Workshop Description: This workshop supports youth program staff in developing and practicing effective communication skills in youth program settings. Successful implementation of this workshop will ultimately help youth program staff to reflect on how they support youth's communication skills and how they use communication to further support the positive development of youth within the program.

This workshop guide will ask participants to examine and reflect on their communication strategies to better assist youth in their development. This workshop guide and all others within the Effective Communication series are intended to lead to building skills in youth program staff that help address maladaptive behavior and better assist youth in their development.

Preparation Time: The preparation time for this workshop is approximately 15 to 20 minutes. This preparation time should include reading background information on the Effective Communication and Positive Youth Development website and in this workshop guide, collecting materials, and gathering any additional information you may need.

Instruction Time: It will take approximately 2 hours to complete all activities within this guide. If you do not have time for the full workshop, use only the most relevant activities to make the workshop fit within your timeframe, or split the workshop into multiple sessions. Be sure to keep the reflection portion of the activities and workshop as this is where staff should consider how the activities and knowledge apply to their work.

Materials:

- Printed copies of the Handout: *The Evolution of Communication Across Generations*
- Printed copies of the Worksheet: *Cultural Identity*
- Instructional Aid: *Culture Differences and Communication*
- Printed copies of the Handout: *High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication*
- Printed copies of the Handout: *Gender Communications Quiz*
- Printed copies of the Handout: *Youth Development Factors Scenarios*
- Instructional Aid: *Youth Development Factors Scenario Key*
- Paper and writing utensils for each participant
- Flip chart paper, whiteboard, or laptop and projector

Preparation Instructions: You should read the content related to this topic on the Effective Communication and Positive Youth Development website, specifically the content related to Effective Communication and Youth Development Factors. In addition, you should review the background information in this workshop guide, gather all necessary materials, and prepare for the activities.

In this series of workshops, youth program staff will learn skills that build on one another in a specific sequence. We recommend you complete this set of workshops in the following order:

1. *Understanding Effective Communication*
2. *Effective Communication and Youth Development Factors*
3. *Effective Communication Strategy: Active Listening*
4. *Effective Communication Strategy: Clear Expectations and Direction*
5. *Understanding Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing*
6. *Understanding Change Talk*
7. *Motivational Interviewing Strategies*
8. *Practicing Motivational Interviewing*

Knowledge: Effective Communication and Youth Development Factors

Effective communication is more than clear communication (either spoken or written) and being able to read body language. It includes the sum of both the speaker's and listener's understanding, which may be influenced by their families, peers, education, abilities to understand, and broader society[51] and is often influenced by their past experiences, their relationship with each other,[52] and the situation in which the communication occurs. Even the hopes and goals of participants can influence how communication is delivered and received.[53] All of these factors are important to consider, but many are out of the communicator's and listener's control or consciousness. However, some factors that can influence how effective communication are easier to understand and are important when working in youth programs in particular. These include age, gender, socioeconomic status, and culture, race, and ethnicity.

Age
Generally, as individuals age their verbal and nonverbal communication skills improve.[54] There is a larger improvement in adolescence in the area of social and interpersonal communication.[55] These skills are closely associated with an increase in youth's ability to understand, specifically around language comprehension and nonverbal cues. Simply put, as children grow they learn how to communicate: some through formal education but many through informal learning at home with family and interactions with their peers.[23, 57] This learning helps youth to navigate more complex relationships with peers, communicate their identities, and understand how others might feel and think.[58, 59] Research also supports an interesting relationship between age and gender, and these two factors should be considered together when working with youth.[60]

Gender
Another important factor to consider when working with youth is gender. Understanding how gender may influence communication can help youth program staff to develop and adjust strategies when working with youth whether in mixed-gender or single-gender groups.
Youth program staff should be aware of how youth
- Pick up on nonverbal cues (girls tend to be better at this earlier)[61]
- Notice when peers and program staff are inconsistent in what they say and how they say it (girls tend to notice inconsistencies more frequently between verbal and nonverbal messages)
- Approach working together (girls tend to be more collaborative and boys more direct)[63]
- Prefer physical closeness and familiarity during communication (girls tend to allow closer proximity and more eye contact, touch, smiling, and expression while boys tend to prefer more distance and less eye contact, touching, smiling, and expression)[64]
- View relational goals (girls tend to have deeper insight)[64]

- Use communication to discuss their problems as a way to obtain social support or discuss their problems with friends[65]

Youth program staff should also consider that the research shows that youth are more likely to agree to do what they are asked when the requestor is the same gender and that they think their peers of the same gender pay closer attention.[66]

More research is needed to understand the communication preferences and tendencies of sexual minority youth. With that in mind, staff should approach interpersonal communication with the understanding that preferences and tendencies can be fluid in youth as they work through questions about their identities in their homes, schools, and out-of-school programs.

