

BUILD WITH US



Youth Engagement Toolkit



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Land Acknowledgement

Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) recognizes that its work and the work of its partners and members takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across the province. We acknowledge that 46 treaties and other agreements cover the territory now called Ontario.

We are thankful to be able to work and live in these territories. We are thankful to the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who have cared for these territories since time immemorial and who continue to contribute to the strength of Ontario and to all communities across the province.

A Personal Reflection

I live on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg peoples, which includes the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. As a student at the University of Toronto, I also recognize that this institution is situated on the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. These lands where I live, learn, and work continue to be spaces where First Nations and Métis individuals live and contribute to our communities.

I also identify as a settler, as my family immigrated from Nigeria to Jamaica before coming to Canada. While my family and I may not have had a direct role in the injustices and suffering faced by Indigenous peoples, living on their traditional lands means we are part of a system that continues to benefit from and perpetuate these inequalities. Recognizing this, I feel a deep responsibility to act in ways that challenge this legacy.

As someone passionate about environmental stewardship, I deeply value the Indigenous outlook that sees the land as a living relative deserving of care and respect. The sense of duty is something I strive to emulate in how I engage with my environment and community. I am also profoundly grateful for the opportunities I have been afforded on this land and, while true reconciliation may still be far from reach, I commit to continuously learning, reflecting, and taking action, using every opportunity I have to help move us closer to meaningful reconciliation and justice.

By Boluwatife Ogunniyi (she/her), Youth Action Committee Member

About The New Mentality

The New Mentality (TNM) operates as a program of **Children’s Mental Health Ontario (CMHO)**. TNM is a network of youth advocates and adult allies working together to “disable the label” of mental health and mental illness. We strive to amplify youth voices to create change within the mental health system and beyond. We believe that youth with mental illness must contribute to building and improving the mental health system for it to work effectively. Our network comprises youth advocates aged 13 to 25 and adult allies from children and youth mental health agencies across Ontario. Together, we are a community of mental health advocates across the province.

The Youth Action Committee (YAC) is a joint initiative of TNM and CMHO. As an entirely youth-led group, the committee recruits youth aged 12 to 25 annually to develop a policy over a three-year cycle. Previous topics have included racial equity in mental health (“Adjusting the Spotlight”), long wait times to receive care (“Waiting for Change”), and the need for school mental health support (“Speak Up, Speak Out”). Through this collaboration, the YAC continues to bridge the gap between youth lived experience and policy action, ensuring that young people are not only heard but are active partners in shaping a more equitable and responsive mental health system across Ontario.

Acknowledgements

This toolkit was shaped and written by dedicated members of the 2025 YAC, a team of passionate youth advocates working in partnership with TNM and CMHO to strengthen youth engagement within Ontario’s child and youth mental health system.

A special thank you to the adult allies and staff at TNM and CMHO, including Samara Brown, Ananya Gupta, Caralyn Quan and our Aboriginal Navigator Gerard Sagassige, for their invaluable support throughout this project. Their mentorship, guidance, and dedication to amplifying youth voices were instrumental in bringing this toolkit to life.

Finally, heartfelt appreciation goes to the 2024 YAC members and youth and adult participants who contributed their time, stories, and experiences through surveys, focus groups, and consultations. Their perspectives continue to inform and inspire the movement toward equitable and authentic youth engagement in mental health.

Deepest gratitude is extended to the 2025 YAC members for their insight, leadership, and commitment to advancing meaningful youth participation across Ontario.

Arwen Cooke, Co-Chair
Tayyba Khattak, Co-Chair
Madeleine Kubi, Member
Arpit Sharma, Member
Boluwatife Ogunniyi, Member
Ravneet Kaur, Member
Ray (Rayla) Prus, Member
Dhara Chauhan, Member
Saiorse Hargadon, Member

This toolkit is a guide created by youth, for youth.

It is designed to help youth navigate roles in youth engagement spaces with confidence and clarity. Whether you're joining your first youth council, volunteering with a community organization, or sharing lived experience, this resource is here to support you.

