Developmental Relationships Survey Results for

Westport Public Schools

June 1st, 2021



Prepared by:



Discovering what kids need to succeed

Introduction

This report is based on your young peoples' responses to the Developmental Relationships Survey. The report was prepared by Search Institute, a non-profit organization that partners with schools, youth programs, and other organizations to conduct and apply research that promotes positive youth development and advances equity. Search Institute generates new knowledge through mixed-methods studies and develops and delivers workshops, surveys, and other resources that enable practitioners and parents to understand and act on the science of youth development.

In this report, you will find actionable data on developmental relationships, social and emotional competencies, and equitable practices. We hope that these data will help you make the case that developmental relationships are the lever through which we can advance social and emotional competence and create more equitable environments where all young people are equipped to continue on their paths to thrive.



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Developmental Relationships Survey Results for Westport Public Schools 2021/06/01 – Report: Combined DR Survey Youth Report for Westport Public Schools

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What are Developmental Relationships

Over the past decade, Search Institute has conducted a multi-year effort to better understand the role relationships play in positive youth development. This work has led to extensive literature reviews and numerous qualitative and quantitative studies to inform our understanding of the power of relationships young people have with parenting adults, educators, and youth workers (e.g., mentors, program staff, among others). It is through this work that Search Institute has defined these high-quality relationships as "developmental relationships." Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are (identity), gain abilities to share their own lives (agency), and learn how to interact with and contribute to the world around them (committed to their community).

Developmental relationships are characterized by five interconnected elements (with specific actions within each): express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities. To date, Search Institute's research has shown that when young people experience developmental relationships with caring adults, they tend to report a wide range of positive outcomes including social-emotional strengths (Syvertsen et al., 2015), increased resiliency (Roehlkepartain et al., 2017), and greater academic motivation (Scales et al., 2019).

Just as a system of roots supports and nourishes trees as they develop and grow, nurturing relationships with adults provide a foundation for young people's development by offering them guidance, encouragement, and new opportunities. Cultivating strong roots nourishes young people and supports their development and growth while creating a foundation of stability.



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					
	Express Care Show me that I matter to you.	Be dependableListenBelieve in meBe warmEncourage	Be someone I can trust. Really pay attention when we are together. Make me feel known and valued. Show me you enjoy being with me. Praise me for my efforts and achievements.					
	Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.	Expect my bestStretchHold me accountableReflect on failures	Expect me to live up to my potential. Push me to go further. Insist I take responsibility for my actions. Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.					
	Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	NavigateEmpowerAdvocateSet boundaries	Guide me through hard situations and systems. Build my confidence to take charge of my life. Stand up for me when I need it. Put limits in place that keep me on track.					
•	Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.	Respect meInclude meCollaborateLet me lead	Take me seriously and treat me fairly. Involve me in decisions that affect me. Work with me to solve problems and reach goals. Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.					
	Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.	InspireBroaden horizonsConnect	Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. 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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Download a PDF of the framework

Description of Your Study & Sample

Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Survey was used for this study. This survey is designed for young people in grades 4 through 12+ and is typically administered online independently or in a group setting. Some young people may choose to use the included audio prompts to assist with comprehension. Standardized administration procedures were provided to staff who administered the survey to enhance the quality of the data.

The specific characteristics of your survey participants are shown in the table and waffle charts on the next two pages. When reviewing demographic data in this report, it is important to note that survey participants self-reported on each of these attributes. As such, it may not entirely align with your own demographic data. Understanding who participated is vital for appropriate interpretation and application. If your sample reflects the population you seek to engage, then you can have more confidence that the results will be broadly applicable. If your sample does not match your target population, you will need to consider these differences when interpreting the findings.

This report will only show results for samples of at least 30 young people. This reduces the risk that results on particular young people will be singled out and discussed, particularly in public settings. In addition, results from very small samples of young people should not be applied more broadly, nor should assumptions be made that their perspectives are generalizable or transferrable to larger groups. Their results may be true for them, but there may not be enough young people in the sample to account for measurement and sampling errors.

Discussion Questions

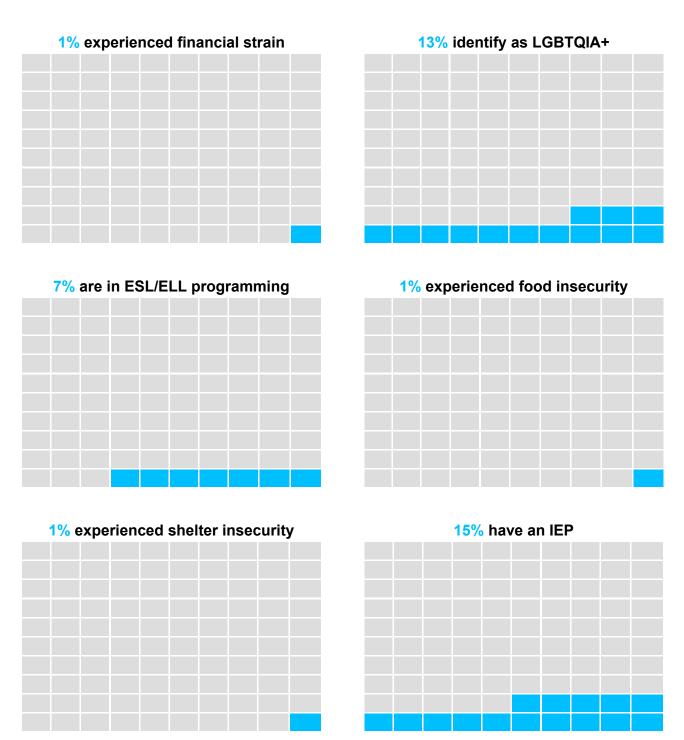
- (?) What worked with the survey administration? What challenges were present? How can we avoid these problems going forward?
- ? How did youth respond to being asked to complete the survey? Were staff and young people sufficiently aware of the survey's purpose?
- (?) In what ways does the sample in your survey reflect (or not reflect) the young people you seek to hear from as you develop your priorities and action plans?
- What characteristics of the survey sample make it particularly valuable? (For example, perhaps there is a subgroup included that you haven't heard from before. Or perhaps it includes young people who participate regularly but don't always speak up.)
- (?) If your study does not include all the perspectives of young people you would want to include, how might you engage those additional voices moving forward? (This might include asking them to be part of the study interpretation and planning process.)

