



## Qualities of residential youth care workers that are valued by youth

Quality of Adult <sup>A</sup>	Definition
<b>Engaged</b>	<b>Makes deliberate efforts to interact, spend time with, help us</b>
Listens	Listens to us, makes an effort to accurately understand our perspectives or concerns
Meets emotional needs	Tries to help us feel better, responds supportively when we are feeling emotional distress
Helps resolve problems	Helps to solve specific problems we have, gives helpful advice, teaches, improves our abilities
Meets tangible needs	Provides material goods, transportation, and manages other routine tasks of care
Is available/Dependable/Approachable	Provides assistance whenever needed, enables us to talk without feeling inhibited
Nonspecific	Makes efforts to interact with, help, or spend time with us
<b>Genuine</b>	<b>Conveys that they are authentically concerned and dedicated to our personal wellbeing</b>
Cares/Invested in us	Shows a personal investment in our development and well-being
Has real relationships with us	Forms relationships that are similar to real relationships we have with family or friends
Is trustworthy	Is reliably fair and honest, maintains confidentiality, keeps promises
<b>Flexible</b>	<b>Is willing to adapt expectations or responses to our unique situation or preferences</b>
Is tolerant/Forgiving	Allows us to make mistakes or fall short of expectations without judgment or retribution
Nonspecific	More general statements conveying staff are flexible or adaptable (in situations unrelated to transgressions)
<b>Respectful</b>	<b>Shows acceptance and validation of our intrinsic worth and right to fair treatment</b>
Supports individuality/Autonomy	Accepts our unique characteristics, preferences, and perspectives; believes in our right to autonomy and self-determination
Nonspecific	More general statements that convey respect, acceptance, validation of our identity or perspectives
<b>Favorable Characteristics</b>	<b>Possesses discrete, characteristics that are appealing</b>
Relational	Interpersonal qualities enabling friendly interactions, satisfying relationships
Similar to us	Has characteristics that make them feel similar to us
<b>Understanding</b>	<b>Has personal experiences that enable them to understand or “relate” to our unique situation or perspective</b>
<b>Structured</b>	<b>Provides clear expectations, restrictions, guidelines</b>
A. The bold text in the shaded rows describes a broad theme identified in the responses. Each row underneath the broad theme is a subcategory within that theme. The right-hand column provides a brief definition for each theme and subcategory.	

Qualitative analyses of 597 responses to an open-ended survey question about the characteristics of their favorite staff member from children and youth living in 16 residential care agencies in two states in the southeast yielded seven broad categories of responses. As indicated in the table below, five of these categories included several subcategories. These findings provide insight into how youth appraise and describe their relationships with key adults and may help residential care agencies’ efforts to maximize their fit with the needs, preferences, and best interests of the youth they serve.

Izzo, C. V., Aumand, B. N., Cash, B. M., McCabe, L. A., Holden, M. J., & Bhattacharjee, M. (2014). Exploration of the youth-adult relationship in residential care. *Small glimpses from a large sample of youth. International Journal of Child & Family Welfare*, 15(1–2), 10–23. <https://ugp.rug.nl/IJCFW/article/view/37854>