



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

in Support of Where, When, & How
Learning Happens



Introduction

The Youth Development Work Group of the Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development offers this brief on the critical role of youth development organizations in young people's growth and development. The brief presents a framework for broadening our understanding of how, when, and where students learn;ⁱ both in and out of school and during the summer. It recommends ways for educators, policymakers, and funders to partner with youth development organizations and to capitalize on formal and informal learning settings that support young people's growth and development.

What Is Youth Development?

"Positive Youth Development 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." – Inter-agency Working Group on Youth Programs.ⁱⁱ



The youth development approach emphasizes the importance of meeting young people where they are—physically, academically, socially, and emotionally—to help them build the relationships, competencies, and confidence they need to succeed in life. While each youth development organization operates differently, their common denominator is the commitment to create supportive learning settings that nurture young people’s strengths and interests and enable them to thrive. Relationship building is at the heart of what these organizations do. While an organization may be known by its activities or content—an arts program, a sports league, an environmental camp—young people consistently voice a common refrain: they may initially be “hooked” by the activity, but they stay because of the bonds they form with peers and adults.

Youth development organizations span and are staffed by every sector of the community—nonprofits, faith-based organizations, employers, businesses, civic and arts associations, and public agencies focused on recreation, health, safety, and learning. They range from afterschool programs and community centers to mentoring programs and summer camps. Their staff and volunteers work in and across systems and sectors, meeting youth wherever they are—in schools, sports leagues, clubs and community centers, as well as in public housing, detention centers, homeless shelters, and hospitals.

Youth development organizations provide myriad learning opportunities in an array of settings. United in the belief that America’s bedrock principle of equal opportunity necessitates a balanced approach to learning, these organizations recognize that learning is fundamentally social, emotional, cognitive, and academic. They acknowledge that young people are learning all the time, both during and out of school, and in families, neighborhoods, and communities. They support an approach to learning that develops a broad set of skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to become a life-long learner, productive worker, and engaged citizen. And they foster settings and services that allow young

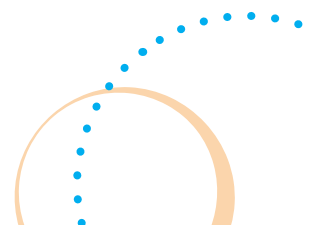
people to grow while exploring interests and wrestling with issues that reflect their passions and concerns.

In the last decade, youth development organizations have strengthened their collective capacity to increase young people’s access to quality learning settings, both in and out of school as well as throughout the day and year. Partnering with public officials across the country, these organizations have created the state and local infrastructure needed to coordinate, measure, and improve their programming. They have worked to ensure that learning activities are available in such hard-to-reach settings as rural communities and housing projects, and they have sought to reach young people in the digital world where they spend increasing amounts of time.

The organizations’ expanded capacity is due, in part, to the growing number of local and state afterschool and summer learning systems and networks that are providing assessment and training aimed at increasing access to quality youth development experiences. Often referred to as “intermediaries,” these organizations represent cross-sector partnerships among youth development providers, city agencies, school districts, employers, and other stakeholders who want to support the whole learner through a systems approach.ⁱⁱⁱ While there is still much to be learned, youth development organizations can and do partner with schools and districts. Together they prioritize and integrate social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development to address persistent achievement gaps and the needs of increasing numbers of youth who are challenged by poverty.

