

Using the Resilience & Youth Development Module

Available at
www.wested.org/hks

Updated 10/09/2003

#1: Using the Resilience Module

The *RYDM* is an integral component of the California Department of Education (CDE) Healthy Kids Program Office's (HKPO) youth development initiative. Currently, the *RYDM* is an optional component of the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). The CHKS emphasizes that it is just as important to assess the strengths, competencies, and positive social and health attitudes and behaviors exhibited by youth as it is to identify their risk and problem behaviors. Furthermore, if families, schools, and community organizations are to enhance these strengths and competencies in youth, which are known to mitigate against their involvement in risk behaviors, it is imperative that we get information about the supports and opportunities in young people's lives that research—and commonsense—tell us build youth's *resilience*. **The charts in this presentation are based on the responses of the 293,741 students who have taken the RYDM as of Spring 2002.**

All slides with notes are available at our website <http://www.wested.org/hks>

The RYDM Report Is A *Tool* for California School Communities Containing:

- RYDM data presentation in user-friendly charts
- Explanations for RYDM data scoring system
- Rationale for resilience and youth development
- Significance of each asset
- Strategies for promoting external and internal assets
- Relationships between risk behaviors and resilience in California

#2: The *RYDM Report* is a Tool

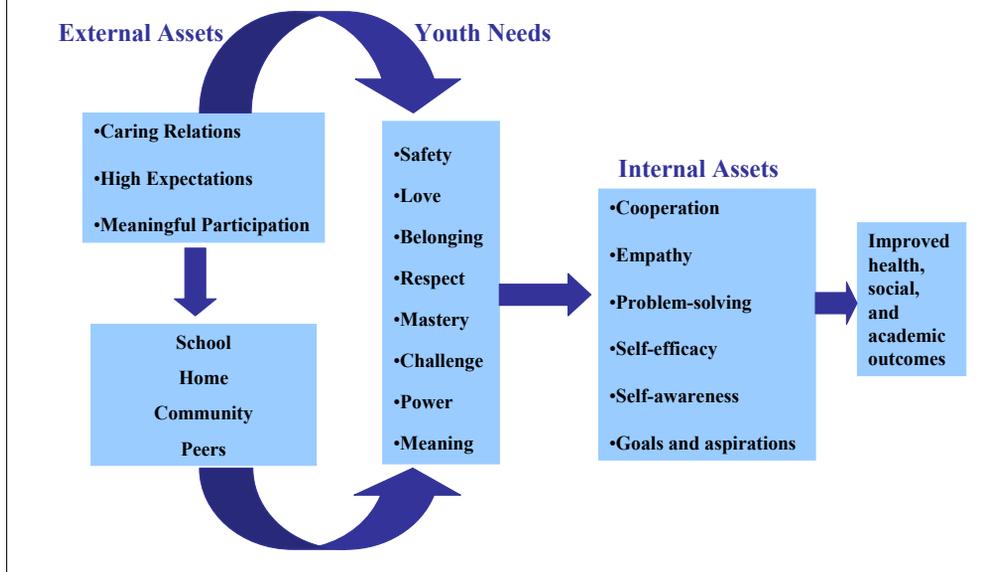
The *RYDM Report* (in Resources section of workshop binder and on website: <http://www.wested.org/hks/resilience.htm>) contains aggregated California data. The report school districts receive provides the detailed findings of the *RYDM* administered by your school district (school district name is on cover). Individual schools can request their own *RYDM Report* as can county offices of education.

The *RYDM Report* is written primarily for school communities as the audience. It is the hope of the California Department of Education that schools will work in **partnership** with communities toward the common goal of fostering positive youth development and academic success. It is not a training manual, but rather **a tool** to help California school communities understand their *RYDM* data results and assist them in using the data to plan youth development and resilience-based prevention, intervention, and education strategies and programs.

The results are reported in three sections: (1) the External Assets in the School, Home, Community, and Peer Environments (Section 2); (2) the Internal Assets (Section 3); and (3) the Relationship between Risk and Resilience (Section 4). These sections and the Introduction (Section 1) contain the information listed on this overhead.

The RYDM Theoretical Framework

The Youth Development Process: Resiliency In Action



“Successful development in any human system depends on the quality of relationships, beliefs, and opportunities for participation in that system.” (Benard, 1996)

#3: The RYDM Theoretical Framework

The major tenet of this youth development framework is that resilience is a capacity for healthy development and successful learning innate to all people. It is an inborn developmental wisdom that naturally motivates individuals to meet their human needs for love, belonging, respect, identity, power, mastery, challenge, and meaning. The ongoing process of meeting these needs is called *youth development*. As illustrated in this framework, when young people experience home, school, community, and peer environments rich in the proven developmental supports and opportunities (also called external assets or protective factors) of caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation and contribution, they meet these developmental needs. In turn, youth naturally develop the individual characteristics (internal assets, or resilience traits) that define healthy development and successful learning—social competence, problem solving, autonomy and identity, and sense of purpose and future. These individual strengths are the natural developmental outcomes for youth who experience homes, schools, communities, and peer groups rich in the three basic developmental supports and opportunities. Moreover, these individual characteristics protect against involvement in health-risk behaviors such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse and violence AND promote successful learning. This model has been born out in lifespan developmental studies of individuals, brain science, in research on healthy families, successful schools, community development, learning organizations, and prevention and other program evaluation research.

What does the RYDM Measure?

- **17 assets most consistently identified by researchers to be associated with positive youth development and health-risk behavior protection.**
- **Secondary CHKS has 56 items on resilience**
- **Elementary CHKS has 59 items (22 items are on resilience)**

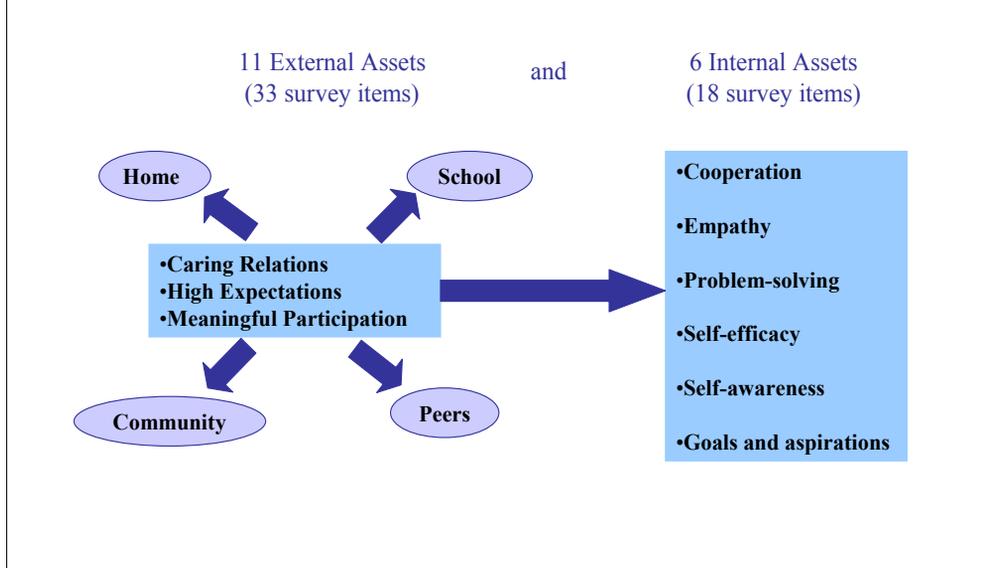
#4: What does the RYDM Measure?

The *RYDM*, administered to 7th, 9th, and 11th grade students, contains 56 questions that measure the 17 assets most consistently identified by researchers to be associated with positive youth development and health-risk behavior protection. The *RYDM* has been found to be developmentally and culturally appropriate by extensive field tests and pre-test youth focus groups. It has also demonstrated psychometric reliability and construct validity for each of its asset items and clusters of assets.

The California Healthy Kids **Elementary** Survey (administered to students in 5th grade) consists of **37** health risk behavior items and **22** resilience items. The elementary resilience items are drawn and modified from the middle and high school *RYDM*.

Every school **district** that takes the *RYDM* gets its results in a document, *the Resilience & Youth Development Module Report*.

What Does The RYDM Measure?



#5: What does the *RYDM* Measure?

More specifically, the *RYDM* measures 11 External Assets (using 33 survey items) and 6 Internal Assets (using 18 survey items).

External Assets are the environmental supports and opportunities (also called protective factors) that facilitate healthy and successful development in children and youth. The *RYDM* asks students their perceptions of Caring relationships, High Expectations, and Opportunities for Meaningful Participation in their Home, School, Community, and Peer group. These three external assets are consistently identified by research as the most robust and powerful environmental protective factors.

Internal Assets are the positive developmental outcomes or personal strengths associated with healthy and successful development. The internal assets of Cooperation and Communication, Empathy, Problem Solving, Self-Efficacy, Self-Awareness, and Goals and Aspirations are those that research suggests protect a young person from involvement in health-risk behaviors and contribute to improved health, social and academic outcomes. They are the personal strengths that result from students experiencing home, school, community, and peer environments rich in external assets/protective factors.

External Assets in the Home, School, Community, and Peer Group*

- **Caring Relationships:**
 - *Supportive connections to others*
 - *Someone who is "there"*
 - *Someone who listens non-judgmentally*
- **High Expectations**
 - *Consistent communication of messages that the student can and will succeed*
 - *Belief in youth's innate resilience*
 - *Youth-centered support*
 - *Strengths-focused*
- **Meaningful Participation**
 - *Involvement of student in relevant, engaging and interesting activities*
 - *Opportunities for responsibility and contribution*

* External assets are also known as *protective factors* or *supports and opportunities*

#6: External Assets in the Home, School, Community, and Peer Group

Caring Relationships are defined as supportive connections to others, having a person who is "there" and who listens non-judgmentally.

High Expectations are defined as the consistent communication of messages that the student can and will succeed, a belief in a youth's innate resilience, and the provision of guidance that is youth-centered and strengths-focused.

