

YouthCare Transitions Glossary

Terms Parents may hear from their Teens or Program Staff

Programs

Career Development	Program for teens 15-19 to support development of career interests, skills for college and the workplace, self awareness and social skills
Summer Explorations	Program for teens 13-16 to support development of organizational skills needed to plan leisure and community service projects, independence and responsibility, self awareness and social skills
Saturday Explorations	Program for teens 13-19 to support development of social thinking, self-awareness, problem-solving and organizational skills needed to plan leisure activities in a group
Teen Connections	Program for teens 13-19 offering the opportunity to learn communication and perspective-taking skills through participation in interest-based and motivating activities

People

Scott McLeod:	YouthCare's Executive Director, who supports summer programs and staff, and leads Social Thinking and Parent Groups.
Kelley Challen-Wittmer:	YouthCare's Director of Teen Programs who supports programming throughout the summer and school year and leads Social Thinking and Parent Groups.
Dot Lucci:	YouthCare's Director of Consultations, who is involved with summer staff training and support
Sylvia Lewinstein:	YouthCare's Administrative Director
Patty Daigle:	YouthCare's Administrative Assistant
Program Coordinator:	Supports children, families, and staff throughout one program
Job Coach:	Full-time staff member with Career Skill Development program, supporting groups of teens at internship site and throughout program
Program Facilitator:	Full-time staff member with Summer Explorations program and Saturday Explorations program, supporting groups of teens throughout program
Social Thinking Group Leader:	Part- or full-time staff who lead once or twice-weekly Social Thinking Groups for assigned groups

Skills and Terms

Accommodations:	Any strategy that gets rid of or lessens the effect of a specific challenge.
Big problem-little problem:	Not all problems are the same size or merit the same concern or reaction. A big problem is something that is a crisis or near a crisis (earthquakes, serious injuries); a little problem is something that is a small bump or a glitch (not getting the color pawn we want in a game, being last in line). For each level of problem, there is an expected response and reaction.
Black and white thinking:	Thinking in absolutes, thinking with words such as never, always, only, all, every, no one, etc
Boring moment:	Moments when you are participating in an activity or conversation that you don't want to be participating in, but still have to do. "Boring moments" include conversations you are in that you could care less about and listening to long directions or hearing about non-preferred topics.
Bridge statement:	A statement that connects different topics of conversation (e.g., "speaking of that...")
Clear mind:	A relaxation strategy using self talk with (1) correct facts and (2) correct meaning. An example of "clear mind" is telling yourself that even though your friend said she hates your favorite movie, she did not say that she hates you, and you can still be friends even if you like different movies.
Cognitive flexibility (use a "flexible brain"):	Making a decision that, although it might not be the teen's first choice, allow the teen or his/her group to have more success.
Concrete thinking:	Style of thinking characterized by a focus on literal interpretation and facts.
Disclosure:	When you tell someone something that they did not already know. When you disclose, you are intentionally releasing personal information about yourself for a specific purpose. Disclosure does not always mean divulging specific information about your disability; it does mean providing information about challenges you have with learning and performing and the environment, supports, and services you'll need to perform and excel in your job, class, or community.
Effective/Expected time management:	This includes being on task for at least 80% of the time given to complete the task; accurately estimating appropriate amounts of time for certain types of tasks; not sidetracking the group during the task; taking breaks when needed; reading the directions and asking clarifying questions; understanding when you are distracted or ineffective; understanding that choices and actions have consequences; and more
Engine:	Engine language comes from the Alert Program. Your engine is the gear of your body and brain working together. When your engine is running just right, you can attend to the activity.
Executive functioning:	The ability to plan and organize, inhibit responses, self-regulate, orient toward a goal, maintain and monitor attention

