

Meaningful Engagement that Minimizes Harms: Youth and Family Perspectives

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Please note that we use the terms 'youth and families' and 'lived experience' to encompass youth and families with lived experience of mental health and/or substance use concerns.

Youth and Family Strategies for Minimizing Harms in Engagement



Reflecting on Experiences of Harm in Engagement

Experience that led to harm		Reflection questions
Description	Impact (over intent) on the person	What do I need to think about to avoid causing this harm? If this harm has happened, what is needed to repair?
Youth and families, particularly those with intersecting identities, are engaged as a 'checkbox'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of shame, anger, disinterest, dehumanization, and exploitation Decreased interest in engagement Breaks down trust of the organization/institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are youth and families valued equally as partners in decisions about intended goals and impacts? Are there frequent checkpoints to determine how well work is aligning with agreed upon values and shared goals?
Goals, ideas, and visions of youth and families are misaligned, shut down, or ignored (paternalism and infantilization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feelings of frustration, criticism and contempt, of being 'used' Not being listened to Questioning of validity of own knowledge and expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are youth and family's experiences being minimized or overlooked because they call for changing priorities, you cannot relate to them, or they make others uncomfortable? After the engagement initiative, are you following up with youth and families about the results and collecting feedback on how the engagement process went?
Culturally safe, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches to engagement are not taken and historic and systemic drivers of injustice are ignored (colour blind).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of hope and feeling that systems will never change Emotional burden of sharing experiences of multiple oppressions BIPOC youth and families experience microaggressions and harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are those in decision-making roles willing to take responsibility for factors that contributed to harm and change their actions in the future?

This table just scratches the surface of some of the harms and isn't meant to be a comprehensive review! For some more of our thoughts and to share some of your reflections, please join us on Jamboard!
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1ihHdFNOMnmW6MwwmnlkHa8Xu0J9Sj0hCOOhoysHPwl/edit?usp=sharing>

Co-Creating a Community for Us

Across sectors and at every systems level, more folks are looking to engage young people and families with lived/living experience of mental health and substance use concerns. However, there remains a gap in creating spaces where young people and families can connect for mutual support and collective impact, outside the limitations of time-constrained, provider and system-driven priorities and initiatives.

We want to build a peer-led, online community for youth and families to connect with one another, to share, celebrate, reflect on, and learn from their engagement and co-design experiences. **Our goals are to:**

Co-create an accessible and inclusive online community for youth and families to connect

Create opportunities for folks to talk about their unique perspectives, insights and need for safe(r) and more meaningful engagement

Provide opportunities for engagement-related peer support and mentoring to validate experiences and nurture wellbeing and resilience

This poster was created with the experiential knowledge of people with lived and living experience. Many concepts shared have been informed by and built upon the historical knowledge of countless activists, advocates, and communities - past and present.

1. CTLT Indigenous Initiatives. UBC. [Positionality & Intersectionality](#).
2. Mulvale et al. 2021. [A COMPASS for Navigating Relationships in Co-Production Processes Involving Vulnerable Populations](#).
3. The Jane Finch Community Research Partnership. 2021. [Principles for Conducting Research in the Jane Finch Community](#).
4. Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Additions. 2021. [Quality Standard for Youth Engagement](#).
5. Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Additions. 2021. [Quality Standard for Family Engagement](#).
6. Beames et al. 2021. [A New Normal: Integrating Lived Experience into Scientific Data Syntheses](#).
7. Racial Equity Tools. [Core Concepts](#).
8. National Education Association. ed justice. [Prioritizing Impact Over Intent](#).
9. Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Additions. [Youth Engagement Traffic Light](#).

Keep In Touch!

If you are interested in learning more about the community of interest and/or want to join, please scan the QR code and fill out the form so we can keep in touch!

<https://forms.gle/rXyMevvNxV9ebTTV8>



SCAN ME

This community acknowledges, and is grateful for, the organizational and co-design support provided by McMaster University's Co-Design Hub. codesign.mcmaster.ca/



This knowledge exchange activity is supported by Evidence Exchange Network (EENet) which is part of the Provincial System Support Program at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health - "CAMH". EENet has been made possible through a financial contribution from Ontario Health ("OH"). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of either OH or of CAMH.