The Questions of Belonging: Professional Experience

1. Prior to the session, instruct participants to gather student examples of questions of belonging from their own classrooms or schools. Consider using the steps outlined in the “The Questions of Belonging: Youth Experience” facilitator guide.

   NOTE: It is important that students can submit their questions anonymously. If it isn’t feasible to ask participants to take this pre-session step, write a list of example student questions of belonging on the board or on poster paper from “The Many Questions of Belonging” article located in the “Read it” additional resources located in the “Take It Deeper” tab of this module. Questions should include:

   Does anyone here even notice me?
   
   Are there people here to whom I connect?
   
   Do people here value me, or people like me?
   
   Is this a setting in which I want to belong?
   
   Can I be more than a stereotype here?
   
   Are people like me incompatible with this setting or behavior?

2. Additionally, encourage them to pre-read the “Read it” additional resources located in the “Take It Deeper” tab of this module before the session.

3. Assign participants into groups of approximately five participants. Provide adequate time for participants to discuss the questions their students submitted brainstorm interventions and use the “Read it” additional resources located in the “Take It Deeper” tab of this module to identify research-based interventions that could address them. By the end of the brainstorming session, participants should be prepared to share 1-3 possible interventions to utilize to address each student question.

4. Ask for a volunteer to share one question and their brainstormed interventions with the full group. After they share, ask if other participants had a similar question, and if so, ask them to share any additional possible interventions to address it. Encourage participants to note the ideas of their peers.
5. Continue the process until all questions and brainstormed interventions have been shared.

6. Ask participants to then discuss, in their small groups, what methods they could use to continue to seek input from students on how they can help them feel like they belong. Ask groups to share thoughts aloud.

7. Ask participants to next discuss, in their small groups, what methods they could use to seek input from professional peers on how they can help them feel like they belong. Ask groups to share thoughts aloud.