

Session 4

Seeing Me through Your Eyes

Facilitator Notes

Key Concepts

- Youth can be both resources and participants.
- Practitioners can increase personal power for youth in care.
- Youth in care need opportunities to demonstrate and increase their personal power.

Highlights

- Recalling adolescent experiences when participation made a difference
- Session video
- Personal power continuum
- Recognizing personal power

Challenges

- Helping participants recall their own adolescent experiences when their participation made a difference
- Teaching the personal power continuum with effective examples
- Connecting practitioners' skills and knowledge to help youth demonstrate personal power

Materials

- Quotes for Practitioners
- Sticky wall
- Half sheets of paper of various colors
- Handouts and overheads
- Flip chart, markers and tape
- ILC video
- Embedded evaluation score sheets (**Handout 4f**) printed on NCR paper
- Journal

Session Objective

To present approaches for increasing youth input and participation

Session Outline

- ❑ Activity 4.1
Welcome and Introduction (40 minutes)
 - ⌘ Identifying the benefits of approaching youth as resources

- ❑ Activity 4.2
Session Video (20 minutes)
 - ⌘ Highlighting how youth in care view support and participation

- ❑ Activity 4.3
Room for Growth (45 minutes)
 - ⌘ Identifying incremental steps for self-management

- ❑ Break (15 minutes)

- ❑ Activity 4.4
Incorporating Youth as Participants and Resources (30 minutes)
 - ⌘ Identifying skills that encourage self-management

- ❑ Activity 4.5
Recognizing Personal Power (20 minutes)
 - ⌘ Identifying levels of power through case scenarios

- ❑ Activity 4.6
Session Wrap-up (10 minutes)

Session Handouts and Overheads

- 📄 Value of Youth Participation 4a

- 📄 Opportunities for Youth Participation Should Be. 4b

- 📄 Participation and Power from a Youth Perspective 4c

- 📄 Case Scenario. 4d

- 📄 Embedded Evaluation #2—Five Interactions Between a Youth and Adults 4e

- 📄 Embedded Evaluation #2—Score Sheet. 4f

- 📄 Words of Advice from Youth in Care 4g

Session 4—Activity 4.1

Welcome and Introduction

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to recognize the benefits of approaching youth as resources.

Materials

- Flip chart, markers and tape
- Handout 4a

Time

40 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Prepare flip chart page with positive youth development principles.
- Place youth development outcome areas on separate sheets of paper and hang on the sticky wall.
- Identify group norms, if this is a stand-alone session.
- Hang Quotes for Practitioners from **Introduction Handout b**—printed on separate sheets of card stock paper—around the room.

Procedure

Step 1

- Welcome participants to Session 4.
- Tell participants that this session continues to focus on approaches for working with youth.

Step 2

- Ask participants to recall the discussion in Sessions 2 and 3 about approaching youth as objects, recipients or resources.
- Review the positive youth development principles listed on the flip chart.

Step 3

- Ask participants to recall an experience during their adolescent years when their participation as a resource made a positive difference.

Note: You might need to provide examples that highlight how they may have been a resource. For example, planning a birthday party for a sibling; assisting a parent with a household project; visiting seniors in a retirement home; or baking holiday cookies. Encourage participants to identify a one-time experience versus something that was an ongoing chore or responsibility.

Step 4

- Ask participants to form pairs and interview their partner about this experience.
- Give pairs 10–15 minutes to interview each other.
- Invite a few participants to introduce their partners and share their experiences with the group.

Step 5

- Facilitate a discussion by asking the following questions:
 - “Recalling your experience, what were some of your feelings at the time?”
 - “How did this experience contribute to your personal development?”
 - “Why is participation important for youth?”

Step 6

- Distribute **Handout 4a** and review the value of youth participation.
- Invite participants to talk in table groups about the benefits of involving youth in care in participatory activities.

Note: Encourage participants to associate benefits with youth development outcome areas.

Step 7

- Invite participants to share the benefits they identified.
- Remind participants that the barriers and challenges discussed in Session 3 limit how youth contribute and that Session 4 will highlight strategies to engage youth as participants and resources.

