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In the 20th century, childhood and adolescence came to be increasingly regarded as special periods of development in which children were provided extra support to learn and develop. Early in the century, American society assumed an increased sense of responsibility for the care of its young people, including increasing the reach of education, delaying entry into the workforce, and providing supports for families who, historically, had nurtured the development of children. As the century progressed, changes in family socialization created changes in conceptualization of school and community practices to support the family in its mission to raise successful children. (Weissberg and Greenberg, 1997)

In the mid-20th century, increases in juvenile crime and concerns about troubled youth led to the inception of federal funding initiatives to address these issues. These trends accelerated during the 1960s, as did national rates of poverty, divorce, out-of-wedlock births, family mobility, and single parenthood (Bumpass & Lu, 2000).

At first, interventions to support families and children were focused on reducing juvenile crime or transforming poor character in youth (e.g., Chilton & Markle, 1972). As youth problems became more prevalent, intervention and treatment responses for a wide range of specific problems were developed. In the last four decades of the 20th century, both services and policies designed to reduce the problem behaviors of troubled youth expanded. The effectiveness of these approaches has been extensively examined in a variety of research studies on substance abuse, conduct disorders, delinquent and antisocial behavior, academic failure, and teenage pregnancy (cf. Agee, 1979; Clarke & Cornish, 1978; Cooper, Altman, Brown, & Czechowicz, 1983; De Leon & Ziegenfuss, 1986; Friedman & Beschner, 1985; Gold & Mann, 1984).
Another approach to address youth problems was to prevent problems before they occurred. Prevention approaches emerged about a decade later than treatment approaches. These approaches sought to address the circumstances (families, schools, communities, peer groups) of children's lives. Often growing out of earlier treatment efforts, most prevention programs initially focused on the prevention of a single problem behavior (e.g., Berleman, 1980; Janvier, Guthmann, & Catalano, 1980; Moskowitz, 1989).

Prevention of youth problems in the 21st century has evolved from earlier models. Many early prevention efforts were not based on child development theory or research. As expanded investment in the evaluation sciences was initiated from the 1960s, prevention strategies changed as many approaches failed to show positive impact on youth problems including drug use, pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, school failure, or delinquent behavior (cf. Ennett, Tobler, Ringwalt, & Flewelling, 1994; Kirby, Harvey, Claussenius, & Novar, 1989; Malvin, Moskowitz, Schaeffer, & Schaps, 1984; Mitchell DiCenzo et al., 1997; Snow, Gilchrist, & Schinke, 1985; Thomas et al., 1992).

Faced with early failures, prevention program developers became increasingly aligned with the science of behavior development and change and began designing program elements to address predictors of specific problem behaviors identified in longitudinal and intervention studies of youth (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994). A second generation of prevention efforts sought to use this information on predictors to interrupt the processes leading to specific problem behaviors. For example, drug abuse prevention programs began to address empirically identified predictors of adolescent drug use, such as peer and social influences to use drugs, and social norms that condone or promote such behaviors (cf. Ellickson & Bell, 1990; Flay et al., 1988; Pentz, Dwyer, et al., 1994; Pentz, MacKinnon, et al., 1989). These prevention efforts were often guided by theories about how people make decisions, such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Morrison, Simpson, Gillmore, Wells, & Hoppe, 1994), and the Health Belief Model (Janz & Becker, 1984; Rosenstock, Strecher, & Becker, 1988).

In the 1980s, these prevention efforts focused on predictors of a single problem behavior and came under increasing criticism. Critics urged prevention program developers to consider the co-occurrence of problem behaviors within the child, and the fact that there was extensive overlap in predictors across multiple problem behaviors. At the same time, prevention program developers were also encouraged to broaden their focus from individual predictors of problems to incorporate environmental predictors and individual-environment predictor interactions in their programs. Further, many critics advocated a focus on factors that promote positive youth development, in addition to focusing on reducing factors that predict problems. Such concerns, expressed by prevention practitioners, policymakers, and prevention scientists, helped expand the design of prevention programs to include components aimed at promoting positive youth development. These critics suggested that successful childhood and adolescent development required more than avoiding drugs, violence, school failure, or risky sexual activity. The promotion of children's social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development began to be seen as key to preventing problem behaviors (W. T. Grant Consortium on the School-Based Promotion of Social Competence, 1992).

In the 1990s, practitioners, policymakers, and prevention scientists adopted a broader focus for addressing youth issues (Pittman, O'Brien, & Kimball, 1993). Resourced with a growing body of research on the developmental etiology of problem and positive behaviors (Evans et al., 2005; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Howell, Krisberg, Hawkins, & Wilson, 1995; Kellam & Rebok, 1992; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998; Moore, Lippman, & Brown, 2004; Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994; Newcomb, Maddahian, & Bentler, 1986) and comprehensive outcome reports from rigorous randomized and non-randomized controlled trials of positive youth development programs
(e.g., Durlak & Wells, 1997; Greenberg, 1996; Greenberg & Kusche, 1997; Hahn, Leavitt, & Aaron, 1994; Weissberg & Caplan, 1998), policymakers, practitioners, and prevention scientists were now converging in their focus on the developmental precursors of both positive and negative youth development.