Meaningful Participation is defined as the involvement of the student in relevant, engaging and interesting activities and having the opportunities for responsibility and contribution.

Caring Relationships

Environment	Measure			
	Care/Interest	Attention	Listening	Helping
School <i>At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult...</i>	Who really cares about me.	Who notices when I'm not there.	Who listens to me when I have something to say.	
Home <i>In my home, there is a parent or some other adult...</i>		Who is interested in my school work.	Who listens to me when I have something to say.	Who talks with me about my problems.
Community <i>Outside of my home or school there is an adult...</i>	Who really cares about me.	Who notices when I am upset about something.		Who I trust.
Peers <i>I have a friend about my own age...</i>	Who really cares about me.	Who talks with me about my problems.		Who helps me when I'm having a hard time.

#7: Caring Relationships

This slide gives you a sense of the specific items on the *RYDM* that measure Caring Relationships. Three items ask about Caring Relationships in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. This is a necessary condition for statistical validity. Five items were field-tested for each, and the top 3 were chosen (in terms of reliability). For example: “For the School environment students were asked the following: At my school, there is a teacher or some other adults...who really cares about me, etc.”

The Elementary CHKS contains 2 items each asking about Caring Relationships in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. For example, in terms of the school, 5th graders are asked the following 2 questions: “Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school... care about you...listen when you have something to say?”

High Expectations

Environment	Measure			
	Validation	Personal Best Message	Believes in Student	Guidance
School <i>At my school, there is a teacher or some other adult...</i>	Who tells me when I do a good job.	Who always wants me to do my best.	Who believes that I will be a success.	
Home <i>In my home, there is a parent or some other adult...</i>		Who always wants me to do my best.	Who believes that I will be a success.	Who expects me to follow the rules.
Community <i>Outside of my home or school there is an adult...</i>	Who tells me when I do a good job.	Who always wants me to do my best.	Who believes that I will be a success.	
Peers <i>My friends...</i>	Try to do what is right.	Do well in school.		Get into a lot of trouble.

#8: High Expectations

This slide gives you a sense of the specific items on the *RYDM* that measure High Expectations. Three items ask about High Expectations in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. This is a necessary condition for statistical validity. Five items were field-tested for each, and the top 3 were chosen (in terms of reliability). For example, “For the school environment students were asked the following: At my school there is a teacher or some other adult...who tells me when I do a good job, etc.”

The Elementary CHKS contains 2 items each asking about High Expectations in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. For example, in terms of the school, 5th graders are asked the following 2 questions: “Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school...tell you when you do a good job...believe that you can do a good job?”

Meaningful Opportunities For Participation

Environment	Measure		
	Make Decisions	Do Fun or Interesting Things	Make a Difference/ Helping
School <i>At my school...</i>	I help decide things like class activities or rules.	I am involved in interesting activities.	I do things that make a difference.
Home <i>In my home...</i>	I help make decisions with my family.	I do fun things or go fun places with my parents or other adults.	I do things that make a difference.
Community <i>Outside of my home or school...</i>		I participate in music, art, sports, or a hobby. I am part of clubs, sports teams, church/temple or other group activities away from school.	I help other people.

#9: Meaningful Opportunities for Participation

This slide gives you a sense of the specific items on the *RYDM* that measure Meaningful Opportunities for Participation. Three items ask about Opportunities for Meaningful Participation in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. This is a necessary condition for statistical validity. Five items were field-tested for each, and the top 3 were chosen (in terms of reliability). For example, “For the school environment students were asked the following: At my school...I help decide things like class activities or rules, etc.”

The Elementary CHKS contains 2 items each asking about Opportunities for Meaningful Opportunities in the School, in the Home, in the Community, and in the Peer Group. For example, in terms of the school, 5th graders are asked the following 2 questions: “Do you... help make class rules or choose things to do at school...do things to be helpful at school?”

Internal Assets

- 1) The individual qualities and characteristics that are enhanced by protective factors.
- 2) The strengths identified most often as associated with healthy and successful adult outcomes.
- 3) Positive outcomes of the youth development process. They are indicators of whether the environmental supports and opportunities (external assets) that are necessary for healthy youth development are in place.

#10: Internal Assets—A Perspective

Looking now at the Internal Assets on the *RYDM*:

Item One: They are the *individual* qualities and characteristics (skills, attitudes, beliefs, and values) that are enhanced when a youth experiences environments rich in Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Opportunities for Meaningful Participation.

Item Two: They are the *personal strengths* most often associated with healthy and successful adult outcomes. They describe what resilience **looks** like.

Item Three: They are the *positive outcomes of the youth development process* we looked at in Slide #1 and indicators of whether the environmental supports and opportunities (external assets) that are necessary for healthy youth development are in place. A youth development approach focuses on environmental change, on providing the "protective" developmental supports and opportunities (i.e., external assets) that meet students' developmental needs and, thus, engage students' innate resilience, their capacities for Cooperation and Communication, Self-Efficacy, Empathy, Problem-Solving, Self-Awareness, and Goals and Aspirations.

Internal Assets

Environment	Measure		
Cooperation and Communication	I can work with someone who has different opinions than mine.	I enjoy working together with other students my age.	I stand up for myself without putting others down.
Self-efficacy	I can work out my problems	I can do most things if I try.	There are many things that I do well
Empathy	I feel bad when someone get their feelings hurt.	I try to understand what other people go through.	I try to understand what other people feel and think.
Problem-solving	When I need help I find someone to talk with.	I know where to go for help with a problem.	I try to work out problems by talking about them.
Self-awareness	There is a purpose to my life.	I understand my moods and feelings.	I understand why I do what I do.
Goals and Aspirations	I have goals and plans for the future.	I plan to graduate from high school.	I plan to go to college or some other school after high school.

#11: Internal Assets

Looking specifically at the survey items that measure the internal assets on the *RYDM*, we see that Cooperation and Communication is measured by the following items: "I can work with someone who has different opinions than mine"; "I enjoy working together with other students my age"; "I stand up for myself without putting others down," and so on.

When you see exactly what the items are, you can see how common-sensical and non-threatening they are. These are the individual characteristics and strengths you often hear referred to as "emotional intelligence" or social and emotional literacy. Remember that these items have been field-tested in youth focus groups.

Comparison of RYDM & Search Survey

SEARCH	RYDM
Support	Caring Relations
Empowerment	Caring Relations and Meaningful Participation – Community
Boundaries and Expectations	High Expectations
Constructive Use of Time	Meaningful Participation
Commitment to Learning	Goals and Aspirations
Positive Values	Empathy
Social Competencies	Problem Solving, Cooperation, and Communication
Positive Identity	Self-Efficacy, Self-Awareness

#12: Comparison of RYDM and Search discussion

If your schools/districts are currently using the Search Institute model of 40 assets, please see the handout, *Comparison of RYDM and Search Survey* in the **Resources** section of workshop binder. Note that the first page compares the Search Institute's 20 External Assets with the RYDM's External Assets. Basically, the Search model examines 4 categories of **external** assets: Support, Empowerment, Boundaries & Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time. They map very closely to the 3 categories of external assets measured on the RYDM: Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Meaningful Participation. Of the 5 items on the Search survey that are not on the RYDM, the CHKS Core Module (A) has 3 of them (items surveying safety and adult and peer role models). The remaining 2 (religious activities and spending time at home) are purposely not measured on the RYDM, the former because legal advisors think surveying religious participation may raise institutional issues; the latter because researchers think the research is not strong around spending time at home.

Page 2 of this handout compares the **internal** assets of the Search Institute with the RYDM. You will see once again a close match. Where there is not a match, we found a lack of research support for the asset (doing homework daily, reading for pleasure, and integrity/convictions, and honesty). Sexual and AOD restraint is measured on the CHKS core module (A). So if you spend some time with the RYDM data, you will be able to find a close--not perfect--match with the Search assets you are using in your prevention efforts.

What Do The RYDM Scores Mean?

⇒ For each item, students responded:

4: *Very much true*

3: *Pretty much true*

2: *A little true*

1: *Not at all true*

⇒ For each scale, points averaged

⇒ **High:** % of students with average item response above 3

Moderate: % of students with average item response of at least 2
and no more than 3

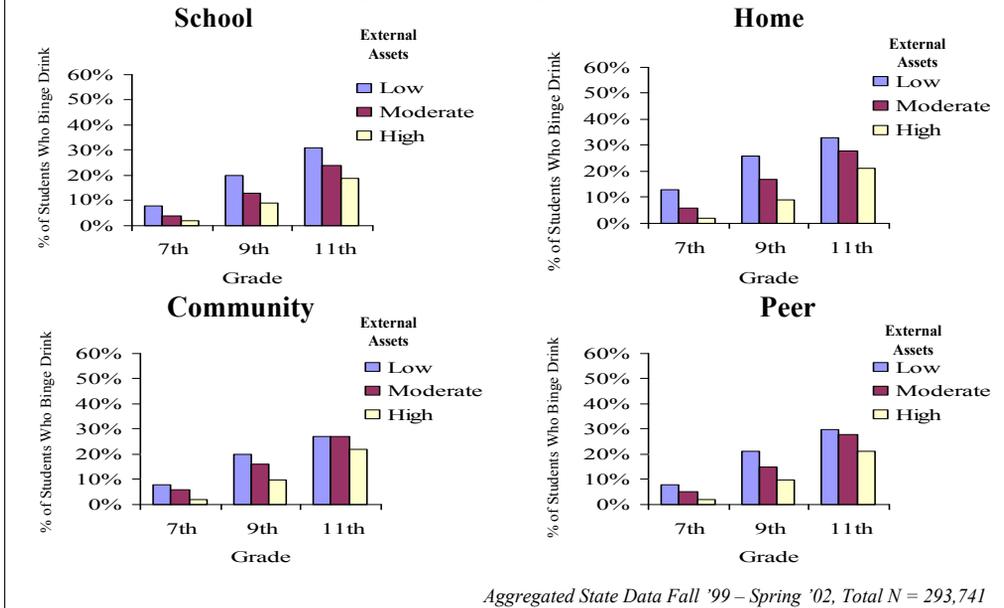
Low: % of students with average item response below 2

#13: What do the RYDM Scores mean?

