

The Welcome Toolkit: Building Connections from Day One

Research and Resource Guide

Introduction

This research and resource guide summarizes lessons from the session, provides additional topical resources to further develop your application of the topic, and offers research to expand your knowledge.

Lessons from the Session

The **Welcome Toolkit** introduces attention getters, activities, and approaches to start the program off strong, focusing on building connections with youth and creating a welcoming space from day one.

Search Institute's **Developmental Relationships Framework**¹ lays out five key elements of building close connections with youth that support their overall development, cultivate autonomy, and engage them in their communities. The five key elements are:

- **Express care:** Being an adult that youth can depend on, listening to and believing in youth, and uplifting them.
- **Challenge growth:** Expecting young people to reach their potential, challenging them to go further, holding them accountable, and supporting them through failure.
- **Provide support:** Helping youth navigate challenges, building up their confidence, being an advocate for them, and managing their progress.
- **Share power:** Take youth seriously, treat them fairly, include them in decisions, collaboratively solve problems, and provide leadership opportunities.
- **Expand possibilities:** Be an inspiration for youth, introduce them to new experiences and ideas, and connect them with others to help them grow.

Resources and Tools

Attention Getters

- [7 Attention-Getters to Use Instead of Raising Your Voice](#)²
- [Classroom Attention Grabbers](#)³

¹ Search Institute. *Relationship Builder's Guidebook*. January 2021 Version ed., Minneapolis, MN, Search Institute, Jan. 2021.

² Fuhrman, R. (2022, January 27). *7 Attention-Getters to use instead of raising your voice*. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/7-attention-getters-use-instead-raising-your-voice/>

³ TikTok - *Make your day*. (n.d.). <https://www.tiktok.com/discover/classroom-attention-grabbers-high-school>

- [35 Fun Attention-Getters to Keep Your Classroom Under Control](#)⁴

Resources from Search Institute

- [Developmental Relationships: The Roots of Positive Youth Development](#)⁵
- [Approaches to Expressing Care](#)⁶
- [Approaches to Challenging Growth](#)⁷
- [Approaches to Providing Support](#)⁸
- [Approaches to Sharing Power](#)⁹
- [Approaches to Expanding Possibilities](#)¹⁰

Additional Resources

- [Helping Youth Thrive 4-H Thriving Model: Understanding Developmental Relationships](#)¹¹
- [The Five Cs Model of Positive Youth Development](#)¹²

Research and Readings

- [Positive Developmental Relationships](#)¹³

⁴ 35 Fun Attention-Getters to keep your classroom under control. (n.d.). Bored Teachers. <https://www.boredteachers.com/post/35-fun-attention-getters-to-keep-your-classroom-under-control>

⁵ Houlteberg, B. J., Scales, P. C., Williams, J., & Search Institute. (2023). *Developmental Relationships: The roots of positive youth development* [Position Paper]. Search Institute. <https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/The-Roots-of-Positive-Youth-Development-2023.pdf>

⁶ *Approaches to expressing care*. (2021, December 22). Search Institute. <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/approaches-to-expressing-care>

⁷ *Approaches to expressing care*. (2021, December 22). Search Institute. <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/approaches-to-expressing-care>

⁸ *Approaches to providing support*. (2021, December 22). Search Institute. <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/approaches-to-providing-support>

⁹ *Approaches to sharing power*. (2025, April 7). Search Institute. <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/approaches-to-sharing-power>

¹⁰ *Approaches to expanding possibilities*. (2021, December 22). Search Institute. <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/approaches-to-expanding-possibilities>

¹¹ Search Institute, 4-H Program Leaders Working Group, & Access, Equity and Belonging Committee. (n.d.). UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS. In *UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS* (pp. 02–04). <https://helping-youth-thrive.extension.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/230127-Curriculum-Relationships.pdf>

¹² *Explore SEL*. (n.d.). <http://exploresel.gse.harvard.edu/frameworks/52>

¹³ *Positive developmental relationships*. (n.d.). Design Principles for Community-Based Settings. <https://community.designprinciples.org/positive-developmental-relationships>

- [Positive Youth Development \(PYD\) Among Latinx Adolescents](#)¹⁴
- [Promoting Resilience for Underserved Youth: Mobilizing Protective Factors Using a Positive Youth Development \(PYD\) Framework](#)¹⁵

¹⁴ Coulter, K. M. (n.d.). *Positive Youth Development (PYD) among Latinx Adolescents* - ProQuest.
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/3098efb1d1040d5d58bcc81f29f6cc13/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

¹⁵ Taylor, L. C., & Giles, A. C. (2023). Promoting resilience for underserved youth: Mobilizing protective factors using a Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework. *North Carolina Medical Journal*, 84(5).
<https://doi.org/10.18043/001c.87513>