

Building Positive Relationships with Staff

Positive and supportive staff relationships are the foundation to a thriving program. While relationships have always been important, they are now more vital than ever.

Strategies for building relationships with staff:

- **Be authentic.**
 - Know who you are and your value and then share it authentically with your staff. Share your goals, interests, and passions, to help staff better relate to you as a person.
- **Be there.**
 - Be there for your staff. This might look like being available in-person as well as responding to their concerns via email, phone, or a messaging app. Acknowledge and act on staff's requests to build trust with your team.
- **Listen actively.**
 - Ask questions and learn about your staff's needs and concerns. As you listen, affirm, and celebrate the work your staff are doing and the difference they are making. It's important to act on what you heard.
- **Get to know them.**
 - Know your staff as people; work to know their passions, interests, goals, and challenges so you can offer support. Just as we encourage our staff to know the youth, work to know your staff.
- **Share control (decision making).**
 - Decision fatigue is real. Find ways to involve your staff in both big and small decisions. Empower your staff by allowing them to make decisions, find answers, and provide space for their voice. This shows you trust your staff and trust is at the core of all relationships.
- **Take responsibility for your mistakes.**
 - We all make mistakes and sometimes we just simply fail. Take time to admit when you've dropped the ball, misspoke or forgotten. Apologize and then work to correct the mistake. This will help create a relationship built on trust.