

No society can long sustain itself unless its members have learned the sensitivities, motivations, and skills involved in assisting and caring for other human beings.

— Urie Bronfenbrenner —



01

**Laying the
Groundwork**



02

**Role of
Relationships**



03

**Practices and
Strategies**



04

**Act and
Reflect**

Groundwork

WHAT IS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
AND CIVIC ACTION



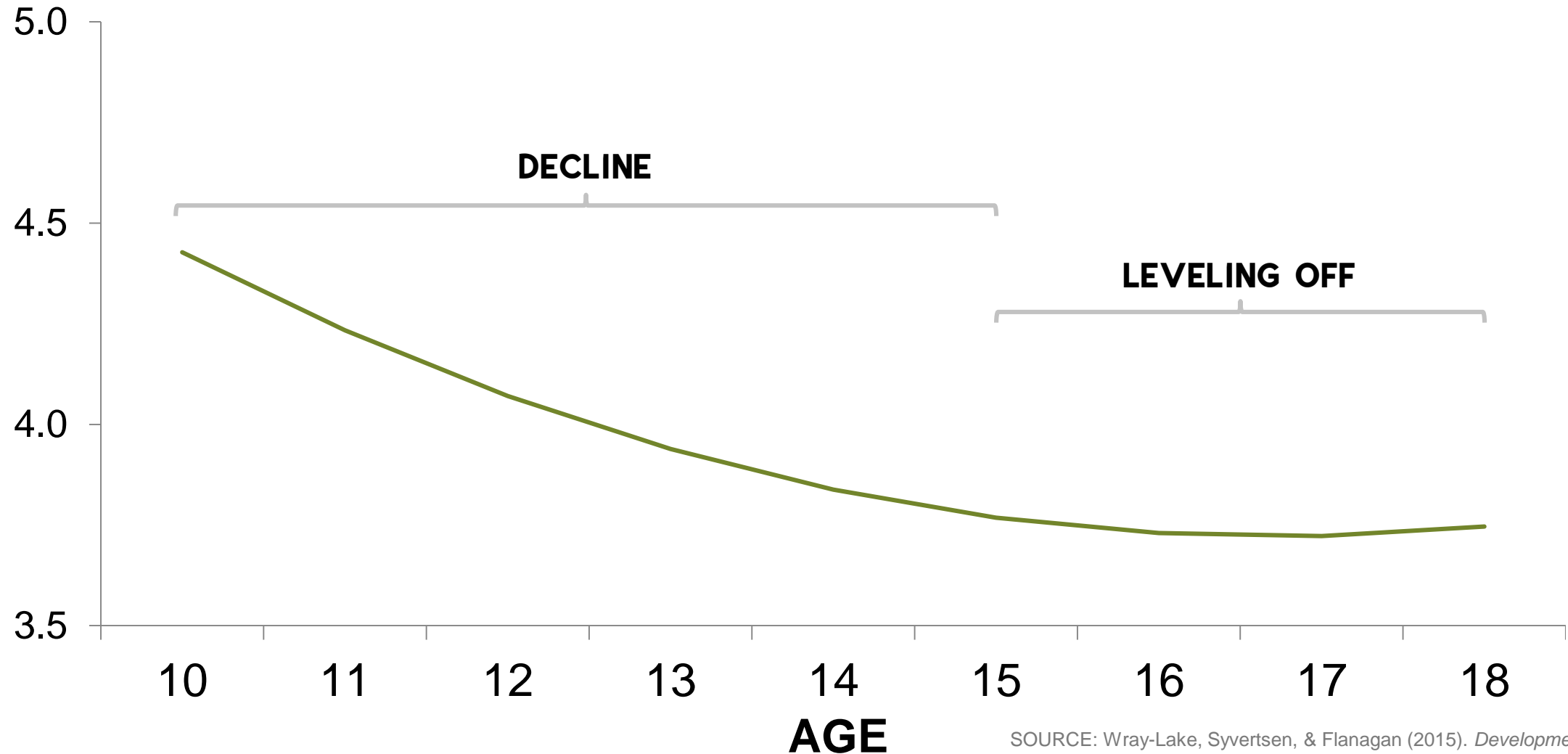
Social Responsibility

- Sense of obligation to others and concern for the common good
- Associated with more frequent **civic behaviors** [Alisat et al., 2014; Pancer, 2004; Pratt et al., 2003; Straub, 1991]
- **Social and cognitive development in adolescence allows for more sophisticated and other-oriented thinking** [Eisenberg et al., 1999; Smetana & Villalobos, 2009; Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003]



There is a normative **DECLINE** in **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

in early and middle adolescence



SOURCE: Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, & Flanagan (2015). *Developmental Psychology*.

