

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT  
TOOLKIT  
CHAMPION'S GUIDE



# acknowledgements

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The Youth Engagement Toolkit was produced in 2013 by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Province of British Columbia and includes:

1. Youth Engagement Toolkit Overview
2. Youth Engagement Toolkit Champion Guide
3. Youth Engagement Toolkit Resource Guide
4. Youth Engagement Toolkit Evaluation Tool

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# introduction: using the toolkit

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Champion's Guide for the Youth Engagement Toolkit! The Champion's Guide provides detailed information about how to use the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Each section of the Guide has all of the information and resources you'll need at different stages of the process. The Champion's Guide is intended to be used by a Champion (or Champions) for Youth Engagement. Champions are individuals who are interested in leading their team through the Youth Engagement Toolkit. You can read more about the role and responsibilities of a Champion on pages 5 and 6.

Many individuals participating in the Youth Engagement Toolkit process will not need to read this Champion's Guide. Instead, they should read the Resource Guide, which contains information and practical tips for youth engagement. Champions should start by reading the Champion's Guide and getting familiar with the whole Toolkit.

## USING THE TOOLKIT

The Toolkit is a user-friendly resource to help ministry teams and community partners assess, improve and sustain their youth engagement practice. The Toolkit guides teams through a process of 4 collaborative meetings where adults and youth work together to create a plan to strengthen their youth engagement practice.

- **Meeting 1:** Teams receive an orientation to the Toolkit process and develop common understandings of youth engagement.
- **Meeting 2:** Teams use the Evaluation Tool to evaluate youth engagement practices within their organization.
- **Meeting 3:** Teams address areas of strengths and challenges discussed in Meeting 2 by developing a Youth Engagement Develop Plan (YEDP). The YEDP outlines steps the team can take to reach a few key youth engagement goals that are important to them.
- **Meeting 4:** After 2-3 months of working towards their goals, teams meet again to review their progress and set new goals if desired.

After completing the Toolkit, the team should have all the tools and knowledge they need to continue to improve their youth engagement practice. The important work they have started- to build and strengthen youth engagement- should continue! As teams strengthen their youth engagement practice, they may choose to use the Toolkit repeatedly to re-evaluate and strengthen their youth engagement practice.

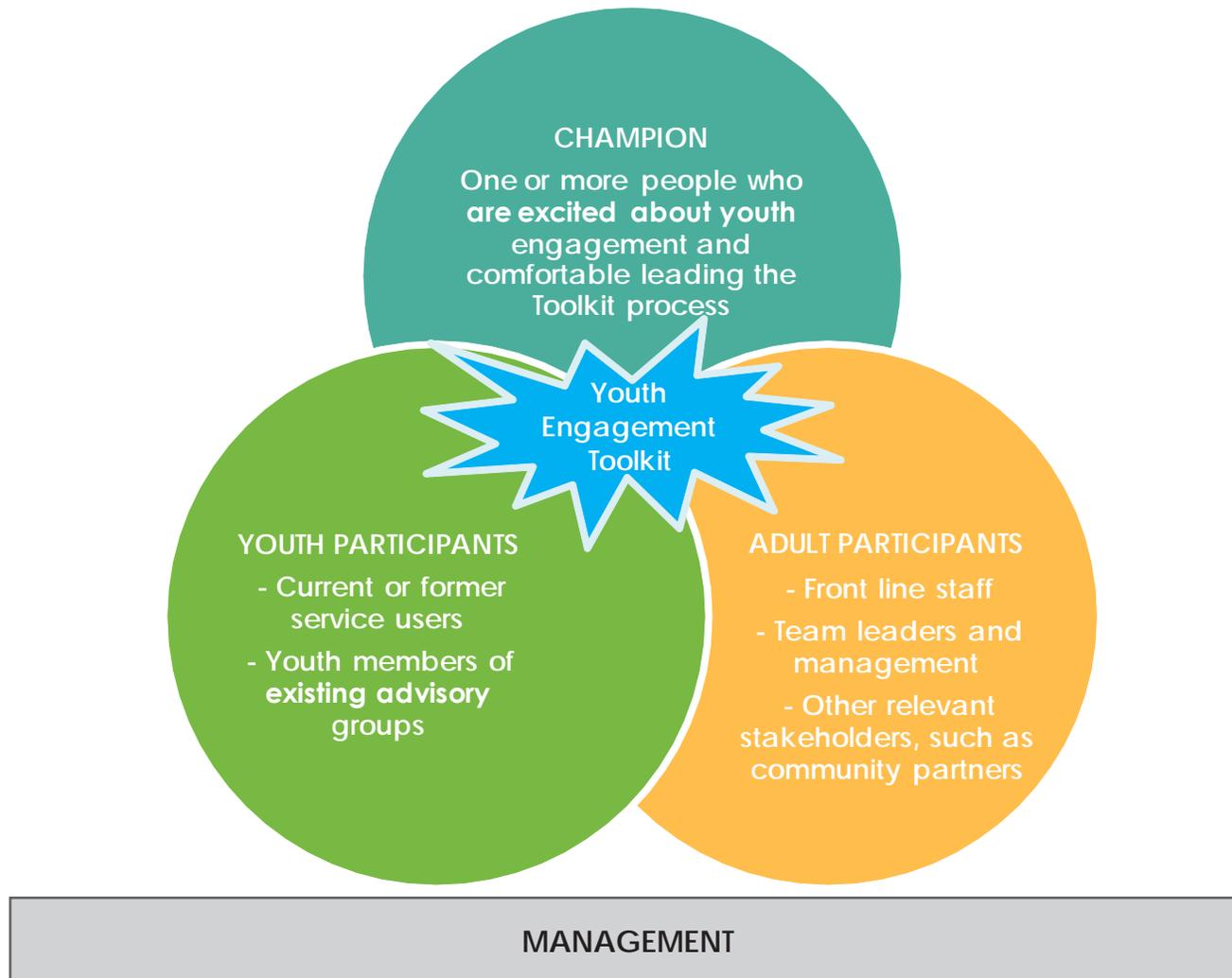
**The Toolkit does not provide a recipe for “doing” youth engagement. Instead, the Toolkit provides a roadmap and tools to support the process. It is designed so that it can be used flexibly. Teams can choose to modify the process to work best for them in their environment.**

# roles & responsibilities

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

There are four different types of participants in the Toolkit process: the Champion(s), adult participants, youth participants, and management.

