Military Youth Staff Training Program

Module 8: Personal, Character & Leadership Development
Module 8: Personal, Character and Leadership Development

Content Guide

NAVY CYP

Child and Youth Programs

Youth Staff Training Program
Acknowledgments

The Youth Staff Training Program is a series of self-study training modules that form the core of the Navy Foundation Training Program for Program Assistants working with youth in sixth – twelfth grades. The competency-based training modules equip Program Assistants with the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful working with youth and include real-life situations faced by middle school and teen youth every day.

To promote training consistency across Child and Youth Programs (CYP), the module format and selected activities and content are patterned after similar series of training modules developed by Teaching Strategies Inc. used by military School-Age Care (SAC), Child Development Center (CDC), and Child Development Homes (CDH) Programs. We thank Teaching Strategies, Inc. for laying the groundwork and developing a self-study training format that supports Navy staff working across child and youth program areas. We also thank the Council for Professional Recognition whose “Functional Areas” form the basis of the “core competencies” for youth staff.

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This training program will allow staff to expand their knowledge about middle school and teen youth and their interests, challenges and overall development. Through the completion of the modules, staff will also have the opportunity to build skills in programming, communicating with youth and helping youth to grow and develop into productive citizens and leaders in their communities.

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1 CHARACTER COUNTS! and the Six Pillars of CharacterSM are service marks of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics, www.charactercounts.org.
Welcome to **Module 8: Personal, Character and Leadership Development**. Every single day, in every encounter within the Youth Center, you have the opportunity to help promote personal, character and leadership development in youth. This guide will show you the importance of infusing character and leadership opportunities into conversation and program activities. The Table of Contents below will give you an overview of what you’ll be covering.

Throughout this Content Guide, you’ll be directed to the companion Skill Building Journal. This journal contains a module checklist for you to use to chart your progress, pre-training assessment as well as worksheets for each of the activities in this guide. Together, the Content Guide and Skill Building Journal will help you identify opportunities for growth and put your new ideas into practice.

After you move through this Content Guide and Skill Building Journal, your final step will be to complete this module’s knowledge and competency assessments. When you have finished this module, let your trainer know you are ready to schedule them. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to begin a new module.

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8. Personal, Character and Leadership Development

8.1 Introduction

Program Assistants promote personal, character and leadership development by:

- creating an environment that helps youth to accept and appreciate themselves and others;
- providing youth with opportunities to feel successful and competent;
- providing youth with experiences in the areas of character building that enhance personal development; and
- providing youth with experiences in building leadership skills that enhance personal development.

Overview

As a Program Assistant, you already know that adolescents are in a critical, highly turbulent developmental stage of life. They struggle with many issues as they transition from childhood to adulthood. Life skills such as decision making and goal setting are being developed. As you help youth transition into adulthood, close attention must also be paid to their moral development. In Youth Centers, staff do this by assisting youth in the development of good character.

You can see that today’s youth are dealing with many internal and external issues. Youth, especially teens, want to play an active role in addressing their own problems and must be given the opportunity to meet numerous developmental challenges. The power of an effective Youth Center is that it helps youth to build good character and positive leadership skills, providing them with the tools needed to navigate through adolescence.

Helping youth to accept and appreciate themselves

When an individual has a foundation of good character other skill development and critical thinking will reflect their character. Your job is to model good character and create an environment that supports and celebrates individual behavior. Here’s how you can create an environment that helps youth to accept and appreciate themselves and others:

- Remind individuals through words and actions that the Youth Center is a place of character.
  Example: “I’m proud of how you all shook hands with the other teams after you lost the game. It shows you respect how everyone played. You showed great sportsmanship and respect.”

- Act as a role model for youth by demonstrating principles of character.
  Example: “I might not agree with your opinions of that movie, but I respect your ideas.”
Offer a wide variety of activities that do not limit youth’s options because of individual differences.
Example: “Hey Tina! (15) Did you hear? The Youth Council’s planning a special outing to the mountains for a 5 mile hike. They’re also planning to have a ‘base camp’ with activities like outdoor cooking, music and a nature talk,” says Sue (15). “We can choose to either hike or stay at base camp. It’s a great idea. We can all have fun!”

Avoid biased remarks regarding gender, disabilities, culture, ethnic background or any other differences.
Example: “We’ve all got special talents,” says Mr. Allen to the group of teens. “Regardless of who we are or where we come from, we all can do something well. Keith (14), I noticed you’re great at helping younger kids with homework. They really look up to you. And Tabitha (17), you’re a super art instructor.”

Ask youth questions about themselves and their family heritage.
Example: “Carol (11), it sounds like you love and admire your grandmother a lot. What do you know about her life when she was young?”

Provide youth with opportunities to share their family traditions and heritage with others (e.g., theme dinners, parties, etc.)
Example: “I think our Rockin’ ’Round the World New Year’s Eve Party is great! Everyone gets to share favorite decorations and food from their family’s heritage. Maria (11), the piñatas are great and those tortillas are the best I’ve ever eaten. Have you tried the lasagna that Joe (15) brought? His grandparents are from Italy.”

Interact with staff, youth and parents as a person of character.
Example: “I know I promised you I’d be at the parent’s meeting next week. I’ve rearranged my schedule to be sure I can be there.”

Display posters or other information that illustrates principles of character and leadership.
Example: “Nancy (17), I think it’s a great idea to ask the youth who are planning the community beautification project to help create posters that show how leadership qualities like decision making and working well with groups helped the project be successful. We can hang them throughout the Youth Center to inspire other youth.”

Feeling successful and competent
Everyone has a need to feel they are good at something. You can probably think about a few things you are very good at and how great you feel when you can use a skill well. The same is true for the youth you work with. In all your interactions with youth, you have the opportunity to help them with their own personal growth and their ability to master skills and situations they can feel good about. In turn, this helps them feel confident and good about themselves. They have an increased sense of self worth. This is the foundation for good character and leadership development. Here are some ways a Program Assistant can provide youth with opportunities to feel successful and competent:

| Help youth to identify their unique talents. |
| Example: “Wow! Todd (15), your drawing looks exactly like Mr. Stevens! You’re a fantastic artist!” |
| Provide opportunities and encouragement for youth to practice their skills. |
| Example: “If you practice a bit more on your guitar, I bet you’ll improve those cords. I’ve got some free time right now; want me to listen to you practice?” |
Encourage youth to take risks and learn from their mistakes and try again.  
Example: “You’re right Tonia (15). Joining the debate team at school would be a lot of work but, like you said, it would be a great experience. I don’t think you need to worry about winning or losing the debates because each debate will be a little different. You’ll learn a lot about public speaking and debate techniques. Over time you’ll refine your skills. I wouldn’t be surprised if eventually you walk in here with an award or two!”

Provide a variety of materials, equipment, and activities to meet a wide range of abilities.  
Example: “Those are pictures of our High Adventure club. We do a lot of scuba diving, kayaking, rappelling and hiking. If you’re interested, we always have classes going on and club meetings. Some of the youth are beginners while others are certified as instructors.”

