

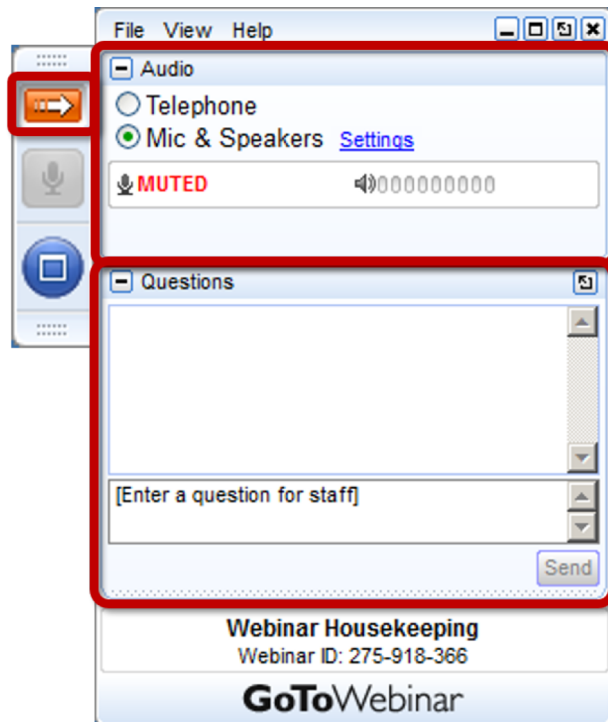


# A Framework for youth development and youth leadership

September, 16, 2020

**Welcome! The webinar  
will begin shortly.**

## Attendee Participation



Open and close your control panel

Join audio:

- Choose **Mic & Speakers** to use VoIP
- Choose **Telephone** and dial using the information provided
- If you are joining the audio by telephone mute your computer speakers