In the late 1990s, youth development practitioners, the policy community, and prevention scientists reached similar conclusions about promoting better outcomes for youth. They all called for expanding programs beyond a single problem behavior focus and considering program effects on a range of positive and problem behaviors (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002; Kirby, Barth, Leland, & Fetro, 1991; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, Chalk, & Phillips, 1996; Pittman, 1991). Prevention and developmental research provide substantial evidence that many youth outcomes, both positive and negative, are affected by the same predictors, including risk factors that increase the likelihood of problems and protective factors that appear to promote positive behavior or buffer the effects of risk exposure (Howell et al., 1995). The evidence that risk and protective factors are found across family, peer, school, and community environments led to recommendations that positive youth development interventions address multiple socialization forces—across family, school, community, peer, and individual (National Research Council & Institute of Medicine et al., 1996). This convergence in thinking has been recognized in forums on youth development including practitioners, policymakers (Pittman, 1991; Pittman & Fleming, 1991), and prevention scientists (National Research Council & Institute of Medicine 2002; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine et al., 1996; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1997) who have advocated that models of healthy development hold the key to both health promotion and prevention of problem behaviors.

**POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTS**

In reviewing the literature and conducting a consensus meeting of leading scientists sponsored by the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 1999), an operational definition of positive youth development constructs was created in 1997. This definition was further developed by a meeting of scientists organized by the Annenberg Sunnylands Trust (Seligman et al., 2005). The following section provides a listing followed by a description of constructs addressed by youth development programs.

1. Promotes bonding
2. Fosters resilience
3. Promotes social competence
4. Promotes emotional competence
5. Promotes cognitive competence
6. Promotes behavioral competence
7. Promotes moral competence
8. Fosters self-determination
9. Fosters spirituality
10. Fosters self-efficacy
11. Fosters clear and positive identity
12. Fosters belief in the future
13. Provides recognition for positive behavior
14. Provides opportunities for prosocial involvement
15. Fosters prosocial norms
16. Fosters positive emotions
17. Promotes life satisfaction
18. Promotes strength of character

These constructs are described below.

**Promotes Bonding**

Bonding is the emotional attachment and commitment a child makes to social relationships in the family, peer group, school, community, or culture. Child development studies frequently describe bonding and attachment processes as internal working models for how a child forms social connections with others (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1973, 1979, 1982; Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975). The interactions between a child and a child’s caregivers build the foundation for bonding which is a key to the development of the child’s capacity for motivated behavior. Positive bonding with an adult is crucial to the development of a capacity for adaptive responses to change, and growth into a healthy and functional adult. Good bonding establishes the child’s trust in self and others. Poor bonding establishes a fundamental sense of mistrust in self and others, creating an emotional emptiness that the child may try to fill in other ways, possibly through drugs, impulsive acts, antisocial peer relations, or other problem behaviors (Braucht, Kirby, & Berry, 1978; Brook, Brook, Gordon, Whiteman, & Cohen, 1990; Kandel, Kessler, & Margulies, 1978).

The importance of bonding reaches far beyond the family. How a child establishes early bonds to caregivers will directly affect the manner in which the child later bonds to peers, school, the community, and culture(s). The quality of a child’s bonds to these other domains is an essential aspect of positive development (Brophy, 1988; Brophy & Good, 1986; Dolan, Kellam, & Brown, 1989; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992).

**Fosters Resilience**

Resilience is an individual’s capacity for adapting to change and stressful events in healthy and flexible ways. It has been identified in research studies as a characteristic of youth who, when exposed to multiple risk factors, show successful responses to challenges and use this learning to achieve successful outcomes (Hawkins, Catalano, Morrison et al., 1992; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Rutter, 1985; Werner, 1989, 1995). The National Research Council & Institute of Medicine (1996, p. 4), have defined resilience as “patterns that protect children from adopting problem behaviors in the face of risk.”

**Promotes Competencies**

Competence covers five areas of youth functioning: social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral competencies.

**Social Competence**

Social competence involves a range of interpersonal skills that help youth integrate feelings, thinking, and actions in order to achieve specific social and interpersonal goals (Caplan et al., 1992; Weissberg, Caplan, & Sivo, 1989). These skills include encoding relevant social cues; ac-
curately interpreting those social cues; generating effective solutions to interpersonal problems; realistically anticipating consequences and potential obstacles to one's actions; and translating social decisions into effective behavior (Consortium on the School-Based Promotion of Social Competence, 1994).

**Emotional Competence**

Emotional competence is the ability to identify and respond to feelings and emotional reactions in oneself and others. Salovey and Mayer (1989) identified five elements of emotional competence: knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. The W.T. Grant Consortium's list of emotional skills includes: "Identifying and labeling feelings, expressing feelings, assessing the intensity of feelings, managing feelings, delaying gratification, controlling impulses, and reducing stress" (W.T. Grant Consortium on the School-Based Promotion of Social Competence, 1992). Goleman (1995) has proposed empathy and hope as components of emotional intelligence.