Civic Action

- Political and prosocial behaviors intended to contribute to the community and society
- Includes a diverse range of behaviors varying in focus, effort, and commitment



Relationships

A CRITICAL PIECE



IT'S ALL ABOUT
RELATIONSHIPS



Programs don't change kids, relationships do.

— *Bill Milliken* —
Founder, Communities in Schools

Developmental Relationships

- Close connections through which young people discover who they are, gain abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to interact with and contribute to the world
- Five Core Elements:
 - Express Care
 - Challenge Growth
 - Provide Support
 - Share Power
 - Expand Possibilities





Kids in high-stress families with **DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS** are

17 times

more likely than peers who don't to report high levels of

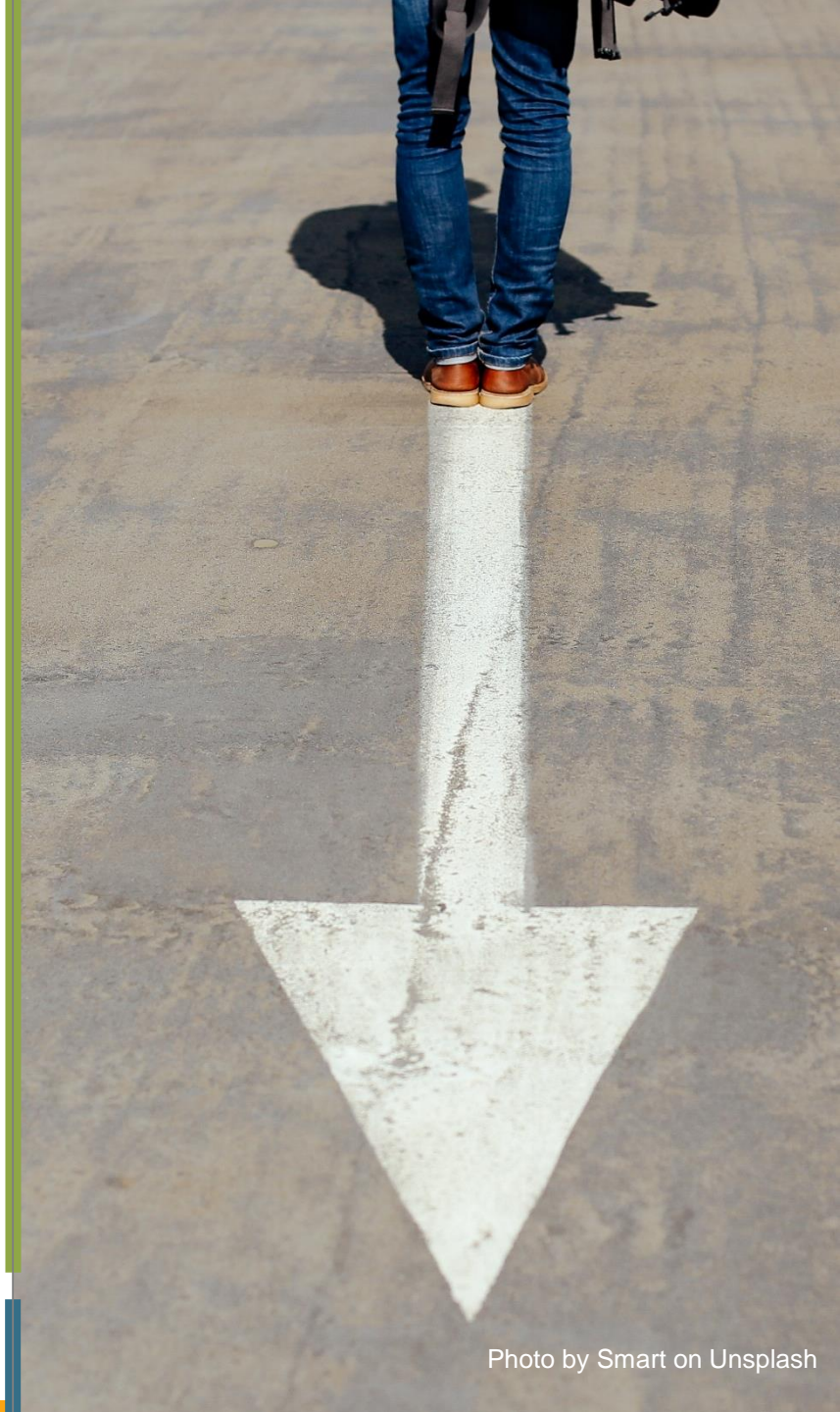
**helping
behavior**

Kids in high-stress families with
DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS are

