

ARTWORK BY NINA WANG

YOUTH IN THE LEAD OUTREACH TOOLKIT

**AN EDUCATIONAL GUIDE
DEVELOPED BY YOUTH
LEADERS, FOR ADULT
PREVENTIONISTS**

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INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is vital for adult preventionists, because it is written and created by youth leaders who know and oversee what is happening in their community. This gives valuable insight straight from the source into what we believe should be addressed and talked about.

KEY STEPS FOR BUILDING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUTH IN THE OUTREACH PROCESS



BE PRESENT IN CLUBS, STAND BEHIND YOUTH LEADERSHIP, AND ECHO THE THINGS THAT MATTER TO THEM

Set up discussion and reflection sessions that are peer-led to discuss feelings.

COMMUNICATE CONSISTENTLY WITH YOUTH

Make sure everyone is heard and regularly check in outside of club settings to build familiarity.

MAKE EVERYONE COMFORTABLE BY DIMINISHING THE POWER DYNAMIC

Make decisions as a group without a strong or overbearing adult lead. This could look like taking input from peers and encouraging youth to lead activities or events.

KEY STEPS FOR BUILDING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUTH IN THE OUTREACH PROCESS (CONTINUED)



BE NONJUDGMENTAL TO BUILD A CONNECTION, AND ENCOURAGE TEACHERS TO DO THE SAME

A really important thing for talking to children/students is that you are not judgmental. These people are choosing to trust the person and are being vulnerable in doing so. Ridiculing them or invalidating their problems can make it harder for them to open up to others in the future.

WORK WITH STUDENTS TO EMPOWER THEIR OWN DECISION-MAKING

It is okay for people to offer possible solutions, but if a person doesn't wish to solve a problem that way, then you shouldn't push that. Let them choose what seems like the best solution and ask them how you can support them.

BE VOCAL ABOUT CONNECTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION WITH THE WAYS YOU AS AN ADULT TRY TO FOLLOW THE SAME PRINCIPLES WITH YOUTH

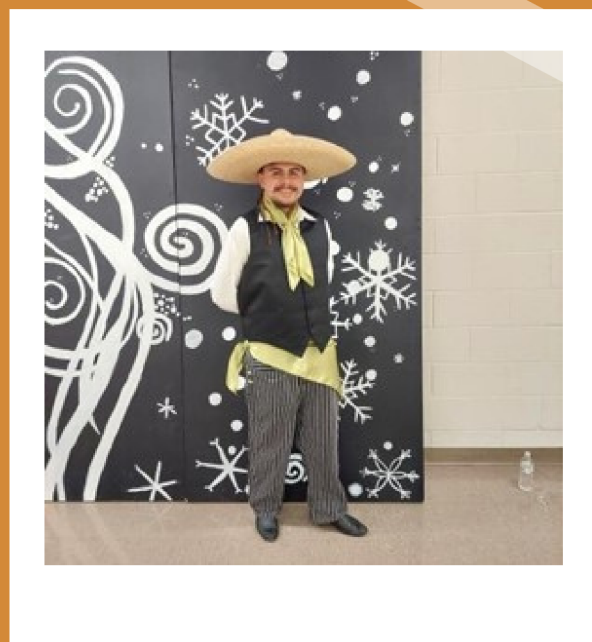
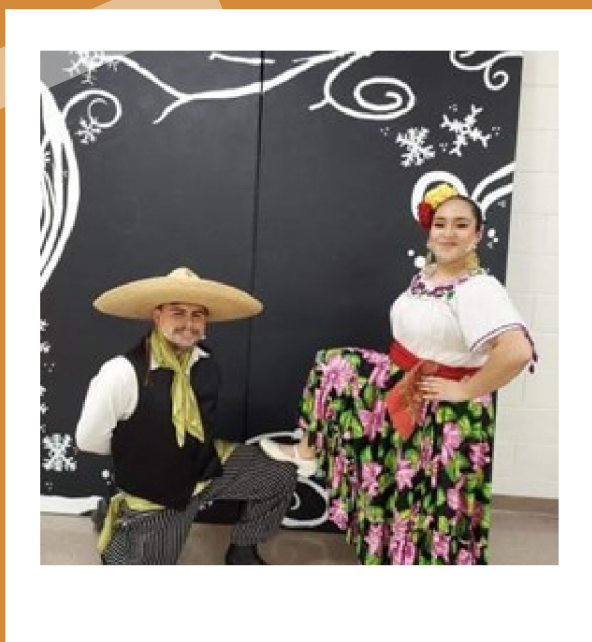
This establishes boundaries and creates an example for students to follow. By demonstrating what healthy balances of power look like, students can have this as an example.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE STIGMA THAT EXISTS FOR MANY PEOPLE AROUND THE ISSUE OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

The most important thing that an adult can do to make youth leaders feel supported is by hanging posters and maybe even just spreading the word. Having adults help support youth leaders reminds us that we aren't alone.

