



Youth Inclusion Workshop Guide: Understanding Bias and Values

Workshop Description: This workshop includes information and practice for identifying the difference between bias and prejudice and how unconscious biases affect social interactions. The skills developed in this workshop include identifying your own individual biases and acknowledging how bias affects behavior.

This workshop guide will include a series of activities aimed at demonstrating or introducing skills that you will need to understand bias and values when interacting with youth. These activities, followed by larger group discussions, will prepare staff for interacting with youth bias-free.

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

Instruction Time: It will take approximately 45 to 50 minutes to complete all activities within this guide.

Materials:

- Two blank sheets of paper and/or whiteboard space.
- Paper clips.
- Construction paper badges in different shapes: circles, squares, and triangles. Each shape should come in various colors (i.e., red, yellow, green, blue, purple, etc.).
- Printed copies of the *Subtle Prejudice* worksheet (enough copies for each staff member).
- Pens (one for each staff member).

Preparation Instructions: You should read the content related to this topic on the Youth Inclusion Training website, specifically content related to Understanding Bias and Values. In addition, you should review the background information in this workshop and any others related to this topic (i.e., Developing Reflection Skills). Also, gather all necessary materials and familiarize yourself with the workshop guide.

Knowledge: Understanding Bias and Values

Everyone has had biases or been prejudiced at some time in their lives. Implicit or unconscious bias and prejudices are part of the unconscious decision-making part of the brain. Staff need to understand themselves to overcome any unconscious biases that work against an open and welcoming youth program.

Bias and prejudice are terms used to describe a set of beliefs that influence and sometimes misinform decisions and interactions with others.

Explicit Bias reflects attitudes or beliefs that one endorses at a conscious level.

Implicit Bias reflects judgment and/or behavior that results from subtle cognitive processes that operate at a level below conscious awareness or control.



Prejudice is judging or forming an opinion before having all of the relevant facts.

Reflection can help an individual become aware of their unconscious bias and prejudice by spending time thinking about specific actions, thoughts, and statements. Reflection gives a person understanding, and with understanding, they gain knowledge. Knowledge is what program staff use to inform the way they interact with youth. For example, if a person walks barefoot in grass and is stung by a bee, the next time they walk barefoot through grass, they will watch for bees to avoid being stung. Understanding that bees sting happened after the person was stung. The knowledge (understanding that bees sting) changed their behavior (watching for bees) to avoid being stung. This is the goal of reflection.

Objectives:

- Create awareness of how subtle beliefs and behavior affect social interactions.
- Modify behavior based on a better understanding of each staff person's bias and values.

Introduction (5-7 minutes):

- Describe the topic of bias and values and how one's own unconscious bias and prejudice affects an individual's interactions with others. Be sure to define the differences between explicit and implicit bias and prejudice using the definitions in the knowledge section.
 - What to say, "Today we are going to talk about the biases we may have but don't plainly express. They are hidden or implied and called implicit biases. These biases differ from prejudices in that prejudice is judging or forming an opinion before having all of the relevant facts. This workshop is designed to address the question of how our values and experiences shape how we see others."

Prior Knowledge (5-7 minutes):

- Ask your staff what they know about their own biases and values. Staff responses might be in words, terms, or phrases. Have the staff explain their associations using questions like "What made you think of that?"
- Record staff responses on a large sheet of paper or whiteboard.
- Ask the staff what they are curious about in terms of how their own biases and values affect their work with youth. Ask the staff what they think they will learn during this session, or choose a topic from the first questions and ask what else they would like to learn about that topic. Again, record staff responses.

Activities:

Activity: *Tag Game* (15-20 minutes)

- Describe the *Tag Game* activity:
 - What to say, "To start things off, we are going to play a game that should highlight how easy it is to form unconscious biases and beliefs based on first impressions and assumptions."
- Lead the *Tag Game* activity:
 - Have staff paper clip a badge made of construction paper somewhere between their waist and neck. These badges are circles, squares, or triangles and also differ in size and color.
 - Instruct the staff to form groups without talking.
 - Then, instruct them to form new groups, also without talking.
 - Repeat this step at least twice more.



- Come back together as a large group and discuss what groups were formed in each round. Staff typically form groups with people who have badges of the same color or shape. It is less common for individuals to look past the badges and form groups based on differences.
- Discuss the value and importance of looking past the similarities of people and how to support differences within the youth program.

