

Lessons Youth Learn at Challenge Day Programs

Evidence based research has shown that Challenge Day helps develop leadership in high school students through its day-long Challenge Day programs.¹ It also increases particular skills and life effectiveness listed in the categories below:

Intellectual Flexibility – youth that demonstrate this attribute are open to new ideas, are adaptable and flexible in their thinking, and can change opinions easily if there is a better idea or way of doing activities and projects. They can also see and understand perspectives different than their own.²

Task Leadership – youth that demonstrate this attribute can successfully enroll people to participate in tasks, activities, and projects. Youth with this attribute believe that they can productively lead others in a positive and effective manner.

Emotional Control – youth that demonstrate this attribute believe that they can stay calm in stressful situations and overcome anxiety quickly when things do go wrong and recover and resolve the problem efficiently.

Self Confidence- youth that demonstrate this attribute believe that they have the ability to do anything they put their mind to and they are confident they will succeed.

Social competence – youth that demonstrate this attribute have a high degree of self-perceived ability in social interactions. They have a high degree of confidence in their ability to positively relate with others.

In addition, Challenge Day provides growth in other areas as well. After our programs, you can expect the youth participants to:

- Increase their skills in noticing oppression and isolation
- Practice safe and effective intervention tools in the midst of conflict
- Perform acts of change in their schools and communities³

At Challenge Day, we invite youth make at least one conscious, positive contribution (also known as an act of change) each day in their communities and schools. The acts of change youth most often did after a Challenge Day are as follows⁴:

- Helped peers and family
- Connected and reached out to peers
- Gave hugs and expressed love
- Participated in community service
- Resolved conflict
- Took care of self

By participating in Challenge Day, youth learn to accept themselves completely for who they are just the way they are, look through the eyes of acceptance, love, and respect, and live their life in service. This is the work of Challenge Day!

¹ Nail, Terry. Dissertation: Evaluation of Life Effectiveness and Leadership Development in a Challenge Day Program for High School Students, Library of Congress, 2007.

² Neill, James et al., Life Effectiveness Questionnaire, 2003.

³ Nail, Terry, 2007.

⁴ Ibid.