



Engaging and Working with Diverse Populations

Kristine Andrews, PhD – Child Trends
Amanda Berger, PhD – Child Trends

OAH Pregnancy Assistance Fund Grantee Training
Washington DC
January 24-25, 2012

Pathways To Engaging Youth



Engaging Target Population: 4 “S” Approach

- Setting
 - Welcoming climate
 - Support
 - Strong adult ally
 - Structure
 - Workable and intentional
 - Strategy
 - Accessible and meaningful activities
-

Setting

Diverse Settings for Serving Youth

- Schools
 - Clinics
 - Community centers
 - Rural environments
 - Large urban cities
 - Group homes
 - Detention centers
-

The Support: Youth Adult Partnerships

- Relationships: Role of Adult Allies
 - Recruit and welcome a diverse group of youth
 - Preparing them to participate through training and education
 - Setting high expectations for what youth can accomplish
 - Opening doors and increasing their access to decision-makers
 - Supporting their efforts to create other youth-driven initiatives
 - Reach out to parents to encourage their support of youth participation
-

A Workable Structure...

Ensure that youth

- are seen as valuable participants
 - are prepared to take on meaningful roles in addressing relevant issues
 - work in partnership with adults who respect, listen to and support them
-

A Workable Structure...

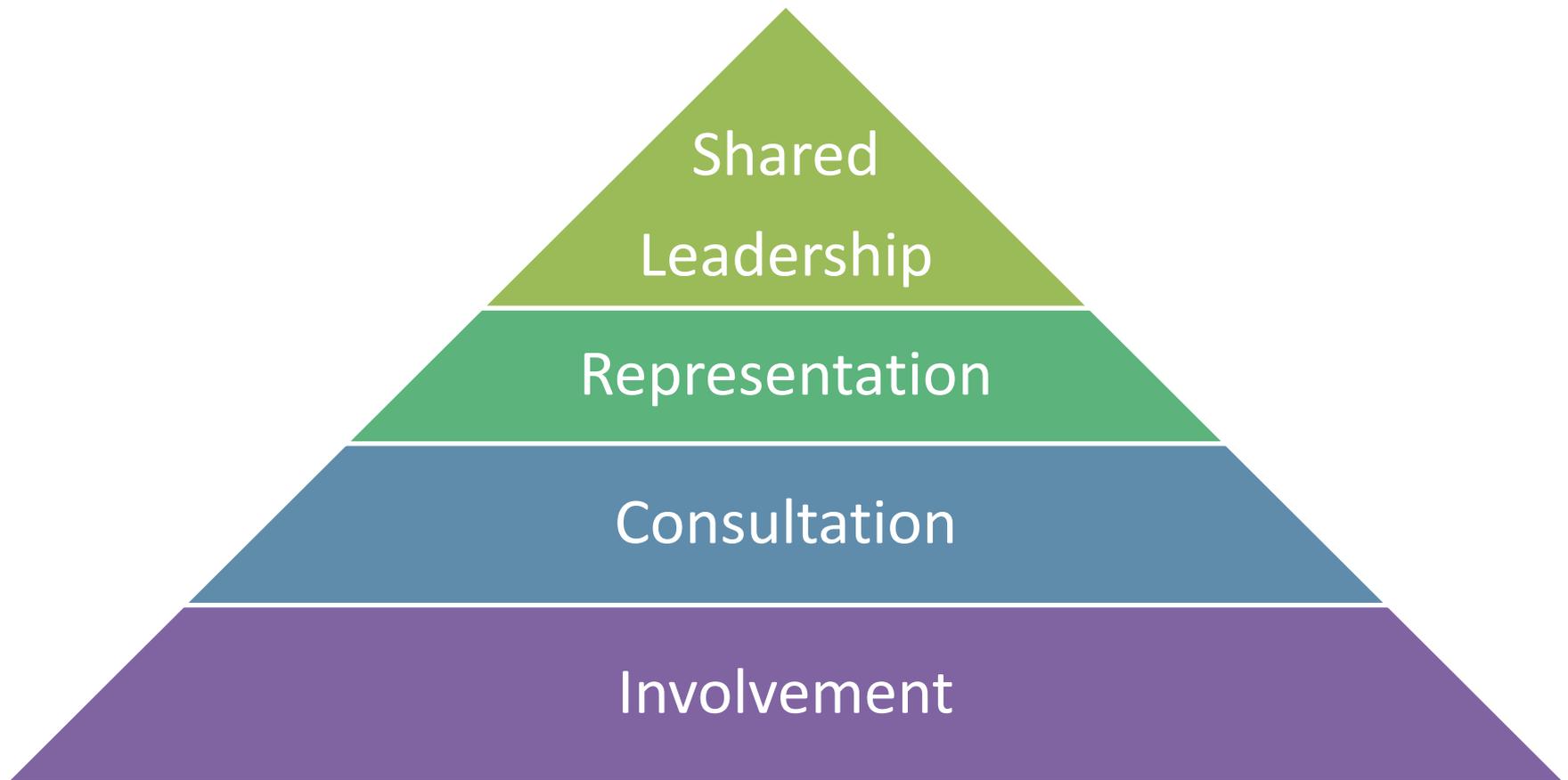
Recognize barriers to participation

- Beyond a warm smile
- Logistic concerns
 - Where and when meetings are held
 - Availability of transportation
 - Food offered

Strategies to address barriers

- Intentional and positive outreach
 - Range of opportunities
-

The Strategy: Four Pathways to Engagement



Perceptions Inventory

Assess how well your program is
currently engaging youth

Hitting the Target Exercise



Improvements Needed in THE SETTING

Welcome Youth in Your Program

- Acknowledge youth as active participants
 - Create youth-friendly processes
 - Listen to youth voices
 - Promote youth leadership
-

Improvements Needed in THE STRUCTURE

Develop an Infrastructure that Supports Youth Participation

- Decide on an organizational setup
 - Enlist other partners
 - Connect youth to program decision-makers
 - Pay attention to barriers
 - Learn from others' experiences
-

Improvements Needed in THE STRATEGY

