

# DR IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT TOOL

For each section below consider your formative years (0-25 years), write the names of up to three people who do/did these things for and with you. You can list the same person repeatedly.

## CATEGORY A: Who showed you that you mattered to them?

They may have done this by:

- Being someone you could trust.
- Really paying attention when you were together.
- Making you feel known and valued.
- Showing you that they enjoyed being with you.
- Praising you for your efforts and achievements.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## CATEGORY B: Who pushed you to keep getting better?

They may have done this by:

- Expecting you to live up to your potential.
- Pushing you to go further.
- Helping you learn from mistakes and setbacks.
- Insisting that you take responsibility for your actions.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## CATEGORY C: Who helped you complete tasks and achieve your goals?

They may have done this by:

- Guiding you through hard situations and systems.
- Building your confidence to take charge of your life.
- Standing up for you when you needed it.
- Putting in place limits that kept you on track.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## CATEGORY D: Who treated you with respect and gave you a say?

They may have done this by:

- Taking you seriously and treating you fairly.
- Involving you in decisions that affected you.
- Working with you to solve problems and reach goals.
- Creating opportunities for you to take action and lead.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## CATEGORY E: Who connected you with people and places that broadened your world?

They may have done this by:

- Exposing you to new ideas, experiences, and places.
- Inspiring you to see possibilities for your future.
- Introducing you to other people who helped you grow.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Please share your responses to these two questions for your group:

1. Which person did you list in the largest number of categories?
2. Which person on your list was a bit of a surprise because you had not previously thought about how that person influenced your development?

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

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.

# RELATIONSHIP BUILDING PRACTICES TOOL

<h2>Expressing Care Practices</h2>	<p>I will practice these selected skills to help youth develop strong relationships. <i>Choose 3 or less.</i></p>
1. Ask young people to tell you about themselves and listen to their stories.	
2. Learn young people's names as soon as possible after meeting them.	
3. Take time to greet young people each day as they arrive in your school or program. Systematically check in with different young people on a regular basis (not just the same ones every time).	
4. Look in young people's eyes when you talk to them. Focus on them when they are talking about things that matter to them. Put away your cell phone.	
5. Follow up with young people when you learn about what they are going through something, rather than waiting for them to bring it up again.	
6. Make time for lightness. Share in some humor, fun, and laughter amid the practical tasks. Smile.	
7. Ask follow-up questions so young people know you're interested and tracking.	
8. Strive to understand and show sensitivity to young people's feelings.	
9. Do what you say you will do and keep your promises.	
10. Ask for more: When young people tell you about something they care about or show you something they have made or done, ask to know or see more about it. Go beyond nodding or saying "great job" to ask why they are interested in or proud of the work.	
11. When you notice that young people act differently, ask why.	
12. Show up at the events that matter in young people's lives, from competitions to concerts.	
13. Find an interest that you have in common with them.	
14. Tell young people what you like about them.	
15. Pay young people indirect compliments by telling their parents or friends about something good that they said or did.	

# Challenging Growth Practices

I will practice these selected skills to help youth develop strong relationships.  
Choose 3 or less.

1. When you *challenge growth*, also utilize another element of the Developmental Relationships Framework such as *express care* so the young person does not experience challenge as entirely negative
2. Be as specific as possible in giving feedback to young people. Describe what a young person did well and what was good about it. It can also help to contrast what you see with past examples as evidence of growth, particularly if the growth is important to the young person.
3. Encourage future goals. Talk with young people about the things they look forward to or dream about.
4. Help young people imagine their "future selves" by asking them to think and talk about what they want their lives to be like in the future.
5. Expand young people's thinking by asking hard questions, providing alternate explanations, and encouraging openness to different opinions. This helps them expand their own thinking.
6. Emphasize mistakes are a necessary part of growth and learning. Praise them for hard work and using good strategies, whether they succeed or fail.
7. Expect young people to do their best, even when doing something they don't really like.
8. Emphasize discovery, mastery, and self-improvement more so than doing better than others.
9. Challenge young people to try things that are a little hard for them to do.
10. Set boundaries for young people that put and keep them on the right track and keep them safe
11. Help young people understand that some problems take a long time to solve.
12. Help young people think about why they might work hard in one area of their lives, such as at an extracurricular activity they are good at and care about, and not in others, such as at school. Help them see that if they put the same effort into activities, they don't like as they do into the ones they do, their outcomes might be different.
13. Acknowledge (and sometimes celebrate) when you see how a young person has grown or changed.
14. Tell young people what you expect of them.
15. Expect young people to do their best, but don't expect perfection.