**Cognitive Competence**

Cognitive competence includes two overlapping but distinct sub-constructs. The W.T. Grant Consortium (1992, p. 136) defined the first form of cognitive competence as the ability to develop and apply the cognitive skills of "self-talk...the reading and interpretation of social cues...using steps for problem-solving and decision making...understanding the perspective of others...understanding behavioral norms...a positive attitude toward life, and self awareness."

The second aspect of cognitive competence is related to academic and intellectual achievement. The emphasis here is on the development of core capacities, including the ability to use logic, analytic thinking, and abstract reasoning.

**Behavioral Competence**

Behavioral competence refers to effective action. The W.T. Grant Consortium (1992, p. 136) identified three dimensions of behavioral competence: Nonverbal communication ("through eye contact, facial expressiveness, tone of voice, gestures, style of dress"), verbal communication ("making clear requests, responding effectively to criticism...expressing feelings clearly"), and taking action ("walking away situations involving negative influences, helping others, participating in positive activities").

**Moral Competence**

Moral competence is a youth's ability to assess and respond to the ethical, affective, or social justice dimensions of a situation. Piaget (1952, 1965) described moral maturity as both a respect for rules and a sense of social justice. Kohlberg (1963, 1969, 1981) defined moral development as a multistage process through which children acquire society's standards of right and wrong, focusing on choices made in facing moral dilemmas. Hoffman (1981) said that the roots of morality are in empathy, or empathic arousal, which has a neurological basis and can be either fostered or suppressed by environmental influences. He also asserted that empathic arousal eventually becomes an important mediator of altruism, a quality that many interventions try to promote in young people. Nucci (1997, 2001) considered fairness and welfare as central concerns for moral judgments.
Fosters Self-Determination

Self-determination is the ability to think for oneself and to take action consistent with that thought. Fetterman, Kaftarian, and Wandersman (1996) defined self-determination as the ability to chart one's own course. Much of the literature on self-determination has emerged from work with disabled youth (Brotherson, Cook, Cunconan Lahr, & Wehmeyer, 1995; Field, 1996; Sands & Doll, 1996; Wehmeyer, 1996) and from cultural identity work with ethnic and minority populations (Snyder & Zoann, 1994; Swisher, 1996). While some writers expressed concern that self-determination may emphasize individual development at the expense of group-oriented values (Ewalt & Mokuau, 1995), others linked self-determination to innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1994).

Fosters Spirituality

To incorporate religiosity and nontraditional forms of applied spiritual practice, spirituality is defined here to include affiliation, belief in a transcendent hierarchy of values, and practice relevant to both formal religion (which considers God-given values to be at the top of the hierarchy of values) and also less formal conceptions of spirituality such as internal reflection and considering a transcendental hierarchy of solely humanistic values (Berube et al., 1995). Although well-controlled evaluation studies are lacking, belief and practices related to spirituality have been associated with overall improvements in both physical health (Levin, 1996), mental health (Seybold & Hill, 2001), and happiness (Myers, 2000), and in some research with the development of a youth's moral reasoning, moral commitment, or a belief in the moral order (Hirschi, 1969; Stark & Bainbridge, 1997). Recent reviews of the relationship between religiosity and adolescent well-being found that religiosity was positively associated with prosocial values and behavior, and negatively related to suicide ideation and attempts, substance abuse, premature sexual involvement, and delinquency (Benson, 1992; Benson, Donahue, & Erickson, 1989; Donahue & Benson, 1995). As there are research findings that challenge the contribution of spirituality (Sloan, Bagiella, & Powell, 1999); better designed studies are required to convincingly establish the contribution of spirituality to youth development and to explain the underlying processes.

Fosters Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the perception that one can achieve desired goals within specific domains (e.g., educational attainment) through one's own action. Bandura (1989, p. 1175) stated that "Self-efficacy beliefs function as an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect, and action. They operate on action through motivational, cognitive, and affective intervening processes." Others have documented that the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goals people set for themselves and the firmer their commitment to them (Locke, Frederick, Lee, & Bobko, 1984).

Fosters Clear and Positive Identity

Clear and positive identity is the internal organization of a coherent sense of self. The construct is associated with the theory of identity development emerging from studies of how children establish their identities across different social contexts, cultural groups, and genders. Identity is viewed as a "self-structure," an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abili-
ties, beliefs, and individual history, which is shaped by the child’s navigation of normal crises or challenges at each stage of development (Erikson, 1968). Erikson described overlapping yet distinct stages of psychosocial development that influence a child’s sense of social identity throughout life, but which are especially critical in the first 20 years. If the adolescent or young adult does not achieve a healthy identity, role confusion can result. Developmental theorists assert that successful identity achievement during adolescence depends on the child’s successful resolution of earlier stages.