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status, or an individual's or group's social standing or class, is a complicated factor as it relates to youth's ability to communicate effectively. Socioeconomic status is often a combination of other factors like education, income, and occupation, but youth program staff should understand that race and ethnicity, gender, and other social factors may also play a role in which socioeconomic status one belongs to.[67, 68]

What is important for youth program staff to understand is that children and youth with a higher socioeconomic status may have more access to support in the development of language and literacy than children and youth with a lower socioeconomic status.[70,71,72] These supports provide opportunities for children and youth to learn and practice effective communication.

Culture, Race, and Ethnicity

Communication and culture are related.[73] Some cultures value a direct communication style while others value an indirect communication style.[73] In addition, those cultures that value individual characteristics tend to be direct while those that value a collective or communal characteristic are indirect.

Another cultural influence is in how much value is placed on adult engagement with children or youth. In some cultures, the norm that children and youth speak less in the presence of adults or elders is reinforced.[74] Another cultural norm that may influence youth's communication skills is whether adults reinforce language comprehension by talking with children before they can talk back, allowing children to practice comprehension before they can speak.[51] Youth program staff should know that the culture in which youth are raised may have an impact on their interpersonal communication style. However, awareness of cultural influences needs to be balanced with an understanding of the impact of individual preferences as personal preferences appear to have a stronger influence on individuals' communication.[75]

Objectives:

- Understand how some factors impact individuals' ability to effectively communicate
- Understand how youth program staff can use understanding of youth development factors to support effective communication with youth
- Understand how youth program staff can use understanding of youth development factors to support youth learning effective communication

Introduction (5 minutes):

- Describe youth development factors and how they relate to effective communication.
  - What to say: "Today we are going to talk about how youth development factors relate to youth's ability to effectively communicate, which leads to program success. Understanding these factors will help you to support youth in learning effective communication in a multicultural context."
- Transition into Prior Knowledge activity:
  - What to say: "To start, we are going to gauge how familiar you are with youth development factors."

Prior Knowledge (5-7 minutes):

- Ask participants what factors they think influence youth's ability to communicate effectively. You may need to assist with identifying these factors using the background information provided for you to jumpstart the conversation. Record these responses where participants can see.
- Ask the participants if there is anything they are unsure of in regards to factors that affect youth communication or if there is anything they want to learn through this workshop. Again, record responses.

Activities:

Activity: *Age and Effective Communication* (15 minutes)
- Describe the *Age and Effective Communication* activity:
  - What to say: "We're going to learn about how age and the generation gaps affect communication as well as the role of individual differences."
- Lead the *Age and Effective Communication* activity:
  - Distribute the Handout: *The Evolution of Communication Across Generations* to each participant.
  - In pairs, ask the participants to discuss the following:
    - Which generation do you belong to?
    - How well does the handout describe your communication style? How different is your communication style from the description of your generation in the handout?
    - How accurately does the handout describe the youth in your program? Are there youth that don't fit the description in your program? If yes, provide some examples.
  - Come back to the larger group and ask for volunteers to share examples of times when youth in the program demonstrated or deviated from the descriptions in the handout. Discuss how they might change their communication styles to accommodate youth based on those examples.
  - Remind the participants that the point of the discussion is to be aware of the generation gap and how that affects a group's communication style. Warn the group that generalizations are OK when discussing the style of a particular generation but that individuals offer a wide variety of differences.

