



Youth Engagement:
**Opening the Door
to Difficult
Conversations**
Toolkit

Module 9:
Superpowers

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Please note, community standards should be set (see Module 1) before beginning this module. This module will also build on knowledge from Modules 3, 4, and 5.

Background

Youth may face various health-related challenges during their teens. At the same time, they have strengths and skills – or ‘superpowers’ – that help them make informed choices, navigate difficult situations, build resilience, and reach out for support when needed.

This session helps youth recognize the superpowers that they already have and explore new ones they may wish to develop. They will be invited to reflect on real-life situations, consider health-related challenges they face or are concerned about, set personal health goals, and think about how to achieve these goals. Youth will identify potential health risks, explore strategies to manage challenges effectively, and consider which people and resources they could connect with to support their well-being.

Objectives

- Identify superpowers (e.g., beliefs, knowledge, and skills) that can support well-being
- Discuss different health-related issues that youth commonly face
- Explore how different strategies and superpowers can help in challenging situations
- Encourage the development of new superpowers, including help-seeking behaviours
- Identify supportive people and resources available in their lives

Material

- Pens/Markers
- Letter-size paper of two different colours (e.g., yellow and white)
- Sticky notes
- Superpower Activity Sheet for check-out activity

Check-in

Who was your favourite superhero growing up? What did you admire about that superhero?

Activity 1: Superpowers and Common Health-Related Challenges

Begin this activity by connecting it to the check-in question. Inform youth that although superheroes in movies or comics can fly, become invisible, or lift cars, real-life superpowers differ but are just as powerful. Clarify that superpowers may include qualities like staying calm under pressure, standing up for a friend, or making difficult decisions amid peer pressure. Highlight that everyone has strengths,

unique abilities, or skills that help them navigate everyday challenges and make positive choices in their lives.

Part One: Identifying Superpowers and Challenges

Distribute letter-size papers in two different colours to everyone. One for listing their superpowers (e.g., yellow) and another for common health-related challenges (e.g., white). Ask them to use multiple sheets, with each sheet listing a single superpower or health challenge. Invite them to talk with the person next to them to help spark ideas.

Facilitator's Tip: Use a real-life example to help participants connect the idea of superpowers to everyday situations. For example, if a friend offers something they don't want (e.g., a cigarette, vape, or beer), they might feel pressure to fit in. In that moment, a superpower like *confidence* can help them say no. You can use an example from your own life, if you are comfortable doing so, to encourage youth to think critically about their own superpowers.

Part Two: Group Discussion

Collect the sheets from Part One and arrange them on the floor in two circles. The outer circle displays the superpowers, while the inner circle shows the youth's common health-related challenges. Leave an open space in the centre where participants can step in and move around. By standing in the middle, they can view all of the challenges and superpowers identified in Activity 1.

Facilitator's Tip: Invite volunteers, one at a time, to step into the centre for a guided discussion. Reinforce that there are no right or wrong answers; this is a chance to reflect and explore. The goal is to help youth think more deeply about their superpowers and how they can use them in real-life situations.

Use the following questions to guide the conversation with the youth. Begin with simple questions (1 to 3) that everyone can answer, then explore questions 4 to 10 with volunteers at a comfortable pace.

1. What superpowers do you already have?
2. Where do your superpowers or skills come from?
3. How do you use your superpowers in daily life? (Discuss real-life examples.)
4. What might make it hard to use a superpower? (Have you faced challenges to using a superpower?)
5. Can you think of a time when you forgot to use your superpower? What happened?
6. Are there times when a superpower is not enough, and you need help? What did you/can you do?
7. What makes it hard for people/youth to ask for help? How can we make it easier?
8. Who are the trusted people, or what are the places where youth can seek help?
9. How can you support a friend who may be struggling but is reluctant to ask for help?
10. Are there other superpowers/life skills that we have not mentioned here but are important?

Activity 2: Developing New Superpowers

Part One: Listing New Superpowers

In the first part of this activity, give everyone sticky notes to write down one or two superpowers they wish to develop (e.g., confidence, relaxation techniques, stress management, time management, or asking for help). Ask them to reflect on why they chose these superpowers and how they might help in daily life. Inform participants that their responses will remain anonymous. Gather all completed sticky notes in a box/bowl/jar.

Part Two: Reflecting on New Superpowers

Ask participants to draw a sticky note at random. Allow them 5-10 minutes to think about the superpower they drew individually or chat with a partner. Encourage youth to think about the value that this superpower can add to someone's life and how someone could build that superpower.

Once the group is ready, go around the circle and invite participants to share the superpower written on the sticky note they drew. Ask them to explain how this superpower might benefit someone and suggest ways to develop it based on their own experience. Use different discussion questions based on participants' answers to promote diverse and engaging conversations. Invite others to contribute when appropriate.

Discussion questions:

- What steps can you take to develop this superpower?
- Where can you find support to enhance this skill or superpower?
- Have you observed someone who uses this superpower well? What have you learned from their experience?
- How can this superpower help you navigate real-life situations?
- What challenges might you face while developing this superpower, and how can you overcome them?
- What role do family, friends, and the community play in helping you build this superpower?
- Do you have any advice for a friend or someone who would like to develop this superpower?

Facilitator's Tip: Let participants know that they do not have to stick to the superpower on the sticky note they drew if they are more comfortable speaking about another. Emphasize that all contributions are welcome and that there are no right or wrong answers. This activity is about sharing ideas, building understanding, and supporting one another.

Activity 3: Finding Your Squad!

Begin this activity by reminding youth that even the strongest superheroes rarely work alone. Think of fantasy teams like the Avengers, X-Men, or Guardians of the Galaxy – each member brings unique strengths, and together, they face challenges no superhero could handle alone. Just like them, we all need our own squad – a group of people we can count on for support, advice, and backup when things get tough.