## Providing Support Practices

I will practice these selected skills to help youth develop strong relationships.  
*Choose 3 or less.*

1. Catch young people doing something right.
2. Tell young people that their feelings are okay.
3. Accept young people as they are.
4. Help young people solve problems when they encounter barriers to their goals.
5. Offer information and practical help to solve a practical problem, or loan them something they may need.
6. Show young people how to ask for help when they need it.
7. Shift levels of support. Give more support when young people are struggling, and less when they are making progress. Step back as their skills and confidence build.
8. Help young people find their own solutions, rather than just telling them what to do.
9. When a young person needs help that you cannot provide, help them find a person or an organization that can help address the issue.
10. Teach strategies for performing and learning under pressure.
11. When young people get upset about something or when they have done something wrong, listen carefully and let them know that you understand their feelings before providing direction or discipline.
12. Help young people find humor in both ordinary and challenging situations.
13. Show young people that it is often better to deal with a problem or conflict while it is still small in order to prevent it from becoming large.

## Sharing Power Practices

I will practice these selected skills to help youth develop strong relationships.  
*Choose 3 or less.*

**1.** Ask for young people's opinions, especially on issues that affect them but also on ones that don't.

**2.** Work to understand young people's points of view when they share ideas or opinions.

**3.** Let young people make decisions about activities you do together and what you talk about. Don't jump in too fast when they don't make quick decisions or think of things to talk about.

**4.** When you can, offer choices ("So, what could you do differently to tackle this problem?"), rather than always giving instructions.

**5.** Learn from young people—and show it. Young people have a lot to teach adults. Let them know when you've learned something from them that you're excited about.

**6.** Include young people in thinking about decisions, even when you have to make the final call.

**7.** When you disagree, take time to understand the young person's point of view.

**8.** Ask young people for input on activities, assignments, projects, class content, and how they can show growth or proficiency.

**9.** Provide opportunities for young people to lead programs based on their interests and values.

**10.** Respect young people's need for privacy.

**11.** Give young people a voice in decisions that will affect them.

**12.** When young people ask you what they should do in a difficult situation, give them several options rather than a single answer.

**13.** Apologize when you said or did something wrong.

**14.** Ask young people to help you when you need assistance accomplishing a task or achieving a goal.

**15.** Allow young people to make and learn from mistakes if making the mistake doesn't threaten their safety or their future.

## Expanding Possibilities Practices

I will practice these selected skills to help youth develop strong relationships.  
*Choose 3 or less.*

- 1.** Let young people see you being yourself and encourage them to do the same.
- 2.** Listen for things young people are curious about, and then weave those topics into group or classroom discussions, informal conversations, or future activities.
- 3.** When young people seem curious about an activity, topic, or issue, ask questions such as, "What interests you about this?"
- 4.** Introduce young people to a wide range of people, places, ideas, cultures, and vocations.
- 5.** Broaden the web of relationships. Connect young people to people who share their interests.
- 6.** Encourage young people to try things they might be interested in. Maybe even try it together.
- 7.** Demonstrate how what young people are learning or working on relates to their interests and to success outside of the school or program.
- 8.** Connect young people with educators, other young people, and community members who can explore with them areas of personal interest and strength.
- 9.** Model being a curious learner by asking questions and sharing what you're learning in your own life.
- 10.** Share articles, blogs, tweets, posts, or stories that you think young people will be interested in.
- 11.** Help young people learn more about their heroes.
- 12.** Help young people learn to do something that you love to do.
- 13.** Inspire young people to be creative.





# FOSTERING DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS



Developmental relationships between youth and adults are an important aspect of the 4-H program. Developmental relationships begin by creating a secure attachment between the 4-H member and adult volunteer, reflected in mutual warmth, respect and trust. Developmental relationships also increase in complexity over time. As youth develop, their needs within the relationship will likewise change to reflect their increasing maturity and abilities. As such, healthy developmental relationships shift power over time. Developmental relationships with younger youth are typically highly adult driven and determined. Youth-adult relationships across the adolescent years, however, reflect the young person's increasing competence, personal autonomy, decision making, and identity formation. As youth grow, an effective 4-H program reflects these developmental changes through developmentally-appropriate activities and relationships with adults.

