

Preventing a Lack of Youth Involvement



Introductions



Just FYI...

Before We Start:

“Kids” = students = teens = youth = STAND members

STAND is our youth development model

(we may call it “our program”)

clubs = teams = STAND teams

We like fun

Long winded slides



Who We Are



M I R R O R

STAND

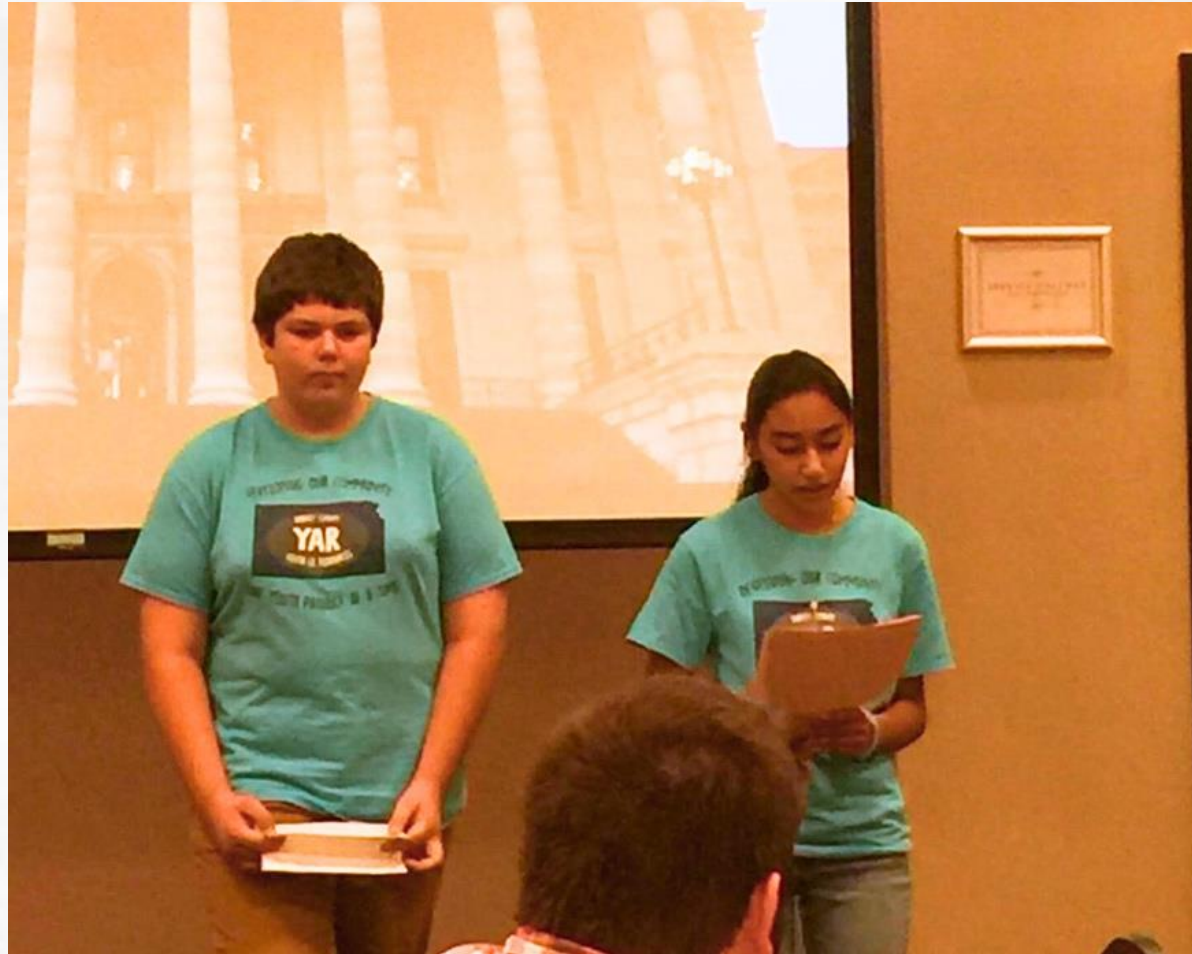