Step 8

- Review the highlights from the previous sessions:
 - Session 1
 - Importance of healthy youth/adult relationships
 - Importance of promoting interdependence
 - Attitudes which inhibit and promote positive youth development
 - Session 2
 - Development goals in working with youth in care
 - Existing services, resources and strategies
 - Session 3
 - Characteristics of youth culture
 - Barriers to youth input and participation

Step 9

- Review Session 4 objective:
 - To present approaches for increasing youth input and participation

Session 4—Activity 4.2

Session Video

Learning Objective

Participants will understand how youth in care want to be treated by adults.

Materials

- Video
- Flip chart, markers and tape
- Half sheets of paper and markers
- Sticky wall

Time

20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Write the questions asked of youth in the video on flip chart paper:
 - “How do you know if an adult cares about or understands you?”
 - “How would you like to be treated by your foster care caseworker?”

Procedure

Step 1

- Invite participants to share youth responses to the interview questions that they were assigned in the last session:
 - “How do you know if an adult cares about or understands you?”
 - “How would you like to be treated by your foster care caseworker?”
- Distribute half sheets and ask participants to write youth responses from their dialogue assignment.
- Ask participants to write one idea per half sheet.
- Place the half sheets on the sticky wall to compare with the responses of youth in the video.

Step 2

- Introduce the video by acknowledging that the *Interdependent Living Curriculum* video was produced by young people and showcases youth in care.
- Mention that youth were behind and in front of the camera.
- Underscore that it is important to recognize that youth in care are “experts” on foster care since they are living the experience.

Step 3

- Before showing the video, assign table groups one of the following focus areas for which to pay particular attention:
 - Key words and phrases
 - How do youth in care want to be treated by their caseworkers?
 - What can other caring adults do to show support for youth?
 - How do youth learn how to participate as resources?

Step 4

- Show Session 4 video.

Step 5

- Facilitate a discussion by asking each group to share their observations of the video.
- Review youth interview responses to identify similarities and differences.

Step 6

- Stress that the *Interdependent Living Curriculum* emphasizes that relationships are key to human development
 - Practitioners are important to youth in care, and for some youth, practitioners are their “primary family.”
 - An individual’s self-esteem and self-worth are influenced by the perceptions of others.
 - Involving youth as partners demonstrates respect, interest and openness.
 - Effective partnerships with youth in care can contribute to their growth and to system improvements, as well as provide opportunities for youth to practice interdependent relationship skills.

Session 4—Activity 4.3

Room for Growth

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to identify the incremental steps that youth need to take in becoming self-managing.

Materials

- Flip chart, markers and tape
- Half sheets of paper
- Handouts 4b, 4c and 4d

Time

45 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Write the five categories of personal power from **Handout 4c** on half sheets.
- Write the strategies that are listed under Step 5 on separate half sheets of the same color.

Procedure

Step 1

- Ask participants to recall the previous sessions' discussions about object, recipient and resource approaches.
- Underscore that these approaches can be encountered in many settings regardless of the relationship.
 - As discussed in previous sessions, being involved in a situation as a resource provides youth opportunities for self-development and interdependence.

Step 2

- Distribute **Handout 4b** and discuss that it is important to approach youth participation with engaging strategies.
 - Youth participation should be:
 - Meaningful
Youth meet real needs and make real contributions
 - Self-directed
Youth make the decisions about what they do and how they do it, with advice, supervision and training
 - Powerful
Youth have a significant influence on their lives and in their environments
- Invite participants to reflect on the activity in Session 4.1 in which they shared an experience where they made a difference as adolescents.
- Ask participants to think about the three engaging approaches.
- Ask for a show of hands of how many of these experiences were meaningful? Self-directed? Powerful?
- Remind participants that, even as adults, when we are asked to work on something that doesn't engage us, we are less likely to do our best or stay involved.
 - In some cases, we will reject participation either through our words or actions.

Step 3

- Remind participants that personal power is an important element in youth participation.
 - Children's personal power is limited due to safety and development needs.

- But as children grow up, it is important to allow them increasing levels of personal power.
- Personal power leads to self-management.
- Distribute and review **Handout 4c**.
- In reviewing the handout, discuss the five stages of progressive personal power.
- State that the stages are related to the stages of human development.
 - During these stages, as children develop, they are given increasingly more responsibilities that build upon their character and survival skills.
 - During adolescent years, personal power is not only desired but necessary to prepare for adulthood.
- Mention how personal power can foster self-development.
- Remind participants that it is important to be intentional in supporting personal power and encouraging self-management.