Youth engagement can be exciting, empowering, and deeply meaningful. However, it can also be confusing, emotional, and even overwhelming at times. This toolkit aims to make that journey a little easier by breaking down a few key parts of getting involved. It will discuss setting expectations, communicating your needs, navigating conflict, understanding compensation, and turning your experiences into skills you can proudly translate to a resume.

The toolkit will also introduce examples, scripts, and real-life scenarios to help you learn how to speak up, set healthy boundaries, and advocate for yourself and others. True youth engagement isn't just about showing up and doing the work—it's about being valued, supported, and heard.

WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

Any young person who wants to get involved within their community and contribute to enhancing the child and youth mental health sector.



Adult allies, mentors, and organizations who want to build braver, more inclusive, and equitable spaces for youth to thrive.



Our goal is simple: to equip youth with the tools, language, and confidence to take up space, and to remind every youth in this sector that their voice matters and their time deserves value in order to create change.

Setting Expectations

The best way to start your journey into the youth engagement sector is to set your expectations, understand the rules, and identify boundaries you would like to put in place for yourself and/or others as you enter the space.

This section aims to explore everything from understanding the Terms of Reference, a formal document outlining roles and guidelines, to the less formal yet equally important concept of braver spaces.



TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

One way a youth volunteer group can effectively set clear expectations for both the youth and the adults supporting them is to provide a Terms of Reference document. According to the Oxford Languages dictionary, terms of reference are “the scope and limitations of an activity or area” (Oxford Languages).

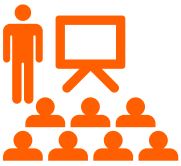


Here are some examples for us to break down together. Terms of Reference can clearly define the following:



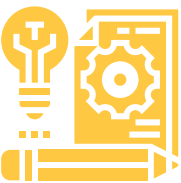
What is the goal of your committee or group?

- Have a group of youth come together and socialize once a week?
- Make projects and events designed for youth by youth?
- Have youth give input on services offered by an organization?



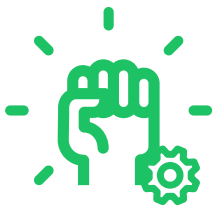
When and how often will you be meeting?

- Some groups meet weekly, while others meet biweekly or even less frequently.
- How long are the meetings?



What is your role and the commitments that come with it?

- What is the weekly time commitment in and outside of meetings?
- What will the assigned tasks look like?
- What are the positions—co-chairs, secretary, social media, etc.?



What are the expectations for meetings/representing the group?

- Should we be professional or casual?
- Are casual/personal conversations appropriate in meetings?
- Can meeting discussions be shared outside the group?

For a Terms of Reference to be truly effective, it needs to be developed in collaboration with the youth and the agency or organization. It can't be just one or the other, as both parties need to be aware of the document and consent to its contents. This promotes an overall positive youth partnership. Some agencies may have existing Terms of Reference. In that case, it is important for youth to be presented with it, to discuss it and ask questions, and to consent to it. Having a copy available for reference makes it easy to understand the expectations, responsibilities, and the youth's rights.

In the scenarios below, you'll see how having Terms of Reference can really make a difference for a youth group.



Hey, did you do the meeting minutes for the last meeting?

Uh, no. I had no clue about that. Why are you telling me this now?



Oh, sorry, I assumed you read it in our **Terms of Reference** about your role. How about I walk you through what needs to be done? You can take a look at the terms once we're all done today.



Thank you, I'll work on it, and if I have any questions, I'll ask you at the beginning of the next meeting.



Great! Thank you.

Hey, is it okay if I ask you a question about your personal life?



I'll be honest with you, I would prefer not to share those details because it's not appropriate for me to be talking about that with you.



Why not? It's just a question.



Since I'm an adult in charge of supervising you, I can't answer questions like that. I recommend that you talk to some of your peers or a trusted adult if you are curious.



Oh, well, I'm sorry for making you feel uncomfortable for asking that. This should really be written down somewhere as a boundary to avoid this in the future.



That's a great idea. I agree!



Of course, very similar things can happen if you do not have this agreed-upon set of commitments and goals. This is why Terms of Reference agreed upon and created in partnership with youth and adults foster a healthy working relationship that enables both parties to work successfully in the same environment.

