STRATEGIES FOR ADDING
YOUTH VOICE AND CHOICE

STARTERS

If your activity includes…	*… then consider...*
Working with **materials**	Letting youth choose which and how much of each **material** they need.
Asking youth a specific **question**	Making time to also ask youth what other **questions** they have as they engage in the activity. (These don't need immediate answers.)
Telling youth when it's **time to move on**	Letting youth decide **the timing** for moving on to the next part. Make it clear that it's ok if they don't get to ___ at all (or telling them that if they want to get to ___ they need to move on to ___ about now)
Learning STEM content	Asking youth to choose what part of the lesson they're most interested in **digging** deeply into – what are **they** wondering about?
Answering questions	Asking youth to think of **ways they could answer** some of their own questions (e.g. a quick experiment, looking it up online, discussing with others)
Summarizing	Asking youth to **summarize** what they think they've discovered, and sharing that in groups or with a partner.
Asking a presenting **group questions to get them to say more** about what they did	Asking who else in the room has a **question** for the group that just presented.
A **fixed ending**	Asking youth if they had more time, what they'd **wish** they could create or explore further.

If you're ready for even more youth leadership…
Let youth take turns to lead an activity of their own choosing with the group.
Let youth look through possible projects (e.g. Instructables.com or Howtosmile.com) and choose one they'd like to try.
Work with youth to create a place where "junk materials" can be stored, and start assembling a collection for "spontaneous" youth projects.
Bring in community leaders who can suggest authentic needs the community has that involve STEM learning. (e.g., building a better culvert to let fish pass, assessing water quality, solving transportation bottlenecks)
Help youth participate in ongoing STEM activities (e.g., Scratch programming, Zooniverse citizen science) by letting them try a few and then making a commitment.
Use capstone events, such as community days, to bring in parents and the community to acknowledge youth and motivate them to do their activities to a deadline.

DEEPER DIVES