

# Youth Political Homes Toolkit

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Use this toolkit to evaluate your organization's current efforts, capacity, and success across all elements of a youth political home. You can lead conversations with leaders and members of your organization and fill out the worksheet to identify strategies that can address the gaps you identify.

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## A Space for Belonging

### Evaluation

- Members feel like they are part of and connected to the organization.
- Members feel pride in the organization.
- Members feel safe in the organization.
- Members have made friends at this organization

### Conversation Prompts

-  Do you feel included in this space? What could help you feel more included?
-  Do you feel like you can create friendships with people in this organization? Why or why not?
-  Are there things you feel like you can/cannot talk about in this space? (E.g., friendships, life issues, jokes, etc.)

## Developing Political Identity

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### Evaluation

Being part of this organization:

- Helps members access information related to community issues.
- Helps members feel they can influence decisions that affect their community.
- Gives members a better understanding of the important political issues in our country.
- Means that members feel free to disagree openly with each other and others about political and social issues.

### Conversation Prompts

-  Do you feel like you understand what's happening in the country? Does the organization help you with that? Why or why not?
-  What kinds of conversations about politics and the news would you be interested in having with people in this organization?
-  Can you talk about politics with people in the organization with different views from you? Why or why not?

# Meeting Basic Needs

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## Evaluation

- There are people in this organization who members can turn to when they need help.
- People in this organization work together to help each other in times of personal crisis.
- The organization provides members with some basic needs.
- The organization supports the mental health of members in the organization.

## Conversation Prompts

-  Does being part of this organization cause you financial stress?
-  Are you able to have a job while being part of this organization?
-  Do you feel like your most pressing needs (eg, food, mental health, third space, etc.) are being met while at the organization? What could help?
-  Do you have trouble physically getting to this organization or face other barriers to participating? What could help?
-  How does being part of this organization impact your mental health? What support do you need?

# Preparing for Life and Career

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## Evaluation

- Members can get advice about setting career or educational goals at this organization
- This organization exposes members to different careers and educational paths.
- The organization helps members find funding sources for my future career path or educational goals.
- The organization provides youth opportunities to develop skills which will be useful in future career / educational pursuits.
- The organization provides hands-on opportunities to gain lived experience to benefit future civic engagement.

## Conversation Prompts

-  What do you think your next steps are? What help do you need in figuring this out?
-  Does this organization provide space to talk about career and the future?
-  Do you have people you can talk to who have gone through the application (college or job) process before?
-  Have you learned/developed skills for future work through involvement at this organization?

# Developing Youth Voice

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## Evaluation

In the organization...

- Members know that their opinions matters to others.
- Members feel that they can influence what this organization is like (through feedback and/or leadership).
- There are efforts to meet the needs and goals expressed by all members.
- Members have opportunities to initiate or lead a project.
- Members have leadership opportunities and understand the pathways to getting them.

