



Cheat Sheet

ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Action	Example
Create regular check-in conversations	• Ask questions like “What’s been on your mind lately?” or “What was the best and hardest part of your day?”
Encourage identity exploration	• Support the youth’s interests in music, sports, art, fashion, or hobbies, even if they differ from your own • Attend cultural events, performances, or activities that are meaningful to the youth.
Model healthy emotional expression	• Model healthy emotional expression by saying, “I’m frustrated right now, so I’m going to take a few minutes to calm down before we start talking.”
Support healthy coping skills	• Encourage activities such as journaling, exercise, art, music, gaming with friends, time outdoors, or cultural practices to help reduce stress. • Help youth create a “coping toolbox” of calming activities to use when overwhelmed.
Talk about values and goals	• Help youth set realistic short-term goals, such as improving a grade, trying a new activity, or saving money. • Ask questions like “What values are important to you?” or “What’s important to you in friendships?”
Normalize conversations about consent and respect	• Talk about how healthy relationships involve mutual choice, comfort, and communication. • Discuss examples from movies, TV shows, or social media about respectful versus disrespectful behavior.
Problem-solve together	• Listen and validate emotions first (“That sounds really upsetting”) before moving into problem-solving. • Break larger problems into smaller, manageable steps together. • Brainstorm multiple options during conflicts and discuss possible outcomes of each choice. • Ask, “What do you think would help in this situation?” rather than immediately giving orders or solutions. • Help youth think through situations like friendship drama, school stress, or disagreements calmly and collaboratively.