

Developmental Relationships Framework Tools



Discovering what kids need to succeed

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The Developmental Relationships Framework

Young people are more likely to grow up successfully when they experience developmental relationships with important people in their lives. Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them. Search Institute has identified five elements—expressed in 20 specific actions—that make relationships powerful in young people’s lives.

Elements	Actions	Definitions
1. Express Care Show me that I matter to you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be dependable..... Be someone I can trust. • Listen..... Really pay attention when we are together. • Believe in me..... Make me feel known and valued. • Be warm..... Show me you enjoy being with me. • Encourage..... Praise me for my efforts and achievements. 	
2. Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect my best..... Expect me to live up to my potential. • Stretch..... Push me to go further. • Hold me accountable... Insist I take responsibility for my actions. • Reflect on failures..... Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks. 	
3. Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate..... Guide me through hard situations and systems. • Empower..... Build my confidence to take charge of my life. • Advocate..... Stand up for me when I need it. • Set boundaries..... Put in place limits that keep me on track. 	
4. Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect me..... Take me seriously and treat me fairly. • Include me..... Involve me in decisions that affect me. • Collaborate..... Work with me to solve problems and reach goals. • Let me lead..... Create opportunities for me to take action and lead. 	
5. Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire..... Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. • Broaden horizons..... Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. • Connect..... Introduce me to people who can help me grow. 	

NOTE: Relationships are, by definition, bidirectional, with each person giving and receiving. So each person in a strong relationship both engages in and experiences each of these actions. However, for the purpose of clarity, this framework is expressed from the perspective of one young person.

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<p>Share Power</p>	<p>Challenge Growth</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Allowing kids to decide where to spend their time at the organization -Collaborate with student to come up with a project to own and support them in achieving -Youth leadership model where young people can select which roles they want to have on projects and which additional responsibilities they want to take on -Coach young women to be leaders by encouraging and creating space for public speaking and group leader roles -Set goals beyond program framework if needed and set an action plan -When assigning a project, instead of telling them how to do it step by step, ask, “What do you think?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Push them to go further and expand their capacity -Help learn from mistakes and setbacks -Push my players to try drills that they aren’t fully comfortable with yet -Holding players accountable while taking ownership of their strengths and weaknesses -Hold the line of high expectation, no excuses, or mediocrity process and how can we be better -Make constructive feedback and positive reinforcement a regular part of the program -Transparency with their work progress and quality -Make sure they make better choices daily -Assign the next step when a teen is not stepping up -Maintain rigorous pacing, expect growth, even if it looks different than planned -Accountability and support - “what’s going on?” make a support plan together
<p>Express Care</p>	<p>Provide Support</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Address students by their names - i.e. “Good Morning, Samuel” -Spend time with each student to get to know them outside of work -Use technique like peaks and valleys to check-in -Asking deep questions, more than just “how was your day”, but going the extra mile -Personal check-ins as they arrive -Always have food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Guide the young person through hard situations -Be a sounding board/give advice -Create a safe place for freedom of expression and self -Build trust by creating personal mini goals with students

Expand Possibilities

- Encourage young people to attend trainings, community events, etc. (staff I go to)
- Encourage young people to apply for jobs in the youth work field and support the process
- Introduce/connect interns to other
- Colleagues for informational interviews
- Use travel as an opportunity to build cultural capital (go to museums, restaurants, etc.)
- Take players to college visit/tour
- Collaboration with other youth programs
- Post-secondary success
- Connecting is a challenge so making sure you give best practices