Here is an example of how to bring up the topic of Terms of Reference in conversation:

The other day, someone brought up a document called **Terms of Reference**. I haven't heard of this before. Could you explain what that document is?

Is this document applicable to our youth group? If so, could you share an example of what the document looks like and discuss it with the group?

If we do not have one, do you think it would be good for us to create one?



If they are unsure what the document should look like or how to begin, you can offer a brief explanation or direct them to Health Quality Ontario's How-To Guide.



How-To Guide

BRAVER SPACES

Braver Spaces is a tool that helps us recognize when we're in the right mindset to learn, grow, and collaborate. It can also help communicate to others how we might show up or respond when we're feeling unsafe.

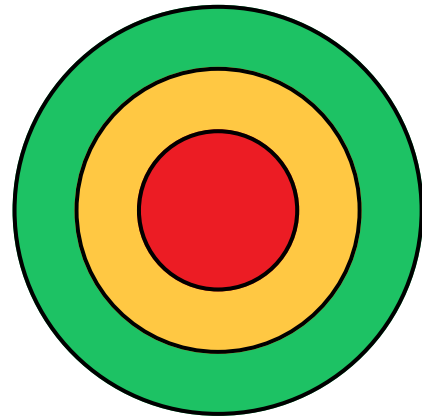
The concept includes three zones: the **comfort zone**, the **learning edge**, and the **unsafe zone**. These zones show how you might feel in different situations. Understanding how you personally experience each of these zones and recognizing how others may move through them can strengthen trust, communication, and overall group cohesion.

This activity works in committees, youth groups, teams, or any situation where you want to create a braver space. The New Mentality Network uses the Braver Spaces activity at our annual conference, [Disable the Label](#), to check in with ourselves before we start learning, sharing, or working together. It helps us figure out where we're at and how we can support each other to feel safe and ready to grow. You can learn more about braver spaces in [The New Mentality's Youth Resource Package](#).

What you'll need: paper or a whiteboard, sticky notes, and markers or pens.

STEP 1: SET UP YOUR ZONES

-  Comfort Zone
-  Learning Edge
-  Unsafe Zone



STEP 2: UNDERSTAND THE ZONES



The **Comfort Zone** is safe, familiar, and (as the name suggests) comfortable. While the comfort zone may be a nice place to be, you may not be doing much learning in it. The comfort zone is where we'd like to go if we're returning from the unsafe zone or just hanging out with friends.

You may feel:

- Comfortable
- Warm and fuzzy
- Relaxed
- In control



The **Learning Edge** can feel scarier, but it should not feel unsafe. You may feel some of the feelings of the unsafe zone, but it is manageable and isn't stopping you from learning. Think of how you might feel on a rollercoaster or doing something thrilling—your heart is beating fast, but you're not scared. It may be uncomfortable, but we're expanding your comfort zone, learning new perspectives and ideas, and being open to others. **It's important to balance the negative feelings in this zone with the positive;** if you're starting to feel more negative than positive, you may be approaching the unsafe zone and need to take a step back.

You may feel:

- Nervous, but like it's in your control
- Excited
- Curious
- Confused
- Defensive
- A sense of challenge



In the **Unsafe Zone**, it's not possible to learn or grow. We may be completely unable to think when overwhelmed by negative emotions. If you find yourself feeling any of these things in a space, it's important to take a step back into your comfort zone and/or find someone you trust to talk about why you're feeling distressed.

You may feel:

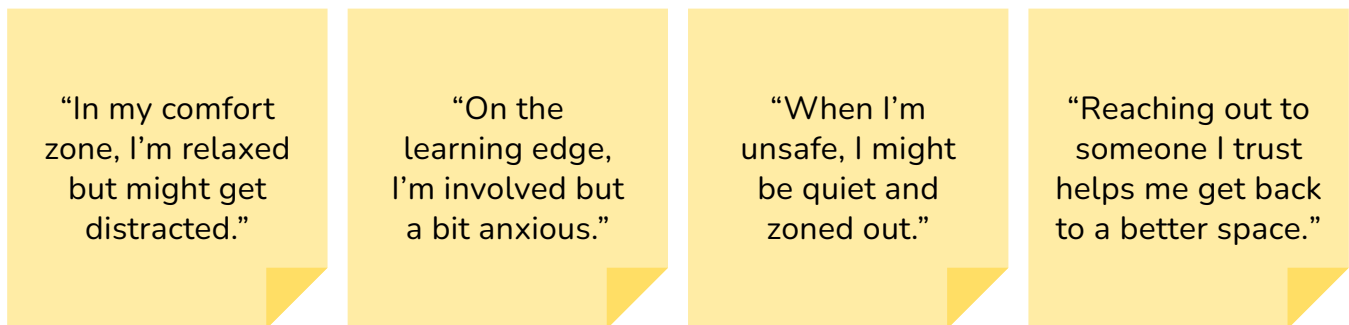
- Dissociated
- Anxious
- Overloaded
- Heart racing
- Stuck in place
- Tense