The *Resilience & Youth Development Module Report* provides bar charts summarizing the percentage of students who responded in the **HIGH** category on each of the 17 assets, as well as a "quick read" summary chart showing all three categories--high, medium, and low. In order to score "HIGH" the students had to answer three items in each category with at least one "4" (Possible scores: "3,3,4" "3,4,4" or "4,4,4")

We'll now look at some of these charts and the data showing the aggregated results from over one hundred California school districts (293,000+ students) that have taken the RYDM as of Spring 2002.

Risk by Resilience in California: Relationship Between Binge Drinking & External Assets

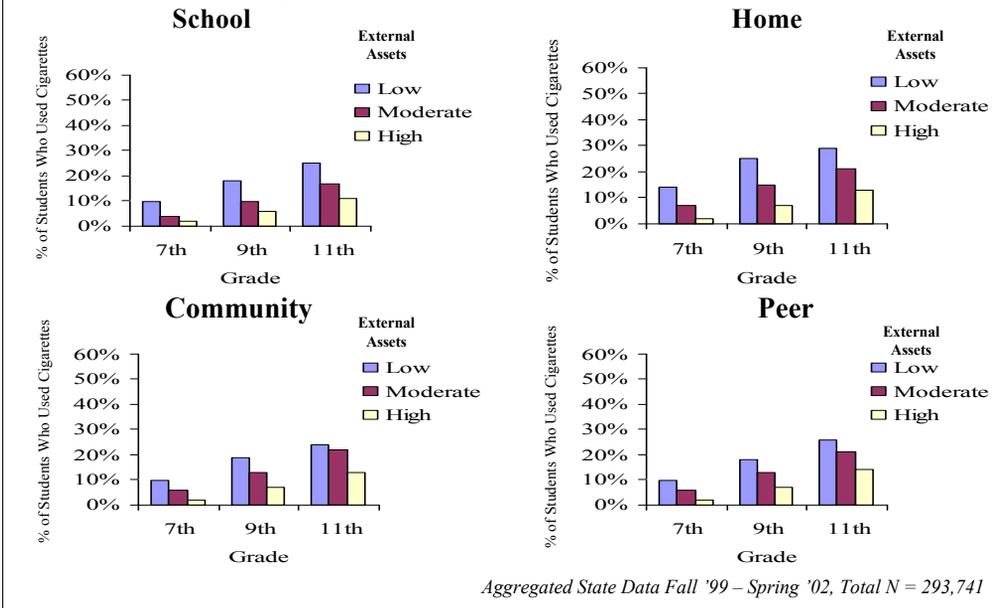


#14: Risk by Resilience in California: Binge Drinking

The CHKS data consistently validate the youth development theoretical framework. That is, we find that when students report low levels of external assets (Caring Relationships, High Expectation messages, and Opportunities for Meaningful Participation) in their families, schools, communities, and peer groups, they also report higher levels of health-risk behaviors. Similarly, when they report higher levels of external assets, they report lower rates of involvement in risky behaviors.

For example, this overhead shows the relationship between levels of student binge drinking and how this is affected by low, medium, and high levels of external assets. Student binge drinking was surveyed by asking the following question: "During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours?" You can see that students lowest in external assets have the highest rates of binge drinking across all their environments: school, home, community, and peer group. Similarly, students with the highest levels of external assets report the lowest levels of involvement in binge drinking across all these environments. Specifically, among 7th graders 8% of the students who were low, 4% who were moderate, and 2% who were high in external assets in the school environment reported binge drinking.

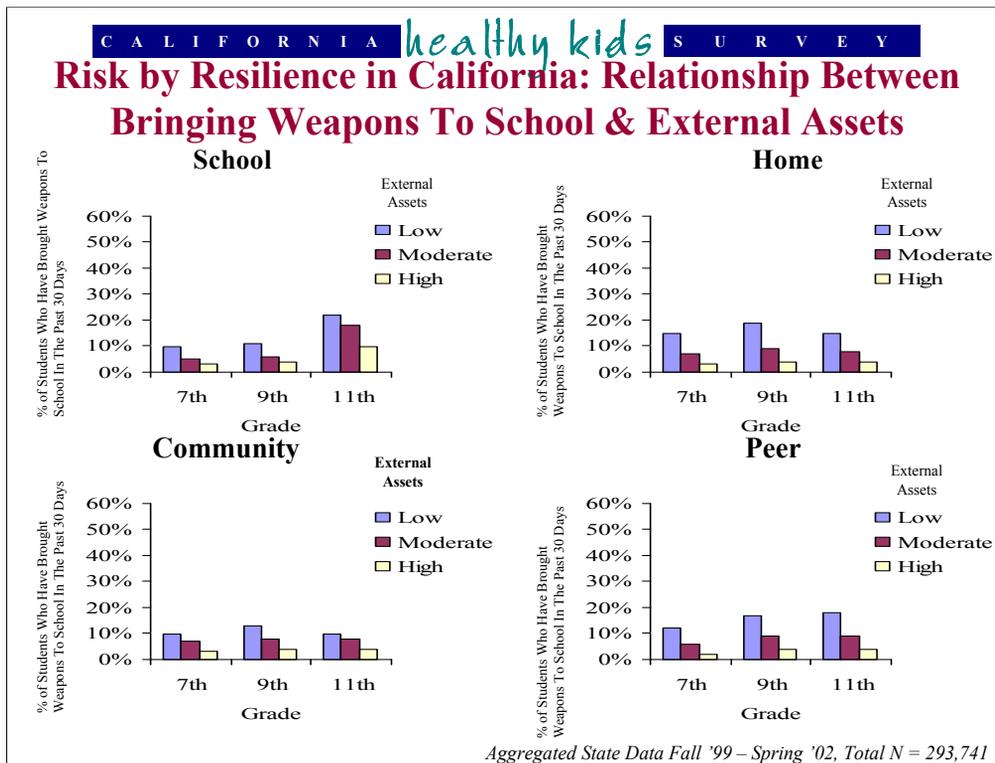
Risk by Resilience in California: Relationship Cigarette Use & External Assets



#15: Risk by Resilience in California: Cigarette Use

We see the same relationship in this overhead of cigarette use in the last 30 days. The students with the lowest levels of external assets have the greatest involvement in smoking cigarettes. The students were asked the following question: "During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?" This is a "classic" item on most risk surveys of current cigarette use.

For example, 25% of 11th graders with low external assets *in the school* smoked cigarettes, 17% of those with moderate external assets *in the school* smoked, and 11% of those with high external assets *in the school* smoked. Similarly, 29% of students with low external assets *in the home* smoked, 21% of students with moderate external assets *in the home* smoked, and 13% of students with high external assets *in the home* smoked cigarettes during the past 30 days.



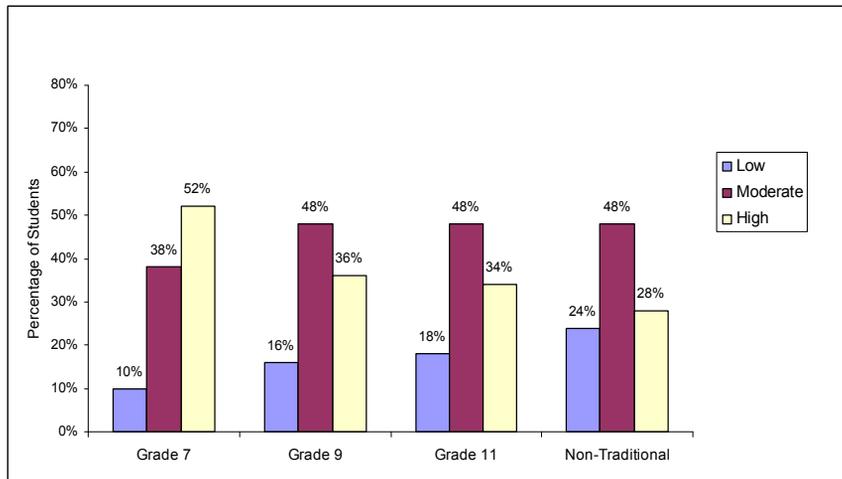
#16: Risk by Resilience in California: Brought Weapons to School

Looking at one other chart, the same relationship appears once again between health-risk behaviors and external assets, this time, bringing a weapon to school. For example, among 11th graders, 22% of those who were low, 18% of those who were moderate, and 10% of those who were high in external assets in the school environment reported that they brought weapons to school. This was asked by the following item: "During the past 30 days, on how many days did you carry a knife, a gun, a club, any other weapon on school property?" As you can see once again, the students with the lowest levels of external assets are more likely to bring a weapon to school.

These Risk by Resilience charts provide the bridge linking the CHKS risk data to the RYDM assets data. These charts show us "what works" to actually reduce health-risk behaviors: create families, schools, and communities rich in the external assets of caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for participation. *The same patterns are found on the California Student Survey which is statewide representative data.*

We'll now look at just what students said about the presence of these powerful external assets with such protective power in their lives.

