CHAPTER H.

Resources

Materials to Increase Positive School Climate

- H-1-4 Resources for Youth Development
- H-5-7 Getting Results Article
RESOURCES FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

- Youth Development Strategies Inc.
  A national nonprofit research, evaluation and technical assistance organization helping communities improve long-term outcomes for their youth.
  http://www.ydsi.org/YDSI

- Institute for Youth Development
  Information on risk behaviors, vast amounts of research, news releases and opinion pieces. It contains extensive listings of government web sites that have links dealing with youth development.
  http://www.youthdevelopment.org

- American Youth Policy Forum
  http://www.aypf.org

- West ED
  A program of the California Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office that offers technical assistance, publications, information on the Resiliency Youth Development Module of CHKS and training.
  http://www.wested.org/chks

- Youth Leadership Institute
  This community-based institute delivers training, technical assistance, facilitation and model programs in youth involvement. It has training manuals and guides for policy development and youth-led evaluation.
  www.yli.org

- California Partnership for Character Education
  This document addresses the challenges for schools in creating a learning centered culture and offers standards, research-based and classroom materials, articles and training.
  http://www.youthcitizenship.org

CONCEPTS AND THEORY

- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
  This site uses research to identify effective program principles and approaches in working with at-risk youth through youth development approaches. It highlights innovative ways states are using youth development policies and programs to improve outcomes for youth.
  www.nga.org/cda/files/000727YOUTHDEV.pdf

- Public/Private Ventures
  A national nonprofit focused on improving social policies, programs and community initiatives, especially as they affect youth and young adults. They worked with six neighborhoods around the country to develop and institute a framework of "core

Putting Assets into Action, Region 4 Bay Area Safe & Drug Free Schools County Coordinators, 2006
concepts" to guide youth programming for the non-school hours in those neighborhoods.
http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth.asp

ACTIVITY IDEAS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- **Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB)**
  Guidance for translating Youth Development Into Action

- **NLC Institute for Youth, Education and Families**
  This website provides access to an action kit that looks at youth participation,
  promoting youth service and youth mapping.
  [http://www.nlc.org/iyef/program_areas/youth_development/4346.cfm](http://www.nlc.org/iyef/program_areas/youth_development/4346.cfm)

- **The Giraffe project**
  A K-12 service learning and youth leadership program that helps move kids to
  courageous and compassionate acts. There is also a teen leadership development
  and citizen action program “It's Up to Us”.

- **Youth in Service to Americans: A Guidebook for Service Learning**
  This assists with implementing projects that develop habits of civic participation and
  community responsibility in students.

- **Rock the Vote**
  Empowers and inspires youth to be involved in the political process and to take action
  for meaningful civic engagement.

- **California Friday Night Live Partnership**
  [http://www.fridaynightlive.org](http://www.fridaynightlive.org)

PUBLICATIONS

- **National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth: Reconnecting Youth**
  This document has an overview of youth development and implementation
  strategies that guides youth service providers, community leaders, and policymakers
  about how to shift their community’s approach from a problem-focused approach to a
  community-youth involvement approach.
  [www.ncfy.com/Reconnng-YC.htm](http://www.ncfy.com/Reconnng-YC.htm)

- **National Collaboration for Youth**
  The collaboration works to provide a united voice for all youth, advocating for improved
  conditions and opportunities for their positive development. This report looks at schools and
  youth joining voices to create a better community.
  [www.nassembly.org/nassembly/Final%20web%20document.11.6.02.pdf](http://www.nassembly.org/nassembly/Final%20web%20document.11.6.02.pdf)

Putting Assets into Action, Region 4 Bay Area Safe & Drug Free Schools County Coordinators, 2006
• **Guide to Effective Programs**  
  Defines measures of youth development and synthesizes research on various approaches from a literature review.  
  [http://www.childtrends.org/lifecourse/schoolbased_menu.htm](http://www.childtrends.org/lifecourse/schoolbased_menu.htm)

• **Youth Development: Issues, Challenges, and Directions**  
  In these essays researchers and practitioners in the field of youth development share what they have learned over the past decade about the potential challenges of the "youth development approach" and offer some suggestions about how to proceed in the coming decade.  
  [www.ppv.org/content/reports/ydv_pdf.html](http://www.ppv.org/content/reports/ydv_pdf.html)

• **National Youth Development Information Center**  
  Looks at the most recently cited publications that provide detail on the effectiveness of youth development as a programmatic approach.  
  [http://www.nydic.org](http://www.nydic.org)

• **The Forum For Youth Investment**  
  Article: “Preventing Problems, Promoting Development, Encouraging Engagement: Competing Priorities of Inseparable Goals”  
  [www.forumforyouthinvestment.org](http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org)

**FUNDING**

• **Learn and Serve American**  
  This is a source for school-based service learning projects  

• **Collaborative on Youth Organizing**  
  This is a collection of state, regional and local foundations and youth organizing practitioners dedicated to advancing youth leadership as a strategy for promoting youth development and social change.  

