

Key Criteria for Youth Development Programs

From Don Hellison's *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility through Physical Education*

1. **Treat youth as resources to be developed.** Build on the strengths they already possess and emphasize their competence and mastery.
2. **Focus on the whole person** - the emotional, social and cognitive as well as physical dimensions of the self.
3. **Respect the individuality of youth**, including cultural differences and developmental needs.
4. **Empower youth.**
5. **Give clear expectations** based on a solid, explicit set of values.
6. Help youth **envision possible futures** for themselves.
7. Provide both a physically and psychologically **safe environment**.
8. **Encourage participation over a long period of time**; emphasize belonging and membership.
9. Maintain a **local connection**.
10. Provide courageous and persistent **leadership** in the face of systemic obstacles.
11. Provide **significant contact with a caring adult**.

