

Youth LEADS Recommendations

Youth LEADS (Leverage, Energize, and Define Solutions) is a Biden Foundation initiative to end gender-based violence. Through a series of listening sessions in 2018, spanning a dozen states and multiple intersections of identity, the Youth LEADS team heard from hundreds of young people who had valuable perspectives to add to the ongoing conversation. Here's some of what we learned:

1. Talk directly with youth.

Schedule listening sessions after the school day ends to work with youth's academic schedule. Work with established youth groups to simplify logistics. Keep listening sessions small — 10 or fewer participants is ideal.

2. Hold space for girls of color.

Be intentional about who is in the room when holding a listening session for girls of color. Create spaces that are consistent and accessible to girls of color. Find ways to engage in the conversation beyond one listening session.

3. Educational programming must be taught through an intersectional lens.

Ask for feedback from youth, especially youth of color and youth with marginalized identities. Ask relevant organizations to consult or collaborate on your listening session and fund them for their work whenever possible.

4. Adults need a separate space to process their own history with trauma and assess their biases.

If possible, have only youth participants and facilitators in the room. Host a separate listening session for adults.

5. Youth-adult collaboration is a key component to addressing gender-based violence.

Encourage youth to collaborate with each other and with appropriate organizations to build leadership and advocacy skills. Host brainstorm sessions. Invest in youth leadership.

6. Community-based education efforts are essential to reaching diverse groups of youth.

Host workshops, classes, and listening sessions outside of the classroom. Ask youth where they are learning about gender-based violence and healthy relationships. Tailor your curriculum to meet the developmental needs of specific age groups.

7. Use social media to counter negative influence and promote more accurate and relevant content.

Form open lines of communication with young people about healthy boundaries and representation on social media. Ask youth how and where they are learning about relationships on social media.

Learn more:

[GO.BIDENFOUNDATION.ORG/YOUTHLEADS](https://go.bidenfoundation.org/youthleads)