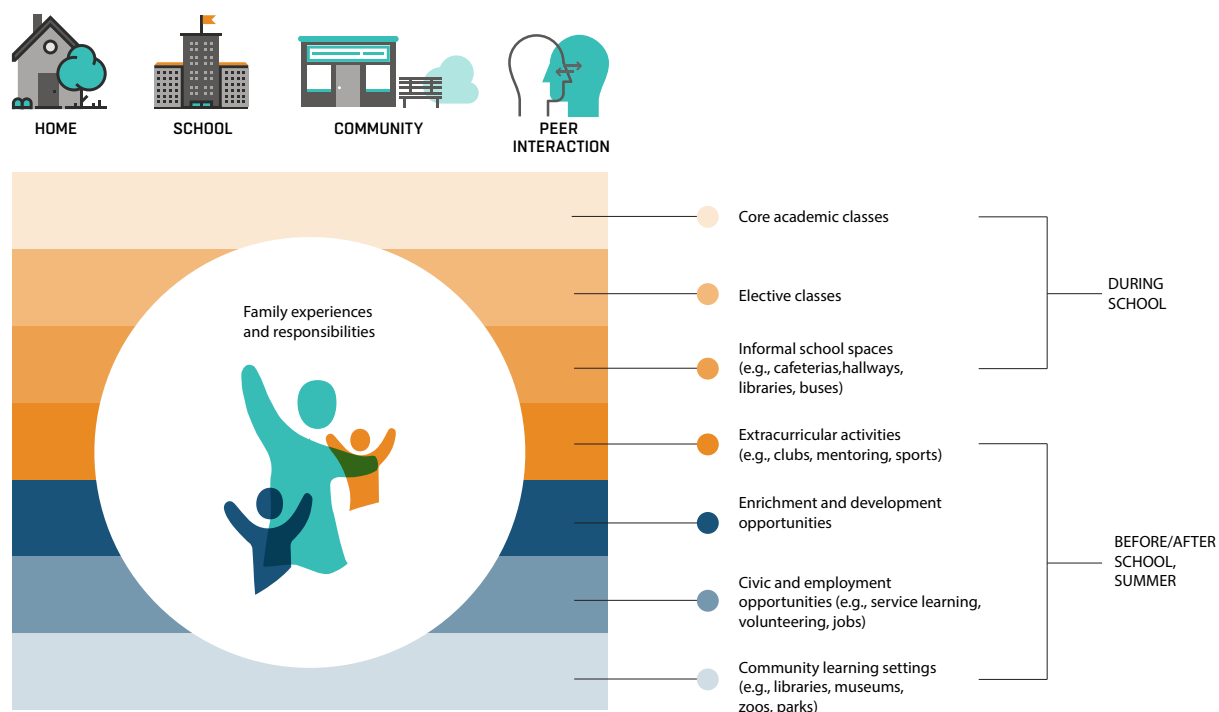
Where and When Learning Happens

We now have 40 years of evidence to show how learning happens.^{iv} In order for all young people to benefit from this knowledge, our next goal is to expand our understanding of where and when learning happens—or doesn’t happen. And we must push far beyond the familiar in-school/out-of-school dichotomy.



Where and When Learning Happens

Expanding our understanding of all the places and times young people grow and learn



Most young people start and end every day with their families. The family is the central place where specific skills and competencies as well as broader attitudes and values are named and normed. Families play an active role in determining whether the other places where young people spend their learning time are places that reinforce and respect the lessons they are teaching at home.

Among the most critical decisions families make are selecting schools and identifying opportunities to broaden their children's learning and development. Their options, however, can be constrained by availability, affordability, quality, cultural or developmental appropriateness, transportation, program hours, and neighborhood safety. For example, an examination of two national data sets found significant disparities in participation in afterschool and summer programs related to family income: youth from higher-income, more educated families were more likely to enroll and participate in more diverse activities than children from less advantaged families.^v

As illustrated in the graphic above, there are many places and spaces that can and should contribute to social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development; it is the role of families, schools, and youth development organizations to work together to ensure that they are all considered and adequately resourced. Bolstered by data, communities can take bigger, bolder steps toward two goals: 1) shedding light on inequitable access to learning opportunities, and 2) providing guidance, incentives, and resources to ensure that accessible opportunities not only exist but reflect the science of learning and development.

The Commission's case study on the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative illustrates one community's approach to strategic partnerships.^{vi} Understanding that context matters, the following recommendations are intended to give schools and youth development organizations multiple entry points for working together, creating connections or expanding upon what is already in place, and promoting new strategies and policies at the building and district levels. This work is not meant

THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR HOW LEARNING HAPPENS: SKILLS, ATTITUDES, AND CHARACTER TRAITS FOR SUCCESS

More than two decades of research across a wide range of disciplines—psychology, social science, brain science, and others—demonstrate that a variety of skills, attitudes, and values are embedded in and support how learning happens. They generally fall into three broad categories: (1) skills and competencies, (2) attitudes, beliefs, and mindsets, and (3) character and values.^{vii}

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

(shown in the center of the figure below) encompass approximately a dozen specific behaviors—cognitive, social, and emotional—that research and practice

demonstrate are important to successful learning.

