

# AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS BEHAVIORAL ISSUES TOOLKIT<sup>1</sup>

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# YOUTH ENGAGED IN TECHNOLOGY



## Y. E. T.

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## **Introduction**

Over the last year and a half of working with youth in the Youth Engaged in Technology (YET) after-school clubs, the YET staff have been faced with many youth who exhibit behavioral problems. To address these problems we began a search for specific strategies that YET site coordinators could employ to effectively work with these youth. After conducting a comprehensive review of the literature, we have developed a toolkit of strategies. We are making this toolkit available to youth development professionals and after-school program staff to assist them with youth who display disruptive behaviors.

Behavior problems are a common challenge in youth development programs especially for programs geared toward high-risk youth. Behavioral problems can be, at the very least, a distraction to all youth involved in the program thereby creating a less than desirable learning environment. More importantly, behavior problems exhibited by one or two youth can incite other youth members and significantly derail the progress being made in the program. Thus, youth development professionals need to have an action plan within their various programs to address these problems swiftly and appropriately. Many times youth who engage in disruptive behaviors are “expelled” from programs. While, this action may be necessary, it should only be used as a last resort. As youth development professionals, we need to assist these youth in improving their control over their emotions and behaviors by keeping them engaged in the program. The benefits from our programs, namely life and pro-social skills development can only be realized by youth that stay highly engaged in our programs.

Youth have large amounts of free time, and for many youth this time lacks adult monitoring and supervision. This free time can be an opportunity for youth to learn skills and contribute to their communities or it can be an opportunity for youth to engage in risky behaviors. Youth that have positive relationships with adults outside their families feel supported, are more social and less depressed, and get along better with their parents. Indeed, a caring adult has been found to be a protective factor in every major study of resiliency in the last thirty years. Youth development programs that work to increase youth’s interpersonal skills have been found to be successful in improving their interactions with peers and family members. Thus, positive youth-adult interactions within programs such as the traditional 4-H club or after-school setting could provide them with an experience that may have long-term positive outcomes for their development.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide youth development professionals with specific prevention and intervention techniques to address behavioral problems in which youth may engage during your programs. Some of the strategies for prevention and intervention overlap. The same strategy or method can be used to prevent or intervene. Prevention strategies presented here can assist you in creating a program environment that is supportive and caring while simultaneously decreasing the likelihood of major behavioral problems erupting. Intervention techniques discussed in this document are designed for staff to react swiftly and appropriately to a behavioral problem so to defuse it and prevent further escalation.

## **Defining Behavioral Problems**

What are behavioral problems? They are behaviors that take away from the learning experience for a particular person and/or for the group. These behaviors often distract the adult leader or youth development professional from focusing on their lesson plan or group activity for that session. Through our experience in the YET program and a thorough literature review, we have identified some common types of misbehavior that youth development professionals may experience when conducting a youth program; these behaviors are especially prevalent when working with youth who are at risk. This list of common behavioral problems is not meant to be comprehensive, rather it is meant to highlight those behaviors that are most common according to research and our experience. These behaviors include:

- Attention-seeking behaviors (e.g., calling attention to themselves and/or interrupting others while they speak);
- Disruptive behaviors (e.g., sudden outbursts and/or distracting others);
- Inappropriate conversations (e.g., topics pertaining to alcohol, sex, and violence);
- Defiance (e.g., challenging the adult leader or teacher and/or refusing to comply to authority);
- Heckling behavior (e.g., speaking out of turn and/or picking on others while they speak);
- Inappropriate social behavior (e.g., sloppy, interrupting others, and/or not waiting for their turn);
- Lack of social skills (e.g., unable or unwilling to work on team with others).

# Prevention Techniques

## **Preventative Techniques And Development Of The Group**

Proactive techniques can be used to enhance “group development” within an after-school program, as well as to foster the development of social skills of group members. In addition, these techniques may also prevent problem behaviors. Groups often evolve through stages of development toward more autonomy and “maturity.” The stages are: forming, storming, norming, performing, and then transforming or adjourning (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977; See Appendix 1). By focusing on positive group development activities, group leaders can potentially prevent problem behaviors of youth. This happens in part because, over time, the group can establish positive social norms for behavior. Thus, youth within a program may become more engaged in managing the behavior of each other. It should be stated here that this section of this document involves *shared* power for the control of the group. That is, the power is held by group members with support, guidance, direction and overall supervision from the adult leader.

Laurie Frank, in her book: Journey Toward the Caring Classroom describes a group adventure that can take place in the classroom and within positive youth development programs whereby a group of youth with adult facilitation builds rapport, trust, and cohesion which leads to more autonomy and maturity. The resulting social climate is very conducive to the development of positive group norms. Ms. Frank leads into a discussion of building community by writing that “community building takes work. It is predicated on trust, risk taking, and open communication. It is a process that needs constant attention.” (Frank, 2004).