M I R R O R

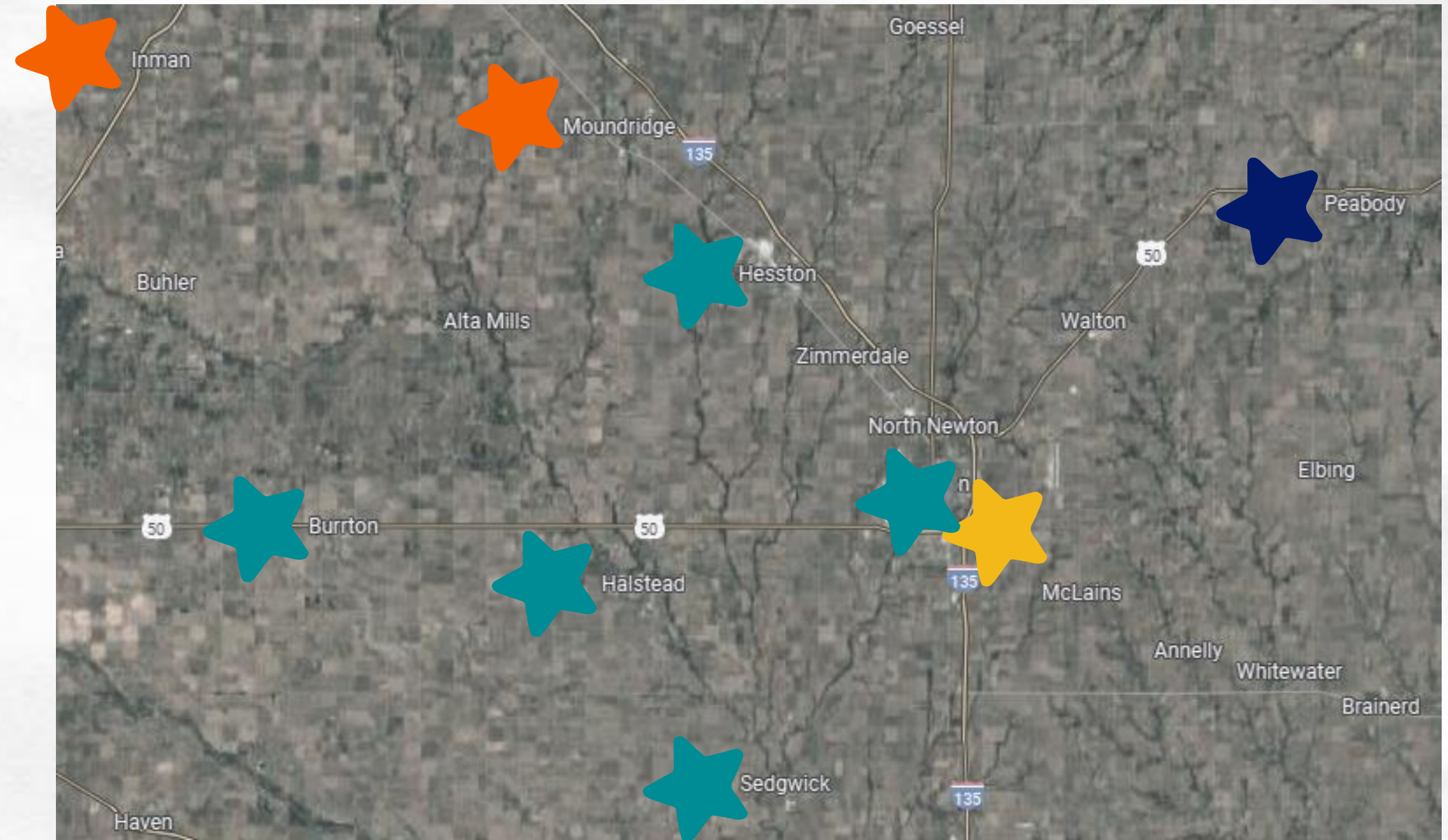
Our Story

STAND



HARVEY COUNTY
DFY
DRUG FREE YOUTH

STAND

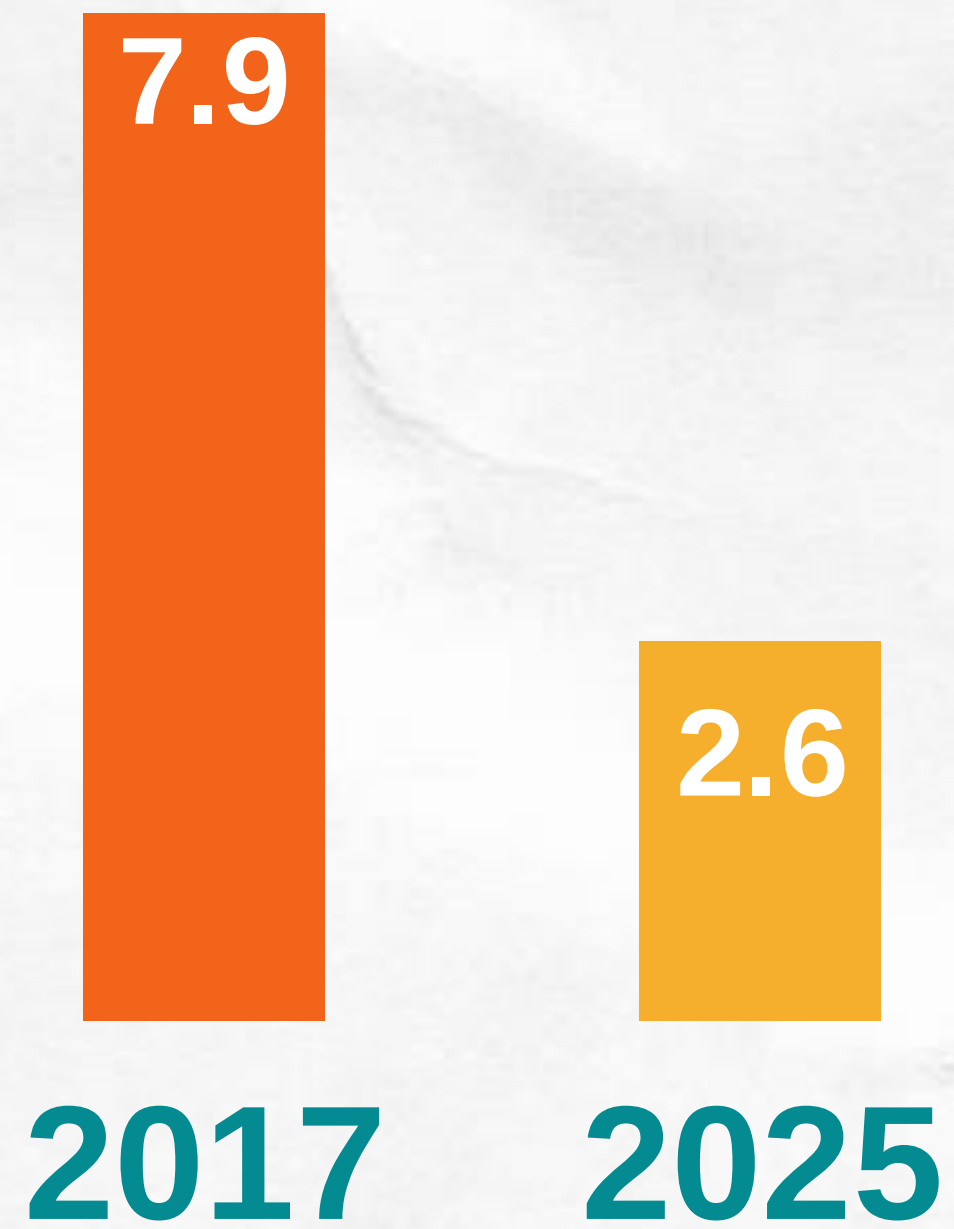


Past 30 Day Underage Drinking in Harvey County



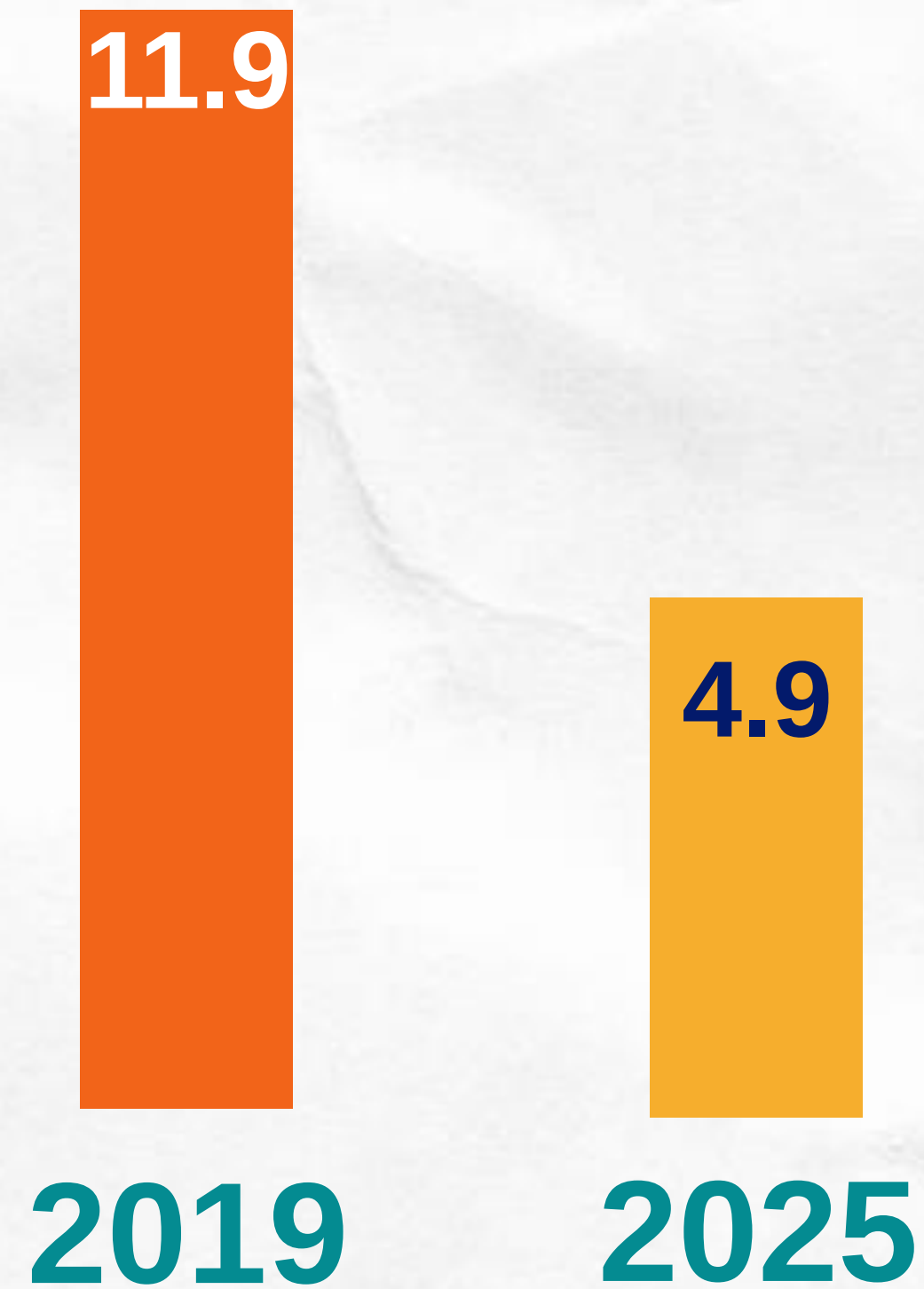
Kansas Communities That Care Data
Harvey County, 2017-2025

Past 30 Day Youth Marijuana Use in Harvey County



Kansas Communities That Care Data
Harvey County, 2017-2025

Past 30 Day Youth Vape Use in Harvey County



Kansas Communities That Care Data
Harvey County, 2017-2025

Past 30 Day Youth Prescription Drug Use in Harvey County



Kansas Communities That Care Data
Harvey County, 2017-2025

Who's in the room?





