



What do you mean, “youth development”?

An Overview of Youth Development Theory



Shamia Sandles, Youth Development
Specialist

What's the Difference between Helping Youth Develop and Practicing Youth Development?

- Engaging with youth to help them through the struggles of adolescences is helping youth develop.**

This is happening every day you provide direct service to youth.

- Designing programs based on researched principals to ensure that you are systematically addressing as many needs for as many youth as possible is the practice of youth development.**



Definition

Youth Development *noun.*

A process which prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent. Positive youth development addresses the broader developmental needs of youth, in contrast to deficit-based models which focus solely on youth problems.

(Approved by the executives of National Collaboration for Youth Members, March 1998)



Deficit vs. Asset Based Youth Development

- ☐ Asset based youth development focuses on developing skills instead of avoiding problems
- ☐ Deficit based youth development focuses on what is considered wrong with youth
 - ☐ (ex: leadership groups, art classes, volunteer opportunities)
 - ☐ (ex: at risk, low income, pregnant, drug abuse, these)
- ☐ Trying to solve problems in the lives of youth does not help them develop new skills
- ☐ Offers a variety of opportunities to practice newly learned skills
 - ☐ “Problem free is not always fully prepared” (Pittman et al. 1996)
- ☐ Avoiding deficit based language does not mean
- ☐ Offer a variety of avenues for youth to express themselves and become engaged in the community.
 - ☐ you forget about challenges that the youth are facing



How to talk about Youth Development

□ Service, Opportunities, Support—SOS Model

(Pittman et al. 2001; Whitlock 2004)

- Service: Actions done to and for youth intended to encourage the health, safety and performance of students transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. Often implemented by school districts, department of public health, non-profits, etc.

- Project EAT

- Opportunity: Actions done by the youth where youth participate in hands-on learning

- Activities/Lessons

- Support: What is done with the youth to facilitate safety, relationship building, participation, skill building and community involvement.

- Programs (Internships and Garden Club)



Key Elements in Youth Development Services

- **Inclusive, Internally coherent and Externally connected** (Hamilton and Hamilton, 1999)
 - **Capacity to accommodate all those who qualify**
 - **Participants understand the entire range of services provided, and how to navigate through them to receive the most benefits**
 - **Formally linked to outside services**



Some More Terminology

- **Positive Outcomes**: Tracking growth and progress in individual students
- **Youth Voice**: Giving youth an opportunity to provide feedback and shape the program
- **Long-Term Involvement**: Keeping youth connected to the program for as long as possible and its feasible to do so.



