



Youth Input Training Plan

Use this Training to Go training plan with the Power Point to lead a staff training. Customize it to fit you, the time and setting, and the participants. Break it into shorter parts, delete or add sections, change the activities, or expand on topics. All handouts referenced are available on Y4Y. If participants don't know each other, you may want to add a warm-up or icebreaker, or go around with introductions.

TRAINING TO GO Training Plan		
Getting and Using Youth Input		
Time: 60 minutes		Materials:
Prep: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print handouts for all participants • Fill in the Project-Based Learning Project Planner with a sample project • Cut up the Challenge and Idea Cards and mix them up, to create a set for each group of two to five people • Arrange the space for group and pair work 		
Slide Number and Title	Timing	Notes and Talking Points
1. Getting and Using Youth Input	3 min	<p>Explain: Interest motivates. Why do you do puzzles, read articles or books, or take on DIY projects? (pause for responses)</p> <p>When people do things they find interesting, challenging, or inspiring, they dive in and keep going. We want our students to feel that way about projects and project-based learning. Getting youth input and involvement in project ideas, planning, and implementation – keeping them involved all along the way – not only generates and builds student commitment, it expands the learning and builds skills.</p>
2. Objectives	1 min	<p>Explain: Most of the time, children and youth are told what to do, and are not given much opportunity for input, much less real authority, leadership, or self-direction. They need to learn how, and we need to learn how to help them – because we're more used to telling and leading than guiding or facilitating.</p> <p>So today's session focuses on core techniques for facilitating youth input, and we'll identify specific steps we can take with our PBL activities.</p>



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<p>3. Why Youth Input?</p>	<p>6 min</p>	<p>Ask: Can anyone offer an example from their experience where children or youth developed their ideas, or had a meaningful role in planning and doing an aspect of a program, or a project? Something that was truly ‘youth run’? (If no one has an example, have one ready to present. If time allows, draw out two examples.)</p> <p>Ask: What did the children gain or learn from these experiences? Chart responses and bring out self-direction, decision-making, responsibility, critical thinking, productivity, perseverance, communication, and teamwork.</p>
<p>4. What Do Youth Learn?</p>		<p>Distribute handout <i>21st Century Skills in Action</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out that many of the skills noted are referred to as 21st century skills, or learning skills. Developing youth input is a core strategy for building 21st century skills through PBL. <p>Ask and discuss: What other benefits do you see to making youth the drivers of projects, of getting and using youth input? Bring out points, including more interesting projects, youth engagement, better attendance, creating opportunities for exploration and skill building related to jobs and career paths.</p>
<p>5. Facilitating Youth Input: When and Where?</p>	<p>12 min</p>	<p>Ask: Where and when should we be actively cultivating youth input and leadership in PBL?</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute a filled in <i>Project-Based Learning Project Planner</i>. In pairs or small groups, have participants discuss and identify where and how youth input and leadership can occur. Depending on the size of the group, allow pairs or groups to choose to focus on one component: project ideas, driving questions, and planning; setting objectives; project implementation; showtime, culminating events, and documenting learning. Ask each group to present their ideas. Be sure each component is addressed.
<p>6. Facilitating Youth Input: Discussion</p>	<p>6 min</p>	<p>Ask and discuss: What’s the difference between leading and facilitating discussion? Who has experience facilitating discussion?</p> <p>What are some challenges?</p>



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		<p>Explain: Good facilitators help groups do their own best thinking. Facilitators ask questions, reflect back what was said, summarize, and check for understanding and participation. Facilitators keep discussion and thinking moving and on track, and ensure respect and inclusion of all participants.</p> <p>A core technique for having successful discussion is setting guidelines and making them automatic behaviors for all participants.</p> <p>Distribute <i>Guidelines for Group Discussion</i>, and review it as a group.</p> <p>Ask and discuss: How can you introduce these or similar guidelines to young people, and make it a norm for team and project work? What would you delete or add for our youth?</p>
<p>7. Facilitating Youth Input: Discussion Challenges</p>	<p>10 min</p>	<p>Facilitation is a skill, and we should expect and prepare for challenges.</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute a set of <i>Challenge and Idea cards</i> to pairs or small groups. • In each group, participants pick a Challenge, and pair it with an Idea for good facilitation. Note that participants can come up with their own techniques, as well. • After about five minutes, check in, ask for comments, additions, or changes.
<p>8. Youth Input Takes Practice</p>	<p>15 min</p>	<p>Ask and Discuss: Do you think it is also a challenge for us, as adults, to support real participation, decision-making and leadership of youth?</p> <p>It's important that we get an initial sense of what this looks like in practice, and how we can support each other as we move into PBL.</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute the <i>Follow-Up and Supervision Checklists</i>. Explain that you can use this form to look at and discuss techniques and day-to-day practice in engaging youth input. • Direct participants to the categories "Creates an engaging learning environment" and "Facilitates active learning" on the second page • Have participants do a role play, with a few staff playing children or youth, and one or two playing staff. • Ask the people playing staff to work with the "youth" in a way that would fall in the "Needs work" column.



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the role play to play out for a few minutes, then have groups offer feedback to move the action into the 'Strong' column.
9. Next Steps and Closing	8 min	<p>Ask and discuss: Is anyone working on projects with youth now? What are the projects? Are you using some of these techniques? Are there any that we discussed that you will try?</p> <p>Ask and discuss: How can we make these techniques part of all our PBL work? What would be helpful in terms of support and follow-up? Should we use this checklist and discuss it more individually and at staff meetings?</p> <p>Allow the discussion to proceed, modeling good facilitation!</p> <p>Agree upon goals for PBL and youth input, and the next immediate steps.</p> <p>Thank everyone for participating.</p>