Total External Assets in School



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#17: Total Perceived Assets in School

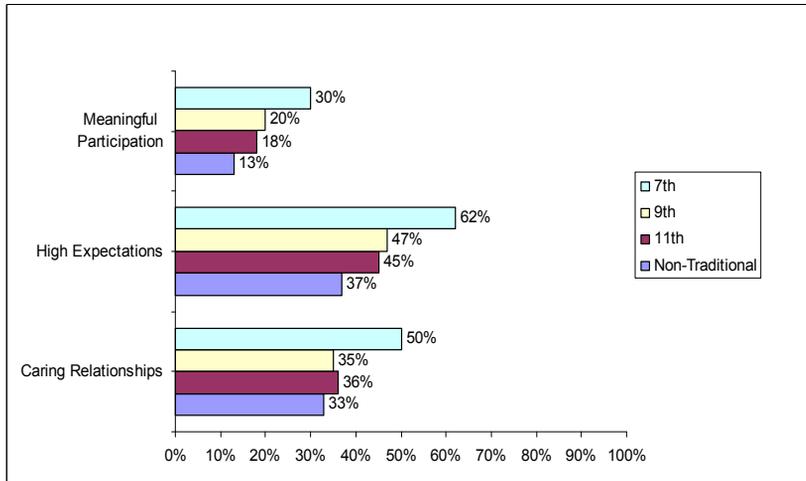
Looking at the school environment (which we are focusing on in this brief overview), this overhead paints a picture by grade level of the percentage of California students perceiving their school to be high, medium, and low in the combined external assets of Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Meaningful Participation.

As you can see, about half of the students in each grade level scored their schools in the medium range; that is, the students said that it was "A little true" to "Pretty much true" that they had teachers who cared, etc. Remember the protective power of these school assets that we just saw in the earlier overheads of binge drinking, etc. and consider whether you think schools might have some work to do around building school environment assets... What is even more helpful when we get to the issue of program planning is to look specifically at each of the external assets in the school environment.

C A L I F O R N I A *healthy kids* S U R V E Y

School 

% of Students Scoring High In Each External Asset



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

At my school:

Caring Relationship: there is a teacher or some other adult... (B32) who cares about me; (B34) who notices when I'm not there; (B37) who listens to me when I have something to say.

High Expectations: there is a teacher or some other adult... (B33) who tells me when I do a good job; (B36) who always wants me to do my best; (B38) who believes that I will be a success.

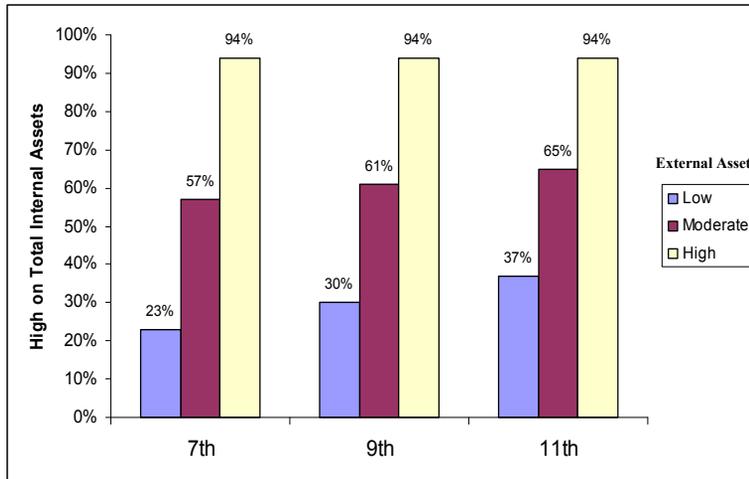
Meaningful Participation: (B19) I do interesting activities at school; (B24) At school, I help decide things like class activities or rules; (B25) I do things at my school that make a difference.

#18: School – % of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset

This chart from over 293,000 students reports on the percentage of students in grades 7, 9, 11, and in continuation schools scoring High (Pretty much true and Very much true) in each of the external assets: Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Meaningful Participation. Specifically, even among 7th graders, only 50% of students scored high in Caring Relationships, 62% scored high in High Expectations, and 30% scored high in Meaningful Participation.

These 3 external assets are critical to students' healthy development and the positive personal outcomes that we'll look at next. It is critical that we keep up our youth development and prevention work so that we can move our schools from these less than desirable numbers to 95+% in all these categories. *These 3 school external assets are performance indicators selected by CDE for the Title IV LNCB Mandate.*

The Relationship Between External Assets in School and Students' Internal Assets



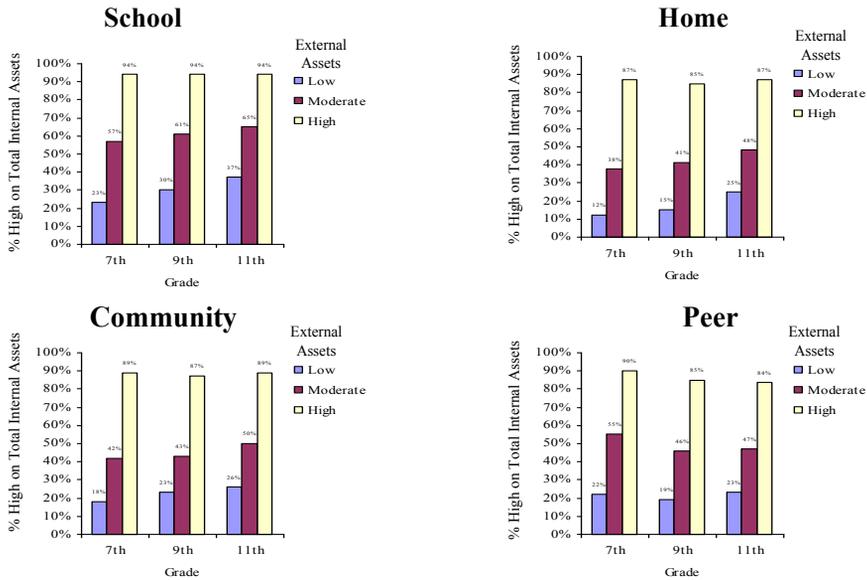
Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#19: The Relationship Between External Assets in School and Students' Internal Assets

This chart shows the relationship between the External Assets in the school and Total Internal Assets (the personal strengths and characteristics associated with healthy development and life success). Once again, we see the relationship between Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and opportunities for Meaningful Participation in the school and positive outcomes in students. Students with the lowest external assets in the school score lower on internal assets. Conversely, the higher the level of external assets in the school, the higher the percentage of internal assets. As the next overhead will show, this relationship holds true across all contexts for development in students' lives: home, school, community, and peer group.

For example, of those who scored high in External Assets, 94% of 9th grade students reported high Internal Assets; of those scoring moderate in External Assets, 61% of 9th grade students reported high Internal Assets; and of those who scored low in External Assets, 30% of 9th grade students reported high Internal Assets.

The Relationship Between External Assets in School, Home, Community and Peer Environments and Students' Internal Assets

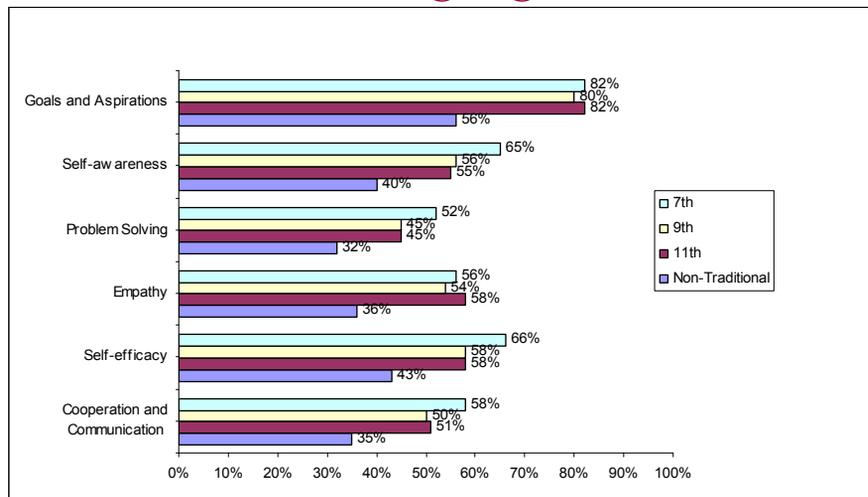


Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#20: The Relationship Between External Assets in School, Home, Community and Peer Environments and Students' Internal Assets

Notice the consistent relationship between Internal Assets across all environments. These charts document that across all 4 environments, students with higher levels of External Assets have higher levels of Internal Assets. Another way to say this is that students scoring high on Internal Assets also scored high on External Assets.

Individual Internal Asset Scores: Percentage of Students Scoring High in Each



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#21: Internal Assets – % of Students Scoring High in Each Internal Asset

The resilience or youth development approach focuses on environmental change, on providing the "protective" developmental supports and opportunities (external assets) that, in turn, will engage students' innate resilience and develop their capacities for positive developmental outcomes (internal assets). These internal assets or resilience traits are consistently described in the literature as consisting of the following categories which are surveyed on the RYDM (note that the Elementary RYDM found only 3 of these valid and reliable at the 5th grade: cooperation and communication, empathy, and problem solving).

- **Cooperation and communication**—often referred to as social competence
- **Self-efficacy**—belief in one's ability to do something
- **Empathy**—understanding and caring about another's feelings
- **Problem solving**—ability to plan, to be resourceful, to think critically and reflectively, and to creatively examine multiple perspectives before making a decision or taking action
- **Self-awareness**—knowing and understanding one's self (one's thinking, moods, feelings, strengths, and challenges)
- **Goals and aspirations**—having dreams, visions, and plans that focus the future

In most school communities, a large percentage of students scoring high in Internal Assets illuminates the presence of Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Opportunities for Meaningful Participation in students' lives—in their homes, schools, communities, and with their peers. The existence of these External Assets nurtures the development of Internal Assets.

Protecting Adolescents from Harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health



- Parent/family connectedness **and** perceived school connectedness were **protective against every health risk behavior measure**
- **School Connectedness is measured by the following items:**
 - I feel close to people at this school...
 - I am happy to be at this school...
 - I feel like I am part of this school...
 - The teachers at this school treat students fairly...
 - I feel safe in my school...