Involving students in decisions about group policies and programs is essential to creating a program climate of inclusion, respect, and safety (Kaufman, Chen, Choy, Chandler, Chapman, Rand, & Ringel 1998). Research has found that when youth are offered opportunities to acquire skills and engage in social activities, their problem-solving, communication, and analytical skills improve. In addition, these youth demonstrate enhanced leadership and autonomous decision-making and are more likely to reach academic goals such as graduating from school. Such factors are all protective against involvement in risk behaviors (e.g., alcohol and drug use, early and unprotected sex) (Nettles, 1991).

## **Prevention through Positive Behavior Management:**

Similar to classroom behavioral management, preventative approaches of behavioral management focus on what youth need to be successful (Dodge & Bickert, 1996). Effective behavioral management practices include: predictable structure and organization, engaging activities with high rates of youth response, positive climates, accommodations to match the youth’s ability levels, and mild consequences for misbehavior. These practices usually foster appropriate behaviors for the majority of youth.

These behavior management approaches extend the practitioner's reach in assisting youth before corrective measures are necessary (Henley, 1997). Prevention has one important advantage over corrective, after-the-fact discipline; it is easier to prevent inappropriate behaviors than it is to correct them. With this said, several of today's youth may also require additional proactive

supports, such as Student Assistance Program (SAP) Teams, Individual Counseling, and Individualized Education Plans (IEP). SAP Teams and IEP Teams are multi-disciplinary teams of professionals in schools, comprised of teachers, parents, counselors, school nurses, principals, etc. Both of these approaches involve confidential processes. Referrals to these support services can be made by parents, teachers, and the student her (him)self (in the case of the SAP Team process).

### **Positive Behavior Management and Effective Programming**

Prevention through classroom management typically focuses on developing appropriate youth behaviors, accelerating classroom learning, and decreasing inappropriate behaviors. Features of positive classroom management can be adapted for youth development programs. These include:

- *Clearly communicated expectations for youth behavior:* Youth development professionals can work with youth to define acceptable behaviors in a concrete manner. High expectations from non-parental adults within youth programs provide a consistent, predictable message and address the sense of emotional and physical safety and structure that all youth require – all of which are important protective factors and processes (Perkins & Caldwell, in press). For an activity that helps to promote a sense of community within the group and shared expectations for group rules among adult leaders and youth, see Full Value Contract Activity in Appendix 2
- *Fair and consistent treatment of youth:* Rules, consequences, and enforcement procedures are clearly defined and articulated to all youth (Henderson, 1997). There are no surprises; youth know what is expected and what will happen if they deviate from the established system. The posted rules and consequences are fair and applied consistently to all youth. Try to limit the list to a few comprehensive rules, this will be easier for youth to remember and follow. Ignoring misbehavior gives youth the message that posted rules are not really important. While it is not necessary to treat any infraction severely, it is necessary to let students know, through consequences appropriately geared to infractions, that the rules of the program do have meaning and will be enforced (Summit Charter School (2004).
- *Ongoing positive and corrective feedback:* Youth development professionals and adult leaders need to focus their comments on what youth are doing correctly and provide specific praise to them for that behavior. Creating an atmosphere that is positive and welcoming can be a powerful technique to increase youth's connectedness. The idea is to catch students doing "the right thing" instead of only catching them doing "the wrong thing." Youth development professionals can also redirect inappropriate behavior before more intensive interventions become necessary (Montague, Bergeron, & Lago-Delello, 1997). For example, when dealing with youth exhibiting disruptive behaviors, youth development professionals need to respond in an even-tempered manner and maintain an appearance of calm in the face of aggression and disruption; as angry or emotional responses on the part of youth development professionals simply feed a cycle of escalation. During an outburst, the need is to decelerate rather than accelerate emotional conflict.

- *Self Monitoring Teaches Responsibility:* The goal of behavior management strategies is not simply to control a youth's behavior, but rather to help him/her move toward the development of self-control and responsibility. Thus, positive behavior management should be viewed as possessing a dual function: providing instruction in social interaction, and controlling of misbehavior. Self-monitoring is a strategy for youth to examine their own behavior, record it, and evaluate how they did. Self-monitoring strategies include use of leader cues (e.g., could be gesture cues or brief verbalization reminders to the youth), a youth checklist of appropriate behaviors, and reinforcement for progress. Self-monitoring helps youth to internalize their behavior and provides a visual reminder of what is expected of them (Warger, Eavy, & Associates 1999).
- *Be Persistent:* At first, youth misbehavior may escalate with the introduction of these new behavioral strategies, because youth are testing the limits. However, over time the misbehaviors should be decreased. Most youth development professionals find that the additional time needed to prevent or de-escalate disruption is more than made up by the savings in time of lower amounts of behavioral issues and overall improvements in the program climate (Indiana University 2000).

