

# Planning activity phases



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Once facilitators have chosen the phase that is likely to work best for their Adolescent Circle, they need to plan the phase. This means outlining a sequence of activities for adolescents' sessions.



**Improvise and adapt**

The **Activity Box** of the Adolescent Kit offers a wide range of activities from which facilitators (with adolescents, when ready) can choose. Those guides indicate which activities can work best in each phase. Facilitators are encouraged to review all of the guides in the Activity Box, not just the ones that are indicated for their adolescents' current activity phase. Adapt other activities to work well for your Adolescent Circle. Be creative and design your own activity!

Use the **Phase Planning Tool** to plan a sequence of activities with an appropriate balance and flow. For the Starting our Circle and Knowing Ourselves phases, this means including a variety of different activities that balance simple fun and games with opportunities to learn and try new things, and high-intensity activities with those that are restful and quiet. For the Connecting and Take Action Phases this means creating a logical flow of activities that enable adolescents to work together on a topic or project from one session to the next. For all phases, planning means looking for the right moment for adolescents to agree to and review their group rules (see '**Planning Sessions**'), and to set and review progress toward their group goals.

## Working together toward group goals

Giving adolescents an opportunity to reflect on and share their own goals for their time together in the Adolescent Circle is a key step for planning. When facilitators (and programme coordinators, and other adults supporting adolescents) know what adolescents want from their activities – including what they enjoy, and what they hope to achieve – they are better able to plan activities that adolescents find relevant and interesting, and that keep them engaged.

Facilitators can use adolescents' group goals to determine which activities to choose. If adolescents are interested in developing a certain set of competencies, or just have a kind of activity they enjoy (such as drawing, dancing, writing, building models, or carrying out interviews) facilitators can choose activities from the Activity Box accordingly. Facilitators can also

adapt activities to adolescents' goals. For example, if adolescents in the Connecting or Take Action phases are especially interested in community service, facilitators can plan a sequence of activities that guides adolescents through the process of planning and carrying out a project with a focus on community service.



**Listen to adolescents**

Adolescents starting a new phase should have a chance to discuss and agree to their goals during one of the earliest sessions in that phase. The **Setting group goals activity** can be a helpful tool to do so.

Adolescents' goals may be related to their emotional wellbeing or learning, or to activities they want to do inside and beyond their circle. For circles that are just starting out together (for example in the Starting Our Circle phase), the goals can be simple, such as:

- ▶ Have fun,
- ▶ Meet new people,
- ▶ Spend time with peers, or
- ▶ Take a break from other responsibilities.



**Challenge and encourage adolescents**

Adolescents also may have goals to learn competencies that they can use to address challenges they face; or to work toward their broader goals and aspirations in their lives. For example, adolescents may want to:

- ▶ Learn and practice new ways to express their ideas, including through the arts, music or writing;
- ▶ Learn new ways to communicate or negotiate with family members; or
- ▶ Know and practice ways to cope with difficult emotions, including stress.

Adolescents' goals also may be linked to positive changes that they want to see in their lives, or in their families, communities or societies. For example, adolescents may want to:

- ▶ Learn about cultural traditions;
- ▶ Develop skills to build stronger relationships with family and friends;

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- ▶ Organize an event or project that is helpful to the community.



**Provide  
structure and  
support**

In the more basic phases, adolescents' goals may be related only to how they want to spend time together in their circles. As they progress to more advanced phases, they may be ready to explore and express possibilities for how their activities will help them to feel well emotionally, learn, and form and enjoy relationships with others. Adolescents in the Connecting and Taking Action Phase may have more ambitious goals for changes in their lives, or for contributions they want to make to their communities.

Whatever phase they may be in, encourage adolescents to set realistic goals that can be achieved with the time and resources available. Adolescents should set goals within the first three sessions of any new phase, and display them in the meeting space. All of the members of Adolescent Circle should have a chance to participate in sharing their ideas and agreeing to their goals.

Once they have had a chance to participate in activities together for a few days or weeks, Adolescent Circles should review their progress toward goals on a regular basis. The **Reviewing progress toward group goals** activity is a useful tool to do so. Adolescents just starting to work together, such as those in the Starting Our Circle or the Knowing Ourselves phases, may find it helpful have a short review of their progress every time they meet (for example, during the Review step of their session) to share feedback about their experiences with new activities. Adolescent Circles who have been working together for some time, such as those in the Connecting and Taking Action phases, may want more time to assess their progress, and may want to take an entire session for a this discussion.