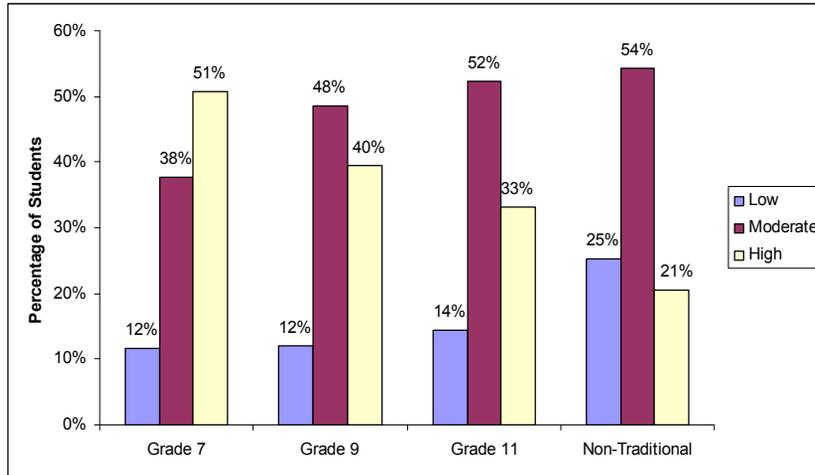
#22: Protecting Adolescents from Harm: Findings from AdHealth Study

What is very exciting for us here in California is that the *California Healthy Kids Survey* is corroborating the findings from the Congressionally-mandated *National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health* that we've all been hearing so much about for several years. A major finding of this study of 90,000 students grade 7-11 is that when students feel *connected* (i.e., feel close to people at school, happy to be at school, part of the school, treated fairly, feel safe) to either their family or to their *school* that this "connectedness" is protective against every health risk behavior—alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, emotional distress, suicidality, teen pregnancy, unsafe sex, and acts of violence towards others.

Given their findings, we added the 5-item School Connectedness Scale to the *RYDM* in 2002 in order to compare the results with those obtained from the Total School Assets Scale (slide 17).

School Connectedness

Scale from National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (AdHealth)



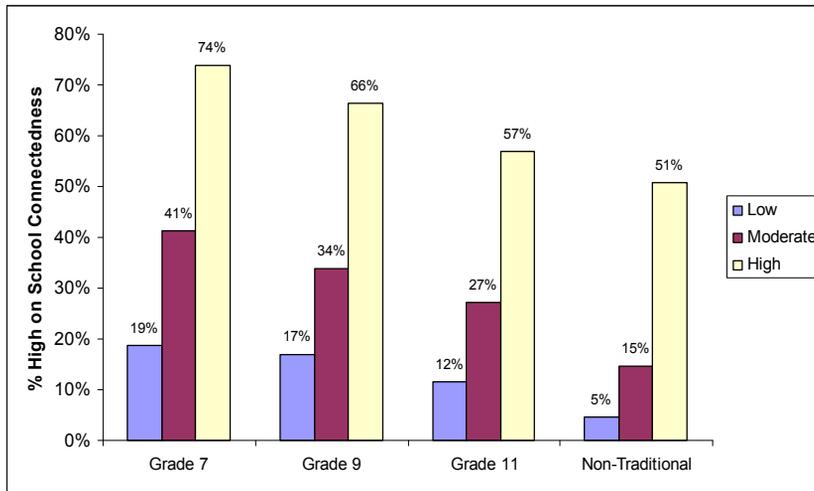
Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#23: School Connectedness

Students score "high" on School Connectedness if they, on average, scored higher than "agree" (between "agree" and "strongly agree") on the 5 school connectedness items. Classified this way, approximately 40% of 9th graders had high levels of school connectedness, 33% of 11th graders, and only 21% of students in Non-Traditional schools.

In a close comparison, 36% of 9th graders, 34% of 11th graders, and 28% of students in Non-Traditional schools reported high levels of Total External Assets in school on the RYDM (slide 17).

The Relationship Between School External Assets and School Connectedness

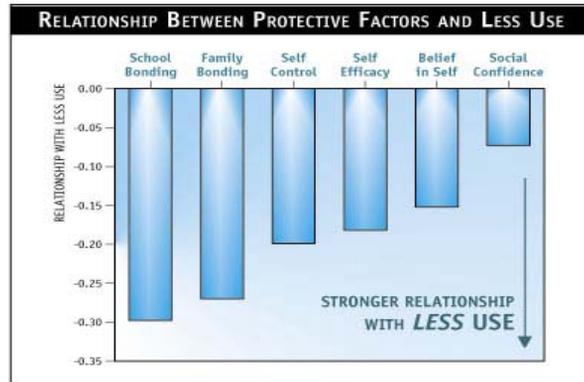


Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

#24: The Relationship Between External Assets in School and School Connectedness

Basically, the chart shows how External Assets in School are related to School Connectedness. It shows that as External Assets in School go up, School Connectedness also goes up. For example, if we just focus on the 9th graders - we see that only 17% of students with low External Assets score high on School Connectedness, compared to 34% with medium levels of External Assets, and 66% of students with high levels of External Assets. The chart shows that External Assets in School are positively related to School Connectedness.

School and Family Connectedness



* Numbers along Y axis are Pearson's Correlation coefficients.

High-risk youth who were connected to positive social environments (such as school and family) used substances less than those who lacked such connections. For youth at risk, connectedness plays an important role in effective prevention efforts.

Findings from CSAP's National Cross Site Evaluation

(Reprinted with permission from EMT Group, Inc. for CA Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs)

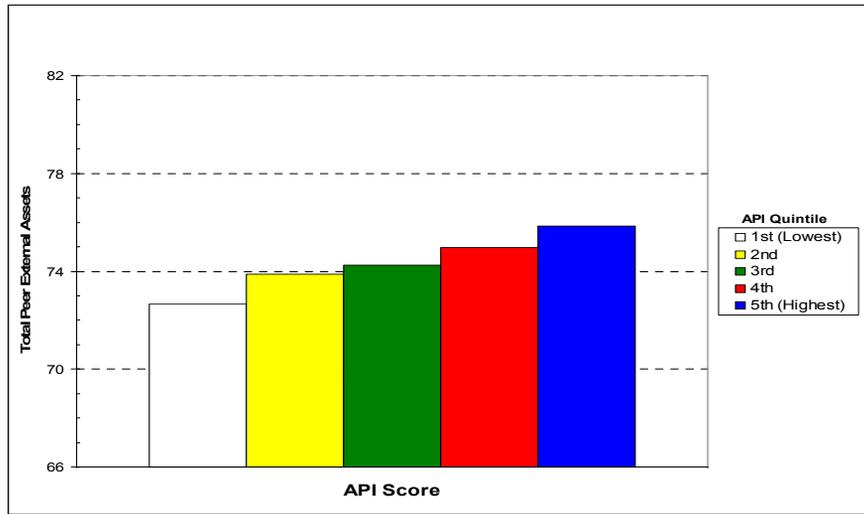
#25: School and Family Connectedness – Findings from CSAP's HRY Program Evaluation

Another powerfully reinforcing research study recently released by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention is the National Cross-Site Evaluation of CSAP's High-Risk Youth Programs (HRY). This 5-year nationwide study was done by EMT Associates (based in Sacramento). The evaluation examined the effectiveness of prevention programs at 48 HRY program sites funded by CSAP in 1994 and 1995. Like the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, it examined both risk and protective factors but only for alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use.

EMT's *Prevention Tactics* 4:3, 2001, "Prevention Works!" (online at www.emt.org) discusses the many findings from this study about best prevention practices. What this overhead shows is that, like the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, being connected (this study uses the term "bonded"), to family and school were the strongest protective factors (external assets) associated with less substance use-- more powerful than individual protective factors (resilience traits/internal assets). Moreover, **being connected to school was even more powerful than being connected to family.**

The bars in the graph summarize the degree to which each protective factor is related to **less** substance use. School bonding represents youths' perceptions that school is a positive and rewarding environment in which they can succeed. Family bonding represents youth's perception that the family is a positive and rewarding environment in which they are heard and supported.

Total External Assets by API Quintile



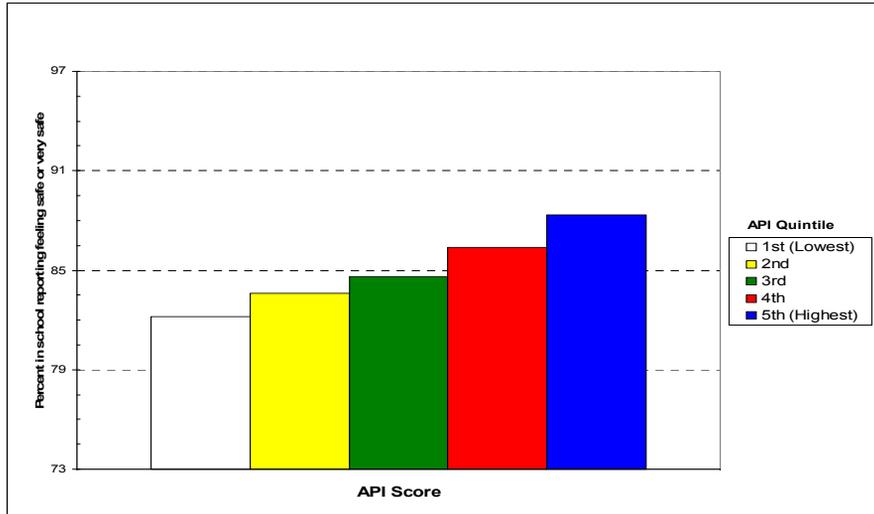
Source: Preliminary calculations based on the California Department of Education's Healthy Kids Survey (1998-2001) and API database (2001).

#26: Relationship between Total External Assets and API Quintile

This chart (from API article in **Resources** section of workshop binder and on website: <http://www.wested.org/hks/factsheet.pdf>) confirms that our resilience and youth development theoretical framework also works for academic achievement. API scores are positively related to the percentage of students who perceived high levels of assets across four environments: school, home, community, and peer group. These assets were measured by the perception of having the three protective factors that have consistently been related to low levels of involvement in risk behaviors, academic achievement, and positive youth development: caring relationships, high expectations, and meaningful opportunities to participate.

These results are statistically significant after controlling for school demographic differences. They are the results we would get after **equalizing** schools on race/ethnicity and social class.

