



ELEVATE ADOLESCENCE PROGRAMS

FACILITATOR *Training*



EQUITY AND INCLUSION
RESOURCE PACKAGE

TYPES OF BIAS

TWO KINDS OF BIAS:

EXPLICIT

Conscious bias refers to the explicit preference for one over another based on characteristics such as race, gender, or socioeconomic status. This bias is visible and can manifest as discriminatory practices, unequal treatment, and favoritism. By recognizing and addressing these biases, individuals can create a more equitable and inclusive environment where all voices are valued.

IMPLICIT

Unconscious biases are automatic and often go unnoticed in our interactions.

For instance, a participant's quiet demeanor may indicate disengagement when, in reality, they could be reflecting or processing their thoughts. Awareness of our biases helps us to create an environment where every participant feels encouraged to contribute, regardless of their communication style.

Types of Implicit Bias:

Confirmation Bias: Looking for behavior that supports what we already believe.

Affinity Bias: Preferring those who seem more like us (in background, personality, etc.)

Attribution Bias: Assuming someone's behavior is due to who they are—not their circumstances.



BIAS INTERRUPTION

Bias interruption is the intentional practice of noticing, pausing, and redirecting behaviors, decisions, or patterns that stem from unconscious bias—especially those that affect inclusion, fairness, or belonging in a group setting. In facilitation, bias interruption means you don't just recognize bias—you actively disrupt its impact in real time, using clear, compassionate strategies that reinforce your group agreements and values.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Unconscious bias can show up in subtle but powerful ways, such as:

- Consistently calling on certain participants over others
- Dismissing emotional expression as “overreacting”
- Making assumptions about motivation or ability based on identity or behavior
- Allowing stereotypes or microaggressions to go unchecked in group dialogue
- If left unaddressed, these moments erode trust, safety, and equity.

WHAT BIAS INTERRUPTION LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE:

Noticing patterns:

“I’m realizing I’ve called on the same 2 people—let’s make space for some new voices.”

Naming with care:

“That comment could be interpreted in a way that feels dismissive—let’s pause and reframe.”

Redirecting the moment:

“Let’s return to our group agreements about listening with respect and curiosity.”

Self-reflection in real time:

“I may have made an assumption there—let me take a step back and check in.”

Debriefing after the fact:

“How did that moment land for folks? Is there anything we need to revisit together?”

FACILITATOR HABITS TO ADOPT

EQUITY PAUSE

Before each session, take a moment to reflect on the dynamics of your group by asking yourself:

- **Who usually speaks first?**
- **Who tends to stay quiet or may not contribute as much?**

Consider the various factors that might influence these patterns, such as personality types, comfort levels, or previous experiences in group settings.

- **What specific adjustments can I implement to redistribute that energy and create a more balanced environment where every voice has the opportunity to be heard?**

POST-SESSION DEBRIEF

After facilitating a session, it is essential to take time for reflection, either with a partner or through journaling. This practice enables deeper insights into the group's dynamics and your facilitation style.

Consider the following reflective questions:

- **Whose voices were amplified during the discussion?**

Reflect on the participants who actively contributed and how their input shaped the conversation.

- **Who didn't get airtime?**

Identify those individuals who may have remained silent or were not allowed to share their thoughts. Understanding this can help you recognize patterns of participation and inclusion.

- **What patterns repeated throughout the session?**

Look for recurring themes in participation, engagement, and interaction. This can provide valuable insights into group dynamics and highlight areas for improvement in future sessions.

FACILITATOR HABITS TO ADOPT

INCLUSIVE PLANNING

Design your activities with a variety of participation styles in mind to cater to the diverse needs of all participants.

- *Consider incorporating verbal activities that encourage discussion, written tasks that allow for reflection, movement-based exercises that engage physical energy, and partner work that fosters collaboration and connection. This multifaceted approach not only enhances engagement but also ensures that every participant can contribute in a way that feels comfortable and authentic to them.*

Offer choices in how youth can express themselves and show up in the space—not just in terms of what they say, but also in how they choose to participate.

- *This could include options for sharing ideas through art, technology, or group discussions. By providing these varied avenues for expression, you empower youth to take ownership of their participation, allowing them to bring their unique perspectives and strengths to the forefront, ultimately enriching the overall experience for everyone involved.*

INCLUSION SCANNING

WHAT IS INCLUSION SCANNING?

Inclusion scanning is the intentional practice of observing your group to assess whether everyone is being seen, heard, and valued.

1. *Who's speaking regularly? Who hasn't spoken at all?*
2. *Who's making eye contact or nodding – and who seems withdrawn or distracted?*
3. *Who's consistently chosen for leadership or praised publicly?*
4. *Are participants responding to each other – or only to you?*

REAL-TIME SCANNING AND ADAPTIVE RESPONSE

Once you start noticing who isn't fully engaged, the next step is to adjust in real-time. Here are three go-to responses when your scan reveals uneven inclusion:

OPEN THE CIRCLE

Say: "I'd love to hear from someone we haven't heard yet."

Use think-pair-share to create safety for less vocal participants.

SWITCH THE MODE

If the group feels flat, shift from verbal to movement, drawing, or writing.

Inclusion is how we invite expression.

CHECK YOUR CUES

Are you giving more praise to certain participants?

Pause and redistribute roles or attention to ensure fairness.

Inclusion scanning isn't just something you do during a session—it's something you build into your sessions from the start. Strengthening this skill means planning for different needs, watching for imbalances, and redesigning on the fly when something's off.