Submit questions and comments via the

Questions panel

**Note:** Today's presentation is being recorded and will be provided within 48 hours.

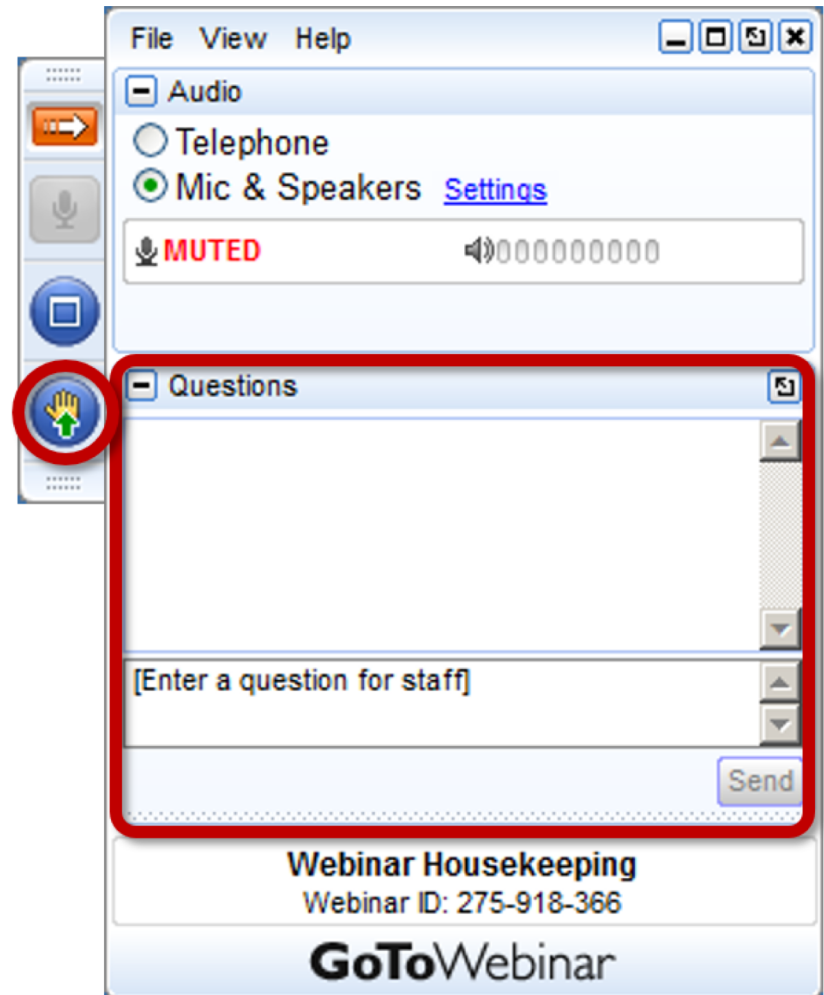


# Questions

## Your Participation

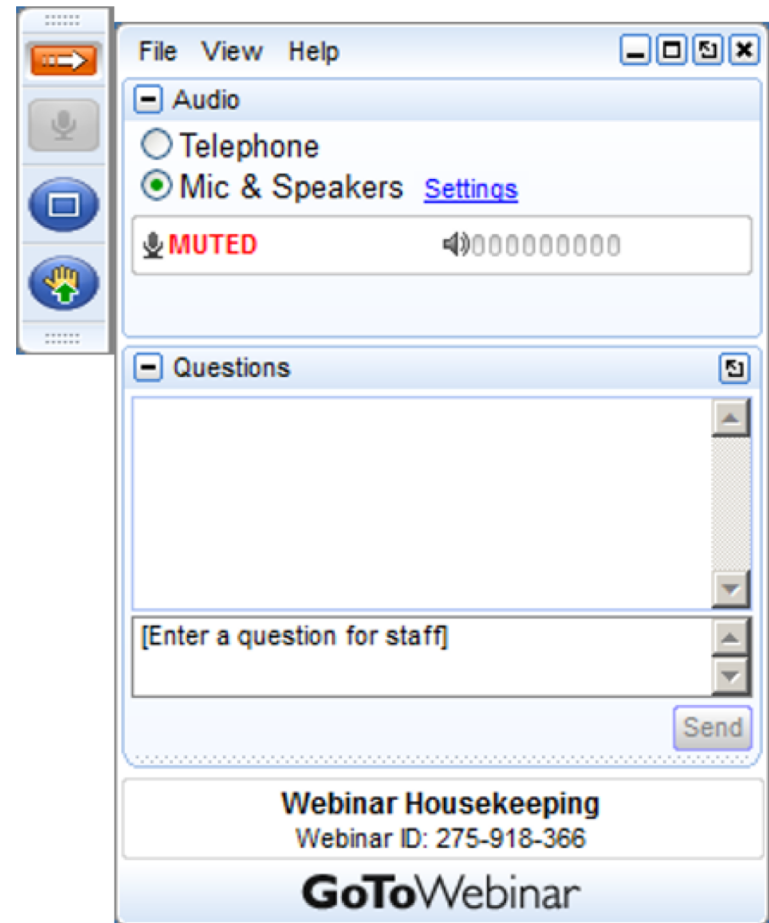
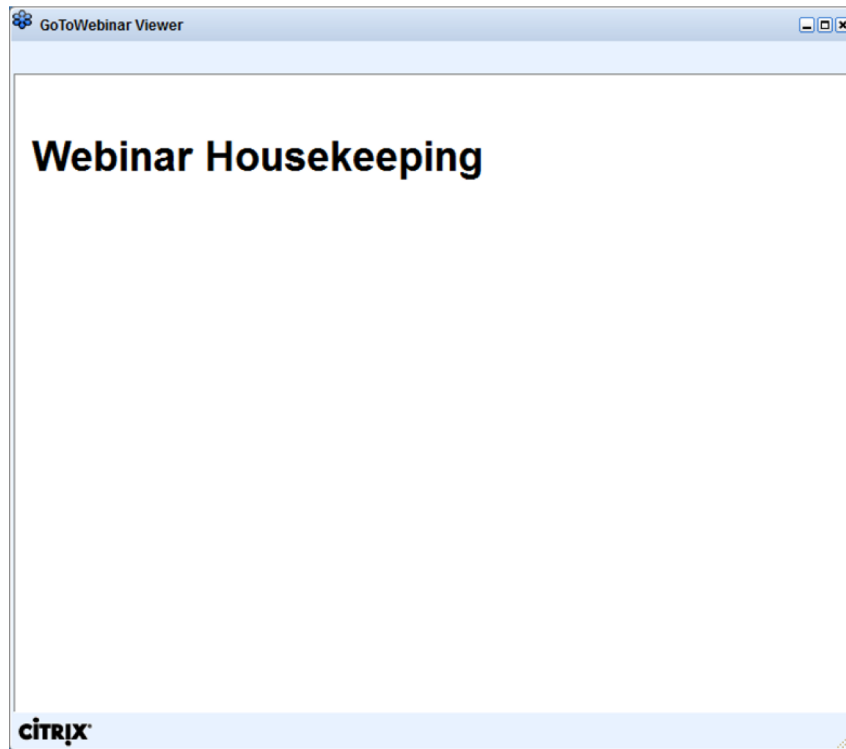
- Please continue to submit your text questions and comments using the Questions panel
- Please raise your hand to be unmuted for verbal questions.

**Note:** Today's presentation is being recorded and the link will be sent to you when it is available.





# Housekeeping





# A FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP

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A RAISE Webinar

Presented by:

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Leadership Toolkits

Independent Contractor



# INTRODUCTION

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# RAISE and the Toolkit Series

## RAISE

- Who we are
- What we do

This leads us to our Toolkit Series

- To support Parent Center professionals in creating programming that is centered in youth development
- So far...
  - Youth Engagement
  - Youth Development
  - Youth Leadership



# What about all of you?

Add in the chat what role you most identify with

Parent

Professional

Other

Add in the chat why you signed up for this webinar / what you hope to get out of it



# GOALS

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# Our Goals Today

- 1. Provide context and relevance**
- 2. Discuss structure of toolkits**
- 3. Provide content-level examples**

## **Overarching goal:**

Leave this webinar with a tool to use with colleagues that will jump-start more meaningful development for your youth.



# THE IMPORTANCE

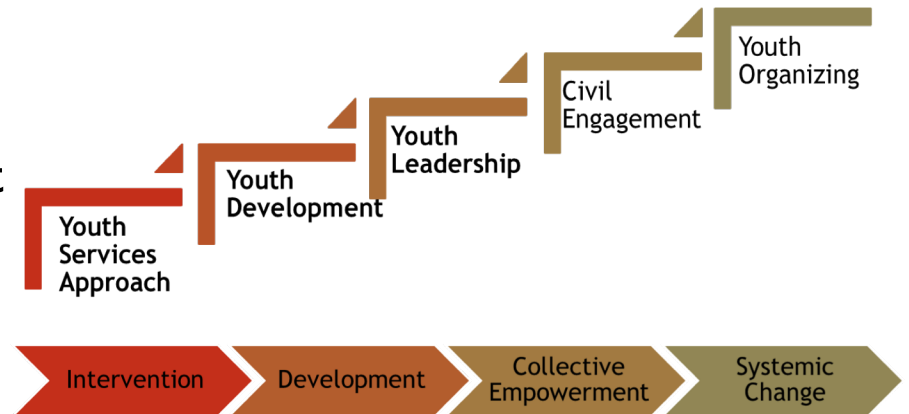
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# Big and Little picture

## Big picture

- Youth deserve to be in the driver's seat
- Progress is being made to *include* but not necessarily *lead*
- Youth engagement continuum<sup>1</sup>



## Little picture

- Toolkits can feel like an overwhelming pile of resources
- We want to teach you strategies and thought processes



