



Video Transcript: Ask Me Anything: Meaningful Youth Engagement

Brittany (00:00): For our project, everything has to be youth approved; marketing materials, the selection of evidence-based programs, presentations at schools, everything has to go through our youth advisors. Ask Me Anything: Meaningful Youth Engagement. Hi, I'm Brittany Bonilla from Foothill Family Services, and today I'm going to let the RHNTC ask me anything about meaningful youth engagement.

Brittany (00:28): What is the best part of working on your project? For me, the best part about working on my project is honestly the youth that I work with. I work with a phenomenal group of ten high school students in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley, and they are so incredible from all the extracurriculars they do, the amazing involvements in their community, and just how passionate they are about reproductive health.

Brittany (00:53): What was one moment in the last year that you're most proud of related to engaging youth as respected, equal partners in your project? For our project, Teen Inspired, we have a Youth Advisory Council, also known as YAC, and all of the youth advisors have stepped up and once a month there's someone new that will facilitate the meeting. They are amazing. They're youth, they're peers, there's us, adults and Foothill staff, and they just make such a collaborative group and it's really just been an awesome opportunity to see them kind of step into that ownership of their voice and their power that they have and just seeing all the brainstorming ideas.

Brittany (01:42): How are youth involved in making decisions that affect your project? The youth are very involved in making decisions for our project. Everything has to be approved by them. I would say the greatest decision-making process is the selection of the evidence-based program. We work with tons of community partners and based on their demographics that they are reaching, we have a selection of EBPs, or evidence-based programs for them, but it's really our youth advisors that consult with them.

Brittany (02:14): How are youth involved in communicating about your project? Our youth advisors have done a tremendous job in communicating about our project, whether it's posting posters or talking to their peers, classmates, even their teachers as well, and just showing that excitement that they not only have about the topic, but also the passion they have for their job as well, has been amazing. Something else that our youth advisors have done tremendously well is actually our social media accounts. We have an Instagram and TikTok. Our youth advisors have created all of the content, scripted it, edited and posted it. It's been really amazing to see how creative that they get trying to educate their fellow peers. The whole point of this work is to spread education and to provide resources. When you get engagement like likes, sharing it, or saving it, that in itself just shows that it's working. It might not hit a million people, but the people it is hitting, you know that it is helping them. It's the community aspect that we're really trying to build on social media and not getting millions of views.

Brittany (03:24): How are youth involved in implementing project activities? We work with our youth to create and develop ideas, but one of the project activities that we did for the month of May for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month was a Virtual Paint Night. It was amazing. They're the ones that came up with the idea, they did budgeting for it as well, and they also put together a reproductive Kahoot game for the students, so that way the students would learn kind of like some facts about reproductive health, and that's just one of many things that they have done. The youth, it's not only their ideas of it, but you can tell that they put their heart into it. They're the ones that led the event, they facilitated it, and all their peers afterwards said, like, if we keep having events like this, they'll keep coming.

Brittany (04:18): So I think it just shows that when the youth are at the forefront of it all, it really shows, and it just, it really makes an impact in the community. This video was created by the Reproductive Health National Training Center, RHNTC.