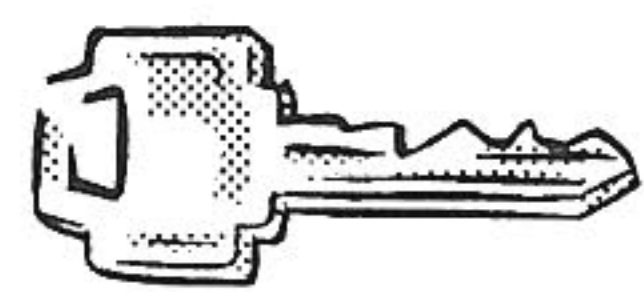


7 Ongoing Training and Support

The key to all effective teenager teaching programs is ongoing training and support. Even programs that provide comprehensive high-quality initial training offer ongoing training to the teen teachers.



Key Research Findings

- Successful programs provided frequent and regular training throughout the teaching experience.
- Effective, ongoing training included opportunities to debrief teaching experiences and to impart new knowledge and skills.
- Effective, ongoing training moved the group from the basics to higher levels of understanding and the skill to problem solve and think on their feet.
- Successful programs continued to foster team building and included opportunities for teenagers to give feedback (see chapter 12) to one another and to resolve work conflicts.
- Teenagers needed to be given increasingly greater responsibility in order to progress in their training.

“You can go over and over this stuff, but when you’re in the situation...that’s when the questions come up. So I’m a firm believer in ongoing training.”

—PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Tips from the Field

- Begin each session with an icebreaker activity. Have the teenagers choose and lead these activities.
- Give clear, timely feedback (see chapter 12). Give feedback of a general and positive nature to the entire group but give sensitive feedback to individuals in private.
- Introduce a new activity or technique at each session to keep the training fun and interesting.
- Adjust the program curriculum and retrain as needed. Give teenagers opportunities to make adjustments.
- Promote conflict resolution for settling disputes.

Conflict Resolution: Win-Win Guidelines

- Take time to cool off. Take a walk or count to 10.
- Have each person express thoughts and feelings about the conflict without blaming, name calling, or interrupting each other.
- Have each person state the other person’s point of view.
- Have each person explain his or her own responsibility for the problem.
- Brainstorm solutions and find one agreeable to both.
- Let conflicting parties know that even if they disagree on the issue, they should still respect each another.