Demographics Tables

Youth Demographics	Sample Size
Total	528
Age	
<10	1
10	0
11	0
12	0
13	1
14	58
15	171
16	99
17	131
18	52
19+	1
Grade	
Not enrolled	0
Grade 4	0
Grade 5	0
Grade 6	0
Grade 7	0
Grade 8	0
Grade 9	155
Grade 10	138
Grade 11	102
Grade 12	123
Post-secondary	0
Gender	
Girl	265
Boy	251
Other	5
Race	
Asian/Pacific Islander	30
Black	10
Hispanic/Latinx	14
Native American	1
White	393
Other	3
Multiracial	67

Demographics Charts

The following waffle charts contain additional descriptive information about your young people who participated in the survey.



How to Read the Report & Interpret Results

This report offers unique information on your young people and their experiences with your organization. It emphasizes the relationships and equitable practices that are essential for young people to develop the social and emotional competencies critical for success in life. These data are meant to guide schools and youth-serving organizations to put in place research-informed strategies to boost their intentional practices in building developmental relationships.

This report provides information from several angles. We recommend you review your results in several stages that allow you to both see the broad context and focus on specific issues, needs, gaps, or priorities. As you do this, consider the following:

- 1. Examine the broadest findings, such as the overall scores for each category of developmental relationships and social and emotional competencies. This high-level review will give you an overall sense of what is happening with your young people. Note any clear patterns, surprises, or questions you see.
- 2. Pay attention to both averages and distribution. The report shows both average scores, which gives you a sense of your young people overall, and the "distribution" of scores, which shows the percentages of young people who scored low and high in each area. These different groups are referred to as "Weak," "Moderate," and "Strong" within this report.
- 3. Access the online dashboard to examine the data for subgroups of young people, particularly those that are most relevant to your work. Do you see surprises or meaningful differences that need further exploration?
- 4. Focus on data in which you and your organization have a particular stake. You may have goals related to specific indicators. Reflect on how they either align with or offer a counterpoint to the general patterns you noticed earlier.

These data are best examined in conversation with multiple stakeholders, including young people, staff, parenting adults, positional leaders, and others—all of whom will bring different perspectives to the interpretation. If you do not already have a diverse guiding team for your planning process, convene one or more groups to work together to internalize, interpret, and then use the data for change. This process will build shared understanding and commitment to actions you ultimately take based on the findings.

You will note that this report does not have "norm" data to which to make comparisons. Though it can be interesting to compare your own results to others, Search Institute's experience in working with schools and other organizations is that it can be distracting or counterproductive. Your population can be quite different from those on which national norms are based, making it difficult to interpret differences. Furthermore, the most important context is your local context, your shared priorities, and the gaps between your current realities and your targets for growth. In other words, the most relevant comparison is to your hopes, aspirations, and goals for your young people. Thus, we encourage emphasizing the local context as a comparison point, rather than focusing on comparing your data to other organizations.

It is important to remember that these survey data represent just one source of information. No single source of information—no matter how valid—can tell the whole story about how your young people are doing. For those reasons, among others, these data should not be used for accountability purposes. It is important to review these data (like all information and data) critically and in context of other information, experience, and research. If it reinforces other data points, you can have more confidence in it. If it contradicts other findings or perspectives, dig deeper to understand the reason for the differences.

As you look at the detailed tables of data, it can be tempting to over-interpret small differences between groups of young people. A difference between scores that may look meaningful, might not reach a level of statistical significance. That is, small differences may be due to measurement error. Small differences are less likely to be significant with smaller samples.

With these general guidelines in mind, we believe you will find important results, patterns, and insights in this report that offer a fresh perspective on how young people are experiencing the essential relationships and equitable practices that matter to their success.

This report is structured into three core sections: Developmental Relationships, Social and Emotional Competencies, and Equitable Practices. Additional sections may be present depending on your organization's customizations.

How are average scores calculated?

Each survey item has four response choices, scored on a scale from 1-4. Individual item scores are added together then divided by the total number of items. The resulting number (1-4) is then converted to a 0-100 range with the following formula ((x-1)*100)/3 to assist with interpretation.