Perceived Safety at School by API Quintile



Source: Preliminary calculations based on the California Department of Education's Healthy Kids Survey (1998-2001) and API database (2001).

#27: Relationship between Sense of Safety at School and API Quintile

We know—and this data confirms—that students who are safe, drug-free, healthy, and resilient is central to improving academic performance. In this figure, we can see the relationship between sense of safety (measured on the CHKS Core as students who report feeling "safe" or "very safe" at school) at school and **school-level** API scores. The results are illustrated graphically by dividing the schools into quintiles according to API scores. Each bar represents 20% of the schools, ordered from the lowest performing (the white bar) to the highest (the blue bar).

What you see is that schools with the highest levels of API scores also reported higher levels of students who felt safe and very safe. These results are statistically significant after controlling for school demographic differences.



At a time when the traditional structures of caring have deteriorated, schools must become places where teachers and students live together, talk with each other, take delight in each other's company. *My guess is that when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully and artificially will be achieved somewhat more naturally...*

It is obvious that children will work harder and do things -- even odd things like adding fractions -- for people they love and trust.

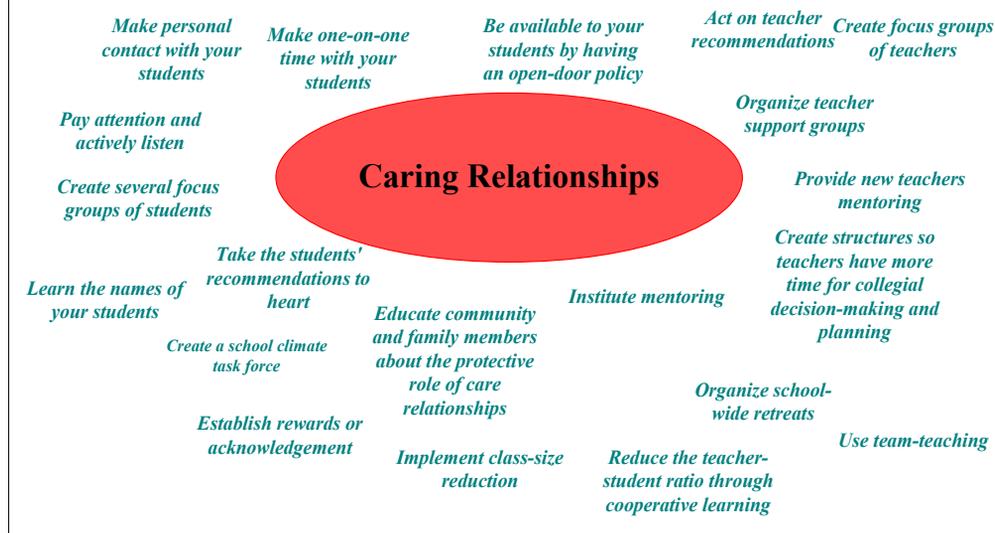


Nel Noddings, 1988

#28: Nel Noddings Quote on Caring in Schools

What the *National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health*, *CSAP's National Cross-Site Evaluation*, and the *California Healthy Kids Surveys* are finding is the power of caring and connectedness to protect against health-risk behaviors. What we also know from resilience, prevention/intervention evaluation research, and effective schools research is that caring and connectedness also promotes positive *academic* outcomes.

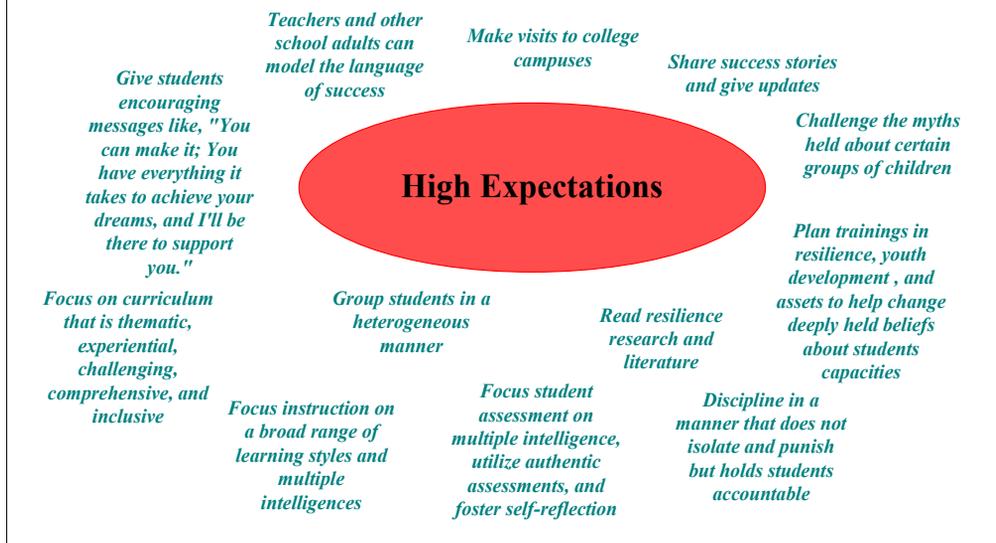
The last 2 slides bear out this lovely quote by Nel Noddings. What this tells us is basically the message of youth development to schools. Even academic success ultimately depends not on curriculum and programs per se, but on the quality of the *people* and the *place*, on our schools being communities in which every child and youth can engage and enhance their resilience, can "love, work, play, and expect well" (the earliest known definition of resilience).

School **What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience****#29: What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience – Caring Relationships**

Let's say the *RYDM* data showed that only 40% of the students in your school said it was "very and pretty much true" that there was a caring adult they could talk to in the school and the student focus groups confirmed that students really felt this was the case. The school staff focus group or the community planning group might then decide that they really need to create a school climate task force to spend more time with this issue and may initiate a process for school-wide asset-mapping on the part of all students, thus eliciting recommendations and needs from all the students. Or perhaps the teachers and administrators, on seeing the data and hearing the students, decided that they needed more caring relationships with each other in order to provide more caring to students. Thus they are considering organizing some teacher support groups.

School 

What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience

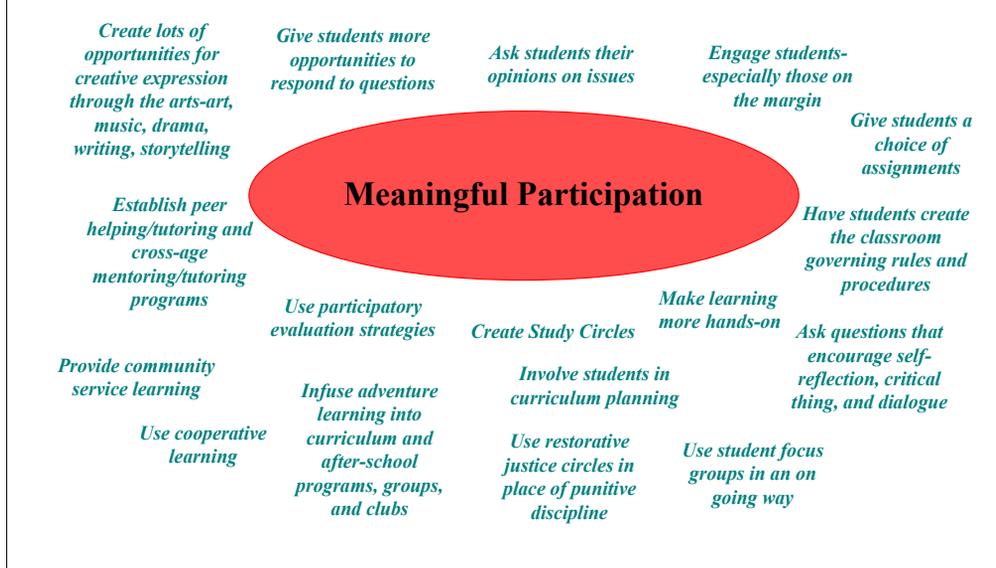


#30: What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience – High Expectations

Another example: Let’s say RYDM data showed that only 55% of the students in your school said it was "very/pretty much true" that adults in their school believe in them and the student focus groups confirmed that students really felt this was the case. The school staff focus group or the school-community planning group might decide that they really need some staff trainings in resilience and youth development or perhaps in diversity/anti-racism to help shift these beliefs.

School 

What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience



#31: What Schools Can Do To Promote Resilience – Meaningful Participation

Maybe your school was particularly low, according to the students, in having opportunities to participate actively and contribute to the school. Maybe students in focus groups said they wanted to be asked their opinions more often or to work on projects that they feel make a difference. In the case of the former (wanting to be asked their opinions), the teacher group might make the commitment to having students create the classroom governing rules and procedures. Or, in the case of the latter (wanting to make a difference), maybe the school community group might decide to initiate a community service-learning initiative with a CalServe planning grant.

Fostering Collaboration Through the CHKS-RYDM

- Focus the survey on the positive – You’re not just looking at what’s wrong with kids!
- Show needs across four environments
- Provide data valuable to multiple institutions, agencies, and groups
- Raise local awareness and understanding
- Avoid the “schools-are-the-problem” syndrome
- Initiate collaboration through survey planning and analysis

#32: Fostering School Community Collaboration

The *California Healthy Kids Survey* as a whole and the *Resilience & Youth Development Module*, in particular, provide a great opportunity for school-community collaboration.

Focus the survey on the positive...

With the *RYDM* module of the CHKS, the California Department of Education is now obtaining information about what's right with the students (their internal assets) and the supports and opportunities they do have.

Show needs across four environments

Having data from the home, community, and peer group, in addition to the schools, creates a picture of all the contexts of students' lives—of both the assets and the need for assets in all of these environments.

Provide data valuable to multiple institutions, agencies, and groups

This data is useful, not only to schools, but to local, district, and county public health agencies, community-based youth-serving organizations, after-school programs, Healthy Start efforts, and local governments—to name a few.