Each type of participant will have a slightly different role and different responsibilities, which are described below.



# roles & responsibilities

## CHAMPION ROLE

The Champion(s) is the person (or people) who will lead and facilitate the Youth Engagement Toolkit process. It doesn't have to be just one person. The role can be shared between different people, including youth.

## CHAMPION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Read and understand all the Toolkit materials.
- Recruit adult and youth participants.
- Plan Toolkit meetings. You'll need to remind participants about the meeting, ensure all participants have the reading materials they need before the meeting, and bring everything else you'll need (like food, bus tickets/transportation for youth, and incentives for youth).
- Lead and facilitate Toolkit meetings using the instructions in the Champion's Guide.
- Ensure all team members are able to participate fully. You may need to speak with participants privately to make sure everyone is receiving all the support and information that they need.
- Ensure that someone takes notes at each meeting and keep track of Toolkit documents.
- Encourage and motivate participants and ensure that participants are on track to meet the goals set on the YEDP.

## IDENTIFYING A CHAMPION

Champions are strongly motivated to support, promote and develop youth engagement in the organization. A youth engagement champion is someone in the organization who is dedicated to working with youth, raising issues that are important to them, and willing to find new ways to work around common challenges when practicing youth engagement. Champions are fair, responsive and informed, and who are dedicated to building positive relationships with young people. Youth will often recognize them as allies and people they can approach when they experience personal challenges or want to celebrate positive life events.

Above all, the most important characteristic of a Champion is their enthusiasm to champion the Toolkit process. Not all Champions will have lots of experience working with youth- that may even be one reason participants choose to begin the Toolkit! However, the Champion's energy and enthusiasm will be an asset for moving the project forward and will serve as an example and inspiration to other workers. Champions must also be willing to dedicate their time and energy to lead the process. As well, Champion's must be comfortable leading a group of adults and youth through the process.

# roles & responsibilities

## ADULT PARTICIPANT ROLE

The role of adult participants is to attend all meetings and contribute their own thoughts and ideas to the discussion. As well, adults participate in working towards goals set on the Youth Engagement Development Plan.

## ADULT PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Help identify youth who might like to participate in the process.
- Attend all Toolkit meetings. It is important to remember that youth often have other things going on in their lives, so meetings will need to be scheduled in a way that is conscious of that. This may mean meeting later in the day or early evening in order to accommodate their schedules.
- Contribute to the process.
- Participate in work tasks that come out of the YEDP.
- Respect the unique perspective that everyone brings to the group.

## YOUTH PARTICIPANT ROLE

The role of youth participants is to attend all meetings and contribute their own thoughts and ideas to the discussion. As well, youth participate in working towards goals set on the Youth Engagement Development Plan.

## YOUTH PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend all Toolkit meetings.
- Contribute to the process.
- Participate in work tasks that come out of the YEDP.
- Respect the unique perspective that everyone brings to the group.

## MANAGEMENT ROLE

The role of management is to support the work of Toolkit participants to build youth engagement within the organization by:

- Supporting staff to dedicate time towards completing the toolkit and working towards youth engagement goals,
- Dedicating financial resources to hold Toolkit meetings and work towards YEDP goals,
- Attending Toolkit meetings as desired to learn about, and provide feedback on, YEDP goals.
- Making youth engagement a priority within the organization.

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend Toolkit meetings as desired
- Support Toolkit participants to achieve their YEDP goals
- Support Toolkit participants to achieve their YEDP goals and strengthen youth engagement through changes in practice, services and structures.
- Consider their role in strengthening youth engagement throughout the organization
- Allocate financial resources to support youth engagement

# overview: using the youth engagement toolkit

The following diagram summarizes the purpose, activities, timelines, and required reading for each meeting during the Youth Engagement Toolkit process. The Youth Engagement Champion(s) should refer to the Champion's Guide for detailed instructions for each meeting.

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Prep</b></p> <p>Preparation Activities</p> | <p><b>Purpose</b><br/>To become familiar with the Youth Engagement Toolkit and the process of using the materials.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>Read all project materials, recruit youth and adult team members, coordinate the meeting schedule and logistics, and confirm that you have the support of leadership/management. Champions should review and bring the Champion's Guide to each meeting.</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 5-6 hours</p> | <p><b>Champion's Pre-Reading:</b></p> <p>Champion's Guide</p> <p>Evaluation Tool</p> <p>Resource Guide</p> |
|--|---|--|



1 MONTH

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b></p> <p>MEETING 1<br/>Orientation &amp; Values Assessment</p> <p>See page 12</p> | <p><b>Purpose</b><br/>The Champion will give an orientation about the Youth Engagement Toolkit process and how it works. As well, participants will build a common understanding of some terms and concepts related to youth engagement.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>The Champion delivers the orientation PowerPoint about the Youth Engagement Toolkit. As part of the presentation, the group will watch the Youth Engagement Toolkit project video. Participants will then complete several small group exercises to build a common understanding of youth engagement among your team and get the conversation started.</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 1-2 hours</p> | <p><b>Participant Pre-Reading:</b></p> <p>Resource Guide (Section 1)</p> |
|---|---|--|