Expected/Unexpected:	Every environment has a set of unwritten rules that people expect to be followed such as talking when it is your turn, respecting personal space, etc. When people follow these rules, then they are considered to be “doing what is expected”. When a person uses “expected behavior” it helps others around them think good thoughts and to feel comfortable. When a person doesn’t follow the unwritten rules, he is using “unexpected behavior”, and other people may have “weird” thoughts about him or feel uncomfortable.
Four steps of communication:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Think about the people in your communicative space. 2) Establish a physical presence (body in the group, shoulders turned towards the group) 3) Use your eyes to think about others. 4) Use language to relate to what other people are thinking.
Four steps of perspective taking:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I think about you, you think about me 2) I am aware of your motive/intention. I think about why you are near me and what you want from me. 3) Since you are thinking about me, I wonder what you are thinking about me. 4) I monitor my behavior and possibly adjust it to keep you thinking about me in the way that I want you to think about me.
Generalization:	Transferring skills to different environments, including different locations and with different people; generalization of skills learned is YouthCare’s goal
Goals:	Teens at YouthCare work on individualized social goals, created with Staff, teen, and parent input when appropriate
Goal, Plan, Do, Review strategy:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Visualize yourself achieving a positive outcome and set a goal for yourself to achieve that outcome 2) Use prior experience and past learning to develop a plan to achieve your goal 3) Follow through with the plan you created and be flexible when unexpected events occur 4) Review the outcome of your plan and notice which aspects were successful and unsuccessful
Good Thoughts / Weird Thoughts:	All people have thoughts about other people. Most thoughts are good or normal thoughts, but each of us may do things each day which can cause people to have “weird thoughts” about us. Creating a small number of weird thoughts each day in other people is totally acceptable, but when we create too many weird thoughts in others, they start to think we may not be nice or safe to be with or that we just don’t seem to care about them.
Hidden curriculum:	The typically-unstated rules of social interaction; these vary across different environments
High Speed / Low Speed / Just Right:	These are the engine speeds used in the Alert Program. When your engine is “high speed”, you are hyper, thinking and moving too fast, and not matching the other group members or the activity. When your engine is “low speed”, you feel sluggish, out of it, tired, zoned out and are not matching the other group members or the activity. When your engine is “just right” you are best able to participate in the activity because your thinking and body match the activity. When your engine is “just right” you are best able to participate.

Know Your Audience:	Noticing and thinking about the people around you. Choosing language and conversation topics based on what you know about your listeners and conversation partners.
Looping thoughts:	Thoughts that just keeps coming up over and over again. We can't seem to get rid of them and they can trigger feelings of anxiety and insecurity. Some looping thoughts start with words like "I can't", "I won't", or "I'll never".
Natural / Artificial cues:	"Natural cues" are things in our environment that serve as signals that an action or behavior needs to occur. Some examples of natural cues in a workplace include the trash beginning to overflow (signaling that the bag needs to be changed) and co-workers leaving the room to go to lunch (signaling that it's time for a lunch break). Natural cues only work if we know what they signal and that we need to pay attention to them. Artificial cues are things we add to the environment. Artificial cues include a post-it in our lunch bag reminding us to engage co-workers in lunch conversation or color-coded files that signal which tasks need to be completed first, second, etc.
Natural supports:	Supports in the workplace (or classroom) that are typically available and perceived as normative. "Natural" supports include both things (clock on the wall) and people (co-workers).
Neurotypical (NT) :	A person without an autism spectrum disorder
Nonverbal communication:	Body language, eye gaze, gestures, facial expressions, and other means of sending communicative messages without sound or words (but used in conjunction with sound and words)
Person-Environment-Activity Model	Adapted from the Person-Environment-Occupation model which describes the dynamic interaction between a person (or group of people), the environment around the person, and the activity the person is engaged in. (Stewart, Letts, Law, Cooper, Strong, and Rigby (2003)
Performance	The intersection between a person, their environment, and the purposeful activity they are engaged in.
Positive / Negative self talk:	Self talk is what we say to ourselves about a situation. Replacing "negative self talk" (I'm going to fail, it's going to be awful) with "positive self talk" (I can do this, I might really enjoy this) is a research-based way to reduce stress.
Pragmatics:	The use of language for social purposes depending on the context
Prompt:	A physical, verbal, nonverbal, or visual cue that reminds a teen of some task or goal
Read the Room:	Observing the environment around you, human and non-human, to determine what activity is occurring and the expected way of behaving during that activity.
Rude interruptions / Acceptable interruptions:	Not all interruptions are rude. Rude interruptions usually happen when someone cuts off your thoughts before you have been able to state them, or they disregard your stated thoughts. Acceptable interruptions are those made before you finish stating all your ideas but your communicative partners has listened to your message and is highly motivated to add his thoughts to yours.

