



RESPECT!

Because Youth Truth Matters

Created by the Tri-County Women's Centre and Youth Truth Matters, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and in collaboration with the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development. These seven components are aligned with the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse's (CCSA) Components of Ethical Youth Engagement. ****Please note that it is not practical or reasonable for every organization to implement these components to the same degree.****

R

REAL EMPOWERMENT

Balance of power between youth and adults. * **Engagement is more than tokenism.** * Youth are involved, as much as possible and realistic, in aspects of the program, including planning, implementation, evaluation, management and decision making. * **Youth feel a sense of ownership.** * There are visible impacts from youth participation.

E

ENVIRONMENT IS YOUTH FRIENDLY

Reduced barriers for youth participation and respect youth challenges. * **Location and setting makes it easy to have active and on-going engagement.** * Create a safe, fair and collaborative space. * **Appreciate diversity and build trust.** * Use inclusive language that builds connection. * **Find out what a safe, inclusive environment means to each group.** * Consider including food, music, arts.

S

SUPPORT & GUIDANCE FROM ADULTS

Build trust. **Youth are supported and guided by adults in the activities and to take leadership roles.** * Respect, encourage and actively listen to everyone's ideas. * **Together, create group agreements around behavior, roles, expectations and limits.** * Adults encourage youth to make their own decisions while still providing a high level of support and guidance. * **Youth are encouraged to think critically about their actions and decisions.** * Be flexible and prioritize youth needs.

P

PARTICIPATION IS MEANINGFUL

Participation is enjoyable. * **Youth can be creative.** * Build healthy relationships. * **Participation matches youth's interest, it feels meaningful and significant, and is developmentally appropriate.** * Participation provides youth with a sense of self-worth and value. * **Opportunities for youth to actively engage in different ways according to interests.** * Prioritize and design programs and projects for on-going recruitment and retention of other youth.

E

ESTABLISH GOALS

Goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Agreed Upon, Realistic and Timely. * **Establish and achieve SMART goals for the organization or project. Where possible, youth are involved in setting and attaining these goals.** * Youth are supported to establish SMART personal goals.

C

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Outward focus: Youth focus on being in service to community and making a difference in the lives of other youth, the greater community, and natural the environment. * **Space is created within institutions/organizations for youth voice and participation.** * Youth have opportunities to establish connections and build relationships with the community.

T

TOGETHER WE LEARN

Organizations and adults actively build their ability to respectfully engage youth. * **Youth and adults build upon their strengths and learn new skills.** * Youth learn from each other. * **Youth support and mentor other youth.** * Youth and adults receive feedback that supports learning and skill development. * **Youth have adult mentors and supports to build specialized skill sets (e.g. marketing, social media, art, music, cooking).** * Youth and adults are encouraged to take risks and move beyond comfort zones.