

# Assessing Your Project's Youth Partnerships

Youth are important community members and should be respected partners in making decisions about the Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) project activities intended for them. The Office of Population Affairs (OPA) expects TPP projects to meaningfully engage youth, as equal partners, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of projects.<sup>1</sup> These efforts are most effective when projects create safe, supportive, and inclusive environments; provide equitable opportunities for all youth; and honor and amplify youth perspectives, expertise, voices, and values—especially of those who have been disadvantaged and/or marginalized.

Use the scorecard below independently, with your team, or with your Youth Leadership Council to identify what your TPP project is doing to foster partnerships with youth. Then use the reflection tool to think through opportunities for youth partners to get involved in your project and steps you can take to increase their involvement.

## Youth Partnership Scorecard

Reflect independently, with your team, or with your Youth Leadership Council on what your TPP project is doing to foster partnerships with youth.

| Fostering Youth Partnership  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Don't Know | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------------|
| Materials developed to recruit youth partners are youth friendly.                                    |                   |          |            |       |                |
| Meetings are scheduled around the needs of youth partners.   |                   |          |            |       |                |
| The meeting location is accessible, consistent, and youth friendly.                                  |                   |          |            |       |                |
| Youth partners know what is expected of them and their role is clear.                                |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We offer youth partners incentives, such stipends or volunteer service hours, for their involvement. |                   |          |            |       |                |
| At any given time, we have at least two youth partners involved in our project.                      |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We are committed to keeping youth at the table.  |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We set time aside for youth partners to speak at meetings but don't put them on the spot.            |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We use language that our youth partners will understand.   |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We check in with youth partners to make sure we're on the same page.                                 |                   |          |            |       |                |
| We approach youth partners with respect and understanding.   |                   |          |            |       |                |
| Youth partners are included in key decision-making meetings.   |                   |          |            |       |                |

**In what ways is our project successfully fostering partnerships with youth?**

**What opportunities exist for our project to improve how we foster partnerships with youth?**

# Youth Partnership Opportunities Reflection Tool

There isn't one right way to involve youth as partners in your TPP project. **What's most important is that youth have opportunities to get involved in a way that works for them and your project team.**

TPP projects can consider involving youth in any of their project functions, such as project design, governance, and monitoring and evaluation.

And, for each project function, there are many ways in which youth can be involved, including:<sup>2</sup>

- **Choosing** which project functions they want to be involved with and what level of involvement they have.
- **Assessing** community needs, project needs, or project performance—for example, what curriculum may be a good fit or if the project is upholding its mission.
- **Making decisions** that affect the project—for example, about project rules or how to staff an activity.
- **Planning** activities or how to fill project needs—for example, how to improve project sustainability or collect evaluation data.
- **Communicating** about the project, either verbally in writing—for example, by describing the value of the project to potential participants or drafting a new project policy.
- **Implementing** project functions—for example, leading workshops, making a budget, or analyzing data.

Use this tool to guide reflection and/or conversations with youth partners about opportunities for them to be involved in your project and what you can do to increase their involvement.

| Project Function                       | How do youth want to (or how do we want youth) to be involved in this project function, if at all? | What are 1–2 examples of how youth could be involved in this project function? | How can we increase youth involvement in this project function? |
|--|--|--|---|
| Project design or curriculum selection | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |
| Governance                             | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |
| Policies and group agreements          | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |

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|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Day-to-day coordination        | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |
| Staff recruitment and training | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |
| Monitoring and evaluation      | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |
| Other functions                | Choosing<br>Assessing<br>Making decisions<br>Planning<br>Communicating<br>Implementing<br>N/A      |  |   |

**This tool has been adapted and is courtesy of Health Resources in Action (HRiA).**

1. Office of Population Affairs. *Notice of Funding Opportunity: Advancing Equity in Adolescent Health through Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs and Services Opportunity Number: AH-TP1-23-001*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://opa.hhs.gov/grant-programs/funding/current-funding-opportunities>

2. AED Center for Youth Development Policy Research (FHI 360)

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