



WSCC Learning Collaborative

District Liaison for Youth Leaders Guide

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Overview of the District Liaison Role

The **district liaison** is a member of the district leadership team who supports youth leaders in developing and implementing SMARTIE goals to support the emotional well-being of students in their districts. The district liaison is responsible for:

1. Identifying 2 youth leaders from their district to participate in the Youth Leadership Action Academy (Intensive Training in Fall, Youth Action Calls in Winter/Spring)
2. Attending the Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training
3. Attending the bi-monthly Youth Leadership Academy Action Calls
4. Meeting with youth leaders in between action call to facilitate youth leaders developing and implementing a SMARTIE Goal
5. Working with the District Leadership Team to integrate youth leaders' perspective into district planning and goals



Process for Districts to engage Youth Leaders in their community to advise & lead

We will be working with you to help amplify youth voices by engaging **two (2)** existing youth leaders from each district as collaborative partners in supporting the health and well-being of students in their community. The youth selected for the role will participate in a **Youth Leadership Academy** where they will help drive the design and implementation of social emotional learning (SEL), student mental health (SMH) and skill development in their school communities. It is imperative that youth be compensated for their contribution to the work.

1) Who are the existing youth leaders in your state and district?

Consider the existing advisory boards, councils, organization and clubs within the state, district, and schools as these are excellent places to start when considering recruiting youth.

2) Identify 2 youth per district.

- Determine a process for selecting two youth to officially participate on the WSCC Youth Leadership Advisory Group. Districts may consider a formal or informal nomination process, application, screening interview, etc. for selecting youth leaders.

3) Consult with the Youth Engagement Liaison (Dr. Tiffany Beason) throughout the process. Dr. Beason can help your district:

- Identify groups/councils to reach out to.
- Develop a Consent process.
- Provide templates for forms and help you adapt them to your district/state policies and procedures.

Inclusion Criteria for selected Youth Leaders:

- **Young people from communities most impacted by chronic disease** and its risk factors, e.g., Youth living in poverty; Youth of Color
- **Age 13-18** years old
- Current Youth Leader or Representative on a State, District or School Council, Organization Committee
- Can commit to two 2-hour intensive trainings & four 1-hour action calls over the school year.

Groups/Organizations to recruit Youth Leaders from:

- District Youth Advisory Committee Representatives
- Youth Representative on the School Board
- Student Government Association Leaders
- State Youth Leadership Council Representatives/ Tribal Youth Leadership Council Representatives
- Youth Leaders/Representatives on Parent, Teacher, Student Organizations (PTSO)
- Youth Leaders on School Social Emotional Learning Team/Mental Health Organizations or Clubs
- Youth Leaders from School Organizations/Clubs (e.g. Students of Color/Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Student Union, LGBTQIA+ Union, etc.)



Youth Leadership Academy

The **Youth Leadership Academy** consists of an **Intensive Training and 4 Youth Leadership Action Calls** throughout the 2023-2024 school year. The purpose of the Youth Leadership Academy is to engage youth leaders and elevate their voices to be contributing members of teams supporting emotional well-being in their states and districts. Activities throughout the year are designed to

Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training

November 28 & 30, 2023

12-2 PM ET/11-1 PM CST/10-12 PM MST

The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) Intensive Training is a 2-day training (2-hours each day) to engage youth leaders from the WSCC LC districts and prepare them for participation in the YLA throughout the year. Youth will be introduced to major concepts used throughout the year and have a chance to share-out their thoughts and perspectives. The Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training will include

- Education on Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems, Social Emotional Learning, the WSCC framework, and Health Equity
- Opportunities for youth to meet with other youth from their states and share their experiences with emotional well-being and health equity in their districts
- Engagement with State and District leaders for youth leaders to share their vision for improving emotional well-being in their state and district

Youth Leadership Academy Action Calls

4th Tuesday of the month

1-2 PM EST/12-1 PM CST/11-12 PM MST

The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) Action Calls are 1-hour training and working sessions that are designed to teach youth leaders leadership skills and give them space to connect with other youth leaders to develop and problem-solve their SMARTIE goals. Each session will consist of a learning a leadership skill, including time to practice in small groups, breakout groups to share ideas and network with youth leaders from their own state and other states, and opportunities to connect with faculty to support the development of their goals.

