


# Chapter One



Essential Question:

What are the Core  
Ingredients for Quality  
Y-AP in Organizations?



# Necessary Knowledge

There are many organizations that have experimented with, and developed best practices for, implementing quality Y-AP. There is also useful research that you can draw on. This chapter draws on the current knowledge base to identify five “core ingredients” needed for quality Y-AP.

## core ingredient # one

### **Youth Need Choice, Youth Need Options**

Not all young people have the same interests or the same skill sets. Some youth love the idea of being an organizer of people and are experienced in doing so. Other youth are skilled at communications or research. Still others see themselves as future community leaders, politicians or lawyers. They want to get involved in organizational governance.

If your organization provides options for youth participation, the organization will be in a much better position to recruit youth to become involved, and stay involved. Youth will be in a better position of finding a match for their interests, experience, and skill.

## core ingredient # two

### **Establish Clear Roles and Expectations**

When youth and adults are working together in a new situation, they may be nervous or unsure about their role. Structure and role clarity are necessary to help them ease through this transition. Establishing clear roles helps a group function more effectively because each member knows what he/she is expected to accomplish. Clarity also provides group members with the structure and boundaries that allow them to manage their limited time.

## **CORE Ingredients for Quality Y-AP**

- **Youth Need Choice, Youth Need Options**
- **Establish Clear Roles and Expectations**
- **Time and Preparation**
- **Encourage Collective Mentoring**
- **Carefully Select Where Y-AP Is Most Needed**

core  
ingredient  
**# three**

### **Time and Preparation are Required for Quality Y-AP**

It is hard to effectively collaborate with others. Youth can have trouble working with other youth, and adults can also have trouble working with their age peers. It makes sense that youth and adults will face challenges in working with each other.

There are solutions. The first solution is “time.” The youth and adults who are partnering together need to find the time to get to know each other, to brainstorm, and to explore ideas. When organizations build in sufficient time for youth and adults to not only work together, but also to get acquainted, success follows.

The second solution is preparation. Youth and adults need a shared orientation before they get to work. They need to prepare and look ahead to future tasks. They need a chance to learn about how other youth-adult partnerships have been successful, and how they have overcome challenges. Organizations may bring in people from the community – youth and adults – who have experience with Y-AP and ask them to conduct an orientation. Often, organizations have the expertise in-house to conduct the orientation.

core  
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**# four**

### **Encourage Collective Mentoring**

We typically think of a “mentor” as an experienced individual serving as a guide for a novice learner. Collective mentoring, in contrast, emphasizes shared teaching and learning between more than two people.

Collective mentoring encourages each group member to be responsible for teaching others. For example, organizations can arrange an informal lunch meeting for people to talk about what they are learning in partnerships. Or during staff meetings everyone can share a best practice.

By encouraging collective mentoring, organizations can ensure that youth and adults effectively form partnerships.

core  
ingredient  
**# five**

### **Carefully Select Where Y-AP Is Most Needed**

We do not wish to suggest (at all) that Y-AP will automatically transform your organization and improve its effectiveness tenfold. Y-AP takes work. Organizations have to commit to the approach, choose a few places in which to implement it, and discover for themselves how to make it work.

## **Take Away Message**

**If your organization orients its planning towards these core ingredients, the likelihood of success will be greatly enhanced**



# Chapter 1

## Tools



There are three tools in this section:

- The first tool, *Defining Quality Youth-Adult Partnerships*, asks you to articulate what “quality” Y-AP means to you and others in your organization.
- The second tool, *Assessing Individual and Group Expectations*, helps you identify the level of commitment to Y-AP within your organization.
- The third tool, *Applying the Core Ingredients*, provides a real-world case study for you to analyze.

Remember, each activity is intended to promote discussion among stakeholders within your organization.

# Tool #2

## Defining Quality Youth-Adult Partnerships



*Respond to the following discussion questions. Remember: the simple questions are the hardest and most important to answer. Be sure to discuss these questions with others in your organization.*

What does “quality” youth-adult partnership mean to you?

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What do you believe are the core ingredients for quality Y-AP in organizations?

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How would others in your organization agree or disagree with you?

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# Tool #3

## Assessing Individual and Group Expectations



*First, circle whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Your answers should be based on your initial gut response. Don't over-think.*

*Next, discuss your responses in a whole group setting. A group member should read a statement aloud and ask others to share their responses. Members should be given an opportunity to explain the reason for their response.*

The idea of engaging young people in decision-making excites me.	Agree	Disagree
Young people have a right to be heard on matters impacting their lives.	Agree	Disagree
The idea of engaging young people in decision-making makes me nervous.	Agree	Disagree
Our program/organization regularly solicits the input of young people.	Agree	Disagree
I believe engaging young people in organizational decision making will positively impact our organization.	Agree	Disagree
I think engaging young people in organizational decision making will positively impact the adults in our organization.	Agree	Disagree
I believe engaging youth in organizational decision making will positively impact the young persons development.	Agree	Disagree
Our program/organization is prepared to include young people in decision making processes.	Agree	Disagree

**There are different strategies to make data gathering more interactive. Here are a few that we have used which spark group reflection and discussion.**

**Variation 1:** Give each member in your group an index card. One side of the card should read *agree*, the other *disagree*. Read the first statement in this assessment and ask group members to hold up the index card stating if they agree or disagree. Have group members look around and discuss the reason for the various responses. Repeat this process for each statement.

**Variation 2:** Read the statement. Ask people to stand up if they agree; have them sit down. Ask them to stand up if they disagree. Have group members discuss their reasons for the various responses. Repeat this process for each statement.

**Variation 3:** Blow the page up into a series of separate posters that can be hung on the walls. Give members of the group sticky dots for pasting their responses to the questions directly on the poster. Process the findings together with the group discussing their reasons for the various responses.