

TIP: HOW TO CREATE GRACIOUS SPACE IN WHICH YOUTH AND ADULTS ARE VALUED

If the majority of the people on your organizing team are adults, it's important that you work with them first to create a safe space in which to invite young people. It can be difficult for anyone to enter an unknown space, but it can be even harder for a young person. The activity **What were You Like at 15 Years Old?** from Section 2 can be helpful here. The reference to an activity that's useful in several situations is a reminder that the components of this tool kit are not intended to be a rigid curriculum – they're tools you can use however you see fit.

Have participants think about what they wore, who their friends were, what they liked to do for fun, how they were involved in their schools and communities, and their experiences with partnerships with adults when they were 15. These questions can begin the discussion (either as a large group or in pairs) about what it means to be a young person and how to best create partnerships based on equal voice. If you have young people participating in this conversation, all the better. It will help them to understand that adults were also young once and that the adults are excited to be working with youth. This exercise can greatly enhance Gracious Space within your group. Try out the other activities to continue to develop relationships with youth and adults and to understand the challenges and opportunities of sharing together.