



Relationships Build Resilience

A primary goal of the Seedling mentor program is supporting students in building resilience.

As mentors, sometimes we find ourselves asking if what we are doing has impact. Is it actually beneficial to our mentee? New research being conducted at Search Institute finds that young people are highly motivated by relationships with significant adult figures when five actions occur within the relationship: expressing care, challenging growth, providing support, sharing power, and expanding possibility.

Expressed from the perspective of a young person, those five actions mean the following:

*show me that you like me and want the best for me (express care);
insist that I try to continuously improve (challenge growth);
help me complete tasks and achieve goals (provide support);
hear my voice and let me share in making decisions (share power); and
expand my horizons and connect me to opportunities (expand possibilities).*

Search Institute is conducting tests regarding this framework for developmental relationships. In a study with parents, they found that though all five actions have positive effects, it is the sharing of power with children that most predicts how well they do academically and in numerous other ways. In a separate study in the school environment they are also proving that students who have stronger developmental relationships with teachers do better in a number of important ways including academic success. While the actions that make up the framework for the Developmental Relationships that are being studied seem fairly obvious and easy to achieve, further studies have found that young people believe that adults who do two or more of those things are relatively rare.

The connection between resilience and relationships is important. Students work hard to try and bounce back from adversity. Studies show they are more successful when they have support and encouragement and don't feel like they are doing it on their own. To talk through ideas about how you can better provide the supports outlined in this framework, call your Mentor Director today.

Excerpted from The Intervention is a Relationship by Kent Pekel, Ed.D. and Peter C. Scales, Ph.D. The full article can be read here: <https://chronicle.umbmentoring.org/the-intervention-is-a-relationship/>.