

# COMPETENCY MODEL FOR YOUTH HEALTH AMBASSADORS



*This competency model has been developed by a group of youth health ambassadors at the the Final Seminar taking place in January 2023 in Slovenia, who have undergone two trainings on building youth health coalitions, youth health and advocacy as a part of Erasmus+ funded project Youth4Health, carried out by the International Youth Health Organization together with partners Civil Life Association from Turkey, HERA from North Macedonia and Youth Network for Health Promotion from Slovenia.*

As young youth health ambassadors were exploring the competences crucial for their role, they discovered an underlying message:

Think - dream - act.

The motto emphasizes the importance of a three-step process: first, **thinking** critically and analytically about health issues, then **dreaming** and envisioning innovative solutions, and finally taking concrete **action** to address those issues and promote positive health outcomes.

It encourages youth health ambassadors to engage in thoughtful reflection, foster creativity, and translate their ideas into tangible initiatives that make a difference in the health and well-being of their communities. We encourage all youth ambassadors to use this motto in order to continuously inspire themselves and others.



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# Knowledge & skills



## I. About the topic (theory, systems, policies, stakeholders)

Youth health ambassadors should have a solid understanding of health concepts, including physical, emotional, and social health. They should also have knowledge of the health issues and challenges facing their community, as well as the policies, systems and the most important stakeholders that affect health

## II. About the target group

Knowledge about the target group youth health ambassadors are advocating for is crucial in order to effectively communicate with them, discover their needs, tailor health messages and develop appropriate strategies, build rapport and trust as well as adapt to cultural differences which can lead to more successful action.

## III. Health literacy

Health literacy is essential for youth health ambassadors as it fosters a lifelong commitment to health education and learning, improves effective communication, empowers people, addresses health disparities, influences policy, and improves health outcomes through the ability to navigate the healthcare system, understand health risks, make informed decisions, and adopt healthier behaviors.

## IV. Facilitation, moderation

The ability to manage groups effectively, engage participants, share knowledge, resolve conflicts, empower others, collaborate, and foster a supportive learning environment are crucial for young health ambassadors. These abilities increase the influence and efficacy of young people's efforts to promote health and wellbeing among their peers and communities.

# Management



## I. Decision - making

The ability to balance options, analyze complicated health concerns, and make educated decisions about the methods, interventions, and advocacy projects they embark on is a crucial competency for youth health ambassadors. They can optimize their impact in promoting health and well-being among their peers and communities by properly allocating resources and prioritizing their actions.

## II. Problem-solving

The ability to solve problems gives youth health ambassadors the ability to recognize health issues, investigate their origins, and come up with creative solutions to deal with them. They can understand complicated health issues, modify their approaches, and persuasively advocate for change by being skilled problem solvers, which improves the health outcomes in their communities.

## III. Responsibility

Responsibility is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it instills a sense of accountability and ensures that they fulfill their commitments and obligations towards their health advocacy initiatives and the well-being of their community. Demonstrating responsibility also helps to establish credibility and trust, allowing youth health ambassadors to effectively lead by example and inspire others to take ownership of their health as well as maintain credibility with stakeholders and external collaborators.

## IV. Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it enables them to effectively address conflicts and disagreements that may arise within their communities or among stakeholders. By skillfully resolving conflicts, they can maintain positive relationships, foster collaboration, and create a harmonious environment conducive to implementing health initiatives and promoting well-being.

# Management



## V. Resource management

For youth health ambassadors, resource management is a crucial skill because it entails efficiently allocating and utilizing finite resources, such as money, time, and materials, in order to optimize the effectiveness of their health promotion efforts. Youth health ambassadors may maximize their impact, maintain sustainability, and produce significant results in their advocacy work by effectively managing their resources.

## VI. Financial literacy

Financial literacy is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it enables them to understand and navigate the financial aspects of health advocacy, including budgeting, fundraising, and financial planning. By being financially literate, they can make informed decisions, effectively manage resources, and ensure the long-term viability and success of their health promotion initiatives.

# Interpersonal



## I. Communication skills

Communication skills are an important competence for youth health ambassadors as they enable effective dissemination of health information, engagement with diverse stakeholders, and the ability to inspire and mobilize individuals and communities towards positive health behaviors.

## II. Team work

Being able to work effectively with a variety of stakeholders, share responsibilities, take advantage of different perspectives, and collectively address complex health issues for greater impact and sustainability is made possible by teamwork, which is a crucial competency for youth health ambassadors. Youth health ambassadors can do more together than they could alone by utilizing the power of collaboration, resulting in positive change in their neighborhoods.

## III. Networking

Connected to previous two competences, networking is another important one as it allows them to establish valuable connections, build partnerships, and leverage resources, expertise, and support from individuals and organizations to amplify their impact and promote positive health outcomes.

# Interpersonal



## IV. Respect

Respect for others is an essential skill for youth health ambassadors because it helps them to forge strong bonds with others, promote inclusivity and diversity, and provide a secure environment where people feel empowered to take charge of their health and wellbeing.

## V. Trustworthiness

Having the ability to be trusted by others is crucial for adolescent health ambassadors because it generates credibility, fosters strong relationships, and builds trust. These qualities help them engage and influence their peers, communities, and stakeholders in the promotion of health and well-being.

## VI. Open - mindedness

Open-mindedness is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it allows them to embrace diverse perspectives, adapt to new information, and explore innovative approaches, fostering creativity and inclusivity in addressing health challenges and promoting positive change.

# Self-management



## I. Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness is the ability to find creative solutions and make the most of available resources to overcome challenges and achieve goals. It is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it enables them to navigate limited resources, adapt to changing circumstances, and find innovative ways to address health issues, ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of their advocacy efforts.

## II. Strong work ethics

Strong work ethic cultivates dedication, perseverance, and a sense of responsibility, enabling them to consistently and diligently pursue their health advocacy goals, making a lasting impact in their communities. But youth ambassadors cannot forget about the importance of self-care and their own mental health while fighting for their goals - you cannot pour from an empty cup.

## III. Creativity

The ability to think creatively, develop original strategies, and devise compelling health promotion efforts that connect with their peers, encouraging positive behavior change and enhancing general well-being, makes creativity an essential competency for adolescent health ambassadors.

## IV. Flexibility

For youth health ambassadors, motivation is a crucial skill because it gives them the internal energy and passion they need to overcome obstacles, persevere, and maintain a long-term commitment to their work in health advocacy regardless of problems they encounter. It gives individuals the power to motivate and inspire others, resulting in a positive shift that spreads throughout their communities.

# Self-management



## V. Motivation and determination

For youth health ambassadors, motivation is a crucial skill because it gives them the internal energy and passion they need to overcome obstacles, persevere, and maintain a long-term commitment to their work in health advocacy regardless of problems they encounter. It gives individuals the power to motivate and inspire others, resulting in a positive shift that spreads throughout their communities.

## VI. Resilience

The ability to bounce back from failures, overcome challenges, and sustain commitment and effectiveness in promoting health and well-being in the face of adversity is resilience, which is a crucial competence for youth health ambassadors.

## VII. Consistency

Consistency is an important competence for youth health ambassadors as it establishes credibility, builds trust, and ensures the reliability and effectiveness of their health advocacy efforts over time, leading to lasting positive impact in their communities and maintaining strong and healthy partnerships.