

Transition Age Youth: Motivating Others through Voices of Experience with Youth MOVE National

MELODY RIEFER

Good afternoon or good morning, based on where you are in the world. Thanks for joining us today. We're happy that you could be a participant in this Recovery to Practice webinar. This and all the Recovery to Practice webinars are funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. We're grateful for the opportunity and the support that that creates to help us can provide you with new information and ways to improve the delivery of recovery-oriented services, supports, and treatment.

The views and opinions and content of this presentation are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions and policies of SAMHSA or the Department of Health and Human Services.

Now, just a couple of housekeeping details before we really get started. Note that there are some places on the screen that invite you to participate. We would love for you to pose questions to the presenters or, if you have any technical challenges, let us know that. You would type that information in the pod labeled "Tech and Topic Questions." If you want to interact with each other and let us know how things are going, you can enter that information in the pod labeled "Participant Chat." You want to keep those two separate because it helps us be able to respond to you more quickly. So Participant Chat is interactive for you all with each other; Tech and Topic Questions come to those of us who are in charge, if you will, of the webinar. We will help you with technical challenges, and we will gather the topic questions to refer to at the end of the presentation during the Q&A.

Also at the end of the presentation, I'm going to tell you how you can go about getting Continuing Education hours or a Certificate of Attendance for your time with us. We want this to be meaningful in terms of content, but we also know that a lot of you need the Continuing Education hours or the proof of attendance to maintain your accreditation. So please do help yourself to that information.

One more thing...there's a pod labeled "Download Materials." In that section, you'll be able to download a copy of the presentation. You will be able to access some additional resources, should you want to do more learning on this topic, and you can access the presenters' bios.

Now, speaking of the presenters' bios, we've got a couple of great people who are going to be talking to you today about transition age youth. But let's help them learn a little bit about where we stand. There's a quick poll that I would like for you to respond to, and there are two questions.

One: Do you work with people in the young adult age range, which is roughly defined as 16 to 25, give or take, depending on your program? If you do, please click "Yes," and if you don't, click "No."

The second question: Does your agency or organization or state have a youth or young adult-led advocacy organization? Let's go ahead and put the word "active" in there. Do you have an active young-adult-led advocacy organization? Again, if you would put "Yes" or "No."

I'm seeing some folks respond to those questions; and I want to give you just another minute or two to think about your response, click the right button. It auto populates and shows you, in terms of percentages, how people are responding. Right now, we're seeing that everyone who has indicated their response *does* work with young adults or people who are in that transition age of youth category. About half and half have a young adult-led advocacy organization. You're going to be able to learn more about those organizations as we go through this presentation. So let's go ahead and do that.

Our title for the webinar today is "Motivating Others through Voices of Experience." We're lucky to have some leaders with us from the youth and young adult advocacy world. Brie Masselli – and, Brie, I'm going to invite you to say your last name correctly because I did not – is the Director of Technical Assistance and Evaluation for Youth MOVE National. She serves as the lead for Children's Mental Health Initiative. She coordinates technical assistance to providers, organizations, and communities seeking to become

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youth-guided and trauma-informed in order to better serve the needs of family and youth who are experiencing challenges with behavioral health and emotional health issues.

Then we have her colleague, Johanna Bergan, who is the Executive Director of Youth MOVE National. Her work keeps her close to the Youth MOVE local chapters in various states, and she has been a youth advocate and a voice for young people in systems with a special focus on the mental health system. Her personal experience as a young adult and as a young mother has also allowed her to see the need for positive systems change.

So these two women are going to speak to us about what it means to the behavioral health world to invite the voice of transition age youth and young adults into the dialog about how we can provide recovery-oriented services.

Thank you both for being here, and I will turn the webinar over to you now.

JOHANNA BERGAN

Excellent, thank you so much, Melody, for introducing us and getting us started.

Brie and I are excited to speak with you today. We'll be trading off throughout the presentation and welcome your questions throughout our session today. As Melody said, we both work with Youth MOVE National. We're a youth-driven, chapter-based organization dedicated to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development by uniting the voices of individuals who have lived experience in a variety of systems including mental health, juvenile justice, education, and child welfare.

