



Youth Inclusion Workshop Guide: Understanding Social Media in Community Engagement

Workshop Description: This workshop will challenge staff to understand how photos and the text associated with photos can alter a viewer's perceptions. In addition, staff will consider the risks associated with sharing information online by reviewing news articles of the consequences youth have faced from what they have shared online. In-depth discussions as a large group will follow each activity.

Preparation Time: The preparation time for this workshop is approximately 30 to 40 minutes. This time allocation takes into account the background reading on the Youth Inclusion Training website, the background information in this module, collecting materials, and gathering any additional information you may need.

Instruction Time: It will take approximately 50 minutes to 1 hour to complete all activities within this guide.

Materials:

- A variety of printed photos showing examples of content youth have posted on social media. Laminate photos if they are intended to be used more than once.
- A variety of different news articles regarding consequences individuals have faced due to information shared online—approximately four copies of each article.
- Pens or pencils (one per participant).
- Three large sheets of blank white paper.

Preparation Instructions: You should read the content related to this topic on the Youth Inclusion Training website, specifically the content related to Community and Communication. In addition, you should review the background information in this guide and any other additional resources depending on your familiarity with the topic. Finally, gather necessary materials by printing off a variety of photos described in the Material section, print off news articles for every group of two to four staff, and hang up the large sheets of paper in the room where the workshop is to take place.

Knowledge: Understanding Social Media in Community Engagement

An inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment is beneficial to all youth. Explaining this to the other caring adults and stakeholders in each young person's life is critical to creating a positive, effective collaboration. In support of this understanding, the program should accurately illustrate program values and goals through the use of social media.

Social media consists of any website or application that allows the user to create and share content while participating in social networking. According to the PEW Research Center for Internet & Technology, 95% of youth and teens have access to a smartphone, and 45% reported that they are almost constantly online (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). There has also been a shift in the breakdown of the most popular social media platforms since 2015, when Facebook was the most popular platform. Now, U.S. teens report that they use YouTube (85%), Instagram (72%), and Snapchat (69%) much more frequently than Facebook. Additionally, this survey found mixed results regarding the effect that social media has on the lives of youth: while nearly one third (31%) of teens stated that social media has a



mostly positive effect, almost a quarter indicated the opposite (mostly negative effect; 24%), with nearly half (45%) stating the effect was neither positive nor negative (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

Objectives:

- Understand the significance of what is shared online and how it can lead to misperceptions.
- Identify advantages and disadvantages of social media tools.
- Identify possible risks of posting online.
- Identify possible guidelines for content that should and should not be posted.

Introduction (5-7 minutes):

- Introduce the topic of social media.
 - Presenters can introduce the topic by saying, “Today we are going to talk about social media and how it contributes to community engagement, as well as how it can be used for and in programs. The goal is to be able to identify and use social media in a way that portrays the values of the program and community without adverse consequences.”
- Transition to the Prior Knowledge activity by briefly outlining or reading the Background Knowledge section.

Prior Knowledge (5-7 minutes):

- Ask staff what they already know about the topic of the lesson.
 - Instructors should ask “What kind of posts receive the most feedback when shared?” “How can you tell what is appropriate to share and what is not?” and “How can social media be used to enhance community and program engagement?”
 - Write the staff’s answers on a large piece of paper or a whiteboard.
 - Ask the staff what they think they will learn during this lesson and what else they would like to know about each of these questions. Write staff’s answers in a separate column or on a separate sheet of paper/space on the whiteboard.
 - Questions can be phrased as follows: “What are some things you would like to learn regarding responsible uses of social media?”

Activities:

Activity: *Captioning and Sharing Photos* (20 minutes):

- Describe the *Captioning and Sharing Photos* activity:
 - What to say: “We are going to do an activity that illustrates how what you post can be portrayed in many different ways, good and bad. Ultimately, the goal is to be able to answer the question, “How can social media be used in a positive way, and what dictates proper and responsible use of social media?”
 - Describe the workshop by providing an example of what staff will soon be doing. Use one of the photos that you printed out and provide a positive and negative caption for that photo. For example, use a photo of a group of youth cleaning up a park. Potential captions might include
 - “It’s a great day to do a park clean-up!”
 - “Ugh, why do I have to do this?”
- Lead the *Captioning and Sharing Photos* activity:



- Split the group into groups of two to four individuals. Provide each group with a set of photos. Ask the groups to come up with at least one positive and one negative caption for each photo. Groups should write down the captions they come up with for later discussion.
- It may be helpful to have a few of your own caption ideas to help groups if they get stuck.
- Provide approximately 10 minutes for staff to brainstorm captions.
- Discuss what staff came up with and why they were negative or positive. Discussion questions can include
 - “Why does the caption of a photo matter?”
 - “How can people make assumptions about a photo and take it out of context?”
 - “What do you think are some boundaries/guidelines that should be in place when interacting and posting online?”

Activity: Consequences of Social Media Postings: (20-25 minutes):

- Describe the *Consequences of Social Media Postings* activity:
 - What to say: “Now we are going to explore possible consequences of social media use by looking at real examples and identifying both the short- and long-term consequences those individuals faced because of their posts.”
- Lead the *Consequences of Social Media Postings* activity:
 - Have staff stay in the same groups as the last activity and provide a copy of the printed news articles to each group. Each group should receive a different news article. Provide a copy of the article for each person in the group.
 - Explain that each group’s task is to read their article, be ready to give a summary to the whole group, and answer the following questions:
 - “What did the individual(s) share online?”
 - “What social media platform did they use?”
 - “What consequences occurred?”
 - Walk around the room for the duration of the 10 minutes and answer any questions that may arise.
 - After the groups are finished discussing their articles, go around the room and have each group share their answers to the questions above.
 - On a large sheet of hanging white paper or a whiteboard create a chart that resembles this one:

Article	Social Media Platform	What they shared	Consequences	Short-term?	Long-term?

- Fill out the chart together, focusing on the consequences both short- and long-term. Have staff volunteer their thoughts and answers while you fill in the chart.
- Transition into discussing some boundaries you might want to consider to ensure responsible social media usage.



- Possible boundaries to discuss might include: when to “friend” youth in the program, when to respond to social media posts by youth, when to address comments in posts by youth in the program, interacting with youth outside the program via social media, and discussing youth posts with other adults.

Reflection and Recap (5 minutes):

- Return to the staff’s responses from earlier. Ask staff what they learned during the course of the workshop and record the information in the same place. These responses can include any changes to information they thought they knew, answers to questions they had about the topic, or any new information.
- Ask follow-up questions, such as “What part of the activity made you realize that?”

Resources:

None

Sources:

Footnotes in this document can be found as references within the Youth Inclusion Implementation Guide at http://reach.umn.edu/inclusion/pdf/Youth_Inclusion_Implementation_Manual.pdf

The *Captioning and Sharing Photos* and *Consequences of Social Media Postings* activities were adapted from Michigan State University 4-H Extension materials on responsible social media use:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/responsible_social_media_activities

Anderson, M. & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens, social media & technology 2018. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/>