



CELEBRATING  
THE BTE STORY:

25 YEARS,  
25 LESSONS

Bridge to  
Employment  
Johnson & Johnson

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Celebrating the BTE Story: 25 Years, 25 Lessons distills BTE's 25 years of experience into words of wisdom from those who have been there and done the work. Here we share one of those lessons.

## LESSON 14

# Engage Students in Program Management and Design

Students can and should be engaged in determining the direction of BTE programs, either during strategic planning or in ongoing planning for upcoming years' activities and events during implementation.

Local BTE programs might consider establishing a youth council or including student representatives on the management team/work group so that students are not just the audience for the BTE program, but active participants in determining its shape.

Incorporating student perspectives in program design complements BTE community partners' own research, planning, and community needs

assessments so they can build a BTE program that addresses both what students need and what they want. Youth engagement in program design promotes positive learning between youth and adults in BTE and ensures that the program is tailored to the specific needs of the students being served. This will benefit students and your program alike.

“It's important to have clear expectations for students, but listen to them as well. Remember that it's a partnership...Make sure they have a voice in the program.”

– Tiffany Nesbey, Rutgers University,  
BTE-New Brunswick, New Jersey