Create Meaningful Opportunities for Youth to Make a Difference

- Ensure a broad continuum of opportunities
 - Shift the role of youth from service recipient to resource
 - Use the youth engagement pyramid
 - Add a youth component to your strategic planning process
-

Improvements Needed in THE SUPPORT

Build Youth-Adult Partnerships to Support Engagement

- Identify caring, skilled adults who share a passion about youth engagement
 - Ensure that adults continue to learn the dynamics of youth-adult partnerships
 - Provide youth with ongoing training
 - Model positive youth-adult relationships
 - Reach out to parents
-

Ways to Keep Youth Engagement Authentic

1. The opportunities are meaningful, not just made up work
 2. Youth have access to decision- makers in setting
 3. Enough time is allocated for youth to learn the issues and complete projects
 4. Training and skill building are built into all projects
 5. Opportunities are connected as a system; youth can move easily from one to another
 6. Any opportunity balances learning, work and fun
 7. Adults want youth at the table because they add value, not because it will be good for them.
-

A Challenge to You...

Please write a one sentence definition of:

DIVERSITY



The Challenge...

Did any of the following words appear in your definition?

- Different
 - Unique
 - Individual
 - Race /Ethnic group
 - Variety
 - Unlike characteristics
 - Minorities
 - Diverse
-

What is diversity

Definition:

The ways we are different; the condition of having unique characteristics

Aspects of diversity are wide ranging, but are much broader than culture, race, or ethnicity

Aspects of diversity

- Age and generational influences
 - Developmental and acquired disabilities
 - Religion and spiritual orientation
 - Ethnicity
 - Socio-economic status
 - Sexual orientation
 - Indigenous heritage
 - National origin
 - Gender
-

Understanding diversity

- Diversity is more than just tolerating differences. It is respecting, appreciating and understanding the varying characteristics of individuals.
 - Understanding dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression
-

Strengths of a Diverse Group

- Pooling diverse experiences benefits group
 - Learning opportunities for youth personal growth
 - Improving group effectiveness and decision making
-