



# The Forum for Youth Investment

## Improving Youth Readiness, Increasing Youth Success

Takoma Park Community Conversation on Youth Success

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All youth ready for college, work & life.

**READINESS**

SHOULD BE  
A **RIGHT**  
FOR ALL  
YOUNG PEOPLE

# Too Few Young Adults Are Doing Well

Researchers Gambone, Connell and Klem (2002) estimate that only 4 out of 10 young people are doing well in their early 20s.

## 22% are having difficulty

*Definition: Doing poorly in two life areas and not well in any*

- **Productivity:** Have high school diploma or less, be unemployed, on welfare
- **Health:** Have poor health, health habits, unsupportive relationships
- **Connectedness:** Commit an illegal activity about once a month

## 43% are doing well

*Definition: Doing well in two life areas and okay in one*

- **Productivity:** Attending college or working steadily
- **Health:** Have good health, health habits, healthy relationships
- **Connectedness:** Volunteer, be politically active, be active in religious institutions, community

Providing these supports *Can* change the odds from 4 in 10 to 7 in 10 doing well.

# The Reality: We Know What It Takes to Increase Engagement and Support Development

*The National Research Council reports that teens need:*

- Physical and psychological safety
- Appropriate structure
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities to belong
- Positive social norms
- Support for efficacy and mattering
- Opportunities for skill-building
- Integration of family, school and community efforts

# Do these Supports Really Make a Difference? *Even in Adolescence?*

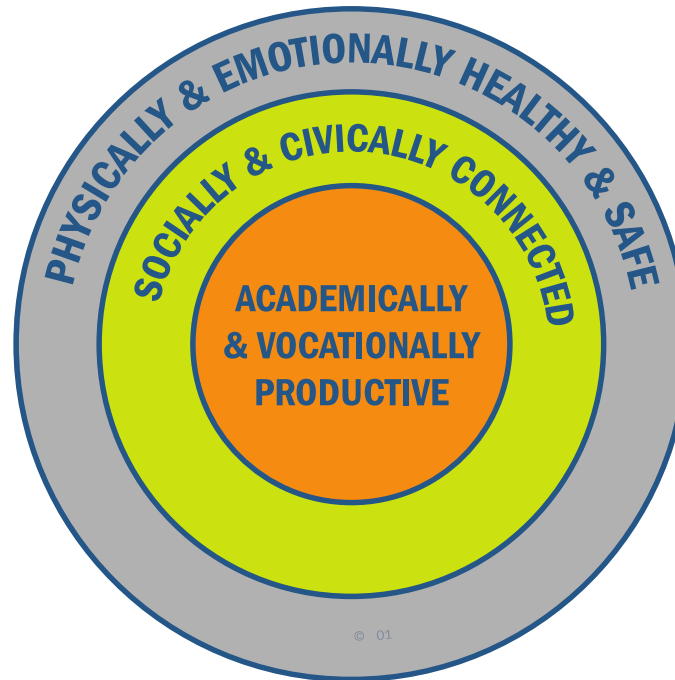
**ABSOLUTELY**

Gambone and colleagues show that youth with *supportive relationships* as they enter high school are *5 times more likely* to leave high school “ready” than those with weak relationships...

... and those seniors who were “ready” at the end of high school were more than *4 times as likely* to be doing well as young adults.

SOURCE: *Finding Out What Matters for Youth: Testing Key Links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*

# Ready Children & Youth



Struggling

Striving

Thriving

# THE READINESS ABILITIES



## I CAN THINK & CREATE

in ways that help me to navigate and experience life.



## I CAN FEEL & EXPRESS EMOTION

appropriately and as a way to connect with others.



## I CAN GET & STAY HEALTHY

physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.



## I CAN APPLY LEARNING

in the real world and to meet life demands.



## I CAN USE INSIGHTS TO GROW & DEVELOP

in each stage of life.



## I CAN WORK & STAY FOCUSED

in each area of life.



## I CAN RELATE TO OTHERS & THE WORLD

by forming, managing and sustaining my relationships.



## I CAN ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE & PLACES

by being present and engaging in meaningful, real and honest ways.



## I CAN PERSIST THROUGH STRUGGLES & MAINTAIN HOPE

no matter my challenges.