### **Other Programming Suggestions For Effective Behavior Management**

- *Multiple options:* Effective developmental settings for youth rely on an array of strategies utilizing: (1) structure (e.g., organized space to facilitate movement and well-planned activities that are appropriately timed); and (2) management responses (e.g., specific praising of appropriate behavior and addressing misbehavior) to maintain an effective learning environment.
- Follow established *program rules and guidelines* created with input from all group members (youths and adults). Consider establishing a challenge by choice philosophy (see Appendix 3).
- Establish rapport and maintain *contact with key school personnel* such as the principal, guidance counselor, instructional support or special education teacher, SAP (student assistance program), team members, school nurse, etc.
- Establish rapport and maintain *contact with parents* of program participants.
- Encourage and support *goal setting* for individuals and for the group as a whole.
- *Training* in behavior management techniques and strategies for crisis intervention and prevention. This should be done in close collaboration with Cooperative Extension, School district and/or Intermediate Unit administration. Attention to Risk Management policies and procedures is essential if the youth within your program are prone to acting out in a way to potentially harm themselves, others, or property while under your care and supervision.

## Intervention Techniques

The following intervention techniques are primarily drawn from comprehensive review of the research in the book *Discipline that Works: 5 Simple Steps* (Divinyi, 2003). These techniques focus on three major concepts that have been found to thwart behavioral problems. The concepts include: trust building with the youth, focusing on positive behaviors, and teaching appropriate behaviors. These concepts lay the foundation for youth to understand that their actions have consequences, positive and negative, and how they can make good decisions.

### **Discipline Not Punishment**

Discipline means *to teach*. Here, discipline refers to teaching someone appropriate behaviors in group settings. Punishment, on the other hand, is a tactic that can be used to enforce discipline or to control a situation. Punishment by itself only identifies what is inappropriate but does not teach what is appropriate. Thus, when addressing a behavioral issue remember to discipline, that is, punish the inappropriate behavior and teach the appropriate behavior. For example: a youth has been making unkind remarks to another youth. As the adult leader or youth development professional, you can make the youth take a time out from the club for half an hour. This will punish the youth for his or her actions, but taking a time out does not teach the youth about the appropriate behavior to be used. A discipline strategy would involve pulling the youth aside and talking to the youth about why he or she made the comment. After listening, discuss how the youth's comments may have made the person feel. Then the discussion should turn into what would have been appropriate and how the youth should act in the future. In addition, clear consequences must be stated so the youth understands what will happen if the behaviors continue to occur. Finally, the youth would need to apologize to the youth who was offended. This apology should be done with as little fanfare as possible. Embarrassment is not an effective discipline technique.

### **ETA (Emotion, Thinking, Action)**

While adults have emotional reactions to situations and issues, many of them have learned to think about the consequences before they take action. Often youth act on their emotions before they think about the consequences of those actions. Inappropriate action is often due to impulsive behaviors, that is, taking action before thinking. Adults may become frustrated with youth's impulsive behaviors. However, adults must model appropriate control of their frustration and focus on understanding why a youth acted the way he or she did. Understanding the reasons for a youth's action will not correct the problem; rather, it will assist the adult in choosing an effective strategy to address the youth's behavior.

One prevention method to implement is providing opportunities and experiences that teach youth how to critically think, that is, to think before they act. There are three steps to increase youth critical thinking skills:

- controlling emotion,
- thinking through the alternative behaviors and consequences,
- and then taking action.

In order to control emotions, youth need to stop and slow down. Simultaneously, youth need to think about the possible behavior or actions they could take and the consequences of those

actions. The youth should think about what emotion they are feeling and what about the situation triggered that emotion.

A youth's behavior stems directly from the decisions they make. Sometimes they make good decisions and sometimes they make bad decisions. A great activity to help youth learn decision making skills is called the "decision wheel" found in appendix 5 (Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2002). This activity allows youth to learn first-hand that there are consequences for all the decisions that they make.

### **Expectations and Rules**

Expectations and rules need to be established from the beginning. Expectations and rules should be established by the professionals and youth. We encourage youth development professionals and adult leaders to use a specific process to establish the expectations and rules the participants will follow in the program. This includes brainstorming ideas for the rules to be established. Youth need to be included in this process. When youth are involved in developing expectations and the rules, as well as the consequences of breaking the rules, they have a clear understanding of what the rules are and the consequences if one breaks them. Moreover, by engaging youth in this process, they are much more likely to feel a sense of ownership to those rules that, in turn, leads to them enforcing those rules among each other. You can also get some ideas for conducting this process through the *Full Value Contract* exercise in appendix 2. After the expectations and rules have been developed, they should be signed by all (including the adult) and posted in a prominent place where the group meets so it can be a constant reminder for all.

In addition, youth development professionals or adult leaders should establish some expectations that they have for their youth participants. Research has shown that when parents and non-parental adults have high expectations for youth, they try to meet those expectations. Rutter and colleagues (Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979) provide a classic examination of student outcomes in different types of school contexts in some of the most impoverished areas of London. They found significant differences in students' rates of academic attainment, delinquency, and behavioral disturbance, (even after controlling for family risk factors), which they attributed to differences in school context. Teachers in successful schools in comparison to non-successful schools: emphasized academics; established clear expectations and regulations; encouraged high levels of student participation; and provided alternative resources such as library facilities, vocational work opportunities, art, music, and extracurricular activities (Perkins & Caldwell, In press).