Benefits of Youth Engagement

Return on investment for time spent

Creativity

More effective messaging

Understand scope of the problem better

Redirecting action plan – additions to implementation

Higher representation from other sectors

DFC match numbers

**DEFINE
THE
WORD**



Define the Word:

67



Define the Word:

clock it



Define the Word:

lowkey



Define the Word:

crash out



Define the Word:

aura farming



Define the Word:

buns



Define the Word:

labubu



Define the Word:

labubu



What Youth Bring to the Room

Experts in their own culture



**THAT'S
GAS**

**LOCK IN
CHAT!**

What Youth Bring to the Room

Unique Generational Traits and Influences



Athleisure

Pajamas at School



Clothing/Fashion Brand Names

(Airpods, Nike)

Focus on Shoes

Taylor Swift

Lululemon

The Summer I Turned Pretty



What Youth Bring to the Room

Unique Generational Traits and Influences

Inclusivity & acceptance
Mental health normalization
Mental health struggles
Fear of being judged
Social status is important
Open minded



What Youth Bring to the Room

Unique Generational Traits and Influences

Desire to work – driven to make
something of themselves

Pressure

Stress



What Youth Bring to the Room

COVID to Provide Context

Elementary/Middle School Years



Being alone

(only saw family, learning)

Connection

(more online with peers, more in person with family)

Depression/anxiety increased

Social media blew up



What Youth Bring to the Room

Social Media Influences



The bad:

Go down the rabbit hole

Cyberbullying

Arguing

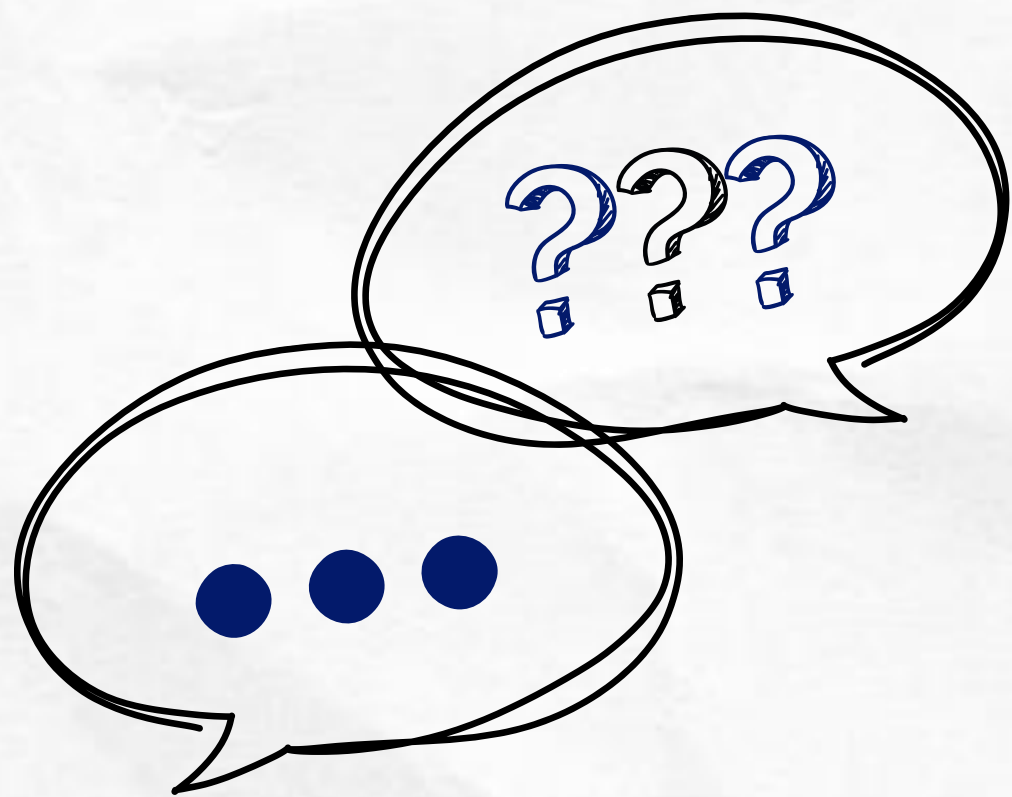
Twisting words/intentions

Carries into real life

FOMO / Highlight reels

Oversharing

Pressure to respond



What Youth Bring to the Room

Social Media Influences



The good:

Educational

See different points of view

Express yourself

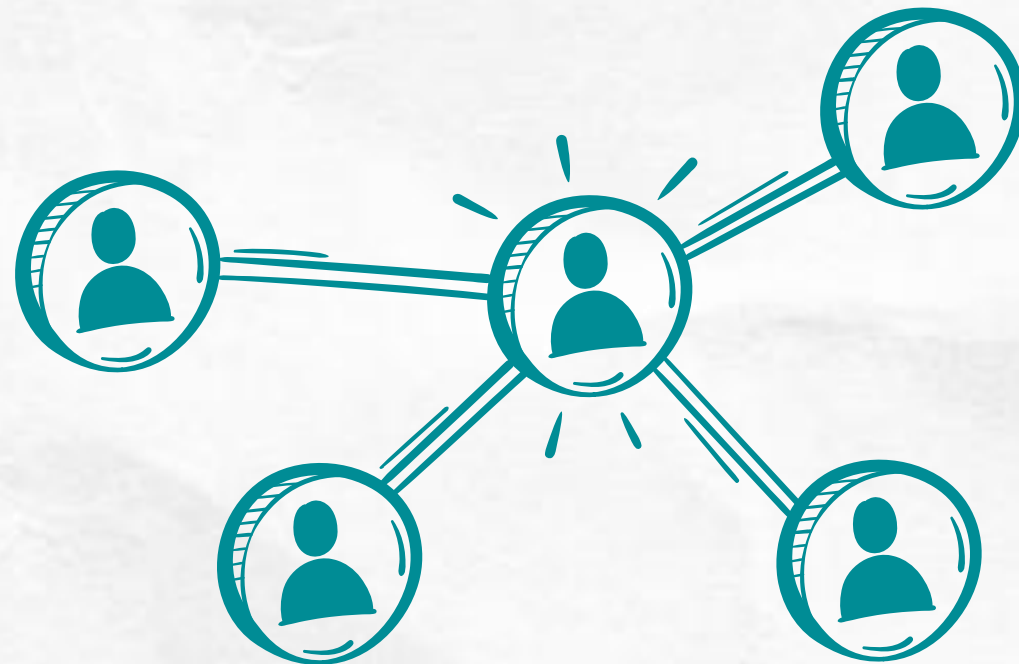
Creativity

Choose what you look at

New connections/groups

Entertainment

Stay up to date with news



What Youth Bring to the Room

Developmental Stage of Adolescence – literally a transition period

- Brain Development
 - Making & learning from mistakes
 - Slow transition from egocentric thinking (self-focused) to others-focused
 - Also from concrete to abstract thought
- Identity formation & belonging
- Developing autonomy, pulling away from parental figures
- Feeling out and exploring the “real world”

What Youth Bring to the Room

Wanting to impact others & make a difference

Willingness, readiness to give of time

Creativity, out of the box thinking

Ability and willingness to challenge the conventional



DON'T BE AFRAID TO STAND OUT

STAND

I ACHIEVE MY GOALS WITHOUT DRUGS AND ALCOHOL.

LEAH WELDON NEWTON, FRESHMAN

WE ALL HAVE A CHOICE. HOW WILL YOU STAND OUT?

STAND

What Adults Bring to the Room

Adults and youth
will bring differing:

Thoughts
Beliefs
Priorities
Experiences
Behaviors
Expectations
Codes of conduct



What Adults Bring to the Room

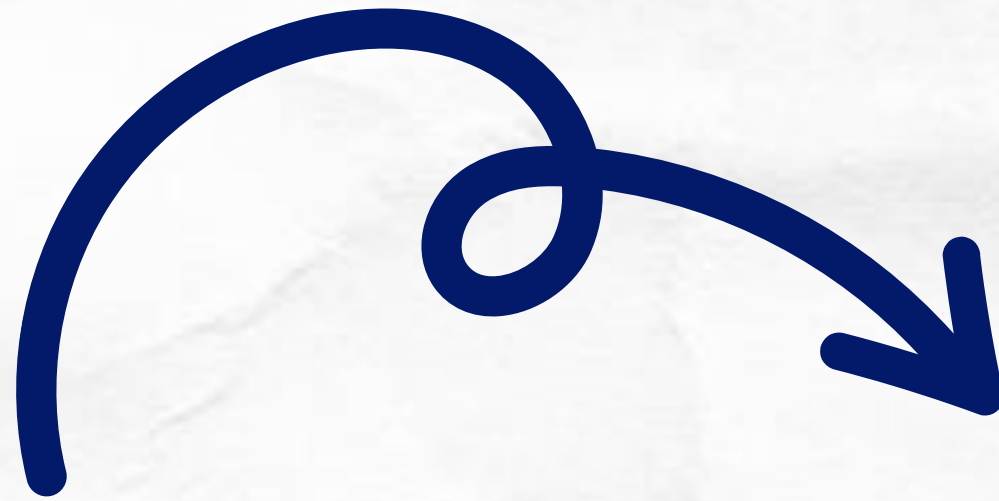
Adults hanging on to those things
too tightly can get in the way of
effective student leadership

Think about the
preconceived ideas that you
are bringing with you.



What Adults Bring to the Room

Mindset & Biases



Limiting phrases

Preconceived ideas about youth

Unconscious bias

Unnecessary judgments

Power dynamics

Work mindset





What Adults Bring to the Room

Mindset & Biases

Clothing style/ripped jeans

Always on phones/social media

Ways of connection

“Kids these days”

“Back in my day”

“When you grow up”

“Don’t understand real struggles”

“You’re just kids”

“You are the future. This is on you.”

What Adults Bring to the Room

Impact of Limiting Phrases

Not Important/Looked Over

Don't Matter

Too Much Pressure

Oppression Olympics

Don't want to participate

Not heard

Devalued/degraded

Can drive kids or motivate

I'll do it myself

Gaslighting

Self doubt

Why try?

Shuts down connection with us

Prove them wrong

What Adults Bring to the Room

Expertise & knowledge

Experience

Connection

Perspectives

Tone-setting energy

(Semi) Successful navigation of developmental stage



What Adults Bring to the Room

An Optimal Mindset:

Be humble (don't know everything!)

