



# Youth Support Specialist Pilot Training Program

2025 CCO Oregon Conference



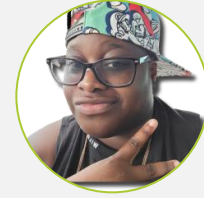
# Presentation Presenters



**Demond Hawkins**  
Senior Health Equity Specialist  
Trillium Community Health Plan



**Jessica Monje-Perez**  
Youth Direct Service Manager  
REAP Inc.



**Des Bansile**  
Founder & Executive Director  
Adulting IRL

**Andy Liu**  
High School 10<sup>th</sup> Grader  
David Douglas High School

**Aiden Zimmerman**  
High School Graduate  
Oregon City High School

# What Sparked this Work



# Why Collaboration Matters





**To proactively ignite,  
elevate, and engage the  
next wave of leaders for  
the future now.**



the next wave of leaders

REAP Inc. is a year-round multicultural youth leadership program, committed to empowering the next wave of leaders. REAP works with students in grades 3rd through 12th through our proactive programs and events that ignite, elevate, and engage all students to be global leaders.



## **Logistics**

- Incorporated into our existing Journey Academy program.
- 16 Saturdays from January to April, 9:30am - 2:30pm.
- Started as hybrid, then transitioned to in-person as requested by students.

## **Youth Recruitment**

- Present to REAP staff with marketing material.
- Staff identify students who could benefit from the training, or may be interested.
- Promote during programming, and 1:1 check ins with students.

"Meet them where they are, not where you want them to be."



*# We Got Us*

Suicide Prevention and  
Workforce Readiness Initiative

# What's Good!

Adulting IRL is a nonprofit, peer-run organization focused on suicide prevention for African American/Black youth with intersecting LGBTQ+ identities. These populations are disproportionately affected by suicide, including suicidal thoughts, planning, attempts, and deaths.



**I'm Des**



I'm the random minor note  
you hear in major songs

--Janelle Monáe

**I'm Nici**



I ain't tryin' to hurt nobody, tryin'  
to bring the life up in yo body.

—Beyoncé

# *Why We Do It*

## **In Real Life**

Young people see what is happening long before any system catches up. They carry each other through suicidal thoughts, grief, anxiety, and everything else life throws their way. And they do it without tools, without training, and without recognition.



# *How We Do It*

## **#WeGotUs**

Our **#WeGotUs: Suicide Prevention and Workforce Readiness Initiative** has filled the gaps that students were left with. We have developed a school-based peer support framework that extends beyond crisis response. It is already changing how care looks, how it feels, and who delivers it inside schools.

This framework works because the three programs are designed to move in tandem.



# #YouGoodFam?

## First-Aid Suicide Intervention Training

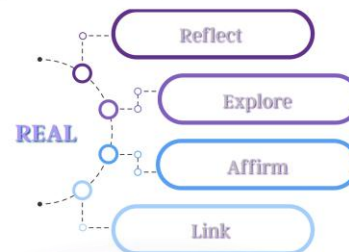
- 4 hours, peer-centered, skills-based
- Teaches students to recognize and respond to crises
- Strengthens their own mental health practices
- Empowers them to connect peers to long-term resources
- Improves focus, academic engagement, and resilience
- Certification



When someone opens up to you about stress, depression, self-harm, or thoughts of suicide, how you respond matters.

Keepin It REAL is a way to respond with care without trying to fix, rescue, or shut the convo down. It helps you:

- Show you're actually listening
- Keep the convo open without pushing
- Validate what they're feeling
- Figure out what matters enough to stay safe for now



# #NoApologies

## Self Love Workshop

- 8 weeks, reflection and practice-based
- Builds radical self-love, identity, and resilience
- Gives students tools for emotional regulation and healing
- Includes a Parent Guide to extend practices into the home
- Reduces disciplinary issues by promoting healthy coping

### Skillz: Boundary Blueprint



Boundaries are a skill, and like any skill, the more you practice the stronger you get. N.O.P.E. is a tool to help you hold your boundaries in a way that is clear, real, and respectful. Each letter is a step you can take when someone asks for your time, energy, or attention. You will start by learning the steps and practicing them with simple examples. After that, you can try them out in your own life.

This is your chance to get comfortable with saying yes when it works for you and no when it doesn't. Use N.O.P.E. to protect your peace and still keep your relationships solid.

#### N.O.P.E

**N: Notice the ask:** Show you heard what the person is asking.

Example: "I get that you need help with this."