# STRUCTURE OF TOOLKITS

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# A Structural Guide

## **Guiding Assessment (Y-VAL)**

- Assessment of Youth/Young Adult Voice at the Agency Level<sup>2</sup>
  - Assess the extent to which you utilize authentic youth voice and meaningful participation

## **Basics from literature**

- Ground-level tenets to guide competencies

## **5 key competencies**

- Background
  - Literature-based explanation of competencies
- Framework
  - General translations of competencies to your work with youth
  - Provides a starting point to individualize at your agency



# GUIDING ASSESSMENT

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The Y-VAL



# The Y-VAL

Created by Youth Move National and Portland State University

- Provides 8 critical themes to a youth-driven approach
  - Assess progress amongst a theme's subset of items
- Assess extent of meaningful participation of youth at agency level
- Understand “fully-developed” support for each theme



# LET'S TALK CONTENT

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Youth Development





# The Basics

Keep these things in mind while building competencies:

- Progressive Leadership
- Decision-making
- Sense-of-belonging
- Peer Interaction
- Identity
- Relationship Building
- Creative Arts, Physical, and Health Education
- Strength-Based



# 5 Key Competencies

## **Social**

Effectiveness and appropriateness of their interactions

## **Moral**

Sense of self, others, and systems

## **Emotional**

Positive emotional growth on individual and social level

## **Physical**

Holistic view of mind and body

## **Cognitive**

Thinking and reasoning through assimilation and accommodation



# Example 1: Social

## Literature

- “Social competence” will look differently for everyone
- Focus on *effectiveness* and *appropriateness* of interactions
- Behavioral categories to consider include representations of:
  - Social values
  - Positive self-identity
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Self-regulation
  - Planning and decision-making
  - Cultural competence
  - Emotional intelligence

# Social Competency Framework

## Some Do's

- DO** consider what they like
  - If your youth enjoy video games - set up a tournament! Beginning with familiar environments will increase their willingness to participate and provide a natural environment for socializing to occur.
- DO** start slow, then expand
  - Now that they are comfortable, bring in other populations. This could be parents, other staff, community members, etc. It is great to be comfortable, but the best way to expand skills is through experience. Build in a diverse range of individuals so that your youth can learn how to vary interactions depending on context.
- DO** recognize opportunities for growth
  - If you notice that your youth tend to be silent around adults, use this as a growth opportunity! Using our example above, set up an event where they are teaching their parents or other staff about video games. Utilize the comfort zone to take a small step towards diverse interactions.

## Some Don'ts

- Do NOT** shy away from negative interactions
  - Encountering and dealing with negative social interactions is a natural part of life. Individuals with disabilities have a high rate of being bullied so our tendency is to develop hyper-protective programming. Allow youth to learn how to resolve conflict, advocate for themselves, and when to walk away.
- Do NOT** think one size fits all
  - As we mentioned above, culture plays a huge role in what their definition of effective socialization means. Listen to your youth and help them respect their perspective and the perspective of others.

## Colleague Conversations

**Who is your population?** Be sure to consider the age and skill level of the youth you work with. Is it a wide range? Do you need multiple approaches? youth are all individuals with different backgrounds so be sure to consider your diverse population when developing programming. The best way to ensure this is to include them in the process!

**Where can we start?** Remember the basics. This is a great place to utilize basics such as strength-based approaches, peer interactions, relationship building, and a sense of belonging.

**Check these places out too:** The Division on Career Development and Transition created a Fast Facts on Social Skills. You can find that and other fast tracks here - <https://community.cec.sped.org/dcdt/publications/fast-facts>



# How to Use It

Can we have a volunteer?

- Name and roll within your agency
- Existing group/program, or looking to create one?
  - What are the current or intended goals?
- Tell us about any activities you currently do surrounding social competency

Now let's use the framework

- Identify and describe your population
- What is your level of knowledge about social competency
- Any do's or don'ts that stick out?
- Brainstorm improvements!