Provide youth with meaningful roles in the daily operation of the program.  
Example: “The Youth Council runs the snack bar everyday. They also help the staff develop our summer program.”

Provide genuine recognition to acknowledge youths’ efforts and accomplishments.  
Example: “Michael (11), you did a great job of explaining this computer program! The step-by-step approach made it easy to learn. Thanks for your help.”

Encourage youth to solve their own problems, but be available to listen and offer support and guidance when needed.  
Example: “I understand the dilemma that you’re in. You want to attend Youth Forum but you would miss a lot of work and, as a result, you may not have enough money for your car payment. Why don’t we sit down and talk about this. Maybe there are other ways you can figure out to save money!”

Encourage youth to establish and achieve personal goals.  
Example: “Marisa (15), it’s great that you’re interested in being a pediatrician. Have you done any research on medical careers? That would help you set some goals and maybe give you some ideas for volunteer opportunities in that field. I’ve got some good resources that you might want to check out.”

Character development

Character is revealed in the way a person behaves when no one is looking. Youth you work with can become people of character and help others understand about character by knowing and practicing the Six Pillars of CharacterSM and the skills and behaviors that distinguish a person of principle. See the chart included in the Resource section for a description of the Six Pillars of CharacterSM.

A person of character is a good person, someone to look up to and admire. He or she knows the difference between right and wrong and always try to do what is right. A person of character sets a good example for everyone and makes the world a better place.

As a Program Assistant, you must commit to creating an environment in the Youth Center in which character development is an on-going process. If character development is integrated into the daily aspect of the Youth Center experience, all activities, group discussions, projects and special events will provide opportunities for youth to explore, define and deepen their understanding of character and their own personal values.
Character development in daily Youth Center activities and programs

There are four things you can do on a daily basis in the Youth Center that promote character development:

**Model good character.**

One of the best ways to teach character is by example. Adolescents, like adults, learn from what they experience and observe. Life presents young people with many challenges; caring adults who listen with respect and model good character can be a great help as youth sort through their experiences and learn to make wise choices. Become aware of your actions, words and even your thoughts throughout the day, while you are at the Youth Center and at home. Consider your choices in the context of good character. Also encourage youth to identify character or character traits of a role model they appreciate. Encourage them to identify the character traits that make that role model special.

*Example:* “Hey, Tommy (14). What is it about Colin Powell that you most admire? What personal qualities does he have? How are you already like him?”

**Speak the language of character.**

The Youth Center’s character education program is based on the Six Pillars of CharacterSM of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Use the pillar language throughout the Youth Center. Youth cannot develop an understanding of positive character unless people around them are consistent about modeling in action and words, the differences between right and wrong.

*Example:* “Sophie (13), when you spoke that way to Julie (11), it was very disrespectful to her. You should apologize.”

**Make character visible.**

The Six Pillars of CharacterSM should be posted in every room of the Youth Center. Create a bulletin board that showcases the behaviors associated with good character. Give youth an opportunity to review and discuss the list of virtues or principles of a person of character.

*Example:* “Mary (17), the bulletin board you and Charley (16) worked on in the gamesroom is great. It’ll help everyone to think about their own behaviors and how they relate to good character.”

**Recognize teachable moments.**

Good character building is an on-going process that requires patience and attention. Develop an ear and eye for what youth are absorbing since so much of what they take in daily has to do with making ethical decisions (value and virtues). Books, songs, the Internet and films are continually delivering messages – moral and immoral – to youth, so it is important to allow adolescents an opportunity to process conflicting information they hear from sources outside the Youth Center. Look for instances where you may talk more with youth. Encourage them to talk about their day at school and conflicts they have with other youth, parents and teachers. Use these opportunities as teachable moments. Help young people define what is the right thing to do in situations they are facing. Discuss times when you had to make a choice between right and wrong and the consequences of your decisions.

*Example:* “Sarah (16), I know peer pressure can make it hard to say ‘no’ to trying cigarettes. I know tobacco use is not illegal, but after everything you’ve learned about cancer and smoking, maybe it’ll be...”
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Youth need to understand that leadership is more than directing a committee, planning an event or speaking to a group. Leaders are people who think for themselves, express their thoughts and feelings honestly and directly, act on their own beliefs and inspire others to do so. Not everyone wants to be a leader in terms of being in charge of a group. Having the skills to positively influence peers one-on-one is also a kind of leadership. An act of leadership could be taking charge of a situation or group, but it could also be helping someone else without being asked. Young people will benefit from a discussion about the forms leadership may take so they can begin to understand their own leadership strengths and potential.

References:

Some ways individuals can lead are by:

- speaking out on behalf of others;
- being willing to make decisions;
- being willing to solve problems;
- working to make positive change.
- taking a public stand;
- taking charge of a situation;
- taking charge of others by organizing, giving guidance or instructing; and
- being helpful, visible or involved;

**Quality of leadership**

One approach for introducing youth in the Youth Center to the importance of leadership is to discuss characteristics of an effective leader:

| reliable       | Sincere           | a thinker               |
| friendly       | Confident         | intelligent            |
| goal setter    | Interested        | a dreamer              |
| dedicated      | Compassionate     | dependable             |
| completes work | Independent       | tries new ideas        |
| helpful        | has good values   | honest                 |
| priority       | Willing           | outgoing               |
| hardworking    | Trustworthy       | enthusiastic           |
| communicates   | believes in oneself | vocal               |
| happy          | show openness     | self-motivated         |

Young people you work with will come to understand that leadership can mean leading by example, having and using the qualities of character that motivate others and inspire trust.

Personal, character and leadership development are the cornerstones of the Youth Center program, and adult guidance is the medium through which young people develop new knowledge and skills. Through strong guidance, direction and support, Youth Center staff provide opportunities for youth to learn about character and leadership. In a larger sense, the Program Assistant creates a “climate” for character and leadership development. By being a model of good character and leading with integrity, Program Assistants encourage youth to become responsible citizens and competent leaders.
Take a Closer Look

Now you have a broad overview of personal, character and leadership development. How do these concepts affect you as a Program Assistant? On the following pages, you’ll find situations you might encounter on the job. As you read the situations, think about how the Program Assistants are using and modeling good character and leadership skills as they deal with specific challenges with youth. Have you found yourself in similar situations? After you read each example, you will be directed to your Skill Building Journal to answer questions.

Example 1

Creating an environment that helps youth to accept and appreciate themselves and others.

1. Remind individuals through words and actions that the Youth Center is a place of character.
2. Act as a role model for youth by demonstrating principles of character.
3. Offer a wide variety of activities that are inclusive of the program population, while respecting individual differences.
4. Avoid biased remarks regarding gender, disabilities, culture, ethnic background, or any other differences.
5. Ask youth questions about themselves and their family heritage.
6. Provide youth with opportunities to share their family traditions and heritage with others.
7. Interact with staff, youth and parents as a person of character.
8. Display posters or other information that illustrate principles of character and leadership.

