

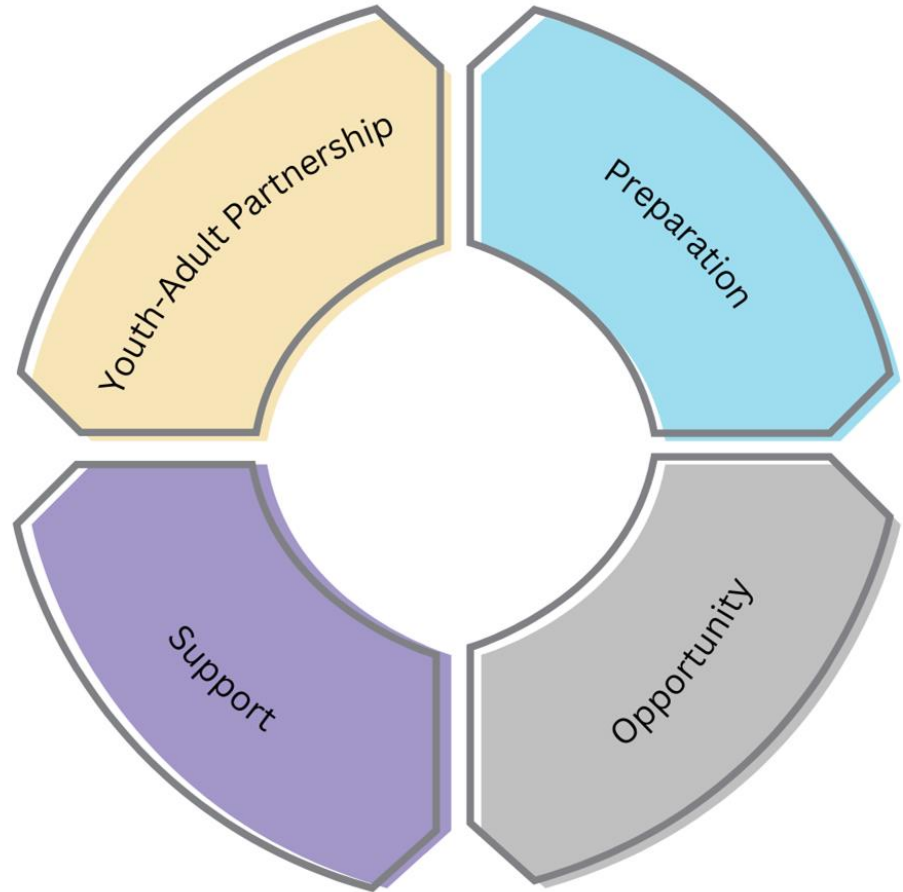
# Authentic Engagement and Collaboration

*with Children, Youth, and  
Young Adults Impacted by  
the Child Welfare System*



# Components of Authentic Youth Engagement

Values young people's **meaningful contribution** and recognizes opportunities for **professional development**.



# Partnership and Authentic Youth Engagement

Partnership is:

- **Doing “with”** not “for” or “to”; and
- Intentionally sharing power

Partnership looks like...

- Asking for, listening to and incorporating feedback;
- Using interpersonal skills for building trust and relationships; and
- Integrating youth voice into all organizational decisions

Partnership requires...

- Self-reflection on personal beliefs and biases; and
- Interdependent relationships between adults and young people

# From Transactional to Transformational Relationships

## Transactional

- No transparency and equity
- One-sided; person is in it for their own personal needs
- Impersonal
- Use people for their gifts and talents
- Defined by:
  - Role
  - Position
  - Authority
  - Title Function



## Transformational

- Transparency and equity are necessary
- Invested in others so it's clear they're cared about and trusted
- Defined by:
  - **Care:** mutual expression of materring. Unconditional support, nurturing and empathy.
  - **Commitment:** authentically engaged, present, accountable
  - **Connection:** bond that includes trust, vulnerability, and authenticity

# Top 10 Ways to Cultivate A Culture of Engagement in the Courtroom

1. Practice transformational relationships
2. Prepare youth for court
3. Break the ice
4. Ask youth how they would like to be addressed
5. Use a warm or neutral tone of voice
6. Create space for youth to speak up
7. Empower youth to end their hearings.
8. Provide multiple ways for youth to interact with their judge.
9. Breakdown the legal process.
10. Debrief with youth after court.





**Authentic engagement should  
show up in system change  
efforts, too.**

