

Experiential Learning Model

TIPS ON FACILITATING REFLECTION

Group discussions tips:

- Use seven seconds of silence. People need time to reflect and think about a topic, some more than others. Once a question is asked, silently count to seven, and more than likely someone will respond. Giving young people time to think and express their answers may mean waiting quietly and encouraging youth.
- Don't answer the youth's questions. Acknowledge every answer so that the young person doesn't feel that he or she has failed to please you. The questions are deliberately open-ended to allow for a range of individual answers, which you should receive openly even if they differ from your opinions.

- Encourage young people to think deeply. Short or superficial responses could indicate that they need to think in greater depth about a question. Use follow-up comments to help them transfer their experiences into understanding, such as, "Can you talk more about that?" "Would you share an example of what you mean?" "Why do you think that is so?" "What about another perspective?"
- Find ways to give everyone a chance to share their ideas and get involved. Think of creative ways to do this without calling on someone by name (participants may not be ready to respond or may not want to respond to a particular question).
- If there are four or five questions you want the group to respond to, write them down on colored note cards. Use different colors to represent questions ranging from easiest to most difficult. (For example, the easiest question might be blue, a more difficult one might be yellow and so on.) Pass these out to group

members and start by asking a member with the easiest color to read his or her question out loud. Continue and end with the most difficult. The color-coded cards help guide the participants from simple thinking about the issue to more complex reflection.

- If you have a group of more than 10 participants, break them into smaller teams to process questions. Bring teams back together and facilitate a discussion on the high points. This may require one or more facilitators. However, it allows for more interaction between participants.
- Take into account different learning styles when brainstorming ways to carry out reflection. Besides the usual activities such as journaling or responding to discussion questions, young people can create songs, write poetry, develop a wall mural or quilt, write a letter to themselves, do a skit, write a radio or television program and record it or create a photo display of the entire project from the first step where community needs were determined to the final application. Think creatively about the entire design of the reflective process.

