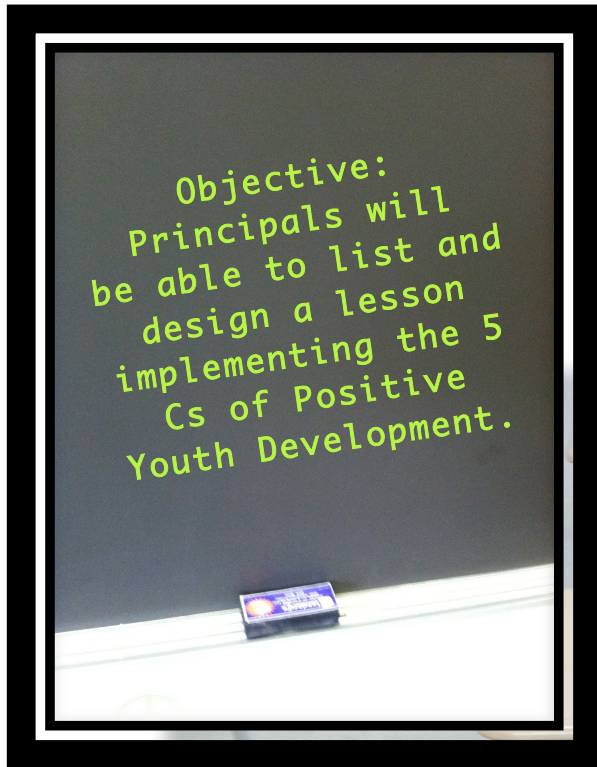


# 5 Cs of PYD



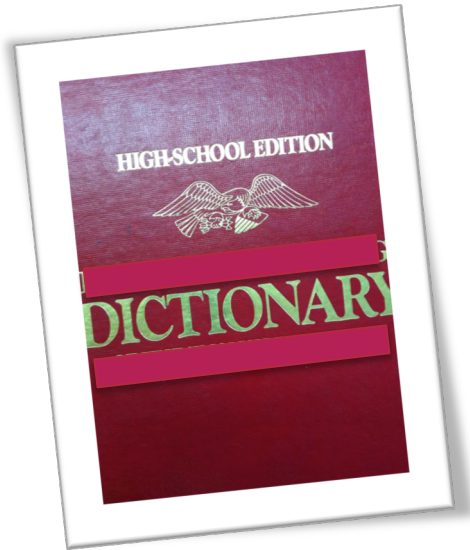
## I. WHAT ARE POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, THE SPARK, AND THE 5 CS?

The quick answer is that they are all factors associate with youth and their ability to grow into thriving individuals and contributing members of society. By focusing in on the assets of youth rather than their deficits proper development can flourish and lead to greater rewards for all involved.

You don't get Positive Youth Development without the others. What is it that you enjoy? What gets you excited about life? Whatever *that* is, it's your spark. The late, Dr. Peter Benson of the Search Institute, an organization dedicated to helping children in all aspects of their lives, has researched what motivates children individually and how to use that motivator to help children achieve high standards in varying aspects of their lives. Reaching out to children in *their* comfort zone demonstrates a worthiness that engages them on their level. Because of the enthusiasm that is generated with them on their spark, the 5 Cs can take root.

Caring, character, competence, confidence, and connection are components that make up features that demonstrate positive youth development in psychological, behavioral, and social domains.





## II. GLOSSARY

- **Character** – Respect for societal and cultural norms, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity.<sup>10</sup>
- **Caring** – A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.<sup>10</sup>
- **Competence** – Positive view of one’s actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, health, and vocational.<sup>10</sup>
- **Confidence** – An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy.<sup>10</sup>
- **Connection** – Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in exchanges between the individual and his or her peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship.<sup>10</sup>
- **Contribution** – putting forth as a contributing member to oneself, family, community and society.
- **Positive Youth Development (PYD)** – The positive youth developmental approach aims at understanding, educating, and engaging children in productive activities rather than correcting, curing, or treating them for maladaptive tendencies or so-called disabilities.<sup>3</sup>
- **Resilience** – The capacity to recover and maintain adaptive behavior after insult.
- **Spark** – the “inner light:” metaphor about what gives a young person joy or energy; something that gives them hope or purpose, life direction.<sup>1</sup>
- **Thriving** – refers to a dynamic and purposeful process of individual ↔ context interactions over time, through which the person and his/her environment are mutually enhanced.<sup>2</sup>

- **Tier I** – also recognized as primary prevention; it is strategies to prevent initial occurrence of a disorder or problem that are applied to all individuals in a setting.<sup>7</sup>
- **Tier II** – considered secondary prevention; strategies to prevent re-occurrences of a disorder or problem that are applied to individuals who have been designated as at risk for a limited period of time.<sup>7</sup>
- **Tier III** – tertiary prevention; interventions that target individuals with serious problems that constitute a chronic condition and attempt to ameliorate the effects of their condition on their daily functioning.<sup>7</sup>

### III. CASE STUDY

Tim is a teenager in his senior year of high school and appears to be developing adequately for his age.

