

STRATEGIES FOR INTERACTING WITH YOUTH WHO ARE HOMELESS

Interviewing Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- Work in teams whenever possible
- Have your name badge visible
- Approach with a friendly smile and open posture
- Ask permission to talk with young people
- Introduce yourself and explain how this project may help young people who are experiencing homelessness now and in the future
- Ask if the young person has any questions before you begin the interview

Building Rapport with Youth

- Maintain eye contact, following their lead
- Make sure you respect the young person's space: if they step back, you step back a bit as well
- Use head nods to show agreement
- Echo back what they say to show you understand them
- Ask the young person if they have any questions or want to be referred for any services
- Thank the youth for their help with the project

Principles of Engaging People

Whether you are an adult participant, a youth data collector, or young person experiencing homelessness, the best practices of engaging people are the same!

- Every person is worthy of respect and has something to contribute
- We are all doing the best we can with what we've got and all people have untapped resources
- There's no such thing as failure; only feedback

Resource: Tips for working with adults: (2001) *Transitions*, 14(1), (Developed by Youth Advisory Board members)
Available online at <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/transitions1401.pdf>

Youth Count Texas!