MOVE, as this session is called for, stands for Motivating Others through Voices of Experience; and it's really what we do each and every day. So we're excited to be with you today. We are going to be talking about several things today, but I'm going to begin by broadly discussing the value of youth voice and youth engagement in our work and your work. Then we'll get more specific throughout the session about what this looks like.

Throughout today's session, we'll discuss youth engagement work that is happening in the field and hopefully lead you to the opportunity of reaching out in your home, community, or state to what is happening there. We'll cover key considerations for you to be aware of while working to support the growth and development of youth voice. Our final message today will be on specific take-home messages you can each use in your work every day. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers. So let's get started.

Just a little bit more about Youth MOVE National...again, we're a chapter-based organization, and that means that local youth groups, programs, and organizations can choose to apply for membership; and, when accepted, they become affiliated with this larger united youth movement. It's all about our voices being stronger together.

Youth members in each of the chapters have lived experience across systems, and we work within child welfare, juvenile justice, special education, behavioral health. From the beginning of Youth MOVE, it was very important to our young leaders that we not create an organization that siloes young people in the way that our service systems tend to do. So, it's exciting to be working in this diverse setting.

At Youth MOVE in all of chapters, we are working to unite, advocate, and empower. We unite the voices and causes of young adults because our voices are stronger together. We advocate for youth voice within the supports and services offered and in system design. Each of us has a truly unique and powerful personal story, and we also each deserve the opportunity to use this experience improve the world around us. We empower youths to be equal partners in the process of change and system transformation.

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As it's particularly relevant and of interest to each of you joining in this Recovery to Practice webinar, Youth MOVE National is working as a part of collective efforts to improve the behavioral health service systems and the outcomes young adult experience specific to young adults of transition stage. We do this through partnership with other organizations and agencies, and specifically by working in communities, several of whom are SAMHSA grantees, including the Healthy Transition Grantees and System of Care Grantees with a specific focus on this population. But most importantly, this work is being done by creating a space for young adults to come to the table, to be seated at the table, and design and build the supports that they need across the community.

At Youth MOVE, we do our work in many ways. We unite members by convening young people and creating stronger peer-to-peer connections across our networks. We identify and disseminate best practices around supporting and engaging and retaining young adults in services and support. We engage young people as advisees to organization and policy design, wanting young people to drive our systems transformation work. We develop resources and training which are guided and created by youth, with youth, and facilitated by youth. Then our core team at Youth MOVE National serves as representation at youth voice at national tables, like our youth leaders within chapters do in their counties, tribes, and states.

Why we do it?

We do this work because we envision a future in which every youth is recognized and accepted as an individual and a human who can make change...not just treated as a number, problem, or caseload. That is why I wake up every morning excited and jazzed to come to work.

One of the most commonly asked questions is, "What does a Youth MOVE chapter look like? What do they do?" Some people are asking, "How do I build a Youth MOVE Chapter? Tell me what to do."

These questions are difficult to answer because the Youth MOVE network is full of youth-driven programming, which means that it's always going to be unique to the young people driving the process within their community. We support our chapters in identifying and addressing the needs of their local community, which means that *every* chapter is unique to its environment. I personally think that the variety across our network is one of our greatest strengths.

So the question I answer instead is, "Why do youth-driven organizations like Youth MOVE chapters exist?"

The answer to that question we categorize things into six purpose areas, and they're up in a graphic on your screen. The six areas include recreation and peer networking. It means we have fun in a positive, prosocial space with our peers and their peers. Our chapters exist for community involvement and advocacy, building the identity of young people and deepening the involvement young people have within their chapter. Our chapters do social marketing and awareness building. Those are code words for stigma busting, which is still very much a vital part of our work. The fourth is youth voice development and leadership training, and the fifth is personal development and empowerment; and the final is peer service delivery.

Youth-run programs and organizations like Youth MOVE chapters can be incredibly valuable to your work to engage youth and young adults. For example, partnering with a Youth MOVE chapter can provide trainings on self-advocacy; and services can help build the young people's skills in the work that you do so that they can advocate for their individual needs and goals at the service level. Youth MOVE chapters often hold regular weekly or biweekly programs that create and support a positive prosocial space for youth to be in. So referring young people in your practice to community programs like a Youth MOVE chapter allows them to build and strengthen their informal support within the community.