• **Grants.gov**  
  A one-stop website to learn about federal grants and to apply for competitive grants for all government agencies  
  [http://www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

• **Start Something Program**  
  A Target and Tiger Woods Foundation that helps 8-17 year olds take positive action towards their goals, dreams and community. Students can get up to a $5,000 to pursue their dreams. The program can be done as a class.  
  [http://startsomething.target.com/info/about.asp](http://startsomething.target.com/info/about.asp)

• **Guide Star**  
  Clearinghouse of information with a searchable directory of over 650,000 nonprofit organizations, a resource exchange, and a learning center.  

_Putting Assets into Action, Region 4 Bay Area Safe & Drug Free Schools County Coordinators, 2006_
• **Channing-Bete**  
  Link to a variety of grant applications for education and youth development  
  [http://www.channing-bete.com/positiveyouth/pages.funding/funding.html](http://www.channing-bete.com/positiveyouth/pages.funding/funding.html)

• **Pentair Foundation**  
  Promotes education, vocational readiness, cultural understanding and general well being with a K-12 commitment to alternative education methods and art.  

• **Active Element Foundation**  
  It assists in building relationship with grassroots youth organizers, donors and artists through grant making and technical assistance. It helps build infrastructure to alter power relationships.  

• **William T. Grant Foundation**  
  Emphasizes projects related to youth development  
  [http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org)

• **Jenesis Group Grant for Youth Programs**  
  Grants for non-profits and grassroots organization that focus on youth development, education and social entrepreneurship for disadvantaged youth.  
  [http://www.jenesis.org/aa/index.htm](http://www.jenesis.org/aa/index.htm)

**MULTIPLE USES**

• **Search Institute**  
  A research and technical assistance resource with publications, activity guides, trainers, tools for planning, evaluation and surveys and much more...  
  Link to nation-wide listserv to exchange valuable tools for asset building  
  [http://www.search-institute.org/participate/subscribe.html](http://www.search-institute.org/participate/subscribe.html)

• **National Institute of Out of School Time**  
  [www.niost.org](http://www.niost.org)

• **John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities**  
  They share practices, knowledge and actual youth-led community projects.  

• **Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD)**  
  Explains the framework, activities and resources and has research-based curriculum  
  [www.cnyd.org](http://www.cnyd.org)
What Does *Getting Results* Say About Youth Development?

Youth development is the name of an approach that focuses on building youths’ assets rather than repairing their deficits. Youth development strategies help most young people—including those challenged by multiple risks and adversities—to grow into thriving adults. The research clearly shows that school is a critical opportunity for support of positive development in youths (*Getting Results, Update 1*, p. 44).

**Summary of Youth Development Research**

Research studies across a broad variety of fields have begun to identify a clear set of factors that can protect children and adolescents from involvement in risky behaviors.

**Connectedness.** A study of 20,000 students in grades 7–12 found that school connectedness was the only school-related factor that consistently protected students from engaging in unhealthy behaviors. “School connectedness” means that students have a sense of belonging at school and perceive that teachers are fair and care about them (*Getting Results, Update 1*, pp. 35–36).

**Developmental Assets.** A study involving more than 99,000 students in grades 6–12 investigated the role of 40 developmental assets in protecting adolescents from a variety of health-compromising behaviors. Developmental assets include those relating to the individual and those relating to his or her environment. Many of the 40 developmental assets identified by the Search Institute pertain to the school environment. Environmental assets comprise the following aspects in a school: a caring school climate, parent involvement in schooling, clear rules and consequences in the school and family, and high expectations from teachers and parents. Individual assets relate to a student’s achievement motivation, school engagement, and bonding to school.

When students find their school environment to be supportive and caring, they are less likely to become involved in substance abuse, violence, and other problem behaviors. The greater the number of developmental assets a student reported, the lower the high-risk behaviors (*Getting Results, Update 1*, pp. 24–25).

**Resilience.** Forty years of research that followed 700 individuals from birth to adulthood found that the presence of a committed caregiver, a broad community support system, and engaging social skills were the three most powerful predictors that children at risk would grow up to be healthy, functioning adults (*Getting Results, Part I*, pp. 136–137). Research on resilience also identifies caring relationships, messages of high expectations, and opportunities for participation and contribution as factors supporting positive youth development. These supports, referred to as “external resilience assets” or protective factors, are associated with both lack of involvement in health-compromising behaviors and with academic success (*Getting Results, Update 5*, pp. 33–34).