The teens are preparing for a dance at the Youth Center and want to come up with a plan that will appeal to all youth in the Center. Linda (17), begins the meeting by discussing the decorations and music. Ms. Ginger, the Program Assistant, reminds everyone that youth attending the dance will have different music interests and they need to keep this in mind when selecting the music.

“But everyone likes to dance to hip hop music Ms. Ginger,” replies Linda. “Most of the group agrees that hip hop's the most popular type of music to dance to.”

“We have youth from many different cultures on the installation,” says Ms. Ginger. “What other types of music do you think those who’ll be attending might also enjoy?”

The group discussed this for a few moments, and then Maria (16) says, “I think we should also include some salsa music. I love dancing salsa. My dad's from Puerto Rico and my mom’s Jamaican. I learned how to salsa. I also know how to reggae dance.”

“I know reggae dances too!” says Juan (18). “Let’s make sure to add some Jamaican tunes!”

Boys know how to reggae dance?” Linda says as she laughs. “Boys don’t even know how to dance that good at all, let alone knowing how to reggae dance.”
“That’s not true,” replies Ms. Ginger. “Do you think it’s okay to make generalizations about people?”

The group thought for a minute, then Juan says, “You’re right Ms. Ginger. It’s not really okay to generalize groups. Saying that ‘all boys…’ or ‘all girls…’ really isn’t right. We shouldn’t make any general comments about any group.”

“I see what you’re saying,” replies Linda. “We shouldn’t generalize about groups. I know lots of boys who are good dancers and know how to dance to different types of music.”

“We need to show that the Youth Center is a place that welcomes and accepts differences. We can do this by not generalizing and offering different types of music. That way we’re showing that our Center is a good place where everyone feels welcome,” says Ms. Ginger.

“So let’s go with the plan to add salsa and reggae,” says Linda. “This also exposes others to music and dance they might not normally listen to and find out they actually like. It’s important to learn to appreciate your differences and backgrounds. This dance could be a cool way to celebrate our differences.”
Example 2

Providing youth with opportunities to feel successful and competent.

1. Help youth to identify their unique talents.
2. Provide opportunities and encouragement for youth to practice their skills.
3. Encourage youth to take risks, learn from their mistakes and try again.
4. Provide a wide variety of materials, equipment, and activities to meet a wide-range of abilities.
5. Provide youth with meaningful roles in the daily operation of the program.
6. Provide genuine recognition to acknowledge youth’s efforts and accomplishments.
7. Encourage youth to solve their own problems, but is available to listen and offer support and guidance if needed.
8. Encourage youth to establish and achieve personal goals.

Because of an interest expressed by teens to learn how to golf, Mr. Jay, a Program Assistant, has planned a trip for the group to a golf range. For most of the teens, this is their very first experience learning how to golf. The teens were excited about the opportunity. Mr. Jay set them all up to practice hitting the ball. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves, when Mr. Jay hears a disgruntled teen complain about the activity.

“I hate this stupid game!” screams Teresa (15) as she throws her golf club down on the driving range.

“What’s going on?” asks Mr. Jay, as he walks over to Teresa.

“Its no use,” Teresa sighs, “I’m never going to hit the ball. I might as well give it up.”

“It’s your first time on a golf range, isn’t it Teresa?” asks Mr. Jay.

“Yes,” says Teresa, “but all those people on TV make it look pretty easy and everyone else here’s doing better than me.”

Mr. Jay nods and says, “You need to remember that the pros on TV have been playing the game for years. You just started today. Give yourself some time and practice. The rest of the group isn’t doing much better than you Teresa. They just might be more patient with themselves when learning something new.”

“Yeah, you’re right,” says Teresa. “It’s just so frustrating.”

“Tell you what,” Mr. Jay replies, “let me watch your swing for awhile. Maybe I can offer you some pointers.”

“Yeah, that’d be cool. Thanks!” Teresa exclaims.

After a quick coaching session, Mr. Jay observes, “I think that with a little more practice you won’t feel as frustrated. Through our MWR Partnership opportunities, the course is open to youth on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays after-school. Why don’t you sign up at least once a week? The
Teresa and Mr. Jay worked with their new volunteer golf coach. "A volunteer golf coach would be much more knowledgeable than me and would give you the opportunity to practice your skills to improve if you really like playing this game."

"That'd be a big help!" Teresa replies.

"Why don't you head over to the club house before the group is ready to leave; you can talk to them about becoming apart of the youth golf program." Mr. Jay suggests to Teresa as he picks up a few stray balls.

While Mr. Jay was getting the group back together to return to the Youth Center, Teresa comes out of the office at the club house with a smile on her face.

"I had a great conversation with the golf coach! We talked about some reasonable short- and long-term goals for my game. A short-term goal could be working on my swing. A long-term goal could be solid putting."

"That's great Teresa! You caught on really fast after you changed your swing. I'll bet you'll be really good if you keep working at it," says Mr. Jay. "Golf's an easy game to learn but takes a lot of hard work and practice to get really good. In a month, I'll bet you'll probably shoot a birdie more than a few times!" says Mr. Jay.

"I'm going to talk to my parents to get permission to register for the youth golf program at least once a week," says Teresa.

"Great, I'm glad this was a good experience for you and that you're excited about learning a new sport!" replies Mr. Jay.

What's next?

Go to the Skill Building Journal and answer the questions for Example 2 in Section 8.1, Take a Closer Look. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Example 3.
**Example 3**

*Providing youth with experiences in the area of character building that enhance personal development.*

9. Provide opportunities for youth to discuss what character is and how it affects their lives.
10. Encourage youth to identify characteristics or character traits of people they admire.
11. Help youth to understand how character supports the Navy Core Values.
12. Provide character-related discussion around videos, movies or current events.
13. Role model and discuss how personal character traits influence behavior.
14. Encourage youth to think about daily decisions as they relate to character.

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**Ms. Sela notices that Bridget (14) looks upset about something while assisting in the snack bar and decides to have a conversation with her.**

“You seem a bit upset about something today,” says Ms. Sela.

“I’m upset Ms. Sela,” replies Bridget. “This is the second day in a row that Jerry (15) and Roxanne (15) said they were going to volunteer to help in the snack bar and they aren’t here again. I have to do everything myself and that’s not fair.”

“They didn’t show up yesterday at all to help you?” asks Ms. Sela.

“They finally showed up, but they were an hour late. They apologized and said they’d be here on time today and they’re late again. I don’t mind them not being here, if they would just tell me that they’re going to be late or not come at all. But not to say anything is just rude.”

“I agree,” says Ms. Sela. “I’ll help you until they get here. Then let’s sit down with them and have a conversation about keeping commitments.”

A while later Jerry and Roxanne come running in the Youth Center out of breath. They put their coats away and scramble quickly to the snack bar.

“We’re sorry we’re late again,” says Jerry. “What do you need us to do?”

“We don’t need you to do anything now!” replies Bridget angrily. “I’ve already set everything up for the day, since both of you weren’t here again.”