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Several Youth MOVE chapters provide formalized youth peer support services, both individual and group; and you can reach out to find out what's available in your community to make these connections. We've provided the service areas as a resource if you would like to download the slides and dig into those a little bit deeper.

I'm going to talk briefly about two continuums with you today that we use when we talk about youth engagement. Both are useful in helping us each think about where we are personally and then where our organization and agency is in partnering with young adults at the individual level as they advocate for their own goals and needs and services, as well as at the organizational or agency level. After I've reviewed these two continuums, I'm going to be passing off to my colleague, Brie.

On this slide you see the foundation of youth development. The columns represent three approaches or styles to working with young adults and they're essentially, from left to right, "do to," "do for," "do with." So when we're in a relationship and as an adult, we do *to* in our relationship. We are driven by the goal of helping the young adults grow and develop. As an adult -- and we should note that we then have more power in the relationships with them, the young adults -- we control the environment. This becomes a telling relationship. The byproduct of this style is that a young adult conforms to the situation and generally accepts that the program and the environment that they're in is just always going to be like it is, and there's not a desire or innovation to try to ask for something to be different. They just sort of assume everything has to stay the way it is.

When we're in a relationship with a young adult and we do *for*, much of the same happens. There's still a drive on behalf of the adult to support the personal growth of the young person; however, we see a shift in letting the young person become involved. So there's now room in input in the relationship on behalf of the young adult. So in this silo, we are able to open our ears, as supportive adults, to hear what a young person is sharing; and because we're able to do this and have this back and forth, we're going to see increased organizational effectiveness.

When we are in a relationship, indicated on the far right of this slide and do *with*, there's a shared partnership between the young adults and adults. The relationship becomes a two-way street. Our objective can now be increased organizational effectiveness, and the byproduct is personal growth; and the (inaudible) is growth for both the young adult as well as the adult. As Brie can attest to, I find it helpful to have an external check, as well as an internal check, when I'm engaging with youth leaders about what style am I using to take a moment to reflect as we start slipping into the "do to" and "do for" to bring ourselves back into a place of resource and "doing with." So that's one continuum that can be really helpful for you to use in your work.

The second continuum I think a lot of folks are familiar with is Hart's Ladder of Engagement. We'll take a very quick look at this. This is a tool that lets you explore where you are in engaging young people. The basic you need to know is that youth-driven increases as you go up the ladder. The bottom three rungs are where we *don't* want to be, and it's small on your screen; those are manipulation, decoration, and tokenism. These are the instances where youth are at the table but their voices are not truly being valued. All youth leaders and advocates who are in this work have experienced being in this place, and this is where we really need to turn our advocacy voice on because we want to change that dynamic.

All of us will experience a variety of points on this ladder over time, and also in different environments -- sometimes even on a day-to-day basis. I just want everyone to know that your program, or the initiative that you're working in, evolves and shifts on the ladder other time. So if you identify that you're sort of in the middle of the ladder, where you allow young adults to inform your work -- you consult them by asking for their input -- you won't stay there the whole time. You can continue to move on this ladder.

There are a variety of ways you can use this ladder. You can do a self-rating system. I find it interesting to have young people rate where they are on the ladder in the work where they guide and drive the work versus where they are on the ladder when they're in an advisor role. We see young people feeling empowered and identifying that they're higher on the ladder when they're only in the

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process. If you do sort of a self-assessment like that and you don't like where you are, then you sort of set the bar so you know where you're going.

It's important to know where you are today and where you want to go forward in your work on the ladder to set a baseline and then a long-term goal for you. Remember...any movement takes time, so there's no instant gratification in the work we're talking about. I remind our youth leaders of this all the time because we're transforming systems, and that's going to take a lot of time and investment.

I'm going to pass it over to you, Brie, to talk a little bit more about youth engagement.

BRIE MASSELLI

Great, thank you, Johanna.

What is youth engagement?

Youth engagement is a strategy in which youth are given meaningful input and have roles where they are authentically and meaningfully involved in working towards changing services and systems that affect their lives. At Youth MOVE National, for us, this really helps us understand that individual -- like meeting people where they're at -- and how we're able to build capacity with the individuals youth leader, as well as the individual organizations and communities in which they participate and receive services from. So it's really important for us to really think about engagement as authentic, developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and really intentional.