*Note: The *Getting Results* documents may be downloaded at [http://www.gettingresults.org](http://www.gettingresults.org).*
**School Climate.** A large-scale study that followed children from ages 10 to 16 investigated what made schools successful in terms of students’ problem behaviors. Schools with fewer student problems (i.e., “successful” schools) displayed a positive school climate; opportunities for student planning and decision making; and a warm, close, personal relationship between the students and an adult (Getting Results, Part I, pp. 121–123).

**School-Based Programs with a Youth Development Focus**

Many effective prevention programs use youth development principles. For elementary-aged children, those programs focus on building interpersonal skills, prosocial attitudes and behaviors, and autonomy and self-direction. For middle and high school students, the programs emphasize improving decision-making skills and increasing school bonding experiences. To obtain information about effective programs, visit the Healthy Kids Resource Center’s Web site at [http://www.californiahealthykids.org](http://www.californiahealthykids.org).

As students get older, they experience an increased need for a “voice” in school improvement efforts. Primary outcomes that are common across many youth development programs are (1) increased prosocial bonding/social skills; (2) improved self-concept; (3) decline in perceived stress, social anxiety, or loneliness; and (4) more positive attitudes toward school. Secondary outcomes for most of the youth development programs are (1) increased academic achievement; (2) reduced delinquency and misbehavior; and (3) decreased alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use. The following table displays the primary and secondary outcomes of five youth development prevention programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Title</th>
<th>Program Focus and Activities</th>
<th>Primary Outcomes</th>
<th>Secondary Outcomes</th>
<th>Getting Results Reference</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Pre K-Grade 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Development Project/Caring School Community (K–6)</td>
<td>Emphasis on positive interpersonal values and attitudes; a supportive classroom and school environment; student autonomy, influence, and self-direction; participation in classroom decision making</td>
<td>Increased prosocial attitudes, behaviors, peer social acceptance, trust in teachers, liking for school, class engagement; decreased loneliness and social anxiety</td>
<td>Increased academic achievement (shown by grade point average and district testing); decreased alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use; decreased delinquency (e.g., carrying weapons)</td>
<td>Part I, pp. 46–48 Update 5, pp. 46–47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project ACHIEVE</td>
<td>Emphasis on schoolwide strategic planning, curriculum-based assessment, behavioral interventions, parent involvement strategies</td>
<td>Improved school climate and increases in student social skills</td>
<td>Increased student achievement; decreased special education and disciplinary referrals, grade retention, and suspensions</td>
<td>Part I, pp. 130–132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle Social Development Project (SOAR) (K–6)</td>
<td>Proactive classroom management; interactive teaching; cooperative learning; and social skills training; Parent training; child behavior management, academic support, and antisocial prevention</td>
<td>Increased attachment and commitment to school, study skills, persistence, and social competence</td>
<td>Increased academic achievement; reduced delinquency</td>
<td>Update 3, pp. 35–38 Update 5, pp. 49–50 Part I, p. 101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 *Project ACHIEVE* is also a middle school program.
### Beyond Programs: What Schools Can Do to Promote Youth Development

Although fully adopting and embracing youth development takes time, schools can follow research-based youth development principles in assessment and monitoring, planning, training/staff development, collaboration, and setting of policies and procedures in the following ways.

**Assessment and Monitoring:** Assess students’ assets and the school climate with simple, valid, and reliable instruments, such as the Resilience and Youth Development Module of the California Healthy Kids Survey. The survey is available online ([http://www.wested.org/pub/docs/ckhs_home.html](http://www.wested.org/pub/docs/ckhs_home.html)).

The Resilience and Youth Development Module (RYDM) of the California Healthy Kids Survey assesses the school climate (external assets) and student’s resilience (internal assets). External assets are clustered into (1) caring relationships at school; (2) messages of high expectations at school; and (3) opportunities for meaningful participation at school. Internal assets are measured in the areas of (1) social competence; (2) autonomy and sense of self; and (3) sense of purpose and future. Research using results of the RYDM has found that schools that provide caring and supportive environments in which students are challenged to excellence can enhance students’ assets and skills and are associated with greater academic achievement.

**Planning:** Have focus-group discussions with students and adults on what the school is doing to promote caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for student participation. Listen to youth voices and include older youths in making decisions.

**Training/Staff Development:** Devote time during training of staff and board members to create a positive school climate and foster protective factors and students’ assets and resiliency.

**Policies and Procedures:** Examine board policies, administrative regulations, and school guidelines to identify ways in which fostering youth development and creating a caring school community can be supported through school standards, plans, the culture, and the mission.