These skills and competencies develop and are used in dynamic interaction with **ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND MINDSETS** (shown in the figure's second ring), which include young people's feelings and opinions about themselves, others, and their own circumstances.

CHARACTER AND VALUES

represent ways of thinking and habits that support youth working together as friends, family, and community. They include understanding, caring about, and acting

on core ethical standards such as integrity, honesty, compassion, diligence, civic and ethical engagement, and responsibility.

These dimensions of learning intertwine to promote accomplishment in any subject or endeavor. Of great importance, these skills and competencies grow over time and can be explicitly taught and modeled.^{viii} When adults in settings throughout the community recognize these skills as mutually reinforcing and central to learning, young people make greater academic progress. ■

Including...

- Focus and pay attention
- Set goals
- Plan and organize
- Persevere
- Problem solve





to diminish the role of state policy; there are many promising efforts at the state level to promote social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development. The Commission, however, believes that a key role of policy should be to create enabling conditions for communities to implement locally crafted solutions that ensure more equitable outcomes for all young people.

Include Youth Development Partners in Setting a Clear Vision

Setting a clear vision with partners promotes consistency across learning settings and provides a strong foundation for developing strategies to ensure equitable access to a wide range of learning opportunities.

Along with youth, families, and school and community leaders, youth development partners should be at the table and working collaboratively to define a shared vision of student success that reflects the values and culture of the community's students and their families. Vision-setting needs to include a shared understanding of where and when learning happens that maximizes the use of all the places where young people spend their time, from schools to community organizations and from the home to the workplace—all of which have the potential to support social, emotional, cognitive, and academic learning. Stakeholders need to broaden their understanding of how the youth development

sector expands where and when learning happens—both independently and in partnership with schools and other systems (e.g., public housing, juvenile justice, foster care). Doing so can help identify which students are getting access to which settings, which in turn can help ensure more equitable learning experiences throughout the day.

Developing a shared understanding of where and when learning happens needs to be coupled with an understanding that learning settings vary along a number of dimensions that influence how learning happens (the setting in which the learning occurs, the staff-student ratios, external accountability demands). Youth development programs offer opportunities for rich peer interaction, hands-on experiential learning, and student choice—opportunities that can help young people name and practice social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

Efforts to support young people's social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development must include families and youth in the planning. Youth development partners can be trusted entities to help schools bridge gaps and build alliances with families. Youth development professionals tend to be from the community and can serve as conduits for information between schools and families because they often staff the places where families pick up their children at the end



THE YMCA & VILLAGE ACADEMY TEAM UP

ExpandedED Schools is a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap through enriched educational experiences. It supports schools and community partners to expand learning and align practices in social and emotional learning throughout the school day. In Far Rockaway, New York, ExpandedED helped Village Academy, a public middle school, partner with the local YMCA to improve students' social and emotional skills and reduce the number of negative behavioral incidents. An ExpandedED Schools Program Manager facilitated

onsite professional development for more than 60 faculty and YMCA staff, then supported staff through on-site observations, feedback, and guidance to assess which practices were working and which needed adjustment. ExpandedED Schools also arranged an inter-visitation, in which a Village Academy team visited a partner school to observe and learn about promising practices. Village Academy implemented a variety of new strategies, including a 15-minute period after lunch in which students check in with their advisory teachers about how they are feeling and what

they can do to improve how they are feeling, plus advisory periods utilizing restorative circles to help students deal with conflicts and make better decisions.

The partnership has paid off. The school's internal record system shows that teachers have reported fewer behavior incidents. The principal indicates that students feel empowered by their positive relationships with adults in the building and are leading in multiple ways, including volunteering to lead dance groups, hosting school dances, and advocating for a talent showcase.^{ix} ■

of the day. They can support district and school leaders in engaging families and young people to shape the opportunities available in school and/or after school. Youth development organizations can also broker critical connections, services, and supports that families may need to help their children come to school healthy and ready to learn.

