

# Module 1:

## Partnering with Youth and Young Adults

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### Objectives

1. To be familiar with core competencies for effective practice with youth and young adults with mental health conditions.
2. To understand the challenges facing young people engaged in mental health services.
3. To know the principles of positive development and empowerment for youth.
4. To build and sustain trusting relationships with youth and young adults.
5. To meet young people's self-identified needs.

### Scenario



#### Working with Homeless Youth ~ Brittany

Brittany (aged 15), her dad and older brother were homeless and moving from hotel to hotel, and she reported that she did not get along with them. Brittany's mom had separated from the family when Brittany was very young. Brittany faced many mental health challenges and had a history of self-harm. She was taking medication prescribed by a psychiatrist and had been referred for wraparound services. Brittany's goals were to include her voice in her team meetings and be able to be the facilitator of her meetings. Recently she ran away and was missing for two weeks. When she returned, she shared stories of things that she experienced while being on the run. She had tried many drugs and put herself in some situations that she described as very dangerous. She said that she did all of this because she hated living with her dad and brother.

## Questions for “Brittany” Scenario

After reading and thinking about the scenario above, consider the following questions:

1. How would you respond to Brittany’s disclosures?
  2. What assumptions or biases about Brittany and her family would you need to check?
  3. How might you talk with Brittany about her situation?
  4. Given Brittany’s desire to have her voice heard, how would you work with her on this goal?
  5. What resources or supports might you explore?
  6. How might a peer support provider work with Brittany?
  7. Whom might you consult with?
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## Module 1 Questions

Here we offer questions to guide your thinking about how module 1 content could be applied in your work in the local area and with the young people you serve:

1. What or who was helpful to you as you navigated the transition to adulthood? What were the biggest challenges you encountered and how did you address them?
2. Think of a situation when you had difficulty engaging a young person in your work with youth. What strategies were most effective in forming a trusting relationship?
3. In a first meeting with a young person who is depressed or withdrawn, what are some ways to increase their engagement in a conversation about strengths and needs? Can you think of an example? Imagining yourself in the young person’s shoes, how would they prefer to work toward identifying strengths and needs? What would need to be in place to encourage this young person to not only open up, but also engage in critical thinking with you?
4. How do you apply an empowerment approach with a young person who has never been asked to identify goals or whose goals you believe are inappropriate according to legal standards? How do you manage your own responses when working with youth whose goals don’t fit with your personal sense of ethics? Can you think of an example of when you did this successfully? What did you do? What did you learn from a situation like this when it went less well?