How are responses distributed?

Scores are shown in three levels. These three levels are: weak (scores of 0-33 that reflect responses of the first two response options), moderate (scores of 33.33-66.33 that reflect the third response option), and strong (scores of 66.67-100 that reflect the fourth response option). From this, you may identify areas where young people are either particularly high or low, which may not always be evident from the average score. In our pilot studies, young people who reported having higher developmental relationship scores typically had better youth development outcomes.

As you make meaning of the data, follow a reflective process with the following questions:

- (?) What stands out? We recommend that you start by naming objective stats (e.g. Express Care was our strongest element with a score of 80).
- ? What encourages you? What discourages you?
- ? What surprises you? What is not clear?
- ? What is the importance of this?
- ? What may have led to this result?
- What action ideas come to mind? Note that actions may come in different forms (e.g. things we should do more often or less often; things that should be kept the same; making something more widely available or systematic).

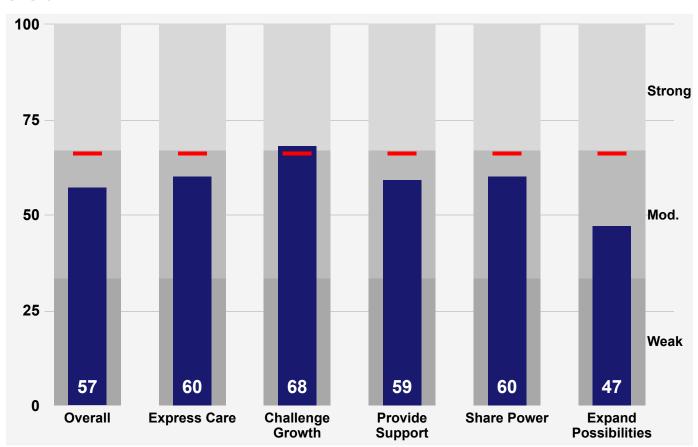
Core Measure 1: Developmental Relationships

Developmental relationships are close connections through which young people discover who they are (identity), gain abilities to share their own lives (agency), and learn how to interact with and contribute to the world around them (committed to their community).

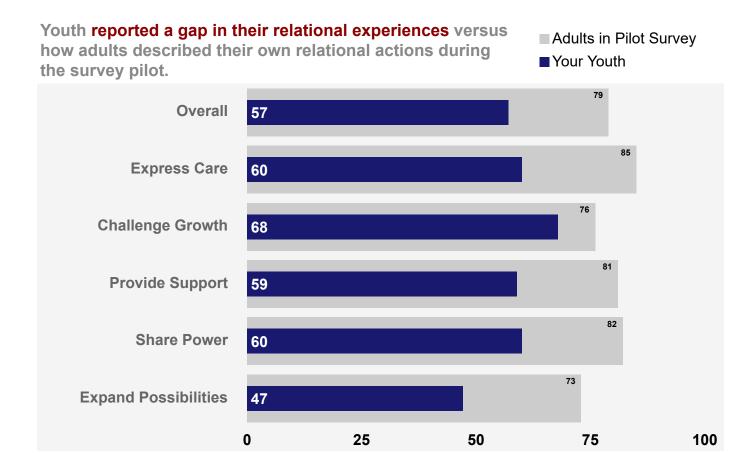
Developmental relationships are characterized by five interconnected elements (with specific actions within each): express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities. To date, Search Institute's research has shown that when young people experience developmental relationships with caring adults, they tend to report a wide range of positive outcomes including social-emotional strengths (Syvertsen et al., 2015), increased resiliency (Roehlkepartain et al., 2017), and greater academic motivation (Scales et al., 2019).

In this chapter, we will explore young people's experiences of developmental relationships and the five elements with the adults at Westport Public Schools.

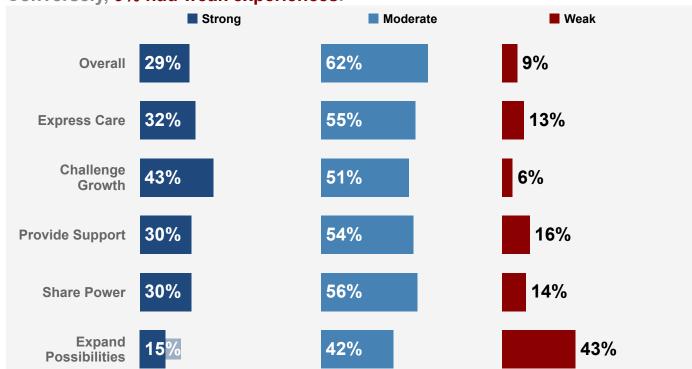
Youth generally reported experiencing moderate developmental relationships overall.



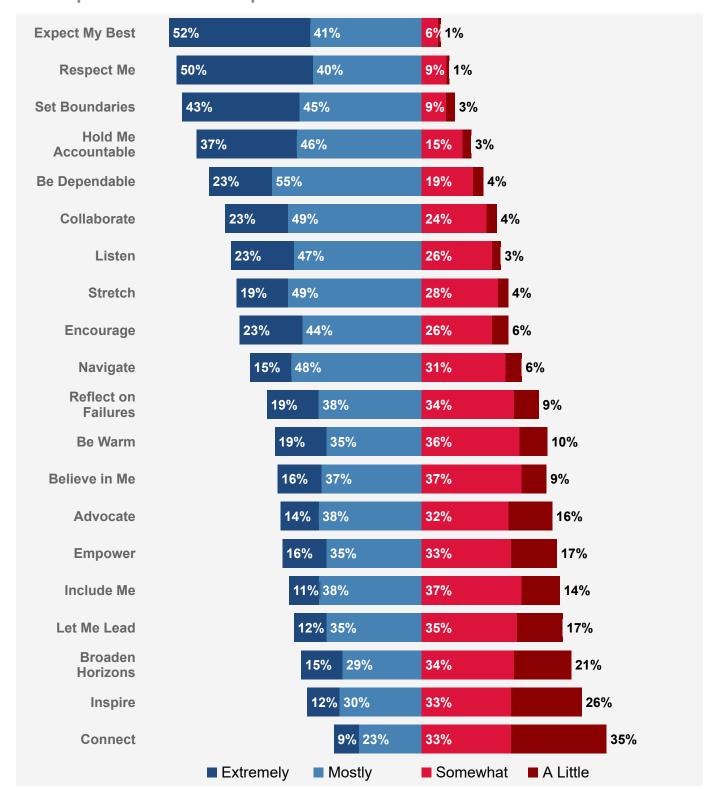
Note: The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a "strong" score.

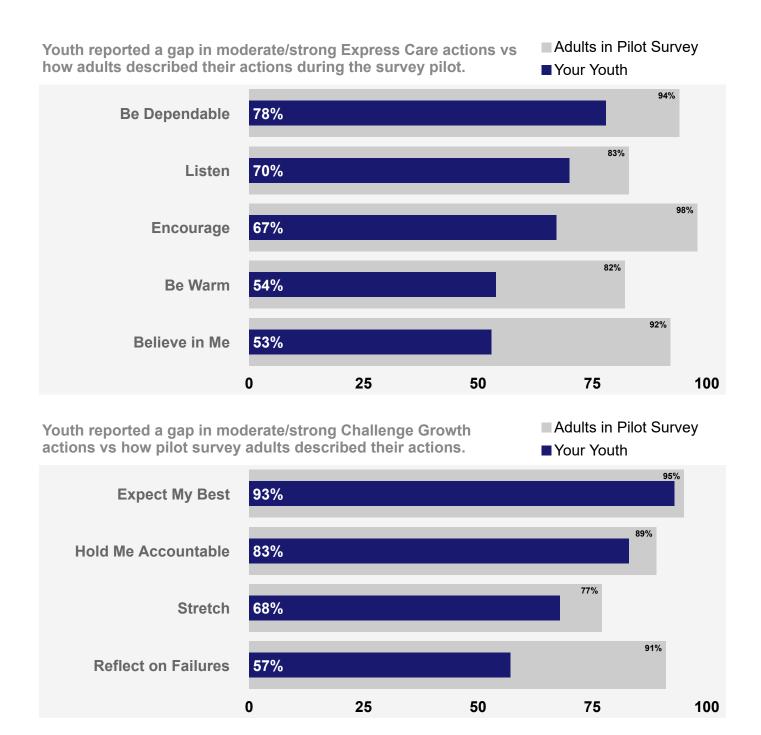


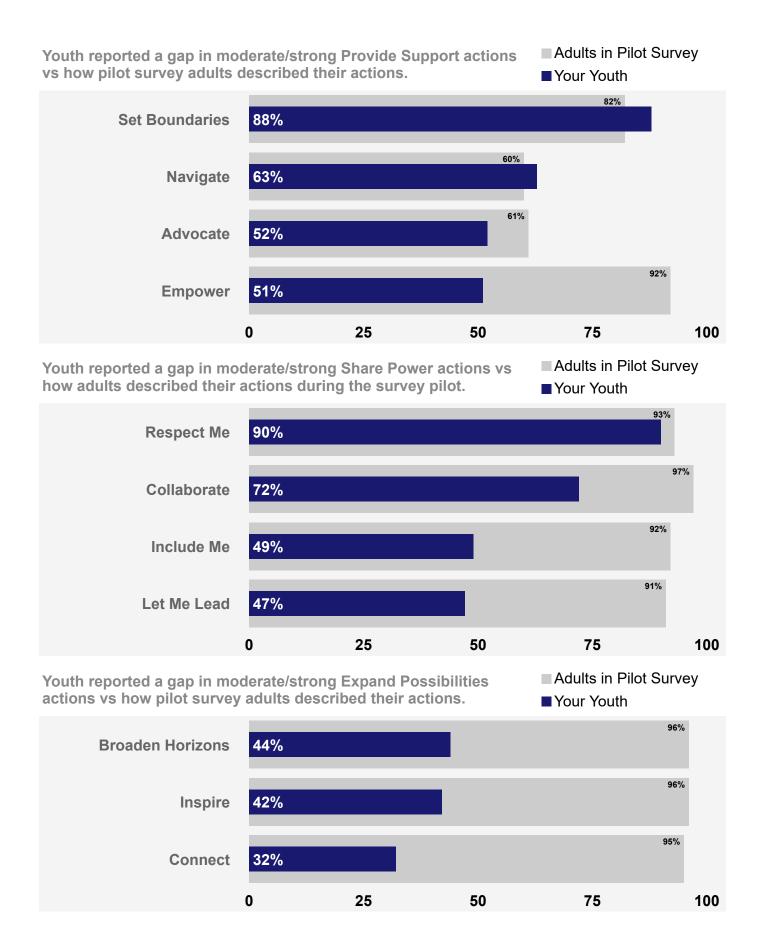
Overall, 29% of youth had strong experiences of developmental relationships. Conversely, 9% had weak experiences.



Youth reported different experiences of each of the 20 actions in the Developmental Relationships Framework.





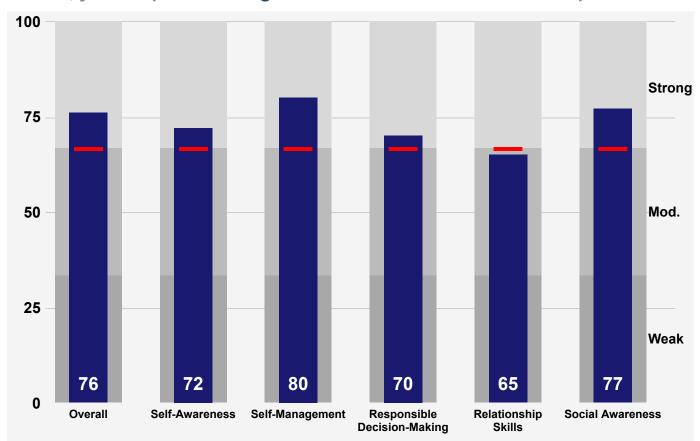


Core Measure 2: Social and Emotional Competencies

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning defines social and emotional learning (SEL) as the process through which young people understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2017). Their framework¹ includes five competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills, and Social Awareness.

In this chapter, we will explore young people's social and emotional competence. This section is customizable, and your organization chose the following option: An overall score for Social and Emotional Competencies along with scores for each individual competency.

Overall, youth reported strong levels of social and emotional competence.

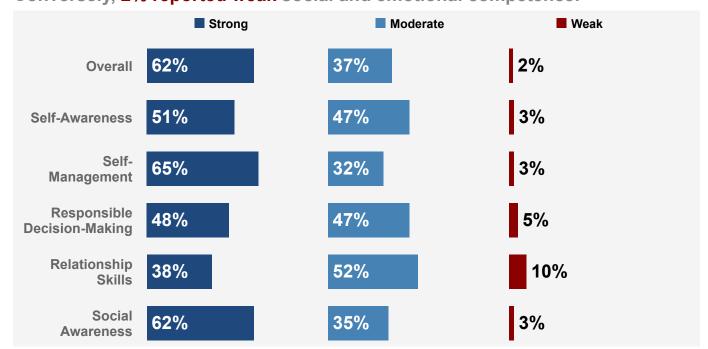


Note: The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a "strong" score.

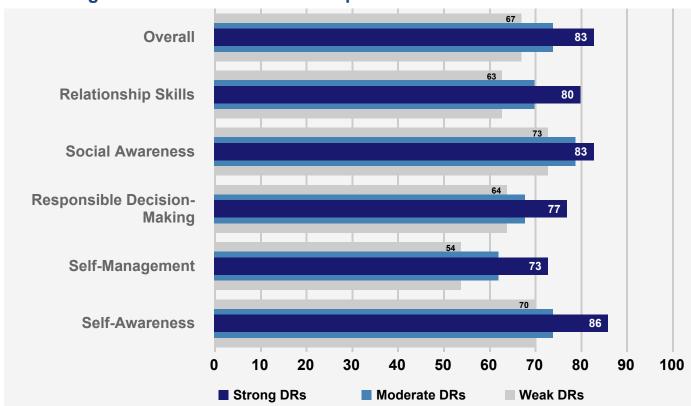
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¹ ®CASEL 2017. The five social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies were developed and defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). For more Information, visit https://casel.org/core-competencies/

Overall, 62% of youth reported strong social and emotional competence. Conversely, 2% reported weak social and emotional competence.



Overall, youth who experienced stronger levels of developmental relationships had stronger social and emotional competence scores.

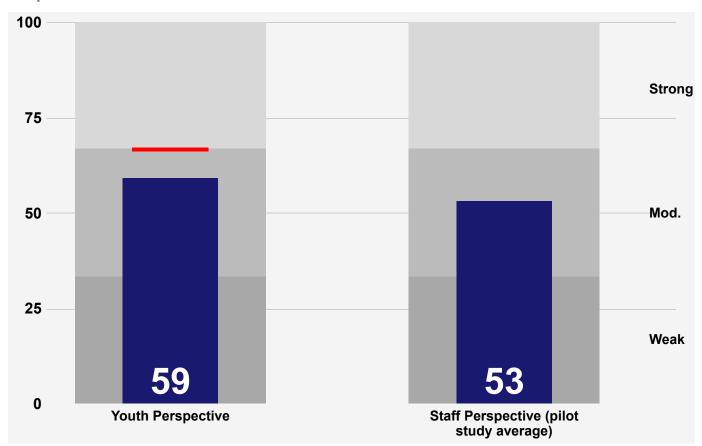


Core Measure 3: Equitable Practices

Whether young people experience their school and program culture as welcoming and inclusive has a direct impact on their experience, and the positive (or negative) repercussions of the experience. The measures in this survey examine how young people experience diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in their schools, OST, and student support programs.

