



**Getting to “Y”  
The YRBS Student Analysis Project**

**Dialogue Night  
Resource Manual**

**“There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about”**

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**Turning to One Another**

**There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about**

**Ask “What’s possible?” not “What’s wrong?” Keep asking.**

**Notice what you care about.**

**Assume that many others share your dreams.**

**Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.**

**Talk to people you know.**

**Talk to people you don’t know.**

**Talk to people you never talk to.**

**Be intrigued by the differences you hear.**

**Expect to be surprised.**

**Treasure curiosity more than certainty.**

**Invite in everybody who cares to work on what’s possible.**

**Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.**

**Know that creative solutions come from new connections.**

**Remember, you don’t fear people whose story you know.**

**Real listening always brings people closer together.**

**Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.**

**Rely on human goodness. Stay together.**

**Margaret Wheatley**

***“Turning to One Another” 2002***

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## YRBS Dialogue Night Sample Agenda

**By the end of the night we will have....**

- 1. shared our data analysis with you, as a starting point for dialogue about these issues,**
- 2. Identified & celebrated our strengths (or assets) as a community,**
- 3. Further developed our action plan, exploring root causes, and incorporating new ideas, resources and identified assets/strengths.**

7:00 Greetings & Welcome (see page 3)  
Review of the Night's Outcomes (above)  
Ground rules (see YRBS Training Manual)

7:10 Ice Breaker Options (See Page 6):  
    Matching Activity  
    Stand-up/sit-down  
    Asset bingo

7:20 Identification of Strengths or Assets in our Community  
(see page 7 for options):  
    Asset Web  
    Straight Brainstorm  
    Post-it Brainstorm  
    Chalk talk Activity  
    Asset Community Map

7:45 Share your "YRBS Executive Summary" to spark dialogue regarding:  
    1. Why do you think this strength or concern exists – what are its "root causes"?  
    2. What do you think might be done to either build on this strength or lessen this concern?

Consider making a "T" chart on newsprint to record thoughts, with question 1 in the left hand column and question 2 in the right hand column.

**Discussion Options:** Depending on how many are attending and how many student facilitators you have each group should be facilitated by a student):

-**Small Group discussions** re: different strengths & concerns  
(options: 1 group strengths -1 group challenges; individual groups for each identified strength and concern)

-**Rotating stations** regarding strengths & concerns, each station one strength or concern. Let each small group spent approximately 10 minutes talking about this issue, recording their thoughts on newsprint. When they move to a new station, they review the notes of the prior group and then add their thoughts. Student facilitators can move with a group or

be responsible for facilitating at one station throughout the dialogue period.

8:15 **Report back** - different people summarize root causes and possible actions for each of the 6 areas.

8:30 **Action Plan for Each Challenge Area:**

**Option:**

Split into 3 groups relative to identified 3 challenges to

1. Review and refine “root causes”

2. Define:

- next steps
- resources needed/available
- who is going to do what, when

See “Action Plan Form” attached

8:50 **Report Back & Closing**

**Options:**

1 word whip (or short phrase)

Paper Airplane

Close by briefly explaining next steps (e.g.: The YRBS Committee will be meeting next week to summarize all that was learned this evening and finalize plans for the spring) and thanking everyone for coming.

Round of applause wouldn't be a bad idea either – to celebrate all the work you put into pulling this off!!

## **GREETING AND MINGLING PERIOD IDEAS**

(taken from VTLSP Dialogue Night manual)

**Greeters:** Greeting is a very important role. People attending Dialogue Night for the first time may be a bit apprehensive; they are entering the unknown. Your friendliness will put them at ease and help them to relax, setting an open and comfortable tone for the entire evening.

Three or four of you should be designated greeters. As people come through the door, welcome them, ask them to fill out a nametag, and hand them a card that assigns them to a table (splitting up groups who come together).

You may want to say something along these lines: “Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ (also wear a name tag). Welcome to our YRBS Dialogue Night. We’re giving you these cards to help us organize small groups. When you are ready to find a seat, please sit at the table marked with your card (number or color). But first, please fill out a nametag and help yourself to something to eat and drink. The moderator will be calling us together in a few minutes”.

**Small Group Discussion Facilitators:** Keep an eye on your table. When someone first sits down at your table, join them and introduce yourself as a YRBS committee member. As others sit down, introduce people to each other. Before you start small group work, consider having each person introduce him/her self and perhaps add something like – “and tell us what your favorite ice cream is”.

