

Toolkit: Adults as Enablers

Leaders' Corner

This comprehensive, self-guided toolkit is designed for adult volunteers in Scouting who are committed to supporting youth leadership. It offers tools to reflect on personal attitudes, adopt inclusive facilitation practices, and engage in shared decision-making with young people in their National Scout Organization (NSO).

Purpose of the Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide concrete strategies, exercises, and reflection opportunities to help adults recognize how they can either block or enable youth leadership. By shifting from a control-based mindset to a facilitative role, adults can become powerful allies who foster youth empowerment at every level of Scouting.

Checklist: Am I Enabling or Blocking Youth?

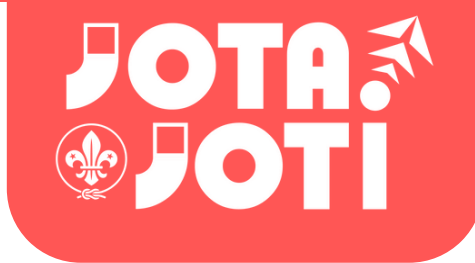
Reflect on your current habits using this checklist. Use it as a personal audit or with peers during training:

- ☐ I actively listen to young people's opinions before giving my own.
- ☐ I offer opportunities for youth to make decisions, even if they make mistakes.
- ☐ I advocate for youth representation in my NSO's leadership structures.
- ☐ I avoid dominating conversations when youth are present.
- ☐ I provide constructive feedback and mentorship when asked.
- ☐ I step back when youth take initiative.
- ☐ I support co-creation instead of approval-only processes.
- ☐ I reflect on my own biases about youth 'readiness'.
- ☐ I celebrate youth successes publicly.
- ☐ I include youth in designing and reviewing adult training content.
- ☐ I act in ways that are Safe from Harm and encourage others to do the same.

10 Facilitation Techniques

Cultural Note: Some facilitation techniques in this toolkit might need adjustment. Take time to consider what works best in your situation, and don't hesitate to ask for advice or collaborate with others.





Use these practical techniques to foster a more inclusive and youth-empowering environment:

- **Open Space Technology**

How it works: Choose a central theme and let participants suggest subtopics by writing them on a board. Designate spaces and times for each topic. Participants select which sessions to attend and can move freely between them.

Pros: Promotes self-direction, empowers youth to take the lead, perfect for complex or multi-interest groups.

Cons: Might feel chaotic to those unfamiliar with the method; needs a space with multiple breakout areas.

Example: At a national conference, young and adult leaders co-host sessions they're passionate about.

- **World Café**

How it works: Prepare 3–4 discussion questions on a topic. Arrange participants in small groups around tables. After 15–20 minutes, participants rotate, carrying key ideas with them. One person stays behind to summarize.

Pros: Promotes broad participation, fosters layered understanding, easy to implement.

Cons: Needs enough space and time; requires good rapporteurs to record ideas.

Example: A discussion about 'What makes leadership inclusive?'

- **Appreciative Inquiry**

How it works: Start by asking what works well. Use storytelling to surface strengths and successes. Then build plans around these positive examples.

Pros: Builds motivation and confidence; reduces focus on problems; very empowering for youth.

Cons: May feel superficial if serious challenges are ignored; needs balance with critical thinking.

Example: Youth share times they felt most heard by adults.

- **Fishbowl Discussion**

How it works: Form an inner circle (speakers) and an outer circle (listeners). After a round, swap roles. Optionally leave an empty seat to allow anyone to join.

Pros: Great for elevating youth voices; encourages active listening and structured turn-taking.

Cons: Some may feel nervous in the spotlight; limited number of active speakers at a time.

Example: Youth sit in the middle to share their views on governance.



- **Gallery Walk**

How it works: Post large sheets or posters around a room with questions, data, or themes. Participants walk, reflect, and add comments or ideas with markers or sticky notes.

Pros: Visual, interactive, low-pressure; good for introverts and large groups.

Cons: Can be hard to synthesize results; not suitable for very small spaces.

Example: Participants brainstorm barriers to youth leadership and post ideas.

- **Youth-Adult Pairing**

How it works: Deliberately pair a young person with an adult in project planning or event roles. Define clear, co-owned responsibilities.

Pros: Creates mutual respect, learning, and mentoring relationships; promotes shared accountability.

Cons: Needs intentional matching; risk of power imbalance if roles aren't truly shared.