Raise local awareness and understanding

This cross-sector data raises local awareness and understanding, not only about the problems, but also about the solutions. It also creates a sense of responsibility for children and youth in environments besides schools.

Avoid the "schools-are-the-problem" syndrome

In fact, having data from all these environments helps shift the "problem" of health-risk behavior prevention away from the schools—from the dominant, although not research-based, focus on "fixing" students with curricula in schools to a focus on enriching the home, school, and community environments with developmental supports and opportunities (i.e., assets). Thus, families, schools, and communities are enabled to see themselves as **partners** in promoting healthy environments for children and youth.

Fostering Collaboration Through the CHKS-RYDM (continued)

- Focus the survey on the positive – You’re not just looking at what’s wrong with kids!
- Show needs across four environments
- Provide data valuable to multiple institutions, agencies, and groups
- Raise local awareness and understanding
- Avoid the “schools-are-the-problem” syndrome
- Initiate collaboration through survey planning and analysis

#33: Fostering School Community Collaboration (continued)

Initiate collaboration through survey planning and analysis

School communities are encouraged to establish a Healthy Kids Planning Committee or charge an existing committee with this responsibility. The *CHKS Guidebook* (available on-line) provides a step-by-step process for using the *CHKS* data that will thoroughly examine the results of both the *CHKS* overall, and the *RYDM* in particular, looking for major themes. By looking at data that reflects both the external and internal assets of students and shows the relationship between these assets and student risk behaviors, which the *RYDM Report* does as we've just seen, a planning committee can better decide how to allocate financial and human resources.

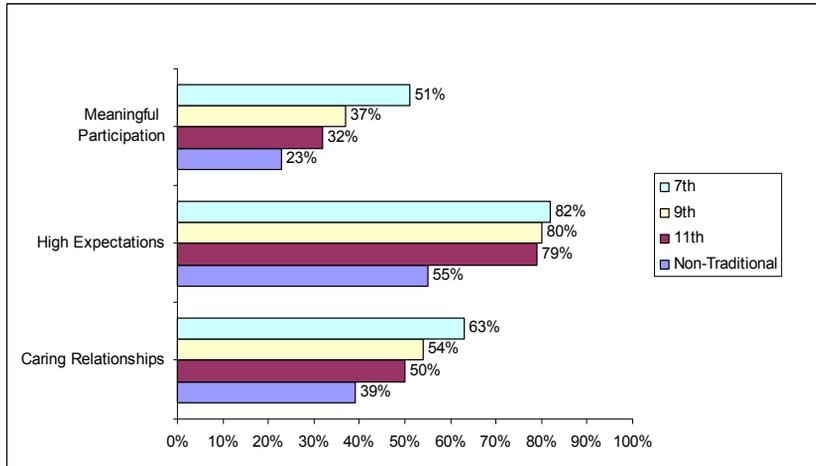
After reviewing the data, a critical planning step is to create follow-up focus groups. The first one must be with the students (remember it is a survey of *their* attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors) and must explore their needs and recommendations around the external assets in their families, schools, and communities. Then school staff, parent organizations, and community representatives need to be brought into the picture to discuss how the student-identified needs and recommendations for change should be addressed. It is at this point in the planning process that the sample strategies pages of the *RYDM Report* can be very useful.

We encourage each of these groups to review and discuss the sample strategies identified in the *RYDM Report* and reflect on what they are now doing to promote assets in their schools and what the students felt were assets in the school. The *Report* suggests strategies for promoting caring relationships, high expectations, and meaningful participation in the family, school, community, and peer systems. **These are only a few strategies from among hundreds, but they can serve as triggers for thinking of others.** Then, these groups need to reflect on what recommendations the students had for change and see if any of the strategies in the *Report* might work to meet student needs or trigger some of their own ideas. A description of the Family-School-Community Forum model planning process is Handout 15 of the [Listening to Students: Using the RYDM Data to Improve Schools](#) workshop.

Home



% of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

At my home...

Caring Relationships: there is a parent or some other adult... (B6) who is interested in my school work; (B9) who talks with me about my problems; (B11) who listens to me when I have something to say.

High Expectations: there is a parent... (B5) who expects me to follow the rules; (B7) who believes that I will be a success; (B10) who always wants me to do my best.

Meaningful Participation: (B14) I do fun things or go fun places with my parents or other adults; (B32) I do things at home that make a difference; (B25) I help make decisions with my family.

#34: Home – % Of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset

This chart from over 293,000 CA students reports on the percentage of students in grades 7, 9, 11, and continuation (non-traditional) schools scoring High ("Pretty much true" and "Very much true") in each of the external assets: Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Meaningful Participation. Specifically, among 11th graders, 50% of students scored high in caring relationships, 79% scored high in high expectations, and 32% scored high in meaningful participation in their family.

Resilience research has identified that feeling connected to one's family and having positive family experiences is the most powerful protective factor in the lives of young people. Schools that help support families in their parenting (through Healthy Start programs, family resource centers, etc.) can further weave a safety net of connection for students. Furthermore, educational research has found that schools that work in partnership with family members in helping their students are the schools with higher rates of academic achievement.

Home



How Schools Can Partner With Families To Promote Resilience



#35: How Schools Can Partner With Families to Promote Resilience –Caring Relationships

The strategies recommended for promoting external assets in the home focus on what schools can do to support families so that families can do their best parenting and what schools can do to work in partnership with families to support students. Just as successful schools relate to their students with caring relationships, high expectations messages, and opportunities to participate, they also reach out to students' families with care and respect and invite them in as partners in educating all their children.

If a small percentage of students score in the *High* range in the asset of perceived caring from adults in their home, it becomes critically important that the school communicate and provide more supports and opportunities for families to increase their positive care-giving. Having focus groups with parent groups based on exploring the *RYDM* data in this category is a good way to begin to find out what parents need from schools to help support them and work in a strengths-based partnership with them. Parents may say they would like some classes on child and youth development, or they would like to volunteer in the classroom more, or maybe they would like a family center at the school where they could meet other parents or attend parent support groups.

Schools may also need to look at providing extra support to students in the form of after-school support groups, peer helping programs, student assistance programs, or either school-based or school-linked mentoring programs.

Home



How Schools Can Partner With Families To Promote Resilience

Encourage parent-teacher conferences and phone conversations with family members

Treat parent concerns with respect

Convey hope and optimism about the student in communications with parents

Call or send home a note when a student does something good

Help family members create choices that are developmentally appropriate and negotiable

Create assignments in which children can practice academic skills at home

Send letters home periodically to remind parenting adults of the rules and expectations of the classroom and school

Make an effort to call or meet with parents or other adults in the home to encourage them about their students' unique strengths, interests, and abilities

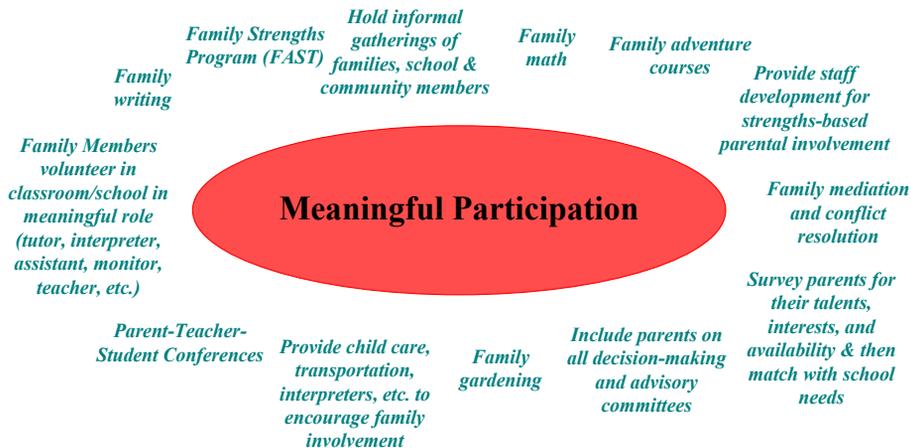
#36: How Schools Can Partner with Families to Promote Resilience – High Expectations

These strategies are focused on how schools can help parents convey positive and high expectations to their children. These are only a few of the many strategies. (See *RYDM Report* for others)

Home



How Schools Can Partner With Families To Promote Resilience



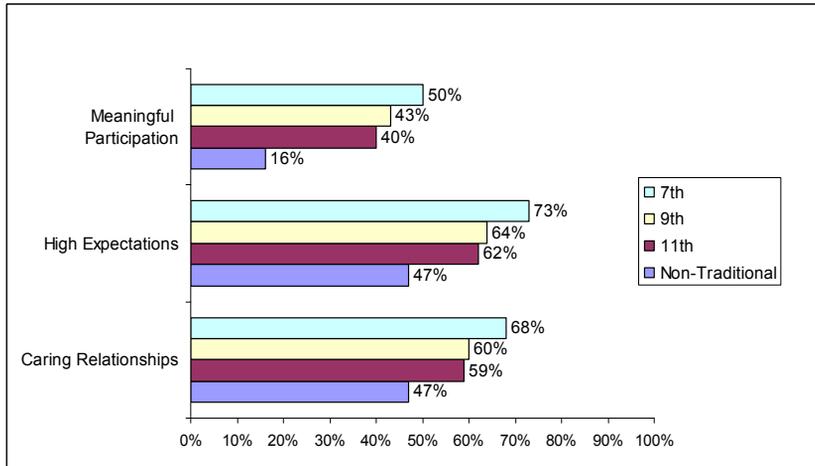
#37: How Schools Can Partner with Families to Promote Resilience – Meaningful Participation

These strategies are focused on how schools can encourage positive student-family interaction. These are only a few of the many strategies. (See *RYDM Report* for others)

Community



% of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

Caring relationships: Outside of my home and school, there is an adult... (B29) who really cares about me; (B31) who notices when I am upset about something; (B34) who I trust.

High Expectations: Outside of my home and school, there is an adult... (B30) who tells me when I do a good job; (B32) who believes that I will be a success; (B33) who always wants me to do my best.