Sensory diet	Your body and brain need a certain amount of sensory input for you to be at your best. The term “sensory diet” coined by Patricia Wilbarger, an occupational therapist, refers to “how certain sensory experiences can be used to enhance occupational performance in any individual.” (Bundy, Lane & Murray, 2002)
Sensory integration tools	Strategies used for calming, waking up, concentrating, or otherwise regulating your state of alertness. These include Moving, Muscle, Touching, Edible and Inedible Mouth, Hearing, Seeing, and Smelling tools.
Smart guess / wacky guess:	Guessing is an important part of participating in groups and communicating with others. There are two major types of guesses. “Smart guesses” are educated guesses you make based on facts, prior learning and past experiences. “Wacky guesses” are guesses you may be asked to make when you have not been given enough (or any) information. For example, asking someone who has never been to my house to guess what color it is.
Social behavior mapping:	A technique to help students understand that their behaviors impact how people feel about them and the natural consequences that arise due to people’s feelings or response to such behaviors.
Social story:	A descriptive, written, and/or visual way of teaching a camper the way to do something, a new perspective, or a rule.
Social thinking:	The process of understanding how socialization works and why certain social skills are important in various contexts (including “thinking about what others think”).
S.T.O.P.	Acronym that reminds you to pay attention to the Space/Situation, Time, Objects, and People when you “read the room”. Attending to each of these gives you important clues.
Stuck:	Sometimes people get stuck on a certain topic, thought, or idea. When a person is stuck it is difficult for them to think or talk about other people's interests or the activity that is going on. The opposite of being stuck is “having a flexible brain” and “thinking about others”.
Talking bubble:	Spoken words
Tangent topic change:	Adding questions/comments about words or ideas in the conversation that are not the main topic. Tangent topic changes move the conversation away from the task at hand.
Task analysis:	A step-by-step procedure for completing a task which includes the setting, materials, and supplies available for the task, the action steps, and the natural cues to observe when completing the steps.
Termination:	The process of saying goodbye, involving recognizing shared memories, having feelings of excitement for moving on and sadness for leaving camp, etc.
Theory of mind:	The understanding that different people have different thoughts, feelings, opinions, etc. and that these difference impact their thoughts and actions.
Thinking about what people are thinking:	Taking into consideration the thoughts of others and what they expect from you.

“Thinking of you” versus “Just ME”:	A “thinking of you” person cooperates by considering what other people need or want in the group. A “just ME” person thinks about and acts upon primarily what he or she wants to do.
Thinking with our eyes:	Rather than simply giving eye contact, “thinking with your eyes” means to focus your eyes on the speaker and to think about what non-verbal messages the speaker is sending as well as what they may be thinking about. Thinking with your eyes means seeing the (and to watch what others are looking at to interpret their thoughts).
Thought bubble:	Where thoughts can be without them coming out of one’s mouth.
Three part brain:	The human brain is made up of many layers built around a central core. <i>The Inside Story</i> curriculum from HeartMath discusses the brain as divided into three main parts: 1 st Brain – Reflex/Instinct - Approach/avoidance, hormonal control, temperature control, hunger/thirst, reproductive drive, respiration and heart rate control 2 nd Brain – Hindsight - Territoriality, fear anger, maternal love, social bonding, jealousy 3 rd Brain – Foresight - Self-awareness of thoughts and emotions, ability to choose appropriate behavior, self-reflection, problem-solving, goal satisfaction
Welcoming / Unwelcoming body language:	When we use nonverbal language to signal to a person that we are interested in communicating/engaging with them it is “welcoming” body language. “Welcoming” body language includes sitting or standing near someone, turning your body towards them, making eye contact, smiling, and having a relaxed body. “Unwelcoming” body language includes behaviors that signal to a person we are not interested in talking/interacting with them. “Unwelcoming” body language includes turning or walking away from someone crossing our arms or legs, scowling and glaring, not making eye contact, etc.
WH questions:	Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why
Whole body and mind participation:	Using my brain, body, and eyes to participate. Thinking about others and adjusting my participation accordingly. Synchronizing, wondering, adjusting, putting others first, wanting others to have positive thoughts about me.
Whole body listening:	Paying attention to others using our brains, eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, etc. (e.g., not talking, staying still, thinking about what is being said).
Whopping topic change:	Comments made that people cannot follow and that interrupt the conversation flow.

