

Two-Minute Tips

This Week's Topic: Check-Ins

Regularly scheduled check-ins positively impact your program in many ways. They create structure and offer a quick, simple way to help transition participants from their school day to ELO program. They offer an opportunity for you to gather information about participants, so you can tailor individual support. They promote positive peer-to-peer and staff-to-participant relationship-building. Make sure to follow up on current issues in young peoples' lives. Also, tune in on whether they feel included and engaged.¹ Check-ins help bring participants' voices into the program, inviting them to share experiences, while teaching others to listen non-judgmentally and empathically. Check-ins help build safety, inclusivity, and a greater sense of belonging for your participants.

Practice Tips

Here are a few quick tips to facilitate check-ins.²

Bring participants together in a circle at the beginning of the program and ask them one or more of the questions below. You can also ask individual participants to come up with a fun question for your check-in.

- What made you laugh this week or today?
- What is your favorite food to eat at home?
- If you could have a superpower, what would it be? What would your superhero name be?
- If we walked in to your bedroom right now what would we see?
- If you could travel for one month, where would you go and why?
- What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?
- If you could have any job, what would it be and why?
- Who is your favorite teacher and why?
- What's your favorite room in your house and why?
- If you have a day off school, what do you do?
- What do you like to do to relax?
- If you had to have the exact same meal for the next 12 months, what would you pick?
- What is your favorite thing about yourself?
- If you could go back and change one thing about this week, or day, what would it be and why?
- If you were stuck in an elevator for 24 hours with one person, who would you choose and why?
- If you were a Crayola crayon color, what color would you be and why?
- Has anything bad ever happened to you that turned out to be for the best?
- Who is your best friend and why?
- If you could change one thing about your high school, what would it be?
- If you could go back in time and tell yourself one thing before you started high school, what would it be?

Tips in Action!

[Watch](#) staff at Village Theatre facilitate an effective check-in with participants.

Want more two-minute tips?

Check out:

<https://depts.washington.edu/cqel/expand-ed-learning-opportunities/>

There you will find the latest tip, an archive of past tips, and a discussion board to connect with peers!

¹ Smith, C., McGovern, G., Larson, R., Hillaker, B., & Peck, S.C. (2016). *Preparing youth to thrive: Promising practices for social emotional learning*. Washington, DC: Forum for Youth Investment.

² Ibid.