

Supporting Circles



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Facilitators play a key role in shaping strong Circles. They help adolescents feel safe in their Circles, so that Circles become a space where adolescents recover from difficult experiences, take a break from stress, and feel welcome and valued by others. A strong Circle is a place where adolescents can express their thoughts and opinions, explore ideas, experiment, and try new things without feeling embarrassed. In a strong Circle, adolescents may turn disagreements and disappointments into positive relationships and learning.

Some of the most important things facilitators do to support adolescents in building safe, strong Circles are to plan sessions and activity phases that create structure and routine for adolescents, while also giving them the opportunity to have fun, learn, and take action. Strategies and steps for those important aspects of a facilitator's role are included in the other sections of the [Facilitator's Guidance](#). In all of their work with and for adolescents, facilitators should always:

- ▶ Use the Ten Key Approaches to support adolescents' wellbeing, learning and positive engagement with each other and the world around them;
- ▶ Communicate regularly with their programme coordinator and ask for support when needed;
- ▶ Communicate regularly with adolescents adults in the community, with support from the programme coordinators (see [Involve adolescents and the community](#));

- ▶ Fulfil the responsibilities outlined in the job description or terms of reference for a facilitator in their programme, and uphold the code of conduct for facilitators (See [Sample Code of Conduct for Facilitators](#) for ideas of what this might include);
- ▶ Ask programme coordinators and adolescents for feedback on their efforts as a facilitator, and look for opportunities to learn and grow in their role. (See [Great Facilitator Checklist](#) for ideas about what this might include.)

Facilitators should also be aware of some of the challenges and opportunities that may arise and when they can or should take specific steps to help adolescents keep their Circles strong and safe. The [Talking about sensitive topics](#) and [Keeping circles safe](#) tools provide some strategies to help facilitators navigate some of the challenges that can arise when working with adolescents, and to transform them into positive opportunities for adolescents whenever possible.