Meaningful Participation: (B56) I am part of clubs, sports teams or other extra activities away from school; (B57) Outside of my home and school, I take lessons in music, art, sports or a hobby; (B58) Outside of my home and school, I help other people.

#38: Community – % of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset

This chart illustrates the percentage of students (from over 293,000 CA students in grades 7, 9, and 11) who feel they are provided Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Opportunities for Meaningful Participation in the Community Environment. For example, 59% of 11th graders say that it is “pretty and very much true” that there are caring adults in their community (outside of home and school); 62% of 11th graders scored high in High Expectations from adults in their community, and only 40% of 11th graders say they have opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in the life of their community.

Evidence is accumulating that transforming schools and creating a resilience safety net for all children depends not only on family involvement, but of community members as well. This means that schools must also form respectful, strengths-based, and reciprocal relationships with community-based organizations, social service agencies, law enforcement, as well as with businesses and community volunteers.

Community



How Schools Can Partner With Community Groups To Promote Resilience



#39: How Schools Can Partner With Community Groups To Promote Resilience – Caring Relationships

Youth-serving community-based organizations are now playing critical roles in promoting ongoing learning and healthy developmental outcomes in students. Both schools and CBOs, have unique and complementary strengths that can be drawn on to encourage healthy and successful development, if they form a partnership that draws on each of their strengths.

This overhead illustrates some of the strategies the school/community task force can consider when they examine their *RYDM* data and look for ways to increase students' supports and opportunities in the community. For example, if your school has a low percentage of students who feel they had caring relationships in the community, here are some strategies your group can consider. Remember, of course, that exploring this issue with students directly in focus groups will help you identify effective strategies specific to your school and community.

Community



How Schools Can Partner With Community Groups To Promote Resilience

*Encourage teachers
to use community
service learning in
their classrooms*



*Invite the local press
to see and report on
the good work
students are doing in
their service learning*

*Create mentoring
programs that
connect community
adults to students in
your school*

*Create "dialogue
nights" where adults
and youth can talk
together in an
atmosphere of
mutual trust and
safety*

#40: How Schools Can Partner with Community Groups to Promote Resilience – High Expectations

These strategies are focused on ways schools can encourage positive community attitudes towards students. These are only a few of the many strategies. (See *RYDM Report* for others)

Community



How Schools Can Partner With Community Groups To Promote Resilience

Form youth advocacy groups around issues like alcohol, tobacco, and gun sales and marketing.

A neighborhood mapping project gets youth actively engaged in identifying community assets which offer pro-youth resources, services and facilities

Meaningful Participation

Create and/or play a vital role in a local community coalition for positive youth development

School-based and school-linked after-school programs provide students a wide range of opportunities: hobbies, sports, arts and crafts, music, gardening, and so on

Community service learning gets students out into the community contributing to community betterment

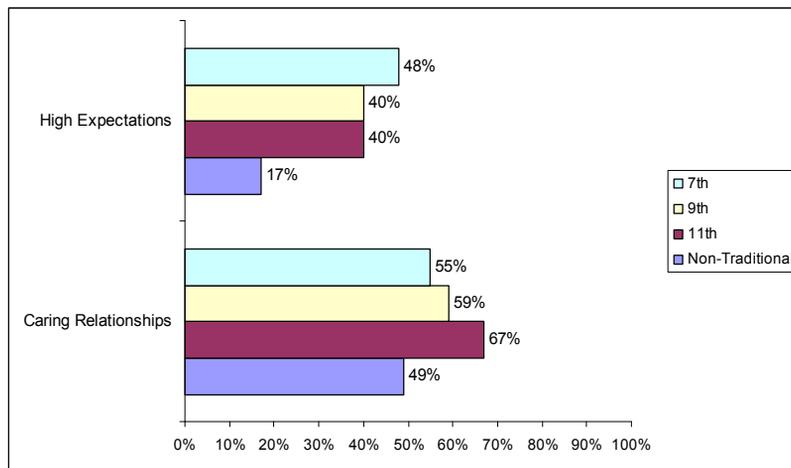
#41: How Schools Can Partner with Community Groups to Promote Resilience – Meaningful Participation

These strategies focus on getting students involved in opportunities to develop interests in activities not always offered in school and to provide them opportunities for involvement in the life of the community. These are only a few of the many strategies. (See *RYDM Report* for others)

Peers



% of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset



Aggregated State Data Fall '99 – Spring '02, Total N = 293,741

Caring Relationships: I have a friend about my own age... (B1) who really cares about me; (B2) who talks with me about my problems; (B4) who helps me when I'm having a hard time.

High Expectations: (B20) My friends get into a lot of trouble; (B22) My friends try to do what is right; (B24) My friends do well in school.

#42: Peers – % of Students Scoring High in Each External Asset

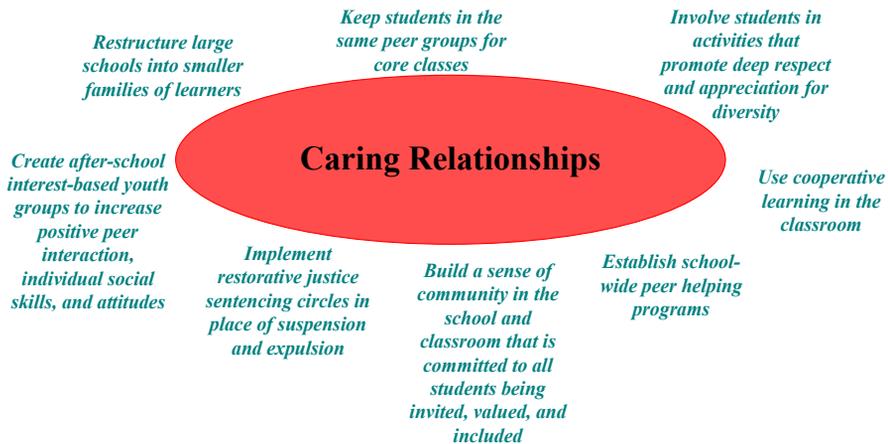
This chart illustrates how students responded to the above questions about their peers. Specifically, 67% of 11th graders said it was “pretty much” and “very much true” that they had caring friends; 40% of 11th graders said it was “pretty much” and “very much true” that they had pro-social friends. There are no questions about Meaningful Participation since they would be redundant with the School, Home, and Community Participation questions (i.e., what peers do has to take place in one of the above environments).

Peer influence is a powerful developmental force. Peer influence is most often interpreted negatively, such as in peer pressure to engage in health-risk behaviors. However, resilience research has documented the positive power of peers. This is seen through supportive friendships and positive peer role models—critical protective factors in the lives of children and youth. The challenge for schools is to engage this influence as a support and opportunity essential to healthy adolescent development. Recent school shootings serve as a painful reminder of the dangerous combination of a society and community in which lethal weapons are readily available and of schools that don't build a sense of community among their students across differences.

Peers



What Schools Can Do to Promote Resilience through Positive Peer Relationships



#43: What Schools Can Do to Promote Resilience through Positive Peer Relationships

These strategies provide opportunities to create friendship networks and positive peer relationships regardless of cultural, gender, class, and ability differences. These are only a few of the many strategies. (See *RYDM Report* for others)

Peers



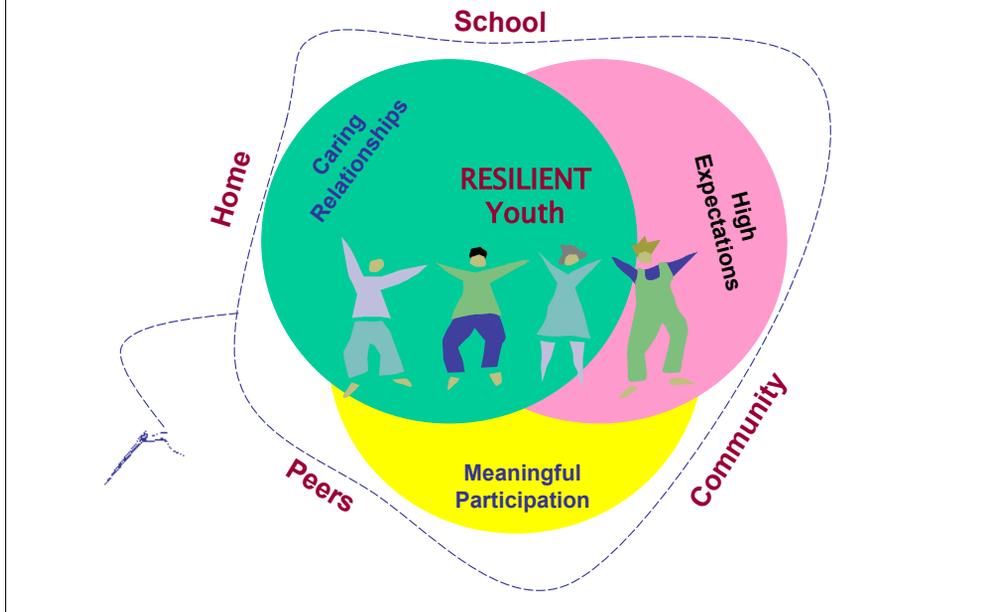
What Schools Can Do to Promote Resilience through Positive Peer Activities



#44: What Schools Can Do to Promote Resilience through Positive Peer Activities

These strategies are focused on providing pro-social activities that encourage positive peer interactions. Creating small groupings of students who share common interests, goals, activities, and/or concerns helps foster an environment that promotes caring peer relationships focused on pro-social activities.

**Weaving A Fabric Of Resilience For
All Of Our Children And Youth**



#45: Weaving A Fabric of Resilience for All of Our Children and Youth

Building linkages and partnerships between schools, young people, families and community groups is how a fabric of resilience, a safety net, is woven for all children and youth. **No single institution can do it alone.** The *Resilience & Youth Development Module* provides a research-based, data-driven tool for bringing together all of these players vital to a young person's healthy development and academic success.