### **Ask Questions**

We need to ask the youth questions that help them think about their actions and the emotion linked with those actions. Ask them questions in a non-threatening or non-condescending way such as, "What are you working on?" and "What do you need to be doing?" These questions could be perceived as threatening if the adult does not have the appropriate tonality or posture. To ensure you are asking questions appropriately, ask yourself, "Would I ask the question in this way to an adult?" If the answer is no, perhaps you may want to rephrase the question or change position and/or your tonality. The questions need to be asked in a positive manner such that they help act as a guide to youth in understanding their emotions. Draw out the answers from the youth so that you can go deeper and they learn to be reflective and to self-observe. Self-

observation is a learned skill, and is the first step in teaching self-control. Once youth recognize their emotions, research suggests that they are more likely to stop and think about their actions and the consequences associated with them. There are four basic steps to help teach self-awareness in youth. The steps are:

Step 1: Clarify the positive behavior standards expected.

Step 2: Ask questions that call attention to behavior.

Step 3: Wait for the answer (draw out the meaning behind the answer).

Step 4: Redirect to proper behavior.

### **Teach Skills**

Youth look for role models. Youth development professionals and adult leaders are often role models; thus they need to model the behavior that they expect from their youth. Youth often model what they see other peers and adults are doing. Therefore, adults cannot say “do what I say and not what I do.” They need to teach by example and provide youth with opportunities to learn self-control through activities and experiences that enable them to develop their coping and social skills.

In many ways, teaching a skill is simply a matter of providing a youth with a plan to assist him or her with a strategy to think through their actions. Using discipline as a basic method will go a long way towards helping a youth do something different the next time. This process rarely happens when parents and other adults are punishing a youth. Thus, discipline is the foundation that youth need to understand the process of thinking through their actions.

### **Short Phrases**

When you are explaining a decision to a youth, you should stick to an explanation that is two sentences or less. Lengthy explanations are ineffective when talking with youth, because the longer the explanation the more likely teens will tune you out. In addition, when speaking keep your comments and statements positive as the brain reacts better to positive statements than to negative ones. Youth are persistent in terms of verbal struggles. They often have the ability to outlast adults in arguments and have learned that if they are persistent in arguing adults usually give in to their wants. Thus, keeping the explanation to two sentences or less prevents getting drawn into a lengthy argument.

As a rule, youth development professionals and adult leaders should plan on having to repeat themselves because youth may display the behavior again. Often, youth need to hear the message several times before it takes hold. However the repeating of messages should not become nagging. Youth are not trying to ignore what you are teaching them, rather they may be focused on something else or they do not comprehend what you are saying.

Also youth development professionals and adult leaders may want to employ short phrases to trigger the appropriate behavior in youth. Research findings indicate that a two- or three-word phrase can trigger the thinking part of a youth’s brain. In addition, adults need to be consistent with their phrases. By using the same short phrase youth may begin to recognize it and start to respond properly. For example, instead of giving a youth a lecture about how they should get back to their homework, adults may want to use the phrase “stay on task” or “focus.”

### **Focus on the Positive**

Often youth receive only negative feedback from adults, because adults attempt to correct youth so the youth can be the best that they can be. Youth are unlikely to hear positive comments or feedback when they behave well. Take the time to notice positive behaviors that youth exhibit. In addition, if you are giving feedback attempt to sandwich the feedback, that is, provide a positive statement, then a constructive comment, and end with another positive statement. Both the positive and the negative feedback to youth should be specific and not general because youth often perceive general feedback as not being genuine.

By recognizing and emphasizing positive behaviors, adults are encouraging those positive behaviors to continue. Youth development professionals and adult leaders can recognize youth's positive behaviors in several ways, including: send handwritten notes of youth positive behaviors to their parents, giving youth positive comments verbally, call their parents to report positive behaviors, give a handwritten note directly to youth when they have done well, etc.

Using these methods will teach youth how to recognize their feelings before they react, reducing behavioral problems. Teaching youth discipline isn't easy but the results are well worth it. Your club will have fewer distractions and the youth as a whole will have more fun as they learn.

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# APPENDIX 1

## *STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT*

### ■ Forming Stage – 1st Stage.

A member of this group may ask herself: “Who am I in this group?”

- ✓ There’s lots of uncertainty.
- ✓ Feeling safe and being safe is a key factor.
- ✓ All members of the group need to be involved.

### ■ Storming Stage – 2nd Stage

A member of this group may ask herself: “Is the group safe? Can the leaders handle us?”

- ✓ Group members will bond with some and not “hit it off” with others.
- ✓ Some silly or somewhat wild or “negative” stuff might go on.
- ✓ Safety again is a key factor to monitor. Facilitator provides safety; but begins to let go of some control.
- ✓ Differences will begin to be accepted.

### ■ Norming Stage – 3rd Stage

A member of this group may ask herself: “What are we going to do?”

- ✓ The group begins to operate as a team.
- ✓ Group gets things done without help.
- ✓ Group members look out for one another.
- ✓ People trust each other.

### ■ Performing Stage – 4th Stage

A member of this group may ask herself: “How are we going to do it? Then she may say: “OK, let’s do it”

- ✓ The group gets stuff done.
- ✓ The group is flexible and provides “give and take” to another.
- ✓ The group is efficient.
- ✓ The facilitator is in the background.