**Everyone:** Mix & mingle!! Introduce yourself and strike up a conversation with people. Ask them how they heard about the Dialogue Night. Ideally everyone who comes will be welcomed by at least one teen and one adult, in addition to the greeters. Avoid clustering up in a group with people you know.

**Moderator:** When it is clear that the majority of the participants have helped themselves to refreshments and have settled in at their assigned tables, get everyone’s attention. Try to make this happen within 10 minutes of the advertised starting time to honor those who arrived on time.

Welcome the participants and introduce yourself and the sponsoring group(s). Explain why you feel that this Dialogue Night is important to your community & pace the rest of the meeting according to your agenda.

## **ICE BREAKER OPTIONS**

### **Matching Activity:**

Identify some of your most surprising or controversial or worrisome YRBS questions (balance of strengths and concerns) and find the current data for your community. Put all the chosen questions in one envelope (1 for each table) and all the statistics in a second envelope. Have participants at the table (as a group) take a guess at which statistics match with which questions for 10-15 minutes.

Lead a discussion, soliciting what each table thought and then revealing the “truth”.

### **Stand-up – Sit-Down**

Pose the following questions, asking folks who answer “yes” to the question to stand up....

Stand up if...

- at any time in the past, up through today, you have ever been a teenager.
- you like pizza
- you are currently a teenager
- you have ever climbed a mountain
- you interact regularly with teenagers as part of the work you do
- you lick an ice cream cone from left to right in a circular motion
- you live with a teenager
- your favorite color is blue
- you are a Red Sox fan
- etc., etc.

### **Asset Bingo**

See YRBS Project Manual

## **WAYS TO EXPLORE COMMUNITY STRENGTHS**

### **Asset Web**

See YRBS Project Manual

### **Straight Brainstorm**

Explain the ground rules for a brainstorm: The purpose is to get as many ideas “on the floor” as possible & be as creative as possible....therefore  
NO idea is a bad idea – use no judgment (& make no comment verbal or non-verbal!).

Have one person be the scribe, writing down each idea, while the facilitator makes sure the comment is understood and all get a chance to contribute. The focusing question is: “What are the strengths or assets in our community, when we think of teens? What are the things which makes growing up in this community a positive experience for teens - things we can be proud of.”

If you want to jump-start this, have everyone pair up with the person next to them to begin their list with a 2 minute warm-up discussion period.

When you “debrief”, here are some questions you might use:

1. What themes do you see in the responses?
2. Is there anything that surprised you when you read it?
3. What does it feel like when you just step back and read this?  
(hopefully proud comes to mind!)

Close with a reminder that whatever the challenges are, it is important to remember that these strengths exist. In fact, building on strengths, rather than “fixing” problems, can be a very effective way to address challenges.

### **Post-it Brainstorm**

Explain the ground rules for a brainstorm: The purpose is to get as many ideas “on the floor” as possible & be as creative as possible....therefore  
NO idea is a bad idea – use no judgment (& make no comment verbal or non-verbal!)

Pass out plenty of post-its for everyone. Explain that they have 5 minutes to write down what they believe are the “strengths and assets” of the community, relative to being a teen.

Collect one post-it at a time from each participant, doing as many rounds as you need to get all the ideas out. Post them in a single spot, creating categories as you do (all strengths related to teens themselves, all strengths related to the school, etc.)

When you “debrief”, here are some questions you might use:

- 1 What themes do you see in the responses?
- 2 Is there anything that surprised you when you read it?

- 3 What does it feel like when you just step back and read this?  
(hopefully proud comes to mind!)

Close with a reminder that whatever the challenges are that you will be talking about, it is important to remember that these strengths exist. In fact, building on strengths, rather than “fixing” problems, can be a very effective way to address challenges.

### **Chalk talk Activity**

Put a very large piece of art paper up on the wall. Put the focusing question in the middle. In this case, it will be “Strengths and assets of this community as a teen”. Put out lots of markers and offer the following directions:

We are going to have a silent dialogue about all the many strengths of this community relative to teens - the things which makes growing up in this community a positive experience or things we can be proud of.

All our thoughts will be recorded on this large paper – IN SILENCE. When you have an idea of a strength, just come up & write it down. Also, read what others are writing down & if you want to add to their thought...or connect thoughts, feel free to do that. We will do this “chalk talk” sharing of ideas for about 10 minutes IN SILENCE. Then, we will talk about what themes we see in the responses and your reactions to what you read.

