Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SAMHSA

YOUTH M.O.V.E. NATIONAL PRESENTS

#THINGS2CONSIDER

Stipending Youth & Young Adults

April 2016

WORKING WITH YOUTH ADVOCATES?

- **Show your appreciation.**
- **Acknowledge youth skills and expertise.**
- **Value the role of youth voice in systems change.**

We provide payment — often in the form of a stipend, honorarium, or gift card — to youth to show we value and appreciate their experience and contributions, just like we pay other professionals for their time and expertise at meetings. However, there isn't one formalized way to calculate an appropriate rate or type of compensation. Instead, there are many things to think about! Recognize that each community, each partnership and each youth will have varying values and desires for compensation.

INCORPORATE YOUTH IN THE DECISION

Each community, organization partner and individual youth will have a different idea of appropriate compensation and stipend rates. **Incorporate both youth and adult partners in developing stipend and compensation policies to ensure that stipends are adequate, valuable and sustainable.**

Organizations providing stipends must engage youth in the creation of stipend policies and ask for youth feedback about their thoughts on appropriate compensation. For example, sometimes youth prefer to be compensated with movie passes, bowling passes, event tickets, video games, gas cards, gift cards or onsite childcare while they are participating in a community/organizational event, meeting, conference or presentation. You won't know if you don't ask!

Compensation doesn't always have to be in the form of money! Get creative!

LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

An important thing to consider when developing stipend policies and rates is long-term sustainability. How will your community or organization sustain the stipend rate or other financial compensation in the future? This is especially important when using grant funds. Don't forget — youth should have an understanding of the budget that pays for their compensation. This understanding will help them to recognize the direct impact of how grant funds are being spent. It is not uncommon for youth to forgo stipends or take a lesser stipend in order to save funds to allow for more youth programming to occur instead. Don't ask youth to make a decision about a stipend policy in the dark. They must know how this decision will impact overall programming opportunities.

Remember to budget for honorariums in your budgets and when writing proposals for new funding!

TYPE AND DURATION OF THE MEETING, EVENT, OR PRESENTATION

Compensation rates may vary based on the type and duration of the meeting, event or presentation that youth are participating in. Stipends can range from $10- $150, depending on the engagement. Regular participation in committee and board meetings often have a lower, regular compensation, while youth sharing their personal story in a public presentation or as a keynote receive higher compensation.

Recognizing that each individual community/organizational partner and each individual young person will have a different idea of appropriate compensation and stipending rates and working to incorporate both youth and adult partners in coming up with a more thoughtful, standardized process for offering compensation for youth participation will help ensure that stipends are adequate, valuable, and sustainable.

words by
HANNAH RAICHE