

Where Do You Stand on Youth Participation? (15 minutes)

Attach the “Where Do You Stand” sheets widely spaced at eye level on the walls around room. Be sure to allow ample room for people to stand near the sheets and move in between them:

- Ten 8.5 x 11 sheets with a large number on them (from 1 to 10)
- Four 8.5 x 11 sheets with “Where Do You Stand” statements
- Attach “Adults know what is best...” sheet under “1”.
- Attach “Adults allow youth...” under “4”.
- Attach “Adults respect youth...” under “7”.
- Attach “Adults view youth...” under “10”.

To keep the activity moving and on time, ask a maximum of 3-4 people per question why they chose to stand where they are, with a brief description. For example, ask one person standing near sheets 4, 7, and 10 to respond after the first question. Encourage new participants to speak each round. By the end of the activity, 10-12 people total will have briefly stated their reasons. Some participants may be inclined to share a lot of history and background on their program or organization, but the purpose of the activity is just to start a conversation and gain a snapshot of where people are starting from.

Some participants may struggle with how to answer questions about their organization’s current practices and desired practices. Encourage them to respond based on their perspective from inside the organization, as a frontline worker, middle manager, or system leader.

To start off, we are going to do a “standing poll” activity called “Where Do You Stand on Youth Participation?”

On the wall around the room are sheets numbered 1 through 10, which represent a continuum of how adults view the role of young people in decision-making. Three statements are posted along the continuum, which represent views adults have on the role of youth. We are going to ask you a series of questions. After each question, please move to the number or statement that best reflects your answer (or position). First, let’s read the three statements on the wall (read aloud). Do you have any questions about these statements or the numbered scale before we start? Okay, please get up out of your seats and join our human poll!

1. First, move to the location that best reflects your personal opinion on youth participation.
2. Now, move to the location that represents your organization's current practices.
3. Now, move to the location that represents your organization's goal or ideal practices.
4. Why did you choose to stand where you are? Please provide just a brief description of your reasons.

Process Questions:

- What did you notice about where people were standing for the first question about personal opinions?
- What did you observe about where people were standing for the second question about current organizational practices?
- How about the third question about organizational goals or desired practices?
- What did you learn about how your view compares to the practices of your program or organization?