

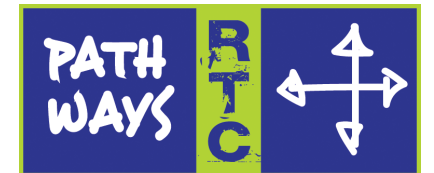


# Managing the Urge to Lead

Using Youth-Driven Conversational Techniques in Situations of Potential Risk



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# Roleplay

Instructions: Partner up with someone at your table. Choose one of you to play the role of the young person, Cara, and one of you to play the role of the provider.

Instructions for provider: Cara is a 17 y/o young woman you have been working with for about a year. She is beginning her senior year in high school. Cara comes to you and tells you that school is becoming too much for her to handle due to her anxiety, and she is planning on dropping out. Since her mom will no longer support her if she drops out, Cara is planning to go live with her 23-year-old boyfriend Kyle. You have concerns about Kyle due to his age as well as history with substance use, though Cara insists he is no longer using.

Instructions for Cara will be passed out separately. Do not share with the “provider.”



## Discussion

- How did that feel, as the provider and as the young person?
- What was difficult, from the provider's point of view?
- As the provider, what techniques did you use? Were they effective?
- Have you had to deal with situations like this in your real practice?



## Guiding Without Leading: Recognizing the Urge to Lead

- In situations in which the young person is planning to do something that concerns you or with which you disagree, the urge to insert your perspective will likely be stronger and resisting this urge will be more challenging
  - For example: the young person is planning to discontinue a program they are involved in (therapy, treatment, school, internship), is planning to leave home or run away, or is planning to strengthen a relationship with someone you disapprove of
- While the urge to lead is stronger in these situations, the risk to your relationship with the young person is also heightened



## Common Mistakes Providers Make

- Overreacting
  - When a young person comes to you with a decision they are planning to make, it's a positive thing. It likely means they trust you.
  - They may be unsure of the decision themselves and want help exploring the consequences
  - They may also be testing you to see how you react, and if you are a safe person to bring difficult topics to



# Common Mistakes Providers Make

- Making suggestions, giving advice, lecturing or attempting to talk the young person out of their decision
  - Saying “don’t do it” is unlikely to stop the young person from doing it
    - It may, in fact, make them more likely to do it
  - Inserting your perspective in this manner can send the message to the young person that you are judging them, manipulating them, or looking down on them as incapable of steering their own life
- Therapizing
  - Young people are hyper-aware of “therapy speak” and leading questions that seem to be eliciting a certain answer can come off as patronizing
  - Certain types of “why” questions can seem therapizing



[video]

What do you see the provider doing in this video?



# GWOL: Conversational Techniques to Use in Situations of Concern or Potential Risk

- First, notice that you are experiencing the urge to lead
- Remind yourself that it is not your responsibility to “fix” or “solve” the situation - what a relief!
- Trust the process - it is designed to empower the young person in the long run, past the point when there is someone to give them advice or suggestions (which they probably won’t follow anyway)
- By allowing the young person to explore their own perspectives and ideas in the context of making difficult decisions, you are giving the opportunity to build trust in themselves and their own skills
- In managing your urge to lead when they young person may be anticipating you will judge or shut them down, you may see great gains in your relationship and trust with the young person





# Conversational Techniques

- Open-ended questions
  - Use open-ended questions to explore the young person's feelings and reasoning around their decision
- Reflections
  - Listen and reflect on what you are hearing - focus on getting it right rather than changing their mind
- Exploring consequences
  - If the young person wants to think about the different options, generate a list of possible choices and the pros and cons of each

## Things to Consider When Making a Decision



### 1. Potential options

Option 1: .....

Option 2: .....

Option 3: .....

### 2. Weigh the pros and cons

Option 1

PROS		CONS
------	--	------

Option 2

PROS		CONS
------	--	------

Option 3

PROS		CONS
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### 3. How will the different options affect me now, and in the future?

### 4. Decision: Which of the three options is best?

### 5. Action Steps:



- How can you introduce and use the “exploring consequences” worksheet without inserting your perspective or leading too much?

## Roleplay pt. II

Let's revisit the roleplay activity from the beginning, as a group, using some of the skills and strategies we have covered during this session. Caitlin (facilitator) will play the role of Cara, and Maria will begin the roleplay in the role of the provider. You will have the opportunity to "tag in" as the provider as the activity goes on. If things get difficult, or if you have spent too much time in the provider role, you can tag out and give another group member a turn to practice.

# Debrief

- What went well? What could have gone better?
- What techniques might you implement in your own practice with young people?





Questions



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