



Organizational Assessment Checklist

WHERE DO YOU START?!? You know you want to involve youth in decision-making, or you know that you can do it better – but you don't know how to get going! This checklist can help you think about the most important factors in successful youth involvement, and challenge you and your organization/school/club to do more, better. Make sure you read the *15 Points* manual for more information on anything on this checklist.

This checklist is to be used to help give direction, uncover hidden issues, clarify tasks, and guide commitment to involving youth in decision-making. Use it as a tool with your board, your staff, young people, or other people who are participating.

YES = We do this already and don't need assistance

NO = We don't do this yet and want to develop next steps to move forward in this area

N/A = This is not applicable to us / We don't plan to do this

Please note that we are not suggesting that every organization meet all of these criteria.

Point 1: Define Decision-Making	YES	NO	N/A
Have you clearly identified the ways young people can be involved in your organization's decision-making process?			
Do you know which decisions you want young people to be involved in?			
Have you considered how your organization will make decisions with young people?			
Point 2: Know Why You Want to Involve Young People	YES	NO	N/A
Do you know how youth involvement can benefit youth, adults, and your organization?			
Do you know how your motivations affect youth involvement?			
Does your organization have a clear vision, goals, and objectives for youth involvement?			
Point 3: Assess Your Organization	YES	NO	N/A
Do you know how to build support for youth involvement in your group?			
Is everyone (board members, staff members, administrators, teachers, and young people) in your organization committed to successful youth involvement?			
Point 4: Determine Your Approach	YES	NO	N/A
Is your group going to add youth representatives to an existing all-adult decision-making group?			
Will your organization involve equal numbers of youth and adults in decision-making?			
Do you know if an 'all youth' or 'youth-adult' structure will work best for your agency?			



Point 5: Overcome Organizational Barriers	YES	NO	N/A
Are there permanent policies in your organization that support youth involvement in decision-making?			
Has your organization or school addressed budget and staff issues related to youth involvement?			
Are the terms of office and voting rights equal for young people and adults?			

Point 6: Overcome Personal Barriers	YES	NO	N/A
Are young people involved in all issues, not just those that affect youth?			
Have adults throughout your agency examined their own stereotypes about young people?			
Are young people engaged as decision-makers throughout the organization?			

Point 7: Address Legal Issues	YES	NO	N/A
Is your organization aware of the legal responsibilities of involving youth as decision-makers?			
Does your state have laws that restrict youth involvement in decision-making?			
Have you explored all the legal options for formalized youth involvement?			

Point 8: Recruit Young People	YES	NO	N/A
Does your group have successful recruitment criteria?			
Do your decision-making activities attract diverse groups of young people?			
Does your recruitment process educate others about youth involvement in decision-making?			

Point 9: Create a Strong Orientation Process	YES	NO	N/A
Do you have an orientation process for young decision-makers?			
Has an adult explained youth involvement to parents?			
Is there a system in you to help young people understand their involvement, as well as the roles they will serve?			



Point 10: Develop Young Leaders	YES	NO	N/A
Do you have a peer training system for young decision-makers?			
Are there opportunities for young people to develop their decision-making skills?			
Do you offer a system of support for adult allies?			

Point 11: Provide Intergenerational Training	YES	NO	N/A
Is there a formal training process for adults committed to youth involvement?			
Do trainings meet the needs of youth and adults?			
Does your organization's culture embrace diverse training interests, needs, and approaches?			

Point 12: Facilitate Successful Meetings	YES	NO	N/A
Do you use techniques that engage youth and adults throughout meetings?			
Are there opportunities for all members to speak at meetings?			
Do you encourage personal and group appreciation during meetings?			

Point 13: Foster Youth/Adult Partnerships	YES	NO	N/A
Are there multiple strategies and opportunities for youth and adults to build relationships?			
Do you involve parents from the start?			

Point 14: Develop a Mentoring Plan	YES	NO	N/A
Do you encourage personal success for youth involved in decision-making?			
Is there an empowered, accountable resource person committed to helping youth and adults build relationships?			
Do young people have substantive connections with adult leaders in the organization?			

Point 15: Sustain Youth Involvement	YES	NO	N/A
Are there reflection opportunities infused throughout activities for young people and adults?			
Do you evaluate youth involvement activities?			
Do you have ways of recognizing success and appreciating people?			