Positive Youth Development

November 6, 2026

Know better. Be better. Do better.

About KBD

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

- Dr. Maya Angelou

"The wrong first question is, 'What do we need to do?' The right first question is, "Who do we need to become?'"

- Dr. Shawn Ginwright

"Small is good, small is all"

- adrienne maree brown

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Objectives

- Understand what we mean when we talk about using a “positive youth development” approach
- Review practices that promote positive youth development
- Identify one concrete opportunity to strengthen PYD

Think of a setting or experience in which you **grew.**

One where you became more capable, confident, connected, caring, or able to contribute.

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1. Think and write
2. Find a partner or two
3. Introduce yourself
4. Share your experience

- What happened?
- What was true about that experience that helped you grow?

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Positive Youth Development (PYD)

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We Already Know

- All young people develop.
- Not all young people get the chance to develop to their fullest potential.
- Even **one** caring adult in a child's life can increase their resiliency to challenging situations and can help them become healthy adults.
- Not all young people have even one caring adult ready and able to support their developmental needs.

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Adults working with and for young people have **power** and **opportunity**.

We have opportunity to…

- Build real and authentic **connections**.
- Meet them where they are, to listen to their voice so they **feel heard and feel seen**.
- Show them **they matter**.
- Help to identify and grow confidence in the areas where they are **already strong**.
- Build trust to offer **responsive support** where it's needed.

Positive Youth Development Approach

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; **recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths**; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by **providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships**, and furnishing the support needed to **build on their leadership strengths**.

From Youth.gov; Definition developed by the US Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs

PYD practices are the *how*.

- Physical & Emotional Safety
- Positive Social Norms
- Support for Efficacy & Mattering
- Supportive Relationships
- Appropriate Structure
- Integration of Family, School, & Community
- Opportunities to Belong
- Opportunities for Skill Building

National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. 2002. *Community Programs to Promote Positive Youth Development*. The National Academies Press.

Think about…

✓ A feature that feels visible or strong in your programs

? A feature you're less certain about, or aren't sure how young people experience

○ A feature you're curious about and want to explore more

Where do you want to dig deeper?



Physical & Emotional Safety



Positive Social Norms



Support for Efficacy & Mattering



Supportive Relationships



Appropriate Structure



Integration of Family, School, & Community



Opportunities to Belong



Opportunities for Skill Building

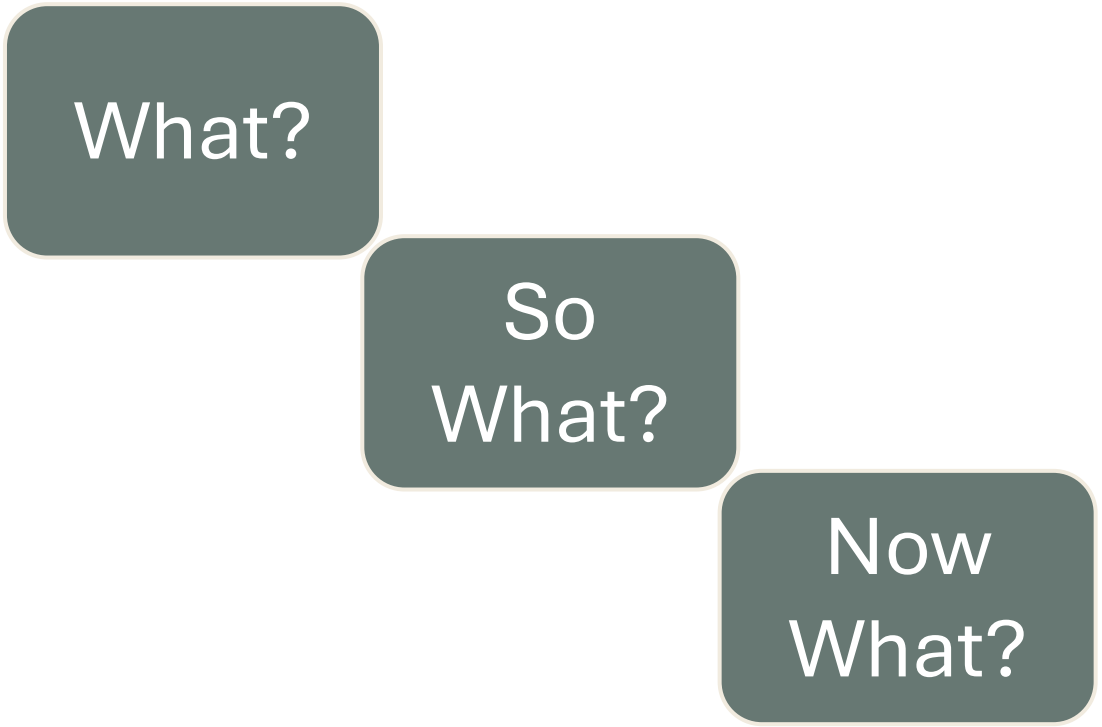
National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. 2002. *Community Programs to Promote Positive Youth Development*. The National Academies Press.

How and where do you influence these practices?



One next step…

- What can you complete in the next 30 days?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- When will you check in to hold yourself accountable?
- **Why does it matter?**



We’d love to hear from you!

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Tell us what you think!