Example: Co-leadership roles in planning events.

- **Role Rotation**

How it works: Rotate roles (e.g., facilitator, timekeeper, note-taker) among all participants during an activity or over a program cycle.

Pros: Builds diverse skills; reduces hierarchy; everyone experiences leadership and support roles.

Cons: Some roles may be uncomfortable for beginners; needs support for role transitions.

Example: Switch facilitation roles during group activities.

- **Silent Brainstorming**

How it works: Provide sticky notes or a digital whiteboard. Ask a question and allow silent individual input. Cluster responses and discuss patterns.

Pros: Avoids groupthink; ensures all voices are heard; great for multilingual or mixed-confidence groups.

Cons: Limited real-time interaction; needs a follow-up discussion to deepen ideas.

Example: Barriers to youth involvement.

- **Power Mapping**

How it works: Draw or use templates to map where power lies in a system (e.g., who decides what in your NSO). Identify influencers and how to involve them.

Pros: Makes invisible structures visible; good for planning advocacy or change strategies.

Cons: Can feel political or uncomfortable; needs psychological safety and trust.

Example: Charting decision flows in your NSO.



• Consensus Workshop

How it works: Facilitate idea generation first. Group and prioritize ideas. Use rounds of discussion and voting to reach shared agreement.

Pros: Inclusive, systematic, builds ownership of outcomes.

Cons: Time-consuming; requires skilled facilitation to manage differing opinions.

Example: Drafting a shared code of conduct between youth and adults.

Reflection Questions:

- Does this tool or technique fit my cultural and organizational context?
- Are there words, formats, or methods I should adapt to make it more familiar or accessible?
- Am I considering language, gender, and disability inclusion?
- Who can I involve to help adapt or test this approach in my context?

Practical Tip:

Involve a peer, mentor, or young person in reviewing or piloting a tool before using it in larger settings. Sharing ownership builds trust and relevance.

What Youth Need From Us

Quotes from Young People

These quotes illustrate the impact of supportive adult behavior:

"The best leaders I've had didn't give me answers—they asked better questions."

"I felt empowered when an adult stepped aside and said, 'Go for it—I'll back you up.'"

"Mentorship isn't about teaching—it's about listening and making space."

"Just one adult believing in me changed everything."

Reflection

Which quote resonates most with you, and why?

Templates for Co-Creation & Shared Decision-Making

Use these templates to support co-leadership and transparency in planning:

1. Joint Agenda Planner

Activity name	
Proposed by (Youth / Adult)	
Objectives	
Co facilitation roles	
Feedback loop	



2. Shared Roles Matrix

Task / Responsibility	Assigned To (Name or Role)	Mentoring Available?	Youth-Led / Adult-Led / Co-Led

3. Evaluation Form

- What worked well?
- What felt empowering?
- What should we do differently next time?
- Did all voices feel heard?

Reflection & Self-Assessment

After using the toolkit, reflect deeply with these questions:

- What have I learned about my facilitation style?
- Where am I strongest, and where do I need to grow?
- What action will I take this month to enable youth leadership?
- Do I regularly review and reflect on how I apply Safe from Harm principles in my facilitation or leadership roles?
- Have I created psychologically safe spaces where young people can express themselves without fear of judgment or harm?

Next Steps

- Share your completed checklist and reflections with a peer or mentor.
- Choose at least two new facilitation techniques to implement in your next activity.
- Co-design an activity with youth and reflect together afterward.

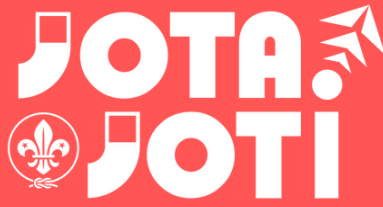
You Are Not Alone

Being an enabler of youth leadership isn't about having all the answers.

It's about asking the right questions, showing up with humility, and choosing to share power, even when it's uncomfortable.

There will be moments when you feel unsure, when structures resist change, or when habits are hard to break. That's normal.





But remember:

You are not alone.

The Scout Movement is supported by adults who believe in youth-led change. You can reach out, exchange experiences, learn from mistakes, and celebrate wins—big or small.

Start where you are. Use what you have. Invite others in.

Because youth empowerment doesn't begin with a program or a policy. It begins with a mindset.

And it grows through every adult who chooses to be an ally.

