

Purchase your copy of the Survival Scale and the MAKiN iT Curriculum and workbooks in the Engagement Store section of this web site.

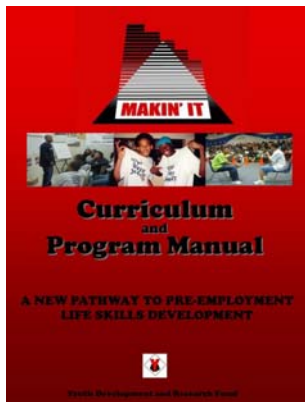
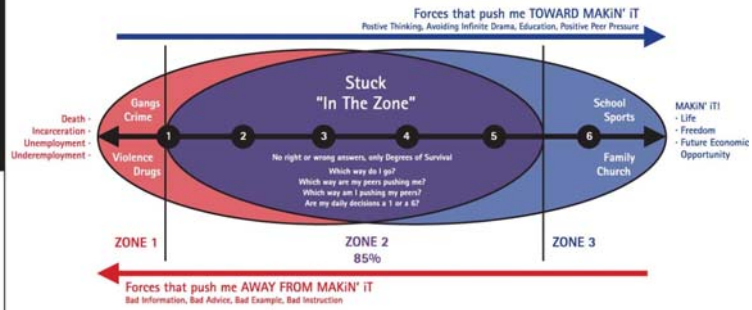


Introducing and using the MAKiN' iT Curriculum's *Survival Scale*...

Step one – (know where it comes from)

Have you ever heard someone say, “There are good kids and there are bad kids, the good ones make it and the

bad ones don't”? “MAKiN' iT” does not happen randomly and the overwhelming majority of youth cannot be classified simply as good or bad. Our development and use of the Survival Scale demonstrates the complexities of the issues as well as reveals successful patterns and formulas which have aided us in training young people how to “MAKE iT” for the last 15 years. YDRF trainings are unique because they are a combination of skill development and active research. The wisdom of thousands of young people and youth workers is reflected in the Survival Scale and wherever we go people tell us that the scale represents their reality. Young people need to see and use the scale because it teaches them perspective. Trees know what it is like to be a tree, but they can't see how they fit into the forest. The scale helps young people realize that “MAKiN' iT” is an ongoing process in which they have significant control.



Step two – (explain what it is)

The scale shows three areas of youth life. The first is filled with people, places, things, and activities that promote death, incarceration, and unemployment. The second is occupied by elements that promote life, freedom, and future economic opportunity. The third is where these first two collide and elements from both spheres are present. The numbers on the scale indicate if you are “MAKiN' iT” at the current time, and how close you are to each end of the spectrum. Remember, being successful is an ongoing process, not a one time affair.

Step three – (do the activities)

Ask the young people to stand on either side of the room. Tell them the scale on the wall indicates that there are elements in their lives that pull them towards success/positivity and other elements that push them towards failure/negativity. Ask each youth to say out loud one particular element (*e.g. the swim team*) and describe what it motivates them to do (*stay drug free and in shape*). Ask the group which of the two types of elements they mainly have in their lives. Give everyone a “post-it” note and ask them to write their initials, a number, and an arrow on the paper. The number indicates where they are on the scale at the present time. A “1” would mean that they are spending time only with negative folks, the activities they are doing are solely promoting death and incarceration, and the places they are visiting are

all dangerous and unhealthy. A “6” would indicate that they are spending time only with positive people, are involved in activities promoting only life and freedom, and the places they go are all healthy and safe. A “2”, “3”, “4”, or “5” would mean they are somewhere in between the two worlds. The arrow indicates their momentum.



For example, Vivian could give herself a “3” for her current position on the scale, and as a result of her recent admission into college and her father who has just come back into her life, her momentum is going towards life, freedom, and FEO. Impress upon everyone that honesty with self is crucial. Invite the youth to stick their notes on the scale and tell them to pay attention to where others are placing their notes. Then ask the youth if they agree with YDRF’s research that states that 75-85 % of all youth are somewhere in the “Zone” (“3” on the scale), 5-10% are living only positivity and 5% are living only negativity.

Also prompt them to do the following “Awakenings Investigations”: What have I lost/am I losing as a result of being a “1” or “2” on the scale? Who have I hurt/am I hurting? Where will I be in five years if I do not move to a higher number? How could I help my peers to move to a higher number?

And/Or

What have I gained/am I gaining as a result of being a “5” or “6” on the scale? Who have I made/am I am making happy? Where will I be in five years if I continue like this? How could I help my peers to move to a higher number?

And/Or

What do the current scores of this group on the scale imply about our future? Where will be as a group one year from now? What will we be doing, where and how will we be living, and what emotions will we be feeling and what thoughts will be in our heads?

Step four -(continue to use the scale)

Once you are able to establish trust and confidentiality within your group, and all are familiar with the basic principles of “MAKiN iT”, youth will begin to hold themselves as well as each other accountable. Please remember that as a facilitator your role is to encourage honesty and support among young people, not competition or judgment.

The scale can be adapted to discuss more narrowly defined questions as well as bigger picture issues. The big picture is what each young person is doing to promote or undermine their true survival. An example of a more specific topic is, “What types of relationships are you involved in and are they good for you”? The youth would then give themselves a score based solely on their romantic, familial, and plutonic relationships and for the moment ignore any other factors. Your discussion as well as Awakening Investigation would be focused on this topic as well.