Content includes:

- Setting SMARTIE Goals
- Assertive communication skills
- Giving and Receiving Feedback
- Mentorship

SMARTIE Goals

- **Specific:** You know exactly what the goal is and when it is met
- **Measurable:** You know when or how much of something is done when meeting the goal
- **Achievable:** Your goal is within reach and easy to put into action.
- **Realistic:** You have access to time and resources to accomplish this goal
- **Time-bound:** You have a deadline for your goal
- **Inclusive:** Your goal includes everyone, including youth of color, LGBTQIA+ youth, low-income youth, immigrants, etc.
- **Equitable:** Your goal would help ensure that everyone has what they need to be well, and sometimes this may not mean everybody has what is equal because we all have different needs

Example Phrasing for SMARTIE Goals

- I will start an Emotional Well-Being Tik Tok for my district. I will post a new video sharing Emotional Well-Being tips once a week on Mondays. I will ask for submissions for ideas to get input from a diverse group of students.
- I will start a wellness committee at my school by the end of the school year. I will start by finding a teacher or administrator to sponsor the club by the end of the month and then create flyers to advertise the club by February.



Best Practices for Engaging Youth throughout the Year

Throughout the year, the District Liaison should continue to engage with the district youth leaders to support the implementation of their SMARTIE goal and their integration into the district leadership team. The Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training and Action Calls will provide youth with foundational skills to develop their goals and explore how to engage as leaders in their school and district. In between sessions, district liaisons can support youth in meeting their goals by:

- Meeting with youth leaders regularly
- Assisting them in revising their goals
- Helping them to connect with administrators at their schools.
- Including them (or their ideas/suggestions) in WSCC LC District Leadership Planning
- Supporting the implementation of their goals and providing access to resources/supports you may need to meet their goals.

Concrete Ideas for Youth Engagement

- Outreach and Advocacy
 - Youth create a social media hashtag or campaign.
 - Youth write or co-write a blog/school newspaper post.
- Youth Representative on Team Meetings, Councils
 - Youth involved on formal and informal groups or councils, including School Mental Health teams
- Research and Assessment
 - Youth leaders participate in gather information about resources to help support their school community
- Peer Education
 - Youth share with their peers, e.g., via classroom presentations, resource fairs, morning school announcements
- Youth Training & Shadowing Experiences

WSCC Emotional Well-Being LC 2023-24 Cohort Schedule

District Liaison Sample Timeline

<p>September 12, 2023</p> <p>11-3 PM EST/9-12 PM MST</p>	<p>SEA and District Kick-off/Intensive Training (4 hours)</p> <p>District Liaison attends the District Intensive Training</p>
<p>September/October</p>	<p>District Liaisons work with District Team to select 2 Youth Leaders in the District to participate in the Youth Leadership Academy</p>
<p>Early October</p>	<p>District Liaison collects Youth Leader Consent forms and discusses with youth leaders their roles and responsibilities for the year</p>
<p>November 28 & 30, 2023</p> <p>12-2 PM EST/10-12 PM MST</p>	<p>Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training</p> <p>District Liaison works with schools to get youth leaders connected to a computer with Zoom capabilities</p>
<p>December 2023</p>	<p>District liaisons should meet with youth leaders to continue developing their goals and make sure the youth's goals are feasible to be implemented within the WSCC LC year.</p>
<p>January 23, 2024</p> <p>1-2 PM EST/11-12 PM MST</p>	<p>Youth Leadership Action Call #1- Setting Goals</p>
<p>February 2024</p>	<p>District liaisons should meet with youth leaders to support them in implementing their goals.</p>
<p>February 27, 2024</p> <p>1-2 PM EST/11-12 PM MST</p>	<p>Youth Leadership Action Call #2-Assertive Communication</p>
<p>March 19, 2024</p> <p>1-2 PM EST/11-12 PM MST</p>	<p>Youth Leadership Action Call #3-Giving & Receiving Feedback</p>
<p>Early April</p>	<p>District liaisons should meet with youth leaders to support them in implementing their goals.</p>
<p>April 23, 2024</p> <p>1-2 PM EST/11-12 PM MST</p>	<p>Youth Leadership Action Call #4- Mentorship</p>



Youth Leader Action Planning Guide

Youth Name:

Month/Year:

Brainstorm: Use this first area to brainstorm potential idea for your goal. Then, you can rate the need for change in this area, the availability of resources for this goal and how many barriers may exist.