Step 4

- Ask participants to form four groups.
- Distribute and review **Handout 4d** and assign separate goal areas to each group.
 - Goal areas include:
 - Managing Julie’s relationships
 - Managing Julie’s wardrobe
 - Managing Julie’s daily schedule
 - Managing Julie’s curfew

Step 5

- Ask each group to develop strategies that encourage self-management for their assigned goal area.
- Provide the following example:
 - Goal area—Managing Julie’s diet
 - Personal power:
 - **None**
Julie eats what is provided to her.
There is no discretionary money for snack food.
 - **Limited**
Julie expresses her opinion.
Julie can watch cooking shows but is not allowed to eat the food.
 - **Moderate**
Julie is offered the option of eating a school lunch or bringing a brown bag lunch.
Julie can order from the menu in a restaurant with adult approval.
 - **Extensive**
Julie is involved in developing household menus.
Julie makes her own snacks and meals when eating alone.
 - **Self-managing**
Julie goes out to eat and orders what she wants.
Julie prepares household meals on her own.

Step 6

- Ask groups to write their strategies on separate half sheets of paper.

Note: Distribute different colored half sheets to each group.

- Invite groups to present their goal areas and the incremental steps for youth self-management and to place their half sheets on the sticky wall.

Step 7

- ❑ Facilitate a discussion by asking the following questions:
 - “What was challenging in this activity?”
 - “What did you find easy?”
 - “Why is this approach important in working with youth in care?”
 - “What challenges or barriers from a foster parent might inhibit a youth from becoming self-managing?”
 - “How can development outcome areas influence a youth’s ability and motivation for becoming self-managing?”
 - “What are some messages a youth might hear about their personal power?”

Step 8

- ❑ Mention to participants that youth might be self-managing in one aspect of their lives but not in others.
 - Becoming self-managing depends upon skills, opportunities, supports and development areas.
- ❑ Remind participants that it is important to be intentional in encouraging self-management.

Step 9

- ❑ Ask participants to complete box 2 on **Handout 1c**.

Session 4—Activity 4.4

Incorporating Youth as Participants and Resources

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to identify skills that encourage youth self-management.

Materials needed

- Flip chart, markers and tape
- Half sheets

Time

30 minutes

Procedure

Step 1

- Ask participants to remain in their groups.
- Ask each group to identify those skills that workers and caregivers need to support youth to become self-managing.
- Ask groups to pay particular attention to the challenges and barriers previously discussed.

Step 2

- Ask groups to write their responses on half sheets and place them on the sticky wall.

Step 3

- Facilitate a discussion by asking the following questions:
 - “Are any skill areas missing?”
 - “Are you surprised with any identified skill areas?”
 - “Do any of these skill areas seem unreasonable?”
 - “How can caseworkers promote these skill areas with caregivers?”
 - “Are you comfortable in encouraging youth to become self-managing?”
 - “Are the systems we work in comfortable with encouraging youth to become self-managing?”

Step 4

- Wrap up this activity by highlighting the benefits of youth participation and self-management.
- Emphasize the importance of creating opportunities for promoting interdependence, teaching skills and contributing to positive youth development outcomes.
- Remind participants that youth participation is an integral component to promoting positive youth development.

Session 4—Activity 4.5

Recognizing Personal Power

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to identify levels of power through case scenarios.

Materials Needed

- Handouts 4e and 4f

Time

20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Print the embedded evaluation score sheet (**Handout 4f**) on NCR paper so that each participant can hand one copy in and keep the other one.

Procedure

Step 1

- Explain the purpose of this second evaluation—to see if the training is working well and if participants are able to apply the concepts to some case scenarios.
- Tell participants that this evaluation is to see how the group is doing, not how individuals are doing.

Step 2

- Give each participant a set of descriptions (**Handout 4e**) and score sheets (**Handout 4f**).
- Ask participants to complete the demographics section on the score sheets.
- Note that their names will not go on this paper so the results will be anonymous.

Step 3

- Ask participants to read each description and to score where it falls on the continuum of participation and power.
- Review the continuum to reinforce participants' understanding of the scale from “none” through “self-managing.”

Step 4

- Pass out **Handout 4e**.
- Tell participants that they can use **Handout 4c** to help them make their scoring decisions.

Step 5

- Once participants have finished, collect the top sheets.

Step 6

- Discuss each description using the Trainer's Notes.
- Be sure to ask participants whether they think the level of participation and power is appropriate to this situation.
- Thank the participants for helping to evaluate the effectiveness of this curriculum.