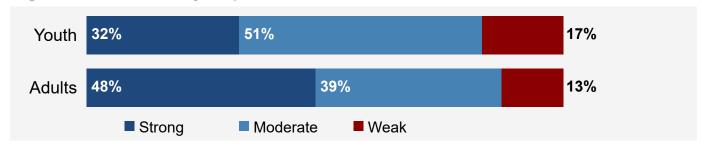
In this chapter, we will explore young people's perceptions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This section is customizable, and your organization chose the following options: A single overall score for your Organization's Culturally Responsive Environment.

Youth generally reported that the organization had a moderate culturally responsive environment.

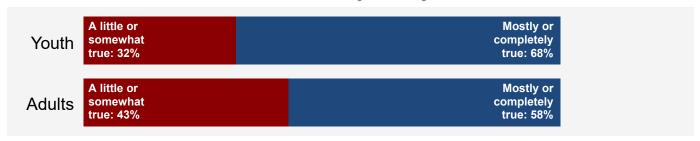


Note: The red bar indicates the score from your previous administration of the survey. If this is your time 1 survey, then it will reflect the minimum benchmark for a "strong" score.

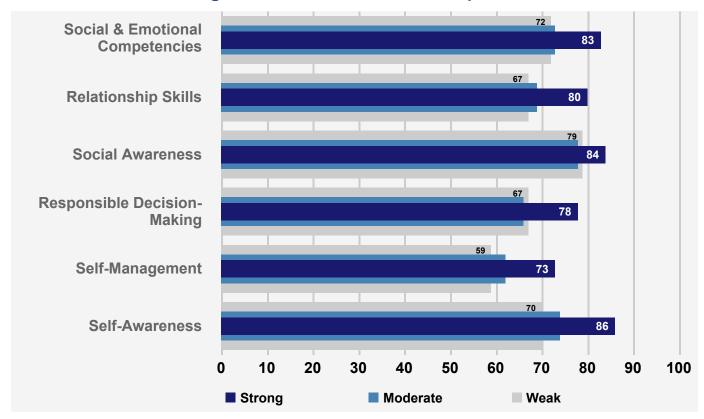
Here is a breakdown of how your youth and pilot study adults viewed their organization's culturally responsive environment:



Here is a breakdown of how your youth and pilot study adults felt when asked whether or not the adults reflect the diversity of the youth:



Youth who reported that the organization had a strong culturally responsive environment had stronger social and emotional competence scores.



Additional Measures: Outcomes

In this chapter, we will explore the optional outcome modules that your organization opted to include. This section is customizable, and your organization chose the following options: Drug Free Communities – Four Core Measures.

Outcomes: DFC Four Core Measures

Drug-Free Communities – Four Core Measures

Young people are increasingly exposed to negative behaviors and opportunities for risk-taking. Those who experience low levels of developmental relationships and high levels of developmental deficit conditions are particularly vulnerable. In this section, you'll find data describing four core measures related to young people's use of alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs, and marijuana. These data can be used to meet Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grantee reporting requirements established by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

This information is invaluable not only to your efforts to educate the community and develop an action plan for reducing substance use, associated risk behaviors, and deficit factors but also as a basis for strengthening protective factors critical to ensuring that your youth thrive.

The four core measures consist of:

- The percentage of youth who report using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or prescription drugs at least once in the 30 days immediately preceding the survey date.
- The percentage of youth who report that their parents feel that substance use is wrong.
- The percentage of youth who report that their friends feel substance use is wrong.
- The percentage of youth who think there is a risk in the use of these substances.

Past 30-Day Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, and Vaping

Category	Definition	Total	Gei	nder	Gra	ide		
J J		Sample	F	M	9	10	11	12
Alcohol	Used alcohol once or more in the past 30 days	33	36	30	15	24	43	60
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes once or more in the past 30 days	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Marijuana	Used marijuana once or more in the past 30 days	15	13	15	5	14	19	25
Prescription Drugs	Used prescription drugs once or more in the past 30 days	2	1	3	2	2	0	2
Vaping	Vaped tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana once or more in the past 30 days	16	14	17	9	14	18	26

Youth Perception of Parental Disapproval of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Prescription Drug Use, and Vaping

Alcohol Drink regularly 92 93 92 95 93 90 91 Tobacco Smoke tobacco 97 97 97 97 98 94 97 Marijuana Use marijuana 80 80 81 91 86 72 63 Prescription Drugs Used prescription drugs not prescribed to you 98 99 98 97 97 100 100 Vaping Vape tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana 94 94 95 95 96 95 90	Category	Definition	Total Sample	Gei F	nder M	Gra 9	de 10	11	12
MarijuanaUse marijuana80808191867263Prescription DrugsUsed prescription drugs not prescribed to you9899989797100100	Alcohol	Drink regularly	92	93	92	95	93	90	91
Prescription Used prescription drugs not 98 99 98 97 97 100 100 Drugs prescribed to you	Tobacco	Smoke tobacco	97	97	97	97	98	94	97
Drugs prescribed to you	Marijuana	Use marijuana	80	80	81	91	86	72	63
Vaping Vape tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana 94 94 95 95 96 95 90	•		98	99	98	97	97	100	100
	Vaping	Vape tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana	94	94	95	95	96	95	90