Be socially aware of how we feel

Be flexible

Be positive

Be supportive but let us struggle

Be understanding



Recruitment

Go Where the Kids Are

Schools

After School Programs

Faith Groups

YMCA's

Community Hubs

Extracurricular Events

Career Fairs

Club Fairs



Recruitment

Ask Us



You never know unless you ask
Don't count us out before we've had the opportunity to say yes
Some kids don't say yes because we've never been asked
We may want to help, but don't know how to engage
We are looking for purpose
Worst thing we can say is no



Recruitment

Benefits to Kids

- Doing something positive
- Leadership opportunities
- Help others get on track to success
- College/resume builder
- Meet new people
- Empowering
- Sense of accomplishment
- Educate others
- Learn something new





Recruitment

Some No-Nos

Overpromising

Lying

Bribe – food, incentives

Go for numbers over quality

Ignore those already involved

Be vague

Neglect accomplishments

Guilt trip

Intimidation

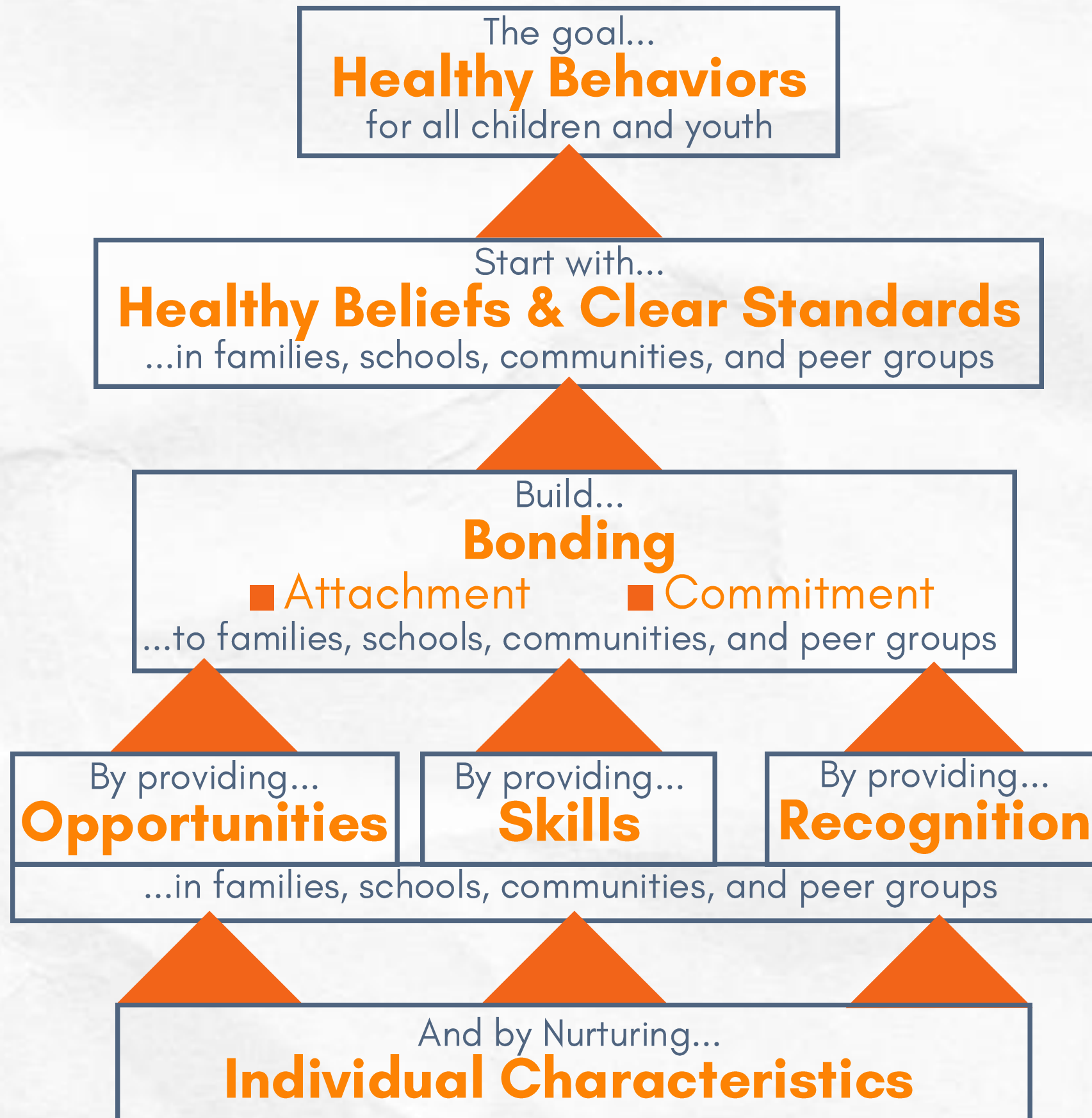


Recruitment

Find Their Why

Kids can become the recruiters





Relationship Building

Social Development Strategy

Hawkins & Catalano, 1996

Relationship Building



You have the responsibility to be a protective factor in the lives of these kids

Optimal Mindset

Be humble
Be socially aware
Be flexible
Be positive
Be supportive
Be understanding



Relationship Building

What Kids are Looking For

Listen to Understand, not to solve

Be genuine & patient

Relate to us

Show an interest in us

No pressure - not forced

No Judgment

Trustworthy

Relationship Building Tips

Be Present

Kids are the priority

Intentional with every minute

Call them by their name

Think back on previous conversations



Respect Boundaries

Look for individual passions

Get to know WHO they are, not what they can do for you

Look for opportunities to connect (don't just dig)

Laugh with them (and at yourself)



Relationship Building

When in doubt...

