DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH AGE GROUP	TIPS for EACH STEP of the EXPERIENTIAL		
AGES 15 to 19	LEARNING CYCLE		
Social needs and desires are high	Experience		
□ Interested in co-educational activities	Provide opportunities for self-expression—emphasize		
□ Want and need a strong voice in planning programs	leadership life skills related to social development		
□ Want adult leadership roles	Provide some experiences around body image, etiquette,		
□ Have interest areas that are more consistent with earlier	grooming, hair styles, health and fitness, etc.—avoid comments		
ones—patterns of interest are emerging	that criticize or compare stature, size, or shape!		
 Often need guidance in selecting careers Beginning to think about leaving home for college, 	Provide activities to test out interactions with the opposite sex		
 Beginning to think about leaving home for college, employment, marriage, or other relationships 	such as trips, dances, work groups, etc.		
 Developing community consciousness 	 Provide opportunities for learners to talk about their own beliefs Plan some group time where learners can discuss ideas and 		
Developing community consciousness	Plan some group time where learners can discuss ideas and abstract concepts such as current political issues, world peace,		
	virtual reality, etc.		
	 Involve learners in carrying out plans—they are ready to be 		
	creative at a level of action, and they are at a level of		
	responsibility to do this		
	Plan activities where learners can experiment with different		
	roles		
	Encourage greater in-depth study of leadership roles and life		
	skills		
	□ Involve learners in more direct developmental activities such as		
	tutoring, helping coach, leading groups, speaking to community		
	groups, mentoring younger children, etc.—activities that place them "in front" of others		
	 Encourage learners to plan programs (even social activities) 		
	with guidance and support from and involving adults		
	 Support learners as they set, work to reach, and evaluate long- 		
	term goals		
	Encourage working with adult role models—emphasize		
	guidance and counsel from adults rather than controlling		
	direction		
	□ Be willing to admit mistakes as an adult!		
	<u>Share</u>		
	• Ask learners what new information they learned in the activities		
	□ Challenge learners to interpret and creatively communicate		
	learnings through symbols, pictures, graphs, etc.		

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		Ask learners to share personal strengths accessed in the activities		
		Ask learners to share how they prioritized roles and functions in		
		completed activities		
		Ask learners to share what constraints they encountered in the		
		educational activities		
		Ask learners to share emotions and feelings witnessed in the		
		activities		
		Ask learners to share personal and group risks associated with		
		the activities completed		
		Ask learners to summarize how the group made decisions		
	_	together throughout the activities		
		Ask learners to detail personal and group records kept in the		
	D	activities completed		
Process				
		Ask learners how the activities could have been structured		
		differently to more efficiently accomplish the same educational		
	_	goals		
		Ask learners to describe or demonstrate how they compensated		
		for unexpected challenges and changes in the activities		
		Ask learners to detail resources needed (available and missing)		
		to complete activities just finished Ask learners to list adjustments made in behavior and plans		
		while completing the activities		
		Ask learners to generate and evaluate additional alternatives to		
	-	activities completed		
		Ask learners to share personal value criteria they used in the		
		activities completed—if in a trusting relationship, ask them to		
		compare what they did to what they SHOULD have done in		
		certain situations		
		Ask learners to describe underlying rules or principles at play in		
		the activities completed and how they influenced the results		
	Genera	alize		
		Ask learners to identify related instances where they need to		
		convey personal opinions and ideas to persuade or convince		
		others		
		Ask learners to speculate long-term consequences of results of		
		the activities completed		

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	Ask learners to identify skills used in their group that are also
	needed in the workplace
	Ask learners how they contribute to the well being of their
	families in similar ways to their participation in this group
	Challenge learners to find answers to similar problems
	Encourage application of leadership life skills to living on their
	own—incorporate budgeting and money management
	applications in activities
	Assist learners in making related wise, healthy, and safe lifestyle
	choices
	Construct experiences that expose learners to and involve them
	with the larger society
Apply	
	Support learners as they design follow-up related independent
	learning experiences
	Ask learners to develop plans for future life transitions
	Assist learners in applying leadership life skills to career
	exploration—especially decision making
	Offer Career or College Days—including the wide spectrum of
	options (not just white collar positions)
	Encourage career exploration within specific subject matter—
	offer vocational activities
	Arrange or locate internships (paid and unpaid) based on skill-
	specific career interests
	Provide activities (actual and theoretical) to explore the job
	market
	Encourage learning activities involving the community such as
	service groups, political parties, Habitat for Humanity, ecology,
	Adopt a Highway, etc.—involve them as spokespersons for the
	activities
	Provide guidance and support to learners as they work to meet
	actual and real community needs
	Organize experiences for learners outside of their own
	community