

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are any safe environment or avenue in which youth and adults accomplish a project or task in partnership, with shared power and ownership.

Opportunities are critical to FNL programs because through opportunities the other three components “pay off,” or see the fruits of their labors translated into action. This is where things happen, in schools, communities, neighborhoods, and systems. When youth are provided with the right training and support, opportunities give them a place to shine while also having an impact on both individuals and the community at large.

Examples of Opportunities – not an exhaustive list!

Community Service Learning and Social Action: Young people, in partnership with adults, develop and implement community projects designed to bring about real change. *Projects might focus on a particular cause, increase awareness of an issue, or bring about real, lasting change in a targeted area.*

Leadership and Advocacy: Youth serve on community boards and hold intern or staff positions within FNL programs or local community programs that understand and support the FNL approach. *Service can be on boards of directors, advisory councils, commissions, or any decision- or policy-making body.*

Youth-Led Projects and Activities: Youth develop projects and activities designed to send a consistent positive message about youth culture. *In addition to providing “safe and sober” activities, the chapter plans innovative, youth-led activities that celebrate young people’s contributions, such as Poetry Slams, Health Olympics, Youth Forums, talent showcases, and teambuilding exercises.*

Relationship Building: Youth interact with their peers and with adults in structured and non-structured environments. *The chapter can host group development activities such as retreats or team building days.*

How are OPPORTUNITIES linked to CFNLP's Standards of Practice?

Through opportunities, programs engage youth and adults in projects that:

SOP Connection	OUTCOME	PRACTICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an emotionally, culturally and physically safe environment... 	... by implementing ongoing group process activities designed to create safe environments; by hosting a community cultural festival to honor a particular culture.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create chances for youth to contribute to their community, learn about what's available and accessible to them, and how to navigate systems... 	...by developing service learning projects, joining community coalitions to bring about community change, or making policy recommendations to decision-making bodies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ways for youth to be leaders and advocates in their communities and to have an impact on chapter and community projects and policies... 	...by including youth in chapter and community development; by establishing a variety of channels for youth to share their ideas; by partnering with youth to turn ideas into reality.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice new skills to enhance chapter action and community development efforts... 	...by providing progressive skill building training that relates directly to a project or action plan, so that youth "learn by doing" each of the steps involved in the project.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create meaningful and caring relationships among youth and with adults by... 	...by implementing group and cross-age events such as peer tutoring, team-building days, FNL Mentoring, and long-term processes or projects that deepen relationships; by incorporating group development activities into planned projects.

Youth, Advisor, and Coordinator Roles

FNL programs are composed of partnerships between young people, adult advisors and county coordinators. Every project is a team effort between these three players and every success is a shared one. The figures below seek to provide *examples* of the roles played by youth, advisors and coordinators in **OPPORTUNITIES**. The relationships between the three team “members” are dynamic and interactive, with support and benefit flowing from each and to each.



YOUTH: Identify an issue the chapter wants to address; research who is already working in this area; identify what the chapter can contribute to “the cause;” contact other organizations to offer youth efforts to existing efforts; follow through on commitments to other groups.

ADVISORS: Help identify potential barriers and develop strategies to address them; help set up timelines, including preparation, training, and debriefing; facilitate the development of youth vision and goals.

COORDINATORS: Link chapters with community partners and systems that can support projects; provide chapters with a connection to proposal or contract opportunities.



YOUTH: Design and lead process evaluations that will draw out the energy and passion that exists in the group and build on group relationships.

ADVISOR: Encourage chapters to view projects as processes, or journeys, and to reflect on the lessons that are learned.

COORDINATOR: Provide chapter with ideas for reflection and evaluation processes that will engage youth and elicit information that is connected to the program’s desired outcomes.



YOUTH AND ADVISORS TOGETHER: Incorporate local, county, and national ATOD and related campaigns into the chapter’s annual calendar (Hands Off Halloween, Red Ribbon Week, Sober Grad, etc.).

COORDINATOR: Provide regular updates on local, county, and national ATOD and related campaigns, events, and activities; help chapters connect their projects with community-wide and larger efforts.



YOUTH LEADERS: Foster enthusiasm for and focus chapter attention on community development. **ACTIVE MEMBERS:** Participate actively in community development opportunities.

ADVISOR: Encourage chapters to select community development projects that are tied to the chapter’s mission.

COORDINATOR: Provide navigation training to help chapters approach adults and allies on different levels in the community and within systems.