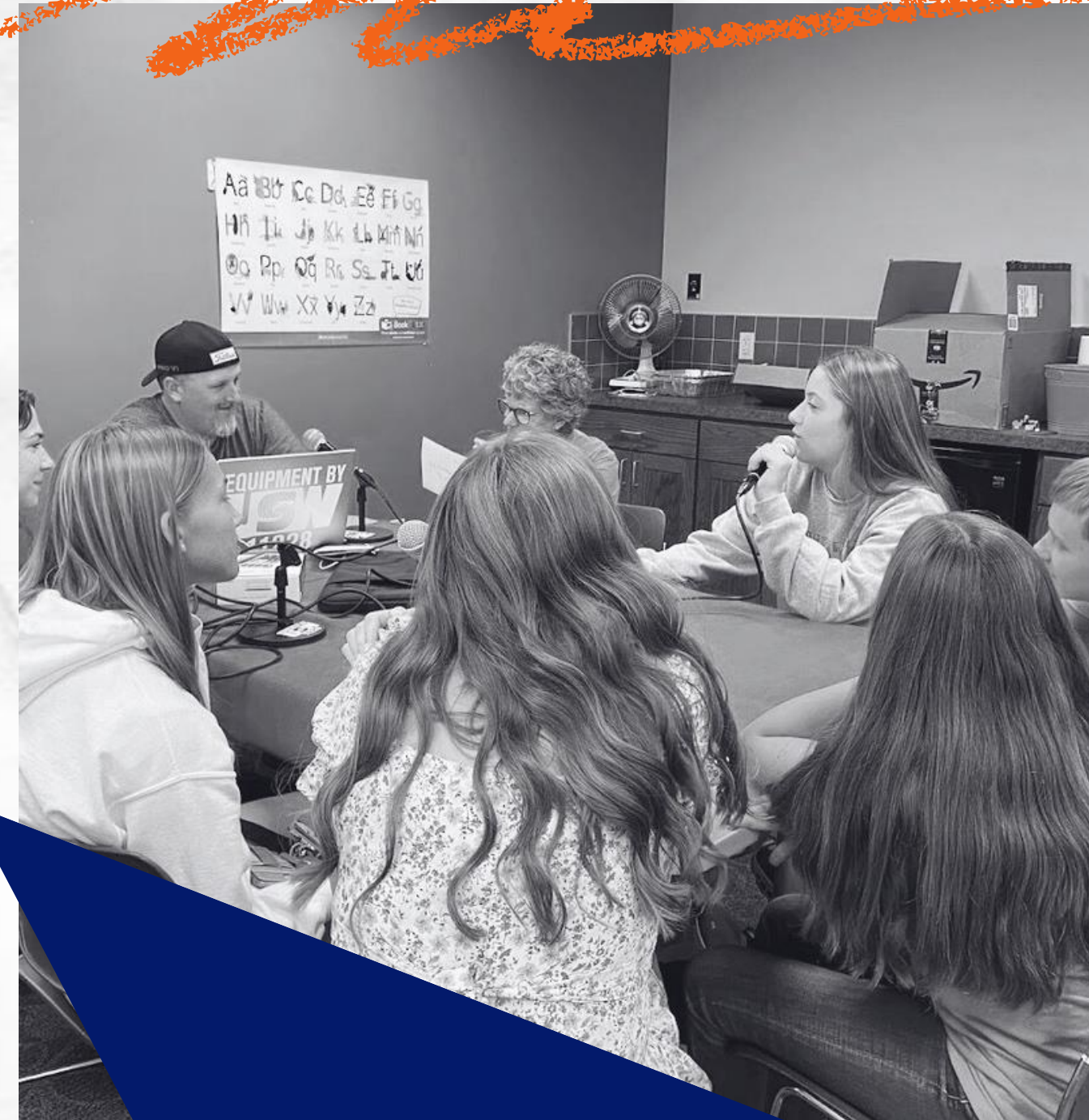
The name of the game is follow up questions

Embrace the awkward if introverted

If extroverted let them talk, just be present

Follow cues from kids - every one is different

Know that you can't connect with every kid



Sustaining Engagement

How can you ensure sustainability of youth involvement?



Sustaining Engagement

Building in Structure

Adult-set purpose and structure doesn't mean the work is not youth-led

Can come from:
Grant Requirements
Goals
Action Plans

Eventually, the kids can and will create and inform structures and action plans

Sustaining Engagement

STAND Pillars

Social Norms
Campaigns



Mental Health
Messaging



Community
Service



Middle School
Prevention



STAND

We can start a revolution when we know what we stand against. To create change that lasts, however, we need to know what we stand for.