Stages of identity development may be linked to gender differences in preadolescence and adolescence (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992). Investigations of the positive identity development of gay and bisexual youth have become a focus for some researchers (Johnston & Bell, 1995). For youth of color, the development of positive identity and its role in healthy psychological functioning is closely linked with the development of ethnic identity (Mendelberg, 1986; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, 1990, 1991; Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, 1990; Plummer, 1995), issues of bicultural identification (Phinney & Devich Navarro, 1997), and bicultural or cross-cultural competence (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; LaFromboise & Rowe, 1983). Some have suggested that it is healthy for ethnic minority youth to be consciously socialized to understand the multiple demands and expectations of both the majority and minority culture (Spencer, 1990; Spencer & Markstrom Adams, 1990). This process may offer psychological protection through providing a sense of identity that captures the strengths of the ethnic culture and helps buffer experiences of racism and other risk factors (Hill, Piper, & Moberg, 1994).

**Fosters Belief in the Future**

Belief in the future is the internalization of hope and optimism about possible outcomes. This construct is linked to studies on long-range goal setting, belief in higher education, and beliefs that support employment or work values: “Having a future gives a teenager reasons for trying and reasons for valuing his life” (Prothrow-Stith, 1991, p. 57). Research demonstrates that positive future expectations predict better social and emotional adjustment in school, while acting as a protective factor in reducing the negative effects of high stress on self-rated competence (Wyman, Cowen, Work, & Kerley, 1993).

**Provides Recognition for Positive Behavior**

Recognition for positive involvement is the positive response of those in the social environment to desired behaviors by youths. According to social learning theory, behavior is in large part a consequence of the reinforcement or lack of reinforcement that follows action. Behavior is strengthened through reward (positive reinforcement) and avoidance of punishment (negative reinforcement) or weakened by aversive stimuli (positive punishment) and loss of reward (negative punishment) (Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, & Radosevich, 1979; Bandura, 1973). Reinforcement affects an individual’s motivation to engage in similar behavior in the future. Both external and intrinsic reinforcers are generally agreed to have important influences on behavior, although there are differences of opinion regarding their relative importance.

**Provides Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement**

Opportunity for prosocial involvement is the presentation of events and activities across different social environments that encourage youths to participate in prosocial actions. Providing prosocial opportunities in the non-school hours has been the focus of much discussion and
study (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992; Pittman, 1991). In order for a child to acquire key interpersonal skills in early development, positive opportunities for interaction and participation must be available (Hawkins, Catalano, Jones, & Fine, 1987; Patterson, Chamberlain, & Reid, 1982). In adolescence, it is especially important that youth have the opportunity for interaction with positively oriented peers and for involvement in roles in which they can make a contribution to the group, whether family, school, neighborhood, peer group, or larger community (Dryfoos, 1990).

**Fosters Prosocial Norms**

Prosocial norms are healthy beliefs and clear standards for a variety of positive behaviors and prohibitions against involvement in unhealthy or risky behaviors (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Hawkins, Catalano, Morrison et al., 1992). These norms may or may not be internalized depending on one's opportunities, one's abilities and experiences in these opportunities, and how well the beliefs and standards produce results valued by the individual, including recognition from valued others. Over time, these standards or modified standards become part of the individual's value system and help to determine which activities the individual views as morally acceptable. In terms of antisocial behavior and drug use, there is evidence that healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior inhibit the initiation of minor offending (Agnew, 1985), drug and alcohol use (Catalano, Kosterman, Hawkins, Newcomb, & Abbott, 1996; Lonczak et al., 2001), and violence (Huang, Kosterman, Catalano, Hawkins, & Abbott, 2001).

**Fosters Positive Emotions**

Emotions like joy, contentment, and love have been linked by research to the broadening and building of psychological skills and abilities (Fredrickson, 2000, 2002).

**Promotes Life Satisfaction**

Life satisfaction is the overall judgment that one's life is a good one (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Among youth, life satisfaction is associated with the presence of desirable psychological characteristics and the absence of negative characteristics, including problem behaviors and psychological disorders (Park, 2004b).

**Promotes Strength of Character**

Positive traits like curiosity, kindness, gratitude, hope, and humor are components of strength of character (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Among young people, such strengths are robustly linked to life satisfaction and can function as buffers against the negative effects of stress and trauma (Park, 2004a).

**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THEORY**

In the early 21st century, efforts have begun to emerge that attempt to tie this long list of youth developmental constructs together in theories of positive youth development (Blechman, Prinz, & Dumas, 1995; Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; Cicchetti & Cohen, 1995; Dryfoos, 1997; Durlak, 1998; Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001; Kellam & Rebold,
These theories attempt to improve our understanding of the mechanisms through which different risk and protective factors influence positive youth development and problem behavior.

While the field of positive youth development is characterized by several theories of positive youth development, no theory predominates. Rather than review theories, we briefly present our theory as an example guide to mechanisms that produce youth development. The social development model (SDM; Catalano & Hawkins, 1996, 2002) is a theory of human behavior that attempts to provide an explanation of the development of positive and problem behavior. It recognizes that development is a product of an individual's behavior in multiple social environments across development. The SDM is explicitly developmental. Four developmental submodels of the SDM have been specified. The same constructs are included in each submodel, although their specific content is defined differently by individual development and changes in social environments. These developmental periods include preschool, elementary school, middle school, and high school, corresponding to major transitions in socializing environments (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). The developmentally specific submodels have been constructed as recursive models; however, the SDM hypothesizes reciprocal relationships between constructs across developmental periods.

The social development model builds on social control theory (Hirschi, 1969), social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Cressey, 1953), and differential association theory (Cressey, 1953; Matsueda, 1988). Control theory is used to identify causal elements in the etiology of problem and positive behavior. Social learning theory is used to identify processes by which patterns of positive and problem behavior are learned, extinguished, or maintained. Differential association theory is used to identify parallel but separate causal paths for prosocial and antisocial processes. This synthetic theory pays particular attention to resolving competing theoretical assumptions of these different theories (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). The SDM hypothesizes that children and youth must learn patterns of behavior, whether prosocial or antisocial. These patterns are learned in families, schools, peer groups, and the community. It is hypothesized that socialization follows the same processes of social learning, whether it produces positive or problem behavior. Children are socialized through processes involving four constructs: (1) perceived opportunities for involvement in activities and interactions with others; (2) the degree of involvement and interaction; (3) the skills to participate in these involvements and interactions; and (4) the reinforcement they perceive from these involvements and interactions (see Figure 23.1).

When socializing processes are consistent, a social bond develops between the individual and the socializing unit. Once strongly established, the social bond has power to effect behavior independently of the above four social learning processes. The social bond inhibits deviant behaviors through the establishment of an individual's "stake" in conforming to the norms and values of the socializing unit. It is hypothesized that the behavior of the individual will be prosocial or antisocial depending on the relative influence of norms and values held by those to whom the individual is bonded. While departing from traditional control theory and attachment theory, which assert that secure bonding always inhibits deviance, the SDM builds on evidence that bonds exist with drug-involved and delinquent peers (Agnew, 1991; Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Gest, & Gariepy, 1988) and family (Fleming, Brewer, Gainey, Haggerty, & Catalano, 1997; Foshee & Bauman, 1992; Hoppe et al., 1998), and such bonds are associated with increased levels of deviance. Social and emotional bonds are only expected to inhibit antisocial behavior if those to whom a child is bonded hold norms clearly opposed to the antisocial behavior. Individuals who develop bonds to antisocial family, peers, or school personnel are expected to be encouraged to engage in antisocial behavior. Thus, two paths are hypothesized with similar socialization
processes operating, one a prosocial (protective) path, and one an antisocial (risk) path. Both paths influence positive and antisocial behavior.

Several environmental and individual exogenous factors are incorporated into this model. The effect of these variables is expected to be mediated by other SDM constructs. These factors are: external constraints (e.g., family management practices), which are hypothesized to affect both prosocial and antisocial rewards and skills; position in the social structure (gender, race, and age), which affect prosocial and antisocial opportunities; and constitutional factors (individual traits, biological, or genetic factors), which affect both prosocial and antisocial opportunities, rewards, and skills.

**POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND MORAL AND CHARACTER EDUCATION**

The constructs included under the umbrella of positive youth development have emerged through consensus meetings involving scientists, practitioners, and policymakers synthesizing findings across the developmental, evaluation, and behavioral sciences. These efforts have married diverse science and practice across a range of disciplines and have achieved an encompassing scope in the characterization of positive youth development such that domains that form the focus in the moral and character education movement have been included. The moral and character education movement shares historical similarities with many areas of positive youth development in the youth domains that have been addressed, the interventions that have been developed and tested, and in the challenges faced in attempting to integrate research and practice (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Leming, 1993).

A common starting point evident in the writing of supporters of moral and character education has been the concern that modern socializing institutions have failed to reinforce the moral development of children and young people (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999; Leming, 1993). Many of the trends that have been of concern, including youth homicide, gun carrying, teen pregnancy, and substance abuse (Leming, 1993), have also been the targets of broader programs endeavoring to advance positive youth development.
A recent review focused on character education programs that had been designed to increase student outcomes related to positive character development, prosocial behavior, and academic performance. This review defined character education programs as “activities and experiences organized...for the purpose of fostering positive character development and the associated core ethical values (also described as moral values, virtues, character traits, or principles).” Character is defined in terms of both moral and ethical qualities and their “demonstration in emotional responses, reasoning, and behavior” (Institute of Education Sciences, 2006).

Concern about the decline in national character during the economic boom of the 1920s led to the initial rise of the character education movement. Curricula during this period encouraged students to reflect on and adhere to defined codes for moral living, and used policy and peer strategies to inspire higher standards of conduct. With the emergence of empiricism in educational and behavioral research, the heavily didactic teaching strategies employed in these programs were submitted to scientific evaluation. A large and pioneering study involving behavioral observations of over 10,000 students found the early character education programs had largely failed to encourage either moral thinking or prosocial behavior (Hartshorne, May, Maller, & Shuttleworth, 1928–1930). Character education waned in American schools until the 1960s when efforts to apply Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning and growing interest in values clarification seeded a range of moral education applications that were distinctive in facilitating students to clarify a personally meaningful morality. These programs were often based in scientific efforts to test aspects of cognitive development theory. Experimental studies tended to find that these programs improved student moral reasoning but had little influence on social behavior (Leming, 1993).

In the 1970s and 1980s, new moral development and prosocial behavior programs began to emerge that focused on social organization and relationships. These programs emphasized social interaction and structural influence processes as important theoretical drivers of prosocial behavior, and introduced strategies such as cooperative learning and democratic participation in discipline policies. Experimental and controlled evaluations suggested a number of these programs had positive effects in reducing student behavior problems and increasing prosocial behavior and educational outcomes (Battistich, Watson, Solomon, Schaps, & Solomon, 1991; Slavin, 1990). These programs have provided important insights that have been influential within the broader positive youth development movement.

The moral and character education programs that are most commonly used in American schools do not appear to reflect the diversity of underpinning theory and practice evident in the history of this movement. Following their resurgence through the 1990s, many programs utilize school curricula with the aim of encouraging a common code of values, and, in this sense, resemble the programs developed in the earliest period of the character education movement (Bebeau et al., 1999; Leming, 1993); recent reviews and evaluations of programs have shown mixed effects, with some programs demonstrating no effects (Institute of Education Sciences, 2006; Leming, 1993). Bebeau et al. (1999) comment that the implicit theory underpinning a number of curriculum-based programs is that didactic teaching of traditional values, reinforced with a behavioral code reflecting these curriculum values, will be effective in changing both values and behavior.

The review of character education programs conducted by the Institute of Education Sciences (2006) identified four programs that had been submitted to evaluations that at least partly met quality evidence standards. None of the programs evaluated was found to have impacted prosocial behavior and only one program (Building Decision Skills combined with service learning) was found to have had potentially positive effects on attitudes and values (Leming, 2001), while one other program (The Lessons in Character curricula) was found to have potentially positive effects for academic achievement (Devargas, 1999; Dietsch & Bayha, 2005; Dietsch, Bayha, & Zheng, 2005).
The growing emphasis on the evaluation of character and moral education programs reflects the broader emphasis on evidence-based practice. Interest in character education has seeded innovative programming and scientific investigation that have influenced positive youth development programs. The recent failure of a number of evaluations to find effects for character education programs (Institute of Education Sciences, 2006) has led to calls to better integrate the practice of character education with the lessons from the evaluation of programs that have successfully promoted positive youth development (Leming, 1993).

EVALUATIONS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

In 1997 we published a systematic review of the unpublished and published literature to find programs that met the following criteria:

- Address one or more of the positive youth development constructs.
- Work with youth age 6 to 20. Because there have been extensive reviews of early child development programs, we excluded programs that focused on children younger than age 6. We chose to include programs aimed at youth up to age 20 to capture the essence of youth development rather than young adult development. Since our 1997 review, much has been written about the developmental stage of emerging adulthood and much has come to light about the development of the brain continuing into the 20s. These concepts and physiological development findings did not drive our review; rather, the review was driven by the concept of youth development, excluding early child development and young adult development.
- Involve a universal sample of youth (not a sample selected because of their need for treatment).
- Address at least one youth development construct in multiple socialization domains, or address multiple youth development constructs in a single socialization domain, or address multiple youth development constructs in multiple domains. Programs that addressed a single youth development construct in a single socialization domain were excluded from this review.

In addition to these program criteria, the program's evaluation had to meet the below criteria. Complete description and operationalization of these inclusion criteria can be found in Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, and Hawkins (2002).

- Adequate study design and outcome measures
- Adequate description of the research methodologies
- Description of the population served
- Description of the intervention
- Description of implementation
- Effects demonstrated on behavioral outcomes

A diverse range of programs met our selection criteria, some of which may be described as positive youth development programs, some as promotion programs, and others as primary prevention programs. We found that a number of programs, traditionally considered primary prevention interventions, incorporated many of the same positive youth development constructs as programs usually viewed as positive youth development programs.
One hundred sixty-one programs were identified as potentially within the scope of that review. Seventy-seven of these positive youth development programs had evaluations that met the initial criteria for the analysis. Eight of the 77 programs with evaluations had to be removed from the review due to missing information. Thirty-nine programs did not have adequate evaluations, and five did not have positive effects on behavioral outcomes. Twenty-five programs incorporated positive youth development constructs into universal or selective approaches, had strong evaluation designs (experimental or quasi-experimental with viable comparison groups), had an acceptable standard of statistical proof, provided adequate methodological detail to allow an independent assessment of the study’s soundness, and produced evidence of significant effects on youths’ behavioral outcomes.

SUMMARY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program results are briefly summarized in this section, organized by effects on positive and negative outcomes. Illustrative references to articles describing outcomes of these programs are provided when the program is first mentioned. More complete descriptions of the programs, research designs, behavioral outcomes, and complete references are available elsewhere (Catalano, Berglund et al., 2002).

