Building Developmental Relationships during the COVID-19 Crisis
*Search Institute

Express Care: Show me that I matter to you. ♥

- Send a text, email, video, or note that says they matter to you personally and you are thinking about them during this crisis.
- Ask how they are spending their time at home during the crisis.
- Tell them that you believe in them and you know they will get through this difficult time, then move on with learning and growing.

Challenge Growth: Push me to keep getting better. ⚙

- Let young people know that you expect them to keep up with the work of your school or program even though times are difficult; hold them accountable if they don't put in the effort.
- Encourage or require young people to use the time at home to focus on learning or doing something that they have been struggling with in your class or program.
- Ask young people what they are or could be doing to help their parents, siblings, or others get through this difficult time.
- Ask young people to set one personal goal for something they want to achieve during the time away from your school or program, and then periodically check in on their progress.

Provide Support: Help me complete tasks and achieve goals. ✪

- Ask young people how they are feeling about the world, themselves, and the future during the crisis. Indicate that you really hear them when they respond and that you care about their feelings.
- Send notes to parenting adults and suggest ways they can help young people stay connected to the work of your class or program while they are at home.

Share Power: Treat me with respect and give me a say. ⊚

- Ask young people what rules and norms your class or group should follow as you work together remotely. Give them voice and choice in shaping your new ways of working and being together.
- Let young people design and/or lead some of the virtual activities and lessons you assign to the class or group.
- Invite young people to tell you how they think you can support them during their time away from school or your program.
- After you have been working together via technology for a while, ask young people for their feedback on how it is going and make adjustments to incorporate their feedback into your subsequent work with them.
- When you can, offer choices rather than mandating a single option.

Expand Possibilities: Connect me with people and places that broaden my world. ☺

- Send young people something to watch or read that will be new to them and that you normally wouldn't have time to focus on in your regular class or group.
- Tell young people about a crisis or difficult experience you went through when you were young and share how that crisis or experience shaped who you are today.
- Ask young people to use the Web and social media to explore how young people very different from them around the world are experiencing and responding to COVID-19.
- Create opportunities for young people to evaluate how authorities at the local, state, and national level are responding to the crisis and to consider what they would do differently if they were in power.
- Hold a virtual chat using video or text with someone who works in the job or field that is the focus of your class or group, but who you would not have been able to connect your students to in person due to the distance or other factors.

*The research-based **Developmental Relationships Framework** identifies key actions young people need to experience in relationships in order to be resilient and thrive. For the full description of the framework and research behind it, visit
www.search-institute.org/developmental-relatioships/

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