

# A Training for Youth Workers, Coaches, and Volunteers.

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THIS IS A JOINT PROJECT BY THE ARMORY YOUTH PROJECT AND THE MANISTEE RECREATION ASSOCIATION. SUPPORT WAS PROVIDED BY THE MANISTEE PREVENTION COALITION (SEA-SUBSTANCE, EDUCATION, & AWARENESS) 2020.

- # Topics we will cover:

1. How to Bond with Youth and Why
  2. Using a Trauma Informed Approach
  3. Using Non-Judgmental Language
  4. Managing Anger
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# Objectives

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**After viewing this training participants should be able to:**

1. Name at least three components to gain youth's trust and bonding
2. Name at least two things you can do to decrease triggering trauma in youth
3. Understand why it works and apply using language such as “high and low risk” when talking with youth.
4. Feel more confident in helping a youth work through their anger AND be able to name at least one approach to managing your own anger.



Part 1.  
Social Development  
Strategy: a.k.a. “how to  
BOND with youth”

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## 3 Parts-

1. Opportunity
2. Skills
3. Recognition



# SDS in more detail . . .

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This is a strategy that the evidenced based program Communities That Care uses when teaching adults how to build a relationship with youth. The visual (above) shows how all the pieces of this fit together for a result of healthier behaviors. This is what we all work toward as parents, coaches, youth staff, etc. This may not be “new” information, but this explanation helps us understand the importance and potential power of our roles with youth.

Let’s think about this for a minute . . . Do you feel motivated to follow rules where you have no connection to a program or person? Or worse, a negative connection? Of course not. We must create a positive bond with youth in order to have the greatest impact.

Opportunities: Youth who have joined a sports team or attend a youth center are handing us the opportunity to teach skills. Coaches especially can be awesome at teaching a skill (it's what you do right?) It's important to understand the youth you want to create a bond with so you can create opportunities for them in an area that interests them. Perhaps it is learning a new sport, learning how to cook, learning a game, earning money through chores (mowing the lawn, washing dishes). The idea is the opportunity doesn't have to be grand- it can be whatever relates to the present moment.





Skills: It is important to break the activity into steps and teach the youth the how, why, and what of the activity. Examples of this include how to mow a straight line, how to load a dishwasher, how to hold a bat and swing, how to hold a ball to throw it.

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**Recognition:** As the youth practice their new skills it is important to recognize their efforts and progress. This can be a simple “great job”, “you are getting better”, or even paying them for a job well done (for mowing). “Look at how healthy and happy your pet is, when you make sure they have food and water, and brush them, you are helping them”. You get the idea.



Bonding: Bonding happens through teaching the skills and recognizing the youth's efforts. We all feel connected and warm when we are recognized for our efforts. Once you have a bond started with youth, keep it going.

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**Clear Standards**: When you have a bond with youth, you have a lot of power to influence their choices. Setting examples of clear standards helps guide the youth in moving toward healthy behaviors. Clear standards can become a part of the team “rules” or “code of conduct”. Teaching youth what good sportsmanship is and the importance of taking care of their bodies (you can emphasize no drugs or alcohol use), are all examples.

**Healthy Behaviors**: Since youth are bonded, they will be more likely to make low risk or healthy choices. They will be less likely to turn to drugs and alcohol. They have more protective factors!



Communities That Care, 2020,

Retrieved from: <https://>

[www.communitiesthatcare.net/how-ctc-works/social-development-strategy/](https://www.communitiesthatcare.net/how-ctc-works/social-development-strategy/).

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# Part 2:

# Trauma Informed Work With Youth

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- Being Trauma informed means you are assuming some of the youth (perhaps most) have experienced some sort of trauma in their life, which can impact their interactions with you and the rest of the world.
- Trauma does not have to be “significant” (i.e. living through war, severe physical abuse, witnessing abuse, etc.). What could be considered “insignificant” can truly make a mark (cause trauma) on a person (i.e. not feeling loved, neglect, being told you are not enough growing up, being restricted from seeing friends and attending school due to COVID-19, etc.).
- Small things we do as adults can make a big difference in helping youth feel safe and supported.

# Trauma Informed Strategies

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1. Create a predictable and consistent routine
2. Expect some youth will react unexpectedly to a new idea or situation- don't take it personal
3. Be positive and supportive when giving constructive feedback
4. Point out a youth's strengths
5. Offer choices when you are able
6. Limit exclusionary practices (sitting in time out, ignoring, sending the youth home). These techniques can trigger abandonment.
7. Ask before physically touching a child- high fives, handshakes, etc. are great to offer.





Remember the question:  
It's not "What is wrong  
with you?" rather "What  
happened to you?".

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## Reference:

Minahan, J. (2019). Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies. Retrieved from: [http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership/oct19/vol77/num02/Trauma-Informed\\_Teaching\\_Strategies.aspx#:~:text=When%20teachers%20are%20proactive%20and,in%20their%20ability%20to%20learn.](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/oct19/vol77/num02/Trauma-Informed_Teaching_Strategies.aspx#:~:text=When%20teachers%20are%20proactive%20and,in%20their%20ability%20to%20learn.)

# Part 3. Non- Judgmental Language

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English language

Hi!

Hello!

Goodbye!

How are you?



# What we say and how we say it matter.

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## Examples:

High Risk Choice Vs. Bad Choice

Low Risk Choice Vs. Good Choice

(“bad” and “good” are full of judgement).

Changing what we say puts the responsibility on the youth and allows them to think about it. Telling them they are wrong or bad can shut them down. We want to preserve our relationship while providing guidance and support.

## Use open ended questions:

How does that make you feel?

What do you think will happen/could happen?

How are your friends respecting your choices?

What could get in the way of you - working, getting good grades, making the team?, etc.

Let's look at what the experts say about this: (help the youth access valid information)



# Part 4. Anger (the five letter word)

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WE HAVE ALL BEEN HERE, LIKE IT  
OR NOT.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOUTH  
EXPRESS STRONG EMOTIONS?

## What's in it for you?



Why? Anger is a mixture of emotions and results when our system is overwhelmed. Staying at home can cause us to miss out on so many things we enjoy and in response we grieve. Part of grieving can be feeling angry. Angry at not being able to go out, financial stress, see our friends and extended family, not go on vacation, or just plain not get time to ourselves. If we can identify when we are feeling down, sad, overwhelmed, then we can try and take extra care of ourselves. Acknowledging how we feel (Identifying our feelings out loud) can be a big help.

# Steps for Managing Anger

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## STARR-

**Stop:** When you start to feel anger (Signs you are angry can include your chest tightens, face flushes, hands clench, blood pressure rises, etc.)

**Think:** Think about what your choices are, how can you react, how do you want to response? What are the possible outcomes of becoming angry? Do we want to blurt out something hurtful or start a physical confrontation? (“Ok, my kids broke my favorite vase, take a breath- they didn’t do it on purpose- I am feeling really sad- talk to them and have them help me clean it up”)

**Ask:** What are you angry about? Is it the current situation or something else? What is the REAL issue?

**Reduce:** Take a time out, a deep breath, do something to calm yourself and then come back to talk about what is bothering you later (it could be a minute, 30, or more).

**Reward:** Reward yourself for working on your anger and showing kids how it is done. Great job you! Do something nice for yourself, you just maintained and strengthened your relationship with your family, friends, teachers, coaches, and more.

# Taken directly from Guiding Good Choices Parenting Program

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HAWKINS, D.J. "PREPARING FOR THE DRUG FREE YEARS: A FAMILY WORKBOOK", 1988