

Guide to Youth Bids

Recognizing is when educators engage in purposeful strategies to notice the lived lives and community wisdom of youth. It involves noticing what youth bring to STEM learning, and then leveraging these resources towards powerful learning opportunities for youth.

What are youth bids? Youth take actions to prompt and seek attention from educators and peers. When youth make a recognizing bid, they seek to share their expertise, lived experiences, culture, values, and imaginations.

This guide provides:

- One example of how to enact the Core Equitable Practice (CEP) of Authority Sharing, as described in the Recognizing Insights 2.1 document.
- Examples of how youth may seek to gain recognition, 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 get recognized** in my/our program because of who they are, what they have experienced and/or what they know? How have youth been **denied recognition**?
- How have I/we **responded to such bids**? Which **new learning outcomes**, if any, emerged from my/our response to bids for authority sharing?

Things to Keep In Mind

- Youth bids can require multiple responses at once. For example, youth bids to gain recognition by presenting their skills and imaginations can also require the core equitable practice of sharing authority.
- 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 recognized with their experiences and knowledge

In STEM club, Jamie proposed “GET City news” for which youths would interview with one another and video-record the interviews using the portable digital cameras so that they could share, collect, and record **successful moments of their project**.

Maria and other STEM club educators **recognized Jamie’s suggestion as meaningful and disruptive** of how the digital cameras had been mostly used for adults’ purpose of video-recording and research data collection. Educators **amplified Jamie’s ideas** to use the cameras as tools to actively recognize and legitimize important youth moments and events as they occurred in real time in the ISL (informal STEM learning) space.

Bid: Asking to be seen as someone with ideas

Response: Noticing the bid, amplifying ideas shared

Recognizing: Youth takes on leadership role to showcase developing group expertise

Amplifying: Wanting Adults to Know and Honor their (and their peers’) ideas

During one of the Youth Action Council sessions in a science center, youths and educators were brainstorming how to co-design and name a conference room. Walking with his peer Lulu to the educator (Ms. Olga), youth member Trey said, “Ms. Olga, **she has a really great idea**. We should listen to her.” Trey **solicited Olga’s attention to his peer’s ideas**, and Lulu **shared her idea** of redesigning the room.

Olga **carefully listened to and asked follow-up questions**. Olga helped Lulu express her ideas by drawing together some visual descriptions, including Trey, so that they all can concretize Lulu’s ideas. Olga also encouraged Lulu to continue thinking of redesign ideas throughout the week, **reaching out to her** if other ideas came up after that day.

Bid: Bringing a peer’s ideas to an authority figure

Response: Noticing bid, recognizing and valuing both the peer’s ideas and the speaker’s support

Recognizing: Youth is supported and shares further support with others

Rightfully Present: Advocating for their (and their peers’) legitimate belonging with their ideas, expertise, and hope

During a summer STEM camp in a science center, Lulu approached adult educator June and **advocated for her peer**, Su’Zanne, who was working on a task different from what June instructed youth to do that day. **Lulu suggested** that Su’Zanne’s off-task activity of mixing beats using an online application could be helpful to the rest of the group. Suggesting where the music beats could be used, Lulu argued, “Ms. June, look at Su’Zanne. Can she make music to be used for the drone video we made yesterday? We also need our own music to be the background of our showcase as well as the videos we made.”

June immediately **recognized this as Lulu’s bid** for publicizing her peers’ expertise as legitimate, productive, and even necessary for their learning community’s success. June **discussed Lulu’s idea with Su’Zanne**, asking if she would be interested in making background music for the group.

Bid: Re-presenting a peer’s activity as not off-task but central to group success

Response: Hearing, taking time to discuss options

Recognizing: Many activities and ways of being a group member as helpful and welcomed

Reflecting:

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