



Features of Positive Developmental Settings for Young People

This table describes youth development principles which can be applied to help structure and/or assess program and work settings in mentoring as well as in other programs.

This table is adapted from *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*, The National Science Foundation, Institute of Medicine. The original version was prepared by the Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer Appleton Gootman, Editors; National Academy Press, Washington, DC, ©2002.

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| <p>Physical and Psychological Safety The workplace and program are experienced as safe and secure both physically and psychologically. Interactions between youth and adults and among youth are constructive. There is training to support constructive interactions.</p> |
| <p>Clear and High Expectations Young people and adults are expected to perform well and hold themselves to high standards of behavior. Agreement is developed within the program and among mentors about expectations and communicated to all. Young people know how they are doing and have opportunities to advance or improve.</p> |
| <p>Appropriate Structure and Continuity The work and the program setting have explicit rules and guidelines, but also opportunities for youth input to these. There is limit setting, firm-enough control, continuity and predictability in relationships, clear boundaries and age-appropriate monitoring.</p> |
| <p>Caring and Trusting Relationships with Adults Between adults and youth, and among youth, there is opportunity for and expression of warmth, caring, connectedness, good communication, support, guidance, secure attachment and responsiveness. Each young person has at least one caring adult relationship.</p> |
| <p>Opportunities to Belong There are opportunities for meaningful inclusion of young people regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities.</p> |
| <p>Engaging Activities Activities are designed to be interesting to young people and make them want to commit themselves to the work of the program.</p> |
| <p>Opportunities for Youth Participation and Voice Young people have opportunities to help shape the program. There are formal structures to support youth voice as well as transparency in the way things are run to enable everyone to understand how to access decision-making. There are opportunities to make a difference to others through service or other activities.</p> |
| <p>Opportunities for Skill Building There are opportunities to learn physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, social skills and good habits of mind; preparation for adult employment; and opportunities to develop social and cultural skills. Learning opportunities are scaffolded to address different levels of student readiness.</p> |