

HEALTH-PROMOTING RELATIONSHIPS

QUICK START!

What are health-promoting relationships?

Grounded in the science of positive youth development and prevention, health-promoting relationships are intentional relationships that **promote protective factors** (ex: belonging, resilience, connectedness, hope, agency, and self-esteem) and cultivate **five core protective beliefs** in youth ages 11-18.

I am seen and loved.

I matter.

I can influence my life.

I can overcome hard things.

I have support.

How can I build health-promoting relationships?

Four intentional strategies can be used to build health-promoting relationships. Together, these four strategies comprise a *way of being* with youth.

1 CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT: Create positive, safe youth-centered physical and emotional environments where full presence, youth voice and growth are valued.

2 FACILITATE CONNECTION: Engage authenticity, patience, respect, empathy, honesty, nonjudgment, kindness, and humility to build trust through meaningful connection.

USE MICRO-SKILLS (POSITIVE WORDS & ACTIONS):

- **Be fully present.**
- **Notice and affirm** strengths, values, and contributions.
- **Be curious.**
- **Reflect** back to youth without judgment to show you care and are listening.
- **Activate youth agency** through empowerment, curiosity, confidence in their abilities, normalizing challenges, offering meaningful choice, and believing in their potential.
- **Support youth in navigating challenges** by showing compassion, partnering with them in solutions, and encouraging them to build and seek out support.
- **Advocate for youth!**

4 GROW ABILITIES IN YOUTH: Seize opportunities to support youth in behaving in alignment with values, growing from challenges, making wise decisions, caring about others, and connecting with others and their community.

Why do health-promoting relationships matter in prevention?

The majority of protective factors in prevention rely on relationships to be developed. Health-promoting relationships enhance the focus of prevention beyond simply “What program do we deliver?” to “How can trusted adults in the lives of youth positively influence youth well-being?” Programs and fidelity still matter, but positive, meaningful adult/youth relationships are fundamental to preventing mental and behavioral health risks supporting the effectiveness of prevention programs.

Is there a resource to support me in building health-promoting relationships?

Yes! The **Health-Promoting Relationships Paradigm Toolkit** offers a deep dive into the four intentional *way of being* strategies, offers considerations for helping health-promoting relationships reach their full potential and provides the following Playbooks with practical strategies for different roles to build health-promoting relationships with youth:

- Parents & Caregivers
- Educators
- Coalitions
- Law Enforcement and Justice System
- Healthcare Professionals
- Sports Coaches



Access the toolkit here!

GET STARTED TODAY!

1

Download the toolkit.

2

Take the self-assessments.

3

Be intentional:
Practice 1 facilitator
of connection & 1
micro-skill.

4

Discuss the five core
beliefs with your
team.

... AND SHARE WITH OTHERS WHO WORK WITH YOUTH!