

## ADOLESCENT FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM (AFLP)

### POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (PYD) MODEL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The foundation of the Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) Positive Youth Development (PYD) model is based upon nine (9) guiding principles for case management. These principles are built on a positive youth development framework and aim to enhance resilience strengths among expectant and parenting youth. Positive youth development is about **promoting development**, not just preventing problems. A positive youth development approach strengthens a youth's ability to identify, build on, and improve their capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets in order to thrive. These principles were developed from statewide expertise and research that helps us understand what youth need to thrive in the face of adversity. The AFLP PYD model processes and activities embody, and are supported by, the following principles:

- **Strengths-Based:** All youth have strengths. The focus of case management practice is on helping youth recognize their strengths and building strengths rather than looking at deficits.<sup>1</sup> Building on strengths fosters a youth's ability to enhance their capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets in order to thrive.
- **Youth Voice and Engagement:** Youth have a voice and choice on their perspectives and priorities that are heard and respected. Their goals reflect their strengths, values, needs, and priorities. Youth are resourceful, meaningful contributors to their families, communities, and partners in the program.<sup>1</sup> Case managers actively engage and collaborate with youth through processes and activities that foster a sense of shared responsibility and connectedness, and further develop youths' strengths.
- **Caring Case Manager-Client Relationship:** Youth benefit from positive adult support in developing their personal strengths. Case managers can effectively support youth by developing caring relationships that are characterized by: "simple, sustained kindness; compassion; trust; respect; being non-judgmental; showing interest in; actively listening; and getting to know the gifts of the young person."<sup>2</sup>
- **Supportive Networks and Community Involvement:** Youth are encouraged to establish and cultivate healthy relationships and to seek support from their networks of interpersonal, family, social, and community relationships. Providing youth the

---

<sup>1</sup> California Adolescent Sexual Health Work Group. Positive Youth Development Principles. 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Benard B. *Resiliency: What We Have Learned*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd; 2004.

chance to participate in engaging, challenging, and meaningful activities and relationships allows youth to add value and enrich others' lives, make positive contributions to their communities, and builds youths' resilience.

- **Goal-Oriented:** Working with youth to identify and work toward goals is a long term, iterative process that supports positive youth development, specifically builds problem-solving skills, and increases their confidence and self-efficacy. Case managers use motivational interviewing techniques to help youth reflect, explore, and resolve feelings of ambivalence; identify and work towards personal goals; and engage in life planning.
- **Empowerment and Opportunity:** Setting high expectations for youth involves a sincere, implicit, as well as explicitly stated, belief that youth have the capacity to achieve their goals and be successful. High and realistic expectations for each youth empowers and motivates them to develop skills to work toward reaching their goals. Opportunities for meaningful participation and contribution, both within the program and in their broader social environment, provide youth with experiences in which they can practice skills, learn, grow, and make a positive difference.<sup>1</sup> Providing youth with opportunities to make positive contributions to their families and communities builds youths' resilience.
- **Culturally Responsive and Inclusive:** Case managers recognize, demonstrate respect for, and respond proactively to diversity in backgrounds such as culture, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, linguistic abilities, values, preferences, beliefs, socioeconomic status, geographic location, and identity of the young person and their family and community.<sup>1</sup>
- **Developmentally Appropriate:** Youth vary in developmental abilities. Case managers assess and respond appropriately to the developmental level of each youth, recognizing that physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development vary greatly among adolescents and can be influenced not only by age but also by a youth's health history, environment, and experiences.
- **Long Term and Sustainable:** Youth are provided with ongoing support and opportunities to develop resilience strengths and skills that will help them thrive both during the program and after they exit.

---

<sup>1</sup> California Adolescent Sexual Health Work Group. Positive Youth Development Principles. 2010.