Activity: *Culture and Effective Communication* **(15 minutes)**

- Describe the *Culture and Effective Communication* activity:
  - What to say: "We're going to discuss how your cultural identity affects communication."
- Lead the *Culture and Effective Communication* activity:
  - Begin by asking the group to answer some questions about family traditions and rituals. If you like, write their answers so that participants can see the responses as they share.
    - What were some birthday traditions in your family as you grew up?
    - What was important to you as a child about birthdays?
    - Do you still keep up those traditions?
    - As a child, what other holidays did you celebrate with your family?
    - What were your favorite holiday traditions?
    - As you grew up, what foods did your family serve that you liked and didn't like?
    - If you wanted to serve a visitor a meal that would help them to understand your culture or heritage, what meal would you serve?
  - Hand out the Worksheet: *Cultural Identity* and a writing utensil to each participant.
  - Instruct the participants to use the RESPECTFUL model and write down their identity in each category.
  - After the participants have completed the worksheet, divide the youth program staff into small groups (two or three people per group). Then, instruct them to discuss the following questions:
    - What aspects of your cultural identity stood out to you and why?
    - What are some strengths you see in your cultural identity?
    - How are your cultural identities similar to or different from each other?
  - After the small group discussion, come back to the larger group and discuss these two questions.
    - Which part of your cultural identity is the most important or noticeable to you when you are engaged in conversation?
    - Which part of your cultural identity do you think others notice or is important to others when you're engaged in a conversation?
  - Remind the participants that each person has a multicultural background and these cultural factors play a role in how others perceive us and how we perceive ourselves when we speak with other people.

Activity: *Race and Ethnicity and Effective Communication* **(15 minutes)**

- Describe the *Race and Ethnicity and Effective Communication* activity:
  - What to say: "Next, we'll see how one aspect of culture can be a factor in effective communication."
- Lead the *Race and Ethnicity and Effective Communication* activity:
  - Before leading this activity, review the Instructional Aid: *Culture Differences and Communication*. Familiarize yourself the characteristics of the low and high context countries.
  - Print copies of the Handout: *High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication.*
  - Say to the group: "This activity is not meant to stereotype individuals or cultures or imply that one group communicates better than another group; rather, it's meant to provide general observations about a group of people from which we can discuss

cultural differences and likely areas of miscommunication. Remember that everyone uses both high- and low-context communication. It's not simply a matter of choosing one over the other."

o On a whiteboard, flip chart, or projector, create a vertical number line (1-14) based on the Instructional Aid: *Culture Differences and Communication,* and write out the countries on the list next to their corresponding number (i.e., 1 – Germans, Swiss, Austrians, etc.). Try to include countries that represent the youth program staff and youth.

o Once you draw out the arrow, say: "High-context cultures rely more on nonverbal communication and relationships while low-context cultures rely more on precise verbal communication."

o Divide the participants into groups of three or four, and provide each participant with a copy of the Handout: *High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication* to read.

o After everyone has finished reading, instruct the participants to discuss in their small groups and answer the following question:

▪ How do you follow or not follow the communication style that is dominant within your culture?

o After a few minutes, reconvene the large group and lead a discussion regarding their thoughts on high- vs. low-context communication. Encourage the participants to share their experiences communicating with youth of different races or ethnicities who may or may not have exhibited some characteristics of their culture's communication style.

▪ Instructor Note: During the discussion, watch for absolute language (e.g., never, always, etc.) to prevent stereotyping. Remind the participants that no one fits perfectly into one category and race and ethnicity aren't the only explanations for how people communicate.

Activity: *Gender and Effective Communication* (15 minutes)

- Describe the *Gender and Effective Communication* activity:
  o What to say: "We're going to learn how gender can be a factor in effective communication."
- Lead the *Gender and Effective Communication* activity:
  o Divide participants into groups of three or four, and give each participant the Handout: *Gender Communications Quiz* and a writing utensil.
  o Ask each participant to read the questions and decide which are true and which are false.
  o With the large group, provide the correct answers, using the Instructional Aid: *Gender Communications Quiz – Answer Key* to lead a discussion about the results and any misconceptions.

▪ Instructor Note: Some possible processing questions could include
  • Which of these answers surprised you and why?
  • Not much research has been done around communication and sexual minority youth. How do you think these results might change to reflect a broader definition of gender?

- What is one takeaway you might have regarding gender and communication while working in the youth program?