Goal Ideas	Need for change (1-10) 1=no need 10=great need	Resources to achieve change (1-10) 1=no resources 10=many resources	Barriers to change (1-10) 1=no barriers 10=many barriers

Select one idea from above that you want to improve:

Write your SMARTIE Goal for this idea. Remember, SMARTIE Goals are:

- **Specific:** You know exactly what the goal is and when it is met
- **Measurable:** You know when or how much of something is done when meeting the goal
- **Achievable:** Your goal is within reach and easy to put into action.
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MY SMARTIE GOAL:

ACTION PLANNING

How will you know if you've achieved success within this goal?

- Indicators of Success:

What opportunities exist related to this goal?

What current work is taking place related to this goal?

What resources are available to support this goal (leadership, infrastructure, staffing, partnerships)?



What barriers exist related to this goal?

What would prevent me from moving forward with this goal?

What would I need to overcome this/these barrier(s)?

Action Steps

List the short-term steps necessary to achieve goal	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date	Completed (Y/N)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

NEXT MEETING: _____

Best Practices for Creating Space for Youth to Engage

Using Shared Agreements

Shared agreements can be used to engage youth leaders and provide a space where they feel comfortable and empowered. Some sample shared agreement include:

- Use “I statements” to state opinions or feelings
- Respect everyone’s differences
- Respect everyone’s opinions
- Use inclusive language
- Use you right to say: “pass” or “pass and come back”

TRAUMA-INFORMED YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



The **What**, the **Why**, and the **How**

What is Trauma-Informed Care?

“ Trauma-Informed Care is a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. ”

- Hopper, Bassuk, & Olivet (2010), p. 82

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Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach

1



Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery.

2



Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system.

3



Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings.

4



Resists re-traumatization of clients as well as staff.

Why Does a Trauma-Informed Approach Matter in Youth Engagement?



Trauma affects youth from all walks of life, from all identities and experiences.

Engaging young people through a trauma-informed approach is crucial to maintaining the safety and well-being of all young people in youth engagement initiatives.



Given evidence suggests that youth engagement can act as a protective factor, building resiliency and supporting the development of healthy coping mechanisms, there are particular benefits to engaging youth with experiences of trauma.

Key Components of a Trauma-Informed Approach to Youth Engagement:

Safety

Adult allies and youth feel safe in all aspects of engagement, from the physical environment to interpersonal interactions, with the understanding that the safety of all individuals engaged is the utmost priority.

a

Trustworthiness & Transparency

Adult allies invest in meaningful relationships with youth, based in trust and transparency. Decisions are made with clear communication and transparency with the goal of building and maintaining trust and transparency.

b

Peer Support

Peer support, among engaged youth, is important for promoting safety, building trust and enhancing collaboration. Strong peer relationships can act as a protective factor and facilitate healing.

Collaboration & Mutuality

Building meaningful relationships is crucial to a trauma-informed approach and successful youth engagement. Relationships are built on mutual interest and enable power-sharing.

Empowerment, Voice & Choice

Youth are supported to engage in decision making and to articulate their needs and perspectives. Organizations understand the importance of power differentials and barriers to youth speaking up. Youth are encouraged to cultivate self-advocacy skills.

Cultural, Historical & Gender Issues

Organizations actively strive towards an anti-oppressive approach that recognizes and does justice to the realities of oppression, including racism, colonialism, classism, homophobia, transphobia and others. Organizations recognize the healing value of cultural connection, incorporate policies and procedures that are responsive to the racial, cultural and ethnic needs of youth and that recognize and address historic and ongoing trauma.

Practical Consideration for Trauma-Informed Youth Engagement

1 *Meaningful relationships*

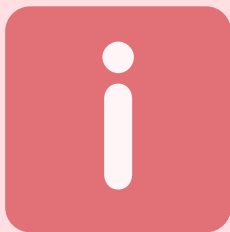
Strong relationships are a cornerstone of meaningful engagement and a trauma-informed approach.



Meaningful relationships are crucial to sharing power and ensuring young people are able to identify their needs, seek support when needed, and engage fully and safely.

2 *Content Warnings*

To minimize risk of re-traumatization, content warnings are provided prior to any in-depth discussion of topics that might carry significant weight or relate to youth experiences of trauma.



Prior to delving into such topics, inform those in the room of the topic, and provide an opportunity for individuals to leave the space, prepare themselves mentally, or take other steps to ensure they're able to engage with a given topic.

