



## Opportunity for Mastery

Opportunity for mastery is the building of knowledge, skills and attitudes and then demonstrating their competent use to others. Community programs can provide settings where youth can acquire knowledge and learn new skills. Research shows that opportunities for reflection on these skills can help youth transfer what they learn to other areas of their life.

Youth mastery will vary by a youth's own developmental stage and learning style. Mastery is a process that takes time and repetition and can contribute to preparation for adult employment.

### **In our youth group.....**

Do youth get assistance and guidance in selecting activities appropriate for their developmental level?

Do youth set individual and group goals? Are they held accountable for these goals?

Are members allowed to practice skills until they master them?

Do youth reflect and receive feedback on their accomplishments?

Do youth and adults receive public recognition for their achievements?

Are members encouraged to continue after successes and after failures?

Are there sequential and age-appropriate learning opportunities?

Do youth programs provide opportunities for youth to feel a sense of progress, achievement or accomplishment?

### **Some practices your group might want to implement to help develop opportunities for mastery:**

- Provide opportunities for youth to practice skills needed to accomplish certain tasks.
- When possible, structure activities to include different styles -- use group activities, pair and triad work, and multi-sensory activities.
- Help group members work on projects based on their interests.
- Pair a younger youth with an older youth for an activity. Encourage the older youth to mentor and teach the younger person.
- Encourage youth to make presentations at activities or events. Recognize them for their efforts.

**Why provide opportunities for mastery?** Youth need opportunities to achieve physically, intellectually and socially. Through practice they develop skills for living and learning as well as better problem solving and decision-making. By developing competency and mastering certain skills, they increase their self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning.