



70 YEARS
INSPIRING YOUTH

Program Staff Tools, Topics and Teaching Examples

Program Staff - In light of some of the problematic behavior with cell phone usage and cyberbullying at our T&E I conference, this document is meant to be a starting point for you to have with your delegates at the beginning of each session regarding what the expectations are for a Youth & Government delegate. There are links within this document that can be utilized as tools to review and to share with your teams. At the closing session of T&E I, I expressed to the delegates that there was behavior in multiple sessions/spaces which caused fellow delegates to feel unwelcome and/or unsafe. It is our hope to mitigate these issues as we move into T&E II and Sacramento, as well as future conferences. The behaviors discussed have become an ongoing problem along with the disregard for other portions of the Code of Conduct that will be covered later in this document.

With the assistance of our Advisor Development Team and Assistant Director Program Staff, CALYMCA has put together some shared language and tips we would encourage in every program area. The following definitions come directly from Y-USA and we will continue to incorporate them into our training and teaching. It is our hope that if we all work with the same messaging and understanding, we can provide a more impactful experience for the delegates we serve. We hope to bring character development back to the central focus for all delegates in our programs. The following [link](http://bit.ly/2AJkmXB) is a great document on the topic to share with your teams, <http://bit.ly/2AJkmXB>.

In particular, we are aware that there are limited actions that can take place surrounding social media usage; however, we are continuing to work with Jodel and Apple to assist with mitigating the abusive use of these social media platforms during conferences.

Therefore, at the beginning of each session, please make an announcement about what active participation means in your program area. In addition, what is acceptable phone usage during sessions. There should be no use of phones unless they need it for research or to let an advisor know where they are. It will be up to the program lead to assess whether a delegate is using their phone for a non-productive reason. In the case that delegates choose not to follow the expectations set forth by the program area, please ask the delegate to bring their phone to the front of the room until the end of the session. All leads will also be working on the tone in the room and be responsible for keeping decorum during all sessions.

During T&E I, there was also a few instances where debates moved away from topics and became personal. This happened openly in the form of hurtful statements to specific groups during sessions and using social media platforms anonymously to target other delegates in an unacceptable manner, which created the feeling that our Youth & Government conferences are not a welcoming or safe environment.

The following bullets offer a few topics that we hope will help should situations arise:

- A reminder that having a healthy debate at conference is encouraged as long as it is kept to the topic and not aimed at any specific person or group. We are asking each of you to work with us in educating delegates before sessions on the expectations of healthy debate. Please make it clear that if at any time a delegate begins to feel uncomfortable in any way during a debate or discussion, they are encouraged to notify you or any CALYMCA staff member.

- Please review the Code of Conduct with your team. A copy of the code is attached [here](http://bit.ly/2SZshai) (<http://bit.ly/2SZshai>). As a reminder, the Code of Conduct is in place to keep all participants safe. Should you have a delegate that breaks the code, please contact a Core Staff member, SWA and the delegate's advisor immediately. The following is an area we feel you will deal with the most in sessions.

Cyberbullying Definition:

Cyberbullying includes communication in writing or by means of electronic act including the transmission of messages, text, sound, image, video, website, burn page or social networking activity that has a substantial effect on a person's physical or mental health, academic performance or ability to participate in school.

Definitions Regarding Youth Development

Youth Development

Youth Development is the social-emotional, cognitive, and physical processes that all youth uniquely experience from birth to career. At the Y, we know that a successful development process fulfills children and teens' innate need to be loved, spiritually grounded, educated, competent, and healthy.

Equity (different from Equality)

Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all, where individuals are not at a disadvantage from achieving their potential because of their background or social position.

Equity requires intentionality around identifying and eliminating the institutional, systemic and societal barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups (based on certain characteristics including ability, age, economic background, ethnicity, faith, gender, national origin, race or sexual orientation), and developing the solutions and support systems that are relevant to social structures, trends and emerging opportunities.

Diversity

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

Inclusion

The full engagement, participation, and development of all existing and potential YMCA communities; the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

In addition to the above, is the topic of Restorative Justice. The San Francisco Unified School District defines it in the following way:

Restorative Justice/Practice

CALYMCA would like to incorporate the practice of Restorative Justice that is used by the San Francisco Unified School District to assist our delegates in becoming the leaders that they have the potential to be.

A restorative approach sees conflict or misbehavior as an opportunity for students to learn about the consequences of their actions, to develop empathy with others, and experience how to make amends in such a way as to strengthen the community bonds that may have been damaged.

Leading by example is one of the first steps in fostering positive behavior in the youth we are engaged with. We would like all adult participants to be the role models for each of the above-mentioned definitions. If we lead, they will follow. By having all adult staff and participants on the same page regarding protocols and expectations, there will be no surprises regarding ramifications when poor choices are made.

Thank you to each of you for all the time, dedication and love you provide your delegates. Advisors, Program Staff, and Core Staff are truly one team with the same goal of providing a memorable experience for all participants. Our delegates look up to all of us for examples of leadership. Knowing all who are involved, our California delegates are among the more fortunate in the Nation.

- If you would like more resources on youth development, please visit our website: calymca.org > click at the top of the page - "Resource Portal" > Under Volunteer Staff Resources, click "Model Legislature & Court" > then scroll down to Advisor and Volunteer Training to view handouts and presentations.