“But we didn’t mean to be late Bridget! It’s not like we do it on purpose!” yells Roxanne.

“Hey, let’s sit down and talk about what’s going on,” says Ms. Sela. She turns to Jerry and Roxanne and says, “Because you didn’t keep your commitment, you disappointed Bridget.”

“But we didn’t mean to be late! We had to run back to school because Jerry forgot his assignment that needs to be completed by tomorrow,” says Roxanne.
“We just totally forgot we volunteered to help in the snack bar yesterday. When we remembered, we ran over here. Everyone makes mistakes and forgets things sometimes,” replies Jerry.

“You’re right,” says Ms. Sela. “Everyone does make mistakes. Let’s look at this situation specifically. Did you make a commitment to help in the snack bar?”

“Yes,” reply Jerry and Roxanne.

“What kind of message are you sending to Bridget when you don’t show up on time, two days in a row?” asks Ms. Sela.

“I guess it seems like we don’t care or that we aren’t responsible,” says Roxanne.

“I felt like I can’t trust you to be here,” replies Bridget.

Ms. Sela looks at Roxanne and Jerry and says, “What does it tell people about your character when you make commitments and don’t keep them?”

Jerry and Roxanne put their heads down. Jerry says, “I guess it tells people that we can’t be trusted or that we’re not responsible. I’m sorry. I don’t want people not to trust me.”

“But we did have excuses,” says Roxanne.

“Yes, but you let a friend down that’s counting on you. What do you think you could’ve done differently?”

Roxanne thinks for a moment, then says, “I guess I could’ve called to let Bridget know we were going to be late. We could’ve also written down our commitment to help in our notebook so we’d remember.”

“I could’ve told Roxanne to go ahead without me while I went back to get my assignment at school. That way only one of us would’ve been late and Bridget would’ve known what’s going on,” says Jerry.

“It hurts when people don’t keep their promises. I felt like you didn’t care that I’m volunteering alone,” replies Bridget.

“I didn’t mean to make you feel that way,” says Roxanne. “I won’t let it happen again. I am responsible for my commitments.”

“Good,” says Ms. Sela. “Not keeping your commitments affects other people. I want you both to figure out a way to avoid not keeping commitments in the future.”

“Will do,” says Roxanne.

“Me too,” says Jerry.
What's next?

Go to the *Skill Building Journal* and answer the questions for Example 3 in Section 8.1, Take a Closer Look. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Example 4.
Example 4

Providing youth with experiences in building leadership skills that enhance personal development.

15. Help youth to identify needs within the community that could be addressed through community service.
16. Model leadership skills and provide youth with opportunities to take on leadership roles.
17. Provide opportunities for youth to understand the relationship between leadership and acting as a person of character.
18. Help youth learn to value the participation and contribution of others.
19. Encourage youth to consider all points of view.

Ms. Marie is meeting with a group of youth that are planning a community service project that is part of a community beautification project. At their last meeting the group narrowed down their plan based on the needs of the community. They decided to come up with a specific plan and assign leadership responsibilities at their next meeting.

“This is really needed around here. Families don’t really have time to plant new grass, flowers and clean up some of the areas around here and make them look better,” says Sue (13).

“I’m excited about the changes we can make in our community,” says John (13).

“How much time is this going to take?” asks Erin (11). “I’ve got a lot to do on the weekends. I’ve got basketball games and also have to help out with chores at home.”

“I have a lot to do at home too,” replies Betsy (12). “But that’s what doing community service means. It means that we all have to give something up, or re-arrange our schedule in order to help in our neighborhood.”

“How many weekends are we going to have to help?” asks Erin.

“When we agreed on our project last week, we all said we would contribute two Saturdays to this project. Can everyone still keep this commitment?” asks Ms. Marie.

The group nods in agreement.

“Let’s start with responsibilities,” says Sue. “We have a small budget to work from. I’ll start on the list of supplies. Ms. Marie said she’d get the supplies once we make our list. Now, who would like to take the leadership role for planting new grass, planting flowers and cleaning up areas?”

“I’ll volunteer to take the lead with laying down new grass. I’ve also gotten some more volunteers to help on Saturday,” says Betsy.

“I’ll volunteer to plant the flowers and also get a couple of my friends to help,” says Erin.

“I guess I’ll do clean up,” says John. “But who else is going to help?”
"We’ve got staff from the Youth Center that are volunteering and some of the other youth also signed up to help. We should be fine," replies Ms. Marie. "Don’t forget to come up with a plan to thank everyone who volunteered. How do you think you could thank volunteers after the project is completed?"

“What if the 4-H photography project kids take pictures and place them on the bulletin board in the Youth Center, thanking everyone for their help? People always like their pictures displayed,” suggests Erin.

“Great idea!” Ms Marie responds. “Anything else we could do?”

“What if we made thank you cards with a picture of one of the gardens we plant on the top of the card? We can ask kids in the Youth Tech Lab to help,” says Betsy.

“Another good suggestion!” says Ms. Marie. "I want you all to know what a difference your help will make in this community. Thanks so much for your help and see you Saturday morning!"

---

**What’s next?**

Go to the *Skill Building Journal* and answer the questions for Example 4 in Section 8.1, Take a Closer Look. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Self-Reflection.
Self-Reflection

Thinking about leadership?3

Leadership involves getting things done. It means helping people achieve goals. Leaders actually guide and influence other people’s actions, as individuals or in groups.

People require a variety of skills to be effective leaders. These abilities are developed and expanded throughout a lifetime and can be used in a variety of ways depending on the situation. Leadership skills are needed by everyone. People need such skills to lead themselves as well as others. You need leadership skills as much to be an effective member of a group as to direct the group’s activity. No one is a formal leader at all times!

Leadership roles in your youth

When you were an adolescent, there were opportunities you had to take on a leadership role and to be part of a group. Maybe you helped out by planning dinner and setting the table before your parents got home from work. That task helped you learn how to plan and organize. Perhaps you volunteered to serve holiday meals in a local homeless shelter. This helped teach respect for others and how to be part of a bigger group that was helping people. Or did you hold a class office or were you team captain in high school? These positions helped you learn problem solving and other leadership skills.

In your role as Program Assistant, your own leadership development plays a key role in how you encourage youth to develop leadership skills.

3 Adapted from Leadership: Skills You Never Outgrow, Leadership Project Book IV, Skills Leading Groups, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University Of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1986.

What’s next?

Go to the Skill Building Journal and answer the questions for Self-Reflection in Section 8.1. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with the Pre-Training Assessment.
Before you can move forward in any area of life, you need to know where you stand. How could you begin improving your skills without a clear sense of what you need to work on? To give you that sense of where you are now, a pre-training assessment will help you look at how you currently encourage personal, character and leadership development with youth. This assessment will measure the knowledge and skill areas that you will be studying, and it will help you pinpoint areas for improvement. Ultimately this assessment, and other checklists in the Skill Building Journal, will help you develop a plan for your own skill development.

