

WORKSHOP 13

ALIGNING FOR ACTION: SHARING COLLECTIVE INSIGHTS AND CRAFTING CALLS TO ACTION

Objectives

Following this workshop, the youth will be able to:

- Apply information gained during ally engagement to refine their policy change goals.
- Translate their goals into focused calls to action.

Overview

Debriefing meetings with allies will enable the group to synthesize new knowledge and refine the group's policy change goals and action strategies.

Total time

2 hours

Facilitator Prep

- Review notes from ally interviews in preparation for Activity 1: Insight Exchange and Ally Debrief.
- Bring the group's mission statement and key research findings ready for reference during Activity 2: Crafting Impactful Calls to Action.
- Prepare the Success Log to share for the Connect & Close.
- Review and summarize AWE evaluation results using a modality of your choice.

Welcome

Invite the youth to share their favourite dish or food specialty that they love to cook or prepare.

Connect & Open

Review AWE survey summary and anonymous compliments from last session.

Look Back

Review that last workshop, the group hosted an adult ally for a group interview. Invite the youth to provide a brief recap of that meeting.

Look Forward

Explain that today, the group will discuss the ally interview from the previous workshop and develop impactful call-to-action messages to use in their change campaign.

Activity 1: Insight Exchange and Ally Debrief (20 minutes)

Aim

The aim of this activity is to check in and reflect on the group's experiences with the support offered by the guest ally, and provide encouragement where needed. The activity also supports summarizing strategic opportunities and incorporating new strategies that the group can explore in working towards their change goals.

Steps

1. Explain that following the guest ally interview, it's helpful to debrief as a group to explore experiences, including feelings such as excitement, concern or confusion
2. Use the following questions to prompt discussion:
 - a. On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being not excited and five being super excited, how do you feel about the meeting with the guest ally?
 - b. In a few words, what resonated with you from that discussion?
3. Ask the group whether they have any questions arising from the meeting. Acknowledge that there may have been unfamiliar words or phrases used and provide an opportunity to discuss these, if relevant.
4. Facilitate a discussion using the prompts below either as a large group or in smaller groups:
 - a. Did you feel heard by the guest ally?
 - b. What surprised you?
 - c. How did the discussion motivate or inspire you, or how did it not? (discouragement, barriers, etc.)
 - d. How did the guest ally influence how you view the work we are doing?
 - e. Did the ally provide any new ideas to explore?
 - f. Based on this discussion, what new questions do you now have?
5. If needed, note that while experiences and opinions of allies may differ from those of the group, their viewpoints provide helpful information. Different perspectives provide a deeper understanding of the issues being explored and enable the group to create more effective messaging that can increase support for their goals and identify various ways that allies could help further their efforts.

Facilitator Tips

- If the group had any uncomfortable experiences during their exchange with the guest ally, be sure to validate these feelings, reference the GROW approach they saw in the previous workshop and identify how they found common ground. Check in after the workshop with any youth who may need further support.
- Share with the group any key insights you may have following the ally exchange that might be helpful to their work.

Activity 2: Crafting Impactful Calls to Action (30 minutes)

Aim

Drawing on their mission statement, evidence gathered to date and information from allies, the group will craft calls to action related to their policy change goal. These calls to action represent the asks they want to make of decision makers, and can be used in phase three activities where they apply their change tactics and bring their campaign to life.

Steps

1. Share with the youth that in this activity they will translate their change goals into “calls to action” that will help target and engage other allies and decision makers to support their goals.
2. Share example calls to action from past Agenda Gap cohorts.

agenda gap

WHO WE ARE
We are the Alberta Agenda Gap, a passionate, diverse group of youth with our own unique experiences. We worked together to learn how we can be effective mental health promotion advocates to change the stigma surrounding mental health in the world we are growing up in. Our perfect world is a safe, diverse, inclusive, and equitable place where everyone can receive care.

WHAT WE KNOW
Everyone has mental health. It's a part of us. Mental health relates to our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. People can have good mental health, even if they have a diagnosed mental health condition. However, according to the World Health Organization, 1 in 7 youth between the ages of 10-17 experiences mental health challenges. Youth face hard times in many areas such as at school, during socializing, or through traumatic events, and many also experience mental health stigma. Yet youth do not have enough access to services that promote their mental health or have a voice in the programs, services or policies that affect them.

WHAT WE WANT
We believe in an upstream approach that solves problems before they even occur. Youth are a big part of community and our voice is often silenced by power dynamics and stigma. **Engaging our strengths and expertise** in a meaningful way promotes our mental health, individually and collectively. **We have the right to participate** and our engagement can improve the relevance and fit of services leading to better uptake and health outcomes.