## Example 2: Cognitive

### Literature

- Forget the idea of traditional intelligence
  - Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences
- Stages of cognitive development as our brains develop
  - Sensorimotor
  - Pre-operational
  - Concrete operational
  - Formal operational
- Individuals adapt through assimilation and accommodation
- Develop three main components to their cognitive skills
  - Advanced reasoning
  - Abstract thinking
  - Metacognition



# Cognitive Competency Framework

## Some Do's

### **DO** use every moment

- Taking in information, processing, and relating it to our environment is something that is happening constantly. Switch up who gets to choose lunch, ask someone why they chose to take the bus that day, or ask them to solve a problem that you encountered. There is no moment too big or too small to support their thinking processes and begin to help them understand how they arrived at certain conclusions.

### **DO** directly talk about strategy

- We have talked a lot about finding natural experiences and opportunities for your youth to learn, but this is another excellent place to teach strategies directly. Based on your answer to who your population is, guide them through thinking about options for meals, how to look at options for post-secondary, or even how to chat up the person they like! Scenarios help build out the decision-making process.

## Some Don'ts

### **Do NOT** remove risk

- We could have mentioned the idea of dignity of risk a thousand times throughout this toolkit, but it feels particularly relevant here. Most people would admit that they learn the most from making mistakes. As much as we would like to protect youth that we work with, their learning process is no different. Create space for your youth to make a decision and possibly fail. Follow-up about what went wrong, and how they can think things through better next time. [Look out for this basic in the Youth Leadership Toolkit]

### **Do NOT** do all of the work

- If you have ever found yourself incredibly stressed out trying to plan and figure out all of the details, you are not alone. You are however not utilizing your youth's potential as much as you could be! Try setting the bounds, offering resources, and letting youth decide details along side of you instead.

## Colleague Conversations

**Who is your population?** This is a key component in each framework because our work has to begin with a good look at who we are working with. For this competency it is important to take into account where each individual is at in their lives. What is going on in their lives? Target realistic scenarios as opportunities for growth.

**Where can we start?** Remember the basics. This is a great place to utilize basics such as decision-making, opportunities for progressive leadership, and strength-based approaches.

**Check these places out too:** Whose Future is it Anyway is a student-directed transition planning process, but has excellent strategies for allowing youth to lead the charge. <https://www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/transition-education-materials/whos-future-is-it-anyway>



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# LET'S TALK CONTENT

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Youth Leadership



# The Basics

Keep these things in mind while building competencies:

- Authentic experiences
- Meeting them where they are
- Modeling
- Leadership Styles
- Sense of community and belonging
- Opportunities for critical thinking
- Dignity of risk



# 5 Key Competencies

## **Leadership Styles**

Styles and strategies for engaging those around you

## **Critical Thinking & Decision Making**

Process of thinking leading towards some goal

## **Sense of Community**

Components that create the feeling of belonging

## **Responsibility**

Learning cycle of feeling and being accountable

## **Service**

Engagement of helping that does not produce some commodity



# Example 1: Sense of Community

## Literature

- Definitions typically include some type of criteria
- Experience of belonging, mattering, and meeting of needs
- Four elements to this experience:
  - Membership
  - Influence
  - Integration and fulfillment of needs
  - Shared emotional connection



# Sense of Community Framework

## Some Do's

**DO** discuss roles

- Every great community recognizes the value that each individual brings to the collective group. Work with your youth to begin to identify their unique position as a part of the larger group.

**DO** create a method of reinforcement

- Beyond an individual feeling as though they have a right to belong, we have learned that there needs to be a sense of reinforcement in terms of what they get out of the group. Just as there will be different roles based on the individual, they may also each desire something different out of the group. Be sure to ask and recognize what motivates each of your youth to be within your community.

**DO** go beyond the obvious

- Being a part of your organization or agency is one reason they belong to this community, but it may not be enough to create a true sense of belonging. Push yourself and your youth to identify common values and beliefs that unite you for a common goal.

