

Overview of Authentic Youth Collaboration for Youth Homelessness Stakeholders

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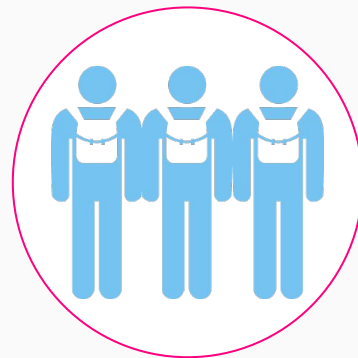
What we do:



Training & Education



Advocacy



Youth Collaboration

Objectives.

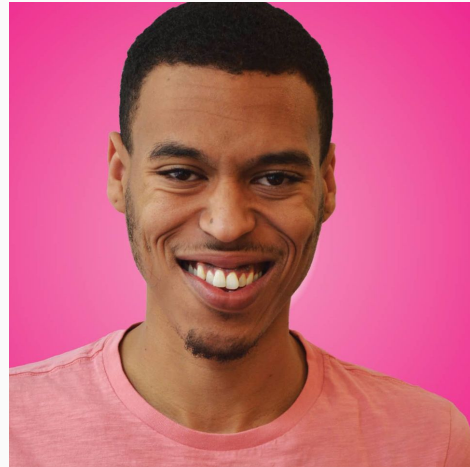
- Explain the Authentic Youth Collaboration Philosophy and why it's important to our work to end youth homelessness
- Provide an introduction to adultism and concrete examples to address adultism as an adult.
- Provide a baseline for equity in youth collaboration.



Authentic Youth Collaboration

Authentic Partnership with Youth/Young Adults.

- Be intentional about the decision-making power that youth have in your work.
- Youth are the experts of their own truth.
- When asking young people to be involved in your work, hear them out and build a reciprocal relationship where you honor their experiences, allowing their experiences and ideas to inform the process.



"It is important to create a setting where young people feel like everyone is working collectively."

– Anthony, 2017 Innovation Fellow



Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration.

Building Trust

Establishing and building trust is essential in any effective working relationship. Once positive rapport is established, genuine collaboration can begin.



Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration.

Meaningful Engagement

An issue that often gets in the way of effective collaboration between youth and service providers is showy engagement, in which young people are invited to participate simply to create the impression of inclusion and diversity.



Avoiding Barriers to Authentic Youth Collaboration.

Meaningful Engagement

Young adults should have the freedom and agency to be the leaders of their own lives. Their autonomy should be promoted as they make decisions about the issues that impact their lives.



Transparency and Honesty

Developing a positive rapport and committing to authentic collaboration with young people requires radical transparency and honesty that goes beyond budgets. The young people you collaborate with should understand the relationships between all stakeholders and partners, have clear details about their compensation, and be privy to any changes in timeline or with deadlines.



Adulthood

What is adultism?

Adultism describes the systems of privileged attitudes and behaviors that adults have over those of young people.

Adultism is driven by behaviors and attitudes that are based on the assumption that adults are better than young people and therefore entitles them to act upon or on behalf of young people without their agreement.

What's the difference between ageism + adultism?

Ageism describes the systems of privileged attitudes and behaviors that younger people have over elders.

Call It Out

Calling out adultism whenever and wherever it shows up in working with young people is necessary for authentic youth collaboration, as it permeates housing systems and our culture. It often manifests in how meetings are planned and facilitated, as well as in designing and providing services to young people. Adultism is not only systemic but cultural and, like with other isms, adultism can be carried out through small or subtle ways, including microaggressions.



Listening Sessions

Listening Sessions are an effective way to ensure young people are providing necessary feedback to move your collaborative work forward in a way that is not adultist.

For this to be most effective and worthwhile, here are some tips:

- *Be specific about the intention. Prior to engaging in a listening session with YYA, be sure they clearly understand your intentions and the potential outcomes.*
- *Include YYA in the development of the questions/feedback forms.*
- *Allow YYA to facilitate when/where applicable.*