*Research shows that the relational quality between the 4-H leader and member is connected to positive youth development .*

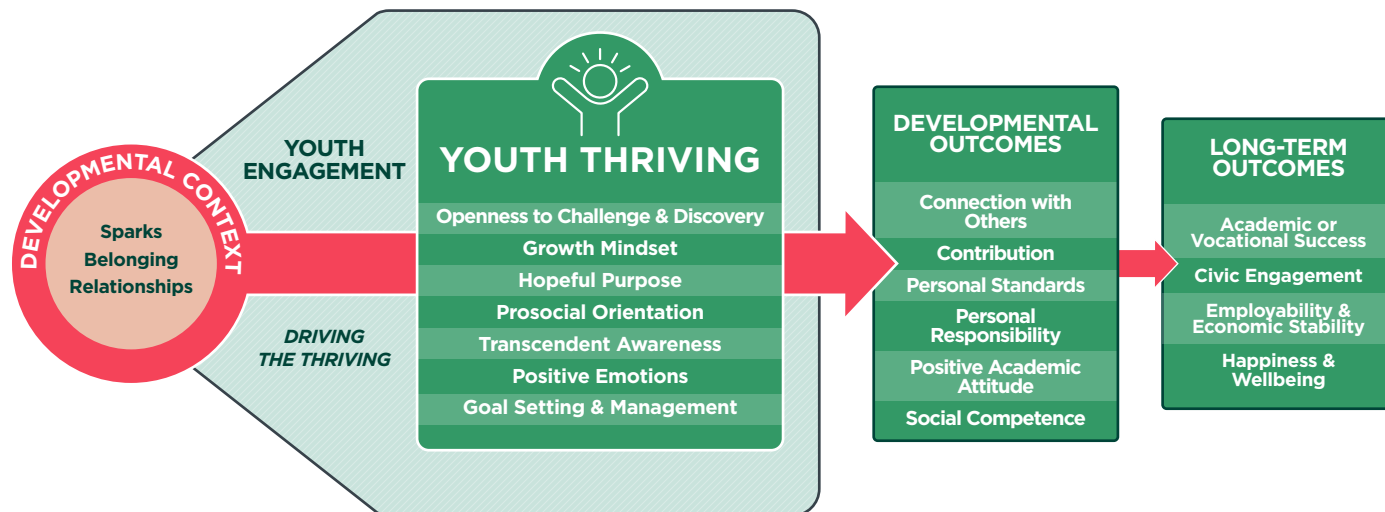
## Research has revealed five dimensions of developmental relationships:

- 1. Expressing care**, though listening, warmth, and dependability.
- 2. Challenging growth** by holding youth accountable, expecting them to do their best, and helping them reflect on failures.
- 3. Providing support** by empowering and advocating for youth as well as helping them navigate situations and systems, and setting appropriate boundaries.
- 4. Sharing power** through inclusion, respect, and collaboration.
- 5. Expanding possibilities** by exposing youth to new ideas and opportunities and connecting them to others who can help them reach their goals.



## 4-H is Positive Youth Development

4-H is based on a positive youth development (PYD) approach that recognizes all youth have interests, abilities, and strengths that can be enhanced by participation in 4-H programs. Research shows that participation in high quality 4-H programs increases thriving in youth, and thriving youth achieve important developmental outcomes, such as academic motivation and achievement.



### REFERENCES

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Pekel, K., Roehlkepartain, E. C., Syvertsen, A. K., Scales, P.C., Sullivan, T. K., & Sethi, J. (2018). Finding the fluoride: Examining how and why developmental relationships are the active ingredient in interventions that work. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 88(5), 493–502.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Search Institute (2020). Developmental relationships framework. Minneapolis, MN: Author. Available at: <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/developmental-relationships-framework/>

Learn more about the 4-H Thriving Model at: [helping-youth-thrive.extension.org](https://helping-youth-thrive.extension.org)