Youth Perception of Peer Disapproval of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, and Vaping

Category	Definition	Total Sample	Ge F	nder M	Gra 9	ide 10	11	12
Alcohol	Drink regularly	71	76	67	73	71	71	68
Tobacco	Smoke tobacco	79	81	78	85	81	71	75
Marijuana	Use marijuana	48	48	49	72	51	32	25
Prescription Drugs	Used prescription drugs not prescribed to you	88	90	86	84	93	91	86
Vaping	Vape tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana	59	58	61	74	61	54	39

Youth Perception of Risk of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Prescription Drug Use, and Vaping

Category	Definition	Total Sample	Gei F	nder M	Gra 9		11	12
Alcohol	Five or more drinks once or twice a week	78	82	73	78	84	76	74
Tobacco	One or more packs of cigarettes per day	96	97	95	96	98	96	96
Marijuana	Use marijuana once or twice a week	48	53	44	61	55	33	35
Prescription Drugs	Used prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them	94	96	92	94	96	93	95
Vaping	Vape tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana	78	80	77	82	81	77	71

Four Core Measures Data Summary

		Past 3	0-Day U	se			Percep	Perception of Risk							
		Alc	Tob	Mar	Pre	Vape	Alc	Tob	Mar	Pre	Vape				
Total	*%	33.1	1.6	14.7	1.6	15.9	78	96.1	47.8	94.3	78.1				
Sample	n N	170 513	8 512	75 511	8 511	81 509	396 508	487 507	243 508	477 506	395 506				
Female	*%	35.6	1.2	13.1	0.8	14.3	82.4	97.3	53.1	96.1	80				
Tomaic	n	93	3	34	2	37	211	248	136	245	204				
	Ν	261	260	260	259	259	256	255	256	255	255				
Male	*%	29.6	2.1	15.5	2.5	16.7	73	94.6	44	92.1	76.7				
	n	71	5	37	6	40	176	228	106	221	184				
Not	N *%	240	240	239	240	239	241	241	241	240	240				
Not Enrolled	n														
Elirolled	N														
4	*%														
	n														
	N														
5	*%														
	n N														
6	*%														
J	n														
	Ν														
7	*%														
	n														
	*%														
8	n														
	N.														
9	*%	14.6	0.7	5.4	2	8.8	78.2	95.9	61.2	93.8	82.3				
	n	22	1	8	3	13	115	141	90	137	121				
	N	151	150	149	149	148	147	147	147	146	147				
10	*%	24.1	2.3	13.5	2.2	13.5	83.7	97.8	54.8	96.3	81.3				
	n N	32 133	3 133	18 133	3 134	18 133	113 135	132 135	74 135	129 134	109 134				
11	*%	42.9	2	19.4	0	18.4	76	95.8	33.3	92.7	76.8				
11	n	42.9	2	19.4	0	18	73	95.6	32	92.7 89	73				
	N	98	98	98	98	98	96	96	96	96	95				
12	*%	59.5	1.7	24.8	1.7	25.8	74.2	95.8	35	95	70.8				
	n	72	2	30	2	31	89	114	42	114	85				
Dest	N *%	121	121	121	120	120	120	119	120	120	120				
Post															
Secondary	/ ⁿ N														
		II													

Note

^{% --} In this table, the rows marked with a percent sign (%) reflect percentages of youth who meet the criteria appropriate to the particular column for Past 30-Day Use, Perception of Risk, Perception of Parental Disapproval, and Perception of Peer Disapproval.

n -- Rows marked with a lower case n report the number of students who meet the criteria.

N -- Rows marked with an upper case N report the number of students who responded to the relevant question.

Values for one or more cells were suppressed due to fewer than 10 youth in that category responding.

Four Core Measures Data Summary - Part 2

		Percei	otion of	Parenta	l Disapı	oroval	Percei	Perception of Peer Disapproval						
		Alc	Tob	Mar	Pre	Vape	Alc	Tob	Mar	Pre	Vape			
Total	%	92.4	96.7	79.9	98.4	94.1	71.2	79.1	47.9	88.4	59			
Sample	n	475	497	409	505	480	364	404	245	449	301			
F	N %	514 93.1	514 96.9	512 80.4	513 99.2	510 93.8	511 76	511 81	511 47.7	508 90.3	510 57.8			
Female	% n	243	253	209	99.2 259	93.8	196	209	123	232	149			
	N	261	261	260	261	260	258	258	258	257	258			
Male	%	91.7	96.7	80.8	97.5	95	66.5	77.7	49.2	86.3	61.4			
	n	221	233	194	234	227	161	188	119	207	148			
	N	241	241	240	240	239	242	242	242	240	241			
Not	%													
Enrolled	n N													
4	%													
~	n													
	Ν													
5	%													
	n													
	N													
6	% n													
	N													
7	%													
•	n													
	N													
8	%													
	n N													
9	N %	94.7	97.4	90.7	97.4	95.3	73.2	84.6	71.8	84.5	74.5			
J	n	143	147	137	147	143	109	126	107	125	111			
	N	151	151	151	151	150	149	149	149	148	149			
10	%	92.6	97.8	86.5	97	95.5	70.9	81.3	51.5	92.5	61.2			
	n	125	132	115	131	128	95	109	69	124	82			
44	N	135	135	133	135	134	134	134	134	134	134			
11	%	89.8	93.9	72.4	100	94.8	71.4	71.4	31.6	90.8	54.1			
	n N	88 98	92 98	71 98	98 98	92 97	70 98	70 98	31 98	89 98	53 98			
12	%	90.8	96.7	63.3	100	90	68.3	75	25	85.6	39.5			
	n	109	116	76	119	108	82	90	30	101	47			
	Ν	120	120	120	119	120	120	120	120	118	119			
Post Secondary	% / n N													