Positive outcomes for youth in these programs included a variety of improvements in emotional competence, including greater self-control (PATHS—Greenberg & Kusche, 1997; Bicultural Competence Skills—Schinke, Orlandi, Botvin, Gilchrist, & Locklear, 1988), frustration tolerance (Children of Divorce—Pedro-Carroll & Cowen, 1985), increased empathy (PATHS), and expression of feelings (Fast Track—Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 2002; PATHS). Improvements in social competence included interpersonal skills (Child Development Project—Battistich, Schaps, Watson, & Solomon, 1996; Life Skills Training—Botvin et al., 2000; Social Competence Promotion Program—Weissberg & Caplan, 1998; Children of Divorce; Fast Track), greater assertiveness (Bicultural Competence Skills; Children of Divorce), greater self-efficacy with respect to substance use refusal (Project Northland—Perry et al., 1996), healthy and adaptive coping in peer-pressure situations (Bicultural Competence Skills), improvements in acceptance of authority (Fast Track), and improvements in race relations and perceptions of others from different cultural or ethnic groups (Woodrock Youth Development Project—LoSciuto, Freeman, Harrington, Altman, & Lanphear, 1997). Increases in cognitive competence included decision making (Life Skills Training) and better problem solving (Children of Divorce; PATHS; Social Competence Promotion Program). Increases in behavioral competence included better health practices (Growing Healthy—Smith, Redican, & Olsen, 1992; Know Your Body—Walter, Vaughan, & Wynder, 1989) and greater self-efficacy around contraceptive practices (Reducing the Risk—Kirby et al., 1991). Positive youth development programs were associated with improvements in parental bonding and communication (Seattle Social Development Project—Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Big Brothers/Big Sisters—Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995; Reducing the Risk). Positive outcomes also included increased acceptance of prosocial norms regarding substance use (Project ALERT—Ellickson & Bell, 1990; Life Skills Training). A variety of positive school outcomes were also achieved by some youth development programs, including higher achievement (Teen Outreach—Allen, Philliber, Herrling, & Kuperminc, 1997; Valued Youth Partnerships—Cardenas, Montecel, Supik, & Harris, 1992; Success for All—Slavin, 1996; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Seattle Social Development Project), higher school attachment (Seattle Social Development Project), increased high school attendance (Quantum Opportunities—Hahn et al., 1994; Big Brothers/Big Sisters), increased high school
graduation (Across Ages—LoSciuto, Rajala, Townsend, & Taylor, 1996; Quantum Opportunities Program; Seattle Social Development Project; Valued Youth Partnerships), and increased post-secondary school and college attendance (Quantum Opportunities Program; Seattle Social Development Project). Other positive youth outcomes included higher levels of voluntary community service (Across Ages) and use of community services when needed (Creating Lasting Connections—Johnson et al., 1996).

Problem behaviors were also reduced or prevented. For several programs, substance use was lower, including alcohol or drug use (Midwestern Prevention Project—Pentz et al., 1994; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Child Development Project; Life Skills Training; Project Alert; Project Northland; Seattle Social Development Project; Woodrock Youth Development Project; Bicultural Competence Skills) and tobacco use (Child Development Project; Growing Healthy; Know Your Body; Life Skills Training; Midwestern Prevention Project; Project ALERT; Project Northland; Woodrock Youth Development Project). Several programs reduced delinquency and aggression (Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways—Farrell & Meyer, 1997; Metropolitan Area Child Study—Guerra, Eron, Huesmann, Tolan, & Van Acker, 1997; Adolescent Transitions Program; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Fast Track; PATHS; Seattle Social Development Project; Social Competence Promotion Program). Youth contraception practices increased, and initiation and prevalence of sexual activity were reduced in two programs (Reducing the Risk; Seattle Social Development Project), and Teen Outreach and the Seattle Social Development Project reduced teen pregnancy. Negative school outcomes were reduced, including truancy (Big Brothers/Big Sisters) and school suspension (Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways).

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Summary of the characteristics of these 25 effective positive youth development programs is instructive. These programs may not be typical of positive youth development programs in general. These programs were fortunate to have attracted funding to support strong evaluations. Thus, we expect that they are at a later stage of development, having convinced funding sources of their evaluability: this usually entails a strong rationale for the program components and evidence of replicability; for example, manualization of procedures and curricula specifying the logical links between procedures and outcomes.

Youth Development Constructs

All of the effective programs in this review addressed a minimum of five positive youth constructs. Most interventions addressed at least eight constructs, and three-domain programs averaged 10 constructs. Three constructs were addressed in all 25 well-evaluated programs: competence, self-efficacy, and prosocial norms. In over half of the 25 programs, several other constructs were addressed, including: opportunities for prosocial involvement (88%), recognition for positive behavior (88%), and bonding (76%); and 50% of the well-evaluated programs addressed positive identity, self-determination, belief in the future, resiliency, and spirituality.

Structured Curriculum

Having a structured curriculum or structured activities is critical for program replication. Twenty-four (96%) of the well-evaluated effective programs incorporated a structured curriculum or program of activities. One program, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, did not focus on a structured cur-
riculum skill-based strategy to build social competence, but rather, assumed that positive outcomes are mediated by bonding and other aspects of positive interaction (such as the presumed modeling of effective behavior by the adult) within the mentoring relationship.

