



TALK THAT TALK! WAYS FOR ADULTS TO CONNECT WITH A YOUTH AUDIENCE

Speaking to youth can sometimes be difficult. Youth in foster care come from diverse backgrounds and vary in their levels of sensitivity and vulnerability. Approaching them with sensitive subjects can be a challenging task; however, this task can be made easier by adhering to the following pieces of advice created by youth in foster care themselves.

- ☆ Consider the age of your audience. Use information that will be useful and relevant to them. It is important to be mindful that youth of different ages have different ways of understanding and processing information.
- ☆ If you are using statistics, use this information in an encouraging way. If you are presenting information that is "discouraging," provide youth with an alternative, so they can understand how to use the information to their advantage. It is important for youth to understand the benefits of the information you are sharing with them.
- ☆ Try to make youth feel comfortable and relaxed when you are talking to them. It is important to tell them who you are and where you came from, so they can relate to you.
- ☆ Get on their level. Try to see the situation from the youth's perspective. Individuals can be sensitive to certain approaches. It is important to remember that youth have their own frame of reference. Try to understand your audience's frame of reference before presenting your points.



"The application of knowledge is true power"

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- ☆ Be firm and honest. Some information may be difficult to hear, but it's important for youth to know the truth. Although this information should be shared with youth, it is important to be mindful of how you share the information and sensitive to your delivery and their reaction.
- ☆ Make your presentation interesting and engaging. Avoid long, drawn-out processes. Too much detail may be unnecessary and distracting. You can ask youth questions (not personal questions) to help to engage them in the presentation. It is important to help youth to stay engaged and connected to the information you are sharing.
- ☆ Have fun and use humor—but don't be sarcastic. Use expressive language and animated speech to draw in your youth audience. It is important to balance your conversation with serious and light information.
- ☆ Use appropriate, youth-friendly language. It is important to remember that youth enjoy informal dialogue and don't always connect with authoritative approaches.
- ☆ Honor, acknowledge, and respect youths' experiences. It is important to remember that youth have their own experiences, their own wisdom, and their own truths to bring to the table.

About GOALL

Go Out and Learn Life (GOALL), the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) state youth advisory board, was established in January of 2000 and is composed of youth who have experience with the foster care system and who advocate on behalf of youth in foster care throughout the state. GOALL works in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Social Services with the intention of making life better for youth in SCDSS foster care.

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