**Key Messages and Key Responses for Conversations with Youth**

1. *Youth sharing negative experiences:*

* “I’m glad you told me, it sounds like it was a very scary situation.”
* “How do you deal/have you dealt with difficult situations in the past? What helps you?”
* “How can I help you now?” “Who are people you can talk to or places you can go?”

1. *Youth disclosing abuse:*

* “I’m sorry that happened, it’s not your fault.”
* (in present situation) “We need to talk to…, to make sure you’re safe.”
* “It’s brave of you to share this with me.”

1. *Youth looking depressed/stressed:*

* “You don’t look like yourself, how are you doing?”
* “And to make sure you are safe, I want to know, are you having thoughts of hurting yourself?”
* “I’m really worried about you. Do you want to talk?”
* “You are not alone, let’s go find \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”
* “Is there anything I can do to support you?”

1. *Key messages all youth need to hear about suicide:*

* “If someone is hinting about suicide, don’t keep it a secret. Tell an adult you trust. Know this is bigger than the both of you.”
* “I’m glad they said something, it means they are asking for help.”
* “Take care of yourself when you are supporting others.”
* “There is no shame in speaking up if you fear someone is going to hurt themselves. It is better to “tell on them” and help them get better then to keep it a secret.”

1. *Youth grieving after a suicide:*

* “You are not alone.”
* “They were in so much pain, they forgot they could get help from \_\_\_\_”
* “I’m so sorry, when I get really sad, I \_\_\_.”
* “It is not your fault.”
* “It can help to talk to \_\_\_\_ about how you are feeling when you are ready.”
* “How are you taking care of yourself?”
* “What are some good memories you had with \_\_\_.”

1. *Youth sharing concerns related to puberty:*

* “How do you feel about that?”
* “It is common to feel \_\_\_\_\_\_ during puberty.”
* “Many people have a lot of mixed feelings.”
* “Everyone goes through puberty in their own time.” “Puberty is a part of life.”

1. *Key consent messaging:*
   * Consent is (FRIES):[[1]](#endnote-1) Freely given - no pressure or manipulation; Reversible - can change their mind at any time. Check in if they do not seem into it anymore.; Informed - understand what they agree to; Enthusiastic – excited; Specific - clear about what exactly they agree to
   * “If someone is drinking, asleep or unconscious, they cannot give consent.”
2. *Youth sharing about their sexual orientation or gender identity:*

* “Thanks for sharing, how do you feel about it?”
* “I’m hear to listen.”
* “Is there anything you need or I can help you with?”
* *(For gender identity)* “How do you feel in/about your body?”

1. *A youth tells you they are pregnant:*

* Have you taken a pregnancy test? If not, then let’s go to \_\_\_\_.”
* *(If they have confirmed that they are pregnant)* “How do you feel about being pregnant?” (Go seek out resources on all the options.)
* “Do you have supportive people?” “Who are the supportive people in your life?”

1. *Key messages for FASD prevention for youth (with uteruses) talking about drinking and having penis-vagina sex:*

* “If you are drinking and having penis-vagina sex, use condoms and/or birth control.”
* *(If continuing a pregnancy..)*“No alcohol is best when pregnant, or cut it down as much as possible as it affects the fetus.”
* “Prenatal care can help.”
* “Are you aware of the resources available to you, pre, during and post pregnancy?”

1. *Youth asking about STI testing:*

* Do you know what an STI is?
* “If you are comfortable sharing what makes you believe you have an STI?”
* “Do you know where you can get STI info and tested?”
* “When having any type of sex, get tested with every new partner or every six months.”

1. *Dealing with a youth who is activated..*

* “I’m here for you, tell me what’s going on.” “What’s happening?”
* “I’m on your side.”
* “What do you need?”
* “Do you want to just walk?”

1. *(If you, the Service Provider, doesn’t feel comfortable dealing with a specific situation:)*

* “I don’t feel like I am the best person to help you, but I am glad you came to me.”
* “I think I have someone in mind (guidance counsellor etc.) that would be better with help you, but thank you for confiding in me.”
* “You are not alone, I will help you get the support you deserve.”

1. *(If you the Service Provider don’t have time:)*

* “Now’s not a good time but I really want to hear what’s going on. Can we meet at \_\_\_\_\_?”
* “I’m just in the middle of something, how about we talk at \_\_\_\_\_?”

**Remember, as a service provider taking care of yourself is important too.**

1. Excerpted from Planned Parenthood, accessed November 5, 2021. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)