

Empowering Youth Training



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This [self-paced training](#) provides an overview of youth empowerment theory and shares examples of youth empowering programs. This course also walk users through incorporating youth empowerment into their school safety initiatives.

Learning Outcomes

- » Define youth empowerment.
- » Give examples of using youth empowerment theory in various contexts.
- » Identify solutions for common barriers to youth empowerment.
- » Plan projects or programs that utilize youth empowerment.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Positive youth development is a comprehensive framework outlining the supports young people need in order to be successful. Youth empowerment is a subset of positive youth development and gives youth skills they need to have the confidence and power to achieve their goals.
- ✓ The goal of youth empowerment is to develop the 6 Cs: **confidence, character, connection, competence, contribution** and **caring**.
- ✓ Youth empowerment also focuses on youth gaining a personal sense of control and self-efficacy, developing positive skills and assets and applying those skills to become agents of positive change.
- ✓ Youth empowerment theory contains three components: intrapersonal, interactional, and behavioral which can also be referred to as “feeling”, “thinking” and “doing”.
- ✓ One frequent barrier to youth empowerment is adultism or adults’ belief that youth are less capable. It is important to move towards a feeling of shared control and shared responsibility.
- ✓ Important characteristics of a youth empowerment program include:
 - ✓ **Self-determination:** creating group agreements and expectations together.
 - ✓ **Intergenerational Partnerships:** open discussions about dealing with adultism can help youth learn about how to deal with prejudices and how to maintain mutual respect in relationships.
 - ✓ **Decision Power:** allow youth to select the adult volunteers they want to work with, draft project plans and address challenges to reach their desired outcomes.
- ✓ When it comes to project planning in a way that empowers youth, it helps to encourage the development of a project proposal including- project description, project goals, project needs and project timeline to ensure the team has reached a mutual understanding.

Additional Resources

[Why Is Youth Empowerment Important?](#) - A collection of youth empowerment recommendations developed by the Boys and Girls Club of America.

[Making the Shift from Student Engagement to Student Empowerment](#) - A collection of videos and readings suggesting small shifts that can make a big difference in creating an environment that encourages student empowerment.

[How to Empower Students Beyond the Classroom](#) - A discussion on ways to empower students in extracurriculars and activities outside the classroom.

Questions for Discussion

- » What does youth empowerment mean to you?
- » How could your school safety project incorporate the intrapersonal component? the interactional component? the behavioral component?
- » What are some barriers to youth empowerment that are present in your school environment or in your community?
- » How could your school safety project share control between youth and adults?

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