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1 WEEK

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>MEETING 2</b><br/>Using the Evaluation Tool</p> <p>See page 16</p> | <p><b>Purpose</b><br/>Participants will assess areas of strength and challenge in youth engagement in their organization. The discussion and findings from this meeting will help participants identify areas where they can start to build youth engagement within their work environment. These findings will help guide participants in the development of a Youth Engagement Development Plan in Meeting 3.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>Participants will use the Evaluation Tool to rate and discuss current youth engagement practices.</p> <p><b>Duration</b> Up to 3 hours</p> | <p><b>Participant Pre-Reading:</b><br/>Evaluation Tool (Optional)</p> |
|--|---|---|

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**1 WEEK**

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>MEETING 3</b><br/>Youth Engagement Development Plan</p> | <p><b>Purpose</b><br/>Participants set goals to build youth engagement in their organization by developing a Youth Engagement Development Plan.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>Based on their discussions using the Evaluation Tool, participants develop a Youth Engagement Development Plan with 2-3 goals for the team to work towards.</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 2-3 hours</p> | <p><b>Participant Pre-Reading:</b><br/>Resource Guide - Section 2</p> |
|---|---|---|

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**2-3 MONTHS**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>MEETING 4</b><br/>Youth Engagement Development Plan (YEDP) Review</p> <p>See page 24</p> | <p><b>Purpose</b><br/>Participants will review their progress towards their youth engagement goals.</p> <p><b>Activities</b><br/>Participants will review the progress they have made towards goals they set on their Youth Engagement Development Plan. Participants can change, adjust or set new goals as needed.</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 1-2 hours</p> | <p><b>Participant Pre-Reading:</b><br/>Resource Guide - Section 2</p> |
|--|---|---|

# preparation activities

Before beginning the Youth Engagement Toolkit process, there are a few preparation activities to take care of that will help ensure your success. **Appendix A (Champion Checklist)** has a handy list of all the necessary preparation activities.

## STEPS:

**1. Involve Management:** Before starting, determine how managers or executives will be included in the process. Teams will likely need management to allocate or confirm what resources your organization may have to help you achieve the goals on your Youth Engagement Development Plan.

**2. Identify a Champion:** Choose someone to lead and facilitate the Toolkit process. The Champion role can be shared between several people but each Champion should attend all the Toolkit meetings. Consider appointing a youth co-champion as well. The Champion(s) should read all of the Toolkit materials thoroughly and be familiar with the different steps of the process.

**3. Recruit youth and adult project team members:** Invite adults and youth to participate in the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Adults and youth should be familiar with the services provided by your organization. Consider recruiting staff, managers, past or current service users, members of youth advisory groups, and/or community partners. See the Resource Guide for suggestions on how to recruit youth participants.

Consider what group size will work best for you- too few people and you may not have enough awareness or enthusiasm within your organization to generate lasting changes. However, with too many people it can be difficult to facilitate meaningful discussion and choose goals everyone can agree on.

**4. Plan for youth-friendly meetings:** Youth engagement is very new to some organizations. **Section 2** of the Resource Guide contains many helpful suggestions for how to facilitate youth friendly meetings. It is strongly recommended that Champions read and incorporate some or all of the suggestions from the Resource Guide into your Toolkit meetings.

### A few key things to consider are:

- Think about the youth friendliness of your meeting space. Choose a location that is accessible by public transportation, has a comfortable atmosphere, and also provide food and drink if possible.
- Bus tickets or transportation should be provided for youth who may have trouble accessing the meeting.
- Consider whether you will provide incentives for youth to attend the meetings. Youth have competing demands on their time and may need to take time off from work or find childcare to attend the meeting. It is considered best practice to provide youth with some form of compensation for their involvement, like an honorarium of money or a gift card. (See Resource Guide).

# preparation activities

**5. Schedule YET meetings:** Decide what meeting times, length and frequency works best for all participants. Youth may have school or work during the day, so meeting later in the afternoon or early evening may work best.

**6. Assign Pre-Reading:** Some of the Toolkit meetings have pre-reading all participants should complete prior to the meeting. Pre-reading will help build knowledge of youth engagement among your team and give you tools to complete the different steps of the Toolkit process.

**7. Get Started!:** The Champion's Guide contains all the resources and information you'll need to lead your team through the Youth Engagement Toolkit! So get out there and build youth engagement!

## Something to Think About...

Setting a clear agenda at the start of each meeting – and being specific about what you want to have done by the end of each meeting – can help your team move through the meetings on schedule. It also lets you know when success is achieved and creates opportunities for the group to celebrate!

## HELPFUL HINT

As you move through the Youth Engagement Toolkit, it can be helpful to evaluate how well the group of youth and adults you've brought together to complete this exercise feels you're practicing youth engagement in real time. As well, it can be helpful to reflect on what participants learn at each meeting. Young people have suggested that taking the time at the end of each meeting to review what's working well or not so well in this process is useful. There are a variety of quick and fun ways to do this including:

- 1. 2 STARS AND A WISH** – In this exercise, each group member identifies 2 things that they liked about the meeting and 1 thing that they would like to see done differently the next time.
- 2. FLIF SANDWICH** – In this exercise, participants reflect on their Feelings, what they Liked, what could be Improved, and give overall Feedback. (see appendix H)
- 3. PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRES** – for meetings 1, 2 and 3 (see appendix I)