Split participants into small groups and assign each group a scenario involving real-life challenges. You can use the scenarios in this module or ask youth to come up with their own challenges (e.g., dealing with peer pressure, managing stress, navigating conflict with a friend). Explain that the purpose of this activity is to think about how teams work together and how we can support each other in everyday life.

Ask each group to build a superpowers squad that would be helpful in their scenario. Squads can include real people, fictional characters, or both informal (e.g., family, friends) and formal (e.g., nurse, counsellor, therapist) supports. Encourage them to be creative but also realistic about how different people or supports might be helpful in that situation.

Once complete, ask each group to describe the superpowers squad they created and explain their reasoning. Invite anyone to share what they liked about each squad and facilitate a discussion.

Facilitator's Tip: To wrap up, lead a short reflection on how no one can handle everything on their own. This is not a weakness; it is a normal part of being human. Remind participants that everyone deserves a support group, or squad, and that it is sometimes necessary to reach outside of the group for specialized support. This might mean connecting with a counsellor, accessing health services, or connecting with a community resource. In fact, knowing when to reach out for support is a superpower.

Activity 4: Superpowers in Action (Optional)

This activity provides youth with a fun way to apply the ideas discussed in this module in real-life scenarios. Explain that you will be reading out different scenarios and providing multiple superpower options. The goal is for youth to pick the superpower that would be most helpful in the situation. This activity can be completed with the same groups from Activity 3 to encourage collaboration.

Facilitator's Tip: Some questions may seem to have multiple possible answers; encourage participants to choose the one they feel is the best fit. If multiple answers arise, encourage a discussion about why they chose their responses. For a more interactive experience, consider using online tools like Kahoot.

Check Out: Encourage participants to reflect on the session and creatively capture their insights. Ask them to complete a Superpower Activity Sheet to highlight their key takeaways. These sheets act as a personal reminder of their strengths and offer practical strategies for applying their superpowers in everyday life.

Activity 3 Sample Scenarios

Scenarios	Description
Scenario # 1 Drinking at a party	You are at a party with friends. Some of your friends have started drinking a lot. One friend is acting strangely, slurring their words, stumbling, and even passing out for a few seconds.
Scenario # 2 Bullying at school	You are at school and see a classmate being bullied. A group of students is making fun of their clothes and calling them names in the hallway. Your friend is nearby and laughs along. The student being bullied looks upset and tries to walk away.
Scenario # 3 Supporting a friend who is feeling down	A friend is feeling really down, and you are worried about them.
Scenario # 4 Concern about a friend's health	You notice that a friend is having health-related symptoms that they are ignoring. You are concerned that it could become more serious if they do not do something about it.

Activity 4 Superpowers in Action (Optional)

Question 1: You are at a party, and your friends encourage you to try a beer. You are not comfortable drinking because you understand the risks of alcohol use in young people.

Which superpower helps you stand your ground with confidence?

- A) Self-awareness
- B) Decision-making
- C) Refusal skills (how to say no when pressured to say yes)**
- D) Problem-solving

Question 2: You often feel tired and low on energy. You spend most of your free time sitting and want to be more active to benefit your mental and physical health.

Which superpower will help you make a change?

- A) Critical thinking
- B) Goal setting
- C) Knowing healthy ways to stay active (healthy habits)**
- D) Decision-making

Question 3: You enjoy using the internet for studying and entertainment. However, you have heard about online privacy threats and the risks of sharing personal information.

Which superpower will help you stay safe online?

- A) Digital awareness (knowing safe use of online tools and applications)**
- B) Creativity
- C) Emotional intelligence
- D) Adaptability

Question 4: You feel overwhelmed and anxious about an upcoming exam and the uncertainty of the future.

Which superpower will help you stay calm and manage stress?

- A) Seeing things from another perspective
- B) Resilience
- C) Relaxation techniques**
- D) Communication

Question 5: Your friend is struggling with school pressure, family responsibilities, and social pressures. They seem overwhelmed and unsure of how to cope.

Which superpower might help them the most?

- A) Seeking support (help-seeking behaviour)**
- B) Time management
- C) Empathy
- D) Problem-solving

Question 6: You and your best friend argue, and they stop talking to you. You do not want to lose the friendship, but you also feel hurt.

Which superpower will help you begin to repair the relationship and resolve the conflict?

- A) Seeing things from another perspective**
- B) Avoidance
- C) Self-awareness
- D) Creativity

Question 7: You have been feeling sad, unmotivated, and disconnected for weeks. Nothing seems enjoyable, and you are struggling to cope with everyday life.

Which superpower will help you take the first step towards feeling better?

- A) Resilience
- B) Seeking support (help-seeking behaviour)**
- C) Self-reliance
- D) Keeping busy

Question 8: You have an upcoming exam, hockey practice, and a family event all on the same day. You feel overwhelmed trying to fit everything in.

Which superpower will help you handle your responsibilities?

- A) Multitasking
- B) Time management**
- C) Perfectionism
- D) Ignoring less important tasks

Question 9: You want to build stronger relationships with your family and friends. Sometimes, misunderstandings happen, and you feel like you do not always communicate well.

Which superpower will help you develop and maintain healthy relationships?

A) Active listening (knowing how to listen)

B) Independence

C) Logical thinking

D) Avoiding difficult conversations

Question 10: You want to achieve something, such as improving your grades, saving money for something important, or getting better at a sport, but you often struggle with motivation and consistency.

Which superpower will help you turn your ambitions into reality?

A) Positive thinking

B) Setting goals

C) Creativity

D) Self-awareness