3 *Challenge by Choice*

In all engagement opportunities, youth are challenged by choice. Young people are never required to engage, to contribute or to discuss. Youth are encouraged to engage - but never required to do so, nor to do so in a particular way..





4 *Youth Know Their Bodies Best*

Youth are trusted as experts in their own needs, experiences and bodies. Young people are permitted to engage in spaces in whatever way best suits their needs and doesn't infringe on the safety and needs of their peers. Youth are allowed to leave spaces if and when they need.

5 *On-site Mental Health Support*

As much as possible, when engaging with difficult topics where young people are more likely to have personal traumatic associations with the topic of discussion, provide on-site mental health support.



6 *Resource List*

Provide young people with a list of local resources, including mental health supports, that can be accessed during or outside of engagement opportunities.



Trauma may manifest during an event or in the hours after - and ensuring young people have access to supports after-hours is crucial to maintaining their wellbeing.

Facilitation Recommendations

#1: Safer Spaces

The co-creation of safer spaces ensures spaces are created based on the particular needs of the young people in a given space and can help ensure a space is as safe as possible for youth impacted by trauma. Rather than dictated, safer spaces are created with an acknowledgement of their imperfection, and built upon a mutual agreement to maximize the safety of all in attendance as much as possible.



#2: Connect Participants & Project Staff

Offer ongoing opportunities to connect between participants and project staff. Consider the role of peer facilitators or peer support.



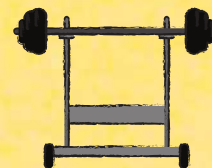
#3: Goal-Oriented Facilitation

Working with young people often involves engagement on issues of significant personal importance and relevance to their lives and lived experiences. Facilitation approaches should seek to guide conversations towards goal oriented outcomes.



#4: Strength-based

Approaching facilitation with a strength-based focus, intended to draw the successes and opportunities from discussions and experiences shared, is conducive to meaningful, safer engagement.



Considerations for Trauma-Informed Youth Engagement



What do we understand as a collective about the trauma that may be carried by individuals or communities?



How can we mitigate risk of triggering a trauma-response by creating collective principles for safety in a project or at an event?



What resources are available for mental health support?



How are we supporting key aspects of a trauma informed approach, such as:

- Trauma awareness in the organization and community
- Building community, connection and caring
- Attending to safety and wellness
- Building on strengths and skills

References

- 1 Harden, T., Kenemore, T., Mann, K., Edwards, M., List, C., & Martinson, K. J. (2014). The Truth N' Trauma Project: Addressing Community Violence Through a Youth-Led, Trauma-Informed and Restorative Framework. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 32(1), 65–79. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-014-0366-0>
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- 3 Hopper EK, Bassuk EL, Olivet J. Shelter from the storm: Trauma-informed care in homelessness services settings. *The Open Health Services and Policy Journal*. 2010;3:80–100. [Reference list]
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- 5 Trauma Informed Oregon (2016). *What is Trauma Informed Care?* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://traumainformedoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/What-is-Trauma-Informed-Care.pdf>
- 6 Trauma Gender Substance Use (2017). *Trauma-Informed Practice Principles* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/TIP-principles-Reflective-questions-2017.pdf>

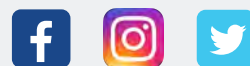
Want More Information?



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Invitation to join the WSCC Emotional Well-Being Youth Leadership Academy

Hello!

Our school district is participating in a learning collaborative with the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) and Center for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). As part of this collaborative, we are nominating 2 high school youth leaders in our district to provide input on the work districts are doing to increase emotional well-being in schools.

Expectations for Youth Leaders:

- **Attend the Youth Leadership Academy Intensive Training on November 28 & 30, 2023**
12-2 PM EST/11-1 PM CST/10-12 PM MST
 - We will work with your teachers to get permission to miss class and make-up assignments
 - The training will focus on leadership skills and connecting with youth from **across the country** to share your voice about emotional well-being for youth today
- **Join 4, 1-hour youth action calls every other month (January, February, March, April)**
 - These one hour calls will be focused on helping you to advance emotional well-being in your school/district through skill development, collaboration, practice and reflection
- **Apply what you've learned to your school/district!**

All students who participate will receive a **gift card** for their time! We also can help connect you to mentors and provide opportunities for professional development.

We think you would be a fantastic candidate for this opportunity. Please let us know by XX date if you would be interested in participating!