Activity: *SES and Effective Communication* (20 minutes)

- Describe the *SES and Effective Communication* activity:
  - What to say: "We're going to learn how socioeconomic status (SES) can be a factor in effective communication."
- Lead the *SES and Effective Communication* activity:
  - Explain how social class impacts communication. Say: "People who have a low SES may rely more on mutual assistance and place greater value on solidarity. But people who have a higher SES often value individualism and act according to their own preferences because they have more resources. Consider how youth who have more resources may be more assertive because they believe that they have the resources to influence the situation."
  - As a large group, ask the participants to think of examples of social hierarchies in their lives. List them in a place where all participants can see.
    - Instructor Note: Participants should think about relationships at work, home, school, the youth program, etc. and might include supervisor-employee or student-educator relationships.
  - Divide the participants into groups of three or four to discuss how people in these hierarchies interact with and feel toward each other. Ask the groups to answer these questions:
    - What does person A think about person B?
    - What does person B think about person A?
    - What does person A think person B thinks about them?
    - What does person B think person A thinks about them?
    Example:
    - What do youth think about staff?
    - What do staff think about youth?
    - What do youth think staff think about them?
    - What do staff think youth think about them?
      - Instructor Note: Consider assigning examples the group generated to different groups.
  - Come back to the larger group and discuss.
    - How can what we *know* and what we *believe* or *imagine* inform how we work with people in these kinds of social interactions?
  - Provide each participant with a blank sheet of paper and a writing utensil, ask them to think back to a recent conversation when they felt that they had less power than the other person due to the difference in SES, and write down thoughts about the following:
    - Who was this conversation with, and why did you feel that you had less or no power?
    - How did you react during this conversation?

- Using your experience of having limited power, how might this shape your behaviors when you find yourself in a position of power or when you see a youth also struggling with an imbalance of power in the youth program?
  - Come back to the larger group and discuss the questions. Encourage the participants to brainstorm ways they can support youth with a lower SES.

Activity: *Youth Development Factors* (15 minutes)

- Describe the *Youth Development Factors* activity:
  - What to say: "We're going to practice identifying the factors that may impact an individual's or youth's ability to effectively communicate."
- Lead the *Youth Development Factors* activity:
  - Distribute the Handout*: Youth Development Factors Scenarios* to each participant.
  - Divide the participants in groups of three to five participants, and give them ample time to read through each scenario.
  - Instruct the participants to discuss factors that could be at play in each scenario.
  - Come back to the larger group to share the list of factors and discuss the possible youth outcomes in each scenario if youth program staff were aware of the factors.
    - Instructor Note: Use the Instructional Aid: *Youth Development Factors Scenario Key* to help participants if they struggle to identify factors.

Reflection and Recap (5 minutes):

- Return to the responses gathered at the start of the workshop (see Prior Knowledge activity). Ask the participants what they learned during the course of the workshop and record the information. Draw attention to topics that were on the list generated earlier, new topics, and questions that were answered.
- Ask follow-up questions, such as "What part of the activity made you realize that?" and "How could you use these strategies with youth?"

Resources:

Handout: *The Evolution of Communication Across Generations*
Worksheet: *Cultural Identity*
Instructional Aid: *Culture Differences and Communication*
Handout: *High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication*
Handout: *Gender Communications Quiz*
Instructional Aid: *Gender Communications Quiz – Answer Key*
Handout: *Youth Development Factors Scenarios*
Instructional Aid: *Youth Development Factors Scenarios Key*

Sources:

D'Andrea, M., & Daniels, J. (2001). RESPECTFUL counseling: An integrative model for counselors. In D. Pope-Davis & H. Coleman (Eds.), *The interface of class, culture, and gender in counseling* (pp. 417-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mqjeffrey. (2016, April 22). High-context vs. low-context communication [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://toughnickel.com/business/High-Context-vs-Low-Context-Communication

Notre Dame of Maryland University. (2019, February 6). *The evolution of communication from Boomers to Gen Z.* https://online.ndm.edu/news/communication/evolution-of-communication/

Sadker, M., Sadker, D. M., & Kaser, J. S. (n.d.). *The communications gender gap*. Washington, D.C.: The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University School of Education.

Southeastern University. (2016, August 18). *Intercultural communication: High- an low-context cultures.* https://online.seu.edu/articles/high-and-low-context-cultures/

Van Everdingen, Y. M., & Waarts, E. (2003). *A multi-country study of the adoption of ERP systems: The effect of national culture* (ERS-2003-019-MKT). Retrieved from ResearchGate website: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4781353_A_multi-country_study_of_the_adoption_of_ERP_systems

Directions: Review this summary of communication preferences by generation for discussion.

Generation Z

This generation is comprised of people born after 1997, who experienced the internet early on as part of their daily lives.