### ■ Transforming (or Adjourning) Stage – The Last Stage

A member of this group may ask herself: “Where do we go from here?”

- ✓ The group may have to deal with feelings of loss.
- ✓ The Facilitator should be helping the group to move on to new beginnings (as a group or as individuals).
- ✓ Group may need help (from the facilitator) to finish out - and end on a good note.

## APPENDIX 2

### Full Value Contract

The Full Value Contract (between and among all group members) addresses group needs during the development process: the establishing and maintaining of group norms (ground rules) for behavior. Challenge by Choice addresses the individual needs of group members. Both of these concepts were developed by Project Adventure, a leading company in the field of experiential education.

“The Full Value Contract is a positive step in the group development process that calls for each group member to value self, others, the group and the learning. To do this, the group must establish basic rules, or, guidelines of emotional and physical safety. The Full Value Contract reminds the adult leader and youths to pay as much attention to the processes of learning as they do to the content of learning” (Henton, 1996).

“The group develops a series of commitments that has the effect of agreeing to find positive value in the efforts of group members. This positive value is expressed in encouragement, goal setting, group dialog, a spirit of forgiveness, and confrontation.

An initial activity with Full Value Contract involves asking group members what they can do to make their group environment a safe place, both physically and emotionally. By simply listing their suggestions, the group begins to establish norms for behavior. At first, this will be somewhat superficial, but it is used as a starting point. Later in the process, the members will develop a more comprehensive Full Value Contract. Make sure that your “agenda items” as a facilitator/adult leader are incorporated into the contract; and, that issues around name calling and put-downs are also included.” (Frank, 2004).

#### Full Value Contract

A “Full Value Contract” (FVC) is a set of values, norms, or ground rules that the group establishes and agrees to use for their time together. The essential points of the Full Value Contract are: to allow each member of the group to have a voice in creating group norms, to empower participants by allowing them to create the Full Value Contract, and to ensure that these values will allow the group to

work toward their common goals. The Full Value Contract asks participants to:

- fully value themselves,
  - fully value the other members of the group, and
  - fully value the environment —this includes the physical environment and the group environment.
- Another way to look at a Full Value Contract is to simply ask your participants to:
- play hard,

- play safe,
- play fair.

#### Creating a Full Value Contract

##### **4-H Full Value Contract**

I pledge my *head* to clearer thinking, my *heart* to greater loyalty, my *hands* to larger service, and my *health* to better living, for my club, my community, my country, and my world. The 4-H pledge can be used and adapted for teambuilding programs. A facilitator can expand on

the ideas that are already a part of the foundation of 4-H. I pledge my *head* to clear group problem-solving and participation, my *heart* to caring for the other members of my group, my *hands* to working with my other group members toward our common goals, and my *health* toward keeping a positive atmosphere in our group.

### **Five-Finger Full Value Contract**

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The Five-Finger Full Value Contract is a quick and easy way to create group values. This tool is particularly valuable for younger groups, as well as for groups that may only be working together for a short period of time. Each finger of one hand represents various important group values.

#### ***Pinky Finger***

Represents the need for us all to watch out for “the little guy/gal,” and serves as a reminder to a group to watch out for each other over the course of the Program.

#### ***Ring Finger***

Represents a commitment made to the group. Each person has made a commitment to do their best for the program and to support other group members.

***Middle Finger*** Represents the idea that a group will agree to not “discount” each other. This includes refraining from inappropriate language and respecting all members of the group.

***Pointer Finger*** Represents a reminder to the group to point out the positive outcomes that the group notices. This reminds individuals not to point the finger of blame at other participants.

***Thumb*** Represents the idea that the group is going to have fun!

### **The Being Full Value Contract**

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#### ***Equipment Needs***

- Large format paper (ideally large enough for a life-size being)
- Markers, crayons, paint, and so forth. The Being is a fun and interactive way to create a Full Value Contract. A simple drawing of a person can be created on a large piece of paper by tracing one of the participants. This being is a representation of the group as a whole. Participants individually contribute values that they think are important to uphold as a group. These values are added to the inside of the being. As the discussion progresses, the group members write aspects of group values

that they would like to leave out of their community (for example, disrespect, hurtful words, and so on) on the outside of the being. This is a living, working document that the participants can take with them or display in a place of importance to them. As the group members move through their experience together, they can look back to their being to point out things that they are doing well and areas where they can continue to improve.

### **Hands-On Full Value Contract**

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#### ***Equipment Needs***

- Large poster board/large sheet of paper
- Markers or crayons.

This Full Value Contract is similar to The Being, but with a slightly different focus and frame. On the large sheet of paper, the participants will trace both of their hands with a marker. In one hand they will write a strength that they bring to the group (such as a great sense of humor, being a good listener, and so forth) and in the other hand they will write one thing that they need from the group (for example, support, clear communication, and so on). The group members can use this Full Value Contract as a tool to assess

how well they are able to use each other's strengths. Facilitators can ask their participants to write a variety of things in their hands depending on the group.