Don’t worry – this assessment is not a test. It will not be graded or judged. Rather, it is a tool for you, an opportunity to identify knowledge and skill areas that you may want to improve. As you answer the questions, be thoughtful and honest with yourself. That’s the only way you can get a true picture of your needs and create a useful plan of action for your professional growth.

8.2 Pre-Training Assessment

Go to the Skill Building Journal and complete the Pre-Training Assessment in Section 8.2. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with the Learning Activities.
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A. Helping Youth to Accept and Appreciate Themselves and Others

In this activity, you will learn to:

- talk with youth in ways to let them know you are a caring adult;
- help youth appreciate their uniqueness; and
- help youth to identify appropriate role models.

As youth navigate the adolescent years, a powerful influence is adults: parents and teachers, band directors and coaches, clergy and youth workers. Youth need supportive relationships with adults to help guide them towards building good character and positive leadership skills. These adults offer youth a listening ear, a helping hand when needed and wise words to direct them toward the right path. Unconditional positive support is one way that adults can express their view that all youth are worthwhile, valued and have potential in life. This support creates an environment where youth can learn to accept and appreciate themselves and others.

Talking with youth

A Program Assistant is doing his/her job by talking with youth. Greeting each youth by name when they walk in the door, learning about the likes and dislikes, the ideas and concerns of each youth are important. These are the building blocks of a relationship with each youth and that is the goal of the Program Assistant’s job: know the youth and care about them.

When talking with each youth, help them appreciate themselves by strengthening their developing sense of identity:

Mary (12) mentioned to Ms. Geri that on Mardi Gras, her family always eats a “King Cake” and that this year, she got the prize. Ms. Geri said she had never heard of that before and asked Mary to tell her more about it; “never mind, it’s stupid,” Mary said, feeling self-conscious. “It’s not stupid,” replied Ms. Geri, “I think it sounds very interesting. My family didn’t have that tradition, but it sounds like it was really neat. I would love for you to tell me more about it.” Mary went on to explain the history of the King Cake and the good luck the prize in the cake brought to whoever got it. “Maybe we could have King Cake at one of our Youth Center functions,” Ms. Geri said, “I’m sure other youth and staff would be as interested as I am,” Ms. Geri added.

As you can see from the example, Mary was expressing an aspect of her identity when she spoke of her family and the King Cake tradition. Ms. Geri affirmed Mary when she encouraged Mary to talk about her family and the tradition. This is one way a Program Assistant can build a caring relationship with youth and strengthen the youth’s appreciation of themselves. Program Assistants can also express an interest in a youth’s schoolwork, extra-curricular activities, part-time jobs and family events and role models youth may have.
Helping youth identify role models

Role models are people youth look up to and admire. Role models can be famous people (athletes, historical figures, Hollywood stars) or someone much closer to the youth (a family member.) Role models help youth identify qualities in people that they value and they also help youth develop ideas about their own futures. Program Assistants can help youth identify what they value by asking questions, “What do you admire about this person? Is there anything that you don’t admire?” Or, “What characteristics or skills do they have that are important to you? Which of these do you already have?”

Program Assistants can also help youth to realize that the role models with the greatest impact are probably the people they admire in real life. For example, a youth might admire a sports figure. But what is really known about that person? Have they ever talked or spent time with that person? They play a sport well, and they’ve seen them in interviews and on talk shows. Youth perceive an image of character but really do not know what the person is like in real life.

When you talk with youth, you can help them to see that important role models are generally all around them. You can help youth to see that there is a real difference between their admiration for the abilities of a famous figure and the admiration they have for someone who is involved in their life and has made an impact on them personally. Your role is to help youth learn to identify positive role models based on real facts not just perception.

As a Program Assistant, you should develop supportive relationships with youth. Learn what each youth values and what they value in others. These “clues” will help you know how to reinforce and strengthen youth’s developing sense of self and what is important to them. Knowing what youth value helps you guide them toward understanding and learning about good character. It also helps you to guide youth toward admiring people who really demonstrate good character in every day life.

Go to the Skill Building Journal and complete the worksheets for Activity A in Section 8.3. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Activity B.
B. Developmental Stages of Youth and Implications for Character Development

In this activity, you will learn to:

- use your knowledge of the developmental stages of youth to promote character development; and
- identify character building messages staff can convey in each of your program areas.

When does character development start and how does it occur? It starts in infancy and is learned first by how one is treated and by watching what others are doing. The process grows from there and continues through life. Character development is a dynamic process where parents (and other adults who spend significant time with adolescents) interact with youth and youth interact with those same adults to shape each other’s values and priorities. As you consciously seek to develop the character of the young people in your care you are developing your own character as well.

Research in moral development indicates that are two main forces that affect character during childhood and adolescence – parents and peers. As a Program Assistant you have the opportunity to work with both groups and have significant influence on young people’s character development. There are those in character development that believe people underestimate the power of peer interactions but just think about the youth in the Youth Center program. When they play together they directly engage in issues of fairness and caring by taking turns and setting informal rules for play. Also consider the impact on youth regarding how they treat each other and what they approve of or don’t approve. The CYP program and you as a Program Assistant, along with thoughtful and concerned parents, can help young people by providing them guidance, ground rules, support and discipline which affect the way youth deal with peer problems and pressures.

The stages of character development

Much like human development, character develops through a series of predictable stages. A young person’s maturity and reasoning abilities are key factors in determining the techniques most likely to be effective. Here are some general guidelines for all ages. Keep in mind being interactive with young people is key.

- Preschoolers need clearly established and enforced basic rules of behavior. It is important to focus primarily on modeling character. Preschoolers watch closely and will ask “Why?” It is best to respond with short uncomplicated answers.

- Pre-teens are capable of concrete reasoning. They can tell the difference between intentional versus accidental harm. As Program Assistants you can apply reasons and explain why it is wrong to steal,

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Learning Activity B

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cheat or lie. Modeling good character is still critical and brief discussions for why decisions are made are appropriate.

Adolescence brings the ability to think and feel at increasingly more complex levels. The move from responding to simple rules to understanding reasons behind actions allows for growth toward their personal and civic responsibility. It is important to discuss both sides of controversial issues to help teens develop their own understanding.

The old saying that actions speak louder than words is true - in character development they shout. Yet modeling is not enough. As young people move from preschool age to adolescence their behavior is important yet they need to understand the reasons for the ethical principles even more.

Here is a general list of character implications for younger adolescents and teens:5

- **Physical**

  Physically, middle schoolers are experiencing rapid changes in their appearance. Expect girls to have growth spurts earlier than boys. They are often uncomfortable with and embarrassed by their body changes. It is important to talk about these new changes and help them understand it is normal.

  Many older teens have overcome the awkwardness of puberty yet they could still be experiencing rapid growth. It is important to avoid comments that criticize or compare stature, size or shape.

- **Social**

  Socially, younger adolescents are becoming less dependent upon their parents and are relying more on the opinions of their peers. They are showing interest in coeducational activities. With this interest comes more concern about social graces, grooming and being liked by their peers. At this age you should be concerned with learning experiences related to self-discovery, self-understanding and getting along with others as well as providing activities for boys and girls to mix and feel comfortable. You also need to help parents understand this dependency on peers is a sign of growth and maturity.