Session 4—Embedded Evaluation #2

Trainer's Notes

Interaction 1

Moderate

Thomas gets to have some input, but the adults make the decisions based upon current group home policy and practices.

Interaction 2

Self-managing

Tyron and the other youth are fully managing this outing.

Interaction 3

None

Celia has no say in this situation.

Interaction 4

Extensive

Randy has identified the issue (set the agenda) and has made decisions and has joint accountability with the caregivers (the RTC staff and his uncle).

Interaction 5

Limited

In this case the judge has set the parameters. The worker attempts to make sure the youth is consulted, but it is unclear if his views will be heeded.

Session 4—Activity 4.6

Wrap-up

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to recall session information and learning.

Materials

- Flip chart, markers and tape
- Journal
- Handout 4g

Time

10 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Write words and phrases that capture the essence of this session on the flip chart. Some words or phrases include:
 - Youth as resources
 - Participation
 - Power
 - Engaging youth
 - Meaningful
 - Self-directed
 - Powerful
- Cut quotes from **Handout 4g** into separate slips.

Procedure

Step 1

- Invite participants to recall what stood out for them in Session 4 and its relevance to their work.

Step 2

- Review highlights of the session by referring to words and phrases captured on the flip chart.
- Relate the session to learning from previous sessions and discuss how this session leads to the next one on strategies promoting positive youth development.
- Review comments made during this session (or contained within the survey information) regarding difficulties due to relationship issues between youth in care and adults working with the foster care system.
- Mention that incorporating youth as participants and resources is a worthwhile strategy in meeting development needs.

Step 3

- Direct participants to ask 3–4 youth the following questions from **Introduction Handout a** before the next session:
 - “Why is it important for youth in care to have real life experiences?”
 - “What opportunities are important for youth to learn to become self-sufficient?”

Step 4

- Invite participants to complete Session 4 of their journals.

Step 5

- Remind participants of the next training date and time, to complete their

interview questions and to bring handout materials with them to the next training.

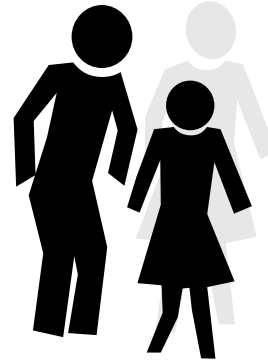
Step 6

- Pass around a basket or envelope with the quotes from **Handout 4g** and ask participants to draw one.
- Invite each participant to read their quote aloud to the group.

Session 4—Handout 4a

Value of Youth Participation

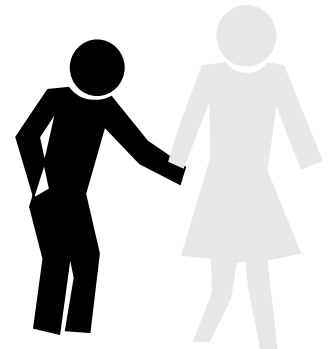
Discover youth desires—not what adults say are youth desires and needs.



Youth are more willing to follow rules they help make.

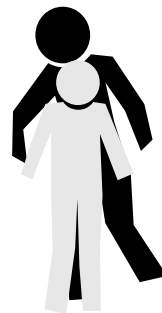
Youth develop social skills and move into the fabric of society.

Youth engage in activities that immediately result in a higher quality of life.



Youth reach out to other youth that need help.

Youth participation creates a momentum for such participation in other locations and institutions.



Session 4—Handout 4b

Opportunities for Participation Should Be:

Meaningful

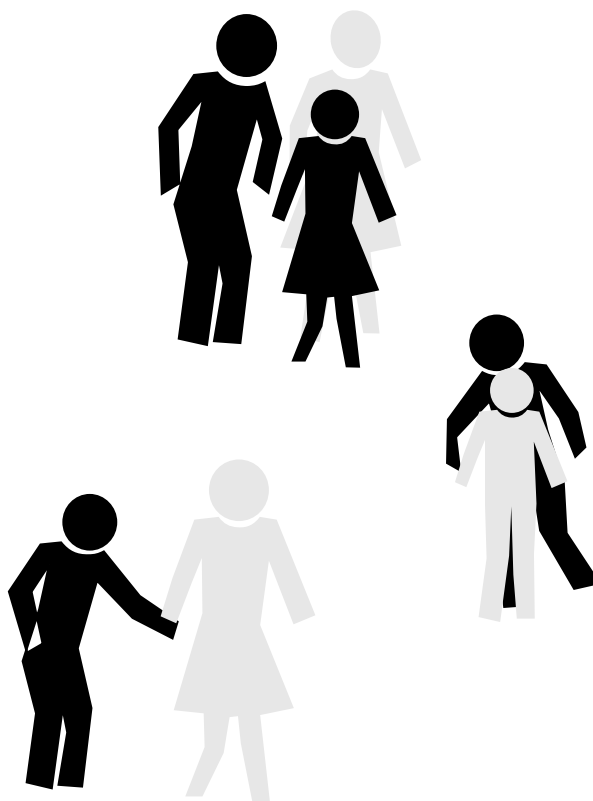
Youth meet real needs and make real contributions