### **Building Blocks/Pyramid/Puzzles Full Value Contract**

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#### ***Equipment Needs***

- Poster board
- Markers

This version of a Full Value Contract can be used with programs that meet over a long period of time. The concept of building blocks or a pyramid is that together the group is working on building a community and a stronger group. As the group works

together they will discover more important things to add to their community. At different times, group members add more to the Full Value Contract. For example, introduce the base of a pyramid on the first day, as the group is just forming. The group will be creating norms to use throughout their experience together. At the midpoint of the group's time together reintroduce the contract and ask which learning experiences they would like to add, or perhaps goals that they would still like to work on. As a part of a closing experience, the capstone of the pyramid could include one positive learning

activity that each person had from the group experience. The Puzzle Piece Full Value Contract is similar to the Building Blocks or Pyramid. The facilitator incorporates the puzzle metaphor of each individual being an important piece of the group puzzle. The group can work on the puzzle at various points in time during the group process. The idea behind these Full Value Contracts is to incorporate the thoughts of many different individuals or the progression of one group over a period of time.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Challenge by Choice**

Challenge by Choice is the notion that in-depth learning occurs when individuals choose and commit to academic and personal goals that are challenging and meaningful. Risk taking, within the supportive atmosphere of the adventure learning community, is essential for cognitive, meta-cognitive, interpersonal, and personal growth. “Challenge by Choice accepts the proposition that individuals know their own abilities, their limits, and their potential for accomplishments. When an individual is encouraged to meet a challenge and is supported in that effort, they are more likely to meet with success. That success, in turn, leads to additional efforts at taking healthy risks. In other words, success breeds success. This self-efficacy, this ability to evaluate one’s potential to meet a challenge in the face of uncertain results (Bandura, 1977; Ewert, 1989) is the crux of Challenge by Choice.”

In team learning and teaching, each member should be challenging themselves. Program participants should also be challenging each other in a supportive manner. Challenge by Choice provides an effective framework for the social development of youth. A learning environment that is community based demands attention to the intrapersonal growth and interpersonal relations of its members. Challenge by Choice means youth need to make positive decisions that effect their lives. There is no better place for youth to learn how to make wise choices, follow through on commitments, and be accountable than in a challenging and supportive classroom.” It provides the informal after-school learning environment with continuous opportunities to set and refine goals, to act, reflect, generalize, and apply learning. “The operating principle of Challenge by Choice rests on the premises that 1) challenge or healthy risk-taking promotes growth; 2) the individual’s basic need for competence and effectiveness is a positive motivation for learning; and, 3) individuals possess the ability to determine their potential success in new situations.”

## APPENDIX 4

Here are some more suggestions from Mike Klumpp, a 4-H Youth Development Specialist from the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture. They have been compiled from the 4-H Volunteer Leader's Series publication titled "Positive Approaches to Behavior Problems".

No listing of specific guidelines of discipline, punishment or control can possibly accommodate all of the various leadership styles or group situations that one will encounter. Each individual must work out a style (or styles) that seem to work best in various situations.

The following pointers have been selected for consideration because they relate to basic realities of human nature and group behavior. Understanding and accepting these realities can help a leader establish an atmosphere that will minimize the occurrence and intensity of conflicts, disruptions and misbehaviors.

- Accept each child at his/her present level of development. Try to establish a warm friendly relationship. This will go a long way toward nurturing further development and good relationships.
- Establish an atmosphere of mutual trust, liking and respect. Whenever possible make your comments and behavior positive and encouraging.
- Be certain that you are honest in recognizing the personal needs, feelings and motives that lead to your behavior.
- Recognize the difference between what you do to get through a situation and what you can do to resolve a basic issue.
- Consider that changing your attitude or approach may be the most effective way to arrive at a solution to a behavior problem.
- Limit rules to those that are necessary and in the general interest of the group. Try to ensure that everyone clearly understands them and their purposes. Enforce them calmly, firmly and impartially. Children understand and appreciate the need for rules. Rules can be discussed and evolved into accepted agreements.
- Do not make threats you cannot or will not carry out. Better yet, do not make threats at all. When the occasion demands, act swiftly and decisively.
- Do not argue with or nag group members. Do take time to carefully explain.
- Sometimes the best response is to ignore a behavior.
- Never speak disrespectfully of a child's parents, home or upbringing. That is a quick way to lose respect.

- If you receive satisfaction from threatening, embarrassing or punishing a child, reexamine your motives.
- You are human. Be willing to acknowledge your mistakes and learn from them. Then carry on.

The key factor in managing a successful youth group is the attitude of the leader. The leader sets the tone, establishes the atmosphere and is the role model. Establish some ideals for yourself as a leader of youth. Strive to become what you want to be as a youth leader. Striving will help you reach your goal, but be realistic: Don't expect to be "ideal." Just expect and work toward improvement and it will come.

