

## Key of Icons

 = Slide change     = Estimated duration of topic     = Script for facilitator     = Note for facilitator

Intro/Hook  (3 minutes) 1 – TITLE SLIDE

 Today we are going to do a 15-minute mini-training, also called a Spark. As youth-serving professionals, it is important that we know how to effectively connect youth to services like health care or mental health support. To do this, we first need young people to be willing to open up to us about their concerns. During this Spark training, we are going to look at how we can encourage youth to seek out support from us by being an askable adult.

 Introduce yourself/yourselfes.

 2 – REFLECTION

 To get started, I want you to think back to when you were a teenager and needed support from an adult. Who did you feel comfortable talking to? What about that person made you feel comfortable? I'll give you a moment to reflect on these questions quietly to yourself.

 Give participants a moment for quiet reflection.

 Would anyone like to share how this adult made you feel comfortable?

 Allow a few participants to share.

 Those were great examples. Thank you for sharing.

Key Concepts  (1 minute) 3 – HOW TO BE ASKABLE

 Now we're going to review some tips about how to be askable. The first two tips are to convey warmth through body language and use a nonjudgmental tone of voice. Next is to ask open-end questions and practice active and reflective listening. This means paying close attention to what someone says, including their tone of voice and body language, and to repeat back what they say to ensure we understood them correctly. To be askable, it is also important to avoid making assumptions.

 4 – HOW TO BE ASKABLE

 To be askable, one may also give affirmations and avoid criticizing or shaming youth. Askable adults keep conversations focused on the adolescent. They provide clear information and avoid giving opinions. Finally, they discuss confidentiality so the young person they're speaking with knows what kind of information will and will not be kept private.

**Application**  (11 minutes) 5 – ROHAN

 We're going to spend the next few minutes listening to a young person's experience interacting with adults.

 [Pass out handout to each participant](#)

 On this handout you can see the tips we just reviewed about how to be askable. Then you will see Rohan's story which I will read aloud now. Rohan is 14, a freshman in high school, and a member of his school's competitive marching band. He lives with his grandmother who has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer. Rohan has had a hard time sleeping and is feeling overwhelmed by school and his concern for his grandmother.

We are about to hear directly from Rohan about his interactions with five adults today. As you listen, take notes to respond to the question on your handout: "In what ways was this adult askable or not askable?" I will pause after each slide to give you time to take notes.

 6 – GRANDMOTHER

 Ok, I'm now going to read Rohan's reflections from his day.

"My grandmother dropped me off at band practice this morning. As she drove me to school, she could tell that I was feeling upset. She said, 'You can always talk to me about anything, Rohan.' I don't even know why I'm upset, but I know that I can't talk to my grandmother about it. The last thing she needs to worry about right now is me. I have to remember to act happier when I get home from school today."

 [Pause for a moment to allow participants to take notes on their handout.](#)

 7 – MR. DAVIS

 "I fell out of step a few times during marching band practice this morning. We have a competition this weekend, and so my band teacher, Mr. Davis, was not happy with my performance. He told me that I better get my act together this weekend. I apologized and told him that I just have a lot on my mind right now. He told me that he didn't want to hear any excuses from me. I feel awful that I messed up this morning. I hope I get it right this weekend."

 [Pause for a moment to allow participants to take notes on their handout.](#)

 8 – MS. LIN

 “My second class of the day is art. Ms. Lin could tell that I was distracted so she pulled me aside after class and asked me if I was ok. I wanted to be honest with her, but I was afraid she’d tell other people all about our conversation. I told her that I was just tired from getting up early for band practice. I don’t know if she believed me, but that was the end of our conversation.”

 Pause for a moment to allow participants to take notes on their handout.

 9 – MR. GARCIA

 “After lunch, I have math with Mr. Garcia. He is a hard teacher, but I have always really liked him. I think Ms. Lin told him that I was acting upset, because he pulled me out into the hallway to talk during class. He asked me how I was doing. This time when I responded with ‘I’m fine’ he told me that there is no shame in being honest about my feelings. He said that I will probably feel better if I talk to someone. He asked me if I would feel comfortable speaking with the school counselor. I said, ‘sure,’ so he took me to her office.”

 Pause for a moment to allow participants to take notes on their handout.

 10 – MS. HARRIS

 “When I sat down to talk with Ms. Harris, she told me that she was happy to see me. She asked me to talk to her about what was going on in my life. I decided to open up a bit, and told her that I was nervous about my band competition this weekend. I wasn’t ready to talk about my grandmother’s diagnosis, so I kept that to myself. Ms. Harris told me about how she used to get really nervous before her volleyball matches in high school. She said that her nerves were silly because she doesn’t even remember any of her games anymore. She told me that she’s sure I am fine and just need to shake off my nerves. I wish it were easy to not worry so much.”

 Pause for a moment to allow participants to take notes on their handout.

 11 – ROHAN

 We have come to the end of Rohan’s school day. Now take a couple of minutes to discuss the question on this handout with the person sitting next to you.

 Give participants a few minutes to discuss the question on the handout with a partner. If you have a small group of participants, you can discuss the question on the handout as a group.

 12 – GROUP DISCUSSION

 Now we’re going to reflect on Rohan’s experience as a group. Which of these five adults do you think Rohan would be willing to open up to about his feeling in the future? Why are why not?

 Allow a few minutes for group discussion.

 13 – PERSONAL GROWTH

 Before we end this Spark, we're going to take a few minutes to think about how we can become more askable. When we look at the tips we've reviewed during this Spark, it may be easy to think we do all of these things very well. However, it is unlikely that we appear askable to youth all of the time, especially when we are feeling tired, stressed, or in a hurry.

 14 – REFLECTION

 I would like you to think about the following questions. When you are feeling tired, stressed, or in a hurry, in what ways might you appear un-askable to youth? In these moments, how can you be more askable? I will give you a few seconds to think to yourself.

 Give participants a moment for quiet reflection.

 Would anyone like to share their response to either of these questions?

 Allow a few participants to share.

 Great, thank you for sharing!

 15 – THANK YOU

 This brings us to the end of our Spark on Being an Askable Adult. We know that it can take time for a young person to view an adult as trusted and askable. By consistently using the tips we discussed today, we can help the young people in our lives feel comfortable opening up to us when they need support. Of course, being askable is only one piece of connecting young people to services like health care or mental health support. For example, you also want to be sure you're aware of the youth-friendly services in your community to connect young people to.

To keep this conversation going over the next month, I will share Sparklers, or case scenarios, that relate to being askable. I'll post the Sparklers in places that you all can easily see them. When you see a Sparkler, take a moment to read the scenario and think through the questions listed on the page. Thank you for your participation!

 Print and post Sparklers in areas your staff can see (e.g., lunchroom).