  Peer groups are also important for older adolescents but they also take on a different emphasis. Older adolescents want to belong to a peer group and look for status but also want to be recognized as a unique individual. They may also be looking for ways to take on adult leadership roles. As a program assistant you can help with all these needs by providing a climate that is conducive to peer support and allowing, as much as possible, for teens to plan their own programs. Of course, coeducational activities continue to be important. Encouraging teens to plan coeducational and group oriented project or activities can help to achieve many of their social needs.

- **Intellectual**

  Intellectually, adolescents tend to reject solutions from adults in favor of their own. Younger adolescents begin to think more abstractly and hypothetically – a skill which reaches high levels of abstract thinking and problem solving as they reach older adolescents. As they reach older adolescents they also develop community consciousness and concern for the well-being of

5 Adapted from Volunteers...The Foundation of Youth Development, Internet course, University of Missouri 4-H Youth Development Programs.
others. They also begin to develop their own personal philosophy. To encourage this growth, involve teens in setting rules, planning activities and, as they get older, put them in real life problem-solving situations. This allows them to fully explore ideas, make decisions and evaluate outcomes. Encourage projects that serve others and allow time for older teens to discover and express their own philosophies.

As a Program Assistant, it’s important to know that character development begins in infancy and is first learned by how one is treated and by watching what others are doing. The process grows from there and continues through life. By being aware of age appropriate behavior, you can be more knowledgeable about what you can do and say to impact a youth’s character development.

**Your role in character development**

Effective character development is centered on:

- instilling habits;
- inspiring moral ambitions;
- imposing positive and negative consequences;
- developing thinking and problem solving skills; and
- modeling good conduct.

When you were an adolescent there were individuals you admired and came in contact with that helped to develop your character.

When you get right down to it, the only person’s character you have control over is your own. However, the way you behave on a daily basis – through crisis but especially through your daily routine – can influence others’ behavior. The best way to shape or change behavior is for youth to have a role model. To the youth you work you serve as that role model. You set the example. Youth look up to you. Youth can be told the right thing to do but internalizing this and demonstrating good character comes about by observing your example. Youth notice your every move, what you say and the way you handle situations.

There are many character resources available to you. For more detailed information about character development ask your Director or the CHARACTER COUNTS! trainer for the resources they have available. If you have not yet participated in character training, ask when you might be able to do that.

**The relationship to your program areas**

The programming in your Youth Center presents great opportunities to help build character. It also provides a concrete way to help youth understand that every area of their life is affected by the decisions of character they make. While specific program areas are discussed in the Skill Building Journal, another way you can impact young people is to help them understand making character decisions is important in everything, not just the big decisions in life. As you review the charts in the Skill Building Journal, think of how the examples given can be used in other parts of a young person’s life. For example, cheating is mentioned in relationship to sports, fitness and health, but it is a critical issue for young people in the classroom. It’s an issue that can affect their career goals and life plans.

As a program assistant, remember that it is important for character development to be interwoven through program planning and discussed as part of after action reviews with youth.
Go to the **Skill Building Journal** and complete the worksheets for Activity B in Section 8.3. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Activity C.
C. Building Leadership Skills

In this activity, you will learn to:

- identify different leadership styles; and
- identify how to promote leadership development skills.

Developing leadership skills?6

Leadership is helping yourself or others achieve goals. Actually being able to direct your life to get the results wanted is leadership. Leaders need skills in working with people. They also need skills in examining situations so that they can decide what to do to help. And they need skills in helping people work together in groups.

Different leadership styles

There are several ways you can lead. One way is directive. This kind of leader takes charge and tells followers what to do and how to do it. This style works well in situations where the goals to be accomplished are very important and have priority over the feelings of the group. This is also considered “high task – low relationship.”

Another way to lead is laissez-fair, a French expression that means “to let be.” The laissez-fair leader may give some advice and guidance, but generally doesn’t interfere too much either with the tasks of the group or with the relationships of group members. This style of leadership works well in established situations where people get along well and do a good job of accomplishing group goals. This is considered “low task – low relationship.”

A third way to lead is with a democratic style of leadership. Democratic leaders actively encourage group members to take responsibility for achieving group goals and give attention to both completing the job and the feelings of the group members. This is considered to be “high task – high relationship.”

Another style of leadership is low task – high relationship. Leaders using this style focus more attention and priority on the needs, interests and feelings of the group members than on the tasks they are doing. This style of leadership works well in situations where it’s important for people to get along and to like and respect each other and where the goals are likely to be accomplished satisfactorily without a lot of direction from the leader.

It’s important to know that different kinds of situations and groups need different styles of leadership. Skilled leaders know how to lead all four ways and when to use each way. They also know their own strengths, weaknesses, preferences and natural tendencies and adapt their leadership accordingly.

Beliefs and leadership

Successful leaders have learned specific skills that help them to lead. By learning and practicing leadership-related skills, and applying them in situations where leadership is needed, youth have the opportunity, with your modeling and guidance, to become leaders. Here are five beliefs about leadership that will help you think about how to incorporate leadership opportunities for youth in the Youth Center:

- Leadership can be learned, just like other skills. It involves skills you use to direct your own life as well as those to lead others. It is not only abilities you have or know, but what you do with what you have that will determine success.

- Leadership is a helping process, whether it involves just one other person or a group. A leader focuses on accomplishments in helping people reach goals rather than personal recognition.

- Leadership is shared. Leadership opportunities can be divided so individuals in a group can select roles best fitting their needs and interests. No one is a formal leader at all times.

- Leadership is a relationship between people. It is the way a person interacts with others and sensitivity to what others need. The skills a leader has are only important when they are used well with people.

- Leadership is shown at the right time and place. Different people lead at different times. The interaction between the leader, the group and the goals may determine which way to lead. The group members, the situation and the skills of the leader must all work together for the best results.

Leadership life skills

Specific skills relate to being a good leader. These are abilities youth can use in many ways the rest of their lives. These are called life skills. The seven leadership life skill areas that Program Assistants can help youth develop are:

Understanding self – understanding and developing a positive attitude about who you are, what you like and don’t like and what you want to be.

Example: “Even though my friends are all chasing boys, I’m not interested in chasing boys around,” Michelle (12) says to Ms. Nina. “I’d rather spend my time doing things like jogging and basketball.”

Communicating – effective two-way sharing of information through writing, listening, speaking and body language.

Example: “Becky (13), you did a great job at the meeting yesterday discussing why Friday night’s dance had to be cancelled. You also did well listening to the group without interrupting when teens shared their concerns about rescheduling the dance.”

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7 These beliefs are adapted from Ellen Elliot, Teens Take the Lead, Northeast Teen Leadership Committee, Cooperative Extension Service of the Northeastern States, Cornell University, pg 2.