STEP 3: WRITE YOUR STICKY NOTES

On separate sticky notes:

1. Write how you might feel, look, or act in the **comfort zone**.
2. Write how you might feel, look, or act in the **learning edge**.
3. Write how you might feel, look, or act in the **unsafe zone**.
4. Write ideas for **how to return to your comfort zone** if you feel unsafe.

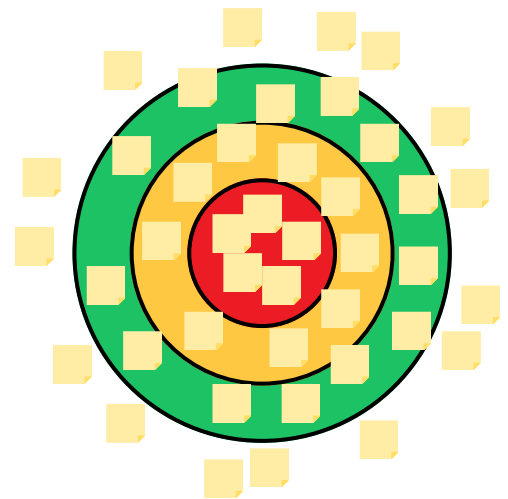
Note: You can use multiple sticky notes if needed.



STEP 4: ADD YOUR STICKY NOTES TO THE ZONES

Place your sticky notes in each of the sections of the circle.

1. In the **green area**, place your **comfort zone** sticky notes.
2. In the **yellow area**, place your **learning edge** sticky notes.
3. In the **red area**, place your **unsafe zone** sticky notes
4. On the **outer edge** of the circle, place your **return to comfort** sticky notes.



STEP 5: REFLECT AS A GROUP



1. Look at what others wrote on their sticky notes.
2. Notice patterns and differences.
3. Think about ways you can support each other in each zone.

Communicating Your Needs

There is no youth engagement without youth! Your voice is a key component in bringing change to the mental health system, including addressing issues in youth engagement as you face them.

In the midst of the change and effort you put forth, your needs are just as important. You're more than just the ideas and lived experience you bring to the table—you also bring YOU, and you're worthy of care in this space. This section of the toolkit is designed to help you navigate how to communicate your needs during the youth engagement process.

NAVIGATING CONFLICT

It is normal to experience conflict in different areas of youth engagement, and youth groups, whether social groups or committees, can have moments of conflict that may arise from misunderstandings. It's important to voice concerns when things aren't going well, when there is confusion, or when something was said or an action may not have landed well. Below are a few examples to consider when navigating conflict.

SPEAKING UP

Your voice matters—even when not-so-positive things need to be addressed. An important aspect of successful youth engagement is promoting youth safety, encouraging bravery, and allowing free expression of concerns.

Ultimately, this helps to nurture youth-adult partnerships in youth engagement spaces. Speaking up holds everyone accountable for their actions and for the standards set to maintain healthy, fun, and safe youth engagement!



It's okay to speak up
if you have a concern.
Your voice matters!

WHEN TO CONSIDER SPEAKING UP

There are many situations where you may consider bringing an issue to light. Some of these include, but aren't limited to, the following examples:

- You were disrespected, harassed, or discriminated against.
- Your boundaries were dismissed.
- You experienced signs of tokenism.
- You did not receive compensation as communicated.
- Your identity (ethnicity, gender, disability, etc.) was not respected.
- You were placed in a triggering/unsafe situation without support.