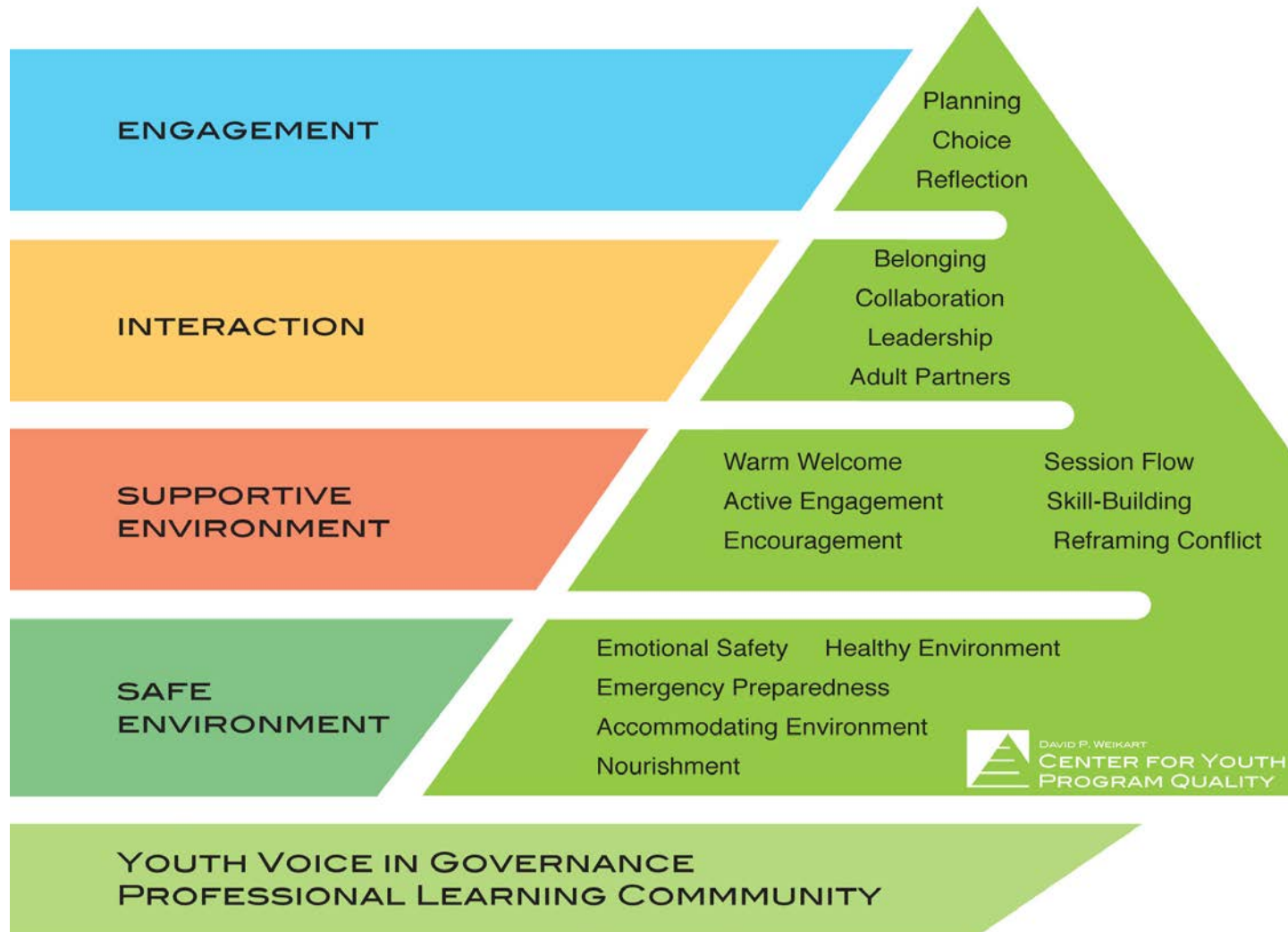


## I CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS & MAKE DECISIONS

about the intellectual, social, moral and emotional issues and problems that I face.



# Quality Matters



# Readiness = Being Willing + Being Prepared