Self-directed

Youth make the decisions about what they do and how they do it, with advice, supervision and training

Powerful

Youth have a real influence on their lives and in their environment



From

Pittman, K., Irby, M., Tolman, J., Yohalem, N., & Ferber, T. (2001, September).

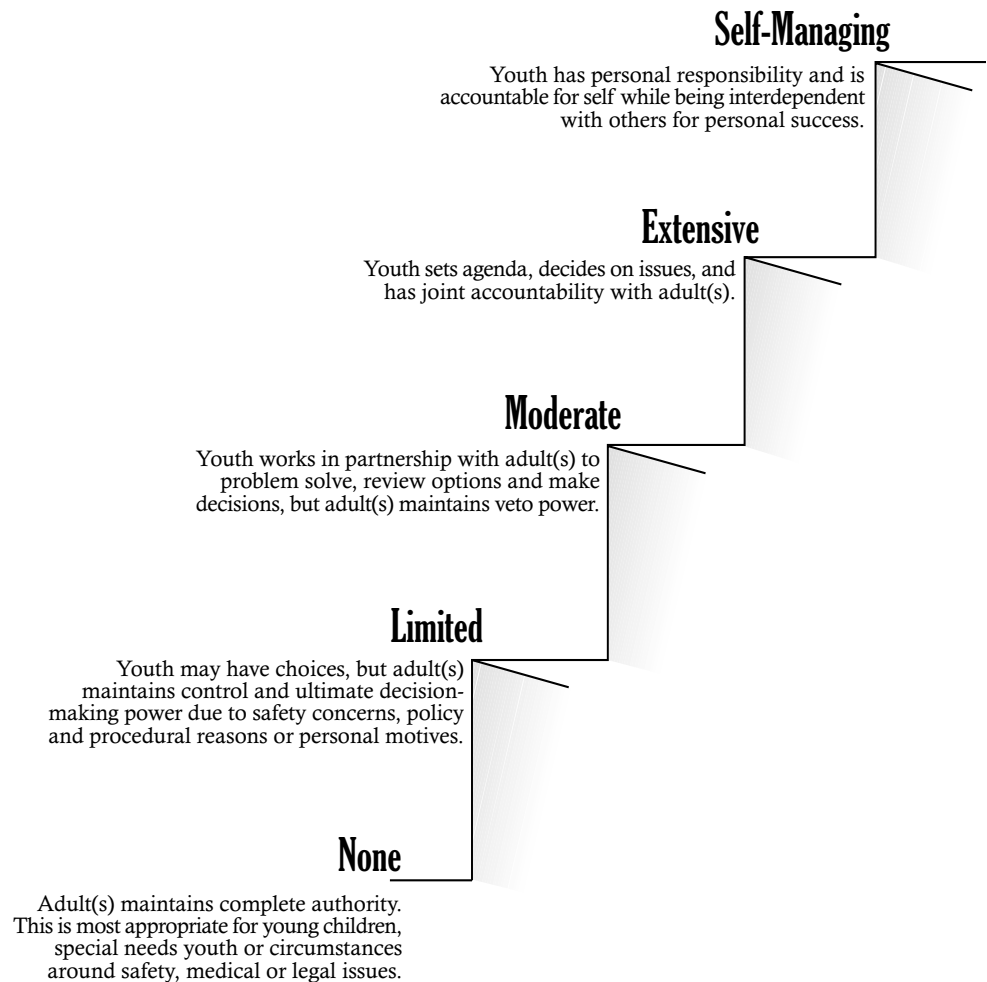
Preventing problems, promoting development, encouraging engagement: Competing priorities or inseparable goals? Takoma Park, MD: Forum for Youth Investment.