Academically, he is on par with the other students in his grade and falls toward the middle of the pack and would be considered an average student. Tim quietly sits in class and sometimes does his homework and at other times does not, but he never makes excuses. He does not really cause any trouble but a lot of people wouldn't even recognize that he was there unless he was called on or was forced to work in a group setting.

Socially, he has friends his own age and of either gender and is seen mingling as most teens do.

He is not an imposing figure and stands physically within the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for both height and weight for his age group.

Tim, raised in a suburban, middle-class neighborhood, is old enough to work outside of school but chooses not to do so. What he likes to do is spend time watching sports, particularly hockey. Although skilled in athletics his drive seems to be in idle as life wafts over him. He has competed in some recreational community teams and has done well but knows it will not lead to anything beyond that.

Tim appears to be headed for high school graduation, on time, and has even begun talking about college with his friends but is not sure what major to select. Mom and Dad have



never forced his hand as his siblings have turned out to be fine, holding down careers and raising families, and they believe he will “hold his own” and go on to do the same thing.

## THE 5 Cs AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

In class one-day, the teacher and recreational hockey coach happened to ask if anyone saw the professional hockey game on the television the previous night. He overheard Tim kind of mumble that he “never misses a game.” The teacher asked if he played and Tim answered that he had but doesn’t any more. Only later did the teacher find out that he stopped playing because he got cut trying out for the varsity team and figured it wasn’t worth it to play junior varsity.

After class the teacher pulled him aside and asked if had any interest in helping him with the recreational team he coached because good help was hard to come by and not many parents are skilled at skating. Tim first declined but the coach insisted that he really could use the help simply retrieving pucks and helping to set up cones for drills and things.

Tim did follow hockey quite a bit and missed skating and shooting and thought this might be an opportunity to also stay in shape

so he finally relented. Tim knew he had to clear it with his parents first. Since Tim already had equipment and knew a couple kids on the team, getting to practice wouldn’t be a problem for him or his parents so they approved too.

It’s from here that Tim developed a quality relationship with his teacher/coach and learned quite a bit about coaching.

After two years of helping with the team, Tim eventually took classes to earn a coaching certificate. He had been enrolled at the local community college taking general courses and now realized that working with players on the team was what he really enjoyed most.



Therefore he declared secondary education as his major so that he could continue to work with kids and maybe some day coach a team of his own.

## THE 5 Cs AT A UNIVERSAL LEVEL

Now imagine if all teachers in your building made a concentrated effort to reach out and discover what all their students' sparks are. There are ways to encourage this and they start with engaging your teachers and staff to discover their own first. Now, have them imagine what it would have been like if they did not have *that* in their life. Quite an eye opener, isn't it? Where would *you* be? What would *you* be doing if you didn't have that spark in your life?

If there is one thing we can do as educators, it is to encourage students to thrive and become a contributing member in society. If they are not connected to it, there is no reason for them to do so. If they are empathetic and caring, they will find reasons to do so. If your students are confident as they move forward in their endeavors, they will demonstrate their competence in areas of strength. The character that is built by a job well done is far more intrinsically rewarding when efforts do not go in vain.

Tim may be an average student but without true direction and a purpose he may remain that way, average, or he may even digress and lose all interest and get caught up in attention-seeking behaviors that make him appear important. Or, Tim could find that one person to connect with that helps him break the average mold and actually thrive!



#### **IV. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Please consider the following questions before you begin your exploration of the 5 Cs and as you work your way through the slide show.

- As an administrator, how much of what happens in your building is truly positive?
- Who believed in you and acted as your role model? Do members of your faculty act as the role models to your students?
- Do you have a plan in place in your building that is meant to foster positive growth of your students at an individual level or on a universal level?
- How much of yours and your staff's energy is devoted to addressing negative issues or children? Could those resources be better utilized?
- What traits do you want your students to develop before they leave your school?
- What traits will serve your students well as they move on to the next phase in their lives?

## **V. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Within the power point presentation, the following questions are addressed. Space has been provided for you to write in your answer.

Q: Is there any research on Positive Youth Development?

Q: What resources are available for further understanding the 5 C's?

Q: How can school leaders implement a Positive Youth Development program school-wide and bring the 5 C's to the entire school rather than just to the individual classroom?

Q: How do you deal with unwavering teacher negativity toward another new program?