8 Adapted from Leadership: Skills You Never Outgrow, Leadership Project Book III, Skills Working Within Groups, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1986.
Getting along with others – developing an understanding of how you relate to other people (one-to-one or with a group) and how you accept and appreciate the differences between others and yourself.

*Example:* “Sam (15), I’m glad you’ve been spending a lot of time with Henry (14),” says Mr. Frank. “It seems like many of the other boys don’t include him in activities because they don’t know him. You’ve been including him and even encouraging him to try out all kinds of activities at the Center.”

Learning to learn – understanding the skills and methods that help learning take place and how you can be the positive force in your own learning opportunities.

*Example:* “Jessie, I was impressed with the way you took personal initiative to learn more about nature in the Education Center before we went on our hiking trip,” says Mr. William. “You’re a great role model for other kids in the Youth Center.”

Making decisions – learning steps and approaches to setting goals, solving problems and taking individual or group action.

*Example:* “I thought we’d never get through the low ropes course Ms. Nell!” says Brenda (17). “But as a group we figured it out, even though it took awhile.”

Managing – choosing and using things available to get the things you want (to reach the goals set.) This involves identifying resources (time, things, people or money) and using those resources effectively.

*Example:* “All of you did a great job at achieving our fundraising goal. As a result the entire group’ll be able to go on the weekend trip. All of you pitched in to make this happen and followed the group’s plan to raise money.”

Working with groups – learning how groups of people work together and how to help groups to accomplish their goals.

*Example:* “Edgar (16), you did a great job volunteering with the younger kids today,” says Ms. Chloe. “I was impressed with how you kept the group on task with the arts and crafts and assisted them in completing their projects. You’re a great leader!”

It’s important to remember that not every person wants to be a leader in the sense of taking charge and leading a group. All youth can benefit from learning leadership skills, but how the skills are applied may differ from youth to youth.

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What’s next?

Go to the *Skill Building Journal* and complete the worksheets for Activity C in Section 8.3. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Activity D.
D. The Connection Between Character and Leadership Development

In this activity, you will learn to:

- identify how leadership is linked to good character; and
- model leadership and good character for youth.

Character and leadership go hand-in-hand

The most effective way to develop skills among youth is to model strong leadership, demonstrate the abilities involved in leading and provide opportunities for adolescents to assume leadership roles whenever appropriate. Program Assistants can also model the connection between leadership and character by highlighting ways in which the responsibilities of leading call for the use of character traits. Here is a list of character traits that you can model:

- **Value the participation and contribution of others.** Treat people fairly, be open-minded, listen to others and try to understand what others are saying and feeling.

- **Consider all points of view.** Treat others with respect; be tolerant, appreciative and accept individual differences; judge all people on their merits; respect the rights of individuals and be sensitive to others’ feelings.

- **Find solutions.** This requires the use of standards and principles as guidelines. Seek help from others, be open-minded and share one’s own perceptions and feelings.

- **Build trust and support.** Listen to others, tell the truth, keep your word, honor commitments, respect others, be reliable and make ethical choices.

- **Make decisions.** This requires consideration of the consequences. Think before acting, consider the long term and identify the principles guiding the choice.

- **Take action.** Be dependable; live up to expectations; be reliable and show courage, commitment and confidence in your ability.

- **See the big picture.** This means to see group members within their own context, appreciate their cultural and individual differences and stay informed.

- **Give and receive feedback.** Be courteous and polite, be open-minded and listen to others.

- **Share leadership.** Trust others, respect the rights of individuals, share and be fair and just.

- **Take a stand.** Tell the truth, be sincere, stand up for your beliefs about right and wrong, resist social pressures and show commitment and courage.
These character traits not only help develop leadership skills in group situations, but also in being a leader in a youth’s day-to-day encounters with their peers.

As discussed throughout the modules, an important role of a Program Assistant is to provide positive adult leadership and support to adolescents. You are a facilitator of learning. Your role is to empower youth to transition into adulthood. To do this, it’s important to help adolescents learn how to take a leadership role and accomplish tasks on their own. For example, if your Keystone Club wants to have a dance, have the group plan the dance. Your role is to guide them to success in their activity. Have them map out each step. Your role isn’t to plan the event; it’s to help point out steps that might be missing in their plan. They then develop the missing steps for their plan. Ask questions to get them to examine the overlooked points (i.e., How are you going to handle security? How are you going to make sure enough people will participate? Who’s responsible for cleaning up? How will the dance be promoted?) Once the dance has occurred, have the group evaluate the activity and make recommendations for improvements. In this way, they are taking a leadership role.

By using this strategy you are not only promoting the development of leadership skills and build character. Youth are making decisions, finding solutions and respectfully working together.

4 Service Areas

An effective Youth Center program provides activities for youth in the Four Service Areas that offer opportunities to develop leadership skills. Here are some examples of activities that help youth become better communicators, get along with others, learn, make decisions, manage and work with groups.

**Service Area: Sports, Fitness and Health Options**

- plan and conduct a fitness clinic for Youth Center members;
- organize, set up and conduct health fairs;
- sponsor a bicycle safety clinic;
- arrange an overnight camping trip that includes activities like fishing, rowing or swimming;
- invite local college athletes to talk about self-discipline, perseverance and other character traits necessary for success;
- attend cooking and nutrition classes;
- conduct relay races, roller-skating, hiking trips or jump rope competitions;
- post a weekly nutritional tip on the Youth Center bulletin board;
- plan and conduct grooming classes and fashion shows;
- host sectional tournaments in basketball, volleyball, soccer or softball; and
- plan and conduct an aerobic exercise demonstration.

**Service Area: Life Skills, Citizenship and Leadership Opportunities**

- make and send birthday, get well and holiday greeting cards to residents of a senior citizen home, young people in a children’s hospital, etc.;
- organize a neighborhood clean-up;
- participate in a walk-a-thon to raise money for a charity or important cause;
- help with special events in the Youth Center;
- arrange to visit, read books or be companions to disabled citizens or veterans;
- celebrate special holidays (e.g., Fourth of July, Citizenship Day, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month) with guest speakers, rap sessions, skits, musical revues, etc.
- participate in Youth Councils;
Learning Activity D

- conduct Youth Center orientation activities (e.g., tours of the Club, speeches and presentations about Club programs); and
- serve as Youth Center ambassadors by greeting guests and community leaders.

Service Area: Arts, Recreation and Leisure Activities

- host a character appreciation party to acknowledge and celebrate character development;
- attend etiquette programs, dinners and cultural events (plays, classical music and ballet performances);
- host special parties for Halloween, Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc.;
- create a “virtues graffiti” wall on a piece of canvas;
- host a sectional games room tournament;
- put on a Center-wide talent show; and
- act out skits or plays that illustrate important character attributes.