## Conversation Prompts

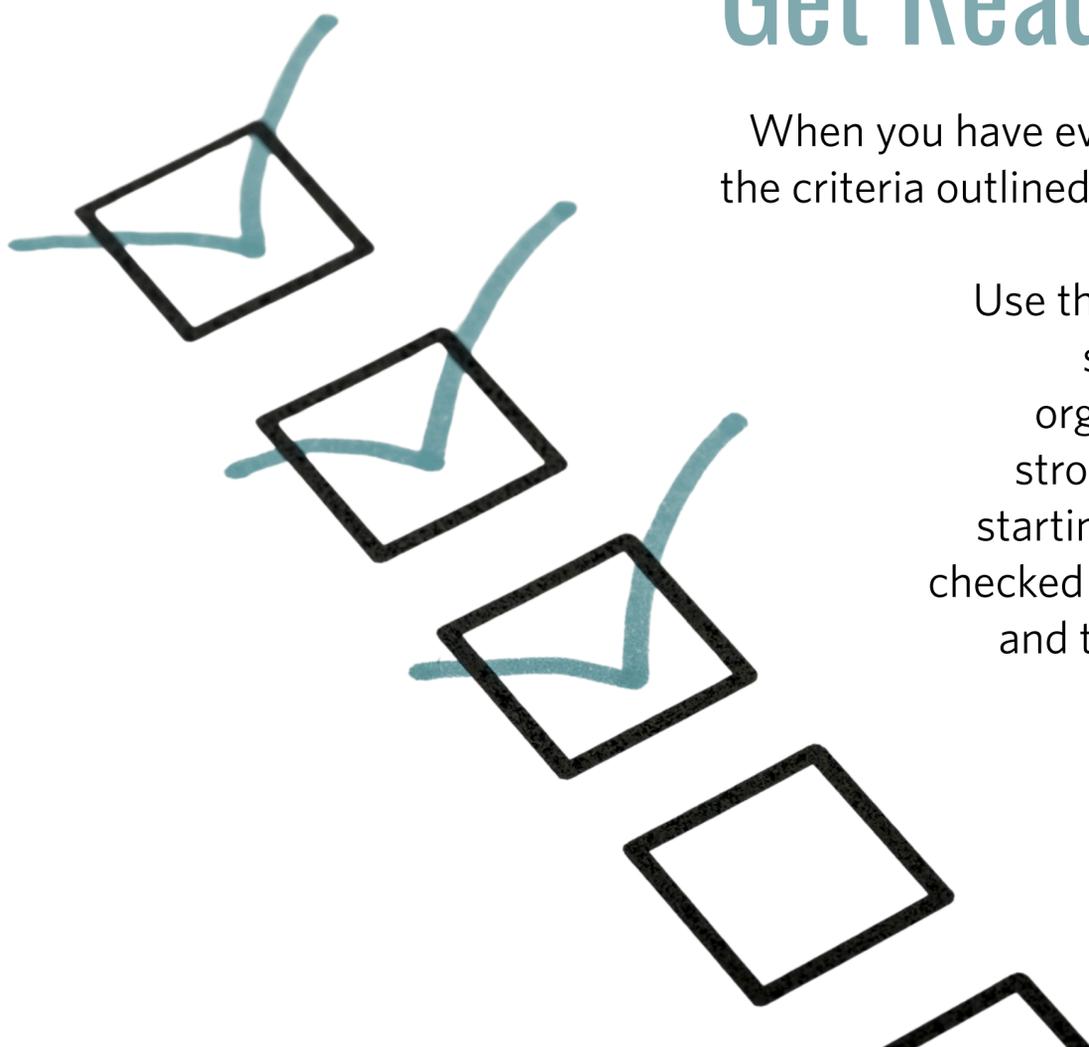
-  Do you feel like your opinion matters in determining what the organization does? Why or why not?
-  What leadership opportunities would you like to see in the organization?
-  If you have feedback, do you know who to talk to/where to go?
-  Do you feel empowered to speak up about what you want to change in the organization?

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## Get Ready to Make a Plan

When you have evaluated your organization according to the criteria outlined in this toolkit, get ready to take action!

Use the next page to set long-, medium-, and short-term goals that will advance your organization's journey toward becoming a stronger political home for youth. Consider starting and focusing on the areas where you checked the fewest boxes in the previous pages and there is a bigger need for improvement!



<b>Element + Area for Improvement</b>	<b>Long-Term Goal (i.e., the identified gap is filled)</b>	<b>Medium-Term Goal</b>	<b>Short-Term Goal</b>
<p><b>EXAMPLE</b>  <b>Developing Political Identity</b>            –            Members do not discuss current events with each other</p>	<p>Have monthly discussions about current events, reflecting on articles representing different sides of an issue</p>	<p>Have one such discussion with members surrounding a current event, and send out a feedback form after.</p>	<p>Schedule a conversation with youth members to discuss what norms they would need to have a political discussion.</p>
<p><b>A Space For Belonging</b></p>			
<p><b>Developing Political Identity</b></p>			
<p><b>Meeting Basic Needs</b></p>			
<p><b>Preparing For Life and Career</b></p>			
<p><b>Developing Youth Voice</b></p>			