Oftentimes in the work we see -- Johanna mentioned kind of lower on that list where we don't want to be, like the tokenism and the manipulation and decoration, oftentimes people are asked because of a contract funding or there's an expectation within a project that you should have youth voice on this committee or in this project. People don't necessarily know how to build that foundation that really kind of is a mutual kind of win/win on what the young adult can learn while participating in the work, as well as what the professionals can learn at the same time.

So when you're not intentional about thinking about what is the foundation or the strategy that we need to develop to really kind of get that meaningful and authentic youth engagement, oftentimes you see people putting folks at the table, not really sure why they're there but yet they meet a contract deliverable or an expectation. It kind of checks the box. And then you see some frustration on why maybe the young adults don't stay engaged -- because they're not quite sure what the purpose or the value is of participating in that level of engagement.

So it's incredibly important to think about your intention behind why engage young adults and what needs to be put in place so that you can see the greatest return on that participation and engagement.

So thinking about that really kind of moves you into understanding the mutual benefits that come with the value added through young adult voice, and it's mutual on all aspects. The young adult voice, as Johanna has touched upon, is about helping the young adult leaders building their own kind of skillset and self-efficacy and their ability to contribute and feel a part of the community and a part of a bigger kind of unified voice within the work.

But what is important is that organizations also get to see the value added through it changes your institutional culture and practice. Young adults can help kind of shift the climate within an organization to be a bit more responsive based on what young adults need through that organization and/or system.

They can help you identify new policies that can better serve young adults. Oftentimes, we see this; and sometimes folks refer to it kind of as mystery shopping, where they're able to utilize the feedback from young adults to kind of understand that the policy that's put in place really is restrictive to accessing care

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or understanding the supports and services that are available, and how young adults can really help organizations create policies and practices that really seem to work well for them.

Through participation, we're able to see outcomes on the individual level. There are often where I have worked with youth programs across the country, where the young adults show up and they're active participants and they're vocal and they're organized and they're excited to be at the table. But, we hear from their parents that they struggle just cleaning their locker at school and getting their homework out of their school bag. It's like, well, they have strong organizational skills when they participate in this work – so helping the individual transfer what they're learning through leadership and advocacy work within our programs to kind of how does that help them transfer into some of the life skills that they need.

We also see when young adults can inform program policies and services and what's available is that the organization sees better outcomes. Young adults tend to treat with treatments and services. They feel more a part of the organization and not so much just a recipient of services or a consumer in some work culture. So they really feel that the organization is kind of like a real meaningful partner and the whole organization cares about their wellbeing and their involvement in their treatment or services. So you'll see that on the return of less missed appointments and young people getting better faster within their treatment and care. Those are all the value added of working with young adults; and again, you see that on the individual, the community, as well as the organizational level.

So I will just turn this back to Johanna to talk a little bit about partnerships.

JOHANNA BERGAN

Thanks, Brie.

For most of us on this webinar, I would imagine that we're interested in how to develop and sustain these meaningful partnerships with young adults; and so I've got just a couple of slides to go over, things for you to consider, that come from the experiences of youth and young adults who have had truly meaningful partnerships with adults.

Youth want a choice of how to participate, and I would note that this often means we have to help them identify what the choices for participation really are.

Young people want options that build on their personal skills and interests. I'd like people to think about how do we add value to all parties who are involved in partnership, so how do we in turn build the personal capacity of young people who are joining us in this work?

Young people ask for a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. If we don't understand what we're supposed to be doing or why we've been invited to a table, we tend to just sort of opt out, sit back, because we don't understand how to dig into the work.

Ongoing support and coaching before, during, and after all the work is essential.

Really being a meaningful partner...so coming to the table with equity on your mind and really living and breathing what it means to be a partner rather than sort of sitting back and sort of putting a lot of onus or pressure on the young person to somehow perform or step into a space. We want to come to the table equally.