9 times

more likely than peers who don't to
report high levels of

purpose





Kids in high-stress families with
DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS are

13 times

more likely than peers who don't to
report high levels of

perseverance

Kids in high-stress families with **DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS** are

5 times

more likely than peers who don't to report high levels of

**social
responsibility**

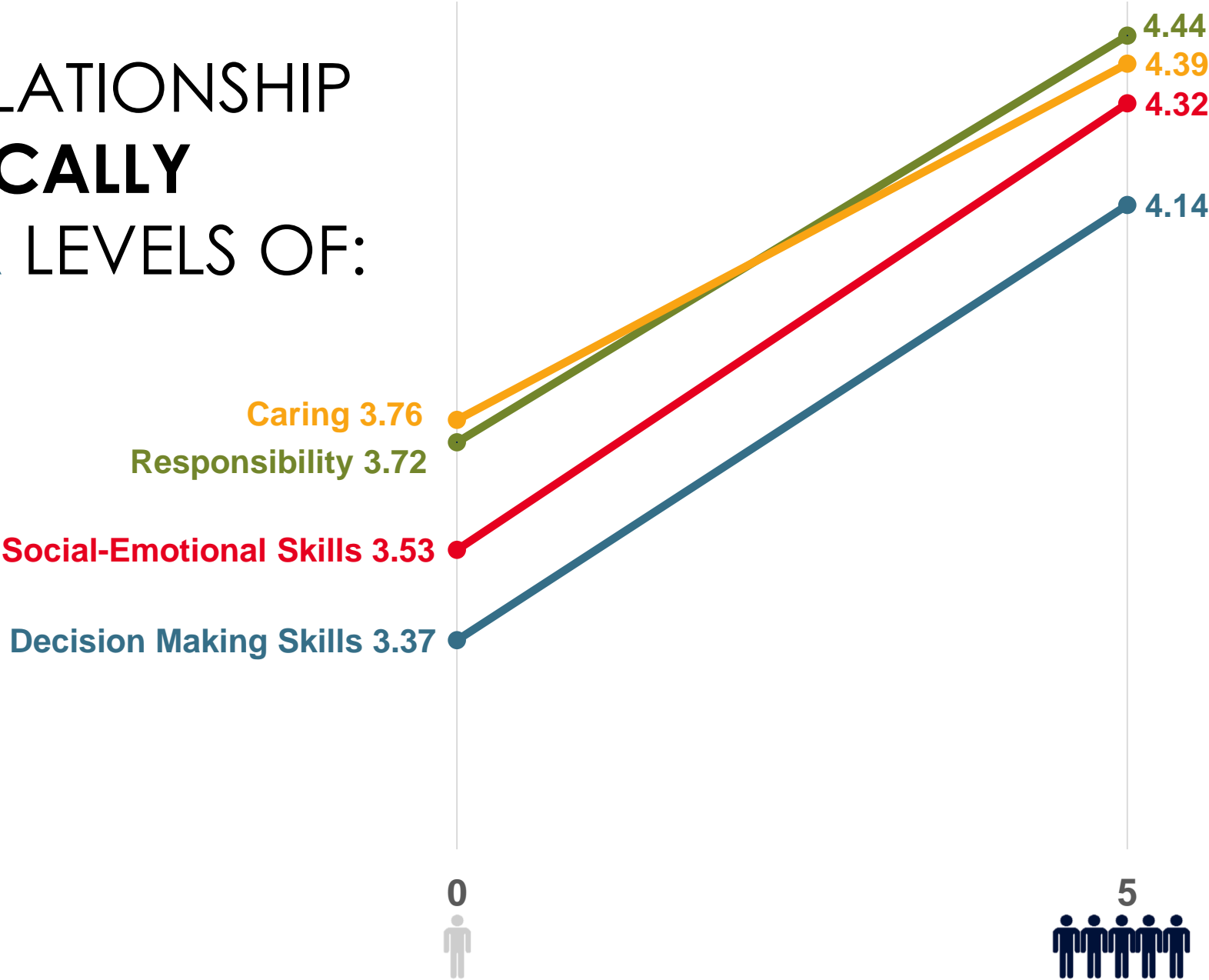


Strong Youth-Leader Relationships

- Conservation Leadership
- Community Identity
- Social Responsibility
- Ability to Work across Differences



EACH ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIP IS LINKED TO STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT HIGHER LEVELS OF:



Practices &
Strategies
TO TRY



Connect with Sparks

- Interests they are passionate about that give them energy, joy, purpose, and direction
- Help kids make the conceptual connection between their spark and larger social causes or issues
- Identify service opportunities that use kids' skills and expertise



Practice Skills and Provide Support

- How to express an opinion that another person might disagree with
- Art of compromise and persuasion
- How to use and channel emotions to drive commitment and change
- Leadership and teamwork
- Systems navigation
- Advocacy



Discuss Civic Issues

What We Talk About

- Politics
- National/local current events
- Problems facing our community
- Injustice

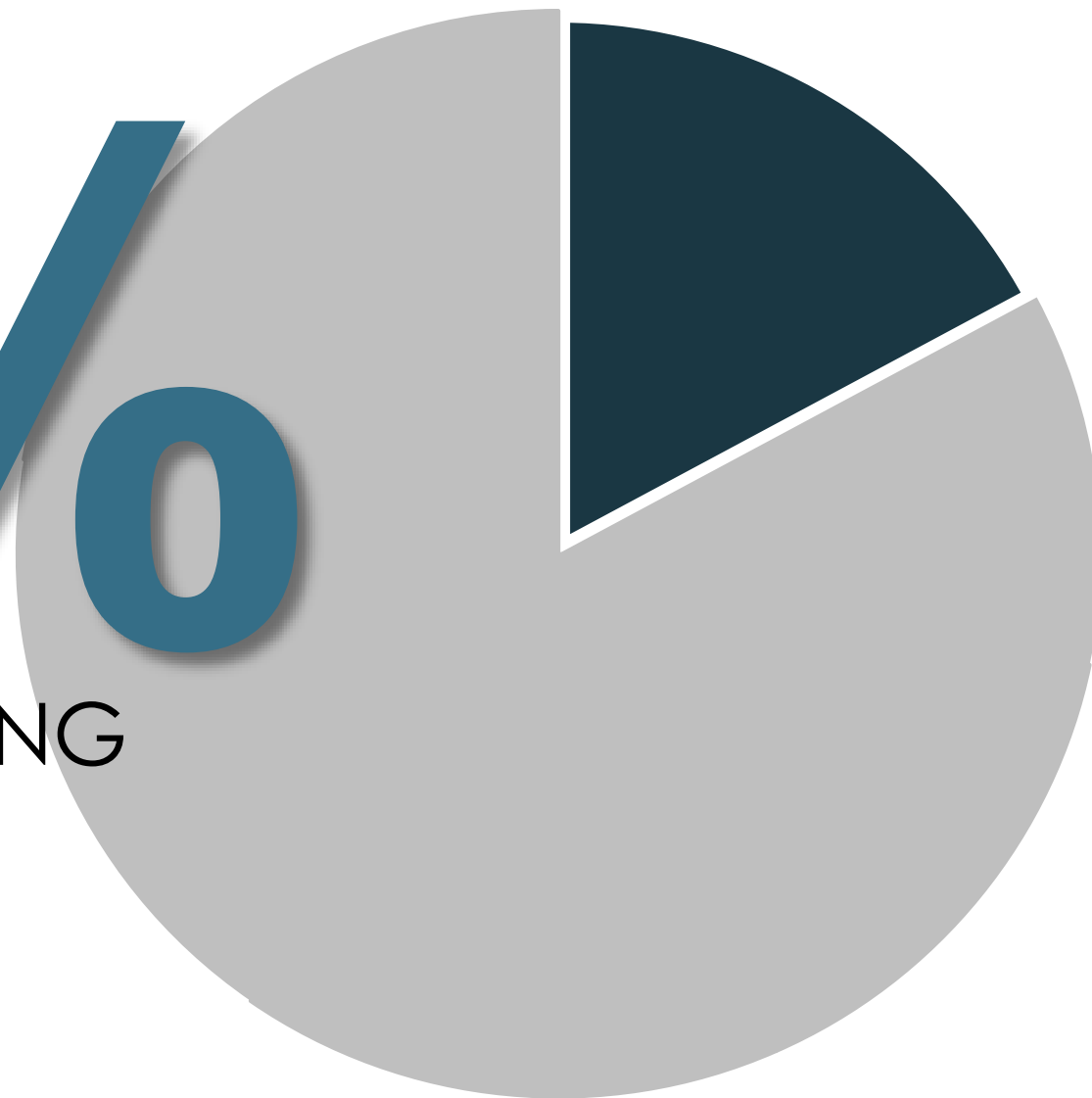
How We Talk About It

- Safe
- Open
- Supportive (verbal, nonverbal)
- Respectful



ONLY
17%

OF YOUTH REPORT HAVING
CIVIC DISCUSSIONS
with their parents *often*.