HOW TO HEAR US

- Assess whether your organization is ready to engage with youth where they are at and open to changing the way business is done (working with youth is transformative)
- Involve youth in the development of any youth engagement plans from the start
- Include more and diverse youth, especially those most excluded
- Ensure your organization has the evidenced-based knowledge and tools to:
 - build mutually beneficial, non-extractive, safe and developmentally appropriate relationships
 - help youth find their voice and take the lead (including doing the hard stuff)
- Recognize youth contributions, formally and informally (e.g., co-authorship)
- Compensate youth for their time
- Use your experience and voice to promote the importance of youth engagement
- Be transparent and accountable

EMPOWERING YOUNG LEADERS: EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STRATEGIES WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

Mission Statement
Agenda Gap Mississauga Youth aim to empower youth by promoting community well-being and advocating for mental health awareness with diverse teenage perspectives. Through developing supportive workshops and resources, we aim to educate our peers and community leaders on the importance of youth mental health and its connection to employment readiness.

Youth Employment Matters
Supports well-being by:

- Developing confidence
- Expanding networks
- Enabling community belonging
- Fostering independence

All of these outcomes are known protective factors for the promotion of positive mental health.

The Challenge
West Mississauga is estimated to have among the greatest concentration of youth until 2031 (Mississauga, 2020, p. 22), making employment opportunities for youth of particular concern, especially following the pandemic where "Peel Region closures were among the longest in the province" (2021 Vitals Signs, n.d., p 23).

Calls to Action

Adapt the mandatory grade 10 Careers Curriculum

- ✓ Include at least 1 month of resume preparation for real-time job postings
- ✓ Use a youth-informed approach to drive interactive & less theory-based assignments
- ✓ Create job boards in schools to provide a pathway to low-barriers opportunities
- ✓ Lessons and opportunities for networking skill development
- ✓ Instruct on how to leverage volunteer opportunities to achieve personal goals

Expand and promote Municipal & Provincial programs to address youth underemployment

- ✓ Set standards for youth inclusion in employment sectors where possible
- ✓ Expand and promote youth employment programs (subsidies, training programs) to youth and careers course instructors in school and in youth-serving agencies

4. If not already observed, note that the writing style is succinct and to the point. The overall messaging is clearly stated in a short and easy-to-read one-page document.
5. Prepare the group to create their own calls-to-action document. Review the group's mission statement and add to the Calls to Action Template. Divide the group into two smaller groups to craft sections of this document:
 - a. One group should focus on introducing the policy change goal. The other group should focus on identifying key research that can be used to demonstrate why their policy change goal is important. As you send them into groups, let them know that they will have 15 minutes to draft their sections, which should be no more than one paragraph long and incorporate their previous research and group discussions. Tell them that it's okay to include new information if they feel there are gaps in their summaries.
6. Return to Circle. Have the groups share their summaries and refine together until consensus is achieved on the content and phrasing.
7. As a group, consider the following guiding questions to identify two to five calls to action. Ensure the calls match the group's priority challenge
 - a. What existing policies are a barrier to our policy change goals?
 - b. What is missing from our network of resources to achieve our policy change goals?
 - c. What existing programs or resources could be modified to achieve our policy change goals?
 - d. What information do others need to know to advance our policy change goals?
8. Review and refine the calls to action as a group until consensus is achieved. Share with the group that these calls, along with their research, insights from allies and planned advocacy tactics, will guide their work in phase three of the program.

Facilitator Tips

- Check in with the groups while they write their sections for the calls to action document. Be sure to have the key points from their prior research and discussions prepared to help support their writing.
- Help guide the group towards calls to action that are achievable and fit with their priority challenge. Encourage the inclusion of feasible or actionable asks to set the group up for future success.

Connect & Close (10 minutes)

1. Share that changemaking can create expected and unexpected ripple effects over time. Collectively tracking the changes that you and the group accomplish will capture the knowledge of the group, providing documentation of your impact and creating motivation for longer term change efforts.
2. Share the Success Log: Charting Your Wins document.
3. Complete the log as a group, drawing on the Map the Wins activity output from Workshop 12 and providing examples as needed.
4. Once complete, ask the group how this exercise made them feel.
5. Encourage the group to visit and update the Success Log over time to log or discover the various ways their efforts have created change.
6. Circulate AWE survey link and allow a few minutes to complete.
7. After workshop closes, send a link to the AWE survey by email for those who did not complete it during the session.



Workshop 13 Resource: Success Log: Charting Your Wins

Keeping track of project activities and their impacts is useful for knowing what tactics are working and what might be helpful moving forward.

Each time you or the group gets the word out about your policy priority, enter the information on this sheet. This will be helpful in seeing your successes and sharing them with others to monitor impact.

**Activities can include everything from informal discussions with teachers, leaders and decision-makers, to formal presentations or campaign tactics. Any exchange that leads to new awareness about the policy priority can be tracked to monitor impact.*

Date	What happened? (activities*, discussion, etc.)	With who? (audience)	What changed? (short, medium & long-term outcomes)	What next? (any follow up needed or reflections on what worked well)
	e.g., Presentation about the policy priority made to school during an assembly	Number and type of attendees — students, teachers, principal, etc.	New knowledge in school community about the policy priority	Follow up with school leaders about whether the presentation will be featured in school blog/newsletter
	e.g., Invited to participate in discussion with the health authority	Number and type of attendees — decision makers, etc.	Commitment to further exploring the issue, invited continued engagement	Send thank you message
	e.g., Participated in a media interview about the policy priority	General public	Offers of support, increased number of allies	Note any supporters among those who commented on or referenced interview