Each organization has its own process for addressing issues, and sometimes it can be hard to know how to address a concern in a manner that is both concise and encourages dialogue. **To help, here is an email template that can help you open up a conversation to an adult ally you feel comfortable speaking to:**

Dear / Good morning / Hi **[insert name here]**,

I wanted to let you know about an issue I encountered during our meeting/event/call on **[insert date]**. During this event/interaction, I felt **[insert describing word for how you felt; e.g., misheard, tokenized, etc.]** when **[insert person name]** did/said **[insert brief explanation of event]**. I would like to discuss this further so I can feel safe and comfortable continuing this engagement.

Please let me know when you will be available for a conversation at your earliest convenience.

Thank you, and I hope to hear back from you soon.

[Insert your name]

Send



CONFLICT RESOLUTION LINGO

Addressing and resolving conflict can be tough. Here is a table of words and phrases that can help you convey feelings and thoughts about the conflict that may be hard to express. Included are examples of responses you could use to remain receptive and understanding during the conversation, so a resolution can be reached.

Common Conflict Resolution Phrases and Their Meanings	
“Help me understand where you’re coming from.”	If you are having a hard time understanding the other person’s perspective, you can ask them to repeat themselves or to re-explain in a way you can appreciate.
“Thank you for being honest with me.”	Even if you don’t agree with the other person, it’s important to hear them out genuinely and respect that they were vulnerable enough to express how they truly felt.
“When you said/did _____, I felt _____.”	This phrase gives you the chance to openly express how you felt about the situation or interaction while still distinguishing those feelings from what the person intended by their actions. This way we don’t place blame if their intention was not malicious.

WHEN TO WALK AWAY

Healthy conflict resolution is a sign of healthy youth engagement. Creating environments built on transparency helps promote safer spaces for members to listen to one another and discuss concerns.

Learning when to walk away impacts personal growth not only as individuals but also as a team! However, if you still feel the conditions aren’t suitable, you may consider walking away from the engagement opportunity and exploring other options that better align with your goals.

If you're navigating a conflict within a group and any of the following situations occur, you may consider whether that group is the right fit for you.

- The other party is not interested in having a conversation.
- A satisfactory resolution is not met.
- You still feel you cannot safely engage after expressing.
- You have been retaliated against for speaking up.
- No change in behaviour has occurred

Don't let a negative experience dampen your desire to see and create change!

COMMON QUESTIONS

As someone who hates confrontation, how can I do this?

Conflict resolution isn't everyone's strong suit. For a lot of people, it can actually be a point of anxiety or stress to confront another person about an offence. However, your needs don't stop mattering when an issue arises. You can communicate your support needs to feel more comfortable and prioritize your well-being. If a one-on-one conversation is necessary, bring a fellow youth for support. If you need to send an email, craft it with a trusted adult ally and CC them when you send it!

Conflict feels uncomfortable. Is it bad?

No! Conflicts and misunderstandings are inevitable parts of working with others and are not inherently bad. As we work through issues, we grow stronger as a community, better supporting one another and working together for the betterment of our mental health system and other youth as well! If conflict arises, don't be scared! Instead, see it as an opportunity to learn and become better, together.

Could things just get better if I wait?

Your voice has power! You can spark change, create movements, and improve the system for so many other youth like yourself. The same goes for speaking up about concerns or mistreatment. Despite the temptation to say nothing and even remove yourself from the engagement, it's important to know that things don't get better in silence. It takes the bravery and courage you already have to speak up! Advocacy isn't just for concerns about our mental health system—it's also about how we advocate for ourselves.

COMPENSATION

Compensation is an important topic in the realm of youth volunteering, and rightfully so. Youth deserve some form of compensation for their time and investment, much like someone would if they were working a job. Compensation can come in many shapes and forms.

1 HONOURARIA

Starting with the most talked about and common form of compensation in youth engagement work, an honorarium is an in-kind gift for your time volunteered. Some volunteer groups, such as committees or advocacy groups, pay by the hour, while others may provide a one-time set rate based on the level of contribution for a specific project/event.

It is important to note that an honorarium is not a wage and should not be relied upon as such. An honorarium is simply a gift from an organization/company to thank you for your time. Youth who may not have a bank account to receive an honorarium can also request gift cards as an alternative.

