

Ideas for Building Developmental Relationships

Express Care

- (Adults) Pay attention. Focus on youth when they are talking about things that matter to them. Put away your cell phone.
- (Adults) Follow up with young people when you know they are going through something, rather than waiting for them to bring it up.
- (Adults) Share in some humor, fun, and laughter amid the practical tasks.
- (Parenting Adults) Ask follow-up questions so you both know you're interested and following what is important to them.
- (Parenting Adults) Find satisfaction in doing things for and with your child, even if these things wouldn't otherwise be important to you.
- (Teachers) Strive to understand and show sensitivity to students' feelings.
- (Teachers) Use varied teaching strategies to make learning enjoyable, and to help students connect with you and each other.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Work to understand young people's points of view when they share ideas or opinions.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Do what you say you will do, and keep your promises.
- (Peers/Young People) When taking with friends, ask follow-up questions that help you get to know them better.
- (Peers/Young People) Let friends know you noticed when they do something you admire.

Challenge Growth

- (Adults) Highlight future goals. Talk with young people about the things they look forward to or dream about.
- (Adults) Challenge them to think differently by asking hard questions, providing alternate explanations, and encouraging openness to different opinions. This helps them build new skills and expand their own thinking.
- (Adults) Emphasize mistakes as necessary parts of learning. Praise them for hard work, whether they succeed or fail.
- (Parenting Adults) Expect your children to do their best, even when doing something they don't really like.
- (Parenting Adults) Teach your children that making mistakes is a part of learning.
- (Teachers) Emphasize mastery and self-improvement more so than doing better than other students.
- (Teachers) Challenge students to reach high expectations. Hold them accountable.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Challenge young people to try things that are a little hard for them to do.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Help young people find their own solutions, rather than just telling them what to do.
- (Peers/Young People) Encourage friends to spend time doing things that will help them reach their future goals and dreams.

Ideas retrieved from: <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/ideas-building-development-relationships/>

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- (Peers/Young People) Model how you put in effort to learn. Push back if others dismiss the value of learning.

Provide Support

- (Adults) Offer information and practical help to solve a practical problem, or loan them something they may need.
- (Adults) Show young people how to ask for help when they need it.
- (Adults) Shift levels of support. Give more support when young people are struggling, and less when they are making progress. Step back as their skills and confidence build.
- (Parenting Adults) When you teach your child a skill, demonstrate it by breaking it into smaller steps.
- (Parenting Adults) When your children are not getting the help they need, find people who can address the issue.
- (Teachers) Provide specific and descriptive feedback for students to use toward their improvement.
- (Teachers) Teach strategies for performing and learning under pressure.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Help young people think through options and resources when they encounter obstacles.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Show young people how to ask for help when they need it.
- (Peers/Young People) When a friend can't figure out how to solve a problem, offer to talk it out together.
- (Peers/Young People) Offer your support when friends face challenges. If needed, ask a trusted adult to be an ally and resource.

Share Power

- (Adults) Let young people make decisions about activities you do together and what you talk about. Don't jump in too fast when they don't make quick decisions or bring up new things to talk about.
- (Adults) When you can, help young people think through options choices ("So, what could you do differently to tackle this problem?"), rather than solving challenges for them.
- (Adults) Learn from young people—and show it. Young people have a lot to teach adults. Let them know when you've learned something from them that you're excited about.
- (Parenting Adults) Include your children in thinking about decisions, even when you have to make the final call.
- (Parenting Adults) When you disagree, take time to understand each other's point of view.
- (Teachers) Give students classroom choices within rules and safety limits.

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- (Teachers) Ask students for input on assignments, class content, and how they can show proficiency.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Provide opportunities for young people to lead programs based on their interests.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Emphasize building community and serving others through youth-initiated projects.
- (Peers/Young People) When you're on a team or in a group, practice listening to others, negotiating, and making decisions that work well for everyone.
- (Peers/Young People) Notice peers who tend to be left out or are quiet. Find ways to include them and give them a voice.

Expand Possibilities

- (Adults) Connect me with people and places that broaden my world. When young people seem curious about an activity, topic, or issue, ask questions such as “what strikes you about this?”
- (Adults) Introduce young people to a wide range of people, places, ideas, cultures, and vocations. Start with ones they're curious about.
- (Adults) Broaden the web of relationships. Connect young people to people who share their interests or can expand their world.
- (Parenting Adults) Find ways for your children to spend time with people who are different from your family.
- (Parenting Adults) Encourage your children to try things they might be interested in. Maybe even try it together.
- (Teachers) Demonstrate how what students are learning relates to their interests and to success outside of school and in the future.
- (Teachers) Connect students with educators, other students, and community members who can explore with them areas of personal interest and strength.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Introduce young people to other cultures, ideas, and places that help them discover their place in the world.
- (Youth Program Leaders) Model being a curious learner by asking questions and sharing what you're learning in your own life.
- (Peers/Young People) Take turns with friends trying new food, music, or outings, based on each other's interests.
- (Peers/Young People) Introduce friends to people who can help them learn things that interest them.