



Workshop A: Showing up as Trusted Adults: A Deeper Dive into Positive Youth Development

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In a related breakout session, *Showing Up as Trusted Adults: A Deeper Dive into Positive Youth Development*, Ms. Neuwirth explained in greater detail how the Positive Youth Development (PYD) program underpins state and local work in Colorado to shift systems so that all young people are healthy, connected, contributing, and educated.

By understanding adolescent development, a positive youth development program integrates into marijuana use prevention and intervention. The program concepts are based on extensive data and survey information on protective factors, health behaviors, and social/emotional indicators. That information is listed in the presentation power point posted on this webpage.

Parents that have a scientific perspective on the biological challenges of adolescence are better able to interact more objectively with their children, maintain their “cool”, and offer guidance that can improve youths’ lives. The guiding principles of the PYD are:

- Engaging youth as partners
- Strengths-based
- Inclusive
- Sustainable
- Collaborative

The same principles apply in the helping professions when working with youth. Build a strong foundation for conversation. Ask for permission, give information simply, offer concern, and have a menu of options. Ways to help youth stay engaged with you include:

- Empathize with their feelings
- Avoid showing judgment
- Keep asking questions and check for understanding
- Celebrate them and their strengths
- Know when you need to walk away or reschedule
- Help them to practice skills that reduce stress
- Get comfortable with the uncomfortable - Be an “ASKABLE ADULT”

For parents that use marijuana, it is important that they ensure safe storage of their marijuana, talk about healthy choices (consequences, goals, how marijuana can get in the way of youth development, health risks, saying “no”, and assurance that “not everyone is doing it”), and do not use in front of children or adolescents.