

Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents – A Checklist

Program: _____

Process

1. Review your program processes and content to ensure developmental appropriateness.
 - Using developmental needs in our program's processes
 - Using developmental needs to ensure our program's content is understandable and meaningful
 - Using developmental needs as the focus of the program's content
2. After your review make adjustments in your program to enhance its responsiveness to young adolescent developmental needs.

Developmental Needs

Opportunities for Self-Definition

- ☐ opportunities to better understand, define, and accept who they are as individuals
- ☐ opportunities to explore their widening social world and to reflect upon the meaning of new experiences, so that they can consider themselves participants in society
- ☐ opportunities for young adolescents of ethnic cultures to achieve a positive orientation toward their own culture and white American culture; to affirm their ethnicity through observation of ceremonies, retention of native language, and reinforcement of specific attitudes, beliefs, and practices

Competence and Achievement

- ☐ opportunities to find out what they are good at doing and to know what they do is valued by others whom they respect
- ☐ develop and practice life skills for healthy living
- ☐ opportunities that encourage the practice of new skills, public performance and recognition, and reflection on personal and group accomplishments

Positive Social Interaction with Adults and Peers

- ☐ opportunities to develop interpersonal skills
- ☐ opportunities to learn how to develop a relationship with their parents that is reflective of their growing autonomy and utilizes new patterns of communicating

- ☐ opportunities to form positive peer relationships and support, especially through structured programs
- ☐ opportunities for caring relationships with adults who like and respect them, who share their own experiences, views, values, and feelings, and who serve as role models and advisors

Physical Activity

- ☐ opportunities to utilize their energy and growing bodies through activities that require physical movement or expression

Meaningful Participation in Families, Schools, Churches and Community Organizations

- ☐ opportunities to participate in making decisions about activities that shape their lives *and* as active leaders or participants who can make a viable contribution to the success of those activities
- ☐ opportunities to participate as valued and contributing members of the faith community, and as leaders in church ministries and programs
- ☐ opportunities for exposure to situations in which they can use their skills to solve real life problems and affect the world around them, such as community service

Creative Expression

- ☐ opportunities to express to the external world who they are on the inside (feelings, interests, abilities, thoughts) through a variety of activities, e.g. music, writing, sports, art, drama, cooking
- ☐ activities that enable them to experience and test out new and different forms of self-expression

Structure and Clear Limits

- ☐ provision of structure and guidance for young adolescents in making decisions about their behavior that involve them in the process of decision-making
- ☐ provision of structure that helps them stay focused on a task, persevere in their various efforts and succeed, which leads to an increase in self-esteem
- ☐ provision of structure and clear limits that helps them feel safe in their activities, which can empower them to live with joy and confidence

Personal Religious Experience

- ☐ opportunities to explore "the big questions" in life, questions whose answers can only be comprehended within the context of faith and religion
- ☐ opportunities for a deeper and more personal relationship with God