

Youth-Guided Definition

Youth Guided means that young people have the right to be empowered, educated, and given a decision making role in the care of their own lives as well as the policies and procedures governing care for all youth in the community, state and nation. This includes giving young people a sustainable voice and the focus should be towards creating a safe environment enabling a young person to gain self-sustainability in accordance to their culture and beliefs. Through the eyes of a youth guided approach we are aware that there is a continuum of power and choice that young people should have based on their understanding and maturity in this strength-based change process. Youth guided also means that this process should be fun and worthwhile.

We proposed that the process of moving from youth guided, to youth directed, to youth driven happens at 3 levels: youth involvement at the individual youth level, the community and policy making level. This list illustrates what should be happening at each stage in the process as the young person makes their transition into adulthood.

**** Youth should be young people who have experience as consumers and are or would be the youth served in a system of care community.**

Youth Guided

<u>Youth Guided Individual</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth is engaged in the idea that change is possible in his or her life and the systems that serve him or her. • Youth need to feel safe, cared for, valued, useful and spiritually grounded. • The program needs to enable youth to learn and build skills that allow them to function and give back in their daily lives • There is a development and practice of leadership and advocacy skills, and a place where equal partnership is valued. • Youth are empowered in their planning process from the beginning and have a voice in what will work for them. • Youth receive training on systems players, their rights, purpose of the system and youth involvement and development opportunities.
<u>Youth Guided Community</u>	<p>Community partners and stakeholders have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An open minded viewpoint and there are decreased stereotypes about youth. • Prioritized youth involvement and input during planning and/or meetings. • A desire to involve youth • Begun stages of partnership with youth. • Begun to use language supporting youth engagement. • Taken the youth view and opinion into account. • A minimum of one youth partner with experience and/or expertise in the systems represented. • Begun to encourage and listen to the views and opinions of the involved youth, rather than minimize their importance. • Created open and safe spaces for youth • Youth are compensated for their work.

<p><u>Youth Guided Policy</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are invited to meetings • Training and support is provided for youth on what the meeting is about • Youth and board are beginning to understand the role of youth at the policy-making level • Youth can speak on their experiences (even if it is not in perfect form) and talk about what's really going on with young people. • Adults value what youth have to say in an advisory capacity. • Youth have limited power in decision making. • Youth have an appointed mentor who is a regular attendee of the meetings and makes sure that the youth feels comfortable to express his or herself and clearly understands the process. • Youth are compensated for their work.
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Youth Directed

<p>Youth Directed Individual</p>	<p>The young person is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still in the learning process. • Forming relationships with people who are supporting them and are learning ways to communicate with team members. • Developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of the systems and processes. • Able to make decisions with team support in the treatment process and has an understanding of consequences. • In a place where they can share his or her story to create change. • Not in a consistent period of crisis and his or her basic needs are met.
<p>Youth Directed Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth have positions and voting power on community boards and committees. • Youth are recruiting other youth to be involved throughout the community. • There is increased representation of youth advocates, and board and committee members throughout the community. • Everyone is responsible for encouraging youth voice and active participation. • Community members respect the autonomy of youth voice. • The community is less judgmental about the youth in their community • Youth are compensated for their work.
<p>Youth Directed Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth understand the power they have to create change at a policy making level. • Youth are in a place where they understand the process behind developing policy and have experience being involved. • Youth have an enhanced skill set to direct change. • Youth have understanding of the current policy issues effecting young

	<p>people and be able to articulate their opinion on the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy makers are in a place where they respect youth opinions and make change based on their suggestions. • All parties are fully engaged in youth activities and make youth engagement a priority. • Youth receive increased training and support in their involvement. • There is increased dialogue during meetings about youth opinions and action is taken. • There is increased representation of youth and a decrease in tokenism. • Equal partnership is evident. • Youth are compensated for their work.
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Youth Driven

<p>Youth Driven Individual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The youth describes his or her vision for the future. • The youth sets goals for treatment with input from team. • The youth is aware of his or her options and is able to utilize and apply his or her knowledge of resources. • Youth fully understands his or her roles and responsibilities on the team. • The youth and all members of the treatment team are equal partners and listen and act upon youth decisions. • The youth facilitates open lines of communication and there is mutual respect between youth and adults • The youth is able to stand on his or her own and take responsibility for his or her choices with the support of the team. • The youth knows how to communicate his or her needs. • Youth are mentors and peer advocates for other youth. • Youth are giving presentations based on personal experiences and knowledge. • The youth is making the transition into adulthood.
<p>Youth Driven Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partners are dedicated to authentic youth involvement. Community partners listen to youth and make changes accordingly. • Young people have a safe place to go and be heard throughout the community. • There are multiple paid positions for youth in every decision making group throughout the system of care and in the community. • Youth are compensated for their work. • Youth form and facilitate youth groups in communities. • Youth provide training in the community based on personal experiences and knowledge.

Youth Driven Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth are calling meetings and setting agendas in the policy making arena• Youth assign roles to collaboration members to follow through on policy.• Youth hold trainings on policy making for youth and adults.• Youth inform the public about current policies and have a position platform.• Youth lead research to drive policy change.• Youth have the knowledge and ability to educate the community on important youth issues.• Youth are able to be self advocates and peer advocates in the policy making process.• Youth are compensated for their work.• Community members and policy makers support youth to take the lead and make changes.
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Youth Driven

Youth, initiated, planned and executed in partnership with others
Expert level of understanding

Youth advocate for other young people

Youth Directed

Continuing with Youth Guided process
In a safe place (not in continual crisis)
Taking a more active decision making role in treatment and within the system of care (policy, etc)

Increased knowledge of services and resources
Deeper understand of the system

Youth Guided

Knowledge of services
Beginning to research and ask questions about resources
Beginning to understand the process of the system and services

Voice in identifying needs and supports
Learning how to self advocate
Articulate experience and what helps and what harms

Education

Foundation

Awareness

Foundation

Resources

Foundation

Support

Foundation

Philosophies