Note:

^{% --} In this table, the rows marked with a percent sign (%) reflect percentages of youth who meet the criteria appropriate to the particular column for Past 30-Day Use, Perception of Risk, Perception of Parental Disapproval, and Perception of Peer Disapproval.

n -- Rows marked with a lower case n report the number of students who meet the criteria.

N -- Rows marked with an upper case N report the number of students who responded to the relevant question.

Values for one or more cells were suppressed due to fewer than 10 youth in that category responding.

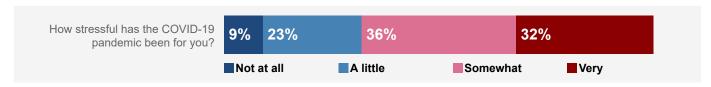
Additional Measures: Current Events

In this chapter, we will explore the optional current events modules that your organization opted to include. This section is customizable, and your organization chose the following options: COVID-19 Module and Racial Injustice Module.

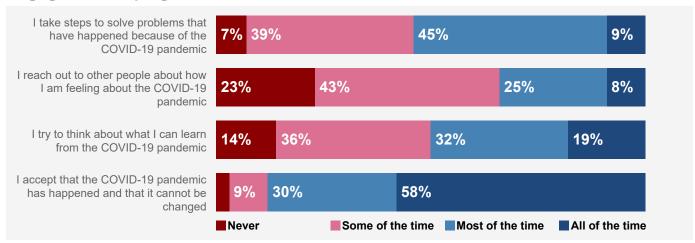
Current Events: COVID-19

No individuals are immune to the effects of the pandemic, including young people. This current event module explores the impacts of the global pandemic on your young people, including stress, coping mechanisms, and any shifts in their relational experiences (e.g. whether connections have decreased in number or in quality). This section will serve as an important way to contextualize the other measures within this report.

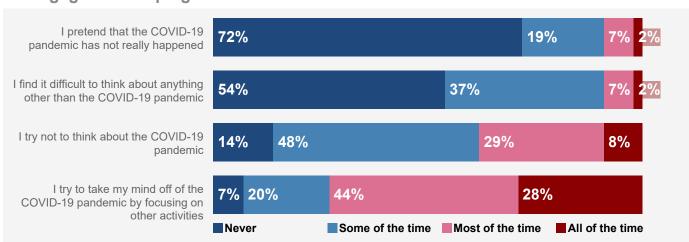
Stress



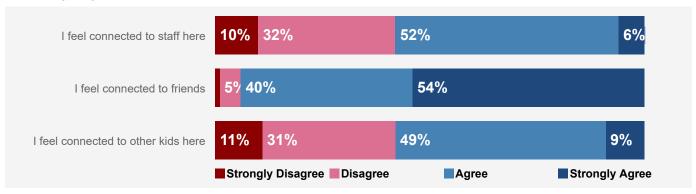
Engagement Coping



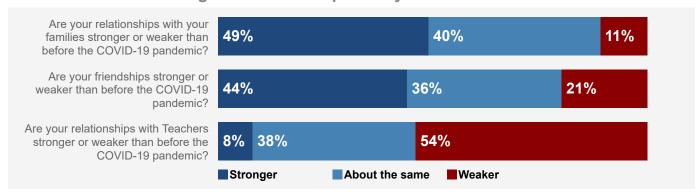
Disengagement Coping



Social (Dis)Connection



COVID-19 Related Change in Relationship Quality



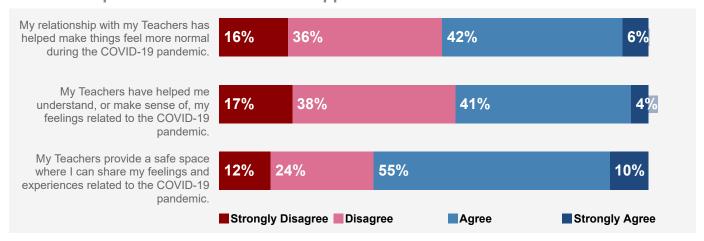
COVID Context - School



COVID Context - Out-of-School Time



COVID-19 Specific Social-Emotional Support



Current Events: Racial Injustice

The questions in this section ask young people about their role in eliminating injustices against people of color and the efficacy of those beliefs.

Following the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor (and many other people of color), there has been increased attention and unrest around the issue of racial injustice. In the questions below, we refer to this as the "racial injustice uprising".