- 65% of Generation Z prefer online communication
- Expects fast responses from the people to whom they send messages
- Skilled at multitasking across multiple screens

Millennials

This generation is comprised of people born between 1981 and 1996, and they grew up before the start of the digital age.

- Prefer to connect through digital messaging apps on smart phones
- Dislike phone calls

Generation X

Members of this generation were born between 1965 and 1980, and they were the first generation to incorporate technology in their youth.

- Prefer communication through e-mail
- Prefer to receive and send brief messages as opposed to lengthy ones

Baby Boomers

Baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964 and experienced the transition of telephones from something bulky and expensive to a smaller, more common device found in most households.

- Prefer face-to-face or phone conversations
- Can be reached through e-mail since 93% of baby boomer respondents in a survey reported using e-mail on a daily basis

Source: Notre Dame of Maryland University. (2019, February 6). *The evolution of communication from Boomers to Gen Z.* https://online.ndm.edu/news/communication/evolution-of-communication/

What is the RESPECTFUL Model?

People often think culture applies only to ethnicity or race, but it can be much more. The RESPECTFUL model was developed to help counselors to approach clients from their point of view.

Directions: Think about how each of the dimensions on the RESPECTFUL model are reflected in you and your culture. Consider your strengths in each of the dimensions and make notes next to each dimension.

R – Religious and spiritual identity:

E – Economic class background:

S – Sexual identity:

P – Personal style and education:

E – Ethnic and racial identity:

C – Chronological or lifespan status and challenges:

T – Trauma or crisis (may be a single trauma or repeated racism, sexism, bullying, etc.):

F – Family background and history (single- or two-parent, extended family, etc.):

U – Unique physical characteristics (including disabilities, false standards of appearance, skills and abilities):

L – Location of residence, language differences:

Source: D'Andrea, M., & Daniels, J. (2001). RESPECTFUL counseling: An integrative model for counselors. In D. Pope-Davis & H. Coleman (Eds.), *The interface of class, culture, and gender in counseling* (pp. 417-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Directions: Use this Instructional Aid to familiarize yourself with how people in high- and low-context countries communicate.

	Scale Score	Countries	Characteristics
Low-Context	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Germans, Swiss, Austrians New Zealanders, South Africans (white) North Americans and Canadians (white) Scandinavians British, Australians Benelux People Other American Cultures from West and Central Europe	Messages are explicit. Emphasize the content and interpret messages based on what was spoken or written.
High-Context	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	Koreans, South East Asians Indians Latin Americans Arabs, Africans Southern Europeans Chinese Japanese	Use contextual cues to interpret messages.

Source: Van Everdingen, Y. M., & Waarts, E. (2003). *A multi-country study of the adoption of ERP systems: The effect of national culture* (ERS-2003-019-MKT). Retrieved from ResearchGate website: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4781353_A_multi-country_study_of_the_adoption_of_ERP_systems

"High-context" and "low-context" were first used by author Edward Hall to indicate cultural differences in communication. They refer to the extent to which speakers rely on context and cues, other than words, to convey meaning. Members of each culture seem to apply a specific "filter," which allows them to focus on what the society has deemed important. High-context and low-context communication isn't binary—everyone uses both types of communication—but the type of relationship and circumstances dictate whether we pay more attention to literal or implied meanings. Understanding the differences in cultural communication can facilitate the exchange of information in all circumstances, including communication with youth in a youth program.

High-Context Culture

High-context cultures are more common in Eastern countries, especially those with low racial diversity. Members of high-context cultures value the group over the individual, and their identity is rooted in groups, such as family, culture, or the workplace. As a result, they have a stronger in-group vs. out-group mindset. Decisions and activities are based on personal face-to-face communication, often centered on an authoritative figure.

Learning

- Learn from gathering multiple sources of information and use deductive thinking (general to specific)
- Learning occurs by observing others then putting it into practice
- Prefer teamwork for learning and problem-solving
- Value accuracy and how well something is learned

Communication

- Less is verbally explicit, written, or formally expressed
- Communicate more through nonverbal than verbal means
- Disagreement is personalized and conflicts should be solved before work can progress

Low-Context Culture

Low-context cultures are more common in Western nations. Identity is rooted in the individual and their accomplishments. Social structure is decentralized; decisions and activities focus on the division of responsibilities.