Create Opportunities

- Specific Civic Skill-Building Activities
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Organized Activities





Organize volunteer opportunities where youth can connect with people who look/live differently than they do



Invite candidates running for local offices to sit down with students and answer questions

Have a group of youth identify a cause they think is important, then help them make and execute an action plan



Invite them to tag along to the polls, community forums, and political activities



Create Opportunities: Organized Activities

- Build community [Hansen et al., 2003]
- Increase responsibility [Larson & Rusk, 2011; Salusky et al., 2014]
- Develop initiative and agency [Larson & Angus, 2011; Scales et al., 2011; Shernoff, 2013]
- Explore identity [Youniss & Yates, 1997]
- Longitudinal empirical links to:
 - Volunteering [Gardner et al., 2008; Hart et al., 2007]
 - Political behavior [Fredricks & Eccles, 2006]
 - Civic values and attitudes [Denault & Poulin, 2009]



Create Opportunities: Organized Activities

- Quality trumps quantity
- Rich developmental experiences
 - Nurture Sparks and Growth
 - Strong Relationships
 - Political Discussions



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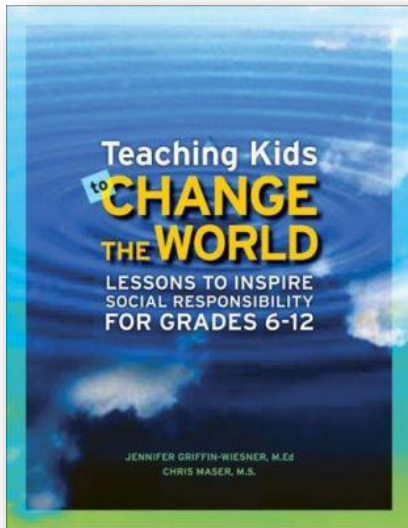
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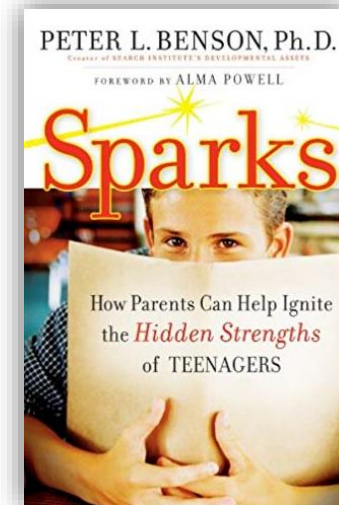
Our many school and community partners, and our funders.



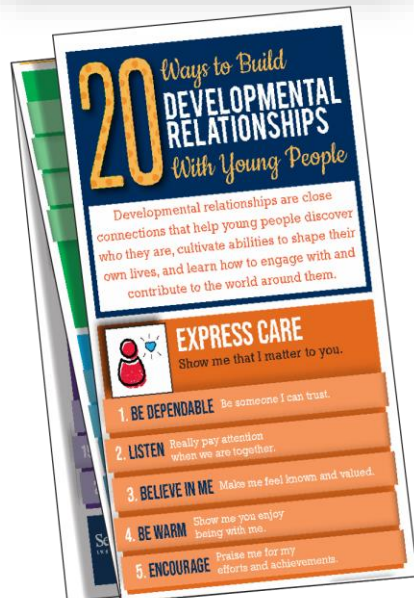
Resources for Practice



**Teaching Kids to Change the World:
Lessons to Inspire Social
Responsibility for Grades 6-12**
by Jennifer Griffin-Wiesner and Chris Maser



**Sparks: How Parents Can Help
Ignite the Hidden Strengths of
Teenagers**
by Peter L. Benson



**20 Ways to Build Developmental
Relationships with Young People
Poster**
by Search Institute

Available at: www.search-institute.org

Developmental Relationships as the Active Ingredient: A Unifying Working Hypothesis of “What Works” Across Intervention Settings

Published in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

by Li & Julian (2012)

Full text also available via ResearchGate

Relationships First: Creating Connects that Help Young People Thrive

by Roehlkepartain et al., (2017)

Available: <https://tinyurl.com/ybrg3ur9>

Finding the Fluoride: Examining How and Why Developmental Relationships are the Active Ingredient in Interventions that Work

Published in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

by Pekel et al., (2018)

Full text also available via ResearchGate



Websites



Roots of Engaged Citizenship Project

Aaron Metzger, Laura Wray-Lake, and Amy Syvertsen

www.civicroots.org



CIRCLE: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement

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