Activities/Events

Alert program	The Alert Program is also referred to as “How Does Your Engine Run?” This program is intended to help students understand the basic theory of sensory integration in relation to their alertness. The primary focus is to help participants learn to monitor, maintain, and change their level of alertness so that it is appropriate to a situation or task.
Case conference:	Over the course of the summer, each family has the opportunity attends a conference with their teen and their teen’s staff member; YouthCare will offer parent conferences in the evening July 21 th -22 nd and will contact parents to schedule these conference once the summer program begins
College visit	Teens in the Career Development Program visit local college campuses once per week for info sessions and tours.
Community service	Teens in the Summer Explorations Program have the opportunity to work on a community service project once per week
Field trip:	In the Summer Explorations Program, the group will take one field trip each week. Location and details of the field trip will be emailed or mailed home prior to each trip.
Gear up:	Fifteen minutes of exercises at the beginning of each day in the Summer Explorations Program
Orientation:	A casual hour-long event where teens have the opportunity to meet one another and the staff who will be supporting them throughout the summer
Overnight :	Teens in “Summer Explorations” program are expected to attend one overnight during the last week of the program. Location and details of the overnight will be planned by the teens and will be emailed home prior to the trip.
Parent groups :	Optional weekly group offered to parents where resources and support can be offered by parent attendees and YouthCare Staff
Science of me	A curriculum developed by YouthCare Staff to teach about the brain, heart, and body and help teens better understand their learning style, emotions and sensory systems.
Social thinking groups :	Once-weekly group where teens learn, practice, and experience the effects of using specific social skills and strategies
Speaker:	Teens in the Career Development Program have the opportunity to hear from a variety of speakers who have expertise in subjects related to transition to college and work. Teens in the Summer Explorations program are invited to hear one of these speakers per summer.
SymTrend ®:	Electronic diary system teen program campers and staff use to record, monitor, and analyze anxiety, flexibility, and social interactions; for more on the technology, see www.symtrend.com
Team-building and Ropes:	Weekly activity where teens engage in group problem solving activities, trust activities, and a ropes course.
TV Analysis	Reviewing animated, sitcom, and/or drama television shows while analyzing the communication, perspective-taking, and social thinking of the characters.

Places

Charlestown	The 3 rd floor of the Boys and Girls Club located at 15 Green Street in Charlestown. This is where many of YouthCare’s yearround staff have offices, where our Administration is located, and where some teen and staff interviews are held.
Hale	Hale Reservation in Westwood, Massachusetts where teens take part in team-building and ropes activities. Teens in the Summer Explorations program also work on community service projects once per week at Hale.
Internship Site	One of several work sites in the metro Boston area where teens in the Career Development Program participate in an unpaid internship experience three days per week during the summer program.
St. John Parish Center	Home of the YouthCare Transitions Summer Program at 39 Washington Street in Wellesley Hills where the majority of program activities take place.
StarMarket	Grocery store located 1 mile from St. John Parish Center in Wellesley where teens in the explorations program shop frequently for cooking supplies.
Wellesley Hills Station	Commuter rail station closest to St. John Parish House.
Wellesley Office	47A River Street in Wellesley Hills. This is one of YouthCare’s two office locations.
Whole Foods	Natural and organic grocery market where teens in explorations program will shop for cooking supplies.
Woodland	MBTA subway station closest to St. John Parish House. It is located on the Green Line.
YouthCare Summer Camp	YouthCare Summer Camps are located at Hale Reservation and in Charlestown.

Some items and definitions modified from M.G. Winner (2005), Sarah Ward (2009), J. McAfee (2002), and HeartMath (2002)