

TOPIC: Positive Youth Development

Participants will answer the following questions by the end of the session:

- What is meant by Positive Youth Development (PYD)?
- What are characteristics of programs that reduce risk to young people?
- How does a well-delivered Venturing program support PYD?
- How is the relationship between a Venturer and an advisor is a critical element of PYD?

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

Presentation Method

In planning the presentation, you should review the latest materials posted at <http://www.venturing.org/>. The most recent program information is posted there and is ready for your use.

Use the discussion outline below to help you prepare your remarks. PowerPoint presentation slides were not prepared for use during this session. If you wish to use one, the content below will be helpful in constructing your presentation.

Resources

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Handbook for Venturers*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 619088)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Advisors Guide*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618768)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Awards and Requirements*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618767)

Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (2018). Positive Youth Development. Retrieved on 2018 March 8 from <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

Search Institute. (2006). 40 Developmental Assets. Retrieved on 2018 March 8 from <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/>

Methods of Venturing – see resource page at end of this document

OVERVIEW

Positive Youth Development is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. Scout’s program model is ideally prepared to help develop the attributes of PYD and help young people become successful and engaged members of their community, family, and network of friends.

INTRODUCTION Developmental Assets

- Create a chart with the columns shown below. Ask participants:
- Create sticky notes for each of the attributes under the categories and ask participants to help place them on the chart

Commitment to Learning	Positive Values	Social Competencies	Positive Identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achievement Motivation ▪ Learning Engagement ▪ Reading for Pleasure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Caring ▪ Equality and social justice ▪ Integrity ▪ Honesty ▪ Responsibility ▪ Healthy Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and decision making ▪ Interpersonal Competence ▪ Cultural Competence ▪ Resistance skills ▪ Peaceful conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal power ▪ Self-esteem ▪ Sense of purpose ▪ Positive view of personal future

When ideas are all posted, note for the participants that these are referred to as **Developmental Assets**. These examples are internal assets – and they are known to help young people thrive when these assets have been internalized by young people.

Ask participants how Scouting provides a platform for developing these assets?

- Look for suggestions from participants that focus on the youth-centered nature of Scouting, opportunities to build relationships with other people (including adults), the independence and autonomy we seek to foster in Scouting, etc.

APPLICATION

Positive Youth Development

Lead a discussion and make the following points:

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

The assets identified above do not happen by accident. They are intentional outcomes for young people and Scouting is a program that can have a positive influence on children. The Venturing program was designed, explicitly, to achieve these outcomes.

PYD has its origins in the field of prevention. In the past, prevention efforts typically focused on single problems before they surfaced in youth, such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency. Scouting has been offering a prevention program for over 100 years, but it is only in the last few decades that a professional language to describe what Scouting accomplishes – has been available to articulate what Scouting has been doing.

If PYD was a formula, it would look like this:

Positive Experiences + Positive Relationships + Positive Environments = Positive Youth Development

Ask:

- How does this “equation” look like a well-delivered Venturing program?

Programs like Scouting are strengthened when they involve and engage youth as equal partners, ultimately providing benefits for both for the program and the involved youth. In Venturing, this is at the heart of the program delivery model, with youth taking the lead for designing and implementing crew activities with advisors serving as a source of guidance and mentoring.

Characteristics of Effective Programs

Researchers have observed that these are some of the characteristics of programs that produce positive outcomes for young people.

Use the Methods of Venturing cards (see resources) and provide cards to participants. As you review the points below, ask participants to comment when one of the methods relates to a point below.

When connecting youth to positive experiences, programs should include the following principles:

- PYD is an intentional process. It is about being proactive to promote protective factors in young people.
- PYD complements efforts to prevent risky behaviors and attitudes in youth and supports efforts that work to address negative behaviors.
- PYD acknowledges and further develops (or strengthens) youth assets. All youth have the capacity for positive growth and development.
- PYD involves youth as active agents. Youth are valued and encouraged to participate in design, delivery, and evaluation of the services. Adults and youth work in partnership.
- PYD instills leadership qualities in youth, but youth are not required to lead. Youth can attend, actively participate, contribute, and/or lead through PYD activities.
- PYD involves civic involvement and civic engagement; youth contribute to their schools and broader communities through service.
- PYD involves and engages every element of the community — schools, homes, community members, and others. Young people, family members, and community partners are valued through this process. PYD is an investment that the community makes in young people. Youth and adults work together to frame the solutions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use the discussion questions to provide advisors an opportunity to process and analyze the information presented during this session. As a general suggestion, keep the discussion positive and constructive, in keeping with the values of Scouting and of Venturing as a youth development program.

A helpful comment to use to keep the discussion moving in a positive direction might be, “how does [comment] promote a program that encourages positive youth development?”

- What is meant by Positive Youth Development (PYD) and how do you see it as a part of what we try to do through Venturing?

- What are characteristics of programs that reduce risk to young people?
- How does a well-delivered Venturing program supports PYD?
- How is relationship between a Venturer and an advisor is a critical element of PYD?

CLOSURE

Wrap up conversation. Close by asking participants how they will use what they learned during this evening's forum to support their crew's program.

ASSESSMENT

Look for participant answers to the following questions by the end of the session:

- What is meant by Positive Youth Development (PYD)?
- What are characteristics of programs that reduce risk to young people?
- How does a well-delivered Venturing program supports PYD?
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RESOURCE

Methods of Venturing

Print out the information below and create a card with a method of Venturing on each one. Use this to support the discussion.

Leadership and Mentoring - Venturers are given opportunities to learn and apply proven leadership skills. A Venturing crew is led by youth officers. Training courses, such as the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews, uses experiential learning to teach Venturers how to lead effectively. Once Venturers have led several activities, they are asked to then mentor the other leaders in their crew.

Group Activities and Adventure - Venturers work with teams on everything they do. Their success is dependent on the interaction and cooperation of all, preparing Venturers for their future careers and paths.

Recognition - Venturing includes an optional awards program that acknowledges and recognizes our youth for their progress through Venturing's four main areas of emphasis

Adult Association - Adults serve to advise the youth as they plan events and make decisions, while ensuring the program remains youth-inspired and youth-led. This partnership provides our youth with essential connections and lessons that will prove useful in their future paths

Ideals - Venturers are expected to know and live by the Scout Oath and Law, ideals of Scouting created to inspire a culture of servant leadership, both inside and outside of Venturing.

Group Identity - Venturers are not asked to conform to a set uniform. Instead, they have the opportunity to create their own standards for attire at their events and meetings, as they see fit.

Service - Venturers serve their local and distant communities through personal and group service as the crew plans activities and individuals make progress through the Venturing awards program.