

Collaborative Support for Developmental Practices

Asset Mapping

Mapping assets within and across systems that support developmental practices

Developmental practices are the dynamic supports young people need, in different ways and from different people, throughout their lives. Adults can learn these practices, and develop strategies for putting them in place, whenever and wherever they engage with young people.¹



Graphic:
Science of Learning and Development Initiative, Turnaround for Children

The five elements above provide the framing for this asset map.

The latest in the science of learning and development affirms that learning is optimized when it starts with strong relationships in environments filled with safety and belonging. In these contexts, children and youth can then fully engage in challenging experiences and opportunities. Optimal learning and engagement also requires personalization – individualized supports – that takes into account a young person's specific needs. Intentional development of skills, mindsets and habits can be best maximized when these other components are in place.

WHY FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENTAL PRACTICE?

How much are developmental practices actually codified and supported within the child- and youth-focused systems in your community? A wealth of science tells us the elements of practice depicted on the graphic are essential for development.² By ensuring people have these supports, we optimize their ability to experience whatever it is we want them to experience. There are likely many policies, practices, procedures and programs that your system or agency says should explicitly support these practices. There could also be mandates that your system/agency requires that seem counter to these practices.

Why is it important to explore this question? Research has shown that if front-line staff and administrators do not get signals that they should proactively take specific actions in their work they will tend to be risk-averse or assume that the positive developmental practices that they are employing are actually exceptions to the institutional expectations.³ By reviewing our current operating procedures, policies and practices against the research of what makes a difference, we can work together to ensure that every young person is receiving the most effective services, supports and opportunities possible.

DEVELOPMENTAL PRACTICES ASSET MAPPING

The Forum for Youth Investment is piloting an asset mapping toolkit and technical assistance process that is designed to support cross-system conversations about how to improve approaches and practices of the staff that work directly with youth across the multitude of places where children, youth and young adults spend their time.

¹ Stephanie Malia Krauss, Karen Pittman, and Caitlin Johnson; The Forum for Youth Investment (2016) Ready by Design: The Science (and Art) of Youth Readiness.

² Linda Darling-Hammond, Lisa Flook, Channa Cook-Harvey, Brigid Barron & David Osher (2019) Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development, Applied Developmental Science.

³ The Forum for Youth Investment (2014) Collective Impact for Policymakers: Working Together for Children and Youth. <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/collective-impact-for-policymakers/>

Definitions of Developmental Practice: How Important? How Much Practiced?



How much are developmental practices actually codified and supported within the child- and youth-focused systems in your community? A wealth of science tells us these elements of practice are essential for development.⁴ By ensuring people have these supports, we optimize their ability to experience whatever it is we want them to experience. This questionnaire is designed as a first step in a conversation with your colleagues and counterparts about how you are defining and supporting developmental practices.

Instructions: Using the columns on the right, please rate each of the below categories from 1 (low) to 5 (high) on how important you feel it is and how well it is currently being practiced across your programs and initiatives.		HOW IMPORTANT? 1 (LOW) – 5 (HIGH)	HOW MUCH PRACTICED? 1 (LOW) – 5 (HIGH)
STRONG RELATIONSHIPS	<p>Relational trust and respect between and among staff, young people, and parents.</p> <p>Structures that allow for continuity in relationships, thereby reducing anxiety and supporting engaged learning.</p>		
ENVIRONMENTS FILLED WITH SAFETY & BELONGING	<p>A caring, culturally responsive learning community, where young people are well known and valued and can learn in physical and emotional safety.</p> <p>Structures that allow for consistency in practices and predictability in routines that reduce anxiety and support engaged learning.</p>		
RICH INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCES	<p>Meaningful work that builds on young people's prior knowledge and experiences and actively engages them in rich, engaging tasks that help them achieve conceptual understanding and transferable knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Inquiry as a major learning strategy, thoughtfully interwoven with explicit instruction and well-scaffolded opportunities to practice and apply learning.</p> <p>Well-designed collaborative learning opportunities that encourage young people to question, explain, and elaborate their thoughts and co-construct solutions.</p> <p>Ongoing diagnostic assessments and opportunities to receive timely and helpful feedback, develop and exhibit competence, and revise work to improve.</p> <p>Opportunities to develop awareness of one's own thought processes through planning and management of complex tasks, self- and peer- assessment, and reflection on learning.</p>		
INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORTS	<p>Ongoing diagnostic assessments to identify barriers to learning and development.</p> <p>Access to integrated services (including physical and mental health and social service supports) that enable healthy development.</p> <p>Access to learning opportunities that nurture positive relationships, support enrichment and mastery learning, and close achievement gaps.</p>		
INTENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL SKILLS, MINDSETS & HABITS	<p>Explicit instruction in social, emotional, and cognitive skills, such as intrapersonal awareness, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and good decision-making.</p> <p>Infusion of opportunities to learn and use social emotional skills, habits, mindsets throughout all aspects of their work.</p> <p>Approaches to group management and discipline that enable children and youth to learn responsibility for themselves and their community.</p>		

⁴ Linda Darling-Hammond, Lisa Flook, Channa Cook-Harvey, Brigid Barron & David Osher (2019) *Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development*, Applied Developmental Science.