Search Institute

40 Developmental Assets

External Assets

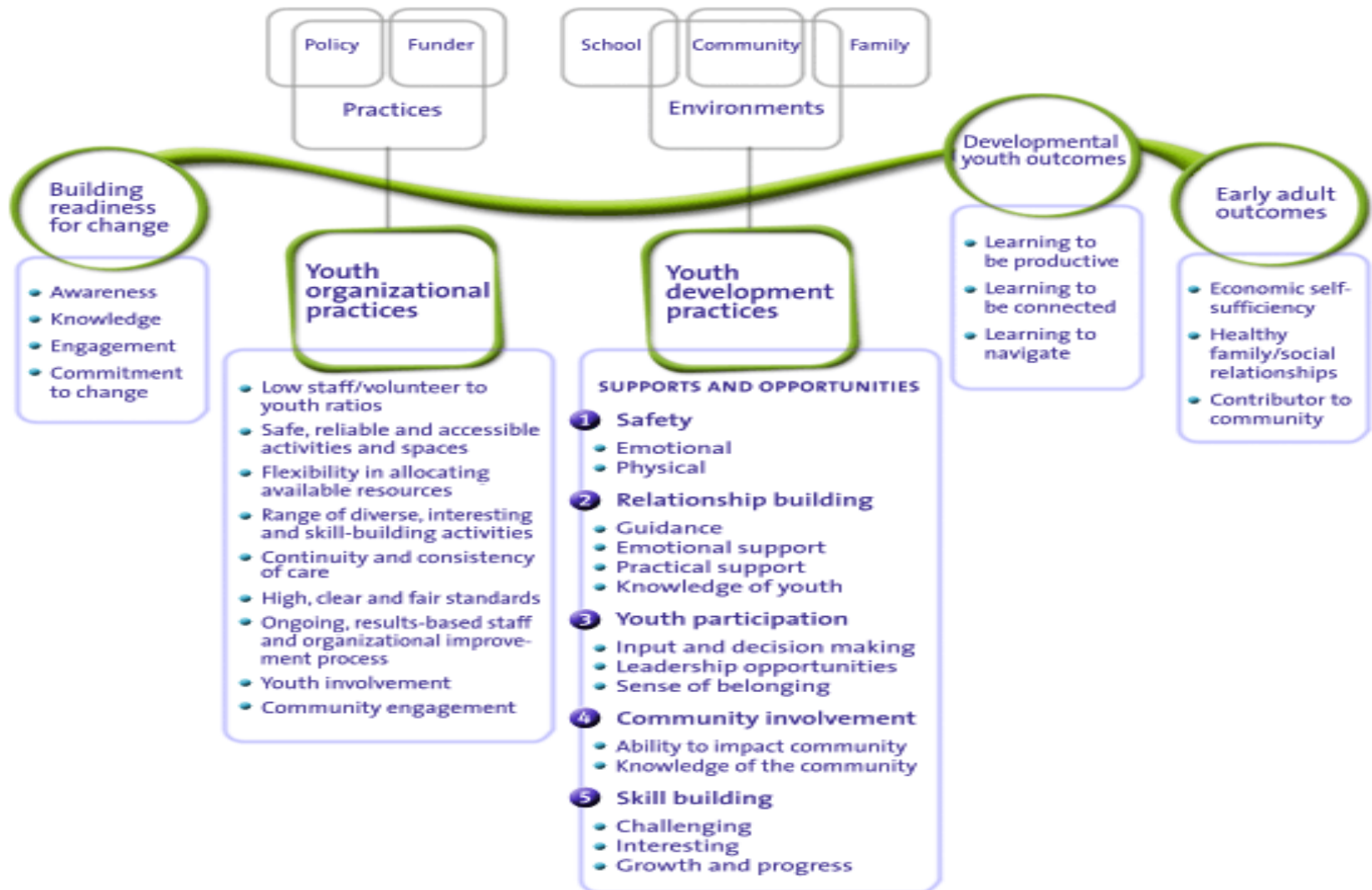
- **SUPPORT**
- **EMPOWERMENT**
- **BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS**
- **CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME**