Understanding Personal Power from a Youth Perspective

Why is personal power important?

A healthy sense of personal power leads to confidence, healthy decision-making, self-accountability and other personal attributes that shape how individuals interact with the world around them. A lack of personal power may lead to low self-esteem, dependence on others, relationship struggles, substance abuse, promiscuity, violence and/or lack of motivation.

Increasing personal power works best when the youth's developmental capabilities are recognized. Providing intentional, planned opportunities to learn with support can increase the youth's personal power in various life arenas. Most individuals' levels of personal power will increase and decrease according to their life situations and experiences.



Adapted From

Zeldin, S. (1996). *Advancing youth development curriculum*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research.

Case Scenario

Julie is the 15 year-old foster child of Melissa and David Taylor. She has been in the Taylor foster home for ten months. Julie has been in foster care since she was 13. She was removed from her mother's home due to chronic neglect and mild abuse. Julie's mother is an alcoholic who provided very little supervision or basic essentials throughout the years. Julie had been in placement briefly when she was 10 and 11. At both times, her mother achieved sobriety, and the case was closed. With this last placement, Julie's mother was unable to achieve or maintain sobriety and has been living on the streets. Julie has continued contact with her mother, but understands that reunification is not an option.

Managing her relationships

Julie has a younger sister and brother who live with an aunt and uncle. Due to limited resources, they were unable to have Julie live with them but welcome her for visits whenever possible. Julie also has extended family living outside of the state that she hasn't seen since she was 9 years old. Julie's current foster home is in the same school district that she has grown up in so she has a variety of peers and adults who have known her for most of her life. She enjoys the company of others and is very outgoing, but the Taylors are reluctant to allow Julie overnight or weekend visits away.

Managing her wardrobe

Julie is currently in the 9th grade and is an average student. She is beginning to express interest in boys, particularly those older than herself. She would like to wear clothes of the latest fashion (skimpy, tight, revealing) but her foster parents continue to determine what clothes to purchase for Julie, even though she has her own money to spend. Julie also has to pass a dress code by her foster parents before she is allowed to leave the house (i.e., shoulders and belly button covered, neat and clean clothes, brushed hair, no short skirts or shorts).

Managing her day

The Taylors are accustomed to setting the household rules, which at times is a source of conflict with Julie. Julie complains that the Taylors are rigid in the schedule of the day and won't let Julie determine when to clean her room or make personal phone calls. As Julie has become more interested in extra-curricular activities at school this has become more of an issue for Julie and Mr. and Ms. Taylor.

Managing her curfew

Julie has also been involved in a local theater group where practice and performance keep her out beyond the household curfew. The Taylors are not comfortable with curfew hours after 10, but realize theater is something important to Julie. They would like to be more flexible, but worry about Julie's increasing interest in boys and her budding sexuality.

The Taylors worry about Julie and their responsibilities to the foster care system. They continue to participate in foster parent training and support groups but are unsure how to adjust their approach with Julie. They fear that relinquishing some control and rules will make their lives chaotic.

Embedded Evaluation #2

Five Interactions Between A Youth and Adults—Rating the Level of Participation and Power

Interaction 1

Thomas, age 16, has been talking with his group home parents and his caseworker about the job he will be getting soon. He will work at the amusement park about five miles from the group home. His group home parents have brought up the issue of transportation. While there is a bus, it runs infrequently and Thomas wants to get home in any way that makes sense to him, including catching rides with friends and hitchhiking. He says it makes sense to wait up to 15 minutes for a bus, but no longer, and he wants the flexibility to get home however he wants. The caseworker says that hitchhiking is out of the question; the agency won't allow youth in foster care to hitchhike. The group home parents and the caseworker remind Thomas of the group home policy that they would consider a ride with a friend or co-worker, but only after meeting the person. Thomas will not be allowed to catch a ride with a friend or co-worker if the foster parents haven't met and approved of that person.

What level of personal power does Thomas have in determining how to return home?

Interaction 2

Tyron, age 15, lives at the Mercer group home with three other foster youth ages 12 - 16. Tyron, by his exemplary behavior, is on the highest level at the group home and has a fair amount of autonomy. On behalf of the others, Tyron has planned a trip to see the major league baseball team play next month. The group home has been given tickets by a civic club. Tyron and the other youth have worked out their transportation (take the bus) and have each set aside some money for buying snacks. Tyron got a map of the stadium off the Internet and they have located their seats. Tyron called the bus company and got the time schedule. He asked for the Mercer's cell phone in case they needed to be in contact, and they thought this was a good idea.

