



Youth Engagement Now | yen.transitionta.org

Using YEN Tools for System Change

The voices of youth leaders are often overlooked in system and policy-level discussions, yet their insights and experiences are vital to shaping a brighter future. As an adult ally, you have the opportunity and the responsibility to ensure that young advocates are heard, valued, and empowered in these spaces. This is why it's essential to ensure they have the preparation and mentorship to face these barriers.

Meeting with policymakers and change-makers can be intimidating, even for the most experienced advocates. That's why your role in preparing, supporting, and debriefing with youth leaders is essential. Whether a meeting goes as planned or presents unexpected challenges, your guidance can help young advocates gain confidence, refine their messaging, and grow from each experience. It will also help you set up your youth for success in navigating challenges in their journey.

To support you in this role, we have developed a set of tools designed to help youth leaders prepare for and reflect on these critical meetings. This section includes:

- **Discussion Questions** to help youth clarify their goals and anticipate key talking points.
- **Tips** on effective communication, self-advocacy, and navigating power dynamics in policy spaces.
- **Role-Playing Exercises** to help youth practice engaging with decision-makers in realistic scenarios.
- **Reflection Prompts** to encourage thoughtful analysis of each meeting, identify lessons learned, and refine future advocacy strategies.

We encourage you to use these tools not only to equip youth for individual meetings but also to foster their long-term growth and sustainability as advocates. Your support in this process will help ensure that youth leaders are not just present but fully engaged and influential in the conversations that shape their futures. It also helps you and youth be on the same page when a challenge arises in encounters with professionals. This helps youth feel supported and encouraged to advocate and learn to navigate through decision making, empowering their self-determination.

Thank you for your commitment to uplifting youth voices and supporting the next generation of change-makers.