**Program Frequency and Duration**

Twenty (80%) effective, well-evaluated programs were delivered over a period of 9 months or more. A number of these, often those operating in a school domain, applied their interventions during the academic year. In the interventions shorter than 9 months, programs ranged from 10 to 25 sessions, averaging about 12 sessions per intervention.

**Program Implementation and Assurance of Implementation Quality**

Fidelity of program implementation is one of the most important topics in the positive youth development field. Implementation fidelity has repeatedly been shown to be related to effectiveness (Battistich et al., 1996; Botvin, Baker, Dusenbury, Botvin, & Diaz, 1995; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993). Among multiyear, well-funded studies, separate evaluations of implementation, in addition to outcome evaluation, are becoming more common. The effective positive youth development programs reviewed here consistently attended to the quality and consistency of program implementation. Twenty-four (96%) evaluations in some way addressed or measured how well and how reliably the program implementers delivered the intervention.

**POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CONCLUSIONS**

We found a wide range of positive youth development approaches that resulted in promoting positive youth behavior outcomes and preventing youth problem behaviors. Nineteen effective programs showed positive changes in youth behavior, including significant improvements in interpersonal skills, quality of peer and adult relationships, self-control, problem solving, cognitive competencies, self-efficacy, commitment to schooling, and academic achievement. Twenty-four effective programs showed significant improvements in problem behaviors, including drug and alcohol use, school misbehavior, aggressive behavior, violence, truancy, high-risk sexual behavior, and smoking. This is good news indeed. Promotion and prevention programs that address positive youth development constructs are definitely making a difference in well-evaluated studies.

Although a broad range of strategies produced these results, the themes common to success involved methods to: strengthen social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and moral competencies; build self-efficacy; shape messages from family and community about clear standards for youth behavior; increase healthy bonding with adults, peers and younger children; expand opportunities and recognition for youth; provide structure and consistency in program delivery; and intervene with youth for at least 9 months or more. Although one third of the effective programs operated in only a single setting, it is important to note that for the other two thirds, combining the resources of the family, the community, and the school was important to success.

**Implications of Evaluations of Positive Youth Development Programs for Moral and Character Development Programs**

Common and overlapping roots are shared by positive youth development programs and moral and character development programs. Both fields have been driven by a common concern that modern socializing institutions have failed to reinforce the positive or moral development of
children and young people. Both types of programs have been built on a common concern with the increasing rates of youth problems, including homicide, gun carrying, teen pregnancy, and substance abuse. Both have shared concerns that development of the individual is more than an absence of problems. Character and moral development programs seek to encourage moral reasoning and ethical standards of conduct. Positive youth development programs seek to encourage a variety of positive developmental experiences, such as taking advantage of positive opportunities in contributing to the socialization units in which they participate, developing strong bonds to positive members of these socialization units, and developing competencies that include moral competence. Both traditions have fostered program development to encourage positive aspects of youth development with the hope that enhancing positive aspects of youth development will also prevent involvement in problem behaviors. Both traditions have also grown in their theoretical and conceptual rigor and increasingly have been submitted to empirical tests of program efficacy.

The constructs addressed by effective positive youth development programs provide some confirmation of character and moral development program elements as well as some potential extensions. While these youth development constructs were not tested individually, their presence in effective, positive youth development programs is suggestive of their importance. It appears that addressing multiple positive youth development constructs was associated with positive program impact. All of the programs that demonstrated positive effects addressed competence, the self-efficacy of the individual to use these competencies, and prosocial norms. It is clear that the constructs of prosocial norms and moral competence are components of character and moral development programs. In addition, program components that addressed individual characteristics, including a clear and positive identity, self-determination, resiliency, spirituality, and a belief in the future, were present in at least 50% of the effective positive youth development programs. These are program elements that could also be considered part of character and moral development programs. However, it appears that other elements of youth development programs were also important, in particular, teaching social, emotional, and cognitive competencies; providing opportunities for prosocial involvement; providing recognition for positive behavior; and fostering bonding. Program components that addressed each of these constructs were present in most effective programs. Character and moral development programs might utilize this information to broaden the concepts addressed and the processes used in programming to enhance the efficacy of existing models.

Almost all of the effective positive youth development programs had a structured curriculum. Most had a duration of at least 9 months and had checks for assessment of fidelity and quality of program implementation. These program characteristics enhance evaluability, appear to be associated with positive outcomes, and are likely to be important components of effective character and moral development programs.

In sum, although the full promise of the programs reviewed here rests on demonstration of long-term effectiveness in reducing problems and promoting positive development, there is clear evidence from well-conducted trials that positive youth development programs can be effective. Many of the elements of character and moral development have been included in the programs reviewed here. Some extensions of character and moral development programs are also suggested by this review of positive youth development program evaluations. Both character and moral development and positive youth development programs are fuelled by a desire to enhance positive development in order to reduce youth problems. Both types of programs experienced substantial theoretical and program development over the years. Cross-fertilization of programming and theory could lead to improvements in our understanding of youth development.
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