know”, facilitator(s) can explain how this may fit into the “forming” or “norming” stage of group functioning.
3. Ask participants to form four work groups. Assign each group a specific stage of group functioning (forming, storming, norming, or performing) and give each group five minutes to create a role play which demonstrates a group in their assigned stage.
4. Each group should perform their role play, and the other groups will be challenged to determine which stage of group functioning they are demonstrating.

Case Studies*Activity Sheets 2.1a – 2.1d***Time:** 35 minutes**Materials:** Pens or Pencils**Cast Study Questions:**

- Which stage(s) of group functioning can be identified in this situation?
- What is/are the challenge(s) being faced by the group in this situation?
- Are these challenges normal parts of group functioning? Explain.
- What are some strategies the group could use to address and overcome the challenges they are facing?

1. Ask participants to work with others at their table, or to form work groups of approximately five people.
2. Distribute Activity Sheets 2.1a – 2.1d (one per group) and ask groups to read the case studies and discuss the questions at the end of each case study (listed to the left):
3. Allow each group time to share their case studies and responses with the rest of the participants.
4. After each group has presented, ask other participants if they have questions, thoughts, or suggestions to share.

<p>Strengths and Weaknesses</p> <p>Time: 10 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Pens or Pencils</p> <p>Slides: 2.10 and 2.11</p> <p>Activity Sheets: 2.2</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a difference between the list you created for yourself as a leader and the list you created for yourself as a follower? Why or why not? • How do these personal strengths and weaknesses affect the way you work with others in a group? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute Activity Sheet 2.2 to each participant. 2. Ask participants to think about and list their own personal strengths and weaknesses as leaders. Then ask them to think about and list their strengths and weaknesses as group members (or “followers”). 3. Engage in a brief open discussion regarding participants’ responses. Use discussion questions on the left as a guide. 4. Refer to slides (2.10 and 2.11) which provide questions that may be used to help youth identify their strengths and weaknesses.
<p>Communication Strategies</p> <p>Time: 20 minutes</p> <p>Materials: Handouts*</p> <p>Slides: 2.12 – 2.16</p> <p>* Note: If desired, ask participants to create handouts, in advance of the workshop, which describe some of their best practices in working with youth groups (as well as any resources they have found helpful). They could bring these handouts/resources with them to the session for participation in a swap shop or other type of sharing activity.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review slides (2.12 – 2.16) on strategies for engaging youth in effective discussion. 2. Ask participants to share some of their best practices and successful strategies in working with youth groups.

Wrap-Up and Food for Thought

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Envelope, Slips of Paper with Discussion Questions on Them

Discussion Questions:

- How does what you have learned today influence your perception of your role in working with youth?
- How can you continue to gain a better understanding of youth leadership development in a group context?
- What should youth who participate in your program gain from working in groups?

1. Review some important points from the session:

- Groups experience developmental stages just like individuals do.
- Each stage of group development and functioning has challenges that need to be addressed.
- There are advantages and disadvantages to working in groups.
- Youth view leadership as something that happens in a group, therefore, group functioning and experiences are critical to their leadership development.

2. Write one of each of the following questions on a small piece of paper. Fold each piece of paper and place in an envelope.

3. Have each group draw a question from the envelope and allow a brief period of time for the group to discuss their responses.

4. Ask each group to share their response.

5. Thank participants for attending and ask if they have any additional comments or questions.

6. Mention future training sessions if appropriate.