# meeting 1

## 1 MEETING 1: VALUES ASSESSMENT & ORIENTATION

|                      | SUMMARY  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>PURPOSE</b>       | In this meeting, the Champion will give an orientation about the Youth Engagement Toolkit process and how it works. As well, participants will build a common understanding of some terms and concepts related to youth engagement.  |
| <b>ACTIVITIES</b>    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Champion delivers the orientation PowerPoint about the Youth Engagement Toolkit. As part of the presentation, the group will watch the Youth Engagement Toolkit project video.</li><li>2. Participants complete several small group exercises to build a common understanding of youth engagement among your team and get the conversation started.</li></ol> |
| <b>DOCUMENTS</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orientation PowerPoint</li><li>• Values Assessment Exercises 1-3 (See Appendix B-E of the Champion's Guide)</li><li>• Youth Engagement Toolkit Project video</li></ul>   |
| <b>PRE-READING</b>   | Prior to this meeting, participants should read Section 1 of the Resource Guide (Youth Engagement Frameworks and Foundations).   |
| <b>TIME REQUIRED</b> | 1-2 hours  |

## 1 MEETING 1: VALUES ASSESSMENT & ORIENTATION

The first meeting blends a formal orientation presentation with informal group exercises designed to help participants develop a common understanding of some key concepts of youth engagement. Everyone has a different understanding of what youth engagement means. Discussion-based exercises will help participants reach a collective understanding of what youth engagement looks like in practice. By the end of the meeting, participants should be better prepared to work together to strengthen youth engagement in your organization.

### STEPS

#### 1. EXERCISE 1: DEFINING QUALITY YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

This meeting starts with an exercise that gives participants the opportunity to discuss personal and shared understanding and definitions of youth engagement.

- Ask participants to form small groups and hand out **appendix B: Exercise 1**.
- Have participants discuss each question and record their answers.
- When participants have had a chance to discuss all the questions, project the **Definition of Youth Engagement from the Orientation PowerPoint** (see slide 4). Ask participants to compare their answers with the formal definition of youth engagement.
- Finally, facilitate a group discussion to ensure that all participants understand that the Toolkit focuses on youth engagement at an organizational level.

#### YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AT AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

The Toolkit focuses on evaluating and strengthening youth engagement at an organizational level. Lots of people understand what it means to engage youth one-on-one. But that's not what the Toolkit is all about. Encourage participants to think big! Youth engagement is about creating opportunities for young people to play meaningful roles in operational and governance issues, as well as in the decision-making structures of organizations. Youth engagement means that organizations partner with young people and engage them in the work of the organization. The ideas and expertise of youth can contribute to improved services and programs and lead to better outcomes for children and youth. Organizations change and evolve when the individual employees adopt youth engagement into their daily practice. Systemic change starts from shifting the practice of employees. For many people, this is a very new concept, so make sure that the group really understands what youth engagement means at an organizational level!

# meeting 1

## 1 MEETING 1: VALUES ASSESSMENT & ORIENTATION

### 2. EXERCISE 2: ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EXPECTATIONS

In this exercise, participants will identify their personal strengths and concerns related to youth engagement.

- Ask participants to form two groups: adults and youth. Hand out **appendix C: Exercise 2** to adult participants and **appendix D: Exercise 2** to youth participants.
- First, have all participants individually respond to the questions by circling Agree or Disagree.
- Then, have each group tally the number of "Agree" and "Disagree" responses to each question by getting participants to share their answers.
- Bring the two groups back together. Read each statement aloud and have the groups read out the number of "Agree" and "Disagree" responses. Facilitate a discussion about participant's responses and the differences between adult and youth's responses.
- Optional Approach: In groups where safety and trust between youth-adult partners is already established, youth and adult participants can be integrated into small groups to share their perspectives.

### 3. ORIENTATION TO THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

The Champion presents the orientation slideshow to explain the concept of youth engagement and how to use the Youth Engagement Toolkit. The presentation also includes a project video with background on the development of the Youth Engagement Toolkit.

The presentation should take approximately 30-40 minutes. Check out the Youth Engagement Orientation slide show [here](#). It includes some speakers notes to guide you through.

## 1 MEETING 1: VALUES ASSESSMENT & ORIENTATION

### 4. EXERCISE 3: VALUES ASSESSMENT

This exercise helps groups come together, share their enthusiasm and discuss moving forward to improve youth engagement.

- Hand out **appendix E: Exercise 3**.
- Facilitate large or small group discussions about each question.

### 5. MEETING CLOSING

It can be helpful to close the meeting by asking the group to share what they got out of the meeting. This can be a nice way to close the first meeting and leave the group excited for the next one! See appendix H and appendix I.

# meeting 2

## 2 MEETING 2: USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

|                      | SUMMARY  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>PURPOSE</b>       | In this meeting, participants will assess areas of strength and challenge in youth engagement in their organization. The discussion and findings from this meeting will help participants identify areas where they can start to build youth engagement within their work environment. These findings will help guide participants in the development of a Youth Engagement Development Plan in Meeting 3. |
| <b>ACTIVITIES</b>    | Participants will use the Evaluation Tool to rate and discuss current youth engagement practices.  |
| <b>DOCUMENTS</b>     | Evaluation Tool  |
| <b>PRE-READING</b>   | None   |
| <b>TIME REQUIRED</b> | 2-3 hours  |

## 2 MEETING 2: USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

The Youth Engagement Evaluation Tool allows participants to rate youth engagement practice within the organization. The Evaluation tool is intended to help organizations understand their areas of strength and areas for improvement in youth engagement. By systematically considering youth engagement practice across five themes of youth engagement, participants will achieve an honest assessment of youth engagement within their organization.

