

HOW TO ENGAGE YOUTH IN YOUR MESSAGING

When sharing information with youth, use facts backed by data. Don't use scare tactics; they're not effective. When possible, put a positive spin on your message and include youth in the process.

Here are a few tips to get you started.

01

USE RELEVANT DATA

Look for reliable local data like the Illinois Youth Survey or from community coalitions. Some other sources are Monitoring the Future, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, and the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey.



02

KEEP YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE IN MIND



When creating behavior or attitude change messages, think about what's important to your target audience. Whose opinions do they value? What language connects with them? Where are they most likely to see your message?

03

FLIP THE SCRIPT

Put a positive spin on the data. Instead of "30% of XYZ high school students consume alcohol every weekend," try "70% of XYZ high school students don't consume alcohol on weekends."



04

GET INPUT AND FEEDBACK

Involve young people in every step of message development. They are your audience. They know what their peers are doing, who they are listening to, and where they get their information.