Finally, it is critical to equity that communities embrace the vision that every young person should have both the access and the means to participate in quality youth development opportunities—opportunities that are developmentally appropriate and meet young people's needs and interests.

Strengthen and Expand Adult Capacity

Recognizing that relationships are central to how learning happens, schools and communities should ensure that all adults who interact with students throughout the day and year have the skills and consistent supports needed to both practice and promote social and emotional skills.

Every adult who interacts with students during the day and throughout the year can contribute to a thriving learning environment. This population includes specialized support personnel such as guidance counselors, school nurses, librarians and coaches, as well as AmeriCorps members and cafeteria, playground, and transportation support personnel. However, not all adults are trained in the foundational skill sets, mind-sets, and strategies of how learning happens. Capacity-building efforts, therefore, must ensure that the adults in all settings, whether paid or volunteer, understand the roles they can play and are trained to support how learning happens. Broadening the “who” also provides the opportunity for engaging adults from the community who reflect the culture and demographics of the students.

Inviting youth development partners into school-day spaces adds capacity and helps students gain access to more role models and caring adults with whom they can process their experiences, set goals, celebrate successes, and overcome obstacles. Youth development

organizations focused on mentoring can provide critical infrastructure to schools, bringing expertise about positive youth development and relationship-building best practices. Inviting PreK-12 educators to staff community-based summer programs can enable training in positive youth development, which carries into their school-year practice.

The education and youth development sectors have a complementary depth of content, practice, and pedagogy related to social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development. Therefore, there is mutual benefit in sharing professional expertise and content and, indeed, many efforts exist to co-train educators and youth development professionals. Schools and youth development partners should seek opportunities to co-design and co-deliver staff trainings, so that content, practice, and pedagogy converge across disciplines, ensuring that building adult capacity is a truly joint endeavor in service of supporting the whole learner.

Create and Support Engaging Learning Settings Throughout the Day and the Year

The youth development sector has established standards and a commitment to continuous improvement to ensure that young people are participating in quality learning settings that support social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development.

A frequent pathway to improvement among youth organizations is to develop common standards for the learning environment that can be used to support more customized improvements in practice. In fact, 35 states have quality standards for afterschool programs, often developed by their state afterschool network. Underlying these quality improvement efforts is an emphasis on the creation of safe, engaging learning settings that support social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

Understanding what engaging learning settings should look like, the youth development sector has a track record of using a continuous improvement approach to enhance them. Youth development programs use numerous evidence-based frameworks to assess, plan,

and implement improvements in staff and management practices linked to program quality and youth outcomes. These frameworks build on the belief that, whatever the content, focused attention on the context leads to improvement in overall program quality, which increases staff and youth engagement, generates opportunities to practice and strengthen social and emotional skills, and ultimately contributes to formal program outcomes.

The efforts of schools and youth development organizations to align their continuous improvement processes and strengthen adult social and emotional learning practice will be more successful if they are built upon:

- A shared vision, based on research, of what social and emotional learning practices and outcomes look like.
- Assessments, trainings, materials, professional supports, and reflection processes that reinforce practice improvement emphasizing social, emotional, cognitive, and academic skill development.
- A system with staff trained and resourced to coordinate and manage the decisions, procedures, assessments, trainings, feedback cycles, and analyses needed to monitor and support continuous improvement cycles and ensure staff ownership and engagement.

Provide Systems and Supports to Maintain Partnerships

Partnership requires an intentional outreach and engagement strategy, with dedicated resources such as community engagement coordinators who ensure the right partners are coming together to accomplish shared goals for the young people with whom they work at every level—classroom, building, and system.

To take full advantage of and be strategic about data-informed partnerships with youth development organizations, a dedicated staff person is needed.

Communities approach this role differently; in some places the Family Resource Center coordinator manages partnerships, while schools with federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers resources may assign the site coordinator to this role. This position can also help schools be transparent about their various entry points for interested community partners. Dedicated space can be just as important as dedicated staff. Offering youth development organizations a designated space in the school during the school day can promote deeper connections between youth development partners and school-day personnel.

Communications are also critical. Schools and youth development partners need to work at developing and enhancing formal and informal collaboration and communication channels. This communication includes regular meetings between youth development program directors and principals to better understand and articulate how youth development organizations can help the school reach its goals regarding social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development.