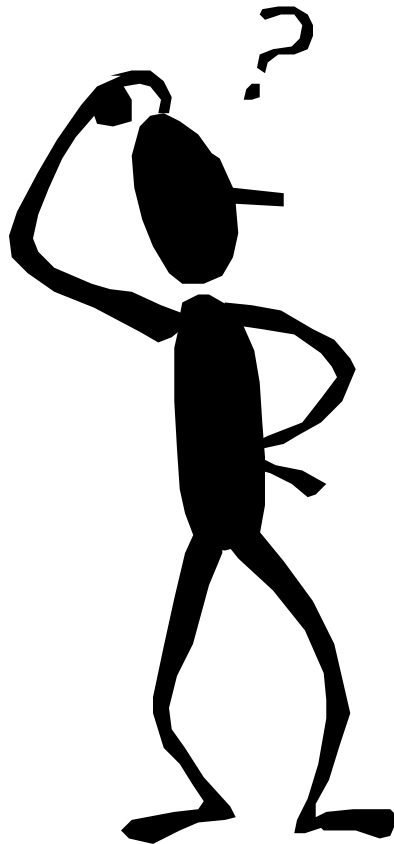
### **Five-Step Approach to Behavior Problems from Klumpp:**

Keeping in mind the needs of youth, think of youth behaviors or situations that are or have been problems for you. Practice the five-step method in analyzing your problem situations. A good way to practice is to write responses to the five steps:

1. **Describe the Situation.** Objectively summarize the circumstances and behaviors. Try not to make judgments at this point. Merely outline the obvious facts of the situation.
2. **What Is the Problem?** Describe and label the actions or behaviors that you see as problems. Who is involved?
3. **Whose Problem Is It?** Look at the behavior. Determine for whom it is a problem and why. Is it a problem for the child, other children, the group, other leaders, parents or others? Is it really a problem? How serious a problem is it?
4. **What Are the Needs?** Try to determine which basic needs the child is trying to meet. To what extent can you meet or arrange for the meeting of basic needs the child is trying to meet. To what extent can you meet or arrange for the meeting of those needs?
5. **Possible Solutions.** Consider several possible solutions that might remedy the problem behavior. Will this solution in some way account for meeting the real needs of the child, the children or the group?

## APPENDIX 5

# Decisions, Decisions, Decisions Decisions, Decisions, Decisions



*Prepared by: Claudia C. Mincemoyer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, and Daniel F. Perkins, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Agricultural and Extension Education, Penn State University for March Statewide In-service, 2002 as part of the Life Skills Resource and Evaluation Program*

## The Decision Wheel - <http://pa4h.cas.psu.edu/Materials/DecisionWheel.pdf>

### Materials needed:

- flip chart
- marker
- post-it notes
- copy of Decision Wheel
- paper fasteners to assemble Decision Wheel
- age-appropriate decision page (elementary, middle or high school)
- blank decision page to develop own decision situations
- scissors
- heavy (60 #) paper

### Purpose:

- to learn the steps involved in making sound decisions. To practice using decision-making skills

### Age:

- elementary to high school (depending on decision situations used)

### About Decision-Making

Good decision-making is a skill that you can help youth learn. Youth make decisions everyday. Some of the decisions are easy, such as what to wear, who to sit with on the bus, or what to buy for lunch; however, others are more difficult. More difficult decisions, such as deciding whether to do homework or watch TV, or deciding whether or not to accept a ride from a friend who has been drinking have more serious consequences than easy decisions.

Not making a decision is really a way of making a decision. Some youth may refuse to make a decision when they don't want responsibility for or have control over the consequences of their decisions. According to a Search Institute survey on developmental assets, 29% of youth surveyed reported that they had planning and decision-making assets in their lives.

Youth can learn the steps and practice the skills necessary to make sound decisions. Below are the steps that you will use when completing the decision wheel activity.

- **Define the problem, issue or situation.** Youth should think about the choice or problem, ask others to help them identify their problem and look for information to help them understand the problem.
- **Identify alternatives, choices or options.** Youth should list or brainstorm all of the possible ways to solve the problem or choices available to them. This step helps them to think before making a choice and identify more than one way to deal with the problem.
- **Identify consequences and risks for each choice.** Think about the advantages or positive aspects of each possible choice. Then identify the disadvantages or risks involved with making each choice. Encourage youth to think about their family and personal values and how each decision may affect other people.

- **Decide on one choice.** What is the best alternative? Encourage youth to think about all the information they gathered about each choice and how their decision will affect them and others. Choices may also be based on knowledge, values, religious beliefs and present and future goals.
- **Evaluate the decision.** Using the steps necessary for sound decision-making will not guarantee that all of the decisions youth make will be the right ones. After an important decision, encourage youth to think about the consequences, use this knowledge to change the decision the next time or be assured that the right decision was made.