Young people want to grow with their experience. So, as we engage young people for longer, deeper amounts of time, they want new challenges, new opportunities. Throughout all the work working with young people, it's important to have peer environments so young people aren't alone. Being the only young person at a table is hard, so doing this work with multiple voices is important.

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If you are looking for very specific things when you're working on a partnership with young people, remember to come to the relationship with an open mind and ready to be flexible from everything, from scheduling to language, youth culture in general. I would sum this slide up with one word, and that is "respect." Respect a young person in all ways, including the readiness level they have to engage with you. We want to build environments that are supportive and nurturing so young people want to keep coming back to it.

We hear time and time again from youth leaders, "Don't over promise and under deliver; be authentic in what you're doing." And then we just encourage ongoing support in the relationships again and again.

Brie, I'll pass it back to you for maybe a couple of examples here.

Great, in much of the work -- I started working in systems of care quite some time ago as the youth coordinator and kind of organizing some youth-driven practices and establishing my own Youth MOVE chapter locally in my community. Over the years, we've been able to grow nationally and kind of really see the meaningful ways young folks are participating. What you see here is really how the value added of youth voice really helped us at the individual service level. We've seen many communities really looking at how do we enhance youth voice at the treatment, planning, and goal setting?

Oftentimes, youth and young adults are not as involved in their service plan; and that is primarily because there's that parental relationship involved. So as a child, you see a lot of the doing *for* and the doing *to* within the service and treatment planning phases. Then as you transition and are older, really kind of gaining your empowerment and your voice within your treatment planning really increases a bit.

Here are a couple of examples. The Achievement Plan is a program that was developed through Portland State University, which is kind of a relationship-building and engagement approach that is overlaid with wraparound services for high fidelity in children's behavioral health planning, which tends to be the core model of a targeted case management model.

We do see that some communities are currently utilizing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment tool, the CANS. That also has been adopted and modified, so there is a yen out there for young adults -- so thinking about how the tools that are administrated kind of grow with the system and the young adults to be more developmentally appropriate.

We have also seen a lot of interactive ways where treatment providers have allowed the young adults to write their own treatment plans within a structure. So sometimes we see this done in a variety of ways. I've seen it done in IEP planning, where a projector in a laptop is kind of projected up so that the young adult can kind of type in the boxes of what they're hoping to achieve and what they're wanting to accomplish throughout their treatment plan. I've also seen young adults work with a clinician, and then they draft it; and the clinician has to sign off with it, as well as the young person versus normally the clinician writes the plan and the family and the young adult sign off on it.

So there are a lot of ways to kind of enhance your skills to assure that young adults are really kind of leading and guiding the process of treatment planning versus having a caring adult or an adult supporter leading that for them. Again, this helps build up their self-efficacy and helps them reach their goal and achievement.

Other innovative models...high fidelity wraparound, at least in the children's behavioral health world, seems to be one of the most common kind of keep young people in the community and help build their natural support in all life domains. So, this tends to be the model of practice that we often see.

With older young adults, that oftentimes can also shift to a model of transition and independent process called the TIP model. Again, it's very similar with life domains as to wraparound; but the teaming and the dynamic of the team shift slightly. These tend to be models that young adults tend to feel supported in and less kind of restrictive, and then also help identify other caring and supportive adults around them that can help them support with their treatment and attainment through their plans.

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What we're also seeing within those models is the development of formalized and informal peer support partners being developed. We kind of move forward in that direction. There are a couple other measures that are listed here. The perception of opportunity scale is a great kind of tool to also consider.

Let's see...so youth voice at the agency level. This looks at aside from individual services, but how well the organization is engaging using young adults in best practice. So there is an agency assessment tool that our Youth Best Practice Committee developed that really kind of helps you understand if we want to start a Youth Advisory Board and start engaging youth in our organizational practice in the community, what are the key domains and things we should consider to really establish that? That tool is available. It looks at advisory structures, decision-making, policies and practices. That tool was developed out of our Youth Best Practice Committee, which is a young adult-driven group of young folks that kind of come together to drive the field forward in organizing the intentional work that we do into a best practice standard.

They support organizations through training, technical assistance. They do a lot of reviewing of documents. They help develop indicators of success in several of our programs within treatment and services, within peer support, within the young adult engagement field, as well as quality health and wellness for those with mental health concerns. So that is a really great structuring of young adults from across the country that join us in participating as kind of these national advisors to several different projects that we work on.