During the writing, just observe and make sure silence is kept. Don’t be afraid when there are lulls – they occur naturally and often precede sudden flurries of writing. You will sense, in about 8-10 minutes, that you can wrap it up and begin to talk about the responses.

When you “debrief”, here are some questions you might use:

- 4 What themes do you see in the responses?
- 5 Is there anything that surprised you when you read it?
- 6 What does it feel like when you just step back and read this?  
(hopefully proud comes to mind!)

Close with a reminder that whatever the challenges are that you will be talking about, it is important to remember that these strengths exist. In fact, building on strengths, rather than “fixing” problems, can be a very effective way to address challenges.

### **Asset Community Map**

Get a big piece of paper from the art room and literally draw a birds-eye view of your community. Post it on the wall and have people gather round and write all the strengths of the community in the logical locations.

When you “debrief”, here are some questions you might use:

1. What themes do you see in the responses?
2. Is there anything that surprised you when you read it?
- 3 What does it feel like when you just step back and read this?  
(hopefully proud comes to mind!)

Close with a reminder that whatever the challenges are that you will be talking about, it is important to remember that these strengths exist. In fact, building on strengths, rather than “fixing” problems, can be a very effective way to address challenges.

## **CLOSING OPTIONS**

**One Word “Whip”** (or short phrase): Circle up (this is really important) and explain that you are closing with a one word reflection (or very short comment) about the evening. Once someone starts, move around the circle.

**Paper Airplane**: Give everyone a piece of paper with the following question on it: “Please write a brief thought or comment about one **positive** thing you learned tonight that you do not want to forget” (stress *positive*). If you want to use this as a pseudo-evaluation, you might also ask them to check student, parent, caring community member (other than parent), or teacher. Ask them NOT to sign the paper but to be sure to write clearly as someone else will be reading it out loud.

Once everyone seems to have finished their writing, create a large circle in an open space. Ask everyone to create the most awesome paper airplane they have ever made...in the next 3 minutes. Create a “NASA Count-down” from 10 and when you get to “blast-off”, instruct everyone to launch their airplane. When they have “landed”, ask everyone to go pick up another person’s airplane. Do a “whip” around, having everyone read the paper they picked up.

Alternate: Just have them crumple up their piece of paper into a ball & throw it.

### **Other Helpful Guides or Training Options for this Night**

Review “Facilitator Job Description” from YRBS Student Analysis Project Manual

Review “What do I do Now? Common Facilitator Dilemmas” from YRBS Manual.

Role plays regarding how to manage a difficult group member.

**Dialogue Night Friendly Feedback**

How did you hear about Dialogue Night?

How has this evening been helpful?

What do you suggest could happen differently?

Would you be interested in being involved with any of the Action Steps and if so which one(s)?

If yes, please provide your name and email address or contact information:

I am a:      \_\_\_ student      \_\_\_ parent      \_\_\_ community member

Any additional information you would like for us to know?

One word you would use to best describe this night: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for participating!***

## Checklist for Organizing your Dialogue Night

- Secured Facility (flexible seating preferably)
- Arranged for Food
- Advertised the night and done personal recruitment to make sure there is a good turnout (start 2 weeks in advance of the event!!!). This may include:
  - Newspaper Press Release, ad or Letter to the Editor
  - Radio Spot
  - Announcement over local cable calendar
  - Posters
  - Personal written invitations (or mail poster with a personal note on it to key individuals you would really like to come to the evening).
  - “Sandwich Board” advertising at PO/ Saturday Recycling Center or other common meeting spot (might even have a student posted at one of these places to pass out posters).
  - Notice to area churches to put into Sunday flyer
  - Notice in school newspaper or weekly notices to parents
  - Arranged for credit for student participation with teachers
- Bought/borrowed Nametags, Newsprint pad (big paper pads), Markers, Masking tape
- Organized/copied Handouts (Executive Summary, Agenda, Ground rules, etc.)
- Organized how small groups will be formed
- Assigned & practiced roles
- Fine-tuned the agenda
- Arranged for AV equipment if needed for Media Presentation (& checked to make sure it is working that night, with back-up plan)

**Dialogue Night Planning Sheet**

Steps	Who will do it?	When?