Learning

- Use inductive thinking with a focus on details, proceeds from specific to general
- Learn by following explicit directions and explanations of others
- Prefer learning and problem-solving independently
- Value speed and efficiency in learning

Communication

- Communicate more through verbal than nonverbal means
- Verbal messages are direct
- Disagreement is depersonalized and focuses on rational solutions

Source: Mqjeffrey. (2016, April 22). High-context vs. low-context communication [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://toughnickel.com/business/High-Context-vs-Low-Context-Communication

Directions: How much do you know about how men and women communicate? Here's a true or false quiz to see how much you know. Indicate whether you think a statement is true or false by writing T or F next to the statement.

1. Men talk more than women.

2. Women are more likely to interrupt men.

3. During conversations, women spend more time looking at their conversation partner than men do.

4. In classroom communication, male students receive more reprimands and criticism.

5. Female speakers use fewer nonverbal cues than males.

6. Gender segregation is widespread and can hinder effective communication.

7. Teachers are more likely to give verbal praise to female than to male students.

8. Women use less personal space than men.

Source: Sadker, M., Sadker, D. M., & Kaser, J. S. (n.d.). *The communications gender gap*. Washington, D.C.: The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University School of Education.

Directions: Use this answer key to lead a discussion on the participant's response to the Quiz.

1. True. Although there is a stereotype that women talk more than men, the opposite is true.

2. False. Men are more likely to interrupt women. However, in a women to women or men to men conversation, interruptions are evenly distributed.

3. True. Generally, women of all ages (infant to elderly) are more likely to look at their conversation partner than men. It makes sense when you consider that the listener tends to look more at the speaker, and we already know men talk more than women in a two-gender conversation. There is also some research that women are better at reading nonverbal cues, and to do that, they have to see the nonverbal.

4. True. From preschool through high school, male students are more likely to be scolded for misbehavior. Some studies show that males are still more likely to receive harsher penalties even when females and males are misbehaving equally.

5. False. Females are more likely to use eye contact, wider range of pitch, gestures, facial expressions, and body movement. But men are more dramatic verbally, such as telling anecdotes and jokes.

6. True. Gender segregation may occur in separate boy and girl lines, seating arrangements, work groups, play areas, and lab work. However, when there's less segregation, youth are less likely to hold stereotyped attitudes.

7. False. Girls tend to receive less verbal praise from teachers. Teachers tend to praise boys more but also criticize them more, ask them more questions, and give them more attention in general.

8. True. Women's personal space is more likely to be intruded on by others, and they tend to take up less space than men.

Source: Sadker, M., Sadker, D. M., & Kaser, J. S. (n.d.). *The communications gender gap*. Washington, D.C.: The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, The American University School of Education.

Directions: Read these scenarios and think about how age, gender, socioeconomic status, and culture, race, and ethnicity may be influencing the characters.

Scenario 1: During physical activity time, you see a White teen girl sitting by herself at the edge of the court. She seems down. A White male youth program staff member walks over to her. The staff member stands next to but not facing the girl and asks, "How are you doing?" During the conversation, you hear the staff member interrupting her occasionally and asking her to get to the point. After some back and forth, the girl seems more upset and shifts her body slightly away from the staff member. Finally, the girl angrily says, "I want to be left alone!" The staff member looks startled.

Scenario 2: You overhear the front desk clerk, a middle-aged White man, lecturing a group of Latino youth. He says, "You guys should use your phones less and communicate face-to-face. Look how simple and straight-forward it is to talk face-to-face." One of the youth, looking at a painting next to the desk, replies but doesn't make eye contact, "Sometimes it's easier to send a text, but I can see the value of face-to-face communication." The clerk sounds annoyed as he starts lecturing the youth on maintaining eye contact when speaking with others.

Directions: Use this key to lead a discussion with participants about how different youth development factors (age, gender, socioeconomic status, and culture, race, and ethnicity) may impact communication between youth program staff and youth.

Scenario 1:

- Gender: The youth program staff member didn't demonstrate body language to show that he cared, and he wasn't aware of her body language to realize that he was making her feel uncomfortable.
- Socioeconomic Status: The youth program staff member stood next to her rather than sitting beside her to talk at the same level. He seemed to talk down to her.

Scenario 2:

- Age: The front desk clerk doesn't appreciate the younger generation's new way to communicate. He insists on his own way to communicate.
- Culture: In some Latino cultures, people find eye contact to be rude and avoid it.