What level of personal power does Tyron have in planning this outing?

Interaction 3

Celia, age 17, was picked up by the police while she was on the run. She left her foster home two days ago, after being confronted for having marijuana in her room. She was picked up at the mall and was intoxicated. She said she had stayed with some friends but wouldn't give names. Her foster parents readily took her back, but she would be grounded for two weeks and have to provide a urine sample. Another run would mean expulsion, they warned.

What level of personal power does Celia have in determining the conditions under which she returned to the foster home?

Interaction 4

Randy, age 17, is on the highest level of freedom at his residential treatment center (RTC). He has liberal use of the phone and can stay out until 11 with friends on Pass Night. If he is going to be more than 10 minutes late, he needs to call and have a good explanation. Randy decides he wants to stay the weekend with his uncle, who is approved by the Agency for visits. Randy has told the RTC counselor that he wants to stay with his uncle from Friday at 6 p.m. until Sunday at 2 p.m., and that he plans to go with friends to a concert Saturday night and return home at 2 a.m. The RTC and his uncle discuss and approve this. Randy is to wake up his uncle when he returns so

that the uncle can be sure he is home and check him for signs of drug use. Also, Randy can not go to any raves. Randy agrees.

What level of personal power does Randy have in achieving his goal of going to the concert on Saturday night?

Interaction 5

Daniel, 16, is unhappy. After being stopped for a cracked headlight while driving a friend's car, a traffic court judge ordered him into community service and driver's education. Daniel does not have a license because neither the group home nor his Agency will allow him to drive. Daniel grew up on a farm and says he has been driving since he was ten. He believes he is a good driver and there is no contrary evidence. He simply has no license. The caseworker asked Daniel what kind of community service he would prefer—although the judge may or may not be willing to consider the caseworker's opinion.

What level of personal power does Daniel have in determining what kind of community service he will have to perform?

Session 4—Handout 4f

Evaluation #2: Score Sheet

Today's date _____

Which best describes your role:

caseworker

supervisor

IL worker

other (specify) _____

How long have you worked with youth in some capacity?

____ years and ____ months

First names of your trainers: _____, _____

Select the level of personal power that BEST reflects each interaction by marking an X in the cell.

#	None	Limited	Moderate	Extensive	Self-Managing
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Session 4—Handout 4g

Words of Advice from Youth in Care—Youth Quotes from IL Project Survey

- ★ There's always room for learning and improvement.
- ★ Be open-minded.
- ★ Talk with us—not at us.
- ★ Children need encouragement and support.
- ★ Be on our level—understand our needs.
- ★ Put yourself in our situation.
- ★ Let us do things on our own.
- ★ Set a good example.
- ★ Be real.
- ★ Be honest and provide encouragement.
- ★ Communicate your thoughts.
- ★ Give me ideas.
- ★ Be supportive and listen.
- ★ Believe in me.
- ★ Don't give up on me.
- ★ Give me more of a voice on things that I really need to know to help support me.
- ★ Learn from me.
- ★ We need to learn from a role model.
- ★ Let me be part of decision-making and make my own decisions.
- ★ Give me options and let me make my own mistakes.
- ★ Give me a chance to correct a problem behavior rather than sending me to another placement.
- ★ Teach me how to take care of myself.
- ★ Include me in all plans.
- ★ Visit me more often.
- ★ Support my thoughts and opinions.
- ★ Give me a weekend experience on my own.
- ★ Be flexible and patient.
- ★ Motivate me.
- ★ Give me hands on experiences.
- ★ Let me see my family.
- ★ Set up a camp to show the real intent of living on your own.
- ★ Try to do things on time.
- ★ Help me get a car.
- ★ Get more involved with me.
- ★ Show love and respect for me.
- ★ Talk more with me.
- ★ Give me examples of youth in IL and how the program has allowed them to succeed.
- ★ Don't push me to be perfect.
- ★ Encourage me to go to school and not give up.
- ★ Give me examples of youth in IL and how the program has allowed them to succeed.
- ★ Encourage me to always strive for the best in life
- ★ Give me more feedback and guidance towards actually moving out on my own.