Cross-sector partnerships can create the infrastructure (including policies and resources) needed for effective program implementation and alignment across schools and other systems that support youth. Strategies can include developing common standards of practice across the various partner agencies, being explicit about the expectations for linkage, and broadening accountability metrics so that more partners can work to deliver a far-reaching set of outcomes. A primary approach to supporting cross-sector, cross-system collaboration in the youth development sector is to establish local intermediaries whose mission is to support access to quality expanded learning opportunities in partnership with schools and other community institutions.

One feature of a strong collaboration between schools and youth development organizations is the ability of partners to access information and data from each other. These data can be used to both track and

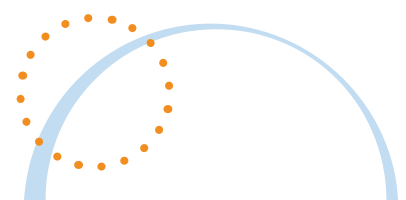
strengthen student performance and to better understand how the partnership can support improved learning settings on behalf of the whole learner. Working together the partners can: identify and track common outcomes; undertake community resource scans to identify gaps and assets in young people's access to a range of quality learning settings; establish robust data-sharing agreements among partners; create data systems that allow understanding of youth-level participation and experiences across the multiple settings where learning happens; and disaggregate and share data, including with families, to identify any disparities in who is getting access to which learning opportunities. In many communities, afterschool intermediaries are instrumental in obtaining and using data to improve learning settings and youth outcomes.

Leverage Resources Efficiently and Equitably

Balanced and equitable learning systems require balanced and equitable funding. To be effective partners in supporting social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development, the youth development sector needs increased and stable funding.

Historically, youth development programs have been underfunded, often cobbling together resources from multiple public and private sources that are short-term and unstable. Sustainability and growth, even for successful youth development programs with demonstrated results, are often elusive. Schools, too, face very tight budgets; in many cities across the country, school spending has still not recovered from the recession and health care costs and pensions are taking up larger shares of education budgets. Together, youth development organizations and schools can leverage each other's knowledge and resources to promote and strengthen social, emotional, cognitive, and academic skill development so that young people benefit.

If we are to succeed in changing the discourse and approach to how, when, and where learning happens, current funding streams must be better utilized and



new ones found. Local, state, and federal decision-makers have the means to improve and balance the funding landscape so that youth development organizations receive sufficient resources to be effective partners. For example, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative is the largest federal funding stream supporting local afterschool, before-school, and summer learning programs. States receive these funds and then offer grants to local schools and community-based organizations to provide programming to youth. As such, 21st CCLC presents a natural opportunity for youth development programs and schools to join forces in supporting a broad range of learning and developmental outcomes.

Partnerships between youth development organizations and schools can apply a variety of other strategies to leverage resources together:

- School budgets can identify partnership investments and how they are leveraging resources.

- State and municipal agencies can provide consistent communications and supports to ensure that schools and youth development partners are aware of any state and federal funding streams that could support partnerships and/or community partners and youth development organizations.
- Schools and their community partners can develop collaborative funding approaches, jointly applying for grants, sharing the cost of trainings, and even using youth development staff to free up teachers for collaborative planning time.



DENVER'S CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC LEARNING

The Denver Afterschool Alliance (DAA) partners with Denver Public Schools (DPS) to make social, emotional, and academic learning (SEAL) a priority. Denver's SEAL Initiative focuses on building the capacity of DPS and afterschool program staff—through aligned professional learning, coaching, partnership, and collaboration—to cultivate SEAL-rich, high-quality learning settings where youth

can thrive and be successful in school, out of school, and in life. Leveraging their expertise in positive youth development, the DAA works with four out-of-school-time (OST) organizations at six schools to elevate afterschool programming and cultivate a SEAL-rich climate and culture conducive to learning and growth. OST staff work alongside school-based SEAL coaches to develop

and provide 30-minute bursts of social and emotional learning content to DPS and afterschool staff in joint professional development settings. Providing the opportunity for OST staff to be seen as experts within the school space has a tremendous impact on the partnership, communication streams, and ultimately on the young people and families in the school communities.^x ■