## VI. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Benson, P. (2011). Sparks: How Youth Thrive. [Video file]. Retrieved from

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqzUHcW58Us>

Developmental scientist, renowned author and former president of the Search Institute, an organization designed to discover what children need to succeed, Dr. Peter Benson, puts forth one of many intriguing arguments for what adults need to recognize in what motivates children. The research-based Developmental Assets developed by Dr. Benson expresses the significance of developing children from the inside out in order for thriving to occur. Based upon research of over 6 to 7 thousand middle school and high school students Dr. Benson surveyed what “sparks” students. Rather than focusing on deficit-driven behaviors, Dr. Benson addresses what ignites students into becoming healthy and contributing members in society. This motivational video will encourage educators, parents, coaches and anyone else working with children to explore what engages the children they are working with and it will set forth a new path of exploration for the children and their caregivers alike.

2. Benson, P.L. (2007). Developmental Assets: An overview of theory, research, and practice. In R. K. Silbereisen & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Approaches to positive youth development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
3. Bundick, M. J., Yeager, D. S., King, P. E., Damon, W. (2010). Thriving across the Life Span.

*The Handbook of Life-Span Development*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Retrieved from

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9780470880166.hlsd001024/full>

DOI: 10.1002/9780470880166.hlsd001024

This chapter (24) from *The Handbook of Life-Span Development* places emphasis on what it means for a person to thrive throughout life. Investigation by these authors of

historical references and current research discussing the concept of thriving has unturned a failure to create a unified understanding of thriving for consistent comparison in positive developmental theories. Intertwining each of the articles and resources found here will provide a solid foundation for anyone working with children, as the objective within Positive Youth Development is to foster thriving individuals. The authors consolidated research investigation utilizes findings of other prominent research on Positive Youth Development and defines what it means for someone to thrive. The components, together, lead ultimately to the goal of adolescents thriving, therefore, an evidence-based definitive understanding of what it means to thrive is necessary in an effort to communicate what is needed to put best practices to use.

4. Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development? *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591(1), 13-24

Stanford professor, William Damon, the director of the Center on Adolescence at Stanford has researched and written extensively with regards to children and their abilities, focusing on their potential rather than their deficits. It is imperative that the concept of Positive Youth Development (PYD) first be defined prior to any theoretical attempt at how to foster PYD extended. However, efforts to shed negative perceptions of youth and goals centered on correction or inability earn attention. Next, efforts at understanding and capitalizing on a child's resiliency with findings from longitudinal studies as early as 1982 are discussed. Discussions surrounding the differing contexts in which resilient children are engaged collectively impact one another holistically. Citing research from Dr. Peter Benson, Damon articulates that children encompassing external and internal assets, as expressed by Benson, are capable of and seek added responsibility, which in turn

provides a stronger moral identity for youth and builds upon the notion of Positive Youth Development.

5. Eccles, J. & Gootman, J. A. (Eds.). (2002). Community programs to promote youth development. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council & Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academies Press
6. Jellicic, H., Bobek, D. L., Phelps, E., Lerner, R. M. & Lerner, J. V. (2007). Using positive youth development to predict contribution and risk behaviors in early adolescence: Findings from the first two waves of the 4-H study of positive youth development. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 31*(3), 263-273.

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether or not theories in Positive Youth Development (PYD) would lead children toward a positive trajectory as contributing members in their different environments (whether school, home, or community etc.) as well as decrease problem behaviors. It is believed that development across content areas of competence, character, connection, confidence, and compassion will lead, over time and across contexts to contributing adolescents and a decrease in deficit oriented behavior. The study focused on 1,700 fifth-graders across the United States where measurement reflected the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development in two separate waves. The results identify whether or not evidence of PYD could offset depression and risk behaviors and promote contributions of youth in family, community, and societal contexts. The findings yield empirical data supporting PYD programs and the 5 C's to enhance of positive youth development. This exemplary study demonstrates to youth workers the extensive research citing effects of Positive Youth Development and permit

confidence in thorough investigations in the 5 C's theory, which is also aligned in many ways with Dr. Peter Benson's Developmental Assets.

7. Zarrett, N. & Lerner, R. M. (2008, February). Ways to promote the positive development of children and youth. *Child Trends: Research-to-Results Brief, 2008-11*. Washington, D.C: The Atlantic Philanthropies. Retrieved from [http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child\\_Trends-2008\\_02\\_27\\_PositiveYouthDev.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2008_02_27_PositiveYouthDev.pdf)

This resource is a short, concise, overview of what Positive Youth Development entails. Providing a background, key and easily understandable definitions of the "5 C's", a listing of institutional supporters of PYD along with a glimpse into data, this brief echoes the importance of ecological cohesion in developing youth. The document also contains a fundamental yet valuable list of resource practitioners within the field of PYD.

8. Garmezy, N. (1991). Resiliency and vulnerability to adverse developmental outcomes associated with poverty. *American Behavioral Sciences, 34*: 416-30.
9. Kerr, M. M. & Nelson, C. M. (2010). *Strategies for Addressing Behavior Problems in the Classroom*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
10. Lerner R. M. (2004). *Liberty: Thriving and civic engagement among American youth*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.