The Evaluation Tool contains detailed explanations of each theme at the start of each section, however a quick summary of each theme is below:

1. **Organizational Readiness** How ready is the organization to engage with youth?
2. **Youth-Adult Partnerships** Do youth and adults work closely together with joint rights and responsibilities?
3. **Youth Leadership and Decision-making** Do youth have opportunities to participate in decision making and develop leadership abilities?
4. **Youth as Evaluators and Researchers** Are youth involved in research and evaluation?
5. **Diversity** Does your organization engage with a range of youth that accurately represent youth involved with the organization?

Keep in mind that when thinking about "the organization", this can mean the entire organization, an office, a team or a specific work setting. Whatever is chosen, the focus is about *how* youth are engaged in the work in that particular setting

# meeting 2

## 2 MEETING 2: USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

Under each theme, participants are asked to rate youth engagement practice in their organization on a number of indicators, or statements, that reflect an ideal state of youth engagement. Participants rate each indicator using a rating scale of 1 to 5. Participants can write their comments in the side bar about strengths, challenges or ideas to improve on each indicator.

### RATING SCALE

Please indicate the degree to which the following indicators accurately describe your experience with the organization

- 1 = Does not describe my experience with the organization at all
- 2 = Somewhat describes my experience with the organization
- 3 = Moderately describes my experience with the organization
- 4 = Describes my experience with the organization well
- 5 = Very accurately describes my experience with the organization
- N/A = Not applicable
- D/K = Don't Know

FOR EXAMPLE:

| Indicators  | Ranking             | Comments                             |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Youth engagement is supported by legislation, policy and/or practice guidelines. | 1 2 (3) 4 5 N/A D/K | We have a policy on youth engagement |

## 2 MEETING 2: USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

### STEPS

- 1. Review** Review your discussion from the previous meeting, as well as the definition of youth engagement at an organizational level.
- 2. Read** As a group, read the description of the first theme of Youth Engagement.
- 3. Rank** The Toolkit works best when participants independently complete rankings for all the indicators in a theme.
- 4. Discuss** Participants should discuss their rankings for the theme as a group. The discussion should highlight similarities and differences in the rankings. Ask people to share why they chose a particular ranking and what examples support their assessment. The group does not have to reach a consensus on the rankings.
- 5. Continue** Continue through each theme in the Toolkit.
- 6. Record** Collect the completed evaluation tools at the end of the meeting. Record and summarize observations and findings from the meeting. Discussions that arise through using the Evaluation Tool should highlight areas of strength and challenge in youth engagement in your organization. These discussions will help your team identify areas where they can start to build youth engagement in their work environment. Prepare a summary of your discussion to review at Meeting 4.

# meeting 2

## 2 MEETING 2: USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

- Before you begin, it can be helpful to review the definitions of common concepts in youth engagement. In particular, ensure that participants are considering youth engagement at an organizational level, as opposed to engaging youth in one-to-one relationships.
- The evaluation tool is intended to be flexible and adaptable to the range of work environments in an organization. You can decide which themes /indicators are most applicable to your work environment. You do not have to rate every indicator. However, it is recommended that you rate at least a couple of indicators from each theme. You may find there are interesting aspects of youth engagement that your team had never even considered!
- At the end of the **Evaluation Tool, appendix A (Indicators in Practice)** contains examples of what strong youth engagement might look like for each indicator. Let participants know that they can refer to this section if they are not sure what an indicator means. It can be very helpful to answer any questions participants may have.
- Participants may find that they've never even considered some of the indicators within their organization. That's ok! The Evaluation Tool reflects what youth engagement can look like in its ideal state. Every organization will be starting at different places with respect to youth engagement. Let participants know that it's ok to rate an indicator at a 1.
- Ask participants to identify areas that are working well and areas where there are challenges in the comment box.
- As you move through the Tool, participants may begin to think of ideas to improve youth engagement in the organization. Ask participants to write these down in the comment box and bring these ideas to the next meeting, where participants will develop a Youth Engagement Development Plan.

## 3

**MEETING 3: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (YEDP)**

| <b>SUMMARY</b>       |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>PURPOSE</b>       | In this meeting, participants set goals to build youth engagement in their organization by developing a Youth Engagement Development Plan.                  |
| <b>ACTIVITIES</b>    | Based on their discussions using the Evaluation Tool, participants develop a Youth Engagement Development Plan with 2-3 goals for the team to work towards. |
| <b>DOCUMENTS</b>     | Youth Engagement Development Plan Template (appendix F), Resource Guide   |
| <b>PRE-READING</b>   | Prior to this meeting, participants should read Section 2 of the Resource Guide (Practical Strategies for Engaging Youth).                                  |
| <b>TIME REQUIRED</b> | 2-3 hours   |

# meeting 3

## 3 MEETING 3: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (YEDP)

The Evaluation Tool should have helped participants understand their organization's strengths and areas for improvement in youth engagement. In this meeting, participants will build on discussions they had as they completed the Evaluation Tool, and develop goals to build youth engagement within their organization. Working together, participants will identify 2-3 key goals to improve youth engagement in their organization and write a Youth Engagement Development Plan.

It is recommended that those at a management and/or executive level are invited to the YEDP meeting to increase awareness of the efforts and resources necessary to successfully complete your YEDP.

### STEPS

- 1. Review** Hand out everyone's completed Evaluation Tool from the previous meeting. Review the strengths and challenges highlighted in your last meeting using the Evaluation Tool. You may also want to review any ideas that participants generated as they worked through the Evaluation Tool.
- 2. Develop Goals** Work together to identify key goals to improve youth engagement within your organization. Record these goals on your Youth Engagement Development Plan (YEDP).
- 3. Develop an Action Plan** Complete your YEDP by assigning tasks and creating timelines to accomplish your goals. Set a date to review your progress in 2-3 months.

