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USE TRUST TO BUILD TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

To paraphrase the late educator Rita Pierson, young people don't learn from old people they don't like.

In addition to our collective personal knowledge about the power of humane, growth-producing relationships, there is compelling research evidence to support this. We have already noted that teacher credibility has an effect size of 1.09, which is impressive. But if we just consider teacherstudent relationships, the effect size is 0.47, still above average and likely to further accelerate learning. There is a distinction between teacher credibility and teacher-student relationships. The former operates in one direction and lies within the student's perceptions. The latter is bidirectional, as both teacher and student participate in its development. These are not unrelated to one another, and in fact trust is foundational in relationships.

Positive relationships between teachers and students are among the most commonly cited variables associated with effective instruction. If the relationship is strong, instructional strategies seem to be more effective. Conversely, a weak or negative relationship will mute or even negate the benefits of even the most effective instructional strategies.⁶

The Search Institute has created a Developmental Relationships Framework. Their model has five major components (expressed from the perspective of an individual student):

- **1. Express care**—Show me that I matter to you.
- 2. Challenge growth—Push me to keep getting better.
- **3. Provide support**—Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.
- **4. Share power**—Treat me with respect and give me a say.
- **5. Expand possibilities**—Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.





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.

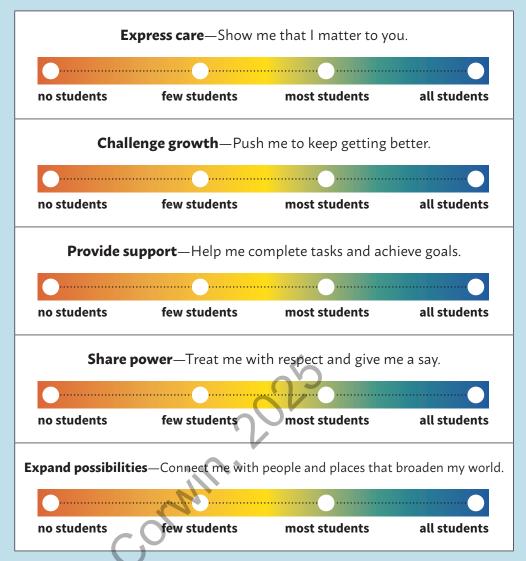
	Elements	Actions	Definitions
	Express Care Show me that I matter to you.	ListenBelieve in meBe warm	Be someone I can trustReally pay attention when we are togetherMake me feel known and valuedShow me you enjoy being with mePraise me for my efforts and achievements.
	Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.	Stretch Hold me account	Expect me to live up to my potential. Push me to go further. ableInsist I take responsibility for my actions. sHelp me learn from mistakes and setbacks.
	Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	EmpowerAdvocate	
344	Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.	Include meCollaborate	Take me seriously and treat me fairlyInvolve me in decisions that affect meWork with me to solve problems and reach goalsCreate opportunities for me to take action and lead.
	Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places that	 Broaden horizon 	Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. sExpose me to new ideas, experiences, and placesIntroduce 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.

broaden my world.

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Note that each of the major components has actions and definitions. For example, one of the actions is to advocate. Stand up for me when I need it. This is one of 20 actions, all of which are powerful. Consider each of the factors from the Developmental Relationships Framework. Use the scale on the right to estimate the number of students who believe that you demonstrate each factor.



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Take a look at your responses. What do you notice? What are your strengths and opportunities for growth? Are you willing to share your responses with a trusted peer and solicit advice?

TAKE ACTION

using the action plan process, what is your goal for improving or maintaining positive, growth-producing relationships with students?