With that...as you can tell, Youth MOVE National, we are a virtual-based organization. We're not center based. We are a virtual team nationally. We do a lot of our work through social media, focus groups, virtual kind of opportunities for them as well as some onsite, but not consistent onsite. Youth MOVE National has a lot of staff that are supported and certified in peer support. We have access to clinical when we are on onsite. So throughout, we do support and train our young people in trauma and trauma-informed care; and so we assure safety is our first concern always. But we're not center-based, so we're not doing like one-to-one support; but we do connect our young people to the appropriate resources when needed. Then our staff also have access to that as well.

Here is just a little guide that we developed for youth leaders to kind of understand their trauma and trauma-informed care. You can download that there, and I'll turn it back to Johanna.

JOHANNA BERGAN

Brie, do you want to talk anymore about the specifics of the Y-VAL; or should we leave that as a resource?

BRIE MASSELLI

I think we can just have that as a resource system in there, since I touched upon it and just with the time constraints so we can jump back.

JOHANNA BERGAN

Okay, perfect, so I think both of us have found it helpful to have people break down the components of youth voice within your organization. So even seeing the eight sections of the Y-VAL can help you think about youth voice and involvement within your work. Then probably the easiest way to get more information about the Y-VAL is an e-mail to either one of us at this point, and our contact information is on the slide deck as well.

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I wanted to take a moment to send everyone home with some very specific take-home messages in thinking about how can we meaningfully involve youth and young adults within the individual services and supports that we offer, and within the culture of our organizations as well as the systems that we work in. This is, in a way, a bit of our challenge to you...to take home and to do one of the following.

I think the first thing that each of us can do, no matter what role we play in our organization or community, is that we can create intentional space for youth to express themselves, to allow young people to develop goals and their plans. I think about how this relates to the *do with* style that we talked about earlier...so how can we go forward with a *do with* working attitude and to create that space for youth voice.

A little more specifically within your organization and agency, I would challenge you to look around and see where youth voice is already a part of the discussion and where it might be missing. Then, we have a responsibility at that table that we're sitting at to pull the chair out next to us and say, "How can we have a young person here helping us guide and develop our work?" Even better, you pull out a chair on either side of you and think about how to bring youth voice and youth perspective and that lived experience into all levels of our work.

The third thing we can do right away is to find out what's already happening in our community. There are Youth MOVE chapters in many states across the country. There are even more youth programs and partner organizations who are doing youth leadership and youth voice work. So look around in your local community, in your state community, and identify who they are. Make that connection and really have a conversation about how you can deepen your partnership. This is where you can invest in the youth movement, and it's a way that the youth movement can become a part of your work and really be value added.

The fourth is to promote and support youth engagement...so share the value of involving youth voice in your work. Please be a spokesperson and advocate for the value of lived experience and young adults participating in our work. We couldn't do this and do the amazing work that we've accomplished without that support from people like you. I'm hoping that one or more of those feels appropriate for you move forward with after our webinar today.

We're just grateful that we got to hang out with you today, and we're anxious to hear any questions you have. We're easy to find online. We've shared some specific resources and links on this slide deck; there are more on our website. If you're looking for something you can't find, please let us know. We love to point people in the right direction.

Then this is the slide specifically talking about some resources here. These are selected and curated for those of you who may be in the beginning stages of creating a Youth Advisory Board for your agency or are thinking about how to initially partner with a youth organization, like a Youth MOVE chapter, and how to bring their youth voice into your work. So these are sort of our go-to places to start.

With that, I'm going to pass it over to Melody so we can open for some questions and answers.

MELODY RIEFER

Thank you so much, Johanna and Brie. I am so glad that we're having this webinar and this discussion. I think that you'll see from some of the questions that people are interested in making sure that youth and young adults have more of a sense of belonging, I think, is the way I would summarize most of these questions. So, I'll jump right in, and I would invite either one of you to respond.

There are a couple of questions that are closely married, and so I'm going to pose them first. Someone said, "Young people often don't want to attend groups or day programs with older people, but our program isn't big enough to have different services. Do you have a suggestion for managing that?"