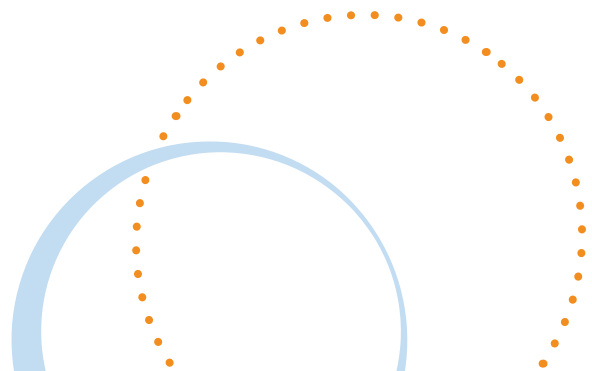


A Call for Collaborative Action

Youth development partners can play an essential role in moving the integration of social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development from the periphery to the mainstream of American education. These diverse organizations have independent and often deep relationships with youth, families, and other community partners that can facilitate trust building and engagement.

The sheer diversity of youth development organizations, however, also means that they do not always serve as a visible and coordinated force in their communities. The research on how students learn has brought new credence to the adage that schools can't do it alone. School leaders committed to galvanizing community commitment to a whole child, whole community approach to learning can accelerate this work by partnering with youth development organizations and networks in their communities and inviting youth development leaders to join them in setting community-wide goals. Four collaborative actions are required of communities to do this work:

1. Broaden the community's vision of both how learning happens and where and when learning happens, in order to deepen understanding of the differences in opportunity that exist within schools and neighborhoods.
2. Ensure that families, students, schools, and community partners, as well as key policy- and decision-makers, have more transparent data about whether and how students are finding and participating in the types of learning settings that best support their social, emotional, cognitive, and academic growth.
3. Increase all young people's access to a rich range of high-quality, year-round learning opportunities, throughout their developmental years, by documenting key gaps in availability, affordability, accessibility, quality, and appropriateness and strategizing about how to work together to fill them.
4. Find, align and, if needed, generate sufficient financial, human, management, and professional development resources to advance the shared vision for how learning happens and address pressing gaps in partnerships with municipal leadership, provider networks, funders, businesses, and other public systems.





COLLABORATIVE STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP TO ADVANCE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN CALIFORNIA

California has the nation's largest system of out-of-school-time expanded learning (afterschool and summer learning) programs in the nation. As the prominence of social and emotional learning surfaced in the fields of research and education, California's Expanded Learning system implemented a field-informed strategic planning process with support from philanthropy.^{xi} This process surfaced a key strategy of strengthening K-12 and expanded

learning program partnerships through collaboration to advance social and emotional learning. As a result, California explicitly identifies expanded learning programs as valuable partners and embeds youth development approaches throughout its work. This state-level endorsement of social and emotional learning guidelines provides further impetus for districts and schools to build authentic partnerships with expanded learning programs at the local

level. The state's entire Expanded Learning infrastructure has prioritized social and emotional learning through its Quality Standards, continuous quality improvement process, grant making, and system of support. California's largest school districts and their expanded learning partners have collaborated to integrate social and emotional learning in school, after school, and throughout summer and inter-session learning programs. ■

ENDNOTES

i National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development. (2018). *How Learning Happens: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Development. An Interim Report*. The National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, The Aspen Institute.

ii This longer definition was created by the [Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs](#), a collaboration of 20 federal departments and agencies that support youth, after a thorough literature review. While not used broadly, the federal working group uses the term positive youth development, in part to emphasize the intentionality needed to create positive settings and experiences. <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

iii For more information about afterschool intermediaries, see *Growing Together, Learning Together What Cities Have Discovered About Building Afterschool Systems*. <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Growing-Together-Learning-Together.pdf>

iv Jones, S. M. & Kahn, J. (2017). *The Evidence Base for How We Learn: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: Consensus Statements of Evidence from the Council of Distinguished Scientists*. The National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, The Aspen Institute.

v Bouffard, S., Wimer, C., Caronongan, P., Little, P., Dearing, E. & Simpkins, S. (2006). Demographic Differences in Patterns of Youth Out-of-School Time Activity Participation. *Journal of Youth Development*, Vol.1, No.1.

