

YOUTH SHARE THOUGHTS ON SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

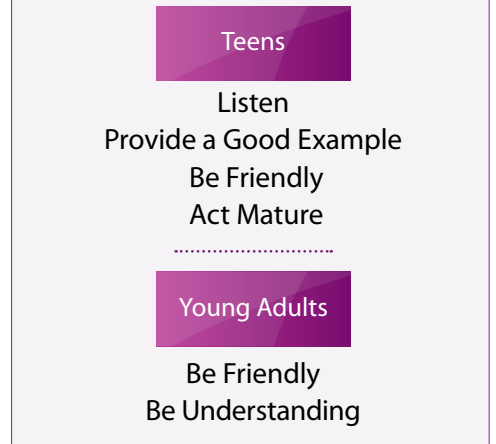


The Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) invited young people from across the state to share their thoughts on how adults can be supportive to young people.

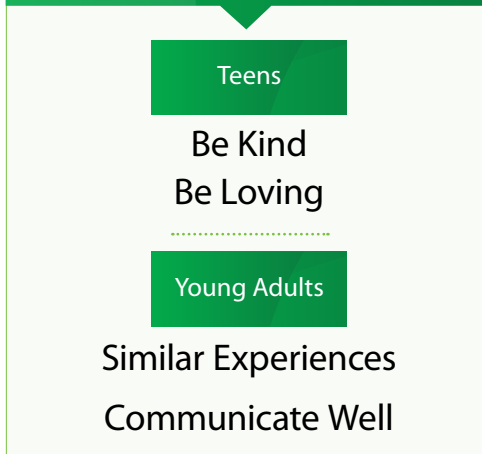
Do you have someone outside your family who you consider a Supportive Adult? How did you meet them?



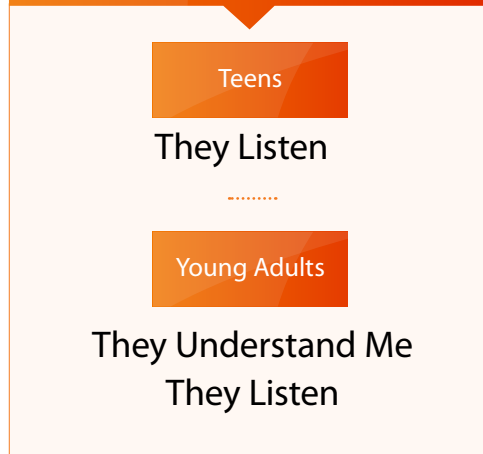
How should an adult behave/act if they want youth to connect with them?



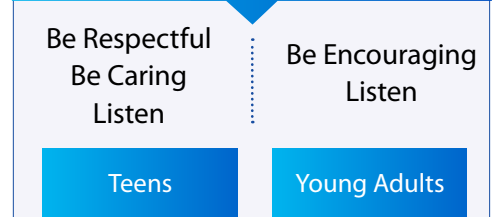
What characteristics do you want to have in common with a Supportive Adult?



What is it about a Supportive Adult that makes you want to spend time with them?



What is the one thing you want adults to know about how to support young people?



Additional comments youth shared:

- ▶ Let me make mistakes
- ▶ Use humor to connect
- ▶ Let me call you out
- ▶ Ask for feedback
- ▶ Be open minded
- ▶ Set boundaries

Young Adults = 19-24 years old
Teens = 13-18 years old

Feb & July 2024

ADULTS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON BEING SUPPORTIVE TO YOUTH



The Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health asked adults who work in supportive capacities with youth to share their thoughts on being a supportive adult.

What are your go-to strategies to connect with young people?

- ▶ Ask youth questions about their favorite things, colors, food, sports, toys, what they like or dislike, etc. Learn about the things youth talk about.
- ▶ Active listening and being present and authentic with youth. Let them speak without cutting in. Give them the time to share their emotions.
- ▶ Share feelings and be vulnerable. It demonstrates it is OK to show feelings.
- ▶ Have inviting and comfortable spaces for youth.

What motivates adults to be a supportive adult for young people?

- ▶ Many want to provide youth what they didn't have when they were young. They feel they would have benefitted from having a supportive adult in their lives.
- ▶ To help young people – develop skills, feel safe, provide resources, be successful, and reduce anxiety and loneliness.
- ▶ It is fun being with youth.
- ▶ To learn from young people.

What are the challenges?

- ▶ Knowing and keeping up with what youth are interested in.
- ▶ Making enough time.
- ▶ Youth behavior in general is a challenge.

Adults participated at the Wisconsin After School Network Out of School Time Conference on November 9, 2023.