

6 tools to build a collective memory of youth projects and programs

Building a collective memory is a way to record youths' journeys of personal transformation while participating in projects and programs. By building a collective memory, youth are given the opportunity to reflect on their learning, share their stories, and celebrate their accomplishments with their peers. This not only reinforces youth's self-esteem, but, when shared with the public, it can also showcase the great work that your program is doing. We suggest reviewing the collective memory at regular intervals during a project or program to support youth to reflect on their personal and collective journeys. It is also a useful tool to gather periodic feedback from youth that can then be used to adjust program content or delivery.

Here are some examples of techniques to build a collective memory:

1. **Graffiti wall:** At the end of every workshop, provide youth with a small box of pencils or markers and an index card. Explain that each index card represents a brick that will be used to build a graffiti wall about their learning and reflections. Encourage youth to write or draw on their index card what they have learned about themselves as a result of preparing a project or participating in program workshops. Add everyone's brick to the wall. Leave a few minutes for some youth to share their bricks with the larger group. *You can vary this technique by hanging the index cards on a cord or make a tree with branches (pictured below) and hang the cards as leaves.*



2. **Picture album:** Take pictures of the youth during different workshops or program activities. Ask youth to write captions for each photograph and keep them in an album that you can review at the beginning of each workshop. Make sure you have permission from the youth (and guardians if they're under 18) to take and/or share pictures.
3. **Journaling:** Distribute a journal to everyone in the group. Invite youth to write, draw or scrapbook over the course of the project or program. Ask youth to share highlights from their journals during or at the end of the program or project.
4. **Make a movie:** Use cellphone cameras to record highlights of workshops or program activities and make a movie of the group's journey at the end of the program or project. Make sure you have permission from the youth (and guardians if they're under 18) to film and/or share videos.
5. **Vision board:** Create a "vision board" of youth's learning using images, key words or photographs cut-out from magazines and newspapers and/or using their own art work. Ask youth to add something that represents an important learning or reflection after each workshop or program activity to the vision board.
6. **That's a rap:** Invite youth to identify key elements of each workshop or program activity such as the highlights, something they learned, or something they want to remember. Ask the group to write a rap song or poem that describes their experiences and/or learning. They can base their work on a familiar tune or poem. Try to add 1 verse for every workshop or step of the program or project and aim to have a complete rap song by the end of the project or program!

Discover more tools and resources on our website: <https://equitas.org>