



Youth Thrive Guiding Premises

(Adapted from the Youth Thrive Trainer Guide: Protective and Promotive Factors for Healthy Development, Version 3.0, p.19)

Youth Thrive's **Guiding Premises** are they key values for workers when using the Youth Thrive Framework and a central part of the Youth Thrive staff training curriculum. The Premises a complement to the Youth Thrive Protective and Promotive Factors, which apply to individual adolescent development and wellbeing. The Premises apply to workers' interaction and practice with youth and families, as workers/staff engage and partner with youth to identify and build their Protective Factors. The Premises also address personal and systemic barriers, such as trauma, racism and other biases, that impact young people, families, and communities.

The Guiding Premises are:

- **Self-Awareness:** Young people are best supported by practitioners who understand and recognize the importance of self-awareness and self-care in their own professional practice. Self-care helps workers and supervisors, as well as youth and parents, learn what it takes to rejuvenate during stressful times.
- **Impact of Trauma and Importance of Healing.** Young people are best supported by practitioners who are aware of the impact of traumatic stress and use trauma-informed practices and healing centered engagement to promote understanding and healing in youth. Trauma-informed practice focuses on helping youth understand what has happened to them and the subsequent impact on their thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Healing centered engagement advances this work, by acknowledging that trauma and healing are both collectively experienced, and that critical components of healing include restoration of identity and collective action to address root causes of trauma.

- **Asset and Strength-Based Focus.** Young people are best served by practitioners who focus on assets and use strength-based approaches. Strength-based practice engages youth as partners while engaging in the case assessment, planning, and decision-making process. Strengths-based practices provide youth with opportunities to focus on what they do well and what they need to improve; to practice new skills; and to safely learn from their experiences. By having “voice and choice” in their case planning process, youth are more involved in what happens to them and are valued for who they are and what they can do.
- **Use of Relationships.** Young people are best supported by practitioners who understand that attachments, connections, and relationships are a primary source of growth and learning. It is in relationships that young people come to understand themselves and others; learn to trust and heal from trauma; form an identity; practice new skills; learn to give/ receive feedback; and become secure, resilient adults.
- **Impact of racism, discrimination, and bias.** Young people are best supported by practitioners who understand issues of race, racism and implicit bias; and the ways in which race, class, ethnicity, privilege, and power shape the young person’s life – as well as the practitioner’s life. Larger historical, environmental and societal forces – such as poverty, gender, homophobia, and racism – can have a negative effect on children, youth, families, and communities, and can also result in inequities in how public systems operate. Youth who live in neighborhoods that are marginalized, under-valued, and under-resourced by society are often disproportionately represented in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- **Cultural Responsiveness and Humility.** Young people are best supported by practitioners who have respect for and understand their own culture, the culture of youth served and their larger community, as well as the culture that is created within programs, organizations, and the wider community. This means acknowledging what one does not know and being open to learning from one another. It also means making intentional efforts to understand the negative impact of institutional racism, implicit bias and other forms of discrimination based on culture, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