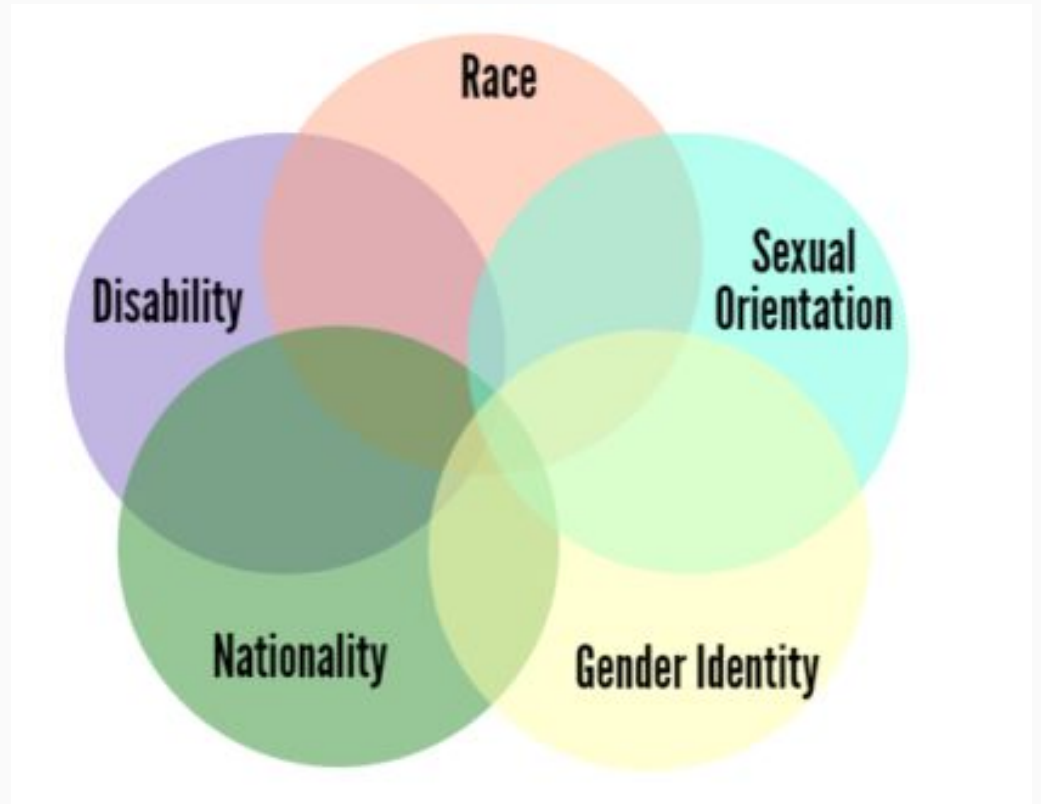
Equity.

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.



Intersectionality.

Dr. Kimberle' Crenshaw
the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.



Youth and Equity

- *Authentic collaboration with young people requires a commitment to understanding how identity shapes experiences. Understand how racism and oppression has impacted your community. Young people come into this work with various and multiple identities (e.g. Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, different ability, etc.) which need to be acknowledged, accepted, and understood before authentic collaboration can truly take place*
- *Historically, people experiencing homelessness have relied on systems that have taken their power away, like when a provider makes a housing decision for a young person.*
- *We recommend that you analyze the demographics of your decision making body, as well as your YAB, to determine if the communities experiencing homelessness locally are accurately represented.*

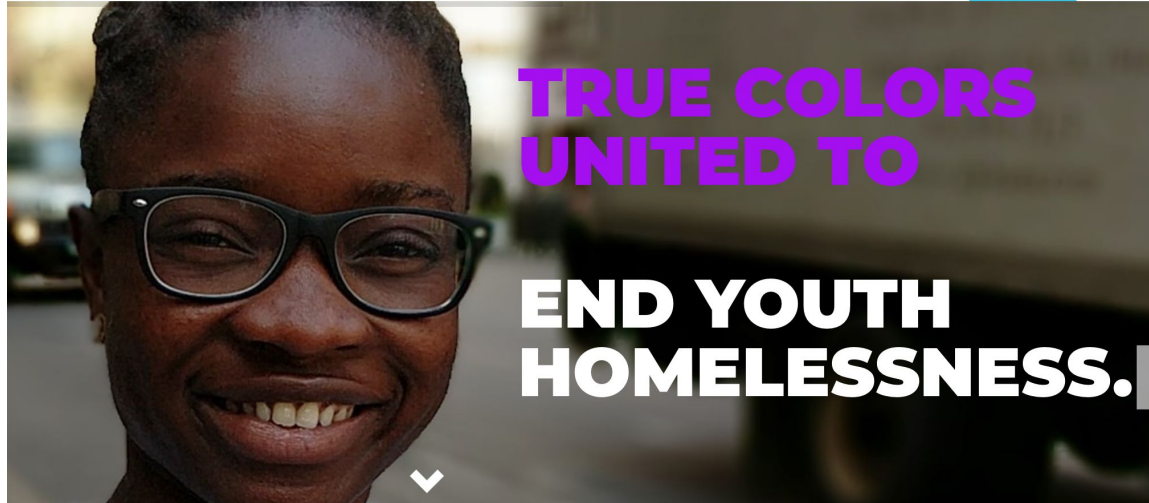
Equity (cont'd)

- *Have at least two seats for YYA with lived experience as a part of your (CoC) structure. In most cases this will mean that it has to be in writing. Write the delegation of these two seats into the CoC charter, bylaws, and agreement.*
- *Decision-making bodies (CoC) should be representative of the communities experiencing homelessness. That will mean older adult partners must consider whether giving up their seat and encouraging it to be filled with a young person is a choice point.*
- *Hire young people at every level. Peer support positions have been designed for young people but have limited the voice and perspective of each individual placed in those roles. If this is a beginning stage for young people in your community, focus on offering training that will prepare them for more advanced positions.*

Q&A.

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Thank you.