### *Leading the Activity*

- Make the Decision Wheel.
  1. Copy (on heavy paper) enough of the Decision Wheel handouts (A and B) for each youth in your group.
  2. Cut out the wheel with the steps to sound decision-making (wheel A) printed on the front. Cut the blank slice of the wheel out.
  3. Cut out the wheel with the decision situations (wheel B). Put the paper fastener through the 4-H clover to connect the two parts of the wheel.
- Draw a large Decision Wheel on a flip chart or chalkboard, review with the youth. Explain that the Decision Wheel is designed to give them practice using the skills needed for sound decision-making.
- Write the first situation from the wheel at the top of the flip chart paper.
- Partner youth to discuss the situation. Youth should follow the steps around the wheel to discuss the decision.
- Ask each pair to write one solution to the problem or situation per post-it note. Ask them to think about all of the possible options.
- Ask each pair to also write the consequences of each solution on a separate post-it note.
- Bring the group back together and share the options and the consequences. Put the post-it notes for the choices in the “Identify Alternatives or Choices” slice of the Decision Wheel.
- Put the consequence post-it notes on the “Identify Risks and Consequences” slice of the Decision Wheel.
- When all of the options and consequences are posted, discuss with the group why they would not choose an option because they don’t like the consequences. Remove one option at a time until there is only one option left. That is the choice the group made. Remind youth that this may not be the choice that each individual would have made.

**Process what the group learned**

Was it more difficult to think of options with positive or negative consequences?

Why is it important to think of consequences when making a decision?

How can collecting information about a situation help make decision-making easier?

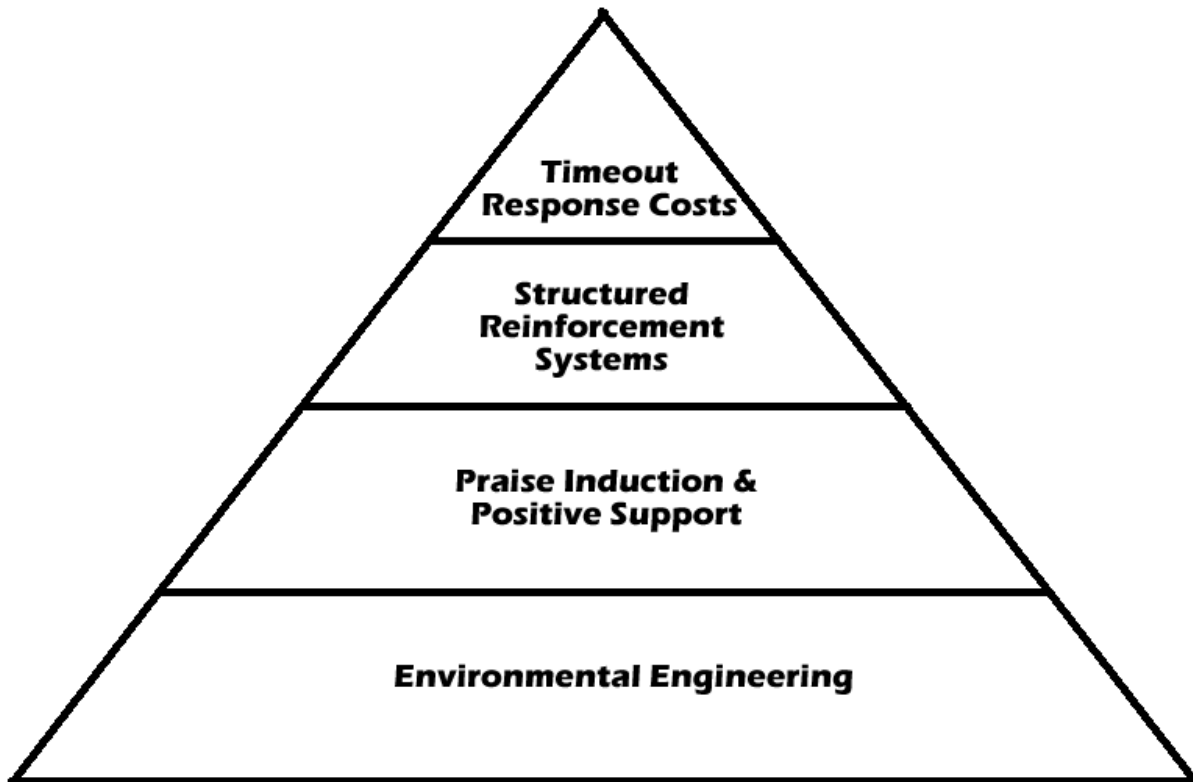
Describe a situation where one of your options had both negative and positive consequences.

The next time you make a decision, what will you do differently?

Process questions adapted from Health: It's Your Choice, Helper's Guide, 4-HCCS Curriculum

## APPENDIX 6<sup>3</sup>

# Discipline Pyramid



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<sup>3</sup> Welsh, J. A. (May 2005) Personal communications.

## APPENDIX 7

### *Sample Friendship Group Contract<sup>4</sup>*

- I agree to keep the following rules:
  - Listen to the counselors
  - Take care of our place
  - No fighting
  - No put-downs
  - Stay together
  
- If I follow these rules:
  - I will get to help the counselor during an activity
  
- If I do not follow these rules:
  - I will get one warning
  - I will need to take a time out by the door
  - I will have to leave the activity and go to the director's office
  
- I also understand that if I run away, destroy property or harm anyone, I will have to go to the director's office immediately, with no warnings

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>4</sup> Welsh, J. A. (May 2005) Personal communications.

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