Activity: *Subtle Prejudice* (20 minutes)

- Describe the *Subtle Prejudice* activity:
 - What to say, “We are now going to transition into a worksheet that is designed to create awareness of how subtle beliefs and behaviors can affect the social interactions in your everyday life and within the program.”
- Lead the *Subtle Prejudice* activity:
 - Provide each staff member with a *Subtle Prejudice* worksheet.
 - Have each staff member complete the worksheet, encouraging them to answer as honestly as possible.
 - For each of the questions, ask them to rate the situation on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very comfortable to 5 being very uncomfortable.
 - Once all staff have completed the worksheet, have them sum up the points they have in each section of the worksheet.
 - If staff feel that some questions do not apply to them, they can write “N/A” and adjust their total score.
 - Have staff reflect on the following questions: 1) On which sections did you score the lowest? Highest? Or are all your scores similar? 2) Why do you think that happened? 3) Do you feel surprised, disappointed, or satisfied with your results?
 - Ask the staff what experiences they have had that may have contributed to the way they answered the questions. Ask if there are any volunteers who would feel comfortable sharing.
 - Finally, ask what it means if someone reports feeling uncomfortable in the situations described by the questionnaire. Does it suggest that the person is biased against certain social groups? Why or why not?

Reflection and Recap (5 minutes):

- Return to the staff’s responses gathered at the start of the workshop (see Prior Knowledge activity). Ask the staff what they learned during the course of the workshop and record the information on the same paper or a new blank page if there is no room. 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?”

Resources:

Worksheet: *Subtle Prejudices*

Sources:

The *Subtle Prejudices* worksheet reproduced from Chance, K., & Szoko, N. (2014). *Subtle Prejudice Activity*. Retrieved August 18, 2018, from [http://breakingprejudice.org/assets/AHAA/Activities/Subtle Prejudice Activity/Comfort in Social Situations Student Version.pdf](http://breakingprejudice.org/assets/AHAA/Activities/Subtle%20Prejudice%20Activity/Comfort%20in%20Social%20Situations%20Student%20Version.pdf)

The *Tag Game* activity adapted from Fowler, S. M. (2006). Training across cultures: What intercultural trainers bring to diversity training. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(3), 401-411.



Youth Inclusion Worksheet: Subtle Prejudice

Directions: Read the following statements and rate what you think your comfort level would be in each situation using the scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be honest and do not over-think the situations. In some cases, you may not think that a situation is personally applicable; if so, mark that statement with “N/A” in the space provided. After you have completed all sections, follow the instructions to create a total score for each section.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Comfortable	Comfortable	Neutral	Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable

Section A:

- _____ Your best friend starts dating a Latino-American.
- _____ You go into a Japanese restaurant where all the patrons and employees are Asian.
- _____ You realize you are the only person of your race when you visit a community.
- _____ A Saudi Arabian commuter sits down next to you on a crowded bus.
- _____ Your new doctor went to medical school in India.

Total: _____

Section B:

- _____ You find out a family friend is choosing to be a stay-at-home dad.
- _____ You greet someone but can't determine the person's gender.
- _____ You take your car in for repairs and the head mechanic is a woman.
- _____ You see a little boy playing with a princess Barbie.
- _____ You see a businessman getting a manicure.

Total: _____

Section C:

- _____ You see two men holding hands.
- _____ A person of the same sex is flirting with you.
- _____ You move in next door to a same sex couple who have two children.
- _____ You go on a date with someone who used to date someone of the same sex.
- _____ You see two females kiss lovingly in public.

Total: _____



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Section D:

- _____ You don't know whether to open a door for someone in a wheelchair.
- _____ You watch someone who does not have a visible disability park in a handicap spot.
- _____ You walk by a mentally disabled person who is talking loudly in the grocery store.
- _____ Your friend is dating someone with high functioning autism.
- _____ You are standing in line behind a deaf person at a fast food restaurant.

Total: _____

Section E:

- _____ A heavily obese person is working out in the gym next to you.
- _____ You are sitting next to an obese woman on a plane.
- _____ You notice a coworker who is obese is holding up the cafeteria line because she/he wants to fill the tray.
- _____ You watch an obese man get stuck trying to sit in a desk in a classroom.
- _____ Your friend sees an overweight person and makes a joke about him/her.

Total: _____

Section F:

- _____ There is a 30 year age difference between you and your lab partner.
- _____ Your internship coordinator assigns you to an assisted care facility.
- _____ Your senior citizen landlord wears a hearing aid and often has difficulty understanding you.
- _____ Your grandmother often asks you for help with her computer.
- _____ Your 70-year-old next door neighbor can never remember your name.

Total: _____



Youth Inclusion Worksheet: Subtle Prejudice Scoring and Results

Results: Compute your total for each section by adding up the numbers from your responses. If you marked an item “N/A,” score it as a “3” before computing your total score for that section. Higher numbers indicate greater discomfort with social situations in that section.

_____ Section A: Race

_____ Section B: Gender

_____ Section C: Sexuality

_____ Section D: Disability

_____ Section E: Weight

_____ Section F: Age