

Spider Web Analysis Tool for a Youth Program

Definitions of Foundational Elements of a Youth Program

Physical and Psychological Safety: The program provides a safe haven both physically and emotionally.

Appropriate Structure: The program has clear rules, expectations, and responsibilities. Youth are involved in creating the rules, expectations, and responsibilities. Generally, those rules are embraced by youth when they have direct input in their development.

Supportive Relationships: The program has adults involved in the program's activities and events. Through these activities and events, adults and youth are able to establish trusted connections.

Opportunities to Belong: The program provides activities and events that foster friendships and provide youth with a sense of a positive group experience.

Positive Social Norms: The program's culture (e.g., habits and expectations) that governs behavior and daily interactions involves conventionally positive social norms.

Support for Efficacy and Mattering: The program provides youth, both individually and in groups, the opportunity to be useful and to make a difference in their social worlds.

Opportunities for Skill Building: The program develops skills and competencies through its activities and teambuilding experiences. The program provides youth the opportunity build their skills (e.g., leadership skills, decision-making skills, cultural competence, communication skills, problem solving skills, civic responsibility, etc).

Active Learning: The program provides learning opportunities that are interactive, reflective, and engage multiple learning styles. For example, programs employ experiential learning opportunities and encourage young people to take positive risks. Youth are encouraged to try new experiences. Whether they are successful or unsuccessful, these attempts are viewed as part of the learning process. Indeed, youth learn how to take risks and also learn how to fail courageously.

Opportunities for Recognition: Youth are sincerely acknowledged for their contributions. The recognition conveys a positive view of youth.

Integration of Family, School, and Community Efforts: The program coordinates its efforts and communicates regularly with families and schools to ensure similar norms and expectations across settings. The program offers a variety of activities and events that involve parents (e.g., social events, parental workshops, and volunteer opportunities).