Here are some examples of gift cards youth might like:

- Cineplex
- Visa
- Subway
- Xbox

Honoraria are among the more difficult forms of compensation for an agency to provide if funds are not set aside, as honoraria for larger groups can be expensive.

2 EXPERIENCE

Sometimes, as an alternative to an honorarium, groups will offer other forms of compensation that are not monetary. Often, these alternatives contribute to your professional or personal development. Below are a few different experiential forms of compensation:



Training & Mentorship

Training and mentorship opportunities are great alternatives to monetary compensation. They are a great way to learn something new, add to your resume, enhance your skills, and open doors to other opportunities. Here are some examples of training opportunities:

- Suicide prevention training
- Peer support training
- First aid training
- Facilitation training
- Safe food handling training
- Mental health first-aid
- Job shadowing

Fun Events & Hangouts

Monthly hangouts or team-building activities are valuable experiences that help groups develop positive, healthy working relationships. Here are some examples of fun events and get-togethers:

- Trip to the ice-cream parlour
- Board game night
- Murder mystery
- Pumpkin carving
- Craft night
- Swimming
- Pizza party

3

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Obtaining volunteer hours can be important for many reasons, such as completing high school graduation requirements, pursuing post-secondary education, or showing experience on a resume for future employment opportunities. Volunteer experience also introduces you to networking, which can help you gain reliable references that you can use later in your professional journey.

Although obtaining volunteer hours is a form of non-monetary compensation, it is important to note that [youth from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face greater barriers](#) to balancing building experience due to the lack of monetary compensation.

Learning how to feel comfortable bringing up the discussion of compensation can assist you as you make decisions on your journey.



HOW TO BRING UP THE TOPIC OF COMPENSATION

Discussions about monetary compensation can be uncomfortable. But it's important to talk with those you're volunteering for if it's something you feel you might need for your time. It's helpful to have this discussion when you first begin to know what to expect, but it is also a conversation worth having during your involvement, especially if your role has changed or if it becomes an issue.

First, lay out an action plan for your proposed conversation. This can be a full script or some bullet points of what you'd like to say. It's important to keep an open mind to some of the proposed alternative forms of compensation mentioned above.

Please keep in mind that an agency can say no to doing any of the above; they are not required to provide you with compensation. It's at that point that you decide whether you feel you can commit to volunteering. You can volunteer for something close to your heart without compensation, but if compensation is something you desire and/or require, then you should seek opportunities that are more in alignment with your needs.

Here is a sample script to get you started:

"I want to take a moment to discuss compensation options for my time. Is there any possibility of receiving an honorarium for my volunteer time?"

If this is not possible, could I receive compensation in a different form, such as professional development opportunities, or accumulate volunteer hours?"

VOLUNTEERING VS. SOCIAL GROUPS

When bringing up compensation with your agency, it's important to consider whether you are a volunteer group or a social group. Often, youth groups are labelled rather ambiguously, and it can be unclear. Consider the types of things your group focuses on;



Participating in a committee, council, or advocacy group with opportunities to advise for an agency or provide a youth perspective, help with planning events, or lead other youth at an event.



Hanging out, doing fun activities, and building social relationships

If your activities are more aligned with a social group, it's likely you don't need to be compensated. If you find your activities are more aligned with a volunteer group, you're likely in an advocacy group or a committee that contributes to enhancing the agency's goals in some capacity.

While committees can sometimes balance work with the community aspect of a social group, volunteer work is underlined by working towards a goal, such as an event planned or a service advised by youth. Committee and advocacy groups can require you to put in more time or effort, which might feel like a serious responsibility with a significant time commitment. Because of this, it is more than reasonable to ask about and discuss compensation for your work.

Turning Your Experience Into a Resume

TRANSLATING EXPERIENCE

When you've spent time in youth mental health spaces, whether through volunteering, joining a youth council, helping with events, or just showing up and sharing your story, you've already built real skills that employers and schools value. The tricky part? Translating those experiences into "resume language."

