

# Benefits and Challenges of Working with Youth

Prompt #1: What are the challenges of working with youth? | Prompt #2: What are the benefits of working with youth?

ELIZABETH\_WEYBRIGHT AUG 21, 2017 04:02PM

## Breakout Room 3: Challenges

- Lot of demands on youths times. Lots of things that are competing interests/responsibilities.
- What do they find useful? Mismatch of what we as adults think is useful to them verse what they deem useful to themselves.
- Understanding learning styles of youth
- Location of classes/meetings can be inopportune for activity
- Building relationship with new random adult. Takes time that is not always available.
- Not knowing their background/history
- Kids in survival mode.
- Peer pressure. Not "cool" to do some things.
- Helping students identify tangible outcomes that are relevant to their lives.
- Feeling like "more school." Kids check out, tired, overwhelmed, acting out, etc.
- Learning during PE time. Students want to be moving, not interested in the lecture portions. Want to do more engaged/active portions (PA cooking, etc.)

## Breakout Room 2:

Challenges:

- Scheduling/logistics (including transportation, meeting location)
- Making the subject appealing
- Getting them engaged
- Unsure where to start
- Identifying stakeholders
- Adhering to ground rules
- Keeping them on task and focused
- Difficult to relate to/clashing personalities
- Striking the balance between facilitator/keeping youth on track and promoting youth autonomy
- Finding and engaging in a topic that is most interesting to youth (coming to a

consensus among ALL the participants)

-Youth may get stuck in their own groups/cliques that it's hard to break them out of there

Benefits:

- Creativity!
- Once they establish ownership, they are invested
- Their responses to achievement are positive
- Strong problem-solving skills/willingness to fail and learn
- Lifelong impact when they are involved in these projects - civic engagement can increase
- Social-emotional growth, self-efficacy, self-esteem when they are given a voice in these settings
- Communication skills improve
- Greater camaraderie
- Ability to accept other points of view and listen from each other

## Breakout Room 1:

Challenges:

- they tend to be very concerned about being judged by their peers
- it can be hard to gain their trust - they may have had experiences in the past where adults weren't great role models or trustworthy, so that can impede gaining trust
- they have a lot of demands on their time
- staying current, relevant about what's going on in their lives and how that impacts them (e.g. things like TikTok)

## Room 4: Challenges

Keeping them engaged  
Getting youth to trust  
Transportation/time/challenges to making time together  
Keeping their attention (stay off phones & side conversations!)  
Sharing control & power  
Time it takes to create sense of safety in sharing  
Influence of peers & desire to avoid standing out

## Breakout Room 5: Challenges

Make the youth feel valued and important.

*challenges of working virtually with COVID restrictions* – ANONYMOUS

*Youth are shy to participate* – ANONYMOUS

*not wearing the teacher hat but more of a team collaboration role* – ANONYMOUS

*Challenge can be relating to youth, getting them to open up and feel like they are safe to share.* – ANONYMOUS

## Breakout Room 3: Benefits

- Creativeness in problem solving.
- Influencers of their surroundings
- Innocence/naivety to try new things. Refreshing to be around them.
- Less cynical
- To see the change from the beginning to the end of a series.
- What impact we have, when we can see that something has stuck and they will take it away with them.
- They know their environment and how to improve it.
- How curious they are. Such good questions. Make you think of things differently.
- Flexibility. They "get it" with many of these changing circumstances. Virtual learning, cell phones, platforms, etc.

## Room 4: Benefits

Hearing youth perspectives & learning from them.  
Helps you look at the world in a new way.  
More investment & benefit when youth can lead projects--more potential for impact!  
Youth today have much better understanding of social justice & need for change  
Youth have tools for navigating internet & social media that can be powerful for learning.  
Lots of fun & laughter & joy!

*community empowerment* – ANONYMOUS

## Breakout Room 1:

Benefits:

- keeps us feeling youthful
- when you see the light go on and that they get it, it can feel really rewarding
- if we do have the opportunity to engage them, it can be beneficial to gain insight into what drives them
- they can become empowered and gain self-confidence
- often willing to challenge the status quo, more optimistic that they can change things

## Breakout Room 5: Benefits

*Community empowerment.* – ANONYMOUS

*Youth know things about their community that we don't know.* – ANONYMOUS

*Adults learn a lot from youth.* – ANONYMOUS

*Youth can gain leadership skills.* – ANONYMOUS

*Good for everyone involved.* – ANONYMOUS

*Engaged and creative.* – ANONYMOUS

*New perspectives.* – ANONYMOUS

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