## Some Don'ts

**Do NOT** ignore history

- Help youth gain a deeper understanding of the history that unites them. This includes disability history, but also the history of the group itself and each of their individual paths that brought them there.

**Do NOT** ignore intersectionality

- The youth you work with may either be deeply rooted in the disability community, or have been avoiding it all together. Encourage your youth to recognize and respect their membership in several different communities. It is very easy to feel that membership to any one community can put them in a box. More and more people are recognizing intersectionality of diversity groups and learning to incorporate all of these aspects into their identity.

## Colleague Conversations

**What is your level of knowledge?** As an individual that exists as a part of the community you are trying to build with your youth, you bring your own background and diversity to the mix. What communities do you feel you belong to and how do they relate to this one? Do you find yourself committed to belonging to this community? Asking our youth to buy in means we have to buy in ourselves. If we don't, what could we be doing to feel more connected?

**Where can we start?** Remember the basics. If you aren't sure exactly what to do remember to stick to things like authentic experiences, sense of belonging, and self-determination.

**Check these places out too:** The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition has a vast resource database which includes various articles and worksheets related to community or resource mapping. Check it out at <https://transitionta.org/>



# How to Use It

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## Example 2: Service

### Literature

- Other terms include service learning or civic engagement
- A benefit to the community as well as the individual's growth
- Positive outcomes for empathy and desire for future action
- Becoming more integrated into education curriculum
- *Successful* engagement includes *meaningful* participation:
  - Appropriate for age and abilities
  - Personally relevant
  - Interesting and engaging
  - Relation of actions to a larger issue
  - Attainable and visible outcomes that are valued by those they serve



# Service Framework

## Some Do's

### **DO** identify relevant skills

- Part of successful development is making sure experiences lead to an increase in self-confidence and efficacy. Work with your youth to identify unique skills and talents that can be used to serve their community.

### **DO** find the right fit

- While service is about volunteering our time, it is not dissimilar to finding the right fit at a job. Some environments, site supervisors, or activities just aren't the right fit for certain individuals. Sure, service learning involves doing good in the community for the simple fact that it is a good thing to do. Meaningful civic engagement, however, would include a personal connection to the task at hand. Help youth engage in activities that have personal value to them, so they are even more invested. Discuss all aspects of the community service opportunity and adjust as needed.

## Some Don'ts

### **Do NOT** do it on your own

- This is where resources come in. Communities are often extremely grateful for the help and are more than willing to discuss opportunities at their site. Access individuals in the community that can provide a breadth of opportunities for your youth.

### **Do NOT** jump right in

- Since volunteering is not considered a job experience, youth are often put into opportunities with little to no preparation. Set them up for success by reviewing responsibilities, logistics, and goals prior to their start. This can help boost success the first time around and increase the likelihood they will want to engage in another opportunity.

## Colleague Conversations

**What is your level of knowledge?** Participating in community service is typically a very personal experience when done correctly. What is your experience with service? Who are our community partners? Make sure you familiarize yourself with various methods, activities, and environments to engage in service so that you can adjust based on individual needs.

**Where can we start?** Remember the basics. If you aren't sure exactly what to do remember to stick to things like authentic experiences, sense of belonging, and basic service learning.

**Check these places out too:** Dosomething.org is one central, youth friendly, hub of activities, initiatives and other engagements that center around civic engagement. With useful search tools, this is one way to find a good fit for everyone!





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# References

<sup>1</sup> "An Emerging Model for Working with Youth," Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing. Retrieved June 26, 2020,

[https://fcyo.org/uploads/resources/8141\\_Papers\\_no1\\_v4.qxd.pdf](https://fcyo.org/uploads/resources/8141_Papers_no1_v4.qxd.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Youth MOVE National & Regional Research Institute, Portland State University. (2016). Assessment of Youth/Young Adult Voice at the Agency Level (Y-VAL).



# QUESTIONS?

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# References

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# Contact Information

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**for joining us for this Webinar!**

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**[raisecenter.org](http://raisecenter.org)**