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Then kind of the companion question was, "What if there are just not a lot of youth or young adults to support their own community?" It sounds like these both are talking about what's in a treatment or program environment.

BRIE MASSELLI

Johanna, if you don't mind, I can kind of provide some examples based on treatment and provider. My first question is, ask the young people what would work best for them in these types of settings where it's mixed by age. One thing we have offered is that generationally, each generation has something to learn from the other generation. So, can you create some very intentional space where young adults may be able to participate in ways that are educating other participants of the program?

Thinking about peer-to-peer support and how we come to know what we know by our lived experience is defendant for everyone. So, starting with a place of mutuality and understanding often helps foster relationships that build more trust; and as there is trust established/safety, young people feel a little bit more empowered to speak up.

As a person with lived experience myself, in fact because of some generational differences, sometimes young adult experiences tend to be somewhat minimized based on others' experiences within group settings. So oftentimes, that may increase their ability to shut down at times, thinking that what they have to contribute isn't as big as what others in the group share. So just trying to create a safe base, checking in with them and finding opportunities for mutual back and forth dialog to establish trusting relationships is important.

MELODY RIEFER

That was very helpful, Brie. The idea of the cross-teaching and cross-learning between generations...just that response felt respectful. Thank you for that.

Johanna, going back to an early slide, you were talking about the do *for* and the do *with*, and you mentioned it a couple of times. How do you manage or perform the do *for* and do *with* check that you referenced, and how do you ensure people feel safe enough to be honest when you do that check?

JOHANNA BERGAN

That's a great question. I think that in a way we embed this type of check within our organizational structure in a way that it becomes accepted. We have multiple process pieces that have our teams think about how has youth voice been involved in this work? Have we heard from a diverse set of young people? How can we infuse more youth voice in this process?

That is natural to the structure of our organization and we've growth over the last 10 years or so. This check is built into some of the ways that we may coach and mentor and build relationships with people. The first is it's just great to be in an organization where this is a natural process.

I would say that I also have to personally have this check in my life with young people who I have personal relationships with, and that's where I've learned how valuable it is to have somebody else have a conversation like this with me. Brie does it to me, and we have a very safe relationship. So she can just say, "It sounds like you might be *doing for* right now." We may not all have a relationship that can be that candid. If you feel like this would be a valuable check to have, I think it's helpful to ask someone to serve in that role, to offer that feedback to you. So you invite that type of feedback.

Then in terms of specific projects or places of work, build into your planning process this reflection point for you; so you become a little more used to checking yourself naturally. Later it will become a way of thinking.

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MELODY RIEFER

Okay, so I feel like I get it a bit more. It's not an administrative or academic process as much as it is do it everywhere, and it soon becomes okay for it to be everywhere.

JOHANNA BERGAN

Yes, definitely.

Another kind of thing to also think about is when you're intentional with your engagement, you're able to have the relationships around roles and responsibilities of how we're going to work together, whether that is one-on-one. When I was working in communities one-on-one, all of the young adults I worked with knew I had a 60/40 rule. The issue is if I'm putting 60% effort into whatever the task being, then that means I'm doing *for* you; and we need to have a conversation about how I can step back so that young leader can step forward.

So, it goes back to what is your strategy for engagement and at what level, and your intention behind it. If you're just picking a young person from the high school to be your youth leader, but they're not fully understanding their roles and responsibilities and what that means as a commitment, then it's hard to have those check-ins. But when you set it up with intention and honesty, you're able to be a little more candid.

The 60%/40% rule always worked. Sometimes like youth would miss a group or they wouldn't participate, and then they'd come back and be like, "I'm so sorry. You're doing 60%; I'm not even doing 40%. I'm ready to be committed." So, it just started to become common language within my youth program that I was running at the time. So, thinking about it organizational, but the 60%/40% might be a really great way in a one-on-one relationship that you're having as a supportive adult ally or as a service provider with young folks.

MELODY RIEFER

That's brilliant, and it makes it really – it makes it an easy way to talk about it, and it doesn't feel like a judgment. That's great.

JOHANNA BERGAN
Absolutely.

MELODY RIEFER

Another question that came in was: "Are there additional cultural considerations when working with young people, aside from just the age issue?"