HOW TO INCREASE INCLUSIVITY IN OUTREACH

WORK TOGETHER WITH CULTURALLY SPECIFIC CLUBS



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CHRISTOPHER PETROSIAN

CRISTOPHER PETROSIAN



HOW TO INCREASE INCLUSIVITY IN OUTREACH (CONTINUED)



BUILD YOUTH CONFIDENCE IN TALKING WITH THEIR PEERS, AND SUPPORT EACH PERSON'S UNIQUE COMMUNICATION STYLE

"I try to be as welcoming as possible. Respect and the way you greet someone is very important, which is why I like to greet people with a smile and I make sure to keep eye contact when conversing about things that are serious. A handshake and/or a hug also helps if they are comfortable with it. There also shouldn't be any pressure being put onto the person, they should know that it's their choice to participate in talking or whatever else, and that they aren't being forced into anything. Also, just being real and genuine with someone by saying things such as "What's up (brother/sister/sibling/friend), much love, telling them to have a good day, or even phrases in a language you might share. For me, this would be like when I talk to a fellow Samoan and say "Alofa atu uso" which means love you brother. Cultural relations really help."—Tavita Lealao

DEEPEN VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND NATIVE, AND YOUTH OF COLOR AND LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

"One thing that helps is when you have diversity visually on posters and other such things. I often find myself feeling so much more welcome or comfortable somewhere if I know that there is someone that looks like me as I feel like we might be able to relate to each other and won't be judged by them. Small quotes in other languages also help. Something even as simple as hello in other languages are nice ways to also help make people feel more comfortable."—Tavita Lealao

HOW TO INCREASE INCLUSIVITY IN OUTREACH (CONTINUED)

HAVE OPEN DISCUSSIONS ON HOW TO MAKE INFORMATION ABOUT TEEN DATING VIOLENCE ACCESSIBLE AND BASED ON REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS

"To make teen dating violence accessible it needs to have a broad spectrum of problems displayed and not be too niche, focusing on what healthy relationships look like and the border between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. The tone of informational videos could make viewers feel like they don't want to associate or compare themselves with such a drastic message. Much of the media depicts violence as only happening in romantic relationships when violence can easily happen in platonic ones. A different approach would be two teens or adults calmly talking and applying warning signs to different kinds of relationships without any hints of judgment. This could make it seem less taboo and makes the viewer more susceptible to try to apply the knowledge to their relationships with others."—Cailyn Mendoza

BUILDING YOUTH CAPACITY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZING



Many Kids in High School at a certain point will feel as though their thoughts and concerns are ignored, especially in regards to the school environment. Generally, most students would want a fairer and more inclusive environment. Some examples of these desires being ignored are unfair dress codes, teachers that enable hostile environments, and more. Seeing how a school environment has a lot to do with student's mentality, many have voiced their concerns only to be ignored. To achieve a student approved environment, communication between students and faculty would need changes, starting with more clarity, as well as more balanced power dynamics.

BUILDING YOUTH CAPACITY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZING

ENCOURAGE THE TEACHERS YOU WORK WITH TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER TEACHERS WHO SUPPORT CLUBS

By collaborating with other groups, it allows for students to connect and potentially collaborate on mutual goals. The easier clubs to collaborate with are those with similar intentions of safe, equal spaces such as GSA, (Gay-Straight Alliance) and BSU (Black Student Union). Icebreakers should be used to build a bond between the clubs in order to allow for better cooperation. As elaborated on earlier, the inclusion of cultural clubs also has many benefits.

EACH ABOUT COMMUNITY ORGANIZING TOWARD A SPECIFIC GOAL

By talking with people who have brought on change, it allows for deeper discussion on certain issues and offers the perspective and insight of someone who has achieved in bringing change. The most relevant activists to use would be those who have affected the school environment, local community, or just something students can understand the impact of.



ABOUT THE TOOLKIT AUTHORS

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Christopher is a know MORE ambassador who attends Sunnyside High School. He is involved with Folklorico dance.

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Cailyn is a 9th grader at Bullard High School and regularly participates in her school's know MORE club. Outside of school she enjoys drawing, dancing, and roller skating.

TAVITA LEALAO

Tavita is a 12th grader attending De Anza High School. He is a part of STAND's YAV for 3 years now, and enjoys music, video games, ice skating, and going on small bike rides.



QUESTIONS?

The Partnership's Prevention Team is always here to support you. Contact Miranda Stiers at miranda@cpedv.org.