Service Area: Academic Support, Mentoring and Intervention Services

- participate in a Toastmaster’s program to learn speaking and debating skills;
- tour local businesses and colleges and discuss career opportunities and educational requirements involved;
- create a bulletin board that defines a “virtue of the week;”
- invite speakers to talk about important social issues and interview them after their presentations ( parental permission slips should be collected when appropriate;)
- exhibit or speak in public schools, civic meetings and assembly programs;
- set school-related educational goals (e.g., to improve grades in math, science, etc.) and help others do the same;
- make and illustrate posters for each of the Six Pillars of CharacterSM;
- take a tour of a public or college library; and
- assist in homework help as a peer volunteer.

You can see how powerful the activities are that are planned in a Youth Center. Everything a youth experiences is an opportunity to help enhance personal, character and leadership development.

What’s next?

Go to the Skill Building Journal and complete the worksheets for Activity D in Section 8.3. When you are finished, return to this guide and continue on with Summarizing Your Progress.
Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced Youth Program Assistant or a new one, you have probably gained new information and developed new skills for guiding youth. Summarizing your progress will give you a chance to analyze what you have learned. A summary sheet has been provided in the Skill Building Journal to help you do this.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule them. After you have successfully completed both assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far.

What’s next?

Go to the *Skill Building Journal* and complete Summarizing Your Progress in Section 8.3.
## 8.4 Resources

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<tr>
<td>Six Pillars of Character&lt;sup&gt;SM&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Six Pillars of Character

1. **Trustworthiness – Four principles: Integrity; Honesty; Promise-keeping; and Loyalty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes Stand up for your beliefs, follow your conscience, be honorable and upright.</td>
<td>Yes Do anything wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Live by your principles no matter what others say.</td>
<td>Yes Lose heart if you fail don’t get what you want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Have the courage to do what is right and to try new things even when it is hard or costly.</td>
<td>Yes Lie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Build and guard your reputation.</td>
<td>Yes Cheat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Tell the truth and nothing but the truth.</td>
<td>Yes Steal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Be sincere.</td>
<td>Yes Be sneaky, tricky or deceptive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Be forthright and candid.</td>
<td>Yes Betray a trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Keep your promises.</td>
<td>Yes Let your friends hurt themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Honor your word and commitments.</td>
<td>Yes Do anything just so others will like you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Be dependable</td>
<td>Yes Ask a friend to do anything wrong or spread gossip that could hurt others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Do what you are supposed to do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Return what you borrow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes Pay your debts and be on time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes Stand by and protect your family, friends, school and country.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes Be a good friend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes Look out for those who care about you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes Keep secrets of those who trust you.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. **Respect – Seven Basic Rules:** Honor the individual worth and dignity of others; Be courteous and civil; Honor reasonable social standards and customs; Treat others the way you would like to be treated; Accept differences and judge on character and ability; Respect the autonomy of others; Avoid actual or threatened violence; Be morally autonomous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treat others the way you want to be treated.</td>
<td>Use or manipulate others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect the dignity, privacy and freedom of all individuals.</td>
<td>Abuse, demean, or mistreat anyone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value and honor all people, not matter what they can do for you or to you.</td>
<td>Use threats or physical force to get what you want or to express anger.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect others’ property – take good care of property you are allowed to use and don’t take or use property without permission.</td>
<td>Use put-downs, insults or ridicule to embarrass or hurt others.</td>
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<td>Respect the autonomy of others – tell them what they should know to make good choices about their own lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judge others on their character, abilities, and conduct without regard to race, religion, gender, where they live, how they dress, or the amount of money they have.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be tolerant, respectful, and accepting of those who are different from you.</td>
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<td>Listen to others and try to understand their points of view.</td>
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<td>Resolve disagreements, respond to insults, and deal with anger peacefully and without violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use good manners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be courteous, polite and civil to everyone.</td>
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</table>
3. Responsibility – Twelve major concepts: Be accountable; Exercise self-control; Plan and set goals; Choose positive attitudes; Do your duty; Be self-reliant; Pursue excellence; Be proactive; Be persistent; Be reflective; Set a good example; Be morally autonomous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Know and do your duty.</td>
<td>✓ Look the other way when you can make a difference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Acknowledge and meet your legal and moral obligations.</td>
<td>✓ Make excuses or blame others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices, not only for what you do but what you don’t do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Think about consequences on yourself and others before you act.</td>
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<td>✓ Think long-term.</td>
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<td>✓ Do what you can do to make things better.</td>
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<td>✓ Set a good example.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Your best.</td>
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<td>✓ Persevere.</td>
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<td>✓ Don’t quit.</td>
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<td>✓ Be prepared.</td>
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<td>✓ Be diligent.</td>
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<td>✓ Work hard.</td>
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<td>✓ Make all you do worthy of pride.</td>
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<td>✓ Take charge of your own life.</td>
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<td>✓ Set realistic goals.</td>
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<td>✓ Keep a positive outlook.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be prudent and self-disciplined with your health, emotions, time and money.</td>
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<td>✓ Be rational – act out of reason not anger, revenge or fear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Know the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be self-reliant – manage your life so you are not dependent on others.</td>
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<td>✓ Pay your own way whenever you can.</td>
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Youth Staff Training Program

Module 8: Personal, Character and Leadership Development
4. **Fairness** – Two kinds: Procedural fairness (how we make decisions); Substantive fairness (results, what we decide, the substance of the decision)

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Be fair and just.</td>
<td>✓ Take more than your fair share.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Treat people equally.</td>
<td>✓ Take advantage of or blame others unfairly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Make decisions without favoritism or prejudice.</td>
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<td>✓ In imposing punishment be sure the consequences for wrongdoing are consistent, certain, and proportional (not too harsh or lenient.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be open-minded and impartial – consider what people have to say before you decide.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be careful – get the facts, including opposing viewpoints, before making decisions (especially blaming or accusing another.)</td>
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5. **Caring** – Four areas: Concern for others’ well-being; Compassion and empathy; Kindness; Charity and love

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Be compassionate and empathetic.</td>
<td>✓ Be mean, cruel or insensitive.</td>
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<td>✓ Be kind, loving and considerate.</td>
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<td>✓ Be thankful and express gratitude for what people do for you.</td>
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<td>✓ Forgive others for their shortcomings.</td>
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<td>✓ Be charitable and altruistic – give money, time, support, and comfort without strings for the sake of making someone else’s life better, not for praise or gratitude.</td>
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<td>✓ Help people in need.</td>
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6. **Citizenship – Four areas:** Fulfill your civic duties; Do your share; Respect authority; and Attempt to pursue civic virtue

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Be a good citizen and a good neighbor.</td>
<td>✓ Break the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Care about and pursue the common good.</td>
<td>✓ Deliberately break the rules.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Be a volunteer – help your school and community be better, cleaner, and safer.</td>
<td>✓ Not vote because you don’t think one vote will make a difference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Protect the environment by conserving resources, reducing pollution, and cleaning up after yourself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Participate in making things better by voicing your opinion, voting, serving on committees, reporting wrongdoing and paying taxes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Play by the rules.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Obey parents, teachers, coaches and others who have been given authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Observe just laws.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Honor and respect principles of democracy.</td>
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Module 8
Content Guide