Resumes aren't just lists of jobs. They're a way to show skills, responsibilities, and impact. Even if you weren't paid, your time in youth engagement still counts as work. Employers don't care if you were a "Youth Council Member" or "Peer Facilitator"—they care far more about what you did and what you learned than what your title was. You have flexibility in how you present these experiences. They can fit under volunteer experience, extracurriculars, leadership, community involvement, or even a general experience section.

1

IDENTIFY YOUR ROLE



Youth Advisor

Gave feedback on programs and services.



Event Planner

Organized youth-led events.



Facilitator

Helped run workshops or discussions.



Peer Supporter

Supported other youth in difficult times.

Think about what you did in that role. Instead of saying “I was on a youth council,” you could say: “Collaborated with 12 peers and 3 adult allies to design and launch a mental health awareness campaign, reaching over 500 students.”

2

HIGHLIGHT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Transferable skills are skills you have learned from activities and life experiences that you can use in any job or career. Here are some examples:

- **Communication:** Public speaking, sharing personal stories, writing.
- **Leadership:** Chairing meetings, leading projects, mentoring.
- **Collaboration:** Working with peers and adult allies, resolving conflict.
- **Advocacy:** Using your voice to influence decisions, presenting to boards.
- **Organization:** Planning events, scheduling, documenting.
- **Wellness & Self-Care:** Knowing how to set boundaries and support others.

3

USE ACTION WORDS

Employers love verbs. Stat each bullet point in your resume with one, such as:

- Facilitated
- Coordinated
- Advocated
- Supported
- Led
- Organized
- Designed
- Presented

Example:

Facilitated monthly youth engagement meetings to gather feedback on mental health programming.

4

SHOW IMPACT (BIG OR SMALL)

Ask yourself: What changed because I was there?

Did you help plan an event? How many people came?

Did you join a committee? Did they adopt your recommendation?

Did you support another youth? Did it improve trust or safety?

5

PUT IT ALL ON ONE PAGE

Here's how one experience could look on a resume:

Youth Engagement Committee Member
Children's Mental Health Ontario, 2023–Present

- Collaborated with peers and professionals to improve accessibility of youth mental health services by 15% in my region.
- Facilitated small group discussions, ensuring inclusive and braver spaces, resulting in positive feedback from peer members.
- Presented recommendations to organizational leadership, resulting in updated youth programming.

TIPS



1. **Don't downplay it.** Just because it was volunteer work doesn't mean it's less valuable.
2. **Tailor it.** If you're applying for a customer service job, highlight communication skills. If you're applying for a research role, highlight analysis and writing.
3. **Keep track.** Save certificates, agendas, or event posters. These can remind you of your impact.

THE STAR METHOD

The STAR method can also help you turn vague experiences into clear, impactful resume bullet points (Indeed Editorial Team, 2025).

S **Situation**
What was happening?

T **Task**
What was your role or responsibility?

A **Action**
What steps did you take?

R **Results**
What was the outcome/impact?

Here is an example:

- **Situation:** A local high school needed more mental health awareness.
- **Task:** As a youth volunteer, I helped plan an event.
- **Action:** I coordinated guest speakers and promoted the event on social media.
- **Result:** Over 200 students attended, and the school adopted a yearly wellness week.

On your resume, this would become one bullet point:

- Coordinated speakers and outreach for a youth-led mental health event attended by 200+ students, leading to the adoption of an annual wellness week.

Youth engagement is not just a checklist.

As you close out this toolkit, carry the thought that youth engagement is not just a checklist. It is a commitment to being better and creating a space where young people can show up as themselves and thrive.

Whether you are a young person using this to understand the power of your voice or a direct service provider working to strengthen how you make yourself available to youth, let this toolkit be the launchpad. Adapt it, challenge it, and more importantly, build on it. It can be intimidating to step into a space where there aren't many others in your age range, but it can be an opportunity to create impactful change.

It can also be an opportunity to work with adults and people outside your same-aged peers. Mental health impacts everyone, and there are adults who want to support you in your work. When youth and those who support them work with intention, transparency, and respect, engagement stops being a formality; it becomes a force for real change.

REFERENCES

Indeed Editorial Team. (2025, March 3). How to use the STAR interview method response technique. Indeed Career Guide. <https://ca.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/star-interview-method>.