**O: Own your answer:** Be real about your yes or no. Say it clearly, without guilt.

Example: "I can't do that right now."

**P: Protect your peace:** Don't overexplain. Choose what works for you, not what makes someone else comfortable.

Example: "I need time to recharge tonight."

**E: End with respect:** Close it in a way that keeps the vibe cool.

Example: "Hope it works out. Let me know how it goes."

# #Amplify&Thrive

## Youth Peer Support Specialist Certification Internship

- Designed for high school juniors and seniors
- Interns receive mentorship and real-world leadership training
- Leads to Traditional Health Worker certification
- Provides career pathways in peer support and behavioral health
- Students transition from being supported → to supporting others
- THW Certification



### Practice Scenario

You have a scheduled check-in with **Angel**. When you arrive at the school to meet with her, she is visibly upset, sitting with her hoodie up and arms crossed. When you ask how her day is going, she says, "I got into another fight. They wouldn't stop messing with me, and I'm not just gonna let them push me around."

Angel explains that a group of students has been bullying her about her accent and struggles with English. She tried to ignore them at first, but when one of them shoved her, she reacted and got into a fight. Now, she's facing suspension, and her parents are upset. She expresses frustration, saying, "No one listens until I get in trouble."

During the session, you validate her feelings and discuss ways to advocate for herself in school. You also explore strategies for managing anger and brainstorm ways to involve a trusted adult at school for support. By the end, Angel agrees to talk to her counselor before responding physically next time but is still visibly frustrated.

### Instructions

Write a **GIRP** note documenting this session, ensuring that you:

- Describe the Goal of the session
- Record Angel's Interactions and responses
- Summarize your Response and interventions
- Outline the Plan for next steps

# Does It Work

## #ISeeYou

- 4 hours, peer-centered, skills-based
- Teaches students to recognize and respond to crises
- Strengthens their own mental health practices
- Empowers them to connect peers to long-term resources
- Improves focus, academic engagement, and resilience
- Certification



### Frustration Tolerance

Frustration tolerance is the ability to persist through challenges, manage setbacks, and stay calm when things don't go as expected. Youth with lagging frustration tolerance may give up easily, react emotionally to small difficulties, or avoid tasks that feel too hard. This can impact their ability to engage in learning, problem-solving, and daily responsibilities.

### What It Looks Like

- Getting easily frustrated when something is difficult (e.g., ripping up homework after getting one wrong answer).
- Avoiding challenging tasks altogether (e.g., refusing to participate in class after struggling with an assignment).
- Reacting emotionally to small mistakes (e.g., yelling or crying after missing a shot in a game).
- Struggling to wait for things (e.g., interrupting because they can't wait for their turn to speak).
- Giving up quickly when things don't go their way (e.g., quitting a game after losing the first round).



We all got habits that pop off when we're stressed, scared, or unsure. But we're not our fears. We're not our past. And we're not our **Opp**.

### What's An Opp?

An **Opp** (in our Adulting world) is anything that tries to stop you from showing up fully — especially when it lives in your own head.

It might sound like...

- "I'm doing too much"
- "Why bother?"
- "Same shit different day"
- "Aint no one holding me down fr fr"



# Activity

Today's Challenge:

- You'll be given an **Opp Role**: a type of self-sabotage.
- You gotta act it out while working as a team.
- We'll see how that **Opp** affects the way we move, build, and show up for each other.

## The Goal

- Recognize what comes up when you are under pressure
- Get curious about where it came from
- Practice sitting with it and finding a way forward



# Activity

## Adulting: The Struggle Bus

Welcome to the lava field of emotional sabotage. Get across the lava...

- Without losing anyone on your team.
- Only stepping on the mats your team has
- Collect your **ALL** without dropping them (If you drop one... that thang gone... thoughts and prayers 🤔🙏💜)

### Challenge

- Must reset if your team messes up
- Stay fully in your sabotage role the whole time



# Activity

## Adulting: Growin-Ish...

### Your Job:

- Build the tallest freestanding tower you can using the tools you were able to gather on the struggle bus
- It has to stand on its own for 25 seconds
- Must reset if your team messes up
- Stay fully in your sabotage role the whole time



# Questions?

---

# David Douglas High School

– Andy Liu High School 10<sup>th</sup> Grader

---

---

# Oregon City High School

– Aiden Zimmerman High School Graduate

---

Thank You.