vi Olson, L. (2018). *School-Community Partnerships Joining Forces to Support the Learning and Development of All Students*. The National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, The Aspen Institute.

vii Jones, S.M., & Bouffard, S. (2012). Social and Emotional Learning in Schools: From Programs to Strategies. *Social Policy Report*, 23(4); Jones S.M., Brush, K., Bailey, R., Brion-Meisels, G., McIntyre, J., Kahn, J., Nelson, B. & Stickle, L. (2017). *Navigating SEL from the Inside Out*. The Wallace Foundation, New York, NY.; and Jones, S. M. & Kahn, J. (2017). *The Evidence Base for How We Learn: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: Consensus Statements of Evidence from the Council of Distinguished Scientists*. The National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, The Aspen Institute.

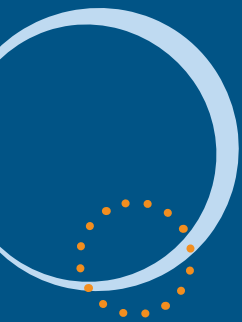
viii Cantor, P., Osher, D., Berg, J., Steyer, L., & Rose, T. (2018). Malleability, Plasticity, and Individuality: How Children Learn and Develop in Context. *Applied Developmental Science*, 1-31.

ix To learn more, see <https://www.expandedschools.org/>

x Denver is one of six communities participating in The Wallace Foundation's Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning Initiative. To learn more, see <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/how-we-work/our-work/pages/social-emotional-learning.aspx>

xi To learn more, see <https://www.caexpandedlearning.com/strategic-planning-process.html>

PHOTO CREDITS: Cover - Playworks Houston by Tyrone Turner; Page 5 - Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools.



About the Commission

The Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development is engaging and energizing communities to re-envision what constitutes success in our schools. Scientific evidence demonstrates that social, emotional, and academic development are interconnected in the learning process. The Commission is drawing from research and promising practices to explore how to make all these dimensions of learning part of the fabric of every school. Building upon existing work in schools, communities, and states across the country, the Commission is working to identify specific action steps in research, practice, and policy that will help shape and sustain a new era of education that reflects what we know about how learning happens.

The Commission's members are leaders from education, research, policy, business, and the military. The full Commission team includes a Council of Distinguished Scientists, a Council of Distinguished Educators, a Youth Commission, a Parent Advisory Panel, a Partners Collaborative, and a Funders Collaborative.

About the Youth Development Work Group

The Youth Development Work Group, under the leadership of Commissioner Karen J. Pittman, was convened to ensure that the critical perspective of the youth development sector is reflected in the recommendations being put forth by the Commission. Its members are: Afterschool Alliance; Alliance for a Healthier Generation; American Institutes for Research; American Youth Policy Forum; ASCD; BELL; Boys & Girls Clubs of America; California Afterschool Network; CASEL; City Year, Inc.; Communities In Schools; Connecticut After School Network; Corporation for National and Community Service; Every Hour Counts; Forum for Youth Investment; FourPoint Education Partners; Girls Inc.; Higher Achievement; MENTOR; National 4-H Council; National Afterschool Association; National Human Services Assembly; National League of Cities; National Urban League; National Summer Learning Association; Playworks; Special Olympics; Sprockets; The 50-State Afterschool Network; Trust for America's Health; UnidosUS; United Way Worldwide; Urban Libraries Council; WINGS for Kids; and YMCA of the USA.

About the Authors

Priscilla Little is a senior consultant to the Forum for Youth Investment, working closely with the National Commission to support the Outreach and Coalition-Building Subcommittee and co-manage the Youth Development Work Group. She is a national expert on youth development programs and intermediaries. Prior to joining the Forum, she was initiative manager at The Wallace Foundation and associate director of the Harvard Family Research Project.

Commissioner Karen J. Pittman is CEO and president of the Forum for Youth Investment, a national nonprofit, nonpartisan "action tank" that combines thought leadership on youth development, youth policy, cross-system/cross-sector partnerships, and developmental youth practice with on-the-ground training, technical assistance and supports. Karen is a respected sociologist and youth development leader.

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