Simon Sinek



Sustaining Engagement

Education

STAND Retreat – Prevention Education

You can provide that along the way

Effects of various substances

Brain science

Best practices

7 Strategies

Continuum of Care

Root causes

Data sharing

Sustaining Engagement

Incorporating FUN



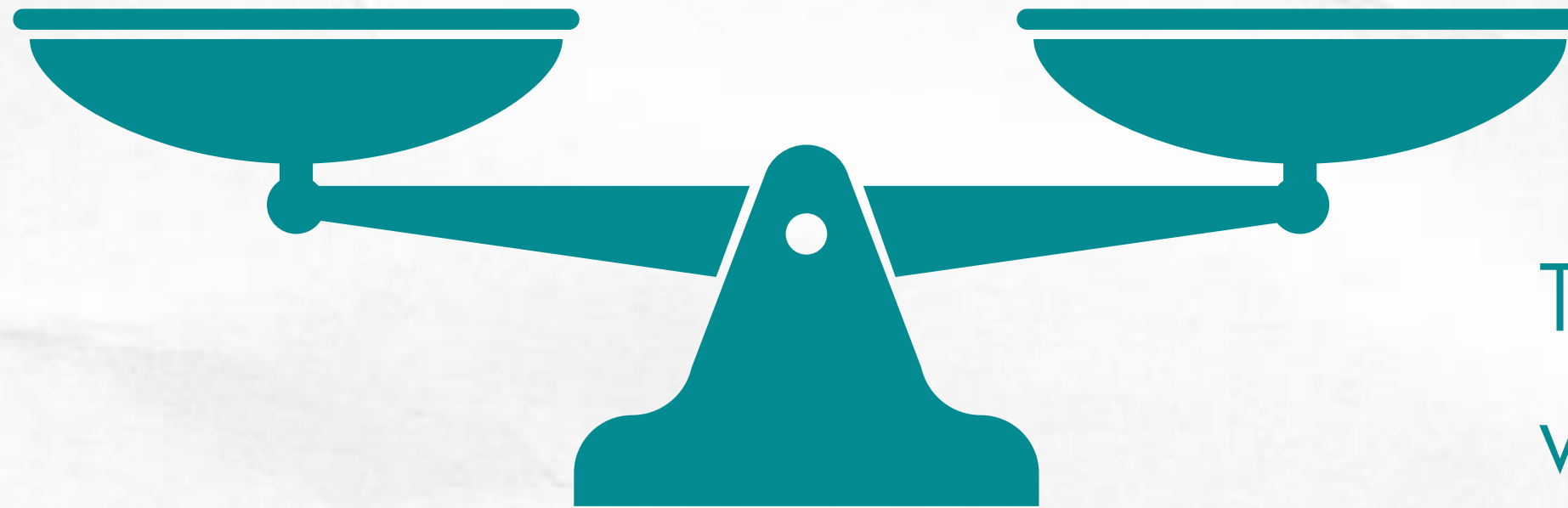
Sustaining Engagement

Finding the Balance



FUN

WORK



Too much
fun, and it's
a disservice
to the kids

Too much
work, the
fewer will
show up

Sustaining Engagement

Finding the Balance

Reminder: Kids are VOLUNTEERS.

Difference between having fun and being ineffective (it's a joke)

Fun helps balance any "heaviness"

You won't hit the perfect balance every time

Sustaining Engagement

Focus on the mission and building relationships and you may be surprised at how sustainable it becomes.



Opportunities & Youth Leadership

Push us out of comfort zone

Take volunteers

Ask us to take action steps

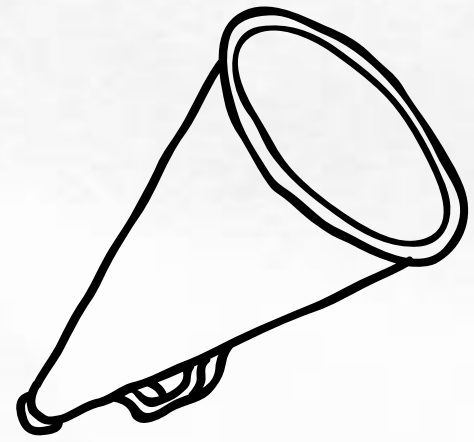
Offer community engagement opportunities

Asking the right things of the right kids

Respect their “no”

Find and maximize strengths





Recognition

Have a success? Here are your after steps:

BRAG

Articles in Paper

Interviews on News Stations

Social Media Posts/Shoutouts

Newsletters

Emails to principals

Podcasts

City Leaders

Key Sector Leaders

Award Nominations

Community Champions (Hospital CEO)



Recognition

Have a success? Here are your after steps:

BRAG

One reason our kids are seen as leaders in the community is because **we position** them to be seen that way.





Recognition

Individual Recognition

Look for and verbalize individual strengths

Small Opportunities – Ex: Birthdays

Hand Writing Notes and Thank Yous (Snail mail!)

Check in with them

End of Year Celebrations (STANDurds)

Different kids want different types of recognition



Skill Building & Accountability

Representation doesn't stop when we aren't wearing our shirts.

Perception is a big responsibility.



Skill Building & Accountability

How do you incorporate accountability?

Consistency across the board

Understanding that mistakes happen

Don't hold mistakes against kids

Accountability isn't one-sided

Talk the talk, walk the walk



Skill Building & Accountability

How do you incorporate accountability?

- Providing constructive feedback
- Challenging incorrect perceptions appropriately
- Addressing unhelpful negativity
- Confronting inner-club dynamics
- Code of Conduct for involvement

It's okay to hold kids accountable.

Challenges



CADCA Working with Youth Training

Challenges

Meetings may not go
as planned

Derailed conversation

Boys

Lack of total buy-in

Communication



Challenges

Work takes way longer

Addressing member use

Adult supports (admin, sponsors, etc.)

Funding

Parent engagement

Community expectations of kids

Losing the plot

Graduation/alumni involvement

Grades/school scheduling conflicts

Second semester seniors

Our Core Beliefs

We believe...

Kids are the **solution**, not the issue.

Kids want to be a part of something **bigger than themselves**.

Kids **can and will do the work** if given support and opportunity.

Kids will reach for the **expectations** put before them.

Every day, we feel so privileged to get to know, work with, and impact so many young leaders.

Closing Thoughts



Questions?



STAND



@STAND.KS

Reach out to us!

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