### After the Meeting:

- 4. Share your YEDP** Send a copy of your YEDP to participants and management to ensure that everyone is aware of your goals and can begin working on the plan.
- 5. Get started!** Start working on your goals. Champions should check-in with participants to ensure that people stay motivated, enthusiastic and continue to work toward your YEDP goals.

### 3 MEETING 3: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (YEDP)

#### HELPFUL HINTS

- Be S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-limited) in stating your goals. As a general guideline, goals should take no longer than three months to complete. If necessary, break your goal into smaller steps that can be accomplished in shorter time frames. This increases accountability among your team and helps ensure your team makes steady progress towards its goals.
- Limit the goals for your YEDP to a maximum of 3.
- Be rights and strengths-based: Identify what is working well and what changes need to occur. Consider where youth's rights are being upheld and where barriers exist or rights are being denied. Think about how these rights can be honoured through practice and what sustainable improvements could be made to structures or systems.
- The Evaluation Tool should have identified which youth engagement practices and processes have best served your organization. Build on these strengths! Where the evaluation tool suggests that gaps exist, the YEDP will help to close them.
- Be focused on how to improve the level of youth engagement. The following questions may help narrow the scope of your YEDP:
  - What knowledge, skill or competency can be acquired, developed, or enhanced?
  - How will the knowledge, skill, or competency benefit the organization?
  - What resources will be required to implement the plan successfully? How can the group ensure that time/money/management support is available to execute the plan?
  - How will you measure if your efforts have been successful?
  - What actions will keep youth engaged over time?
- Determine the best way to share updates and challenges that arise during the completion of YEDP tasks.
- Invite management to attend this meeting (especially if they haven't attended any previous meetings). If they aren't able to attend, send them a completed copy of your YEDP when you're done.
- A youth engagement strategy takes time to execute and the process grows as the group develops a deeper understanding of the strengths and challenges of youth engagement. The YEDP that is created will not be linear; it will evolve into a cycle of continuous improvement.

# meeting 4

4

## MEETING 4: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

|                      | SUMMARY   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>PURPOSE</b>       | In this meeting, participants will review their progress towards their youth engagement goals.  |
| <b>ACTIVITIES</b>    | Participants will review the progress they have made towards goals they set on their Youth Engagement Development Plan. Participants can change, adjust or set new goals as needed. |
| <b>DOCUMENTS</b>     | Youth Engagement Development Plan, Resource Guide   |
| <b>PRE-READING</b>   | None  |
| <b>TIME REQUIRED</b> | 1-2 hours   |

## 4

## MEETING 4: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

During the development of the YEDP, participants should have agreed upon a meeting date to review goals set in the YEDP. Once participants have had some time to work towards their YEDP goals, it's time to meet to review your goals. This meeting is an opportunity to bring participants together again to celebrate the progress they've made, discuss and problem solve if there have been any barriers to achieving your goals, build upon existing goals, or set new youth engagement goals. Document your discussion by creating a revised YEDP for participants that outlines your goals and action plan for the next few months. Once again, participants should set timelines for their goals and agree to meet again in a few months to review their progress.

### STEPS

1. Review the goals set on your YEDP.
2. Review the work your team has done to reach each of your goals. Discuss any successes or challenges you've had while working towards your goals. Take time to recognize and celebrate your successes! This will help your team maintain their enthusiasm for continuing to strengthen youth engagement. Problem solve about any challenges your team has encountered. What is needed to move forward? Are there other approaches you could try? Does the goal need to be modified at all?
3. Once you've reviewed your goals, discuss what your team would like to work towards moving forward. You may wish to add new actions or strategies for achieving goals you set previously. You may wish to add new goals or modify existing goals. Remember to set S.M.A.R.T goals on your YEDP (see the hints on page 23).
4. Set another meeting date in the future to review your progress and follow-up on actions set on your YEDP.

# beyond the toolkit

## *CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT*

By working through the Toolkit, participants should be knowledgeable about youth engagement, and have made some progress towards implementing their youth engagement goals. However, youth engagement doesn't stop here. The Toolkit should have given your team all the tools they need to continue to build and strengthen youth engagement within your organizations. Keep the momentum going by checking in with participants and encouraging them in their work towards your YEDP goals. You may find it helpful to use the exercises listed in **appendix H** ( 2 Stars and a Wish/FLIF Sandwich) and **appendix I**. Schedule regular meetings to review your progress and keep participants focused on building youth engagement.

As you strengthen youth engagement practices within your organization, it can be very useful to re-evaluate your youth engagement practices using the Evaluation Tool. Re-evaluating your youth engagement practice allows participants to recognize the progress they have made and prioritize areas for improvements. Using the Evaluation Tool on an annual basis can be very helpful to guide and refocus your organization towards areas that require improvement and set relevant goals on your YEDP.



## CHAMPION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to keep track of all the preparation activities required to prepare for your first Toolkit meeting.

### ONE MONTH BEFORE

- Read and understand all of the Toolkit materials.
- Obtain the support of management to start the YET Toolkit. Consider how to invite managers to participate in the process.
- Generate interest in the Toolkit among staff and youth at your location:
  - Hand out the Introduction to the Youth Engagement Toolkit.
  - Share the YET Project Video.
  - Talk to staff and youth! Explain the project, answer their questions, and generate excitement!
  - Call a meeting to talk about the Toolkit or present the information at a team meeting.
- Determine a budget for the Toolkit process. This may include a budget for food, bus tickets and honorariums.
- Plan for youth-friendly meetings. Consult Section 2 of the Resource Guide for suggestions.
- Consult with recruited participants to determine a convenient meeting date, time, and length and set your first meeting.
- Assign pre-reading to participants and ensure they have access to the documents they'll need.

### ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Send reminders to all participants. Remind them about any pre-reading.
- Make any necessary arrangements for food, location, childcare, incentives, etc.
- Ensure that you have everything you'll need for your meeting, including documents and supplies.

### ONE DAY BEFORE

- Send reminders to youth participants by phone, text, email, etc.

### DAY OF

- Send reminders to youth (yes – again!)
- Make sure that you have bus tickets and other incentives handy.
- Assign someone to take notes.

# appendix B

## **EXERCISE 1: DEFINING QUALITY YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

### **PURPOSE OF EXERCISE**

In this exercise, you will have the opportunity to illuminate and reflect on your personal and group/team understanding and definitions of Youth Engagement and Youth-Adult Partnerships.

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

As a group, answer the three questions outlined below. Near the end of the exercise, an evidence-based definition of youth engagement, used by the Youth Engagement Toolkit Project Team, will be handed out. Look for the similarities and differences between your individual/group definitions, and the definition handed out.

- 1.** What does quality youth engagement mean to you?
- 2.** What do you believe are the core ingredients for quality youth engagement in organizations?
- 3.** How would others in your organization agree or disagree with you?

## EXERCISE 2: ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EXPECTATIONS (ADULT)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Circle whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Your answers are based on your initial gut response. Don't over-think.

1. The idea of engaging young people in decision-making with this team/program/organization excites me  
Agree      Disagree
2. Young people have a right to be heard on matters impacting their lives  
Agree      Disagree
3. The idea of engaging young people in decision-making makes me nervous  
Agree      Disagree
4. Our team/program/organization regularly solicits the input of young people  
Agree      Disagree
5. I believe having youth engage in organizational decision-making will positively impact this organization  
Agree      Disagree
6. I believe that engaging youth in organizational decision-making will positively impact the adults in this organization  
Agree      Disagree
7. I believe engaging youth in organizational decision-making will positively impact my development and the development of other youth involved  
Agree      Disagree
8. Our team/program/organization is prepared to include young people in decision-making processes  
Agree      Disagree

*Adapted from "Being YAP Savy" Zeldin and Collora, June 2010*

# appendix D

## EXERCISE 2: ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EXPECTATIONS (YOUTH)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Circle whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Your answers are based on your initial gut response. Don't over-think.

1. The idea of engaging in decision-making with this program/organization excites me  
Agree      Disagree
2. Young people have a right to be heard on matters impacting their lives  
Agree      Disagree
3. The idea of engaging in decision-making with this program/organization makes me nervous  
Agree      Disagree
4. I think this team/program/organization regularly solicits the input of young people  
Agree      Disagree
5. I believe having youth engage in organizational decision-making will positively impact this organization  
Agree      Disagree
6. I think having youth engage in organizational decision-making will positively impact the adults in this organization  
Agree      Disagree
7. I believe engaging in organizational decision-making will positively impact my development and the development of other youth involved  
Agree      Disagree
8. This program/organization is prepared to include young people in decision-making processes  
Agree      Disagree

## **EXERCISE 3: VALUES ASSESSMENT**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

As a group, answer the two questions outlined below.

- 1.** Why is youth engagement and using the Youth Engagement Evaluation Tool important to your team, community, and daily practice?
- 2.** What opportunities are you envisioning in your team, community, and daily practice?

# appendix F

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (YEDP) TEMPLATE

| EXAMPLE 1       |                      |          |                       |                |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Goal / Outcomes | Actions / Strategies | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |

| EXAMPLE 2       |                      |          |                       |                |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Goal / Outcomes | Actions / Strategies | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |

| EXAMPLE 3       |                      |          |                       |                |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Goal / Outcomes | Actions / Strategies | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |
|                 |                      |          |                       |                |

## SAMPLE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

| <b>EXAMPLE 1: REGULAR PRACTICE</b>   |   |          |                       |                |
|--|---|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Goal / Outcomes  | Actions / Strategies  | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
| For the Surrey office to develop a youth friendly presentation to explain Section 70 rights of children in care. | Workers and youth will meet to develop a slide show presentation about children's rights in care  |          |                       |                |
|  | Youth and workers will co-facilitate a rights in care presentation in Surrey.   |          |                       |                |
| <b>EXAMPLE 2: COMMUNITY SERVICE</b>  |   |          |                       |                |
| Goal / Outcomes  | Actions / Strategies  | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
| Bring the "youth voice" into continuous planning of youth services in Fort St. John.                             | Youth involved with the organization will be recruited to join the Youth Services Planning Table in Fort St. John.  |          |                       |                |
|  | Youth Services Planning Table and recruited youth will meet to develop a joint vision and structure for the committee's ongoing planning and evaluation work. |          |                       |                |
| <b>EXAMPLE 3: ORGANIZATIONAL OR SYSTEMS CHANGES</b>  |   |          |                       |                |
| Goal / Outcomes  | Actions / Strategies  | Due Date | Person(s) Responsible | Date Completed |
| To provide recommendations for the hours of work agreement for Youth Services Workers province-wide.             | A subcommittee consisting of youth and adults will develop a draft plan for the revised hours of work agreement.  |          |                       |                |

# appendix H

## 2 STARS AND A WISH & FLIF SANDWICH

### 2 STARS AND A WISH

A helpful way to close a meeting is 2 Stars and a Wish. Ask each group member to share 2 things that they liked about the meeting and 1 thing that they would like to see done differently the next time. This should give you an idea of how meetings are going and how they can be improved.

### FLIF SANDWICH

An activity that you can use to debrief a meeting or workshop is the 'FLIF Sandwich'. The FLIF sandwich allows everyone an opportunity to share how they feel the meeting went and what could be improved for next time. The activity is simple, and can be done as an open discussion or anonymously followed by a group discussion.

