

## Guide to Youth Bids

**Embracing Humanity** means valuing who learners really are, not who they're expected to be. It involves seeing the humanity in others, our interdependence, and our contexts, histories, dreams, and emotions as important parts of us. It also involves recognizing how issues of power and oppression shape people's full experiences in the world.

**What are youth bids?** Youth take actions to prompt and seek attention from educators and peers. When youth make an embracing humanity bid, they seek to be valued for how they feel and who they are, as fully human.

### This guide provides:

- One example of how to enact the Core Equitable Practice (CEP) of Embracing Humanity, as described in the Embracing Humanity Insights 2.7 document.
- Examples of how youth may seek to have their learning spaces become more explicitly humane, drawing on our partner educators' implementation of informal STEM programs.
- Ways to notice these bids and readily respond to them in ways that value youth for who they are and what they bring to the learning environment.

### Questions for Group Discussion

- How have youth had **opportunities to have their humanity embraced** in my/our program because of who they are, what they have experienced and/or what they feel? How have such opportunities been **denied**?
- How have I/we **responded to such bids**? Which **new learning outcomes**, if any, emerged from my/our response to embracing humanity bids?

### Things to Keep In Mind

- Youth bids can require multiple responses at once. For example, youth bids to have their humanity embraced can also require the core equitable practice of educator recognition.
- This tool can be used alongside the Equity Compass tool to enhance discussions on youth bids goals and outcomes.

### Why do youth make bids? Youth often actively seek to do the following:

- To **disrupt** the ways in which everyday knowledge and practice of STEM and schooling position students as deficient, or without power and authority.
- To **amplify** their already-present brilliant and agentic acts of everyday knowing and practice and to have their transformative potential made visible.
- To be **rightfully present** and legitimately belong as fully human in ISL.

## Examples of Youth Bids

### **Disrupting:** Asking to be supported in expressing different emotions emerging in making

During the YAC session of making youths-designed STEM projects, frustrations were mounting as several youth struggled with the activity of the day. As was typical during YAC sessions, educator Addison had music playing in the When the song from Frozen, “Let It Go” began to play, several youths **immediately sprang out of their chairs to the carpeted area of the room and began to sing Let It Go with gusto, while dancing along.**

Within a matter of seconds, **everyone, Addison and other educators included, began singing and dancing too.** By sharing and releasing their emotions, and transforming them together with singing and dancing, youths were disrupting how the stress and frustration youths may experience in learning spaces were often viewed as negative and unproductive. They all **needed that moment of emotional release to let their in-the-moment project frustrations go** before they could move on with their projects of the day.

**Bid:** Getting carried away in song to express frustration

**Response:** Noticing the bid, supporting it, and even joining in with youth

**Embracing humanity:** Youth are supported in encouraging each other to regulate emotions

### **Amplifying:** Wanting to share excitement of engagement and successful experiences in learning

During the DNA extraction activity in a Forensic program, **Diana shouted out** “Ms. Rose, look at this! This is my DNA strands. This is me,” and then **toured around the room** to see how her peers extracted their DNA strands.

Rose, the educator, **expressed her joy** when Diana approached her to show her DNA strands that appeared in her test tube. Rose stretched out her arms and said, ‘yay.’ She also **circulated the room vigilantly to find youths expressing joy and excitement.** She was attentive to seeing other youths who were expressing their joy so as to more actively **recognize and amplify the excitement** youths may feel in rigorous engagement in the DNA extraction activity.

**Bid:** Sharing joy

**Response:** Noticing bid, recognizing and valuing joy

**Embracing humanity:** Youth is supported in experiencing and sharing joy in science

### **Rightfully Present:** Wanting it to be OK to feel feelings even when carried in from outside

At the beginning of the third day of a summer STEM camp that took place in the science center maker space, Samantha entered the space **saying she didn’t want to do anything** that day. She **moved directly into the chill zone**, a space created by youths to relax, reflect, and/or brainstorm.

**Chris recognized** this as Samantha’s bid to process feelings in the moment and take some time in a space where she belonged. **Chris let Samantha have time** in the chill zone while dropping by to let her know about what the daily activities would be.

After a while, Samantha came out of the chill zone and joined in her group table as usual. During the breaktime later that day, **Samantha came to Chris and shared** what happened in the morning at home. **Chris listened to her story and thanked her** for letting him know when she was not feeling willing or able to engage productively.

**Bid:** Communicating feelings that required a pause in engagement

**Response:** Recognizing a boundary and respecting it

**Embracing humanity:** Youth can experience emotions and still belong in a STEM work space

### **Reflecting:**

- Which example of youth bids resonates with your experience?
- Share and add youth bids for embracing humanity that you have experienced.
- How might you respond to embrace the humanity of youth in your space?