QUALITY MATTERS TOOLKIT
Practical Strategies to Support Youth with Encouragement:

STAY ACTIVELY INVOLVED

- Provide clear directions
- Answer questions promptly
- Work with one team or group; perhaps rotate
- Check in with individual youth

Use Specific and Non-Evaluative Language

- Encourage youth to describe their plans, what they have in mind.
- Ask them what their goal is.
- Acknowledge their work and ideas by making very specific comments as you talk to them.
- Comment on the level of detail in their work.
- Point out different colors, shapes, designs they’ve used.
- Wonder out loud what their project might look like in its next phase.

Use Open-Ended Questions

- ‘How’ is the great open-ended question word!
- Who contributed to your design, plan or project?
- How did you resolve that problem?
- What about that was inspirational to you?
- What was that experience like for you?
- Describe what you see.
- What is your rationale?
- What makes you think that?

Ask, Listen, Encourage

Ask effective questions.
Ask questions with depth and variety.
Ask and care about the answer. Remember body language!

Three Indicators Staff are Supporting Youth with Encouragement:

- Staff are almost always involved directly with youth.
- Staff use specific non-evaluative language.
- Staff frequently use open-ended questions.

Encourage youth to recognize their own gifts and talents.
Encourage youth to learn how to give specific feedback to peers.

Listen actively to build trust and show you value what they have to say.
Listen with your heart to identify feeling components.
Listen and ask questions to make sure you’re understanding.

Encourage youth to describe their work.