1. Chart the letters FLIF vertically on a flipchart.
2. Beside the first F, write 'Feel'. Beside the L write 'Like', beside the I write 'Improve', and beside the final F write 'Feedback'.
3. If doing this activity in an open discussion, go through each heading individually and invite group members 1 by 1 to share their thoughts. I.e: How do you feel? What did you like? What could be improved? Any other feedback? Have a discussion after each heading.
4. If having members contribute anonymously, ask them to write their responses to the questions on a post-it and then post it under the appropriate heading when they are ready. Once completed, share all of the responses back to the group.

This activity can be used to identify themes about what is working well and what can be improved, and to then create an action plan for future meetings/groups.

## PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE:

### MEETING 1 □ ORIENTATION & VALUES ASSESSMENT

**Your feedback is important.** By completing this form you will help us refine the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Please check the box  that best represents your opinion on each item below.

|  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I am a ...   | Youth                    | Adult                    |                          |                          |                          |
| How long have you been involved with the organization/team?                                      | Less than 1 year         | 1-2 years                | 3-5 years                | 6-10 years               | 11 + years               |
| Did you have enough time at this meeting to complete the exercises?                              | Not enough               | Not quite enough         | Just right               | A bit too much           | Too much                 |
|  | Not at all               | A little bit             | Somewhat                 | Mostly                   | Completely               |
| How clear was the meeting purpose?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To what extent did this meeting help your team reach a common understanding of youth engagement? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To what extent did this meeting prepare you to start the Youth Engagement Toolkit process?       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How helpful were the exercises?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How clearly was the information presented?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How well did the meeting address any questions you had?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Before this meeting, how well did you understand youth engagement?                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Currently, how well do you understand youth engagement?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you think the meeting was youth friendly?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How useful was this meeting?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did you enjoy this meeting?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Why or why not?  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |

|   | Very poor                | Poor                     | Moderate                 | Good                     | Very good                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>adults</b> in this process? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>youth</b> in this process?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What was most helpful about this meeting?

What was least helpful about this meeting?

How could things be improved?

# appendix I

## PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE: MEETING 2 □ USING THE EVALUATION TOOL

**Your feedback is important.** By completing this form you will help us refine the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Please check the box  that best represents your opinion on each item below.

|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I am a ...  | Youth                    | Adult                    |                          |                          |                          |
| How long have you been involved with the organization/team?                           | Less than 1 year         | 1-2 years                | 3-5 years                | 6-10 years               | 11+ years                |
| Did you read the Youth Engagement Toolkit materials before this meeting?              | No                       | A little bit of it       | About half               | Most of it               | Yes, all of it           |
|   | Not at all               | A little bit             | Somewhat                 | Mostly                   | Completely               |
| How clear was the meeting purpose?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How well did the evaluation tool allow you to assess your youth engagement practice?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How useful were the toolkit instructions in guiding this process?                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Before you used the toolkit, how well did you understand youth engagement?            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Now that you have used the toolkit, how well do you understand youth engagement?      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In your opinion, is the evaluation tool (i.e. The part you completed today)...        |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| ... Easy to understand?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ... Easy to use?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ... Visually appealing?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ... Youth-friendly?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ... An appropriate length?  | Too short                | A bit too short          | Just right               | A bit too long           | Too long                 |
| Did you feel you had sufficient time at this meeting to complete the evaluation tool? | Not enough               | Not quite enough         | Just right               | A bit too much           | Too much                 |
| Do you think the meeting was youth friendly?<br>Why or why not?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did you enjoy this meeting?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|   | Very poor                | Poor                     | Moderate                 | Good                     | Very good                |
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>adults</b> in this process? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>youth</b> in this process?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What was the most meaningful part of this meeting?

What was the biggest challenge in this meeting?

How could the evaluation tool be improved?

## PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE:

### MEETING 3 –YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Your feedback is important.** By completing this form you will help us refine the Youth Engagement Toolkit. Please check the box  that best represents your opinion on each item below.

| I am a ...  | Youth                    | Adult                    |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| How long have you been involved with the organization/team?   | Less than 1 year         | 1-2 years                | 3-5 years                | 6-10 years               | 11 + years               |
| Did you feel you had sufficient time at this meeting to develop a plan?   | Not enough               | Not quite enough         | Just right               | A bit too much           | Too much                 |
|   | Not at all               | A little bit             | Somewhat                 | Mostly                   | Completely               |
| How likely are you to complete the goals you set today?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How much do you think your youth engagement development plan (YEDP) will improve youth engagement practice?                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How relevant is your plan to the work of the organization?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How useful were the toolkit instructions in guiding this process?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How useful was the YEDP template?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you think the meeting was youth friendly?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did you enjoy this meeting?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Overall, how satisfied are you with the youth engagement toolkit process?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Overall, how satisfied are you with your team's youth engagement development plan (YEDP)?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How well did the previous meeting prepare you for this one?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Before beginning the youth engagement process, how well did you understand youth engagement?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Currently, how well do you understand youth engagement?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Think back to the first meeting, how helpful was that meeting in preparing you to create a Youth Engagement Development Plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|   | Very poor                | Poor                     | Moderate                 | Good                     | Very good                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>adults</b> in this process? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How would you rate the engagement of <b>youth</b> in this process?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What was the most meaningful part of this meeting?

What was the biggest challenge in this meeting?

How could the planning template and meeting be improved?

The  
**YOUTH ENGAGEMENT  
TOOLKIT**

*is brought to you by*



Ministry of  
Children and Family  
Development

*in partnership with*



**University  
of Victoria**

*School of Child and Youth Care*