WSCC LC Youth Leadership Academy Permission Slip

I, _____, give permission for _____ to attend the Virtual WSCC LC Youth Leadership Summit Intensive Training and Bi-monthly Action Calls on the following dates:

- November 28 & 30, 2023 (12-2 PM ET/11-1 PM CST/10-12 PM MST)
- January 23, 2024 (1-2 PM EST/12-1 PM CST/11-12 PM MST)
- February 27, 2024 (1-2 PM EST/12-1 PM CST/11-12 PM MST)
- March 19, 2024 (1-2 PM EST/12-1 PM CST/11-12 PM MST)
- April 23, 2024 (1-2 PM EST/12-1 PM CST/11-12 PM MST)

I understand that if they are accepted, they will need to attend the entire session.

(Print Name)

(Phone Number)

(Parent/Guardian Signature if under 18)

(Principal/School Leadership)

(WSCC LC District Liaison)

2023-2024 [SCHOOL DISTRICT] WSCC Learning Collaborative Youth Leadership Academy Consent Form

Instructions: A separate copy of this waiver must be completed for each youth attending the **2023-2024 Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Learning Collaborative Youth Leadership Academy**. Each youth must submit a copy of this form signed by the youth, parent/guardian (if under 18 years of age). Read and complete this form carefully.

Youth's Name:
Youth Contact Number (Cell):
Youth's Email:
Parent/Guardian's Name(s):
Home Address:
City, State and Zip Code:
Parent/Guardian's Contact Number (Home):
Parent/Guardian's Contact Number (Cell):
Parent/Guardian's Contact Number (Work):
Parent/Guardian's Email:

Alternative Emergency Contact, if Parent/Guardian are Unavailable:
Emergency Contact's Name:
Emergency Contact's Relationship to Youth:
Emergency Contact Number (Home):
Emergency Contact Number (Cell):
Emergency Contact Number (Work):

What is the WSCC LC Youth Leadership Academy?

[DISTRICT NAME] is participating in a learning collaborative where the adult leaders are learning how to support positive mental health and well-being for all students, staff, and families. The district leadership wants students to be involved and provide their opinions on how we can better support all students and staff. Your student has been nominated to be a youth leader participant in this learning collaborative, given their skills, passion, and potential as a future leader. Involvement in the learning collaborative is described below. **The academy activities will provide opportunities for youth to share their opinions on how the school district leaders can support emotional well-being and promote equity in schools.** Youth will also engage in activities to increase their understanding of school mental health and social and emotional learning and to help them build their leadership skills.

The Youth Leadership Summit and Youth Leadership Action Calls include:

- Two (2) two-hour virtual sessions (Tuesday, November 28th & Thursday, November 30th from 12-2 EST/9-11 PST) on Zoom during the school day
- 4 Virtual action calls (January 23, February 27, March 19, April 23 from 1-2 EST/10-11 PST) on Zoom during the school day
- Youth will be compensated with a **\$160 gift card** at the end of the year for their participation
- **[DISTRICT ENTER ANY ADDITIONAL (NON-MONETARY) INCENTIVES (I.E., COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS, EXTRA CREDIT, ETC.)]**

The Youth Leadership Academy will be sponsored by the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH; www.schoolmentalhealth.org/) and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL; www.casel.org). Jill Bohnenkamp, Ph.D., Tiffany Beason, Ph.D., and Zahra Ladhani, Ed.D., from NCSMH have multiple years of experience and expertise working with youth in schools across the country.

Consent Form

We value a safe and equitable space for all youth and adults to share their opinions. As such, the summit staff will take all steps to ensure a safe and inclusive virtual summit environment for all youth and adults participating. Please indicate your agreement to abide by the following space rules:

- Use “I statements” to state opinions or feelings
- Respect others’ differences
- Respect everyone’s opinions
- Use respectful language
- Use you right to “pass” on activities/questions

Initials of Parent/Legal Guardian_____

Initials of Youth_____

Parent/Guardian (if under 18 years of age): I agree to let my child participate in and be compensated for their participation in the WSCC LC Youth Leadership Academy.

Initials of Parent/Legal Guardian_____

Youth: I agree to participate in and be compensated for their participation in the WSCC LC Youth Leadership Academy.

Initials of Youth_____

I give permission/assent for my student to participate in the above activities.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian_____

Date_____

Youth Signature_____

Date_____