Internal Assets

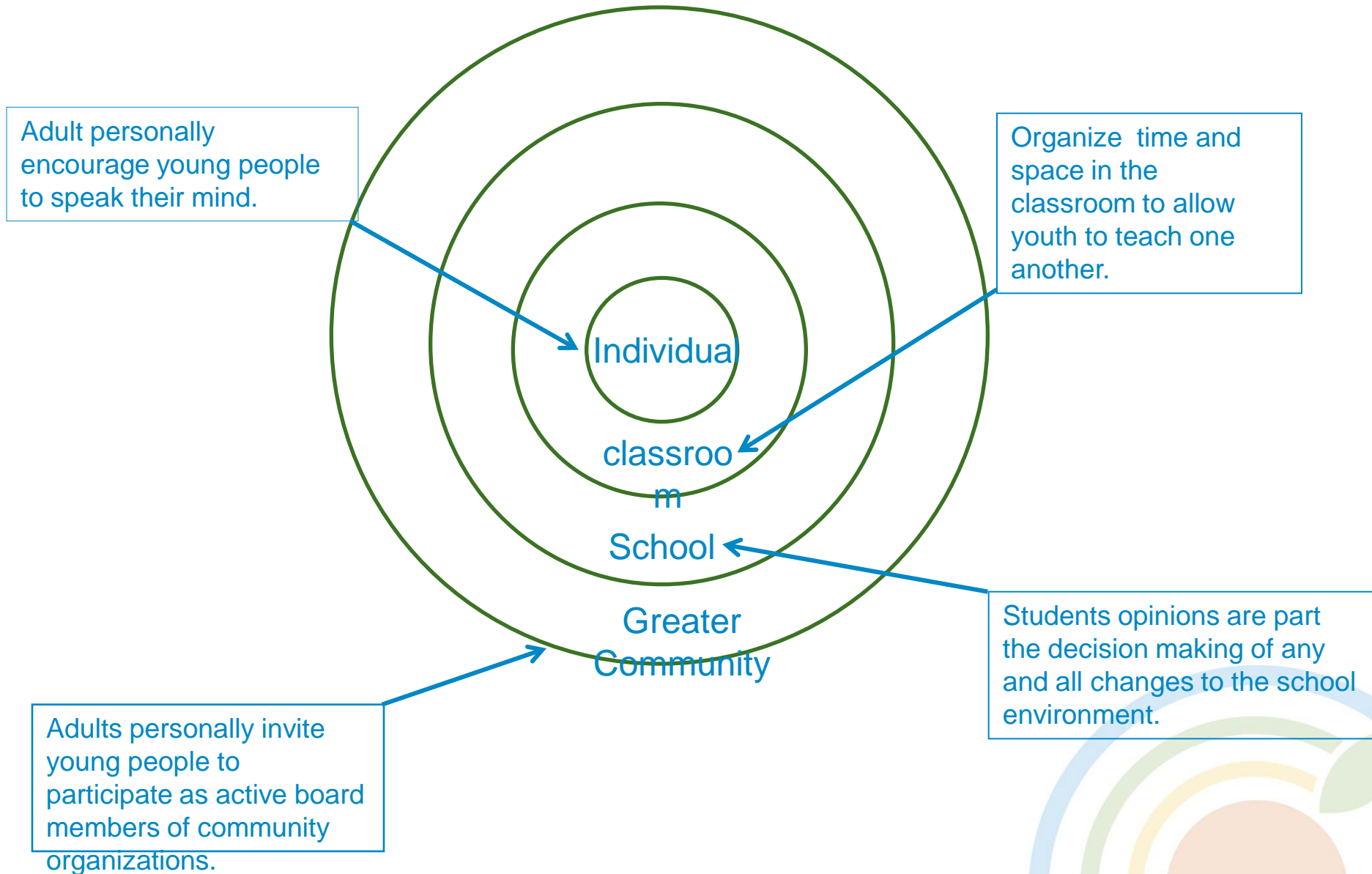
- **COMMITMENT TO LEARNING**
- **POSITIVE VALUES**
- **SOCIAL COMPETENCIES**
- **POSITIVE IDENTITY**



Community Network for Youth Development



Adult Allies



What Are the Outcomes?

- **Youth become capable adults who know how to address challenges in their lives**
- **Youth are seen and treated as valued members of the community**



Thank You

- **Shamia Sandles**
 - Youth Development Specialist
 - shamias@acoe.org
 - (510) 670-4143



PROJECT
EAT
EDUCATE. ACT. THRIVE



External Assets

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Support | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. |
| Empowerment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. |
| Boundaries & Expectations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people’s behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. |
| Constructive Use of Time | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week. |

Internal Assets

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Commitment to Learning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. |
| Positive Values | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty—Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.” 30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| Social Competencies | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| Positive Identity | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.” 38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.” 40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. |

Adult Ally Assessment of Youth Development Program

I am unsure

Somewhat, but I could still use some practice

Mostly, and I am actively learning new methods

Completely, I feel that I have a model program.

1.) All the youth in my program know that they can depend on safe interactions among peers.				
2.) All program expectations will be upheld with fairness and consistency no matter which youth or adults are involved.				
3.) Youth participate in creating rules and consequences specific to my program and hold each other accountable for making sure they are met.				
4.) As part of my program development, I have trained youth with conflict resolution skills.				
5.) I make a point to recognize and celebrate the ethnic and cultural background of youth in my program.				
6.) Youth have appropriate opportunities to demonstrate a sense of pride and ownership in my program.				
7.) There are a variety of activities that provide opportunities for all youth to practice decision-making and leadership skills.				
8.) Youth are actively engaged in developing programmatic schedules and/or creating activities for my program.				
9.) My program provides opportunities for youth to practice newly learned skills.				
10.) My program offers activities that align with the specific interest of the youth.				
11.) I make a deliberate effort to incorporate multiple intelligences (linguistics, musical, logical, spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist) in all the lessons I share with teachers and students.				
12.) I fully understand the necessary structural components to develop and manage a program based on the principles of positive youth development.				