JOHANNA BERGAN

That's a great question. We talk about youth culture a lot, just in all the areas of consideration as we think about and learn another person's culture. Add that generational context to that list. One of the things that I love the best is when we create an opportunity for youth to teach us about their culture. We have an example that I like. For those of you that go to professional development conferences and they may be class disciplined, we go to a lot of conferences where there is a professional track and then there is also a youth track.

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We have a chapter in Arkansas who follows that model for a lot of best practice reasons, but they also take time for youth leaders from the youth track to become the presenters in the general professional track. One of the things they present on is youth culture.

What we get all the time is, "Hey, can you help me figure out how to make my phone work?" We totally have people on our team and I have friends who are like, "We don't like technology; we can't help you." So I think it's easy to make some assumptions about people who are young, and so we want to check those assumptions and then create an opportunity to hear from youth about what really matters to them and what their cultural identity is so that we can respond appropriately to them.

MELODY RIEFER

That's a great example. I have a nephew who just does not like technology, but people are *a/ways* putting it on him. So, that hit home for me. That's a great example.

JOHANNA BERGAN

There are also -- I think in some cultures, young people are expected to listen more than they are to speak. One of our presenters from a different webinar from, gosh, a month or so or better -- no, it would have been more than that, a few months ago -- was someone who is a tribal member and shared that some elders still believe that youth should be seen and not heard. And in some family systems, that's still the approach. So I would assume -- and I'm making an assumption here, obviously -- that helping young people know that in different settings there may be different things that are allowed. Would that be a way of phrasing it?

I think within certain communities, there is a cultural element. We have seen the "seen not heard" within some of the work that we also do; but we've often seen a lot of innovation on how to respect that cultural value while being creative, and still giving young adults an opportunity to grow as individuals, gain control over their life and decisions. In some of our tribal communities, it's a lot of intergenerational learning. So it's finding an elder in the community that young people really, really aspire to connect with, that might not be their family member, and having that adult elder really co-facilitate some youth groups. Doing a lot of traditional cultural dance and art to express their opinions and values is often seen within some of the tribal grantees.

They also are big about learning from culture. So, taking young adults and working with younger youth, like in schools and things like that, you're already starting to kind of see the transfer of knowledge from generation to generation, which is very honoring.

Then oftentimes, the value added of a Youth MOVE chapter, which is an organization that young adults can come to, is when things are brought up, they're brought up in a united voice; so it doesn't single out one particular young person in their individual circumstance that might cause havoc on a treatment or service or other aspects.

Then we do work very closely with the family advocacy movement and their family peer support workers. That way, they can support the family as we're supporting the young in hoping to bring that family unit to a place of understanding that feels a little bit more reciprocal and not as—

MELODY RIEFER

That's a great segue, and I'm going to step in just now to talk about how those connections between family, peer support, relationships, culture -- all of these are part of the SAMHSA- identified 10 principles

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and 4 dimensions of recovery. That was something that just went through all of your presentation, and I can't thank you all enough for the wisdom that you've shared with us today.

I want to remind folks that this was all part of and provided through the Recovery to Practice initiative; and we are very, very grateful to be able to provide these services. And there's more to come. You can access our newsletter; it's free; we want you to have it; it gives good information; it gives updates about resources. We have a brand new webinar series that's kicking off for the summer where we're going to looking recovery-oriented practices of integrated care settings, that being more the marriage of the mind and the body, and exploring the way that happens. The next webinar is going to be on June 7th; put it on your calendar now.

We try to integrate as much information as we can from the various disciplines, and so invite your friends. Invite doctors and social workers and occupational therapists and everybody to these webinars. We want you to register. We want you to subscribe. We want you to get your Continuing Education hours, so be sure and follow the link so you can do that.

I want to thank you so much, Brie and Johanna, for your wisdom and your gift of knowledge that you've shared with us.

I want to thank the audience for being with us today and making time for this information. If you have friends that couldn't be here, let them know that this is recorded; and folks can access the materials and the webinar from the Recovery to Practice website at SAMHSA. So check it out; pass it on. We've got enough people here to change the world...one person at a time.

Thanks so much. Have a great day!